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ON THE ROLE OF MALAGASY IN THE CREATION OF THE VERNACULARS OF RÉUNION

by

DANIEL CHAPUIS

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Linguistics in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2003

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Abstract

ON THE ROLE OF MALAGASY IN THE CREATION OF THE VERNACULARS OF RÉUNION

by

Daniel Chapuis

Adviser: Professor Edward H. Bendix

A respected view (Baker 2000) holds that a language emerged between 1663 and 1720 in the multilingual community of French, Malagasy, Indian, and African origins on the island of Bourbon (called Réunion after 1848). This study provides historical and linguistic evidence for the role of Malagasy in the creation of specific morpho-syntactic traits characteristic of this new vernacular, which likely evolved into different lects by the end of the 18th century. Using Manessy's (1995) model of language creation (*vernacularisation*), Detges' (2000) cognitive model of creole-specific restructuring, and Frajzynger's (1985) analysis of inherent stativity or non-stativity of the verb in languages, it is shown that these morpho-syntactic traits existed in all the Vernacular Lects of Réunion (VLR) since the late 18th century. The literature makes rather scant reference to Malagasy influence on their morpho-syntax (Cellier 1985a; Ramassamy 1985; Manessy 1995; Corne 1999; and Baker 2000) in the face of a flat denial by

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Chaudenson (1974, 1981a, 1992) of any such influence on these lects except for their lexicon. In fact, the literature contains no discussion of actual evidence based on Malagasy data. This study attempts to establish the important role the verb phrase and sentence structure of Malagasy may have played in the creation of the early vernacular. Crucial to this role were bilingualism (or the use of two distinct registers) among the French and bilingualism among the Malagasies, due to the sheer number of the latter. Influential in the much later development of the VLR was the presence of a standard-like spoken French dating back only to the early 1800s. Its increased presence during the 19th and 20th centuries affected the VLR in ways not yet adequately assessed. However, the decreolization it produced, especially since 1848, has done much to overlay their 18th century forms. Essential to the argumentation is clear evidence of a rewriting of the history of the *Petits Blancs des Hauts* or poor Whites of the highlands (Bourquin 1994; Grondin 1998), which contributed significantly to a distorted view of both their origins and their speech variety.

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To my teacher
Eli Siegel

To my parents
Adrien and Betty Chapuis

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I wish to thank the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics for generous monetary support that helped me finance my stay on the island of Réunion in the summer of 1999. I want to thank also the people who extended a friendly hand to me during that summer: Professors Michel Carayol and Christian Barat for allowing me access to recordings made by them for the *Atlas linguistique et ethnographique de la Réunion* published by M. Carayol and R. Chaudenson as well as the use of the equipment for copying extracts from them; and Mr. Guy Ancel and his staff of the Multimedia Center of the University of Réunion for copies of various other recordings. A very special thank you goes to Mrs. Roucaya Safla, the head librarian of the *Salle des Isles de l'Océan Indien* of the University of Réunion, who offered her time and her knowledge generously to assist me in finding relevant documentation and even an informant. I also wish to thank Mrs. Ginette Ramassamy and Fr. Stéphane Nicaise for allowing me to photocopy and quote from their doctoral thesis and master's *mémoire*, respectively. Their work has given this dissertation an authenticity it would otherwise have lacked. A heartfelt thank you goes to all the people in Réunion who assisted me and made me feel welcome. I am grateful to my informant Marie-Ange Payet, a native speaker of the *créole réunionnais*, who helped me transcribe recorded material and gave me advice on various fine points, and also to my colleague and friend Lorraine Smith for proofreading my manuscript.

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The orthography of the VLR

There exists no standard orthography for the VLR. The principal reason for this is that such an orthographic code would imply the official recognition of these lects as a language. The issue over the use of the VLR in the schools has long been and remains a very divisive political issue, in which the communist party, a great promoter of the use of the vernacular lects in the schools as well as other areas of life (not to mention various liberals and literary figures), meets with violent opposition from the right-wing parties and other conservative forces both on the island and in Paris.

Perhaps the most daring attempt made over the years is the project *lekritir 77*, with its purely phonetic transcription of speech, indicating the presence of a different language. At the conservative end, attempts at transcription have tried to make the spelling as close to that of French as possible in order to make it seem only a "bastardization" of the official language. Cellier (1985b:24) gives a "comparative table of vowels and consonants in the six proposals for graphemic normalization", namely Gamaleya (versions G1, G2, and G3),[1] Kriké Kraké (i.e. Barat et al. 1977), Armand (1978) and *lekritir 77*. This table is reproduced below.

In general this study respects the orthography of the sources it uses. However, in some places, a more phonetic transcription has been adopted to underline the specific nature of the VLR as distinct from its superstrate, namely Popular French, as well as from Standard French. In some cases, such changes in orthography have been indicated.

---

[1] According to Cellier (1985c:18), in "Contes populaire créoles" in *Bardzour Maskarin*, Gamleya (1974) discusses three ways to write our speech" (*trois manire po écri not langaze*). The first is based in readers' French habits and remains close to the spelling of French; the other two, which are proposals for tomorrow's schools, are phonetic. In this way the following ways of spelling words correspond to each other:

(1)	(2)	(3)
ferblanc	ferblan	ferblâ
tonton	tonton	tôtô
mounc	moun	mon
tonne	tonc	ton

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Table 0.1 Comparative table of vowels (from Cellier 1985b:24)

Oral vowels	I.P.A.	G1	G2	G3	K	A	77
	i	i	i	i	i	i	i
	e	ez, é, er	é	é	é	é	é
	ɛ	ai, è, e, ait, aid	è	è	e (+C)	è	è
	a/ɑ	ha, a, as	a	a	a	a	a
	o/ɔ	o, au, ô, ot, eau	o	o	o	o	o
	u	ou, out, ous	ou	u	ou	ou	ou
	y	i	i	(ü)	i	i	i
	Ø	é	é	é	é	é	é
	œ	è	è	è	e (+C)	è	è
	ə	e	e	(ë)	e	é/o	e
Nasal vowels	ɛ̃	in, ain, en	in	ê	in	in	in, en
	œ̃						
	ã	em, an, ans, en, end, ant, anc, and	an	â	an	an	an
	ɔ̃	on, om	on	ô	on	on	on

Table 0.2 Comparative table of consonants (from Cellier 1985b:25)

I.P.A.	G1	G2	G3	K	A	77
p	p	p	p	p	p	p
t	t, tt	t	t	t	t	t
k	k, q, qu, c	k	k	k	k	k
b	b	b	b	b	b	b
d	d	d	d	d	d	d
g	gu(i), gu(e), g[2]	g	g	g	g	g
f	f, ph, ff	f	f	f	f	f
v	v	v	v	v	v	v
s	s, ç, ss	s	s	s	s	s
z	z	z	z	z	z	z
ʃ	s	(ch)	(š)	s	s	s
ʒ	s	(j)	(ž)	z	z	z
m	m, mm	m	m	m	m	m
n	n, nn	n	n	n	n	n
ɲ	-gne	-gne	ŷ	ny, gn	gn	gn
ŋ	-ng	-ng	ĝ	-	-	-ng
l	l, ll	l	l	l	l	l
R	r	r	r	r	r	r
j	ill, i	y	y	y	y	y
ɥ	u + i	-	ü + i	ü + i	ü + i	u + i
w	oui, oua, oi, ois	w	w	ou, oi, oin	ou	oi

[2] Cellier (1985b:25) has gn(i) and gn(e), which were probably meant to be gu(i) and gu(e)

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List of Abbreviations

ASM	Agentive Subject Marker
CAUS	causative (prefix)
CIRC	circumstantial syntactic element
CLP	Copula-like Particle
CVF	Creolized Variety of French
COMP	completive marker
COND	conditional
DC	Daniel Chapuis
DEF	definite determiner
DEM	demonstrative adjective or pronoun
DET	determiner
DODM	Direct Object Diathesis Marker
DRM	Durable Resultative Marker
FPA/I	*français populaire d'Abidjan* (ou *ivoirien*)
FUT	future
IdeFC	Isle de France Creole
IE	Indo-European
IMPF	imperfective
IOC	Indian Ocean creoles
IRR	irrealis
MAP	Marie-Ange Payet (native speaker informant consulted)
MC	Mauritian Creole
MCS	Medium for Community Solidarity
MIC	Medium for Inter-ethnic Communication
NDA	non-deictic article
NEG	negation
NP	noun phrase
NPM	Non-processive Predicate Marker
OBP	object prefix (with names)
PASS	passive (prefix)
PAST	past
PERF	perfective
PPM	Processive Predicate Marker
PRES	present
PROSP	prospective
PROG	progressive
RC	Rodrigues Creole
REL	relative pronoun or adjective
RM	relative marker
RMC	Resultative Marker of Characterization
SC	Seychellois Creole
TMA	Tense, Mood, and Aspect
V	verb
VLR	Vernacular Lects of Réunion

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 The aim and scope of this study

The purpose of the present study is to consider a particular aspect of the emergence of the *vernacular lects of Réunion* (henceforth VLR). It argues in favor of a reappraisal of some assumptions made about them in the literature on pidgin and creole languages. Support for such a reappraisal is to be found in the positions of specific authors on the history of the people of Réunion and their vernacular lects, or speech varieties. These authors are: 1. Baker (1995, 1996, 2000, 2002) and Manessy (1978, 1995) for the motivation and processes that led to the emergence and development of the vernacular lects; 2. Cellier (1985a) and Ramassamy (1985) for the role of Malagasy in the development of their morpho-syntax; and 3. Bourquin (1994), Nicole (1996), and Grondin (1998) for the history of the *Petits Blancs*, or poor Whites of Réunion. Each point is key for the understanding of the genesis and development of the vernacular speech varieties of the island. Each also has a direct bearing on two issues that this study is only indirectly concerned with: 1. the nature of the linguistic continuum in Réunion; and 2. the place the vernaculars occupy, on the broader linguistic map of speech varieties sharing a French vocabulary, i.e. with respect to the French creoles of the Indian Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, and America, as well as lexically French vehicular languages spoken in various parts of Africa. While these issues are commented on in these pages, it is not the purpose of this study to deal with them as such.

This study deals with the creation of the vernacular lects of Réunion at both a historical level and a theoretical, or linguistic, level. It considers *what evidence there may*

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be for language creation in them as a consequence of the language contact between Popular French and Malagasy dialects in early Bourbon (as Réunion was called until 1848). It sets out to answer questions that have not been entertained or researched before *on the basis of Malagasy data.* These questions are: 1. What was the contribution of the Malagasy speakers to the new contact language in Bourbon? 2. Are there any new structures in the vernacular lects, as we know them today, that cannot have been produced other than by the influence of a Malagasy-based substrate? Was a Malagasy and lexically French vernacular bilingualism responsible for the contact-induced changes that left their stamp on the vernacular lects? Are there traces of Malagasy influence in traits that are common to *all* the vernacular lects, or varieties, spoken in Réunion in the past as well as today?

1.1 The term *Vernacular Lects of Réunion* (VLR)

In the pidgin and creole literature published in English, the VLR are usually referred to as *Réunion Creole* (Papen 1978; Bickerton 1981; Baker 1982b, 2000; and Corne 1982, 1999), *Réunion(nais) French Creole* (Arends et al. 1994; and Detges 2000), or *Réunionnais* (Holm 1988, 2000; and Baker 2002).[1] In the pidgin and creole literature published in French they are called *réunionnais* (Chaudenson 1974, 2000; and Alleyne 1996) and *créole réunionnais* (Valdman 1978; Cellier 1985a, 1985b; and Ramassamy 1985), as well as *(parler) créole de la Réunion* (Chaudenson 1974, 2000; and Manessy 1995).[2] They are most often considered one of the Indian Ocean varieties of creole French, though different from Mauritian Creole or Seychellois Creole in that they are

[1] Valdman (1977) also uses the term *Reunionnese*.
[2] The title of Chaudenson (1974) is "Le lexique du *parler créole de la Réunion*".

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viewed as either closer to French[3] or a partially restructured variety of French.[4] Chaudenson (1974) sees in their early form, which he calls *(créole) bourbonnais*, the origin of the other French creoles of the Indian Ocean, namely Mauritian Creole, Seychellois Creole, and Rodrigues Creole.[5]

Different vernacular speech varieties are known to have existed in Bourbon (and later Réunion) beside a more standard variety of French referred to as *français [régional] de la Réunion* ([regional] Réunion French) and, especially more recently, *français métropolitain* (official or standard form of French). These vernacular speech varieties, or lects, have been referred to by various names in the literature. Most often a distinction is made between *français créolisé* (creolized type of French) or *créole des Hauts* (creole of the highlands), *créole des Bas* (creole of the coastal regions), *gros créole* (rough creole), *krèol kaf* (Black or African creole), etc. For some authors (cf. Chaudenson 1974, 2000) *français créolisé* refers to the speech variety of the *Petits-Blancs*, which is more commonly referred to as *créole des Hauts*.[6] What the origin and distribution of these

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[3] "Reunion Creole is shown to be [i.e. in Corne 1999] a variety of French profoundly modified by contact with Malagasy, and then modified again by the appropriation of that new code by large numbers of mainly adult slaves" [Corne 1999:6].

[4] "In sum, it seems clear from its verbal system alone that Réunionnais is not a completely creolized variety of French but rather one that has undergone relatively minor structural adjustments in the course of its contact with other languages. ... Réunionnais can best be categorized as a semi-creole language comparable to Afrikaans..." [Holm 1988:395].

[5] "However, an essential fact seems to remain, namely that the key to almost all the differences between the structures of the various [Indian Ocean] Creoles and those of French is not evolutions particular [to each Creole], but rather their common early ["Bourbonnais"] origin. ... Creole speech was, for the most part, fixed by the first quarter of the 18th century. ("L'essentiel nous paraît cependant être que la quasi-totalité des divergences entre les structures des divers créoles [de l'océan Indien] et celles du français ne s'explique pas par des evolutions particulières, mais par l'origine bourbonnaise commune. ... le parler créole était, dans ses grandes lignes, fixé dès le premier quart du XVIIIe siècle") [Chaudenson 1974:1116].

[6] Cf. Appendix C for different terms used to refer to the various lects.

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varieties are, still remains an unsettled issue in the literature,[7] where they are mostly considered to exist in the form of a "creole continuum" (Carayol & Chaudenson 1978; Corne 1982), ranging from the acrolectal *créole des Hauts*, or *créole des Petits Blancs*, to a basilectal *krèol kaf* with more significantly creolized (or restructured) forms. The geographical and ethnic variation between these poles is so complex that even idiolects of these established types are at times starkly different from one another. The "detailed investigation" of the variation in the vernacular lects that Corne (1982:128) pointed out was necessary for any definitive conclusions to be drawn about their relation to French Creoles has unfortunately not yet been done.[8]

This study uses the term *Vernacular Lects of Réunion* to refer to the vernacular varieties that emerged and developed from the contact of speakers of the popular and dialectal French (henceforth *Popular French*), which was spoken from the outset in the French settlement of Bourbon, and speakers of Malagasy dialects and Indian or Indo-Portuguese, and African languages. It is meant as a *cover term* for the different speech varieties on the island, which have not yet been definitively sorted out. There is significant variation in the vernaculars in Réunion on ethnic and geographical lines to justify the use of the term lects. What this study proposes, however, is a temporary kind of *tabula rasa* as to previous theories and a fresh look at the morpho-syntax of the vernacular lects in terms of this language contact. It indicates a setting aside of the

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[7] Deltel (1968) sees in them "rural coastal", "rural inland" and "urban" forms, while Chaudenson (1974:XV-XXIII) sees in them mainly geographical variants. Cf. also Valdman 1978:309: about Chaudenson's distinction between a regional form of French (*français régional*) and a creolized form (*français créolisé*), "without, however, making it clear what distinguishes them on the phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical levels" (*sans toutefois préciser ce qui les distingue sur les plans phonologique, morphosyntaxique et lexical*).

[8] Except on the phonetic level, cf. the remarkable study by Staudacher-Valliamée (1992).

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problem of variation, or rather a putting it on hold, while considering the role of Malagasy in the creation of the early and later vernaculars of Réunion, with the purpose of getting back to these problems later. The term VLR is meant to reflect a different *approach* to the various speech varieties born of the language contact situation that has characterized the island from the very beginning of its history. What is indeed basic in the approach of this study is that: 1. the vernacular varieties were born of contact of the Popular French spoken in Bourbon from the earliest times with other languages; and 2. they are, on specific points, the result of processes of language creation as a result of contact between, particularly, Malagasy dialects or a Malagasy koiné and Popular French from 1663 to 1720 (and even later).[9]

The language that has provided the VLR with the main core of their vocabulary, what is sometimes referred to as their lexifier language, is the type of French that was spoken on the island in the 17th and 18th century. Early, that variety of French was very likely a leveling of the popular and regional French (referred to in this study as *Popular French*) spoken by its earliest settlers and immigrants in the various parts of northern and eastern France they had come from, mixed, no doubt, with elements of nautical French and perhaps even some forms of pidgin French or pidgin Portuguese that were spoken in most ports and on board most vessels the French frequented in the 17th and 18th centuries.[10]

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[9] The term *vernacular lects* of Réunion may to some seem inappropriate because the Popular French spoken in Bourbon was itself a "vernacular". Technically, of course, in the field of Romance linguistics, it is speech varieties such as Popular French, brought from France that are considered the French "vernaculars" of the 17th century.

[10] As Chaudenson (1974:464) rightly points out about the early settlers: "One can therefore surmise that being from the provinces and of the most modest social level at that, the first inhabitants of Bourbon can have had only **distant notions of the French language**" ("On peut donc penser que les premiers habitants

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It needs to be made clear that the vernacular lects of Réunion do not *not* include the *français régional de la Réunion* mentioned in the literature (cf. Appendix C), i.e. the more or less educated local speech, or oral French, which only began to be present in Bourbon in the 18th century and has since then been rather akin in its grammar to what today has evolved into Standard French (*français métropolitain*).[11] Since it was Popular French that was the *input* to the vernaculars that developed in Bourbon, the term VLR seemed appropriate. It also makes it clear that the lects that emerged in Bourbon did not derive from French.[12] The term may be considered by purists to be incorrectly used, a vernacular being by definition a non-standard form, but somewhat proper nevertheless to the extent that the lexicon of the VLR, of course, was ultimately derived from French itself. However, the degree of removal of the VLR from the standard or official language of the French Academy from the outset and during a considerable part of the island's history, is especially important to insist on in order to avoid comparisons of these vernaculars with French, as if they were "vernaculars" in the sense of regional dialects or the kind of popular French spoken in rather educated milieus in various French cities in the 17th and 18th centuries. In fact, this study does not approach the vernacular that emerged in Bourbon or its later forms from an *a priori* notion of degree to which they might be removed from a standard form of French.

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de Bourbon, provinciaux de condition des plus modestes, ne devaient avoir **du français qu'une connaissance assez lointaine** ...") [emphasis added].

[11] What Beniamino & Baggioni (1993:153) refer to as "un français régional issu des français populaires et dialectaux" (regional French originating in the popular and dialectal French) is at best hard to imagine (see Note 10 below). See Appendix C1 for definitions and some discussion of this *français régional*.

[12] The term "French" is most often used in the Francophone pidgin and creole literature to refer to the superstrate of the VLF, when in actual fact it was a leveled form of popular and dialectal French. French has only been a pole in the diglossic situation in Réunion since the 19th century.

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The distinction is also important when one considers the fact that a *significant* number of speakers of a standard-like French was not prevalent in Bourbon until well into the 19th century. There was indeed throughout the history of Réunion a continuous, though irregular, arrival of newcomers from France; and it is the survival of oral French as the language of a slightly more educated minority that resulted early in the situation described in the literature as one of *diglossia*. The so-called creole/French diglossia in today's Réunion is one where Standard French (locally referred to as *français métropolitain*, namely the speech of the people on the island who are from France) is imposed and coexists with the vernacular lects born *previously* from language contact in the 17th and 18th centuries. An official variety of French has long been the language of such realms as education, administration, the courts of law, and, to a large extent, politics. Before the island became a French *département*, even as early as 1850, however, the diglossia was rather one that separated the tiny minority of the upper, wealthy, landowning, and educated classes (probably 3% of the population) from the overwhelming majority of the lower and poor uneducated classes (97%). It was a situation where only the educated were speakers of both a local vernacular and the standard (whether some form of Standard French or an educated form of the "supposed" regional French). As in other colonial societies, the children of the local bourgeoisie learned the vernacular from their nannies and the neighborhood children with whom they spent most of their time, or at least had a substantial passive knowledge of it. The impression is sometimes given in the literature that the same diglossic situation obtained from the early 18th century (cf. Carayol & Chaudenson 1978).

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1.2 Language creation: substrate influence, restructuring, and reanalysis

The language contact phenomena this study discusses as operative in language creation (cf. Manessy's 1995 notion of *vernacularisation* in §6.2.1) are referred to in the writings on the VLR in terms such as "substrate influence", "contact-induced restructuring", "reanalysis", etc. In order not to mislead the reader, it should be stated that the use of terms such as "substrate influence", "contact-induced restructuring", or "reanalysis" (cf. §5.2) is not meant to indicate a continuation of Popular French in the new vernacular of Réunion, but rather its having contributed as *input* to the new vernacular that emerged in Bourbon. It should not be seen as contradictory, then, that this study uses terms such as "language creation", "contact-induced restructuring", or "reanalysis" as referring to processes in language contact that can lead to the emergence of a *new* language. The use of different terms is made necessary to the extent that reference to other authors makes them necessary. The notion of "restructuring" is not new in pidgin and creole studies. It has referred, for example, to the processes that make a creole of a pidgin or a pre-pidgin continuum by way of complexification.[13] This is what is meant in the complexification phase of Manessy's *vernacularisation.* With the conference on degrees of restructuring organized in Regensburg in 1998, there was a renewed interest in this process, which was informed by the developments in pidgin and creole studies since the 1970s.[14] Different views of "restructuring" were represented with a fair amount of overlap among them, including in the sense of language creation, in which this study understands it.

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[13] Cf. Valdman (1977:157ff.), who preferred to call the process "elaboration".

[14] Papers presented at this conference were published in Neumann-Holzschuh & E. W. Schneider (eds.) 2000.

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Restructuring is understood here essentially in keeping with the general definition that Lang & Neumann-Holzschuh (1999) have given for *reanalysis* in the field of Romance languages and the framework of second language acquisition. While the origin of pidgin and creole languages is *different* from that of, for example, Romance languages in the sense that there is analysis on the part of the hearer *and the speaker* of the input to creole and pidgin languages, the definition can apply to those languages, too. Lang & Holzschuh (1999:6) explain:

> It is only possible to speak of reanalysis in those cases where one compares the analysis of the learners with the "correct" analysis the competent speakers of the target language already have at their disposal. As far as the learner is concerned, there is here no reanalysis of anything that he has analyzed differently earlier. He simply analyzes what for him had not yet been analyzed. ... Indeed, in the field of research on language change, only those cases are interesting where the *new analysis was not as yet possible in the preceding state of the language*. It is for these cases that we wish to reserve the concept of "reanalysis" [emphasis added].[15]

It is important that the use of the words *learner* and *target language* not be misleading here. They are *not* to be taken to imply that the origin of pidgin and creole languages is a matter of second language acquisition. It is, indeed, of *quite a different* nature, even though language creation may—in very specific ways—present parallels with processes or phenomena typically found in the field of second language acquisition. Indeed, in a language contact scenario from which a pidgin or a creole emerges, the speaker of the substrate is *not* the *only learner* (of a target language *supposedly* acquired). Rather, as a

[15] "Von Reanalyse kann man in diesen Fällen aber nur sprechen, wenn man die Analyse der Lerner mit der 'richtigen' Analyse vergleicht, über die die kompetenten Sprecher der Zielsprache schon verfügen. Der Lerner selbst reanalysiert hier nicht, was er zuvor anders analysiert hat. Er analysiert einfach, was für ihn bislang unanalysiert war. ... Für die Sprachwandelforschung sind nun allerdings nur diejenigen Fälle interessant, bei denen die neue Analyse im bisherigen Sprachzustand noch nicht möglich war. Für diese Fälle wollen wir deshalb den Begriff von Reanalyse reservieren" [Lang & Neumann-Holzschuh 1999:6].

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contact language develops, there is language creation, on the part of the speakers of *both or all* the languages in contact as an evolving common grammar emerges.

1.3 The approach of this study

As was mentioned above, the aim of this study is to consider a particular aspect of language creation in the creation and elaboration of the VLR. Its approach is that emergence and development of pidgins and creoles are the consequence of a *creative process* which gives rise to new languages with new structures, even though the lexical material they use is mainly that of what is referred to as the superstrate (or lexifier) language, often assumed to have been the supplier of the lexicon by virtue of its social dominance or superiority. This view is in agreement with the "creativist account" in Baker (1995:6-13), or his "constructive approach" (Baker 2000:53-58),[16] and with the notion of "reanalysis" in Detges (2000:144), in which, "along with material continuity between French and the Fr[ench] Cr[eoles], we find a clear-cut functional discontinuity."

It is now widely accepted in the field of pidgin and creole studies that such creations, which are at the origin of new contact languages as well as later developments in them, are caused by both social and linguistic phenomena and to be accounted for by both supporting socio-historical and linguistic data. In fact, this may be said to be the hallmark of pidgin and creole studies since the early 1990s. In this light, this study resorts

[16] Baker (1990:111) writes about his concept of Medium for Interethnic Communication (here MFIC, and later MIC): "What I am suggesting is that participants created a new language, suited to their immediate interethnic needs, and they consequently expanded and adapted this as their growing or changing needs demanded, drawing at all times on the resources available. These resources would include all languages known to the participants, substrate and superstrate ... while the relative availability of these resources would be related to social factors."

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to the work of Manessy (1978, 1995) and what could be called his map of correspondences between social and linguistic phenomena, based in his knowledge of contemporary contact situations in Africa.

This study disagrees with the view that the key to the process of emergence or development in the VLR was one of approximated second language acquisition, where French would have been the *target language* of the speakers of substrate languages at the outset and approximations of approximations of the vernacular as time went on.[17] It is, rather, in agreement with Baker's (1995) "creativist account", or "constructive approach" (Baker 1999) of pidginization and creolization. "I hold," he writes (Baker 1995:6), "that all creoles and all pidgins are, initially at least, successful solutions to problems of human intercommunication." The emergence of a contact language, particularly in Bourbon, as elsewhere in some European settlements at the time, was one that this study sees as the fruit of processes of language creation understood as a *two-way street.*[18]

To the extent that this study focuses on language creation in a contact situation as a the step by step evolution of specific forms or structures, it is to be seen in the light also

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[17] Cf. Chaudenson (1992:155): "My basic hypothesis is then that the varieties of French of North America or of St. Barths constitute the state of the language that is the closest to the starting point of creolization. It is this kind of French, spoken by the settlers who arrived in the islands in the 17th century, that was the target language for the slaves brought onto these islands. In the course of a first stage there appeared a continuum of approximations of this speech variety, which no doubt already led to evolutions specific to the French language... "("Mon hypothèse de départ est donc que les français d'Amérique du Nord ou de Saint-Barthélémy constituent l'état de langue le plus proche du 'terminus a quo' de la créolisation. C'est un français de ce type qui, parlé par les colons débarqués aux Isles au XVIIe siècle, a servi de langue-cible aux esclaves introduits. Est apparu, au cours de la phase I, un continuum d'approximations de ce parler qui a sans doute déjà entraîné des évolutions spécifiques du français...").

[18] Cf. also Mühlhäusler (1986:94: "...those who invent pidgins and creoles are not necessarily powerless victims or clean slates ready to be imprinted with the categories of universal grammar. Instead, one should seek for a view in which deliberate human actions determine the degree to which cultureless natural linguistic categories are used in the formation of such new language systems."

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of what Baggioni (1991) has called "mixed discourse" (*métissage discursif*). He came at language contact with a very carefully weighed rejection of theories of language contact, which he saw as too static and of the order of *langue* rather than *parole*. "However," he writes (Baggioni 1991:191):

> to compare what can be observed in the formation and development of creole languages with other language processes such as learner interlanguages ... phenomena related to language contact situations, language learning processes adopted by migrant people, etc., now there is a much richer and fruitful area of study and comparison. We are not then concerned with classical studies of *langue* but rather with studies where interlocutors are concretely situated in specific language exchanges.[19]

And he adds: "The switching of languages (code switching), their mode of existence and their products: *mixed discourse*, thus become a permanent object of study for the linguist who wishes to get closer to the reality of language exchanges."[20] Indeed, one should remember that the locus of language contact is in the mind of the speakers who are in more or less permanent contact.

This does not mean, however, that principles of sociolinguistics at the level of *langue* are foreign to the issues of language creation in the VLR. Manessy's (1994) objection to the relevance of a type of "self-regularization" (*auto-régularisation*) in a language that Chaudenson (1992) considers crucial (an idea one can well imagine a Baggioni as having balked at) indicates this. Indeed, Manessy (1994:168) objects to

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[19] "En revanche, confronter ce qu'on peut observer dans la formation et le développement des langues créoles à d'autres procès langagiers tels que: les interlangues d'apprenants... les phénomènes liés aux situations de contacts de langues, aux processus d'apprentissage des langues par les migrants, etc. voilà un champ d'étude et de confrontation bien plus riche et fructueux. Il ne s'agit pas alors d'études classiques *en langue*, mais d'études où les locuteurs sont concrètement situés dans des échanges linguistiques déterminés" [Baggioni 1991:191].

[20] "L'alternance des langues (alternance codique), leur mode d'existence et leurs produits: les *discours métissés*, deviennent donc un objet d'étude pertinent pour le linguiste désireux de se rapprocher de la réalité des échanges linguistiques" [Baggioni 1991:191].

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"Chaudenson's term" "tendency" that brought regional as well as African forms of French, and French creoles into existence because he finds it too vague. It is for him is a matter of "processes whose operation is linked to the use of language, and therefore universal processes ... and permanent processes, precisely those which regulate the evolution of languages depending on the conditions of their use ... The tendency would be only the effects of particular socio-historical circumstances which made them possible."[21]

The approach of this study is, in other words, informed by views that are considered to contribute to the understanding of the language creation (or restructuring) that took place as a result of contact between speakers of the Popular French of Bourbon and speakers of Malagasy dialects or a Malagasy koiné in the 17th and 18th centuries. These views are considered compatible and as supporting the point of view presented here. While the study focuses on particular points where such language creation is considered to have occurred, it also takes into account the overall historical and social picture to support the hypothesis it seeks to prove. It must be acknowledged that while the linguistic situation in Réunion before the *départementalisation* of 1946 is hard to reconstruct, it has become, especially since the late 1970s, a particularly thorny issue. This is due to the strong political undercurrents on the question of the status of the VLR in general, and its orthography and use in the schools in particular.

[21] "Notre hypothèse est qu'il s'agit là de processus dont l'opération est liée à l'exercise du langage, donc universels (...) et permanents, ceux précisément qui règlent l'évolution des langes en fonction des conditions de leur emploi ... . La "tendance" ne serait que l'affleurement favorisé par des circonstances socio-linguistiques particulières ..." [Manessy 1994:168].

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1.4 The role of Malagasy dialects in the creation and development of the VLR

While Chaudenson (1974) acknowledges the presence of large numbers of Malagasies in the early and later population of Bourbon (though not as an *overwhelming* majority), he dramatically downplays the role of any Malagasy substrate influence on the VLR.[22] However, the presence of a very large majority of speakers of different Malagasy dialects, underscored more recently by Cellier (1985a), warrants another look at how not just Malagasy *vocabulary*, but Malagasy *morpho-syntax* (and consequently morpho-semantics) may have contributed to the creation of the VLR. A more ample description of the languages of Madagascar is now available, which makes it possible to substantiate more detailed evidence for the role played by Malagasy dialects, or a Malagasy koiné. A greater number of the morpho-syntactic elements in the VLR than has been acknowledged might well explain various aspects in the creation of the VLR. An important question in this respect is whether such a role was only played *only* on points of similarity (*convergence*) between Popular French and Malagasy, or whether only *those* instances where such similarity *obtained* eventually survived and left traces in today's VLR of a previously more extensive role or contribution.

1.5 The social history of the *Petits-Blancs*

Evidence has been presented in recent studies (Bourquin 1994, Nicole 1996, Grondin 1998) indicating that significant *rewriting* of the history of the "social category" *Petits*

[22] He downplays the role of substrate languages in creoles in general. Among the linguistic traits that characterize them, Chaudenson (1992:173) mentions two relevant points: first, as part of "3. Restructuring outside the zones of variability of French": "Convergence with other languages" [3.1]; and second, "4. Positive and direct transfers from languages other than French" ["3. restructuration hors des zones de variabilité du français": "convergence avec d'autres langues"; "4. transfers positifs et directs à partir de langues autres que le français"). Cf. Chaudenson (1981:190) for possible substrate influence on the pronominal forms of the VLR: "Gáldi's idea of a possible Malagasy influence ... should not be discarded" ("l'idée de Galdi d'une possible influence malgache ... n'est pas à écarter").

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Blancs occurred in the 19th century. The evidence seems to suggest that new scenarios for the language contact in Bourbon as well as different conclusions about the processes of emergence and development of the lect of the *Petits Blancs* are called for. Apparently, their lect has undergone the same "whitening" process as the "social category" was made to undergo, to the point that it affects the view the *Petits Blancs* themselves have of their speech variety today. The decidedly mixed nature of the origin of this segment of the population is gradually coming to light. This "whitening" process underlies, for example, what Chaudenson (1974:XVII) writes about this segment of the population:

> While in this group the creole is the mother tongue in practically all cases, there often coexist with it various varieties of regional French. As a result, in a diglossic situation, the speech of the *Petits Blancs* is much closer to French and the phenomena of interference and survival [of elements] play a much larger role than in other groups in the population, whose members are sometimes almost unilingual (creole speakers). In a few families it seems as though regional French is the mother tongue even though a simultaneous acquisition of the creole occurs alongside it. *It is in the white population that is to be found the keenest awareness of levels of language that can exist in the speech* [of various speakers] [emphasis added].[23]

The process can also be felt in the forcefulness with which the *Petits Blancs* distance themselves (as in the recordings of Barat & Carayol) from others by distinguishing clearly between their lect and the lects of others, whether that of the Indians, the Chinese, or the Blacks, whose basilectal traits seem to be most stigmatized. The truth is that the continuous cohabitation of (mostly Malagasy, but also African) Blacks and native Creoles with the *Petits Blancs* during the history of the island can strengthen the hypothesis that their lect is actually a continuation of a very early form of the restructured

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[23] "Dans ce groupe si le créole est, dans la quasi-totalité des cas, la langue maternelle, souvent coexistent avec lui des variétés diverses de français régional. Il en résulte que, si les 'petits blancs' sont en situation de diglossie. Leur parler est beaucoup plus proche du français et que les phénomènes d'interférence ou de survivance y ont une importance beaucoup plus grande que dans le créole d'autres groupes de population dont les members sont parfois unilingues (créole). ... C'est dans la population blanche qu'on trouve la conscience la plus aiguë des niveaux de langue qui peuvent exister dans le parler" [Chaudenson 1974:XVII].

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Popular French and not just a separate lect that might have been influenced by it at a later date, as an *adstrate* would affect another language.

1.6 The nature of the continuum in the VLR

If such a "whitening" of the lect of the *Petits Blancs* did indeed occur, the picture of the "creole continuum" (Corne 1982) on the island might be significantly altered. This is not to say that the status and presence of Standard French has had absolutely no impact on the so-called "acrolectal forms" of the VLR. The presence of the wealthy and educated *Gros Blancs* on the island has always contributed to the VLR's being considered inferior (or incorrect) speech varieties. However, the diglossia between a standard form of French and the VLR has done next to nothing in decreolizing them among monolingual speakers (except for lexical borrowings). It is important to realize that while socially and psychologically the VLR have always been considered to be inferior, these lects have always been considered by their speakers as an entirely *separate speech variety in itself.* In fact, since the late 1970s they have become an important voice, originating among left-wing literary figures, favoring its recognition as the language of the island.

There seems to be significant linguistic evidence that there has been an attempt at what may be called the "*linguistic* whitening" of the lect of the *Petits Blancs.* A different view of it is called for despite the Franco-centric impression Chaudenson (1974; 2000) has tried to give of it. The way the continuum has been understood by him on the basis of measuring the distance from a standard form of French on the basis of vocabulary and morphology, and on an evolutionary scale from a theoretical *français zéro* may well be

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historically misleading and constitute a linguistic as well as a social contradiction in terms. It might well be that psychologically and sociolinguistically the reality about the continuum in Réunion is, to use an expression formulated by E. Bendix,[24] *one speaker's French is another speaker's creole* and *one speaker's creole is another speaker's French*. However, this is a different matter than that of the history of the VLR as a language. How great the variation is on the island is hinted at in Deltel's (1968:33) comment (quoted in Valdman 1978:309) that "every locality has its own linguistic variety" (*chaque clocher a son individualisme linguistique*). The social and linguistic contradiction in terms may also be responsible for the difficulty there is in placing the VLR on the broader linguistic map. Indeed, a crucial question is where to draw the line between dialects of a European superstrate and "partially restructured", or "creole-like", varieties of it, which have also been called "semi-creoles" (Holm 1988, 2000) or "intermediate creoles" (Winford 2000).

1.7 The place of the VLR on the broader linguistic map

If French creoles are characterized by particular features, many of which are also shared by English-based, or Dutch-based, or Portuguese-based creoles, then the VLR do not fit into the category of French-based creoles the way Mauritian Creole or Dominican Creole does, for example. It should also be said that important similarities between the VLR and Louisiana French Creole have been noted (Valdman 1978, Baker 1987). However, the differences between them are also important. On the other hand, the similarities with African creolized varieties of French are also striking; but here again there may be significant differences. While this study does not follow the approach to pidgin and creole languages based on a definition of them in terms of creole features, the question

[24] In a meetings the author had with the chair of his dissertation committee.

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still remains, where the VLR belong on the broader map of speech varieties sharing a French vocabulary.

Using lines of reasoning reflected in more recent literature, this study presents and defends the hypothesis that *the contact between speakers of Popular French and speakers of Malagasy dialects or a Malagasy koiné during their cohabitation in early and later Bourbon (1663 to 1767) resulted in the creation of characteristic morpho-syntactic traits in the new vernacular, some of which were maintained over the years of the plantation society and have left traces in the VLR as they are spoken today.* It has already been made clear (Baker 1982b; Corne 1982) that: 1. whatever the origin of the VLR, they are historically and structurally different from Mauritian Creole and Seychelles Creole; and 2. the sociolinguistic history of Réunion is different from that of Mauritius, for example, where a French-based creole arose in what was already a plantation setting. This study also argues that *while the role of Malagasy element in the contact situation contributed to the creation and maintainance of a new vernacular in Bourbon, it also prevented a more radical simplification of the Popular French originally spoken on the island due to similarities in the structure of Malagasy and Popular French.* It is this that may assign the VLR a special place on the broader linguistic map.

The corpus for this work consists of 1. selections from the recordings made by C. Barat and M. Carayol for the *Atlas linguistique et ethnologique de la Réunion,* which Cellier (1985a), Cellier (1985b), and Ramassamy (1985) are partly based on, and Barat et al. (1977) and 2. an extract from recordings made by Stéphane Nicaise (Nicaise 1992).

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Chapter Two: The Social History of Réunion

2.0 Introduction

Located in the Indian Ocean, 800 km east of Madagascar and 220 km south-west of Mauritius, the island of Réunion was probably first known to the Arabs. The maps of Portuguese mariners clearly label the island and its close neighbors with Arabic names as early as 1502. After the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama had sailed around the Cape of Good Hope in 1497, Réunion is said to have been "discovered", that is probably sighted, by his compatriot Pedro Mascarenhas during his voyage to India of 1511. Today both Réunion and Mauritius, as well as the island of Rodrigues, are still known to the French as the archipelago of *les îles Mascareignes* (the Mascarene islands), after the famous explorer.

The history[1] of the island falls into four main periods, each of which is made up of sub-periods. The four periods reveal how the political decisions made in Paris determined the economic development of the island, which in turn shaped its population as well as its forms of speech. They are:

1. the Era of the East India Company (1665-1767);
2. Bourbon under the French Monarchy, Revolution, and Empire (1767-1815);
3. the Rise and fall of the sugar plantations (1815-1946); and
4. Réunion as a French overseas department (1946 to the present).

[1] The main sources for this history of the island are Scherer (1994) and Chane-Kune (1993).

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2.1 The era of the East India Company (1665-1767)

While the history of the island as a continuous human settlement began in 1663, politically and economically speaking, it started two years later, when it was put into the hands of the *Compagnie des Indes Orientales* (the French East India Company). Bourbon, as it had been called when it was claimed for the French King as early as 1638, remained uninhabited until 1646, when the first of two short-lived periods of human presence on the island began. Some rebels from the French outpost of Fort-Dauphin in Madagascar were "confined" on Bourbon and left to their own devices for three years before they were called back. Then a second group, made up of French exiles from Fort-Dauphin and a few Malagasy settlers lived on the island for a few years, until they were forced onto a passing ship headed for India, where the Malagasies were sold as slaves in 1658. Before the island was entrusted to the East India Company, however, a third settlement would take place, which was to be the first permanent one.

Indeed, in 1663, a private settler from Fort-Dauphin by the name of Louis Payen decided to leave for the island, left uninhabited by the second group of temporary exiles and settlers. He is said to have arrived in Bourbon with another Frenchman, Pierre Pau, and ten Malagasies, of whom seven were men and three were women. It was Payen—who himself was soon to go back to France with his wife and child—and his group, who today are referred to as *les premiers Français* (the first Frenchmen), that initiated the actual permanent settlement of Bourbon. In fact, the first child to be born on the island and endow it with a lineage was Marie Mousse, the daughter of two Malagasy servants.[2]

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2.1.1 The years before slavery (1665-1690)

In 1665, the French minister Colbert founded the East India Company, which was entrusted with Madagascar and its neighboring possessions. Colbert decided to make of Bourbon a kind of infirmary for the sick from Fort-Dauphin. The project would soon include making of the island a place where ships bound for and returning from India could call and stock up on agricultural produce and fresh water. The island was to first live in the shadow of Madagascar (1665-1674), as it would later in the shadow of Mauritius (1735-1815). Bourbon, however, only really became interesting to the French East India Company as an outpost after its attempts to settle Madagascar failed. Indeed, the French of Fort-Dauphin, in the southern part of the Great Island, were massacred by the Malagasies in 1674, who thus put an end to French attempts to colonize Madagascar for almost 200 years.

During the first years (1665-1671), the East India Company did not really show any interest in Bourbon, but soon much needed agricultural produce became the main concern of the governors that the company put in charge of the island. There was indeed to be a succession of governors, some cruel, some benevolent, until the beginning of the coffee-growing years (1715-1767), which was to determine the interethnic relations on the island. In the meantime the population grew steadily.

In 1665, the French governor Regnault landed on the island with 20 Frenchmen, bringing the population to 22 Frenchmen, 10 Malagasy men and 3 Malagasy women. With the arrival of three ships in 1667, some thirty more men and women arrived, few of

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[2] Ménard & Monge (1994:5).

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whom were to survive. However, among them were the first six French women to disembark in Bourbon. Then, in 1672, 15 prisoners from outposts in India, the first Indians, were brought to the island. One year later, when Louis XIV decided to increase the peopling of Bourbon, some 16 women who had been invited to leave French soil and marry overseas[3] found themselves caught up in the Malagasy uprising and slaughter of the French in Fort-Dauphin of 1674. As many as 16 escapees from this massacre would arrive in 1676 after having first fled to India. Two years earlier, 20 survivors of the French campaign in India had arrived on the island, bringing the total population in 1674 to 128: 62 Frenchmen, 43 Malagasy, 15 Indians, and 8 mixed children[4]. Table 2.1 below gives the ethnic breakdown for the population in 1665, 1674 and 1686.

Table 2.1 The ethnic breakdown of the population of Bourbon (1665 – 1686)[5]

Year	Total	Whites (= 99% French)			Malagasies			Indians		Children (mixed)
		Men	Women	Children	Men	Women	Children	Men	Women[6]	
1665	35	22	0	0	10	3	0	0	0	0
1674	128	62				43	?		15	8
1686	271	39[7]	11	33	24	22	26	12	12	92

"Most authors point out," writes Cellier (1985a:19), who is very scrupulous about the racial breakdowns and relations in the early period of the colony, "that the relations between the Black servants and Whites were good" during the first nine years (1665-

[3] According to Guët (1888:105) these young women were orphans from a convent in Paris.
[4] Chane-Kune (1993:26, footnote [1]).
[5] From Scherer (1994:11) and Cellier (1985a:21).
[6] By Indian women are meant either Indo-Portuguese women or Indian women. According to Bénard & Monge (1994:39; 115; 176) two of the women on the *Rossignol* arriving from Surate in 1678 were of "mixed origin", and so could well have been Indo-Portuguese (or Indo-French), but the others were "well and truly Indian" and "not Tamil".
[7] This number includes two Dutchmen and one Creole woman, who appear in Table 2.2 below.

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1674); and "no text alludes to slavery on the island, while this practice already existed in Madagascar."[8] When governor La Hure was instructed by the French viceroy of India named La Haye to see to the establishment of order and work in 1671, Filliot (1974:30), explains, "some Frenchmen, unable to stand this tyranny, fled into the mountains with Blacks called Madagaches [*sic*],"[9] which "confirms" for Cellier (1985a:20) "the impression that the two groups had gotten on well during these ten years."[10] In 1674, the same La Haye established an ordinance of 25 articles, of which article 20 prohibited the French to marry Black women and Black men to marry White women. From this date on there was to be what Nicole (1996:22) calls "a parting of the population into two communities, one Black and one White" (*une bipartition de la population en deux communautés noires, et blanches* [*sic*]). One of the problems that plagued the early colony was indeed the scarcity of White women despite the fact that the settlers constantly asked for the East India Company to send more.

By 1686, the population has risen to 271 inhabitants, whose breakdowns, following Cellier (1985a:21), are given in Table 2.2 below. The large number of exogamic marriages is due to the lack of White women in the colony.

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[8] "Au cours de ces neuf années ... [l]a plupart des auteurs font remarquer qu'il y eut une bonne entente entre la domesticité noire et les blancs. ... Aucun texte ne fait allusion à l'esclavage dans l'île, cependant cette pratique existait dans la Grande Ile" [Cellier 1985a:19-20].

[9] "... des Français ne pouvant souffrir cette tyrannie ont fui dans les montagnes avec des noirs que l'on appelle Madagaches (p.30)" [Cellier 1985a:20].

[10] "Ceci confirme l'impression que les deux groupes ont fait bon ménage durant ces dix années" [Cellier 1985a:20].

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Table 2.2: The ethnic breakdown of the second generation[11]

	Men	Women	Children	Total	Percentage[12]
French: total	36	11	33	80	29.5%
10 endogamic families	10	10	33	53	
Exogamy: Dutch		1		1	
Malagasy	14			14	
Indian	12			12	
Malagasy: total	24	22	26	72	26.5
8 endogamic families	8	8	26	42	
Exogamy: French		14		14	
single	16			16	
Franco-Malagasy Children			50	50	18.4%
Indians: total	12	12		24	8.8%
Exogamy: French		12		12	
Single	12			12	
Franco-Indian Children			42	42	15.5%
Others: total	2	1		3	1.1%
Dutch	2			2	
Creole		1		1	
Totals (per column)	74	46	151	271	
Percentage of total	27.3%	17%	55.7%	100%	

The ethnic figures from the census of 1686, presented by Cellier (1985a:21) as a picture of the "first generation", very closely match those given by Chaudenson (1974:454). Pointing out the high percentages of Franco-Malagasy and Malagasy households, Cellier mentions that the two populations had been in contact in Madagascar since 1643; and he provides (Cellier 1985a:28) an interesting quote from Deschamps

[11] From Cellier (1985a:21).

[12] The percentages given are Cellier's lower estimates; his high estimates are: for all Malagasy and Franco-Malagasy: 44.9%; and for all Indian and Franco-Indians: 24.3%.

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(1961), according to whom "the Malagasy of the east coast had had dealings with the French and a good number of them spoke their language a little."[13]

"The census of 1686," writes Cellier (1985a:20), "allows one to note that interracial mixing has sharply increased among those already settled and the more recently imported population." However, he also adds (Cellier 1985a:20): "During these sixteen years [i.e. 1674-1690] attempts at rebellions have already occurred, marronage gets organized, and the repression becomes brutal."[14] The last period of peace between the French and the Malagasy servants were the years during which Father Bernardin was governor. He had been chosen as governor by the settlers, and only he managed to make the maroons come down from the mountains.[15] At this time a kind of lasting paradox began to characterize the colony: a simultaneous friendliness among different peoples who intermarried and created families (especially the French and the Malagasy) on the one hand, and, on the other, contempt for and brutal treatment of the Blacks on the part of the Whites as well as frequent violence on the part of the Malagasies. The latter insisted on breaking out of the enslavement they had been forced into not so far away from their homeland. In fact, what was to make the treatment of the slaves by their masters even worse in time was the way the East India Company would exploit the settlers during the coffee-growing era.

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[13] "H. Deschamps fait remarquer que 'les Malgaches de la côte Est avaient fréquenté les Français et nombre d'entre eux parlaient un peu leur langue' (1961, p.76)" [Cellier 1985a:28].

[14] "... le recensement de 1686... permet de constater que le métissage s'est fortement accru dans la population déjà implantée et celle qui a été importée plus récemment... . ... durant ces seize années, on assiste déjà à des tentatives de rébellions, le marronnage s'organise et la répression se fait brutale" [Cellier 1985a:20].

[15] Chane-Kune (1993:29).

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It did not take long for the *Code noir* of 1670, the French decree regulating slavery in the West Indies, to affect Bourbon. The ideas of this decree were spread about after the landing of the *Saint-Jean Baptiste* in 1689, according to Cellier (1985a:22), who writes: "The ethno-social differences would become stark. J. M. Filliot [1974:32] notes that 'the change corresponded to the real attempts at cultivating the land' in Bourbon."[16] Still, legally, as Chane-Kune (1993:26-7) points out, "[u]ntil 1690, the island did not know slavery. The Blacks could be servants (*domestiques*) but not slaves, according to article 12 of the East India Company's rulings, which proscribed slavery."[17] The first known sale of a slave in Bourbon, according to Filliot (1974:32), occurred in May 1687, when "a twelve-year-old boy named François was sold to Gaspard Lautret by the Very Reverend Father Dominique of the Conception ... the first imported slave."[18]

By 1690, the population of Bourbon had reached 350, and slavery and the slave trade had become legal.[19] However, it was not to be until 1723 that an edict regulating the relations between masters and slaves in Bourbon would be promulgated.

2.1.2 The beginnings of the colony (1690-1715)

Cellier (1985a:22) states emphatically that "the colonial period only began in 1690," and that "this whole period was a kind of preamble to the massive trade and import of Black slaves, which began between 1715 and 1720 and which would last until 1810 in its

[16] "Les différences ethno-sociales vont devenir marquantes. J. M. Filliot note que 'la mutation correspond aux vrais essais de culture' à Bourbon (p. 32)" [Cellier 1985a:22].
[17] "Jusqu'en 1690, l'île ne connaît pas l'esclavage. Les Noirs peuvent être domestiques mais pas esclaves, conformément à l'article 12 du règlement de la Compagnie des Indes qui interdisait l'esclavage" [Chane-Kune 1993:26-7].
[18] "En 1687, le 'Très Révérend Père de la Conception' vendait à Gaspard Lautret, colon de Bourbon, un esclave indien âgé de douze ans ... nommé François ... fut le premier esclave importé" [Filliot 1974:32].

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official form as well as much beyond in its interloper and illegal form (Cellier 1985a:22)."[20] It was also at this time that a number of former or "repented" pirates began to settle on the island. Chane-Kune (1993:39) writes: "Repented seafarers made up an important segment of the population of Bourbon. Their settlement on the island spread over almost a half a century."[21] At first they would stay with an inhabitant and then marry Creole women and become settlers, often adopting names reminiscent of the French nobility.

As the arrivals of slaves needed for the production of coffee increased dramatically, the proportion of Blacks to Whites began to change too. The censuses of 1704 and 1709, as given in Chaudenson (1974:458-9), are reflected in Table 2.3 below, in which the percentages other than for the Whites and Blacks are out of the total slave population, the total population being 734 for 1704, 894 for 1709, and 2,000 for 1717.

Table 2.3 The racial breakdown of the population in Bourbon and the percentages of the ethnic groups represented out of the total slave population (1704-1717)[22]

Year	Races: totals and percentages				Ethnic groups in the slave population				
	Whites	%	Blacks	%	Malagasy	Indian	Creole	African	Other
1704	423	57%	311	43%	35.5%	14.5%	33%	13%	4%
1709	507	57%	387	43%	24%	24%	40%		
1717	900	45%	1,100	55%					

[19] Chane-Kune (1993:27).

[20] "... la période coloniale n'a véritablement commencé qu'en 1690; ... Toute cette période est une sorte de préambule à la traite et à l'importation massive de noirs qui commence entre 1715 et 1720 et qui durera jusqu'en 1810 sous une forme officielle, et bien plus tard sous sa forme interlope et illégale" [Cellier 1985a:22].

[21] "Les forbans repentis forment une importante composante de la population de Bourbon. Leur installation dans l'île s'étend sur près d'un demi-siècle" [Chane-Kune 1993:39].

[22] The percentages are from Barassin (1972) quoted in Chane-Kune (1993:59, footnote [2]).

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Chaudenson (1974:464-5) draws attention to the fact that Malagasy women made up 50% of the Malagasy population in 1686, and 63% in 1709, while Cellier points out that in 1714 the Creoles were "totally or partially of Malagasy origin".[23] At this time, according to Ralaimihoatra (1969:303), there was fighting on the east coast of Madagascar among the Betsimisaraka for the privilege of trading with the Europeans, and the Dutch signed a treaty with the authorities of the slave-trading post of Antogil.

2.1.3 The era of coffee production and its great many slaves (1715-1767)

In 1715, after unsuccessful attempts at growing pepper and cloves, it was coffee that was chosen by the East India Company for mass production on the island. Of the six plants brought from Moka in Yemen and left on Bourbon in 1715, one survived. Encouraged by the existence of a similar wild species of coffee found on the island, the company launched a large scale operation, which soon made importing a very large number of slaves necessary and permanently reversed the proportion of Whites to Blacks. The economy now turned from a small-scale farming model (*société d'habitation*) to one of plantations (*société de plantation*) typical of the French Antilles islands. Granted what was to prove to be a very lucrative monopoly, the East India Company exacted a precise number of pounds of coffee beans per pair of hands on each plantation. It also lent the settlers the money to buy the coffee grains and the slaves, both of which it alone provided. Soon countless slopes up to 400m were covered in coffee-shrubs, and the coffee production soared from 250,000 lbs. in 1727 to 2,500,000 lbs. in 1744.[24] The success of the coffee era lasted from 1730 to 1767, when the company's monopoly was

[23] "Les créoles étant eux-mêmes totalement ou partiellement d'origine malgache" [Cellier 1985a:23].
[24] Scherer (1994:12) and Cellier (1985a:24).

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revoked and the island was bought back by the King of France. Due to the numerous problems arising from the production, stocking, and shipping of the coffee beans to France, and to the fact that coffee produced in the Antilles had become too competitive, coffee went on the decline and ceased to be the mainstay of the economy on the island.

During the so-called "coffee years", the population of Bourbon increased immensely. A great number of new settlers came from France, attracted by the success of the coffee plantations, and some slaves even began being brought in from as far as West Africa besides the many arrivals from the eastern coast of the African continent.[25] This increase in terms of White and Black populations is reflected in Table 2.4 below, and how the makeup of the slave population changed in Table 2.5.

Table 2.4 The total population, and White and Black population with their respective percentages out of the total population in Bourbon (1714 –1804)[26]

Year	Total Population	White Population	%	Black Population*	%
1714	1,271	733	54%	538	46%
1744	10,338	2,253	18%	10,338	82%
1758	18,361	3,762	20.5%	14,599	79.5%
1804	65,000	15,000	23.1%	50,000	76.9%

* These numbers includes the Creole slaves.

Table 2.5 The percentage of each ethnic group out of the total slave population in Bourbon (1709 – 1765)[27]

	Malagasy	Indians	Africans	Creoles
1709	24%	23%	14%	39%
1735	58%	7%	12%	23%
1765	42%	5%	15%	38%

[25] Chane-Kune (1993:58).
[26] Chane-Kune (1993:60, footnote [1]) and Cellier 1985a:24).
[27] Barassin (1972:121-2), cited in Chane-Kune (1993:59, footnote [2]).

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In the meantime, an important change had come about in 1735, when the governor of the two Mascarene islands, Mahé de Labourdonnais, moved his headquarters to the Isle de France (Mauritius). His plans were to develop the Isle de France and make of it a strategic military outpost for France's campaigns in India, an outpost which Bourbon would provide with agricultural products.

The total White population in Bourbon had been estimated at 1,716 (Cellier 1985a), a number that Mazet (1989:21) corrected to 1,873. Table 2.6 below gives the numbers for Whites, landowners, slaves as well as the ratios of freedmen and slaves to landowners for four wards (*quartiers*) of the time.

Table 2.6 The total number of Whites and landowners by wards and the ratios of freedmen and slaves to landowners in Bourbon in 1735[28]

Wards	Whites	Landowners	Ratio of Freedmen to Landowners	Slaves	Ratio of Slaves per Landowner
Saint-Paul	530	124	4.27:1	2,849	24.5:1
Saint-Denis	405	85	4.76:1	1,918	22.5:1
Sainte-Suzanne	622	140	4.44:1	1,810	12.9:1
Saint-Louis	316	81	3.90:1	1,037	13.4:1
TOTAL	1,873	430	4.35:1	7,664	17.8:1

In 1767, with the return of Bourbon to the French Crown and the dwindling of the coffee production in favor of food produce destined for Mauritius, the economy turned essentially to agriculture again, to growing rice, corn, wheat and grains. The Isle de France with its natural harbors soon became the main calling point for ships, and fewer of them stopped at Bourbon. Henceforth, the island went into a state of quasi-isolation,

[28] From Mazet (1989:21).

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though its inhabitants were allowed to do business in the Indian Ocean and as far as the Cape of Good Hope.

2.1.4 The inhabitants of southeastern and eastern Madagascar

To establish the origins of the Malagasy slaves brought to Bourbon, information about the tribes of southeastern and eastern Madagascar given by Rajemisa-Raolison (1966) is in order at this point. In the 17th century, these tribes were organized as clans [29]. The details Rajemisa-Raolison (1966) gives about them illustrates the diversity of these populations and the different periods of their arrival on the island. He lists (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966) seven tribes for the southeast and east of the island:

> 1. the Antaifasy: "a small tribe in the south-east, between the lands of the Antaimoroan to the north and the Antaisaka to the south ... likely descendants of Indians who immigrated here in the 16th century" (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:71);[30]
>
> 2. the Antanosy: "(inhabitants of the islands) a tribe of the extreme south-east of the island, whose ancestors, the Zafiramini, [were] of Arab origin ... It is among them that the French established their first settlements on the island, in particular in the bay of Sainte-Luce, in 1648 ... main town: Fort-Dauphin" (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:77);[31]

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[29] The names of two tribes were used in 19th-century Réunion to refer to the Malagasy as "MM. Hova et Makoa" (Focard 1896:182). About the former, Rajemisa-Raolison (1966:150) writes: "Hova, mot qu'on a coutume d'employer pour désigner l'ensemble des habitants des Hauts Plateaux du centre à la place du vrai mot Merina, mais qui désigne, en réalité, du moins en Imerina, la classe des simples hommes libres, par opposition aux Andriana, classe de la caste régnante, et aux Andevo, classe inférieure des esclaves. ... L'opinion commune veut que ... ils avaient fait partie d'une immigration malaise entre le Xe et le XIe siècle qui ... gagna le centre ..."; about the latter, Rajemisa-Raolison (1966:218) writes: "Makoa (dit aussi Masombika), nom dont on désigne les Africains importés comme esclaves à Madagascar au cours des siècles, soit par les Arabes, soit par les Malgaches eux-mêmes. On les connaît dans l'ouest sous le nom de Makoa et, dans l'intérieur, sous celui de Masombika (Mozambique)" [Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:150;218].

[30] Antaifasy: "petite tribu du sud-est ... entre le pays des Antaimoroan au nord et celui des Antaisaka au sud ... seraient probablement ... des descendants d'Indiens immigrés dans ces lieux au XVIe siècle" [Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:71].

[31] Antanosy: "(habitants des îles) tribu de l'extrême sud-est de l'Ile, dont les ancêtres, les Zafiramini, de souche arabe ... C'est parmi eux que les Français créèrent leur premiers établissements dans l'Ile, notamment dans la baie de Sainte-Luce, en 1648 ... ville principale: Fort-Dauphin" [Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:77].

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3. the Bara: "the name of a people of the southern interior of the island ... thought to be immigrants from Africa who were led by a certain Rabiby" (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:88);[32]

4. the Betsimisaraka: "(many who do not separate) a tribe of the east coast [since] the end of the 17th century, three sub-tribes continually involved in warfare... . It is known that after the Antanosy (Fort-Dauphin), it was among the Betsimisaraka that the French established their first settlements on the island, notably Sainte-Marie (ceded to France by Bety in 1750)" (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:102);[33]

5. the Bezanozano: "a tribe surrounded by the Betsimisaraka to the east and the Merina to the west. It is generally considered to be a product of Hova-Betsimisaraka miscegenation dating back to around 1679" (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:103);[34]

6. the Mahafaly: "the people who occupy ... the country ... in the south western part of the island. [They] were conquered by the chiefs of the Sakalava dynasty at the beginning of the 16th century" (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:210);[35] and

7. the Tanala: "(people of the forest) ... a tribe in the south-east, whose land ... is bordered by the Betsileo to the west, the Antambahoaka and Antaimoro, to the east, the Betsimisaraka and the Antaifasy to the north" (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:344).[36]

2.1.5 The origins of the Malagasy slaves brought to Bourbon before 1767

From what is known of the history of southern Madagascar in the 17th century, the tribes living in the area of Fort-Dauphin, where the French established their first settlement, were the Antanosy (or Tanosy), with the Tandroy and Mahafaly to the west and the Bara

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[32] Bara: "nom d'une peuplade intérieure du Sud de l'Ile ... seraient des immigrants africains conduits par un certain Rabiby" [Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:88].

[33] Betsimisaraka: "(beaucoup qui ne se séparent pas), tribu ... côte Est ... fin XVII[e] siècle .. trois sous-tribus qui se faisaient continuellement la guerre. ... On sait qu'après les Antanosy (Fort-Dauphin) c'est parmi les Betsimisaraka que les Français créèrent leurs premiers établissements dans l'Ile, notamment Sainte-Marie (cédée à la France par Bety en 1750)..." [Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:102].

[34] Bezanozano: "tribu entourée à l'est par les Betsimisaraka, et à l'ouest par les Merina. Elle est généralement donnée comme le produit du métissage hova-betsimisaraka qui remonte aux environs de 1679" [Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:103].

[35] Mahafaly: "... la peuplade qui occupe le pays ... dans la partie sud-ouest de l'Ile. Les Mahafaly furent depuis le XVI[e] siècle conquis par les chefs de la dynastie sakalava" [Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:210].

[36] Tanala: "(gens de la forêt) "...une tribu du Sud-Est dont l'habitat ... est limité à l'ouest par le Betsileo; à l'est par le pays des Antambahoaka et des Antaimoro; au nord par le pays des Betsimisaraka et au nord par le pays des Antaifasy" [Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:344].

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to the north. The original Malagasies who settled Bourbon with the French in 1663 were most likely Antanosy. There would naturally have been more trust in members of a tribe with whom solid contacts had been established.

According to Ralaimihoatra (1969:66), "[t]he rigors of the climate and the arid nature of the land," he writes, "forced the the Baras, the Masikoros, the Tandroy and the Mahafaly to lead a semi-nomadic life," and "herding cattle was at the basis of a lifestyle in many bush villages that imposed on the inhabitants long marches to find water, pick fruit or wild roots, and water their herds." They were "very dispersed" and "the bonds between clans and families were stronger than any allegiance to a dynastic ruler."[37] There were close ties among the families of dynastic rulers and constant warfare among these peoples, which confirms the idea that their languages had more in common than not. "During the 17th and 18th centuries, wars were especially frequent among the Mahafaly and their Sakavala and Tandroy neighbors,"[38] not to mention the Baras.[39] These wars would have created prisoners and provided the various populations with slaves. This may well be the origin of some of the laborers brought to Bourbon by the East India Company once the farms there multiplied and a need for more manpower was felt, even after the French left Fort-Dauphin in 1674.

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[37] "Les rigeurs du climat et l'aridité du pays dans le sud contraignirent les Bara, les Masikoro, les Tandroy et les Mahafaly au semi-nomadisme ... . Le pastorat fut à la base d'une vie ... pour maints villages perdus dans la brousse. Cette vie imposait aux habitants de longues marches pour chercher de l'eau, pour cueillir quelques fruits ou racines, pour abreuver les troupeaux.... [ils] étaient très dispersés. ... Les liens familiaux et claniques étaient plus solides que l'allégeance à un pouvoir dynastique" [Ralaimihoatra 1969:66].

[38] "Pendant le XVII[e] et XVIII[e] siècles, les guerres étaient partriculièrement fréquentes entre les Mahafaly et leurs voisins sakalava et tandroy" [Ralaimihoatra 1969:66].

[39] In 1649, the king of the Baras sought the Frenchman Flacourt's aid in attacking the Mahafaly king (cf. Ralaimihoatra (1969:66).

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The French also had a settlement in Sainte-Marie on the eastern coast of Madagascar, which was the area inhabited by the Betsimisaraka. According to Ralaimihoatra (1969:303), the Betsimisaraka fought amongst themselves for the right to trade with the Portuguese and Dutch in the first half of the 17th century, when the latter established trading posts on the same east coast of the Great Island.

Presumably, from 1663 to 1715, that is before the actual slave trade began bringing Malagasies from the Great Island and elsewhere, it is most likely that the Malagasies in Bourbon, whose number rose to a total of about one thousand, were from the area of Fort-Dauphin and from the Antanosy tribe. Of course, during those years arrivals from Madagascar might have included Malagasies from the areas to the west and to the north, too, which were inhabited by the Mahafaly and the Bara, respectively. It is thought that the former had been conquered by the Sakavala further to the northwest, who established an empire that more or less spanned the whole of the western lowlands of Madagascar. Since it is known that slavery was practiced in this part of Madagascar before the mid-17th century, it is quite possible that some of the domestics brought to Bourbon were originally from other tribes than the Antanosy, or even of African origin. However, the fact that they are referred to as Malagasies most probably indicates that even if they were not natives of the area surrounding Fort-Dauphin, they spoke the Malagasy dialect of this part of Madagascar, namely Antanosy. If they had been brought from further inland, they may have spoken Bara or Mahafaly, or even Sakalava. Some wives and domestics may also have come from the area of Sainte-Marie, the establishment the French had made among the Betsimisaraka. In the case where any

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domestics were from further inland, they might have been from the Bezanozano or even the Merina tribes. The former, however, were part Bestimisaraka according to (Rajemisa-Raolison 1966:102).

While few slaves came from the eastern coast of Madagascar before 1715,[40] by the middle of the 18th century, it was essentially from the trading posts of Antogil, Foulepointe, and Tamatave, on that coast, that East India Company brought in slaves. This area was inhabited by the Betsimisaraka, while the Merina lived further inland in the more elevated areas. According to Filliot (1974:158), the so-called "Hova" [i.e. Merina] slaves "must have been brought down periodically from the highlands to the east coast [of Madagascar] for decades" before the "first mention of them in French texts dating back to 1775." He adds (Filliot 1974:158) that "after 1790 ... numerous sources ... all show the primacy of the Merina element ...".[41]

2.2 Bourbon under the French Monarchy, Revolution, and Empire (1767-1815)

From 1676, the year that the island came under the direct authority of the French King to the end of British rule (1810-1815), the island lived through a succession of different regimes and their many reforms. It also saw its name change back and forth a few times. In 1793, under the Revolution, Bourbon was given the name *Réunion*, a name which it would retain until it was changed to *Bonaparte* under the Empire, only to be changed back to Bourbon again with the Restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in 1814. It was to

[40] Cf. the list Chaudenson (1974:460) gives of a boatload of slaves dating from 1670, in which 4 out of 19 slaves came from the east coast of Madagascar.

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be called *Bourbon* until the Revolution of 1848, which changed the island's name to *Réunion* again. The British took the island—and its sister island Mauritius—away from the French, but the years of their rule had little or no effect on the population because the British did not have much interest in Bourbon, which remained administratively annexed to Mauritius.[42] It is, however, at this time that the only successful slave revolt occurred in Saint-Leu (1811). It was brutally repressed with 30 hangings and sentences of life imprisonment.[43]

2.2.1 Holding on to slavery (1767-1803)

Under royal rule, the island was administered from Port-Louis on the Isle de France, although it did have its own governor. The main concern of the ruling members of the community at this time, however, was the hunting down of the many fugitive slaves who had disappeared into the highlands (*les Hauts*) of the island, where they were hard to find. The places from which the slaves were brought to Bourbon now increasingly included the East African coast. While the proportion of Malagasy slaves had previously been superior to that of African slaves, by 1808, according to Scherer (1994:21), the proportion was 41.5% of African slaves to 26.4% of Malagasy slaves.

In Bourbon, "the news of the French Revolution was welcomed with enthusiasm by the colonists," writes Scherer (1994:33). "Indeed," he explains, "they hoped for measures that would put an end to: 1. the abuses carried over from the monopoly of the

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[41] "C'est en 1775 environ que les textes français signalent que les esclaves 'oves' sont amenés à la côte est. Ce traffic devait exister épisodiquement depuis plusieurs décennies" "...à partir de 1790 ... les sources ... nombreuses ... montrent toutes la primauté de l'élément mérina" [Filliot 1974:158].

[42] Scherer (1994:44).

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East India Company, abuses that had often been condoned by the king's agents; 2. the latter's incoherent economic policies; and 3. their dependence on the Isle de France."[44] However, when the *Convention* in Paris outlawed the slave trade and abolished slavery, there was uproar among the colonists. They simply refused to put these changes into practice, approved of the way the emissaries from Paris were thrown out of the Isle de France after three days, and felt relieved to see the Empire restore slavery in 1802. General Captain Decaen, who was put in charge of both Mascarene Islands by Bonaparte, actually never visited the island (which was now called Bonaparte), but little of what he put in place was changed under the British. Only some of the Frenchmen chose to return to France rather than pledge allegiance to an alien crown.

2.2.2 The end of the era of coffee production

Of greater consequence at this time than the very few actual changes brought about under the French Revolution, or even under the Empire (when Bourbon was once again became a dependency of the Isle de France), were to be the heavily destructive cyclones of 1806 and 1807, for they were followed by long months of drought. Most of the topsoil was washed away to the point that the sea itself turned yellow. Famine set in as well as starvation and death, even before the island was taken over by the British. It is then, after most of the coffee plantations had been wiped out, that the settlers decided to experiment with sugar cane. Until then, the only profitable production of sugar cane had been reserved for the Isle de France, although the crop had first been developed in Bourbon to

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[43] Chane-Kune (1993:103-4).

[44] "L'annonce de la Révolution française fut accueillie avec enthousiasme par les colons. Ils espéraient en effet obtenir que fut [*sic*] mis fin aux abus hérités du monopole de la Compagnie des Indes et souvent

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meet local needs. While coffee continued to be grown on the island, the widespread destruction wrought by the cyclones put a final end to large-scale production, which had been pursued to the near exclusion of all produce, except perhaps in the southernmost parts of the island.

Two phenomena must be mentioned, however, before turning to the beginnings of the sugar plantation years: 1. the gradual impoverishment of an increasing number of small White landowners; and 2. the increasing number of freedmen. According to French laws of succession, known as the *coutume de Paris*, the land was divided into as many lots as there were heirs, a system that soon brought about a situation where an ever increasing number of Whites owned too little land for them to even feed themselves. (The land conceded by the East India Company had been measured from sea level to the top of the mountains, which explains why as concessions were divided among heirs, they were broken into as many tiny strips located above and below each other. The East India Company had refused to change this practice out of a sense of equity, the low-lying lands being much more fertile than the higher-lying ones.)[45] However, a great number of small landowners were inheriting scraps of land that they could no longer survive on and had to sell. The authorities become aware of this severe problem soon after 1732,[46] which was when the poor Whites, or *Petit-Créoles*, as they were then called, started leaving the lower-lying areas of the island for the higher-lying areas, the highlands called *les Hauts*.

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maintenus par les agents du roi, à la politique économique incohérente de ceux-ci ainsi qu'à la dépendance de Bourbon par rapport à l'île de France" [Scherer 1994:33].

[45] Bourquin (1995:99).

[46] Chane-Kune (1993:106); and Bourquin (1995:99).

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This was where, in previous years, Black maroons had fled to live by hunting, fishing and picking fruit, when they had not been poaching and stealing from the plantations.

The "pauperization", or "proletarization", of the Whites, as the first phenomenon is often called, forced them into the hills, left them to their own devices, and cast them out of the colonial organization of society. Their plight as well as the history of how they have been seen is dealt with below in §2.5. Their descendents today are called *Petits Blancs des Hauts.* By this time, *les Hauts* referred to the areas in the forests above the cultivated land in the steep irregular slopes above the 400m line. In time, for the Whites it would come to include the major *cirques* of *Mafate, Cilaos,* and *Salazie*, the crater-like formations left by volcanic activity in the northern and central part of the island, as well as the highlands called *Plaine des Cafres* and *Plaine des Palmistes* with their plateau-like areas in the southern part of the island, west and northwest of the volcano. These areas, especially the former, were covered in thick primeval forests and had a very cold climate compared with that of the tropical coastal areas.

The other phenomenon that occurred at this time was the increase in the number of freedmen, who were either given a piece of land to cultivate (often along with a few slaves) or had some skill which could provide them with a livelihood. The lifting of the ban on mixed marriages under the Revolution contributed to this increase, although the ban was reinstated by Decaen under the Empire. Table 2.7 below indicates the number of freedmen and the percentage they represented with regard to the total population from 1740 to 1830. This second phenomenon would also play an important role in the

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development of the speech of the *Petits Blancs* due to the fact that the poor Whites shared with them, as well as with maroons and later ex-slaves, both a lifestyle and areas they settled in (cf. §6.1.2.4).

Table 2.7 The number of freedmen and their percentage out of the total population of Bourbon (1740-1830)[47]

Year	Number of Freedmen	% out of total population	Year	Number of Freedmen	% out of total population
1740	40		**1815**	4,500	6.6%
1779	465	1.6%	**1826**	6,000	7%
1788	919	2%	**1830**	7,000	7%
1804	2,700	4%			

2.3 The rise and fall of the sugar plantations (1815-1946)

At the Treaty of Vienna, the British and their allies imposed the abolition of the slave trade on the French. Though an ordinance of 1817 was passed to abolish the trade, according to Chane-Kune (1993:131), "it does not seem to have been respected very much, especially during the fifteen years or so following its promulgation."[48] A decade earlier France had lost its former colony of Saint-Domingue (1804), and it now turned to Bourbon to meet its rising need for sugar. Until 1815, what sugar cane production there was on Bourbon had been limited to certain parts of the island,[49] but well-traveled and well-read colonists soon realized that a new avenue to wealth was about to open up to them. As a result, little by little over the next twenty years, both the land that had once produced coffee and large areas that were cleared began to be given over to the

[47] Chane-Kune (1993:109, footnote [1]).
[48] "... l'abolition de la traite des esclaves ne semble pas avoir été très respectée, surtout pendant les quelques années qui suivirent la promulgation" [Chane-Kune 1993:131].
[49] Chane-Kune (1993:123).

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production of the new crop. The most famous plantation owner of the times was Madame Desbassyns, whose legendary cruelty to her slaves has passed into the island's folklore.

2.3.1 The experiments with sugar (1815-1830)

In a first phase of sugar production (1815-1830), large landowners as well as smaller landowners followed the rising trend. Sugar production was not yet an essential element in the island's economy, but the number of sugar mills on the island went from 10 in 1817 to 189 in 1830.[50]

During this time there was an important influx of slaves, though some proprietors, realizing that slavery was no longer a safe or dependable source of labor, already began to hire indentured servants. The slave population peaked around 1830 and diminished thereafter mainly due to the rising awareness among the plantation owners that the slave trade, outlawed by the Treaty of Vienna in 1815 and by stricter French legislation in 1831, was making slaves harder and harder to come by. While the number of slaves imported illegally began to diminish in 1830, according to Chane-Kune (1993:132), a total of 45,000 of them were purchased from Madagascar and the coast of East Africa. Table 2.8 below indicates the increase in the slave population from 1815 to 1848.[51]

Table 2.8 The slave population in Bourbon from 1815 to 1848

1815	49,400	**1830**	70,927	**1840**	66,100
1820	51,200	**1833**	70,458	**1845**	63,100
1826	60,698	**1836**	69,029	**1848**	62,100

[50] Chane-Kune (1993:124).

[51] Chane-Kune (1993:132, footnote 11).

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2.3.2 The sugar plantation years until the abolition of slavery (1830-1848)

The large majority of indentured servants that came to Réunion in the 19th century were from India, and while a decision of 1829 established a number of provisions aimed at protecting them, many of the colonists do not abide by them. They made few, if any, distinctions in their treatment of slaves, indentured servants, and even freedmen. As a result, some Indians fled the plantations and began to lead an errant life. Many of these servants who came to Bourbon between 1829 and 1832 left after two years, and in 1839 the government in Pondichéry stopped all influx of Indians to the Mascarenes. It is in 1843 that a thousand Chinese were allowed to come in, though the results were much the same.[52] It was finally with the abolition of slavery on December 20, 1848—a date greatly celebrated every year in Réunion to this day, that no slave was ever brought onto the shores of the island again.

Even though the abolition of the slave trade actually dated as far back as 1817, in Bourbon most of the measures passed to humanize the lot of the population working on the plantations remained unheeded. Even when the abolition decree of 1848 freed 62,000 slaves in one day, changes were slow, tempered as they were by the hopes that the freed men and women would continue to work on the plantations.

By 1848, the population has increased significantly, as had also the number of freed men and women. Because of a stark increase in births, on average, the population was also progressively younger. Striking is the number of Whites, and later of Whites and

[52] Chane-Kune (1993:133-4).

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freedmen, under the age of 14. Table 2.9 below shows the population figures from 1778 to 1848, as well as the percentage of young people in 1778 and 1831 (Scherer 1994:54).

Table 2.9 The total population and the percentage of Whites and freedmen under 14 years of age in Bourbon from 1778 to 1848

	Total Population	Percentage under 14 years of age
1778	36,000	19.8% of Whites
1804	65,000	
1825	82,000	
1830	101,000	35% of Whites and freedmen
1848	110,000	

How the population was changing can be measured by the increase in the slave population and the ratio of slaves and freedmen per White man (Scherer 1994:54-5), and also by the increase of the free population in this period (Scherer 1994:57), all of which are given in Table 2.10 below.

Table 2.10 The total population, Whites and freedmen, population of freedmen, and slave population, and ratios of slaves to freedmen in Bourbon (1778-1848)

	Total Population	Whites and Freedmen[53]	Population of Freedmen	Slave Population	Ratio of Slaves to Freedmen
1778	36,000	7,000	950 [1788]	29,000	41 for every 10
1804	65,000	15,000	2,700	50,000	34 for every 10
1825	82,000	13,000	4,500 [1815]	59,000	25 for every 10
1830	101,000	30,000	6,000 [1826]	71,000	
1848	110,000	50,000	8,000	60,000	13 for every 10

[53] These are figures calculated on the basis of the data given in the other columns.

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Scherer (1994:57) notes that the numbers for the freed population by 1848 are the result of a policy to free slaves under the February Revolution of 1830. A law passed in 1833 had granted freedmen the right to exercise their political rights, thereby creating an "intermediate social class" between the slaves and the Whites (Scherer 1994:56).

2.3.3 The sugar plantation years after the abolition of slavery (1848-1946)

Once the system of indentured servants was generally adopted to replace the slaves after abolition, measures were also taken to encourage slaves to stay on as contract laborers on their former masters' plantations. However, these were not very successful for those who did stay on were the ones whose masters had only had few slaves. Economically the transition was smooth, but after 1850 three problems plagued the sugar economy, which had eliminated other crops just as the coffee economy once had. There were fluctuations on the sugar market in France, due to a developing local sugar-beet production and foreign competition (notably from Cuba). The British suspended the entry of Indian indentured servants from 1829 to 1860 because of the ill treatment suffered by them at the hands of the proprietors. And the French government banned the recruiting of African contract laborers beginning in 1859. All this, however, did little to stop the influx of contract laborers. The number of them that came from French counters in India between 1848 and 1860 is 38,000; and by 1859 the number of African and Indian servants was greater even than that of the slaves freed in 1848 (64,525 to 62,151).[54] While there had been about 4,600 Indians in Réunion in 1848 (mostly farmers and artisans), there were an estimated 40,000 in the colony by 1882. It should not be thought, however, that only

[54] Chane-Kune (1993:168-9, footnote 11) gives the following numbers for Indian immigration: 1861: 6,994; 1862: 4,943; 1863: 2,887; 1864: 4,067; 1865: 801.

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Indians and Africans were contracted. The number of laborers from Madagascar was important too.

In the meantime, due to the success of the sugar cane production, the immense areas of land given over to it contributed to the impoverishment of the small White proprietors, many of whom had to sell their land to the plantation owners to survive. Also, as producers on a smaller scale depended on the equipment of the large producers, many small proprietors soon found themselves in debt and facing the only way out for them, which lay in selling off their very land. As the century drew on, this ever more common solution to debt led to a concentration of land in the hands of a dwindling number of proprietors. In turn, this development added to the large number of *Petits Créoles* left without any land. First only the northern half of the island was turned over to large-scale sugar cane production, while the south continued its agricultural tradition. While until 1848, it still could not be said that the island was mainly given over to the production of sugar, this would become increasingly the case after 1850.

All through the 19th century, but particularly in its second half, the authorities were increasingly alarmed about the fate of the higher-lying areas of the island (*les Hauts*). The *Petits Créoles*, or poor Whites, as well as, later, the freed slaves, had been clearing these highlands recklessly and uncontrollably for so long that deforestation had become a real problem by mid-century. However, the government was also increasingly concerned about the lifestyle of this population, which did not conform to the norms of Réunionnais society (cf. 3.5). It had begun to allot concessions in the highlands before

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1850: in 1830 for the *Cirque de Salazie*, in 1840 for the *Cirque de Cilaos*, and in 1852 for the *Plaine des Palmistes* and the *Plaine des Cafres* (which were more specifically destined to the freed slaves).

By 1870, when open immigration was established, a new method of putting land into the hands of the poor population appeared, namely share-cropping leases (*colonage partiaire*). It was put into practice by big proprietors because it afforded them three advantages: 1. it limited their risks; 2. it offered them laborers; and 3. it insured them income. The system also offered advantages to those without land: "the freed slaves had the feeling they were working freedmen, while the *Petits Blancs* and the new dispossessed—recent victims of the concentration of lands—had the impression that they were landowners."[55]

2.4 Réunion as a French overseas department (1946 to the present)

"In 1945," writes Scherer (1994:89), "in the aftermath of World War II, Réunion was ruined economically, physically, morally, and politically."[56] The population of Réunion had grown to 221,000, and this population was hungry. A year later, the National Assembly voted to make it a French *département*, which it became in 1947. France has since then furthered economic development on the island and lavished on it some of its best institutions, such as, in recent years, a state of the art hospital and a large modern

[55] "... les affranchis ont le sentiment de travailler librement, les Petits-Blancs et les nouveaux dépossédés—récentes victimes de la concentration des terres—ont l'illusion d'être propriétaires" [Chane-Kune 1993:183].

[56] "En 1945, au lendemain de la seconde guerre mondiale, la Réunion était ruinée économiquement, physiquement, moralement et politiquement" [Scherer 1994:89].

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university in Saint-Denis. In some respects, it is now advanced to such a degree that it is attracting immigrants from different parts of the Indian Ocean.

In Réunion today, there are a number of different ethnic groups. There are the French men and women who come from the ***Métropole*** (or Metropolitan France) to work in the administration or in another official capacity, who are called ***Métropolitains*** or *zorey*. Most of them remain for a few years and go back to France again, very few of them settling on the island. There are the descendants of the indentured workers, referred to as **Malabars** or *malbar*. There are the Chinese or *sinwa*, some of whom marry into other groups. There are a number of Muslim immigrants, mainly from the Indian state of Gujarat, who are referred to by the misnomer ***Zarabes*** or *zarab*. There are also the descendants of the Black slaves, who are designated by the term ***Cafres*** or *kaf*. Today they use this term, which was long considered to be derogatory, to refer to themselves with pride; and it is also more commonly used by others to refer to them. The ethnic makeup that Carayol & Chaudenson (1973:3) give for the population in the early 1970s is given in Table 2.11 below.

Table 2.11 Subgroups of the population of Réunion (1973)

Type of Population	Subgroup	Totals
European	Metropolitans	10,000
	Creoles	100,000
Asian	Chinese	15,000
	Zarabes	6,000
	Malabars	100,000
African	Afro-Malagasies	200,000
	Non-mixed	30,000
Total Population		461,000

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Today the population is over 720,000 inhabitants. A characteristic phenomenon which dates back to the late 1990s has been a greater mixing of the different ethnic groups in areas where the population was previously limited to a predominant group. One such dramatic example being the penetration of the Malabars into the higher-lying areas.

2.5 The *Petits Blancs des Hauts*

In much of today's literature about Réunion (literary, academic, and other), the term *Petits Blancs*, or *Petit Blancs des Hauts*, is used to refer to a segment of its population. It corresponds roughly to "poor Whites" in English, much in the sense this term is used of people in the American South or in various Caribbean settings. However, this term has long remained misleading about the origins of the people it designates. As a very careful and revealing sociohistorical study done by Grondin (1998) clearly shows, there was a "rewriting" of their history in the 19th century that involved a reinterpretation of the origins and heritage of this particular segment of the island's population.

There are various terms in the vernacular lects of Réunion (VLRF) to refer to the disinherited or landless descendants of the White families that once had owned the land, some of them from the earliest times and some of them not. Among these terms are *pié jon* 'yellow feet', *yab*,[57] *blã niton* and *kréol bichik*, but not *"pəti blã"* or *"pəti blã dé ho"*. In the 18th century, these Whites, who had inherited a lot of land too small for them to live off but found they had to turn their land over to the sugar plantation owners to pay off debts in order to survive, began to be called *Petits Créoles*. For the most part, as early as 1735, they had left for the lands situated above the higher limits of the cultivated areas,

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whether *habitations* first, or later *plantations*, to live from hunting, fishing, picking fruit, as well as poaching and stealing on the land of the colonists, as the maroons, whose territory they now shared, had before them.

The authorities began being plagued with this problem from about 1780 on,[58] and until the end of the 19th century attempts would be made to solve it. Scherer (1994:33) mentions that when some of these poor White families were alloted land to settle on, in 1785, they were given the last available lots of land along the coast in the southern part of the island. From then on, the poor Whites went on to swell the ranks of the poor, a social phenomenon often called the impoverishment (*paupérisation*) or proletarization (*prolétarisation*) of the White population. It affected so many small proprietors that by 1836 the poor made up two thirds of the White population.[59]

At first, this population referred to as *Petits Créoles* adopted a life quite similar to that of the maroons,[60] but little by little they began a devastation through haphazard clearing of forestland, creating a runaway deforestation that the authorities could do little to stop. The affected areas were the slopes above the plantations (i.e. above the 400m to 600m line), but particularly the so-called "interior" of the island: the *cirques* of Salazie, Cilaos, and Mafate in the northern half of the island, on the one hand, and on the other the highland and plateau areas or *plaines*, namely the *Plaine des Palmistes* and *Plaine des Cafres* to the their southeast, just west and northwest of the active volcano. The *cirques*,

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[57] According to Bénard (1999:111), a *yab* is a white Creole, whose origins are mixed or not.
[58] Scherer (1994:33).
[59] Scherer (1994:33).
[60] Scherer (1994:32).

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Scherer (1994:63) points out, were no longer controlled as they had been in the 18th century by large organized bands of escaped slaves. The lot of these poor Whites before 1848 is explained by Chane-Kune (1993:107) in these terms: "On the island, few opportunities were open to them. Employment for a salary did not exist on the plantations, and the practice of slavery made it impossible to point the Whites dispossessed of their land towards any kind of manual labor, for it was not conceivable in the eyes of society that a White man should have shared the condition of a Black man."[61] The poor White population was literally thrown out of a society that had as little room for it as it did for maroons.

When the problem started to become acute, emigration was first thought of as a solution. Decaen, Bonaparte's emissary to the Mascarenes, even thought of using these men, known for their agility and fitness, as soldiers in France's armies. A succession of ideas and projects—most of which never materialized—were considered, especially between 1815 and 1835, though some even at a later date. Of particular importance with respect to the population called *Petits Créoles* was the plan to colonize the areas they lived in with new settlers from France, a project that was, however, totally abandoned after 1848, once the island suddenly had to accommodate 62,000 freed slaves with the advent of abolition. The problem was made worse by the fact that the *Petits Créoles*, who were quite isolated from civilized society in the highlands, were considered by the authorities to be leading a quite undisciplined and immoral life. They were usually

[61] "Dans l'île, peu de solutions s'offrent à eux. Le travail salarié n'existe pas sur les plantations et la pratique de l'esclavage rend impossible l'orientation des Blancs dépourvu de terres vers une quelconque activité manuelle, car il est difficilement concevable pour l'ensemble de la société qu'un Blanc partage la condition d'un esclave" [Chane Kune:1993:107].

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accused of having children outside of the bond of marriage. It was during this time (1815-1848) that the new term *Petit Blanc* gradually came into use—a sign that a different view of this segment of the population was beginning to be adopted. However, in order to understand this change and why their history was rewritten, the picture colonial society had of the Whites living in the higher reaches of the island has to be considered. It is a picture that abounds in the writings of travelers and scientists who visited Bourbon, but one also current in local newspapers, administrative reports, and projects of the local authorities that Bourquin (1994) has documented.

The image of what Bourquin (1994) calls the "social category" of the *Petits Créoles* that is prevalent in the writings of the 19th century is highly contradictory. On the one hand, according to Bourquin (1994:100), they are portrayed as "naturally beautiful" (*naturellement beaux*) in the romantic vein of the "noble savage", which takes important literary roots in Bernardin de Saint Pierre's very widely read and popular novel *Paul et Virginie* of 1789 about two lovers on the Isle de France. On the other hand, they are considered to be "bestially natural" (*bestialement naturels*).

An anonymous source of 1785[62] calls them "suspicious to an outrageous degree and envious in every respect" and notes that the Creole "will not work because he is lazy and thinks that it is humiliating to work, but he will break into your property and into your chicken coop to rob you," and that the Creoles "treat their slaves less well than their

[62] A. N. C3/20. Mémoire anonyme de l'île de Bourbon de 1875 (Quoted in Bourquin 1994:111).

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horses."[63] An early visitor to Bourbon, Auguste Billiard (1990:229-230) describes meeting such a *Petit Créole* living with his slave at the edge of the primeval forests around 1820. He comments that "the *Créoles des 'Hauts'* have practically no contact with the inhabitants of the '*Bas*' [low-lying coastal areas]: some, who descend from the earliest inhabitants of the colony, are of pure European stock ... Most of them have hues of African color because they belong to or ally themselves with families of freedmen. ... They [the *Créoles des Hauts*] have a high regard for themselves and do not esteem that one could have any right to order them about"[64] (quoted in Bourquin 1994:104-5).

A later reporter (Montforrand 1869, quoted in Bourquin 1994:112), who mentions that these Creoles are called *petits blancs, petits créoles* or *créoles bichiques* (Bourquin 1994:111), has this comment about them: "All of them call themselves White and have a deep contempt for the Black race; there seems, however, not to be much of a basis for their claim: it is more likely that their origins are not completely pure and that they belong to the large family of 'mulattoes'; however, what has occurred with these *'petits-créoles'* is what has occurred with all the fruits of ancient mixes; the race has returned to the primitive type... however, it is unmistakable for someone who has lived in the

[63] "Méfiant, soupçonneux d'une manière outrageante, et envieux de tout ... [i]l ne travaillera pas parce qu'il est paresseux et qu'il croit qu'il est humiliant de travailler, mais il enfoncera votre parc, votre poulailler et vous volera. ... Ils traitent leurs noirs moins bien que leurs chevaux ..." [Bourquin 1994:110].

[64] "Les créoles des 'Hauts' n'ont presque pas de relations avec les habitants des 'Bas': quelques uns, descendants des premiers habitants de la colonie, sont de race européenne pure ... La plupart ont des nuances de couleur africaine, parce qu'ils appartiennent ou s'allient à des familles d'affranchis" [Bourquin 1994:104]. "... ils sont en grande estime d'eux-mêmes, et ne pensent pas qu'on puisse avoir le droit de les commander" [Bourquin 1994:105].

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colonies. ... a regular form of work is unbearable to them ... to work the land is for him [i.e. the *petit-créole*] a symbol of slavery."[65]

Clearly, these reports have to be understood in the light of the views of their time. However, Bourquin (1994:114) points out that "through endogamic marriages, an ethnic group gradually developed; it gradually acclimated and adapted to a specific type of life-style." "Rare" (even unique to this island) is what he describes this phenomenon to be which "allows poor Whites to be studied over a period or time and as a social category."[66] He further comments: "It is because they were able to seek refuge in the high-lying areas of the island that the *Petits-Blancs* have survived in this fashion. Their isolation afforded them the chance to avoid being assimilated. Isolation, but also a will to retrieve 'their initial purity'. They have tried, through the centuries—after an initial racial mixing that is beyond any doubt—to remain as white as possible (despite the fact that some *Petits-Blancs* from *Salazie* or the *Plaine des Cafres* are practically as black as really black!)"[67]

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[65] "Tous se disent blancs et tiennent en profond mépris la race noire: leur prétention paraît cependant peu fondée: il est plus probable que leur origine n'est pas complètement pure et qu'ils appartiennent à la grande famille de 'mulâtres'; seulement, il s'est produit chez ces 'petits-créoles' ce qui arrive pour tous les fruits de mélanges anciens; la race est retournée au type primitif. ... Pourtant on ne s'y trompe guère lorsqu'on a vécu dans les colonies ... un travail régulier leur est insupportable; ... la culture de la terre est pour lui un symbole d'esclavage" [Bourquin 1994:112].

[66] "... par le biais de mariages endogames, un groupe ethnique s'est peu à peu développé; il s'est peu à peu acclimaté, adapté à un mode de vie spécifique. ... Nulle part dans le monde il n'existe quelque exemple de blancs pauvres qui puissent être appréhendés dans la durée, et en tant que catégorie sociale" [Bourquin 1994:114].

[67] "C'est parce qu'ils ont pu se réfugier dans les Hauts de l'île, que les Petits-Blancs ont pu ainsi survivre. Leur isolement leur a permis d'éviter d'être assimilés. Isolement, mais aussi volonté de retrouver 'leur pureté originelle'. Ils ont essayé, tout à longueur des siècles—après un métissage initial incontestable—de demeurer le plus blanc possible (bien que certains Petits-Blancs de Salazie ou de la Plaine des Cafres sont presque noirs 'comme ça même!')" [Bourquin 1994:114].

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Another study of the *Petits Créoles* done by Grondin (1998) makes clear both why the term *Petit Créole* was gradually changed to *Petit Blanc (des Hauts)* and why their history was rewritten. What she establishes very convincingly is that: 1. the fall into disuse of the term *Petit Créole* and its gradual replacement by the term *Petit Blanc* corresponds, particularly after 1848, to a need by a society which has undergone the "social earthquake" of the abolition of slavery to "rearrange the taxonomy by which it classifies its individuals";[68] 2. it was the peopling of the high-lying areas (*territorialisation*) which contributed to the coining of the term or "ethnotype" *Petit Blanc des Hauts* (Grondin 1998:72); and 3. the coincidence of this peopling of the *Hauts* and a new image given the poor Whites contributed to obliterating the early interracial relations of which they are the product (Grondin 1998:72). Grondin shows that the myth of the "original French farmers" living in the highlands of Réunion was used to attract new French settlers to these regions in order to bring decency and civilization into a hinterland much given in its past to "decadent" forms of life. The myth depends entirely on the carving of a "White space" in the higher reaches of the island with its cold climate and geographical features that much resemble those of France and Switzerland, as the naturalists who visited the area had already pointed out by then.

The fact is that there is no opposition in Réunion between *Petit Blanc des Hauts* and a hypothetical term *"Petit Blanc des Bas"*. Such an antithetical term simply doesn't exist. There is, however, an opposition *moun dé ho* (people of the highlands) and *moun dé ba* (people of the lowlands or the coast, where the towns and plantations are). "Now

[68] [Referring to the abolition of slavery:] "... événement qui a nécessité un raménagement de la taxonomie par laquelle les individus sont classés par une société" [Grondin 1998:8].

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lexically," writes Grondin (1998:6), "*créole* [Creole] and *blanc* [White] are, of course, not equivalent, since in Réunion the term *créole* [Creole] is used to refer to any native of the island, whether White or Black.[69] If *blanc* means absence of racial mix (*métissage*), welded to the adjective *gros* [fat] or *grand* [big], it refers to a socio-economic category: namely those that wield the economic and/or political power: the *grand blanc* is a descendant of the *grandes familles* [old families] of Réunion, while *gros blanc* designates a wealthy individual."[70] The question is, as Grondin further points out, whether *petit blanc* is to be understood in contrast to *gros* [*blanc*] or *grand* [*blanc*]? "Does it refer to a socio-economic condition or to a color, and so to a lineage of the *grandes familles* [old families]?"[71] In addition, "the definition of the high-lying areas (*Hauts*) of the island as a 'White space' ... also raises problems, for the colonizing of the interior of the island, the *Hauts* ... was not entirely the handiwork of the White population."[72]

The answer to these questions can be found in the efforts made during the 19th century to reinstate the White population living in the upper reaches, the *plaines* and the *cirques* of the island. The attempt consisted in negating—or brushing over, the mixing of the races, which historically was undeniable, and in transforming this White population into the direct descendants of the early, noble settlers of Bourbon. Grondin (1998:69-70)

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[69] Chaudenson 1992:309 (note 11 in Grondin 1998:6).

[70] "Or, du point de vue lexical, 'créole' et 'blanc' ne sont bien sûr pas équivalents, l'emploi du terme 'créole' servant à la Réunion à désigner tout natif, qu'il soit blanc ou noir[11]. Si 'blanc' signifie l'absence de métissage, associé à l'adjectif 'gros' ou 'grand', il renvoie à une catégorie socio-économique: celle des détenteurs des pouvoirs économique et/ou politique; le 'grand blanc' est un descendant des 'grandes familles' de La Réunion, le 'gros blanc' désignant un individu riche[12]" [Note 11 refers to Chaudenson 1992:309; Note 12 refers to Beniamino 1996:303] [Grondin 1998:6].

[71] "'Petit Blanc' s'oppose-t-il à 'gros' ou 'grand'? Renvoie-t-il à une condition socio-économique ou à une couleur, donc à une filiation avec les 'grandes familles' de La Réunion?" [Grondin 1998:6].

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notes that, according to historians, the actual number of noble families that arrived on the island between 1770 and 1779 was around 30.[73] The attempt to pass off the *Petits Créoles* as nobles selects certain traits relevant only to a very small number of individuals and attributes them to a much larger group of individuals. Further, the attempt very cleverly transforms the qualities of the rough and sturdy inhabitants into the characteristics of the French peasant folk. "In this fashion," comments Grondin (1998:70), "is put into place the image of the conservative peasant with his old French country values, and by extension the portrait of French civilization, while the second variant is that of the younger-born sons of ruined families who transported the moral values of the French aristocracy [to the island]."[74] As has been shown, this is hardly the picture given by travelers such as Billiard among others.

The attempt to rewrite the facts further calls science to the rescue, as Grondin (1998:65) illustrates with the writings of the historian Georges Azéma. Azéma does not deny the interracial past of the *Petits Blancs*, but his conclusion is important for Grondin (1998:68): "What needs to be culled from his [Azéma's] demonstration is that after two hundred years, the White Creoles have recovered their 'whiteness', thanks to a policy of whitening which has wiped away the original blemish, and that the post-abolitionist society of Réunion reconstructed itself on the basis of this ethnic criterion. In his exposé, no hierarchy among the Whites is apparent; they all have a European origin in

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[72] "En outre, la définition des Hauts de l'île en tant qu''espace blanc' ... n'est pas sans poser de problèmes car la colonisation de l'intérieur de l'île, les Hauts, ... ne s'est pas faite essentiellement grâce à la population blanche" [Grondin 1998:6].

[73] "Philippe Haudrère fixe à 33 le nombre de ces familles nobles en 1776. Le maximum d'immigrants se situant entre 1770-1779, soit 27 selon Valérie Garsany" [Grondin 1998:69-70].

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common."[75] As Grondin explains, "the blotting out of the racial mixing is justified by the spatial segregation resulting from the appropriation of the high-lying areas which become the territory of the *Petits Blancs*."[76]

How ready the times were for this change can be seen in an interesting anecdote from Victor Charlier, a visitor to the island around 1835, namely "the ironic reference inherent in the use by Mauritians of the term *'blanc de Bourbon'* to qualify a man whose whiteness is questionable" (*le détournement ironique fait par les Mauriciens qualifiant un blanc douteux de "blanc de Bourbon".*)[77] What is crucial in the newly coined expression *Petits Blancs des Hauts*, however, is the association of color and place. Once the concern of the authorities of Réunion for the destiny both of the Whites left without land and the hinterland of the island are understood, it soon becomes clear why a new image was created for the *Petits Créoles*.

While there are many official reports in the 19th century on the inappropriate lifestyle of the many people who had fallen back on the highlands to live a life of freedom from the constraints of government and society, there are also some reports that reflect the serious character of some of the poor Whites. Such a report which dates from 1854 (quoted in Grondin 1998:89) states about the *Petits Créoles:*

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[74] "Se met ainsi en place l'image d'un paysan conservateur des vieilles valeurs campagnardes françaises et par extension de la civilisation française. La deuxième variante est celle des cadets de familles ruinées qui ont transporté avec eux les valeurs morales de l'aristocratie française" [Grondin 1998:70].

[75] "Ce qu'il faut retenir de sa démonstration c'est que, au bout de deux cents ans, les Blancs créoles ont retrouvé leur 'blancheur', grâce à une politique de blanchiement qui a effacé la tache originelle et que la société réunionnaise post abolitionniste s'est recomposée à partir de ce critère ethnique. Dans son exposé, on ne perçoit pas de hiérarchie entre Blancs; ils ont en commun la souche européenne" [Grondin 1998:68].

[76] "L'occultation du métissage est justifiée par la ségrégation spatiale résultant de l'appropriation des Hauts qui deviennent le territoire des 'Petits-Blancs'" [Grondin 1998:71].

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> Some attract a positive interest on behalf of the government by their habits of orderliness and labor and by a lengthy time of stay. They cultivate with care the lands that they have cleared and that some of them have planted with coffee groves—now become quite profitable. ... Others, nomadic speculators, could not think of justifying their establishment on lands of a property by means of a long stay. Their only goal in clearing the forest was to exploit its wood; this goal being reached, they ceded to the first to come along at the vilest price what they found it expedient to call their labor, that is to say the cleared land, and proceeded to push on further with the exercise of their fraudulent industry."[78]

Indeed, when concessions of land were made in the *Cirques* and *Plaines*, moral character as well as a claim to permanent stay on the land were duly considered. The *Petits Blancs* became a separate entity through this encouragement by the authorities to become small property holders.[79]

The change from *Petit Créole* to *Petit Blanc* is made clear by Grondin (1998:109) when she states succinctly: "While the *'Petit Créole'* was an object of shame, the *'Petit Blanc'*—mentally—was reinstated in [colonial] society."[80] "It was necessary," writes Grondin (1998:110), "to wait for the first signs of the general emancipation of the slaves, under the July Monarchy, for this marginal population, which shared with the Freedmen or the Free Men of Color a way of life and a common space, to be given a specific

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[77] Footnote (47) here in Grondin (1998:71) refers to Charlier (1848).

[78] "Les uns se recommandent à l'intérêt du gouvernement par leurs habitudes d'ordre et de travail et par une longue occupation. Ils cultivent avec soin les terrains qu'ils ont défrichés et où quelques uns ont créé des caféeries maintenant en plein rapport. ... Les autres, spéculateurs nomades, ne sauraient justifier par une longue possession, [*sic*] leur résidence sur les propriétés du domaine. Leur unique but en défrichant était l'exploitation du bois; ce but atteint, ils cédaient au premier venu à vile prix, ce qu'il leur convenait d'appeler leur travail, c'est-à-dire le terrain défriché, puis ils allaient plus loin continuer l'exercise de leur frauduleuse industrie" [quoted in Grondin 1998:89].

[79] Grondin (1998:110).

[80] "... si le 'Petit Créole' était objet d'opprobre, le 'Petit Blanc' réintègre, mentalement, le corps social" [Grondin 1998:109].

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identity of greater worth."[81] The real history of the *Petits Blancs des Hauts*, their relations with maroons and freedmen during the 18th century, and their frequent contacts with the Black population with whom they shared important areas of the *Plaines*, if not so much the *Cirques*, is important to the social and historical framework within which the vernacular lects of the French of Réunion developed and critical in how these lects are viewed by the speakers themselves.

[81] "Il faut attendre les prémisses de l'émancipation générale des esclaves, sous la Monarchie de Juillet, pour qu'à cette population marginale qui partage avec les Affranchis ou les Libres de Couleur un mode de vie et un espace commun, soit assignée une identité particulière plus valorisante" [Grondin 1998:110].

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Chapter Three: A Review of the Literature on the VLR

3.0 Introduction

Much has been written on the vernacular lects of Réunion (VLR), from the earliest comments made by travelers on the speech of the Creole inhabitants of Bourbon to the papers presented at the most recent conferences on pidgin and creole languages. Creolists have described these vernacular lects and established criteria for differentiating among them; they have formulated theories to explain their origin and development; and they have compared them with the French-based creoles of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, and with varieties of French that have developed elsewhere outside of France. The present review of this literature is intended to give a chronological overview of those accounts that are *relevant to the genesis and development of the VLR.* Naturally, the different aspects of the issue, whether historical or theoretical, are interconnected, and each author has a particular view of these kinds of speech varieties and the variation and similarities among them. Over time, some of these views have become specific sociolinguistic approaches, and this review aims to show the bearing the key elements in such approaches have on the origin and development of the VLR. The strengths and weaknesses of the approaches are still being debated in the arena of creolistics and language contact. Where it is known, the earliest mention of a new key element has been pointed out.

3.1 The VLR in the debate about mixed languages(1848 - 1930)

What characterizes the early writings on French-based vernaculars spoken in the colonies is the *psychological* difference that authors see between these vernaculars on the one hand

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and French and its dialects on the other. Typically, little by little, this psychological difference translated into *particular linguistic traits* characterizing the vernaculars. Also, besides mentioning the unnatural or "artificial" character of the vernacular spoken in Réunion, due to the uncommon conditions in which it arose, early writers soon comment on the *differences between its various lects*.

3.1.1 Charlier (1848): a psychological difference

One of the very early comments on the language spoken in Bourbon is by Charlier (1848, quoted in Coelho [1887] 1967:198-9), a traveler who was not a linguist, but who seems to have had a keen ear. He compared (Charlier 1848, quoted in Coelho 1967:199) its sound with the sound of the French-based creoles he had heard spoken in the Caribbean and did not find anything like what he had (mistakenly) attributed to the Caribs present in the speech of the Creoles of Réunion:

> In Bourbon, to be sure, the ear is not unpleasantly met, as in the Antilles, by that monotonous and blabberering accent ..., a bizarre, undefinable accent the likes of which we have heard nowhere else ... But in Bourbon there are other hereditary signs which betray the Malagasy filiation: they are harder to notice and escape all regular and methodical definition by which they might be explained or understood.[1]

In contrast with what he calls the "incomprehensible blabbering of the inhabitants of the Caribbean" (*bredouillement indéchiffrable des créoles d'Amérique*), the Creoles of Bourbon, according to Charlier (1848, quoted in Coelho 1967:200):

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[1] "A Bourbon, il est vrai, l'oreille n'est pas désagréablement frappée, comme aux Antilles, de cet accent monotone et bredouilleur ... accent bizarre, indéfinissable, dont nous n'avons connu l'analogie nulle part ... Mais à Bourbon, il y a d'autres signes héréditaires qui trahissent la filiation madécasse. Ils échappent à toute définition régulière et méthodique par laquelle on essayerait de les expliquer et de les faire comprendre" [Charlier 1848, quoted in Coelho 1887 (1967:198-9)].

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> have a gift for speech ... and there is no word out of their mouths that bears the mark of any vice of pronunciation: there are barbarisms aplenty, incorrect or bizarre expressions; but there is *nothing foreign in the sounds*, nothing which to the ear distorts the language spoken more than a good 4,000 leagues from all your academies [emphasis added].[2]

This comment is interesting insofar as it is reveals, in mid-19th century Bourbon, the first impression shared by many later French-speaking visitors to the island, namely that its vernacular is closer to French—especially phonetically—than are the creoles of either the Atlantic or the Indian Ocean.

In the days when history provided the terms for classifying things human, and genetic development was the model that accounted for their evolution, it is not surprising that as soon as what were often called the *French creole patois* were discovered in various colonies around the globe, questions arose about their origins and nature. The earliest views about them reveal two very different responses which were quite at variance. On the one hand, the patois were dialects of French because their vocabularies were derived from French. On the other, they were classified with African or other languages spoken by natives, whose spirit (*génie*) and grammars they reflected. Though the debate focused on the phonology, vocabulary and grammar of the languages, as one looks more closely one realizes that it was rather a debate between those taking a *historical* or *psychological* approach. The historical arguments made most linguists support the genetic classification of creoles with their French source, while the psychological arguments made some even

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[2] [Les Créoles de Bourbon] "ont le don de la parole ... et il n'y a pas un mot sorti de leur bouche qui soit entaché d'aucun vice de prononciation: des barbarismes tant que vous voudrez, des tournures de phrases incorrectes ou bizarres; mais **rien d'étranger dans les sons**, rien qui dénature pour l'oreille une langue parlée à plus de quatre mille lieues assurément de toutes vos académies" [Charlier 1848, quoted in Coelho 1887 (1967:200)] [emphasis added].

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go as far as to classify them with the African, or other native languages of the speakers, due to what they described as the "artificial" nature of their origin (cf. Vinson 1882, quoted in Adam 1883:12). It is likely that a psychological explanation was the only door open to linguists who wanted to take the issue out of a realm dominated by historical explanation. It is interesting that it is in essence the question still debated today of whether the vernaculars spoken in Réunion represent a *natural* further development of the French of the time or are a new language that was created in a situation of language contact in the 17th and 18th centuries.

3.1.2 Adam (1883): a genetic difference

Adam (1883) was fascinated by the nature of the French creoles spoken in Africa (i.e. the Indian Ocean) and the Caribbean, which he considered "hybrid languages", that is mixed kinds of languages. He was the first to make the point, however, that their "hybrid" nature sets them apart from the dialects of France. He states (Adam 1883:5) clearly that what he calls the Negro-Aryan creoles of the West Indies are "definitely hybrid, but [that] these idioms constitute nonetheless new dialects to be classified, the Aryan nature of their vocabularies notwithstanding, along with the languages of Guinea."[3] He quotes (Adam 1883:12-3) Vinson's (1882) words to describe this view as "the intuition of the true nature of the creoles" (*l'intuition de la nature véritable des patois créoles*):

> The creole differs from our popular dialects precisely in its *artificial* character (read hybrid); the popular dialect is an anterior *natural* language, lateral, secondary to literary speech; the creole is *the adaptation of French, of English, of Spanish to the, as it were, PHONETIC and GRAMMATICAL genius* of a linguistically inferior race. The words are deeply altered, the grammar simplified

[3] "... ces idiomes n'en constituent pas moins des dialectes nouveaux à classer, nonobstant la nature aryenne de leurs vocabulaires, à la suite des langues de la Guinée" [Adam 1883:5].

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> to the extreme. Nowhere has this adaptation taken on more musical a character than in our colonies, where it was created by and for the slaves of Africa, that is to say principally in the Antilles, in Réunion and in the Ile de France [emphasis added].[4]

The "inferiority" and the "originality" of these creoles both indicate a *psychological* difference. Adam does not use the term *psychological*, but the slant of his remarks is clear when he writes (Adam 1883:5) about the Creoles of French Guiana and Trinidad as Negro-Aryan dialects:

> I mean by this that the Negroes of Guinea, transported to these colonies, took from French its words, but, having maintained, as much as was possible, the phonetics and grammar of their maternal tongue, created from all this idioms sui generis which present *none of the traits characteristic* of our popular dialects of France [emphasis added].[5]

A difference is made here between two kinds of processes, one *natural* in the sense of normal or genetic language transmission, the other *artificial* (an "adaptation"), indicating language mixing or creation. Later linguists (Göbl-Gáldi [1933]) also use the word *psychological* to indicate the element of language creation. What is indicated by a *sui generis character* that makes these so-called patois something quite other than those of France is the *spirit* of these languages, which takes them out of the Indo-European realm.

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[4] "Le créole diffère de nos patois précisément par son caractère artificiel (lisez hybride); le patois est un langage naturel antérieur, latéral, secondaire au langage littéraire; le créole est **l'adaptation du français, de l'anglais, de l'espagnol au génie pour ainsi dire** PHONETIQUE et GRAMMATICAL d'une race linguistiquement inférieure. Les mots sont profondément altérés, la grammaire est extrêmement simplifiée. Nulle part cette adaptation n'a pris un caractère plus original que dans les colonies, où elle s'est faite par et pour les esclaves nègres d'Afrique, c'est-à-dire principalement aux Antilles, à la Réunion et à l'île de France" [Adam 1883:12-3] [emphasis added].

[5] "J'entends par là que les nègres guinéens, transportés dans ces colonies, ont pris au français ses mots, mais qu'ayant conservé, dans la mesure du possible, leur phonétique et leur grammaire maternelles, ils

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3.1.3 Vinson (1889): substratal traces in a variety of French

Ironically, a very different picture emerges from Vinson's (1889) article in the *Dictionnaire des sciences anthropologiques*, where, right after the very sentences quoted by Adam (who actually took them from a previous version of Vinson's article), there is this: "The idiom thus produced is composite, truly mixed as regards its vocabulary, but its grammar remains essentially Indo-European, though simplified to the extreme" (1889:345).[6] And: "The creole patois [generally] are consequently dialects of a special nature, which belong to an Indo-European prototype and to French, Spanish and Portuguese in particular" (1889:345).[7] Here the creoles are classified as dialects of the language that provided them with their vocabulary, even though this vocabulary is considered to be "mixed". Nothing could be more different from Adam's notion of "hybrid" languages. The only agreement between Adam and Vinson seems to be that the languages are of a "special nature" or "sui generis" in some way.

These statements of Vinson's (1889) are hard to reconcile with others (1882, quoted in Vintilă-Rădulescu 1976:128) in an earlier presumably about the VLR:

> the creole ... was formed by the meeting of the Frenchmen and the natives of Madagascar [Vinson 1882:93]; the Malagasy language [Malayo-Polynesian; I. V-R.] ... has only provided the creole patois with its form, its material harmony but not its words [Vinson 1882:99ff.]; the sentence has textually been copied, as from a pattern, on the Malagasy sentence itself. ... Here the part played by the Malagasy element has been absolute.[8]

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ont fait du tout des idiomes *sui generis* ne présentant aucun des caractères propres à nos patois de France" [Adam 1883:5].

[6] "L'idiome produit est composite, véritablement mixte quant à son vocabulaire, mais sa grammaire demeure essentiellement indo-européenne, quoique simplifiée à l'extrême" [Vinson1889:345].

[7] "Les patois créoles sont, par conséquent, des dialectes d'une nature spéciale, qui se rattachent à un prototype indo-européen et surtout au français, à l'espagnol et au portugais" [Vinson 1889:345].

[8] "... le créole ... a été formé par la rencontre des Français et des naturels de Madagascar [Vinson 1882] (p. 93); la langue malgache [langue malayo-polynésienne; I. V-R.] ... n'a prêté que sa forme, son

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It is hard to see how a speech form that calques its sentence structure on Malagasy could be said to retain an "essentially Indo-European" character. This is one of the many instances from early writings about creoles that show how linguists were torn between two opposing analyses. Even Schuchart is alleged to have been of two different opinions, one in an early phase of his thinking, where he leaned towards the notion of creoles as "more or less mixed", and another later, where he leaned towards an explanation due to "usual psychological reasons" (cf. Göbl-Gáldi [1933:337]).[9]

3.1.4 Focard (1885): different types of lects in Réunion

Focard (1885), it seems, also takes a contradictory stance, while struggling to keep neatly to one side of the debate. In any case, he is the first writer on the 'patois' of Réunion to give some idea of *what* the speech forms were. Valkhoff's (1964:724-7) account of (Volsy-)Focard's study on the speech varieties on Réunion, which he presented to the Société des Sciences et des Arts de la Réunion in 1884, states (Focard 1885, quoted in Valkhoff 1964:726):

> In the same article in which he criticizes the "patois" of the regionalist authors, Volcy-Focard also gives specimens of different types of creole and discusses their origin and "purity". He distinguishes between three kinds of dialects and even reproduces, by way of examples, three versions of a small dialogue on the death of a dog that had occurred shortly before. First, he presents the language of the "Creoles of the woods" or "poor (*Petits*) Creoles", those who are now called the "poor (*Petits*) Whites" and who live in the mountains; then that of the "indigenous Blacks", that is to say the Creoles of color, who are actually brown

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harmonie matérielle et non pas ses mots au patois créole [Vinson 1882] (p. 99); la phrase a été copiée textuellement, comme sur un patron, sur la phrase malgache elle-même ... . Ici la part de l'élément malgache a été absolue (plus loin)" [1882, quoted in Vintilă-Rădulescu 1976:128].

[9] Cf. §3.2.2 below for the quotation from Göbl-Gáldi (1933:36-7). However, this issue seems to be cleared up in Baggioni (1991) [cf. §7.4], who analyzes Schuchardt's theoretical dilemma very cogently.

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> in color rather than black; and lastly that of the "Kafirs", that is to say the old slaves who have remained relatively pure.[10]

These "regionalist authors" (*auteurs régionalistes*) are such 19th century writers as L. E. Héry,[11] a French professor of rhetoric, and A. Vinson[12] from Réunion, who spoke French as well as some patois, both of whom reproduced the local speech to the best of their ability. They wrote poetry in the patois, and the former translated La Fontaine's *Fables* into the patois besides publishing texts of the local folklore. In Reinecke (1937:525), a certain Dr. J. C. is quoted as "criticizing" Héry's *Esquisses africaines* in 1882:

> It is only to be regretted that these fables were not all written in a single dialect; but at the time in the style of the Kafir, the Malagasy, the Black Creole, and the "poor White" styles which differ notably to the ear of a native, and the mixture of which is a little prejudicial to unity (p. 525-6) [Note on p. 529. Quoted by Schuchardt (1885:5:371)].

Focard, according to Armand & Chopinet (1983:67), had a contradictory stance in that he tried to "show that Vinson does not/no longer knows the créole, but elsewhere, taking a contrary stand to his rival, affirm the exclusively French character of the speech of Brourbon."[13] It is Focard who wrote these words about the VLR: "No, the vernacular of Bourbon, the creole, has nothing owes nothing to the dialect used by Mssrs. Hovas (i.e.

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[10] "Dans le même article où il critique 'le patois' des auteurs régionalistes, Volcy-Focard donne aussi des spécimens de différents types de créole et en discute l'origine et la 'pureté'. Il distingue trois sortes de parlers et reproduit même, à titre d'exemples, trois versions d'un petit dialogue sur la mort d'un chien survenue peu avant. D'abord il présente la langue 'des Créoles des bois' ou 'petits Créoles', ceux qu'on appelle maintenant 'les petits blancs' et qui habitent les montagnes; puis celui des 'noirs indigènes', c'est-à-dire des Créoles de couleur, qui sont d'ailleurs plutôt bruns que noirs, et enfin, celui des 'cafres', c'est-à-dire des anciens esclaves, restés relativement purs" [Focard 1885, quoted in Valkhoff 1964:726].

[11] *Fables créoles* (1828), which comprised 5 poems, was expanded in *Esquisses africaines. Fables créoles et explorations dans l'intérieur de l'Ile Bourbon* (1849). The latter was expanded and published as *Nouvelles esquisses africaines* (1856), and *Esquisses africaines* (1883), according to Chaudenson (1981a: 9, 19) and Armand & Chopinet (1983:24).

[12] His three poems are included in Vinson (1982a)

[13] "Volcy-Focard s'appliquera à montrer que Vinson ne connaît pas/ne connaît plus le créole et affirmera par ailleurs, contrairement à son rival, le caractère exclusivement français du parler de Bourbon" [Armand & Chopinet 1983:67].

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Malagasy) and Mssrs. Macouas (i.e. Bantu); it is entirely French, strange, eccentric French, but very sweet and graceful!" (quoted in Valkhoff 1964:726-7).[14]

3.1.5 Hugo Schuchardt (1882, 1885): the status of the lects as creoles

With Schuchardt, who corresponded with Focard and noted the contradictions in his position, there is an important shift. He is the first writer to make a distinction between the various lects *in terms of their status as creoles*. On the basis of two versions of the same story, Schuchardt (1882, i.e. 1979:1-2) makes it clear on phonological grounds that there is a "creole proper of Réunion as it is spoken" as opposed to the "creole as it is usually modified by the Blacks of Mozambique". Schuchardt (1885, i.e. 1979:3-4) also calls these the "common" or "general" Creole of Réunion and a "Mozambican variant of Réunion Creole". In his review of Focard (1885), Schuchardt (1885) takes him to task:

> The author is correct when, at the outset, he rejects the notion that Réunionnais (Bourbon Creole) is a sort of French mixed with Kaffir, Malagasy, etc. vocabulary; the lexicon is essentially French, the foreign elements merely float on the surface. However, when one reads (p. 8): 'no, vernacular Bourbon, the creole, owes nothing to the dialects of which M. M. les Hovas [i.e. Malagasies] and M. M. les Macouas [i.e. Mozambicans] avail themselves; it is totally French,' then this contradicts the perhaps simplified indications made throughout the presentation. Mostly, however, *it contradicts the assumption of three types or nuances of creole* as found among the speakers of "créoles des bois" or "petits créoles," who descend from the first colonizers of the island; among indigenous Blacks, i.e. the Malagasians; and among Kaffirs, i.e. Blacks from the Continent as illustrated by the example of a short conversation. ... Of note are the deviations which we find here beside many correspondences when we compare it with the Mauritian of Mozambican Blacks in Baissac (1884)[15] ... *The legitimate creole is Malagasian, while "petits créoles" [sic] is, I believe--the author appears to be of another opinion--only an apparent creole*" [emphasis added] (Schuchardt 1975:15-17).

[14] "Non, le language populaire de Bourbon, le créole, ne doit rien aux dialectes dont se servent MM. les Hovas [i.e. le malgache] et MM. les Macouas [i.e. le bantou], il est tout français, français bizarre, excentrique, mais fort doux et gracieux!" [Quoted in Valkhoff 1964:726-7] [Cf. Focard 1896:181-2].

[15] This is probably an error. Baissac 1880 is no doubt meant by this reference. There is no Baissac 1884.

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The distinctions that are made by Schuchardt (1885) and (Volcy-)Focard (1885) correspond to earlier distinctions, but add *two new speech forms*, namely a vernacular lect of Réunion which is typical of people from Mozambique and a version of it, it seems, used in Mozambique itself (on essentially phonetic and phonological grounds).

Holm (1998:5) points out that a few years later Schuchardt (1889:480) "observed that there were languages that combined features of creoles with those of non-creoles" and "coined the term *halbkreolisch* (i.e. 'semi-creole') to refer to certain varieties of Indo-Portuguese and Caribbean Creole French that had superstrate features." These features, which are the result of decreolization, however, could hardly apply to the lect of the *Petits Creoles*, though such a process may well have affected the Malagasy Creole Schuchardt considered a "legitimate creole".

3.1.6 Dietrich (1891): the presence of socio-historical data

It is distinctions made by Focard (1885), Schuchardt (1885), and Vinson (1882) that Dietrich (1891:217-8) uses in his study, when he compares "the creole speech forms, from Bourbon (the Malagasy-Creole and the Mozambique-Creole) with the Mauritian speech forms, dealing with them together where [he] ha[s] not found any essential differences between them ..."[16] Dietrich, it should be noted, was the first linguist to give *socio-historical data*, including statistics, for Réunion and Mauritius. He distinguishes (Dietrich 1891:219) between "a Malagasy-Creole which began to fall under the influence of

[16] "... les parlers créoles, bourbonniens (le madécasso-créole et le mozambique-créole) avec les parlers mauriciens, en les traitant ensemble là où je n'ai pas trouvé de différence essentielle entre eux ..." [Dietrich 1891:217-8].

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Mozambican as well as other languages, a Mozambique Creole based on Malagasy-Creole, and in Bourbon (might it be the same in Mauritius?) the language of the Creoles of the woods or poor (*Petits*) Creoles."[17] And he adds (Dietrich 1891:219):

> According to Focard, who provides specimens of their dialect, the latter are the descendants of the first settlers on Bourbon, and as they had little to do with the Blacks because they had retreated to the highlands, they have been able to maintain a reminiscence of French, which is revealed in their speech by reactions tending towards the French.[18]

3.1.7 An ambiguous situation

This picture of the VLR, which is essentially owed to Schuchardt's position, remained relatively unchanged until well into the twentieth century. It assumes that as many as four different varieties of the VLR are spoken in Réunion: 1. the lect of the poor Whites (*Petits Créoles*); 2. the lect of the descendants both of the Malagasy-French and Indo-Portuguese-French marriages (that is Focard's "indigenous Blacks") or Schuchardt's "creole proper of Réunion"; 3. the lect of the descendants of African slaves (*Cafres*); and 4. a Mozambique version of Schuchardt's "creole proper of Réunion" influenced by Mozambican (i.e. Bantu) languages, with one variant of it spoken in Réunion and another in Mozambique.

Schuchardt's statement that the "legitimate creole is Malagasian", while the lect of the *Petits Créoles* is, for him, "only an apparent Creole", pinpoints where uncertainty

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[17] "... un madécasso-créole qui a commencé à être influencé par le mozambique et par d'autres langues, un mozambique-créole basé sur le madécasso-créole, et a Bourbon (en serait-il de même à Maurice?) le parler des créoles des bois ou petits créoles" [Dietrich 1891:219].

[18] "Ceux-ci descendent, dit Focard, en donnant des spécimens de leur dialecte, des premiers colonisateurs de Bourbon, et comme ils avaient moins de rapports avec les noirs parce qu'ils étaient retirés sur les

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remained at the end of the 19th century, and where the debate essentially still lies today. However, it must be noted that, in these early references, the lects seem to be defined in race-specific terms as if a link between race and lect were necessarily implied. This seems to follow from the debate about creoles as either dialects or mixed languages. It is also what underlies the question: Is the language of the Whites a creole? How, indeed, could they speak a mixed language when they did not have the "spirit" (*esprit*) or the psychological element that speakers of non-European languages had to create such a speech variety? Or how could they have adopted the characteristics of the lect spoken by the Malagasies, who are of non-White descent? For some linguists (e.g. Chaudenson) the *nature* of an Indo-European language such as French cannot be altered[19] while for others (e.g. Göbl-Gáldi) the *psychology* of the speakers of a language *can* alter that language. In later analyses, some adopt the position of Focard, or of the non-mixed nature of creoles (Chaudenson 1974), and others align themselves with that of Adam and Schuchardt,[20] or the mixed nature of creoles. Some authors allow for changes in pronunciation and vocabulary only, while others admit the the mixture inherent in the new speech varieties, which make them radically different from popular or regional French dialects.

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hauteurs, ils ont pu garder une réminiscence du français, ce qui se manifeste dans leur parler par des réactions vers le français" [Dietrich 1891:219].

[19] This position may partially exploit the position firmly taken by Meillet, the leading French linguist who left his stamp on French comparative linguistics. Meillet, as Baggioni (1991:189) clearly puts it, "rejected the very idea of 'mixed languages' in the name of the impermeability of the morpho-syntactic system, which, for him, constituted the inalterable hard core of linguistic identity" ("... repoussait l'idée même de 'langues mixtes' au nom de l'imperméabilité du système morpho-syntaxique, selon lui noyeau dur inaltérable de l'identité linguistique").

[20] As Baggioni (1991:187) has shown, if Schuchardt "also defends the thesis of mixtes languages" ("défend lui aussi la thèse de la mixité des langues"), it is "on quite a different basis" ("sur de toutes autres bases") than a Vinson or an Adam. "If he acknowledges in principle the idea of susbstrate influence, it is not in order to set creole languages apart; it is, quite to the contrary, to support [his view of] general linguistics, which makes of the mixed nature of languages the motor of linguistic change." ("S'il admet par principe l'idée d'une influence des langues de substrat, ce n'est pas pour faire des créoles

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The ambiguity that seems to have been prevalent at the end of the 19th century is really a matter of theoretical approach. Indeed, at first, the different labels used to refer to the language(s) or vernacular(s) of Réunion seem important: *patois, patois créole, francais-créole, dialecte(s) créole(s), parler,* etc. However, as one reads the authors more carefully, it appears that it is their *approach* and their underlying *theoretical positions* that are at issue, as becomes clearer with later authors. The different labels are, however, no longer just a matter of nuance after Schuchardt's *distinctions in terms of creole status.* Later works begin to use distinct terms to identify, for example, creoles, creolizing vernaculars, creolized superstrates, and the like.

3.2 The debate about non-Indo-European structures in the VLR (1931 - 1978)

Later writing on the VLR reflects the progress made in the study of creole languages: 1. an interest in what creole languages have in common; 2. the identification, in particular, of "creole traits", which for some are evidence of the psychological causes of these mixed languages; 3. the elaboration of the theoretical frameworks that such common features suggest, as well as different scenarios to account for the emergence of the creoles (including the possible role of the Portuguese pidgin as lingua franca) and stages in their development; 4. comparisons and groupings of the various creoles with French as their lexifier language; 5. considerations of the effects of contact with the superstrate on vernacular lects; and 6. the increasing importance of socio-historical data in establishing processes of creolization.

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des langues à part, c'est au contraire pour venir à l'appui de sa linguistique générale faisant de la mixité

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3.2.1 Tagliavini (1931): characteristic traits in creole languages

In his careful entry "Creole lingue," in the *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti,* Tagliavini (1931:833) writes:

> While rather inappropriately designated, the creole languages and dialects refer to the speech forms which have arisen from European languages in the mouths of colored races and which, independently of their lexical material, are all distinguished by various common characteristics and principally by the loss of inflection. The creole dialects originated independently from each other in various parts of the globe following a common *psychological* process [emphasis added].[21]

And he explains (Tagliavini 1931:835):

> A particular kind of creole language can evolve at any moment and in any place; those that have persisted until today have encountered a favorable environment and have continued to meet a need. Created by adults in a first stage, creole languages of a specific group of individuals have become the mother tongues of others and have taken on a certain degree of stability. From that time on they have *ceased* to be an *artificial* product and have followed the natural laws of human language [emphasis added].[22]

On the issue of the speech forms in Réunion, what he writes (Tagliavini 1931:834) of the distinction between creoles and non creoles is relevant:

> There still remains a difficult problem, namely the boundary between *creole* languages and *creole-like* languages (*lingue creolizzanti*), and this particularly, as H. Schuchardt has well indicated, in view of the fact that once a creole dialect continues to exist, continues also the constant and daily contact [mingling] with the European mother tongue, not to mention the linguistic knowledge of the speakers. Our definition allows us to exclude from this essay

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des langues le moteur du changement linguistique.")

[21] "Col nome piuttosto improprio di lingue e dialetti creoli i linguisti designano quelle parlate che sono sorte dalle lingue europee sulla bocca di razze di colore e che si distinguono tutte, indipendentemente dal materiale lessicale, per certi caratteri comuni e principalmente per la perdita della flessione. I dialetti creoli si sono formati indipendentemente, in varie parti del globo, seguendo un processo psicologico comune" [Tagliavini 1931:833].

[22] "Una specie di lingua creola individuale si può formare in ogni momento e in ogni luogo; quelle che hanno resistito fino a oggi hanno trovato un ambiente favorevole e hanno continuato a rispondere a un bisogno. Create da adulti in un primo momento, le lingue creole di un determinato gruppo di individui, sono divenute le lingue materne di altri e hanno assunto un certo grado di stabilità. Da questo momento hanno cessato di essere un prodotto artificiale e son venute a sottoporsi alle naturali leggi del linguaggio umano" [Tagliavini 1931:835].

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> automatically those varieties of European languages which, taken out of Europe, have, indeed, *more or less changed their essence, while maintaining the essential traits of their grammatical structure* (for example, Canadian French, American Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, etc.).[23]

In the literature about the VLR, this is the first time that French creole vernaculars are compared with "non-creolized" varieties of French which have evolved outside of France. He explains (Tagliavini 1931:834):

> We have already indicated that what brings creole languages together and makes them similar is not, as an initial superficial examination might lead us to suppose, their lexical content, but their *internal linguistic structure*. In the various creole dialects, Schuchardt warned, "we do not have any kind of divergence, but rather a parallelism, since they have been culled from different materials on the same level and according to the same manner" [emphasis added].[24]

Tagliavini's (1931:835) classification of the speech varieties on Réunion is based on previous authors:

> The group of French creole dialects of Africa (improperly called Malayo-French by L. Adam ... including the creole speech varieties of the Mascarenes (Réunion or Bourbon) *with slight variants of the creole on the island of Bourbon*, Malagasy-Creole, Mozambique-Creole and Mauritian. These dialects have been studied quite well by Ch. Baissac ... by Volcy-Focard ... but especially by H. Schuchardt ... and by Dietrich ... [emphasis added].[25]

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[23] "Resta sempre un problema difficile, il limite fra lingue *creole* e lingue *creolizzanti*, e questo tanto di più, in quanto, come ha ben notato H. Schuchardt, dovunque viene parlato un dialetto creolo si continua sempre e diuturnamente la mescolanza con la lingua madre europea, a seconda delle conoscenze linguistiche dei parlanti. La nostra definizione ci permette di escludere senza altro dalla trattazione di questo articolo tutte quelle varietà di lingue europee che, trasportate fuori d'Europa, hanno sì modificato più o meno la loro essenza, ma conservano i tratti essenziali della loro struttura grammaticale (per es., franco-canadese; ispano-americano; luso-brasiliano, ecc.)" [Tagliavini 1931:834].

[24] "Si è già detto che ciò che riunisce ed accomuna fra loro le lingue creole non è già, come si potrebbe credere a un esame superficiale, il loro contenuto lessicale, ma la loro struttura linguistica interna; nei vari dialettti creoli, avvertiva lo Schuchardt, 'non abbiamo alcuna divergenza, ma un parallelismo, giacché essi sono formati di materia differente sullo stesso piano e con lo stesso stile'" [Tagliavini (1931:834].

[25] "... il gruppo dei dialetti creolo-francesi dell'Africa (impropriamente detto maleofrancese da L. Adam ... comprendente le parlate creole delle isole Mascarene (Riunione o Borbon) con leggiere varianti di creolo dell'isola Borbone, malgascio-creolo, creolo-mozambico e mauriziano. Questi dialetti sono stati studiati assai bene da Ch. Baissac ... da Vocy-Focard ... ma specialmente da H. Schuchardt ... e da Dietrich ... ." [Tagliavini 1931:835].

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3.2.2 Göbl-Gáldi (1933, 1934): psychological differences and degrees among creoles

A few years later, in two different articles, the Hungarian linguist Göbl-Gáldi, a Romance philo-logist, helped to bring the French-based creoles out of a certain neglect. For him, too, the role played by common principles of creolization and by substrate languages is clear, as is the importance of creole features (e.g. the structures of the verb phrase). Particularly refreshing is his view is the openness to *non-Indo-European structures* and their potential role in creolization. In the first article he writes (Göbl-Gáldi 1933:336-7):

> The main problem touching French creole, which still needs clearing up, concerns the *purely psychological* development of the dialects with respect to the ethnic reaction arising from the indigenous substrate. ... From the point of view of general linguistics, we face two opposing theories: one, mainly argued by Lucien Adam, claims that the vocabularies of the individual European languages have adapted themselves to a *format provided by the spirit of the indigenous language;* this position is still adopted by those linguists who consider the creole languages as more or less 'mixed'. ... The other, originally argued by Coelho, and later developed in a magisterial manner by Schuchardt (who in his youth had rather leaned towards the first of the two theories), claims that the mechanical simplification [to be found] in the creole languages is always due to the *same psychological reasons* [emphasis added].[26]

This distinction between *usual* ("the same") and *unusual* ("the spirit of the indigenous language") psychological reasons is an early form of the later distinction—and debate—about the "normal" or "genetic" and "non-genetic" language transmission in the case of pidgin and creole languages (cf. Thomason and Kaufman 1988).

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[26] "Il problema capitale del creolo-francese, che resta pur sempre da chiarire, è quello dello sviluppo **puramente psicologico** dei dialetti stessi in rapporto con la reazione etnica dovuta al sostrato indigeno. ... Dal punto di vista della linguistica generale, ci troviamo dinanzi a due teorie opposte: l'una, sostenuta principalmente da Lucien Adam, pretende che il vocabolario delle singole lingue europee si sia adattato a **uno schema dato dallo spirito della lingua indigene;** essa è ancora seguita da quei linguisti che giudicano le lingue creole come più o meno 'miste'. ... L'altra, esposta per la prima volta dal Coelho, e sviluppata poi magistralmente dallo Schuchardt (che pure in gioventù aveva piuttosto accettata la prima delle due teorie) sostiene che la semplificazione meccanica delle lingue creole è dovuta sempre alle **medesime ragioni psicologiche**" [Göbl-Gáldi 1933:336-7] [emphasis added].

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In this first article, which Goodman (1964:119) calls "a very clear and sound approach to a historical and comparative treatment of creoles," Göbl-Gáldi was the first to classify the French creoles into three sub-groups: the American, the Mascarene, and the Annamitic (Sino-French). However, , he writes (Göbl-Gáldi 1933:337-8), the problem is the following:

> In all these dialects the linguistic material is provided exclusively by French; but it has been *laid over diverse substrates*. These are, in the first place, African languages (Bantu, Bantuoid and Sudanese), and in second place an Indonesian language (Malagasy), and in third place an Indo-Chinese language (Annamitic) [emphasis added].[27]

And he explains (Göbl-Gáldi 1933:340):

> The *psychological unity* of creole languages appears most clearly in the structure of their conjugation which is essentially distinct not only from that of French, but also from the Indo-European concept of conjugation ... [emphasis added].[28]

He goes on (Göbl-Gáldi 1933:340-1) to differentiate between two types of conjugation:

> From the point of view of the conjugation, descriptive grammars of the individual dialects might suggest to one the idea of distinguishing between two different types of conjugation: a pure one and one with the particle *ka*. Following this distinction the dialects of the Mascarenes and that of Louisiana [would] belong to the first group, while to the second group [would] belong the other American dialects.[29]

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[27] "In tutti questi dialetti la materia linguistica è fornita quasi esclusivamente dal francese; ma esso si è sovrapposto su diversi sostrati; essi sono: in primer luogo le lingue africane (bantu, bantoidi e sudanesi), in secondo una lingua indonesiana (il malgascio), in terzo una lingua indo-cinese (l'annamitico)" [Göbl-Gáldi 1933:337-8].

[28] "L'unità psicologica delle lingue creole appare nel modo più chiaro nella struttura della coniugazione che differisce essenzialmente non solo da quella francesa, ma anche dal concetto della coniugazione indo-europea" [Göbl-Gáldi 1933:340].

[29] "Dal punto di vista della coniugazione le grammatiche descrittive dei singoli dialetti ci potrebbero suggerire l'idea di distinguere due tipi di coniugazione: quelle puro e quello colla particella *ka*. Secondo questa distinzione al primo gruppo appartengono i dialetti delle Mascareignes e quello della Luisiana; al secondo gli altri dialetti americani" [Göbl-Gáldi 1933:340-1].

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Further, Göbl-Gáldi (1933: 341) comments on the presence of the auxiliary *avoir* 'have' in Malagasy Creole in Réunion: "Noteworthy is the distribution of the auxiliary *avoir* as an element of compound tenses (perhaps only maintained in the Malagasy-Creole of Réunion)."[30] He also argues (Göbl-Gáldi 1933:341ff). for a similar distinction between "concrete" and "abstract" verbs such as are found in the languages of the Sudan and Guinea which were introduced into the creole, and for a calque on Bantu verb constructions in the Mozambique-Creole of Réunion, where "the copula is represented by a pronoun; in the Mozambique-Creole of Réunion one says: *convéritirou ni çaud* 'the lid is hot', where *ni* probably derives from *li* for *lui*".[31]

Notable in Göbl-Gáldi's approach are the *psychological* element and the importance of the *substrate languages*. Besides the effects of the latter, he points out (Göbl-Gáldi 1933:344) the role of grammar universals and the superstrate:

> What characterizes the conjugation of creole languages is, then, a *change in concept*. The European verb enters into a very simple system of a nominal character, even though primitive languages present many more or less convincing analogical cases. This metamorphosis of the concept of the verb and nominal verb into a nominal form is due rather to the common *psychological* level of what Lenz [1928:981] has called 'minimal grammar'. During the historical evolution of these special languages the rules established by these panchronic principles may have been modified by later influences [emphasis added].[32]

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[30] "È notevole la scomparsa dell'ausiliare *avoir* come formante dei tempi composti (conservato forse solo nel creolo-malgascio della Riunione)" [Göbl-Gáldi 1933:343].

[31] "... la copula è rappresentata da un pronome; nel creolo-mozamb. della Riunione si dice: *convéritirou ni çaud* 'il coperchio egli caldo', dove *ni* deriva probabilmente da *li* per *lui*" [Göbl-Gáldi 1933:343].

[32] "Quello che caratterizza la coniugazione delle lingue creole è dunque un mutamento di concezione; il verbo europeo entra in un sistema molto semplice che è di carattere nominale, benchè le lingue primitive presentino molti casi di analogia, più o meno convincenti; questa metamorfosi del concetto verbale e verbo-nominale in quello nominale è dovuta piuttosto al fondo psicologico comune di quella che il Lenz [1928:981] chiama 'gramática minima'. Durante l'evoluzione storica di questi idiomi speciali le regole stabilite da questi principî pancronici possono essere modificati dagli influssi ulteriori" [Göbl-Gáldi 1933: 344].

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Göbl-Gáldi's (1934) second article, an outline of "patois français-créoles", is a very scholarly study which has the merit of suspending preconceived Indo-European notions in the grammatical analysis. He takes up Tagliavini's (1931:257) idea of the goal of such a comparison of creoles, namely "to discern by virtue of what common necessities the systems which form these languages were created and have survived."[33] His discussion of creole grammar—in particular of the verb as nominal (as it is in Malagasy)—is remarkably refreshing.

Göbl-Gáldi (1934:258) asks about the value of the verb as well as the noun "in the minds of the speakers/ individuals who speak the language" (*dans la conscience des sujets parlants/individus parlant créole*). We are a long way from any "inferior" language capacity here. He also discusses the distinctions made by Africans in verbal forms and African "base forms of the verb with aorist value" (*thèmes verbaux à valeur d'aoriste*) found in the French creoles but absent form the French of Sénégal, for example. And in examining conjunctions, he notes (Göbl-Gáldi:1934:292) "the presence of other African calques" (*présence d'autres calques d'origine africaine*): "One could also attribute to the substrate the Mauritian use of *av* ['with'] instead of *par* ['by'] ... and also the use of the conjunction *dans* ['in'] in an elative-ablative function."[34] The scholarship and the respect for the facts here is of a notably higher caliber than in earlier studies of the mixed nature of creoles.

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[33] "... discerner, en vertu de quelles nécessités communes les systèmes que forment ces langues, se sont créés et ont subsisté." [Göbl-Gáldi 1934:258].

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3.2.3 Reinecke (1937): degrees of creolization

With Reinecke's (1937) dissertation appear the first *substantial socio-historical data* in support of linguistic argumentation as well as *comparisons* between creoles based on these data. While noting the lack of such data in the case of Réunion, he (Reinecke 1937:537) remarks that the vernacular lect of the *Petits Blancs* is not "completely creolized." Further, Reinecke considers the role of substrates as important.

This is what he writes (Reinecke 1937:517) on the parallels between the Mascarenes and the French West Indies in a multiple perspective:

> Economically, socially, politically, and linguistically the islands of Mauritius and Réunion present a remarkable parallel to the Lesser Antilles. ... here, too, the slaves made a creole patois of their masters' language. Between these two islands and the Antilles there are, however, two differences of linguistic importance: while the Negroes imported to the New World came of many linguistic stocks and were chiefly Sudanese, in the Mascarenes there were only two groups, the first of Malagasy speaking related Malayo-Polynesian languages, the second of Bantu from the east coast of Africa, also speaking related tongues; and while the colored creoles still form the majority of the population even in Trinidad and Guiana, in Mauritius they have been quite overwhelmed numerically by the Indians. ... All these islands [Réunion, Mauritius and its dependencies and the Seychelles] were uninhabited before their occupation by the slave-holding French. They form a linguistic unit throughout which mutually intelligible forms of French Creole patois are the vernacular.

About Réunion, he writes (Reinecke 1937:525-6):

> Standard French is of course the official language of Réunion, besides being the tongue of the educated colonials. For this reason one would naturally expect the Creole patois to evolve into agreement with the French of the schools somewhat less slowly than in the British colonies of Mauritius and the Seychelles. Concerning the speech of the upper classes we can discover nothing in the literature except that it probably shows some Provençal influence and that to the casual visitor it sounds more pleasing than that of the Antilles. ... Dietrich in 1891 distinguished three forms of Creole French (on both Réunion and

[34] "On pourrait également attribuer au substrat l'emploi mauricien de *av* (avec) au lieu de "par"... et aussi l'emploi du conjonctif "dans" dans une fonction d'élatif-ablatif" [Göbl-Gáldi 1934:292].

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> Mauritius) besides 'les nuances des Indous et des Chinois'. ... Most of the available titles exemplify the Malagasy-Creole; two specimens of the Mozambique-Creole are given; but the present writer has seen no illustration of the Creole of the whites or Creole Negroes. It is probable that by now the two first named have fused into a patois common to all slightly educated Creole blacks; Farchi (in 1936) mentions only "le créole". Though we possess extensive enough linguistic accounts of the Creole of Réunion, historical and sociological data are lacking. Doubtless Baissac's description of the early stages of the Creole of Mauritius applies as faithfully to the parent dialect. ... Data on the later development of the various forms of the Bourbon Creole, and on the local attitudes towards its use, are almost wholly lacking. Dietrich analyzed its differences (half a century ago) from its offshoot the dialect of Mauritius; they do not appear very great, for the sister islands have maintained close contact in spite of their difference of sovereignty. But the dialect of Réunion has not departed quite so widely from the original French (Note 31: For example, the use of polysyllables with *le, li* on Réunion: Dietrich [1891], 235).

Reinecke (1937:537) gives morpho-syntactic reasons for considering the Creole of the Mascarenes as "fully creolized". However, he seems to remain unclear about the nature of what he calls the "Creole of Réunion" and simply echoes what has been written. It is hard to reconcile his claims that it "has not departed quite so widely from the original French" with his claim that it can still be considered as representative of the Creole of the Mascarenes, unless different lects are implicitly being spoken of. There is also more conjecture when he writes (Reinecke 1937:528; 536-7) about its linguistic milieu:

> In Réunion there is only the antithesis of standard French and Creole French, but in Mauritius ... the linguistic situation is more complicated; one must take into account the effect of the official tongue and of the language of the Indian majority (p. 528). ... The Mascarene dialects do not differ greatly from the Creole French of the Antilles and French Guiana. Göbl-Gáldi has conveniently indicated the most important differences that do exist. Some of these are doubtless to be attributed to accidental emphasis upon one French grammatical form or word in the Mascarenes and upon another in the West Indies. French dialectal differences may have counted for something; though the nucleus of the early colonists in both regions seems to have been composed of Normans and Picards, in the Mascarenes there were an unusual number of Bretons, and Vinson speaks of Provençal influence as well. Various dialectal locutions and sea terms have, indeed, been incorporated in the Mascarene patois. Other differences may safely be attributed to Malagasy influence (p. 536). ... To sum up: at this point

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> and that the Malagasy, and sometimes the Bantu, influence has made a considerable difference in details between the Creole of the Mascarenes and that of America, but in general the grammatical structure of the Creole of both follows the logical direction of the decomposition of French. These dialects are completely creolized. Syntax is a matter of word position. the conjunctions are practically suppressed, and a number of prepositions are dispensed with; juxtaposition, therefore, remains the chief way of showing association of thought. Interrogation is regularly indicated by intonation. Inflection of verbs, nouns, personal pronouns, and adjectives is dispensed with. A new scheme of conjugation, usually full and supple, has been built up with auxiliary particles, and consists of nine indicative and three conditional tenses (p. 537).

Remarkable in Reinecke's (1937) thesis is the presence of detailed socio-historical data which give a picture of the population of Réunion. In this regard, he points out the main difference between Réunion and the West Indies between 1717 and 1804: "This was, however, a high proportion of whites as compared with the West Indies" (Reinecke 1937: 518). This is the first time attention is drawn to the high proportion of Whites in a linguistic comparison of French-based creoles of the Indian Ocean and the Americas.

3.2.4 Goodman (1964): a comparison of French-based varieties

With Goodman's (1964) milestone comparative study of creole French dialects, a broad-based comparison of French-based creoles was published and its issues were brought to the wider attention of the English-speaking academic world. "In the Indian Ocean," he writes (Goodman 1964:131-2):

> two distinct dialects can be discerned, that of Mauritius (spoken also in neighboring Rodrigues and in the Seychelles Islands ...) and that of Reunion. *The latter is so inadequately described, that I have not included it with the others in the detailed comparisons.* ... Reunion Creole differs from Mauritian in a number of important points, notably, the personal pronouns, and the use of *a* to connect the verb and the direct object. In general, these features set Reunion even further off than Mauritian from American Creole, although *mwê* and (of lesser importance) *twe* are points of greater similarity. When Reunion was colonized in 1664 (fifty years earlier than Mauritius), probably neither the West African slave

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> trade nor the French slavers' pidgin had reached its fullest development. The West African influence on the Creole of Reunion and its connection with American Creole therefore was doubtless considerably less than was that of Mauritius though the pronoun *mwê* in Reunion, particularly the nasalization of the *e*, may indicate that such a connection was not entirely absent.

Goodman (1964:132) pinpoints the differences in sociolinguisitc data obtaining between the two Mascarene islands accounting for the distance between their speech varieties:

> By the time Mauritius was settled (1715), however, the West African slave trade was probably so well organized that, even though the island was settled in part from Reunion and was quite close to Madagascar, large numbers of West African slaves were imported there, and their pidgin (by this time quite well established) became the dominant linguistic element and soon developed into Mauritian Creole. Reunion Creole was not without influence in Mauritius, however, and the two dialects share certain important features which set them apart from American Creole, notably the historical shift without exception of the phonemes /š/ and /z/ to /s/ and /z/ respectively. This is perhaps a feature of Malagasy origin although it should be noted that it occurs at least sporadically in Louisiana as well as .... Until a better and more thorough description of Reunion Creole becomes available and the relevant historical background is investigated, it will be difficult to clarify the problem further [emphasis added].

3.2.5 Valkhoff (1964, 1966): a creolized form of French or a French creole?

Valkhoff (1964) gives some first-hand information about the speech of Réunion. He distinguishes between the lect of the *Petits Blancs*, with the most archaic forms, and an urban and a popular form of the creole of the island. He uses the term "semi-creole" to refer to the "artificial and gallicized" language Creole authors have used in their writings. He writes (Valkhoff 1964:724):

> ... after the abolition of slavery in 1848 the white population found it had less and less living space along the coasts and sought refuge in the mountains, where it colonized the most accessible places: the valleys, the *cirques* and the *îlettes* (the inhabitable promontories). This is where the most archaic Creole has maintained itself. I have had occasion to establish in Cilaos, for example, that the old forms

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> *qué* and *lé* were still in use, while the people in Saint-Denis already said *que* (pronoun and conjunction), as in French, and *le* and *la* (definite articles).[35]

Valkhoff (1964:724-5) regrets the absence of any authentic literature in the VLR and the "artificial and gallicized language" used in the works by Héry (1828, 1883), Vinson (1882a, 1882b), and Duclos (1885). He says about Fourcade's (1938) work: "I verified the pronunciation and certain linguistic details with his [i.e. Fourcade's] employee Marthe and other Creole women. I think that he represents the rather well the wavering and somewhat gallicized speech of the capital."[36]

With Göbl-Gáldi (1933, 1934), Valkhoff (1964:727-8) is one of the first to view the VLR from a non-French angle. However, the lects do seem to him to be closer to French and perhaps the result of contact with creoles. He writes (Valkhoff 1964:727-8):

> I have been tempted to break with traditional grammar, as L. Gáldi has in his article on the structure of French creoles. But after all, **Réunionnais is rather a creolized form of French than a French Creole;** and that is why I have decided to be rather conservative in my description of it. Let us note, first of all, that there are two varieties of this creole (without counting many intermediate nuances), namely an *urban speech form* and a *popular speech form*, and that the former is more gallicized than the latter. It nonetheless remains unintelligible at first for a Frenchman or a foreigner who has not learned it [bold emphasis added].[37]

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[35] "... après l'abolition de l'esclavage en 1848, la population blanche s'est trouvée de plus en plus à l'étroit sur les côtes et s'est réfugiée dans les montagnes, dont elle a colonisé les endroits accessibles: les vallées, les cirques et les 'îlettes' (des promontoires habitables). C'est là que le créole le plus archaïque s'est conservé. J'ai pu constater à Cilaos, par ex., qu'on se servait encore des vieilles formes *qué* et *lé*, alors que le saint-denisien disait déjà comme en français *que* (pronom ou conjonction) et *le* et *la* (articles définis)" [Valkhoff 1964:724].

[36] "J'en ai vérifié la prononciation et certains détails de langue avec son employée Marthe et d'autres femmes créoles. Je crois qu'il représente bien le parler assez flottant et quelque peu francisé de la capitale" [Valkhoff 1964:725].

[37] "J'ai été tenté de rompre avec la grammaire traditionnelle, comme l'a fait L. Gáldi dans son article sur la structure des créoles français. Mais, après tout **le réunionnais est plutôt du français créolé que du créole français,** c'est pourquoi j'ai décidé d'être assez conservateur en le décrivant. Constatons d'abord qu'il existe deux variétés de ce créole (sans compter plusieurs nuances intermédiaires), à savoir un *parler*

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Valkhoff (1964:730) comments on the "presence of aspects" in the VLR, which he considers "one of the most fascinating questions as well as one of the most difficult questions." However, he feels that "it might be better to study them one day in Mauritian, *a true Creole language*, in which they are much more strongly marked than in Réunionnais [emphasis added].[38]

In Valkhoff's (1966) book, along with a detailed description of the process of language change that brought about creoles and other speech varieties, there are a number of interesting comments and warnings relevant to the development of the VLR. Many of his insights are rooted in Hesseling's (1933) views (which differed from H. Schuchardt's, for example, on the role of the masters in the creation of the creoles). Valkhoff takes seriously the question of the role of the Portuguese lingua franca, Portuguese pidgins and Portuguese creoles in the development Afrikaans, and also writes about the development of the vernacular lects spoken in Réunion and Mauritius.

Important as a caveat, to begin with, is the point about the kind of Dutch that lies at the origin of Afrikaans. He quotes (Valkhoff 1966:117-8) an "observation of one of Holland's most outstanding scholars" who writes: "[Hesseling's] thesis that the difference between the language of South Africa and [continental] Dutch should be substantially attributed to the influence of Malayo-Portuguese spoken by the slaves who had arrived at

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urbain et un *parler populaire*, et que le premier est plus francisé que l'autre. Il n'en reste pas moins inintelligible au premier abord pour tout Français ou étranger qui ne l'a pas appris" [Valkhoff 1964:727-8] [bold emphasis added].

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the Cape between 1655 and 1685, was considered by the Afrikaaners as an affront to their language, which in that way was degraded to a Creole idiom." There is an important warning here to the creolists who want to see an *unadulterated form of French* as the origin of the VLR. In his chapter "French and Portuguese Creole", Valkhoff (1966:117) points out:

> It is only after deeper study, and armed with some knowledge of the African languages, that the linguist discovers the analogies between two Creole languages (e.g. French and Portuguese), due to the common substratum, and the essential divergences between each Creole and its corresponding 'mother tongue'. Unfortunately most students do not pass the first stage and treat Creole speech as continental French (or Portuguese) dialects or an aggregate of these. In the same way South African scholars ignored the phenomena of creolization presented by Afrikaans as compared with 'High Dutch'.

Though this makes Valkhoff seem to lean towards a monogeticist view of the origin of creole languages, he is in fact inviting creolists to take the influence of substrate languages seriously. The relevance of this becomes clear and a warning to French-speaking scholars when it comes to the role of not just Malagasy dialects in the development of the Creoles of the Mascarenes, but also of Malayo-Portuguese. In this regard he also writes (Valkhoff 1966:131):

> Even in such an isolated region as that of the Mascarenhas, the slaves imported from the African coast and the French factories in India must have spoken the Portuguese lingua franca concurrently with their native tongues, and must thus have influenced the French that was forced upon them. In the same way the Spanish contact vernaculars of the Philippines originated in the Creole Portuguese dialects of the Moluccan island of Ternate. In this manner we discover nearly everywhere Portuguese Pidgin or Creole as the basis of a Creole tongue, and it becomes clear that originally Portuguese lexemes must have been superseded by foreign ones.

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[38] "Enfin, une des questions les plus passionnantes et les plus difficiles, c'est la présence d'aspects dans les créoles. Mais il vaudrait mieux les étudier un jour dans le mauricien, **vraie langue créole**, où ils sont bien plus marqués qu'en réunionnais" [Valkhoff 1964:730] [emphasis added].

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Of even further relevance is a remark about Hesseling (Valkhoff 1966:122-3) and the difference between partially "creolized" and fully "creolized" varieties of French:

> There is nothing astonishing in the fact that he studied Portuguese Creole thoroughly under Schuchardt ... . It is more interesting to realize why Hesseling worked on Canadian French and on Ceylon Dutch and Portuguese. In the former we have a language which was not suddenly brought into contact with a native tongue and in the latter case we find ourselves in the "half-way house" between Batavia and Cape Town, where conditions must have been analogous to those in the "frontier fortress of the Indies" (Cape Town). Consequently, in the first case we encounter a rather archaic type of French which has slowly developed on its own, while in the second we get a variety of Dutch with marked phenomena of creolization and a linguistic picture that is more or less similar to that of the Cape. ... it is obvious that we shall not find French Creole in Canada, since no rapid or profound mixing of races took place there. We only observe a sort of *regional French* in this former colony, just as we encounter types of regional Spanish in the Southern and Central American States. In Haiti, the Lesser Antilles, and French Guiana, however, tropical agriculture, especially the sugar plantations, necessitated large-scale importation of black labour, and this created a fertile soil for creolization. Louisiana occupies an intermediate position and here matters are more complicated.

As with Goodman (1964), with Valkhoff (1964) the issues involve the place what can be called less "creolized" or "restructured" varieties occupy in relation to other, more fully "creolized" or "restructured" varieties. The sociolinguistic factors become important, as can be seen when he (Valkhoff 1966:124-5) turns his attention to the radical reversal of proportions of French and non-French speakers in Bourbon:

> In 1671 it had a population of ninety inhabitants of whom fifty were White, while half a century later there lived on the Island 1,550 Whites against 10,950 Negroes and half-breeds. These figures are approximate, but the discrepancy between the two races which they demonstrate shows how favorable a habitat had been laid out for the birth of a Creole language. ... Before long the islands [Réunion and Mauritius] constituted a mosaic of human colour with Whites, half-breeds, freedmen, and slaves imported from Madagascar, the Comores, the African coast, and the East. No attempts were made here to enforce an apartheid policy, as had been vainly tried in some of the Antilles, so that from a sociological point of view the Mascarenhas have developed harmoniously on the whole.

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3.2.6 Vintilă-Rădulescu (1967): the lects and geography

In Vintilă-Rădulescu's (1967) survey of French creoles, there is, along with an excellent and thorough bibliography, probably the first mention of slaves on Réunion having come from the *interior* of Africa or even from the *West Coast* of that continent (Vintilă-Rădulescu 1967:125): "There [in Réunion] French settlers introduced slaves who came from the neighboring coast of Africa, notably from Mozambique, and also from Madagascar, and *perhaps also from areas lying further inland on the African continent or even from Western Africa.*"[39] As a kind of corollary, Vintilă-Rădulescu (1967) mentions the possible influence of Portuguese on the *créole réunionnais,* which brings to mind the Indo-Portuguese spoken by the wives of the earliest settlers in Réunion, as well as the slaves from Mozambique, who likely spoke a restructured variety of Portuguese. She writes (Vintilă-Rădulescu 1967:129), in the same vein as some of Valkhoff's (1966) remarks:

> As far as Portuguese influence is concerned, let us remember that Mozambique had the first Portuguese settlements at the beginning of the sixteenth century and that, at one time—from the middle of the seventeenth century until 1878--Portuguese East Africa was the center of the slave trade. In the ports of Mozambique a form of pidgin was in use during the nineteenth century (and perhaps even before) which contained Portuguese elements among others. One cannot ignore these facts in a serious attempt to establish the role played by Portuguese in the genesis of creoles that are not Portuguese-based, notably in that of French-based creole.[40]

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[39] "Les colons français y [i.e. à La Réunion] ont introduit des esclaves provenant de la côte voisine de l'Afrique, notamment du Mozambique, et de Madagascar, et peut-être aussi des régions situées plus à l'intérieur du continent africain ou même de l'Afrique occidentale" [Vintilă-Rădulescu 1967:125].

[40] "En ce qui concerne l'influence portugaise, rappelons que le Mozambique a connu les premiers établissements portugais du début du 16e siècle et que l'ancienne Afrique orientale portugaise a été au milieu du 17e siècle jusqu'en 1878 le centre du commerce d'esclaves. Dans les ports du Mozambique était en usage au cours du 19e siècle (et peut-être même avant) une espèce de pidgin qui comprenait entre autres des éléments portugais. On ne saurait ignorer ces faits dans un essai sérieux d'établir le rôle du portugais dans la genèse des créoles autres que portugais et notamment dans celle du créole français" [Vintilă-Rădulescu 1967:129].

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Vintilă-Rădulescu also comments on the distribution of the speech forms on the island when she writes (Vintilă-Rădulescu 1967:126-30, *passim*):

> Because of the mountainous relief of the island, there are only two inhabited areas: the coastal areas lying north-northeast and south-southwest between which even ten years ago there was practically no communication. Even among the different localities in the mountainous region contacts were difficult. This explains the dialectal mosaic that is to be found even in the interior of this small island, which is accentuated by the more or less strong influence of French, varying, as it does, among towns and rural zones, etc. ... It is no doubt based on this urban variety that Valkhoff makes his concluding statement that "Réunionnais is rather a creolized form of French than a French creole."[41]

3.2.7 Deltel (1968): three different lects in Réunion

Deltel (1968:31), according to Chaudenson (1974:xxix), distinguishes three speech varieties (*parlers*) on phonological grounds: "1. the *créole des Bas*, with a very reduced phonological system; 2. the *créole des Hauts*, with a relatively richer phonological system in which palatal fricatives and central vowels appear in the form of individual variants; 3. the urban créole, which is phonologically similar to French."[42] According to Reinecke et al. (1975:296), Deltel (1969) "[i]ndicates a continuum of speech in which three main types of *créole* may be distinguished: rural coastal, rural inland (mainly *petits blancs*), and urban" and "all are under strong decreolizing influence from S[tandard] F[rench]." From the Reinecke et al. (1975) source alone, it remains unclear, however, just what kind of a

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[41] "En raison du relief montagneux de l'île, il n'y a que deux zones habitées: la bordure côtière nord-nord-est et le sud-sud-ouest, entre lesquelles, il y a dix ans encore, il n'existait pratiquement pas de communication. Même entre les différentes localités de la région montagneuse les contacts étaient difficiles. Cela explique le morcellement dialectal existant même à l'intérieur de cette petite île, qui est accentué par l'influence plus ou moins forte du français selon qu'il s'agit des villes ou des zones rurales, etc. ... C'est sans doute sur cette variété urbaine que se fonde Valkhoff lorsqu'il conclut que 'le réunionnais est plutôt du français créole que du créole français'" [Vintilă-Rădulescu 1967:126-30, *passim*].

[42] "1. Le créole des Bas, au système phonologique très pauvre; 2. Le créole des Hauts, au système phonologique relativement plus riche, avec apparition des chuintantes et des voyelles centrales qui interviennent à titre de variantes individuelles; 3. Le créole urbain, qui est analogue au système phonologique du français" [Chaudenson 1974:xxix].

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continuum Deltel means, but this would represent the first mention of a continuum among the different lects of Réunion.

3.2.8 Chaudenson (1974): the non-relevance of substratal influence

Chaudenson (1974:xxix), in his exhaustive and detailed study of the vocabulary of the Réunion vernaculars, presents the different linguistic groups in Réunion (monolingual, diglossic, multilingual). He makes a distinction between French and Creole [i.e. VLR], which he says is difficult to establish (*malaisée à établir*) by listing three levels:

1. Standard French (official language, radio broadcasting, education);
2. regional French (everyday conversation; local bourgeoisie); and
3. the Creole.

"However," he writes (Chaudenson 1974:xxix), "the second and third level are far from homogeneous. At times regional French differs only slightly from Standard French by a few phonetic and lexical elements, while calques of creole structures abound in it. And the diversity of levels of creole ... is also great."[43] Chaudenson mentions Valkhoff's (1964) and Deltel's (1968) divisions into varieties, but concludes that in the absence of clear criteria and sufficient data it is almost impossible not to be arbitrary and imprecise. He expresses the hope that the *Atlas linguistique de la Réunion* (Carayol & Chaudenson 1985) will contribute to the clarification of the linguistic situation.

There is a passage in Chaudenson (1974:1134) which hints at the very source of the author's interest in Réunionnais. Réunion is for him a *laboratory* for studying French

[43] "Mais en fait, le deuxième et le troisième niveaux sont loin d'être homogènes. Le français régional peut être à peine différent du français standard par quelques faits phonétiques ou lexicaux, mais peut aussi

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in a context where the language is *not constrained in its tendencies towards change*. It may be on account of this view that for him the languages that were in contact with French are not relevant. When Chaudenson calls for considering seriously the socio-historical situation in which the language evolved, he does not mean it as a general guideline for language contact linguistics, but rather as a given essential to its free development away from the hold which the constraining powers of French culture had on any such development in the language in France. This is clearly the underlying thrust of the comment in the conclusion to his book (Chaudenson 1974:1134):

> Every language exhibits a variety of possible paths along which to evolve, and a sudden change in the sociolinguistic conditions is likely to hasten a process, just as the effects of a powerful cultural superstructure is likely to slow it down. That is why we believe that the cultural and social change proved to be more relevant than the nature of the languages which came into contact with French.[44]

Chaudenson (1974:1126-43) developed a theory about the origins and development of what he calls *créole réunionnais*. The early form of this Creole, which was taken to Mauritius by Réunion settlers after 1721, he calls *créole bourbonnais*. For Chaudenson, it is dialectal forms of 17th century French that gave rise to the vernacular spoken in Réunion by 1715. There is no evidence of any substratal influence on this variety, which he considers simply a freer form of "advanced French" (French with commonly used forms considered unacceptable by, say, the *Académie française*), i.e. a speech variety that presents *more developed* forms of popular dialectal French, due to an

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abonder en calques de structures créoles. La diversité des niveaux de creole ... est également grande" [Chaudenson 1974:xxix].

[44] "Toute langue offre des possibilités différentes d'évolution et une brusque mutation des conditions socio-linguistiques est susceptible de précipiter un processus, comme l'action d'une superstructure culturelle puissante est capable de la ralentir. C'est pourquoi nous pensons que le changement culturel et social a été plus décisif que les caractères mêmes des langues qui se trouvaient mises en contact avec le français" [Chaudenson 1974:1134].

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environment where no linguistic constraints were imposed on speakers. (In fact, Chaudenson argues that such a creole can help reconstitute dialectal variants.) Clearly for Chaudenson *continuity* of vocabulary necessarily implies internal language change. Creoles may present forms that are as different from French as French forms are from Latin ones, yet both these creoles on the one hand and French on the other must be seen as *continuations* of their respective source languages. He does not deny all effects due to substrate languages outright, but accepts them *only* where the French dialects show a tendency towards the *same change*, i.e. as a result of some kind of similarity in structure (*convergence*).

For Chaudenson there is phonological, lexical and morpho-syntactic evidence for his position. As he does with similarities in the lexical field, he sees in the morphosyntactic similarities between French creoles an overwhelming case for *uniformity* among the different French-based creoles. "'Grammar' has been," he writes later (Chaudenson 1979:88), "one of the main areas of speculation about the contribution of the substrate languages (*langues serviles*)." The items illustrating a similar evolution (*évolution convergente*) [among creoles] which he considers to be evidence, include the verbal systems and the pronominal forms. In the conclusion of his book, he makes (1974:1130) his position very clear:

> We have seen how the history of the peopling of the island, the study of the vocabulary, and the formation of a new linguistic system prove that the Creole is essentially the result of a transformation of popular or dialectal 17th century French. To be sure, this speech variety evolved in very specific socio-historical conditions, in contact with various substrate languages, but without the latter

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having brought to bear on it elements significant enough to justify its being referred to as "mixed".[45]

For Chaudenson (1974), the verbal systems of all French-based creoles arose from the periphrastic verbal forms found in regional and popular French, which both allow an invariant verbal form and express aspect. "On this point," he comments (Chaudenson 1974:1124), "all the French creoles offer a remarkable unity." The markers he lists include: *alô, anu; apré, pé; fèk; fin, fini; pu:ʳ; té; and ava,* and *a.*

In the "rare cases" in which there is divergence among forms in different creoles, Chaudenson (1974:1132-3) *seemingly* makes a concession for the influence of substrate languages: "Thus, for the series of object pronouns" "*amwê* ['me'], *au* ['you'], *ali* ['him, her'] ... in which the initial element [a-] is reminiscent of the series of corresponding pronouns in Malagasy, one notes in French the use of the non-clitic forms 'à moi' [to me], 'à toi' [to you], 'à lui' [to him] ... which display a similar character."[46] However, he points out (Chaudenson 1974:1132), "in the rare cases where a structural analogy can be established between the creole and a slave language ... we have noted that the French system presented similar characteristics which could favor their being adopted."[47] In fact, he states (Chaudenson 1974:1133) quite clearly that he has "not come across any example

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[45] "Nous avons vu comment l'histoire du peuplement de l'île, l'étude du lexique, la formation même d'un nouveau système linguistique prouvent que le créole résulte essentiellement d'une transformation du français populaire ou dialectal du XVII[e] siècle. Certes, ce parler a évolué dans des conditions socio-historiques très particulières, au contact de langues serviles diverses, mais sans que ces dernières aient pu apporter au système nouveau des éléments suffisamment importants pour justifier qu'on le qualifie de 'mixte'" [Chaudenson 1974:1130].

[46] "Ainsi, pour la série des pronoms objet [amwê], [au], [ali] ... dans laquelle l'élément initial [a-] rappelle celui d'une série de pronoms correspondants du malgache, on note en français l'emploi des formes toniques 'à moi', 'à toi, 'à lui' ... qui offrent un caractère voisin" [Chaudenson 1974:1132-3].

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of original and 'positive' transfer which led to the adoption of a new trait that might have gone against the general tendencies of the evolution of French."[48]

Comparing Réunionnais and Indian Ocean creoles more specifically, Chaudenson (1974: 1113ff) adopts the list of grammatical structures used by Taylor (1968) for the sake of impartiality: a) prepositions, b) conjunctions of subordination; c) relative pronoun; d) personal pronouns; e) demonstrative adjectives; f) interrogative pronouns; and g) Tense and Aspect markers. He comments (Chaudenson 1974:1115) on the Indian Ocean creoles: "The generally identical character of the system leaves no doubt and easily allows for the common Bourbonnais origin for the [different] varieties."[49]

Carayol and Chaudenson's (1976) study is the only "implicational analysis of a linguistic continuum" in Réunion Creole. Its aim is to "analyse the linguistic behaviour, with regard to four phonetic variables, of a sample of monolingual Réunion Creole speakers" to verify the hypothesis of a possible continuum. It uses "a corpus of conversations with monolingual adult creolophones" and surveys "the auditive discrimination capacity of young Reunionese school children" (Carayol & Chaudenson 1976:179). By a "neutralization of socio-economic and socio-cultural variables" the

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[47] "Dans les rares cas où peut se constater entre le creole et une langue servile ... une analogie structurelle, nous avons noté que le système français présentait des caractères convergents qui pouvaient en favoriser l'adoption" [Chaudenson 1974:1132].

[48] "... nous n'avons pas relevé d'exemple de transferts originaux et 'positifs' qui autraient conduit à l'adoption d'un trait nouveau qui s'inscrivît en opposition aux tendances générales de l'évolution du français" [Chaudenson 1974:1133].

[49] "L'identité générale du système ne fait pas de doute et permet de confirmer aisément l'origine bourbonnaise commune des parlers" [Chaudenson 1974:1115].

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authors draw conclusions about the ethnic distribution of speakers of the acrolectal and basilectal verieties of the VLR.

3.2.9 Carayol (1977): the regional French of Réunion

Carayol (1977) presents a very careful linguistic analysis of the population of Réunion in terms of ethnic groups, professional groups, levels of education, class, diglossia, individual mono- and bilingualism, the continuum, as well as the varieties of the VLR. He distinguishes notably between Standard French, regional French, "creolized" variety of French (*français créolisé*, or lect of the *Petits Blancs*) and the creole of the majority of the population. He concludes (Carayol 1977:65): "The examination of the linguistic situation reveals that the very superficial and simplistic picture often presented to the public of an integrated Réunion society is, in fact very jumbled and contradicted by these internal tensions... ."[50]

3.2.10 Bollée (1977): the fate of a pidgin

While essentially following Chaudenson (1974), Bollée (1977) criticizes him on various points. She sees (Bollée 1977:121-2) Mauritian Creole and Seychellois Creole as having "resulted from a further, starker reduction process with respect to French than that which produced Bourbonnais" (*sind durch weitere Reduzierung gegenüber dem Französischen weniger stark reduzierten Bourbonnais entstanden*). As far as early Réunionnais being a pidgin or having been preceded by a pidgin, the question hangs for her on one's definition

[50] "L'examen de la situation linguistique montre que l'image très superficielle et simpliste d'une société réunionnaise intégrée, que l'on propose souvent aux yeux du public, se trouve, en réalité, profondément brouillée et même contredite par ces tensions ..." [Carayol 1977:65].

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of a pidgin. Bollée (1977:116) finds "Chaudenson's interpretation of the differences between the dialects of the Indian Ocean, which are so great that mutual intelligibility suffers from it, to be contradictory."[51] She attempts to bring the differences between Réunionnais on the one hand and Mauritian Creole and Seychellois Creole on the other in line with the three concepts of "reduction", "generalization" and "stability", criteria she takes from Todd (1974).

Bollée's list of these differences (Bollée 1977:118-121) includes: for the verb: a) remnants of inflection in the verb; b) morphemes indicating past tense; c) completive forms; d) a future morpheme; e) *avoir* and *il y a;* f) remnants of *avoir;* g) remnants of the copula (*être*); h) variable predicates (copula and subject reference pronoun *i*); for pronouns: object pronouns and possessives; for word order: the place of the negator *pa;* and for vocabulary: a few representative samples.

Based on Heine's (1973) 33 characteristics of pidginization and Todd's (1974) views on pidginization and creolization, Bollée concludes on linguistic as well as sociolinguistic grounds that the contact situation led to a different language change in the Indian Ocean than in Canada and Louisiana because in the Indian Ocean, speakers of first languages other than French needed a means of communication with the French speakers as well as with one another, while in Canada and Louisiana this was not the case. She

[51] "Chaudenson's Interpretation der Unterschiede zwischen den Dialekten des Indischen Ozeans, die so gross sind, dass die Interkomprehension darunter leidet, ist widersprüchlich" [Bollée 1977:116].

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concludes (Bollée 1977:140), that "in communication situations without French-speaking parties 'incorrect' forms were able in time to impose themselves and be grammaticized."[52]

It can be mentioned here that in Bollée & Neumann-Holzschuh (1993) can be found a comparison of *réunionnais* and *seychellois* in terms of specific grammatical points of divergence between the two speech varieties.

3.2.11 Papen (1978): comparison among the varieties in the Indian Ocean

Papen's (1978) dissertation is a work remarkable in its scope. Unfortunately, it does not seem as fully reliable as one might wish for the linguistic data for the VLR. Papen presents socio-historical data and the contemporary sociological and linguistic picture for the island of Réunion (1978:16-20; 38-53), as well as the characteristic traits of the grammar of Réunion Creole. He lists Réunion Creole data along with data from the creoles of the Indian Ocean throughout, which allows convenient comparisons with data of the Creoles of Mauritius, the Seychelles, and Rodrigues. Notable is Papen's assertion (1978:45) about a *post-creole continuum* in Réunion:

> This does not mean that Réunion is a totally unified whole. Quite the contrary, it represents a rather typical case of what has been called by DeCamp and others *a post-creole continuum*. Although DeCamp (1971) takes the linguistic situation of Jamaica as the typical example, his definition also fits the Réunion situation in most respects. ... DeCamp also discussed the conditions necessary for a post-creole speech community. As we have seen, these also operate in Réunion.

Papen (1978:48-9) also has an interesting comment and warning after he discusses Deltel's (1969) account of three types of Creole:

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[52] "... in Kommunikationssituationen ohne Beteiligung von Franzosen, konnten sich 'falsche' Formen auf die Dauer durchsetzen und grammatikalisiert werden" [Bollée 1977:140].

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> If we take into account all of the above facts, we are forced to conclude that any classification based on regional or ethnic lines is doomed to failure and that the distinctions which operate are those identified by DeCamp, namely socio-economic ones.

3.2.12 Valdman (1978a): relations with the Caribbean

Valdman (1978a) writes about the importance of certain socio-historical data for the development of vernacular lects in Réunion and is the first to draw some interesting *parallels with the linguistic situation in St. Barts*. He writes (Valdman 1978a: 34-5):

> It is the importance of the number of *Blancs des Hauts* which constitutes the linguistic specificity of Réunion. ... They have always maintained a regional variety of French of an 'advanced type', a variety which has not yet been the object of a thorough study. The existence of a deeply rooted local variety of French adds another element to the French-creole diglossia, and certain authors (Valkhoff 1964) have gone as far as to name the Réunionnais Creole a creolized form of French rather than a French creole. Besides Standard French there are three different kinds of language in Réunion (Chaudenson 1974): 1. the créole des Bas, spoken by the Réunionnais of African, Malagasy, and Indian origin; 2. the créole des Hauts, used by the upland Whites; 3. the urban creole which is strongly gallicized. In any case, the descriptions of Réunionnais mention problems of variation which remind one of the linguistic gradient noted by G. Lefebvre (1976) among the *Petits Blancs* of Saint Barts.[53]

About the relevance of the linguistic situation on St. Barts, Valdman (1978a: 305-20, *passim*) writes:

> To this day there is no detailed description of the speech variety (or varieties) of the *Petits Blancs* of Saint Barts or Réunion, but the studies which report on the linguistic situation in these two regions (Gilles Lefebvre 1975 for Saint Barts and

[53] "C'est l'importance du nombre des Blancs des Hauts qui fait la spécificité linguistique de la Réunion. ... Ils ont toujours conservé une variété régionale de français de type 'avancé', variété qui n'a pas encore fait l'objet d'une étude approfondie. L'existence d'une variété locale de français profondément enracinée ajoute un autre élément à la diglossie français-créole, et certains auteurs (Valkhoff 1964) sont allés jusqu'à qualifier le créole réunionnais de 'français créole' plutôt que de créole français. Outre le français standard trois variétés de langue se distinguent à la Réunion (Chaudenson 1974): (1) le créole des Bas, parlé par les réunionnais d'origine africaine, malgache et indienne; (2) le créole des Hauts, pratiqué par les Blancs des Hauts; (3) le créole urbain, fortement francisé. Toutefois, les descriptions du réunionnais mentionnent des problèmes de variation qui évoquent le gradient linguistique noté par G. Lefebvre (1976) chez les Petits-Blancs de Saint-Barth" [Valdman 1978a: 34-5].

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> Robert Chaudenson 1973, 1975[54] for Réunion) mention a gradient of speech varieties called regional French, a "creolized" variety of French and creole.[55] ... As on Saint Barts, the continued use of Standard French makes identifying the different varieties in contact complicated to identify. ... Chaudenson mentions a distinction between regional French and creolized French without specifying what distinguishes them on phonological, morpho-syntactic and lexical levels. Maybe we are dealing with a local variety of French which developed when the old colony was founded through contact with various *oïl* regional speech forms or even the local variety of what some have called "Maritime French" (Hull 1974) which would have become creolized at a later date. The upland Whites would use a less creolized form of speech closer to the original idiom. Indeed, they themselves consider their speech to be the authentic creole with respect to the Creole of the Blacks and the Indians of the coastal zone, called "Kafir speech" or "Black speech" (Chaudenson 1973). The speech form of the uplands distinguishes itself from the creole des Bas by its greater degree of gallicization.[56]

About the upland Creole Valdman (1978a:309-11) points out:

> For example, we find in it the use of inflected verbal forms in opposition to the preverbal markers of the creole (*kâ li lavé fini mâzé; kâ li té fini mâzé;* 'quand il avait fini de manger' ['when he had finished eating'] ou *m i mâzé; mwê té i mâz;* 'je mangeais' ['I was eating']). The creolization of the French seems to consist in the use of words from the creole, which leads to constructions that are parallel to those of standard French but which all the same remain incomprehensible if one ignores the meaning of the creole lexemes (*Les marmailles ont gagné des bonbons avec leur tantine* 'Les enfants ont reçu des bonbons de leur tante.' ['The children have received candy from their aunt'.]) This sentence is in fact a calque of the creole: *mamaj la gêj bôbô èk tâtin*". ... In conclusion, the speech

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[54] This must be Chaudenson (1978), which is mentioned in Valdman's (1978a) bibliography.

[55] "A ce jour il n'existe aucune description détaillée du parler (ou des parlers) des Petits Blancs saint barthiens ou réunionnais mais les études qui font état de la situation linguistique de ces deux régions (Gilles Lefebvre 1975 pour Saint-Barth et Robert Chaudenson 1973, 1975 pour la Réunion) font mention d'une gamme de parlers dénommés français régional, français créolisé et créole" [Valdman 1978a: 305ff]. [Valdman's (1978a) bibliography does not mention a Lefebvre 1975. Lefebvre 1976 must have been meant. Also, his bibliography does not mention a Chaudenson 1975. Chaudenson 1974 must have been meant.]

[56] "Comme à Saint-Barth, l'extension du français standard complique l'identification des diverses variétés en contact. ... Chaudenson fait état d'une distinction entre un français régional et un français créolisé sans toutefois préciser ce qui les distingue sur les plans phonologique, morphosyntaxique et lexical. Peut-être s'agit-il d'une variété locale de français élaborée lors de la fondation de l'ancienne colonie de l'île de Bourbon par le contact de divers parlers régionaux oïl ou même de la variété locale de ce que certains ont dénommé 'français maritime' (Hull 1974) qui se serait par la suite créolisée. Les Blancs des Hauts useraient d'une variété moins créolisée et plus proche de l'idiome original. En effet, ceux-ci considèrent que leur parler est le véritable créole par rapport au parler des Noirs et des Indiens de la bande côtière, qualifié de 'parler Cafre' ou 'parler Noir" (Chaudenson 1973). Le parler des Hauts se distingue du créole des Bas par sa plus grande francisation" [Valdman 1978a:309].

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> form of the Windward Coast of Saint Barts and that of the upland Whites seem to reflect the deepest layer (*strate*) of colonial French and their description is of fundamental importance to the explanation of the genesis and development of the French creoles.[57]

3.2.13 A new stage

Since 1931, the study of the VLR had come a long way. Now, socio-historical conditions and the role of the substrate languages have taken the place of the psychological difference between the new vernaculars and their superstrate language. Also different degrees of creolization are considered in a more technical way as creole traits are increasingly considered crucial in defining the creole status of a vernacular. The stage was set for the debate about Chaudenson's (1974, 1981) "Bourbonnais Theory".

3.3 The debate about Chaudenson's "Bourbonnais Theory" (1979 to the present)

The most recent writings on the VLR have been dominated by the debate about the origins of the VLR and their relation to the Indian Ocean Creoles (IOC), namely Mauritian Creole (MC), Seychelles Creole (SC) and Rodrigues Creole (RC). The debate has centered around specific, mainly morpho-syntactic differences between the VLR and the IOC. If on the whole Chaudenson's (1974, 1979) "Bourbonnais Theory" has met with much criticism from English-speaking creolists, his views on the origins of creoles have recently found a

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[57] "Par exemple on y observe l'emploi de formes verbales fléchies qui s'opposent aux marqueurs pré-verbaux du créole [*kâ li lavé fini mâzé; kâ li té fini mâzé;* 'quand il avait fini de manger' ou *m i mâzé; mwé té i mâz;* 'je mangeais'.] La créolisation du français semble résider dans l'emploi de vocables du créole, ce qui aboutit à des constructions parallèles à celles du français standard qui demeurent néanmoins incompréhensibles si l'on ignore le sens créole des lexèmes [Les marmailles ont gagné des bonbons avec leur tantine 'Les enfants ont reçu des bonbons de leur tante.'] Cette phrase est en fait calquée du créole: *mamaj la gèj bôbô èk tâtin*". ... En conclusion, le parler de la zone Sous le Vent de Saint-Barth et celui des Blancs des Hauts de la Réunion semblent refléter la strate la plus profonde du français colonial et leur description est d'importance fondamentale pour l'explication de la genèse et du développement des parlers créoles français" [Valdman 1978a: 309-11].

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favorable echo in the writings of Mufwene (1996, 2000, 2001). Meanwhile, Chaudenson's position has remained essentially unchanged, although he seems to have become slightly more flexible on the issue of substratal influence.[58]

3.3.1 Hull (1979): a different scenario for the origin of the VLR

Hull (1979) is the first creolists who explicitly questioned the soundness of Chaudenson's "Bourbonnais Theory". He does this on historical and linguistic grounds, comparing the VLR, Mauritian Creole, and Seychellois Creole on the basis of lexical, phonological and morpho-syntacic evidence. For him (Hull 1979:211) Chaudenson's (1974) "strong case for the essentially independent development of Réu[nion] Cr[eole]" is correct, "the basic structure of this dialect [being] sufficiently different from the other Cr[eole] varieties to make this likely."

There are three important points that characterize Hull's (1979) understanding of the emergence and development of the VLR. The first is the importance he ascribes to the Indo-Portuguese languages spoken by the Indian wives of the early settlers. He writes (Hull 1979:211): "The Indo-Portuguese dialects must have played a considerable role in determining the shape of Réu[nionnais] Cr[eole] (many of the early colonists married Indo-Portuguese women)—for example, the prefixing of /a-/ to the stressed personal pronouns." Second, he considers Maritime French as important input in the emergence of

[58] Cf. Chaudenson 1992:168-70: on the influence of Malagasy on the use of personal pronouns.

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the VLR, which for him did not arise from a French pidgin, although such a pidgin can have influenced them at a later stage. Hull (1979:211) explains:[59]

> RéuCr is of course also based on MarFr, and many of the resemblances between it and Caribbean Cr are due to this. RéuCr does have many traits in common with the rest of Cr, however, which cannot be attributed specifically to MarFr (the vowel system, /mun/ 'person', *corps* as a reflexive pronoun). Diffusion among tropical French settlements was common (cf. the already mentioned *vocabulaire des 'isles'*). Even though RéuCr is not derived from PidgFr, it undoubtedly was influenced by it later, as traders, sailors, and slaves arrived on the island speaking PidgFr. There is no doubt that /môd/ 'people' was MarFr (cf. CanFr "D'ailleurs, en Europe, le monde se lavent pas" ...), and the loss of number in Cr would naturally lead to its use in the singular meaning. The form /mun/, however, is very archaic (even AcadFr has /u/ from earlier /û/ only in words where it was originally followed by /m/ or /n/, as in *pomme* /pum/). It may, therefore, have belonged to a prepidgin "petit nègre". But note that the form /môd/ is used in the Réunion uplands (Chaudenson 1974: 815), and could be the original RéuCr. In this case, /mun/ would have come to Réunion later from PidgFr. *Corps* is more likely to be an Africanism (West and East) than a dialectal French term (despite the arguments in Chaudenson 1974: 733-734), and again to have come to RéuCr either from a pre-pidgin or from PidgFr itself, which certainly used it.

Hull (1979:211) sees pidgin French as a variety spoken widely in the 17th and 18th centuries, as can be seen in this comment on it role in the emergence of Mauritian Creole:

> It is probable that an essential role in transmitting PidgFr to Mauritius was played by white sailors, soldiers, and traders, who by the early eighteenth century must have been quite generally diglossic in French and PidgFr. Settlers learned PidgFr during the long ship voyages. Slaves were taught only PidgFr. There were only direct contacts with the Caribbean: for example, Chaudenson (1974:1093) notes that two blacks were sent from Haiti to Mauritius in 1738 to set up indigo cultivation on that island.

Thirdly, Hull (1979:211-12) sees certain traits as specific of the VLR and as distinguishing it from Mautitian Creole:

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[59] Hull's (1979) abbreviations are the following: MarFr (martime French); PidgFr (pidgin French); StFr (Standard French); Cr (Creole[s]); AcadFr (Acadian French); CanFr (Canadian French); HaitCr (Haitian Creole); LaCr (Louisiana Creole); MaurCr (Mauritian Creole); SeychCr (Seychellois Creole).

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> If one accepts the authenticity of the early eighteenth century document cited by Chaudenson (1974:1147) as evidence for the existence of RéuCr in virtually its present form at that time, this is further proof that MaurCr is not derived from RéuCr. The sentence, "Moin la parti marron parcequ'Alexis l'homme de jardin l'était qui fait à moin trop l'amour" is indeed good RéuCr, and most emphatically not MaurCr. The form /mwê/ 'I, me' (MaurCr /mo/, /mwa/); the past tense particle /la/ (MaurCr only /te/); the structure 'leteki/; the prefixed *à* before stressed *moin*—these are among the most obvious traits which differentiate RéuCr from MaurCr. Unless we assume that two quite different types of Cr were spoken on Réunion in 1720 (unlikely on the face of it, although of course some recent immigrants may have spoken PidgFr on that island), we must admit that MaurCr evolved on Mauritius out of a nucleus of PidgFr, with only secondary borrowings from RéuCr. SeychCr derives from early MaurCr, not RéuCr.

And he further adds (Hull 1979:211):

> Of great importance is the fact that *oi*-words have /wa/ in MaurCr, almost exclusively, whereas /we/ is common in RéuCr, and must have been universal in the seventeenth century. Here MaurCr, like LaCr, betrays its late (i.e. eighteenth century) origins. By 1720, PidgFr, like much of urban colloquial French in France, must have virtually abandoned the pronunciation /we/ for *oi*. Had MaurCr merely begun as a basilectal variety of early RéuCr, as Chaudenson assumes, it is highly unlikely that it would have 'modernized' the pronunciation of these words.

Hull (1979:212) considers Chaudenson's theory of the origin of Mauritian Creole in the VLR as "untenable":

> When we come to MaurCr, and its offshoot in the Seychelles, however, it is a very different story. Chaudenson assumes, without really coming to grips with the problems involved, that MaurCr and SeychCr derive from an earlier from of RéuCr (which he calls Bourbonnais). The different character of modern RéuCr would be due, essentially, to decreolization caused by the continuing presence of French on that island. This is an untenable theory. It is likely that some features of MauCr structure (e.g. the development of two sets of verb forms for final and pre-final position), and obviously of vocabulary, are of RéuCr origin (but even such items as /zot/ 'third person plural pronoun' are found elsewhere in Cr, in this case in the north of Haiti, and must have occurred as variants in PidgFr).

Hull (1979:212) points to the nature of the verb phrase as different in the VLR and MC:

> But the basic verb structure of MauCr is entirely different from RéuCr, and originally nearly identical to HaitCr. As pointed out by Goodman (who did not have adequate information on RéuCr to differentiate the two dialects, and

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> therefore used the term 'Indian Ocean Creoles' when in reality only MaurCr was involved), there are some very specific traits by which MaurCr (but not RéuCr) is clearly connected to the Caribbean Cr dialects (/mo/, /mwa/ as allomorphs of the first person singular pronoun; /volor/, 'to steal', /vini/, /vin/ 'to come', etc.). ... The only other explanation would be to assume a *greater* degree of StFr influence in Mauritius, which is totally implausible.

Hull's view is that the early vernacular in Bourbon had stabilized by 1715, but was "more intricate" than the speech variety on Mauritius. Indeed, he writes (Hull 1979:212-3):

> On Réunion, where the local Cr had already been stabilized, PidgFr could have only minor influence. But PidgFr speakers soon outnumbered RéunCr speakers on Mauritius, and their more highly reduced dialect was destined to supplant the more complex RéuCr, thus preventing a truly unified language from growing up on the two islands. In the Seychelles, too, the 'simpler' form of speech easily supplanted the more intricate RéuCr.

Hull seems to consider the survival of an acrolectal form of speech in Réunion as due to the lack of contact with the slaves from Africa (as well as perhaps those from Madagascar?)—which makes the *Petits Créoles* come to mind, when he states (Hull 1979:213):

> Where black influence was subsequently removed, a somewhat decreolized form of Cr could remain as the only language on the islands, as on Réunion, or on St. Barts. In the latter case, a *Ka*-Creole coexists with a semi-Cr dialect which shows very interesting effects of decreolization, as for example such verb forms as /zə te ki ri(e)/ 'I laughed', derivable by back-formation from Cr /mwê te ka ri/. Note also the similar RéuCr /(le) te ki/, also resulting from an attempt to 'make sense' in terms of StFr structure of a Cr construction, in this case the RéuCr /te i/. But on the whole, Cr and French remain psychologically distinct, even though a good deal of interference may occur in both directions where diglossia is common ... . No 'post-Creole continuum' has formed, as in English Cr-speaking areas.

In other words, decreolization would also be a key factor in understanding the "more intricate" nature of the VLR.

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Hull (1979:212) points to what he calls the "predicate marker /i/ in Seychellois Creole and the VLR, and mentions its possible origin in the latter:

> The principal phonological and structural differences between MaurCr and SeychCr today seem to be the lack of the recent nasalization rule in SeychCr, and the use of the /i/ as predicate marker (but only in the third person, unlike RéuCr). Both of these are simply older MaurCr (for /i/, cf. Chaudenson 1974:967-968). The use of the predicate marker must have been optional at one stage on Mauritius: the past aspect particle /ti/ probably represents a contraction of /te + i/. This suggests that MaurCr was somewhat less stable in its early stages, during the period when the contact with RéuCr was greater than after the political separation of the two islands.

3.3.2 Chaudenson (1981a): the role of "basilectal erosion"

The purpose of Chaudenson (1981a) is to establish the "Bourbonnais Theory" on firmer ground. In his analysis of old vernacular texts from Réunion and Mauritius, Chaudenson tries to find evidence that the origin of Mauritian Creole is in the Bourbonnais that was brought to the island of Mauritius by the settlers from Bourbon in 1721. He writes (Chaudenson 1981a:250):

> The study of ancient texts confirms that the presence of a continuum in Réunion is not recent. Our basic hypothesis is then that many structures that are characteristic of other creoles (Mauritian, but also, in part Seychellois and Rodrigues Creoles) existed in Réunionnais in the 18th century, and even into the 19th century, before they disappeared from it in accordance with a sociolinguistic process that we will try to make clear and that can be schematically characterized as a "basilectal erosion" of the continuum.[60]

[60] "L'étude des textes anciens confirme que, dans cette île [i.e. La Réunion], la situation de continuum n'est pas récente. Notre hypothèse de base est donc que nombre de structures caractéristiques des autres créoles (mauricien, mais aussi, en partie, seychellois et rodriguais) apparaissent en réunionnais au XVIIIe et même encore au XIXe siècle avant d'en disparaître selon un processus d'ordre sociolinguistique que nous essayerons de mettre en évidence et qu'on peut caractériser schématiquement comme une 'érosion basilectale' du continuum" [Chaudenson 1981a:250].

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Even though he points out that texts by such authors as Héry are to be used cautiously,[61] he blithely presents the variants in Héry's texts as if they were *bona fide* data in the lects of native speakers. This does not inspire confidence in the evidence[62] he puts forward when he suggests (Chaudenson 1981a:249-50) that:

> The comparison with Mauritian Creole confirms this interpretation, and one notices then that on the whole the items that have been eliminated from Réunionnais while subsisting in Mauritian Creole, are those that were characteristic of the "basilectal" Creole (1. the agglutinated article; 2. "li"; 7. the present of the "moi manzé" type; 9. the past of the "était manzé" type; 13 and 14. the zero copula—"n'a pas" in the negative form). This evolution took place in the course of the 19th century, and some traits still appeared around 1880.[63]

Chaudenson (1981a) considers the opposite phenomenon to have occurred in Mauritius to the one that took place in Réunion. He explains (Chaudenson 1981a:250) it this way:

> As one of the major modes of "exportation'\" of Bourbonnais to the Ile de France was the shipping of Creole slaves from Bourbon, who were responsible for taking care of and instructing the first Malagasy slaves bought to the new colony—especially linguistically speaking, it was no doubt the most basilectal forms of Bourbonnais that were thus introduced et which as such contributed to establishing the new speech variety. The emigration—whether contemporary and/or subsequent—of White Creoles (or so-called) from Bourbon favored the introduction or maintenance of acrolectal forms, at least in the middle or upper levels of the population ... forms that were most often eliminated in due time.[64]

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[61] "Naturally these writings must be considered cautiously since they are the work of *literati* [Héry was not from Réunion] ..." ("Bien entendu ces écrits doivent être considérés avec prudence puisqu'ils sont l'oeuvre de lettrés [Héry n'était d'ailleurs pas Réunionnais] ...") [Chaudenson 1981a:9].

[62] Baker (1987:74) mentions on this point about Chaudenson's demonstration that "in a few cases the proof is based solely on Héry's *Fables*, texts which, as I have shown (Baker 1982b, Baker 1984), illustrate ill-learned Réunionnais of speakers born in Africa rather than that of those born on the island" ("dans quelques cas, la preuve est basée exclusivement sur les *Fables* d'Héry, textes qui, comme je l'ai démontré (Baker 1982b, Baker 1984), représentent le Réu[nionnais] mal acquis de personnes nées en Afrique plutôt que celui de la population née dans l'île").

[63] "La comparaison avec le mauricien confirme cette interprétation et l'on constate alors que, dans l'ensemble, les faits qui ont été éliminés en réunionnais tout en subsistant en mauricien, sont ceux qui étaient caractéristiques du créole "basilectal" (1. Article agglutiné; 2. 'li'; 7. Présent du type 'moi manzé'; 9. "Passé du type 'était manzé'; 13 et 14. Degré zéro de la copule—'n'a pas' à la forme négative--). Cette évolution s'est réalisée au cours du XIX[e] siècle et certains traits apparaissent encore vers 1880" [Chaudenson 1981a:249-50].

[64] "Comme l'un des modes majeurs de l''exportation' du parler bourbonnais à l'Ile de France a été l'envoi d'esclaves créoles de Bourbon, chargés d'encadrer et d'instruire—en particulier sur le plan linguistique—les premiers esclaves malgaches amenés dans la nouvelle colonie, ce sont sans doute les formes les plus

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Much depends on whether the French-based speech varieties of the Indian Ocean are a homogeneous group[65] (as Chaudenson [1981a] is intent on proving) or not—a matter Baker (1982b) and Corne (1982) were soon to address. The question is whether this view contributes to a correct picture of the origin and development of the VLR or whether it distorts it for the sake of saving a theory. The theory rests on two prerequisites: 1. that the VLR and Mauritian Creole had a great deal in common in the 18th century; and 2. that the French-creole continuum has always been about the same in Réunion.[66]

3.3.3 Baker (1982a - 2002): a "creativist" or "constructive approach"

In the aftermath of Hull (1979), and in the face of Chaudenson's (1981a) assertions, Baker (1982b) and Corne (1982), which were published together in one book, proceeded to reject Chaudenson's "Bourbonnais Theory". The former did it on the basis of well researched socio-historical data as well as linguistic evidence, while the latter did it in a point by point comparison of various structures in the VLR and Mauritian Creole.

Baker (1982b:241-2) distinguishes two theories in Chaudenson's writings: what he calls a "strong version" (i.e. Chaudenson 1974) and a "weak version" (i.e. Chaudenson 1979c). In the earlier version, Chaudenson (1974:446) claims that: "The slaves brought to

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basilectales du bourbonnais qui ont été introduites par cette voie et qui ont, de ce fait, servi de base au nouveau parler. L'émigration—contemporaine et/ou ultérieure—de créoles blancs (ou reputés tels) de Bourbon a favorisé l'introduction ou le maintien de formes acrolectales, au moins dans les couches sociales moyennes ou supérieures ... . Ces dernières ont le plus souvent été éliminées par la suite" [Chaudenson 1981a:250].

[65] Chaudenson (1981a:vi) refutes the concept of an Indian Ocean Creole group apart from the VLR. "[a] view" that "neither a synchronic analysis ... nor a historic study seem to sustain" ("Cette vue ne paraît résister ni à l'analyse synchronique ... ni à l'étude historique ... .").

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the island [i.e. Mauritius] in greater numbers after 1730 are therefore in the presence of a linguistically homogeneous colony, since the masters and slaves established in it speak only one language: the 'Bourbonnais' Creole."[67] In the later version, Chaudenson (1979:543) claims that: "There is no doubt that the settlers and slaves from Bourbon played an important role in the early period of this colony. It is they, in particular, who brought to the island their Bourbonnais Creole which, through a particular evolution would become Mauritian Creole, which is considerably different from Réunionnais."[68]

Baker (1982b:241ff) questions the role of Bourbonnais as the input to early Mauritian Creole. He considers both of Chaudenson's scenarios impossible. For one thing the number of speakers of Réunionnais on Mauritius dwindled to none by 1726, and for another the multilingual situation brought about by the arrival of slaves of different origins would have necessitated a new vehicle for communication. According to Baker (1982b:241), in the period 1727-30, the non-French population of Mauritius increased from about 30, all apparently Malagasies, to perhaps 1,000, who spoke different languages. There was no "readily-available" or homogeneous target language available to the new arrivals, and this is Baker's point. He shows that West Africans formed a majority of the slave population of Mauritius in the period 1730-35.

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[66] Carayol & Chaudenson (1978:180). Cf. Appendix C2, Note 23.

[67] "Les esclaves introduits dans l'île, en plus grand nombre, après 1730, se trouvent donc en présence d'une colonie homogène sur le plan linguistique, puisque maître et esclaves déjà installés y parlent une seule langue: le créole 'bourbonnais'" [Chaudenson 1974:446].

[68] "Il ne fait pas de doute que les colons et les esclaves bourbonnais ont joué un rôle important dans les premiers temps de cette colonie. C'est eux, en particulier, qui ont amené dans l'île le créole bourbonnais qu'ils parlaient et qui par une évolution particulière deviendra le créole mauricien, sensiblement différent du réunionnais" [Chaudenson 1979:543].

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Invoking the presence of pidgin French, as Hull (1979) does, Baker's argument is that slaves who were exposed to a form of West African pidgin French could explain the striking parallels between Atlantic French creoles and the creoles of the Indian Ocean. He goes to great lengths to prove that the picture of the early population of Mauritius is quite different from what Chaudenson presents. The main factor in explaining the differences between Mauritian Creole and Réunionnais and the similarities between it and Haitian Creole for Baker (1982b:254) is "the relatively low degree of access to the francophone population available to the first locally-born slaves in Mauritius and Haiti, in contrast to those in Réunion from 1665-1715."

Baker (1982b:208) also gives linguistic evidence to counter Chaudenson's theory, based on evidence concerning the following items from early texts:[69] 1. *ban*, the "emphasizer of plurality"; 2. third person "third person reprise") *i/li* in SC, MC, and HC, and RC "predicate precursors" (i.e. *l'/y l*); 3. personal pronouns in HC, MC, and RC; 4. negators *napa* and *pa* in RC, MC, and HC; 5. "predicate" markers in RC, MC, and HC.

For these items, Baker (1982b:236-7) notes that: 1. *ban* is known to exist only in IdeFC;[70] 2. some Réunionnais items attested before 1800 and today do not exist in any MC text (i.e. *l* and *i* precursors; initial *a-* with pronouns; negator *pa* post-posed to the verb; and *l'était qui* verb forms); 3. items in MC formerly and presently shared with HC but not attested in Réunionnais (i.e. *li* reprise; preposed *mo* and *to* pronouns; preposed

[69] Baker's (1982b) abbreviations are: HC (Haitian Creole), IdeFC (Isle de France Creole), MC (Mauritian Creole) RC (Reunionnais Creole), and SC (Seychelles Creole).

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negation *n'a pas*; immediate past TMA marker *fek;* and the majority of two- or three-part "marker" combinations.) He notes as "remarkable" the fact that MC "quite simply lacks any TMA marker which is not attested in HC." These data "fail to show that RC and MC formerly had more in common ... than they have today" and, together with the data on the peopling of Mauritius to 1735, contribute, for Baker, to cast much doubt on the "Bourbonnais Theory".

To further make his point, Baker (1987) uses morpho-syntactic evidence, namely pronominal forms, to establish the existence of five areas of French-creole genesis: Louisiana, the Antilles, French Guyana, Isle de France and Réunion. There is a separate area for the VLR and for Mauritian Creole.

In the framework of a "creativist" approach or "constructive approach" (Baker 2000:3) to pidgin and creole genesis, a scenario takes shape in Baker (1994; 1996; 2000) in which the VLR are speech varieties born of the need for interethnic communication. He distinguishes (Baker 2000:3) between "medium for inter-ethnic communication (MIC)" and "medium for community solidarity (MCS)". "All pidgins and creoles," he comments, "are, or were formerly, MICs; many subsequently became MCSs." He points out (Baker 2000:54):

> During the 18th century when the MCS kown today as Mauritian Creole was developing, there was also a very substantial increase in the rate of slave arrivals in Reunion. There would thus have been a greater role in Reunion as well for an MIC for use with and between foreign-born slaves; but there would also have

[70] "Isle de France Creole" is a term coined by Baker (1981) and Corne (1982) to refer to the homogeneous group of the creoles of the Indian Ocean (excluding the VLR), from the former, French name for the island of Mauritius.

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> been two very important differences from the Mauritian situation. First, the Reunion MIC would result largely from contacts between slaves and speakers of *Bourbonnais* (rather than varieties of metropolitan French). Second, by the 1730s, *Bourbonnais* would already have been the established language of locally-born slaves for several decades. This would have made it difficult for an elaborated MIC to replace *Bourbonnais* as the MCS of locally-born slaves, but it could well be that the more basilectal varieties of modern Reunion Creole were influenced by this elaborated MIC.

This suggests a very different origin for basilectal traits than does Chaudenson. In fact, Baker (2000:53) also gives this view of the emergence of the VLR:

> In the unusual Reunion case, I assume that the emergent language of the new community would have been a dialectally-levelled variety of French with some influence from Malagasy and other languages represented during this period [i.e. before 1686] ... . While an embryonic MIC might well have been used with and among new slave arrivals at this time, their offspring—already accounting for 40% of the slave population in 1709—would also acquire Bourbonnais, the principal language of the settlement, and would have little use for the MIC thereafter. Not until the rate of slave arrivals increased substantially would the MIC acquire a more important role.

3.3.4 Corne (1982 - 1999): a "unique blend of continuation and of language creation"

Corne's (1982) very detailed and well-researched demonstration of the typological difference between R[eunionnais] C[reole] (i.e. the VLR) and the Creoles of the Indian Ocean[71] (consists in showing that the former are not a creole, while the latter is. This is clear from what he writes (Corne 1982:102) about the verbal system and the predicate system of the two languages:

> In [section] A1, the verbal system of RC is shown to be fundamentally "French" in its makeup and to be based on a relatively rigid "parts-of-speech" categorization of lexical items, including the syntactic structures. The morphological, syntactic, and semantic structures are all basically "French." "Creole" features, such as the use of *fin(i)* ... do exist, but are rather marginal. In [section] A2, a "new" analysis, which claims to represent the way in which the IdeFC predicate system actually functions, depicts a language whose

[71] IdeFC refers to the common elements in the Indian Ocean Creoles.

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> organization is fundamentally different from that of RC. This system is based on the multifunctionality of lexical items, which are generally morphologically invariant. The system is essentially an aspectually based one, using preposed particles. The notions of Action, Process and State are fundamental to the operation of the IdeFC system, in clear contrast to their relative unimportance in RC.

On the basis of the presence or absence in it of characteristic traits that identify creoles,[72] he claims (Corne 1982:128) that "RC [i.e. VLR] is, and always has been, typologically different from Isle de France Creole, and that it evolved under conditions which were not conducive to creolization (in Bickerton's sense)."[73] For Corne (1982:127) "RC must be seen basically as a *specific variety of French* [emphasis added]." In Corne (1999:73), he would state that the VLR is a "unique blend of continuation and of language creation". He therefore places it between New Caledonia *tayo* and Louisiana Creole French on a continuum of varieties of language derived from French.

The factors Corne (1982:125-6) puts forward as "contributing to the emergence of two typologically different languages" are:

a. The "French" input is partially different (e.g. the *lete ki* structure appears to have been absent from the "French" taken to Mauritius);

b. The conditions for rapid creolization were absent from Reunion during the formative years of RC (1663-ca 1715), while they were present in Mauritius from 1921-35 and after.

c. West Africans were present in Mauritius in significant numbers in the early years of settlement, while substrate languages are unlikely to have played a determining role in Réunion.

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[72] Comparison with Atlantic French creoles helps establish what these features are, due to what Corne (1982:9) calls the "affinity at a 'deep' structural level between Isle de France Creole and American Creole French."

[73] It is important to keep in mind Corne's caveat about the total accuracy of his data. He is "claiming" (Corne 1982:13) "that the picture of RC that emerges from the salient points of the system ... is an accurate portrayal of how the language 'works.'"

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Although Corne (1982) presents a slightly different analysis of the data from that in Corne (1978), and capitalizes on some particularly appropriate items to illustrate its case, the morpho-syntactic items listed in Corne's earlier writing are relevant to his claim about the "fundamental typological difference" between RC (i.e. the VLR) and IdeFC. These items include:

1. lexical elements in the Réunionnais TMA system unknown in IdeFC;
2. syntactic differences at the level of deep structure;
3. the use of the copula in surface structure;
4. the presentative copula;
5. the different placing of the negation *pa;*
6. far more complex verbal morphology in Réunionnais;
7. the *gaYN* + infinitive construction with different meanings in RC and IdeFC;
8. the *gaYN* passive as inexistent in Réunionnais;
9. double predication; and;
10. indefinite subject deletion.

Corne also analyzes and compares the subject reference pronoun *i* common to RC and SC and the *lete ki* construction present in RC but absent from IdeFC. Some relevant points are commented on below.

1. Corne (1982:13ff) shows that the verb *et(r)* 'be' functions as a *copula* much as it does in French (except as an auxiliary verb). The French-like forms *le, la* (present), *sra/sora* (future), *lete, te* (past), *sre, sore* (conditional), *ete, te* (past participle), *etr, et* (infinitive) show this. "As in French," comments Corne, "the copula is used to carry marks of tense (and aspect) which other lexical items such as adjectives or nouns or adverbs cannot carry":

li le prese (3s COP hurried) 'he is in a hurry'
l diab la pa pov (DET devil COP NEG poor) 'the devil is not poor'
muê (le)te malad (1s COP sick) 'I was sick'.

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2. RC has an auxiliary verb *a(v)uar* 'have', which, Corne comments, "is used to form tenses analogous to the *temps composés* of French." For example, in:

muê nora ete malad (1s COP PastPart ill) 'I shall/would have been ill'

Also the past tense forms for 'I ate' are varied:

muê lete ki mâz/muê lete i mâz/muê te ki mâz/ muê te i mâz.

3. What Papen (1978:389) calls a "presentative copula" found in RC, *se* (present) and *sete* (past), is another French-like element in favor of Corne's point. Examples are:

se la pud mayok (COP manioc powder) 'it is manioc powder'
N, sete ê mo dâ la ger (N, COP DET word in war) 'N, it was a word in the war'.

4. The position of the negator is the same as in French, namely after the copula:

muê le pa malad (1s COP NEG malad) 'I'm not ill'
muê (le) p'apre mâze (1s (COP) NEG PROG eat) "I'm not eating'
muê la pa mâze (1s PAST NEG eat) 'I haven't eaten'

5. Corne (1982:49ff) discusses Final Vowel Truncation (FVT) that RC shares with IdeFC as an important feature for establishing the continuum of RC, but also to show that it cannot be used as an argument for the common origin of RC and IdeFC. For Corne (1982:102) "it seems to apply in RC quite gratuitously as far as meaning is concerned."

6. A morpho-syntactic structure Corne (1982:102) sees as pointing to RC being a different system is the "*gaŋ* Construction" (Corne's spelling is *gay*). While RC has a use of *gaŋ*, which is derived from 17th century dialectal forms of French, it does not have the *gaŋ* passive construction particular to the IdeFC, and so cannot be the source of its forms in IdeFC any more than French can.

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7. Corne (1982:102) considers the "Atlantic Creole structure of 'double predication'" (or predicate clefting) to be "reflected in IdeFC" although "no RC and no French model for it is known." An example of it in MC is:

> *batté li capave batté* (beat 3s can beat)
> 'he can beat her as much as he likes' (Corne 1982:85).

8. Corne also mentions another focusing strategy which he calls "indefinite subject deletion" as absent from RC. An example of this strategy in IdeFC is:

> *lôtâ, ti degrad karo kan ar pios* (long ago PAST clear field cane with ax)
> 'in the old days, they/one/people cleared cane fields with pick axes'.

It should be added that in the discussion of what he calls the "Final Vowel Truncation (FVT) rule" that applies to the verb (i.e. regulates the use of its long and short forms), Corne (1982:49-62) proposes not only a criterion for distinguishing between MC and the VLR, but a criterion for establishing a continuum within the VLR on a morphosyntactic basis. He considers it (Corne 1982:127) "a morphosyntactic feature that might delimit (one aspect of) the RC continuum" that "has remained a totally unsuspected possibility". This would be, he points out, the first evidence of a syntactic continuum. There is evidence, for Corne (1982:61) that "the consistent application of FVT is a feature of basilectal RC," which would make this lect more akin to Mauritian Creole and different from the acrolect. (Cf. §5.5.4.4 for discussion of long and short forms in the VLR).

However, most importantly, Corne (1982111) presents the first detailed scenario for the emergence and development of the lects in Bourbon from the beginnings of the colony to the end of the 19th century. It distinguishes between the *lete ki* lect (existing by

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1720) and the lect of the *Petits Blancs* (acrolect), and the coastal lect of the African slaves (basilect), both of which were derived from the *lete ki* of the early 18th century, but by way of different language changes or maintenance of specific linguistic traits.

3.3.5 Carayol & Chaudenson: the Linguistic and Ethnographic Atlas of Réunion

The atlas of Carayol and Chaudenson (1984, 1989) is a milestone in phonetic and lexical analysis of a linguistic territory on the basis of carefully devised questionnaires. It gives a very precise sense of the distribution of basic phonetic and lexical variants in the VLR. The countless interviews that Barat and Carayol conducted and taped, some of which served as the basis for this work (Set A), constitute priceless data for the state of the VLR in the 1970s. Unfortunately many of these tape-recordings appear to have been "lost".

3.3.6 Chaudenson (1992, 1996, 2000): an unchanged position

In Chaudenson (1992) there is a somewhat different position, though *no departure* from the French creolist's previously held theory, namely that creoles are a natural evolution of tendencies already inherent in popular forms of French. Chaudenson (1992:146) writes that his "first hypothesis (1974) certainly stressed the importance to the creolization process of the 'linguistic contact' factor, but did not sufficiently examine its role."[74] His current hypothesis about creolization is then set forth in three points (Chaudenson 1992:146-7):

> Creolization is the result of sociolinguistic processes specific to the development of colonial societies born of French colonization in the 17th century. It is

[74] "... le premier état de mon hypothèse (1974) qui, certes, soulignait l'importance du facteur constitué par le 'contact linguistique' dans la créolisation ... mais n'en examinait pas suffisamment le rôle" [Chaudenson 1992:146].

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> characterized by the emergence of new autonomous systems from initial continua of approximations of popular and/or old dialectal French. These systems are characterized both by the acceleration and the radicalization of autonomization processes, of which the marginal forms of French, in particular of North America, offer examples, but also, and notably by restructurings or specific innovations. It is the latter which, resulting from the conditions and modes of informal acquisition of these varieties of approximate French, establish the linguistic autonomy of creoles constituting elements of the system which are external to the area of "normal" variability of French.[75]

"This point of view seems to me," he notes (Chaudenson 1992:148), "to be radically different (*largement en rupture*) from classical theories of creolization which define it essentially as 'nativization' and/or 'complexification' of a pidgin."[76] He (Chaudenson 1992:148) states further that:

> creolization can, in part, be considered as a special case of variation of French to the extent that the restructurings have affected areas of the original language which are themselves subject to variation, but at the same time as a radical linguistic change, since the structural changes have affected areas which are, in principle, not those of variations due to only language-internal factors.[77]

Chaudenson (1992:155) defines as Zero-French (F0) all the language-internally derived variations, and sees creolization as "beginning, on a linguistic level, when the variability spreads to areas of the system which are beyond Zero-French." For example, the use of *zot* for both the 2nd and 3rd person plural pronouns is a restructuring "of which

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[75] "[L]a créolisation est la résultante de processus sociolinguistiques propres au développement des sociétés coloniales nées de la colonisation française du XVIIe siècle; elle se caractérise par l'émergence, à partir de continuums initiaux d'approximations du français populaire et/ou dialectal ancien, de systèmes autonomes nouveaux; ces derniers sont caractérisés à la fois par l'accélération et la radicalisation de processus auto-régulateurs dont les français marginaux, d'Amérique du Nord en particulier, offrent des examples, mais aussi et surtout par des restructurations ou des innovations spécifiques; ce sont ces denières qui, résultant des conditions et des modes d'appropriation informelle de ces variétés approximatives de français, consacrent l'autonomie linguistique des créoles en affectant des éléments du système situés hors de l'aire de variabilité 'normale' du français" [Chaudenson 1992:146-7].

[76] "Ce point de vue me semble largement en rupture avec les théories classiques de la créolisation, qui la définissent surtout comme 'nativisation' et/ou'complexification' d'un pidgin ..." [Chaudenson 1992:147].

[77] "On peut, en partie, regarder la créolisation comme un cas très particulier de la variation du français dans la mesure où les restructurations ont affecté des zones, elles-mêmes variables, du système d'origine, mais elle est, en même temps, une mutation linguistique radicale puisque des changements structurels ont

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there is no example in any variety of French" (*dont aucune variété de français ne donne l'exemple*). In this way, varieties of French and creoles are defined by their distance from Zero-French. The French of Canada and St- Barthélémy are forms that are closest to the *terminus a quo* of creolization (i.e. the state of French which is the starting point of the creolization process) and constitutes the target language of the slaves introduced to Réunion. Réunion is particular to the extent that it has retained traces of this approximate French.[78]

Creolization can, therefore, for Chaudenson (1992:156) be said to be "the result of three groups of processes:

1. the (*radicalization*) and 'transmission' of restructurings which 'marginal' French speech forms point to and illustrate;

2. the 'emergence' (from 'Zero-French') of structures which do not occur in speech communities where French is transmitted as a first language. ... new structures due to changes related to language acquisition and linguistic contact;

3. internal evolution of systems related to their own dynamics, which, in certain cases, can be detected in old data ...; Réunionnais Creole manifests such a tendency towards "basilectal erosion" which has led, amongst other things, to the accentuating of its differences from Mauritian Creole ... ."[79]

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touché d'autres zones qui ne sont, en principe, pas atteintes dans la variation liée aux seuls facteurs intralinguistiques" [Chaudenson 1992:148].

[78] Chaudenson's (1981b) notion or construct of an "interlinguistic continuum," which for IOC depends entirely on the validity of his Bourbonnais theory, puts the finishing touch to his comparative study of forms of French, to be gauged by their distance from the standard.

[79] "1. La 'radicalisation' et la 'transmission' de restructurations dont des français 'marginaux' font apparaître l'orientation et offrent des variantes. ... 2. L'émergence (hors du 'français zéro') de structures que les français en usage dans les communautés où cette langue est transmise comme langue 1 ne présentent pas. ... ces nouvelles structures sont dues sans doute à des réaménagements liés à l'apprentissage et au contact linguistiques ... 3. L'évolution interne des systèmes liée leur dynamique propre et que, dans certains cas, on peut observer grâce aux témoignages anciens ... le créole réunionnais présente ainsi une tendance à l''érosion basilectale' qui a conduit, entre autres conséquences, à accentuer ses différences avec le mauricien ..." [Chaudenson 1992:156].

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This means that creolization is actually a "restructuring process" which is for Chaudenson not so different from the kind of restructuring to be found in normal language transmission. One cannot help but feel a disturbing current of what could be called a "preservation of French," as if French could not be mixed with or contaminated by other language systems. In fact, Chaudenson (1995:93) states unequivocally that "[c]reoles are therefore not characterized by specific structural traits which they would be alone in presenting and which they would all present."[80] One cannot think of a more radical departure from the view that pidgins and creoles are contact languages born of similar socio-historical situations.

Chaudenson's (2000) paper represents for the author the fulfillment of a long awaited answer to some puzzling parallels in the speech variety of the *Petits Blancs* of Réunion and the *patois* or speech variety of the Whites on St.Barths, the explanation lying in the early plantation and later plantation stages of the histories of the two islands. He sees both varieties as forms of creolized French (*français créolisé*) rather than French creoles. The explanation for the existence of the "être qui + infinitive" or *le te ki* construction in both these speech varieties leads Chaudenson to the conclusion that they are some of the oldest extant witnesses of the koinéization of French that underlies all marginal forms of French such as Canadian and Louisiana French. By "marginal French" is meant a *social* as well as *structural* marginalization, where transmission is both exclusively oral (*transmission exclusivement orale du français*) and takes place without any contact whatsoever with other linguistic systems (*transmission hors de tout contact avec d'autres*

[80] "Les créoles ne se caractérisent donc pas par des traits structurels spécifiques qu'ils seraient les seuls à

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systèmes linguistiques). While the *le te ki* construction does not appear to exist in any form of French, Chaudenson does not see in it any substate origin any more than he necessarily sees any such origin in the case of the TMA marker *ka*. (This marker may just as well derive from the restrictive phrase "n'être qu'à + infinitive".) The issue for Chaudenson (2000:379) is one of "different forms of konéization being able, in part, to explain differences between marginal forms of French."[81] In fact, Chaudenson (2000) sees the next vital step as being the much neglected comparative study among French creoles, with a view to establishing the "intralinguistic variation among the creoles" (*la variation intralinguistique des créoles*) (2000:373). Chaudenson states again (2000:380) that "the basilectal creole of Réunion arose directly from the koiné form of French of the early period, which has no doubt survived in the acrolect."[82]

An author who needs to be mentioned in relation to Chaudenson (1992-2000) is Mufwene (1996, 2000, 2001), as he corroborates the latter's work in its theoretical approach. Indeed, Mufwene translated Chaudenson (1992).[83] While Mufwene (1996, 2000) does not explicitly refer to the VLR or supply any data from them as evidence,[84] his "Founder Principle" and his view of creolization as "a social, not a structural process" have to be considered not only as applying to them but, from Mufwene's point of view, as actually illustrated by the Réunion case. Indeed, Mufwene (1996, 1998) adopts a position

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présenter et qu'ils présenteraient tous" [Chaudenson 1995:93].

[81] "... des formes diverses de konèïsation peuvent expliquer, pour partie, les différences entre français marginaux" [Chaudenson 2000:379].

[82] "... le créole basilectal de la Réunion est issu directement du français koïnèisé de la période initiale dont le créole acrolectal est sans doute une survivance" [Chaudenson 2000:380].

[83] It appears in the bibliography as Chaudenson & Mufwene 2001.

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very similar to Chaudenson's (1979, 1992), whch is made clear in McWhorter (1999). He agrees with Chaudenson that creoles are the fruit of the evolution of a lexifier language through stages whereby, for Chaudenson, as McWhorter (1999:789, Note 1) puts it: "the only thing distinguishing creoles from these [i.e. nonstandard regional dialects] is a minor disruption via non-native approximation." This amounts to placing the lect of the *Petits Blancs* as well as the vernacular lect spoken in the coastal areas of Réunion on a par with the non-standard regional form of French spoken on the island and seeing them as the result of the same "language-development processes." In Mufwene's (1996:107) words:

> The histories of the colonies in which creoles developed suggest that no language-development processes were involved that were unique to these new vernaculars, just the same ones assumed in historical linguistics, except for an emphasis on language contact.

Exactly what this "emphasis on language contact" means remains rather vague, except that for Mufwene, too, the little influence substrate languages have had on lexifier languages has been in strengthening tendencies that were *already latent* in them (Mufwene 1996:104). In other words, whatever substratal influence there might have been, it was one of convergence with such tendencies. The "Founder Principle" is one "according to which a large proportion of today's creoles' structural features were determined by those that were produced by the founder populations" (Mufwene 1996:109).

3.3.7 Staudacher-Valliamée (1992): a linguistic mix in the highlands

Staudacher-Valliamée's (1992) pioneering study of the phonology of the speech varieties of Réunion, in the vein of Carayol & Chaudenson's (1984) atlas, has led her to a

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[84] Mufwene (1996:106) does mention Réunionnais and AAVE as two instances where "restructuring seems to have been less extensive."

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geophonology. She writes (Staudacher-Valliamée 1992:9) about the important role played by the relief of the island and distinguishes, on the basis of phonology and vocabulary, between a rural (*créole rural*), an urban (*créole urbain*), and a common creole (*créole commun*), the agricultural professions being the terrain defining the first.

> Because of the way they cut off areas in the interior of the island from each other, the higher regions have played several linguistic roles. While these were first places where fugitive slaves took refuge in the 17th century, they also became places where families developed from interracial marriages and linguistic mixing that was to define the réunionnais creole. The phonological and lexical traits as well as the syntactic structures characteristic of these regions sheltered by the highlands are not to be placed on the same level as the recent borrowings from, or the sporadic infiltrations of, the regional French in open [i.e. non-isolated] areas.[85]

3.3.8 Cellier (1985a, 1985c): acknowledging the role of a Malagasy influence

The research done by Cellier (1985a; 1985c) arises essentially from a pedagogical concern, namely the interference of the VLR in the production of French by schoolchildren in Réunion. He argues for a *standardization* of these lects to get at the core of their grammar, especially where it is departs from that of the Standard French taught in schools. It is indeed what can be considered typological differences between French and the VLR that for Cellier need elucidating if teachers are to get to the root of the problems students in Réunion have in producing corrrect French.

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[85] "De par le cloisonnement qu'il a créé à l'intérieur de l'île, le relief a joué plusieurs rôles linguistiques: d'abord lieu de refuge des esclaves en fuite dès le XVII[e] siècle, il a aussi créé des lieux de métissage familial et de brassage linguistique définitoires du créole réunionnais. Les traits phonologiques et lexicaux, ainsi que les structures syntaxiques caractéristiques des régions abritées par le relief, ne sont pas à mettre sur le même plan que les emprunts récents ou les infiltrations sporadiques du français régional en milieu exposé" [Staudacher-Valliamée's 1992:9].

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Cellier does not agree with Chaudenson's (1974, 1981) view of creolization as further developments within a *français avancé*. This view, in his own words, is tantamount to saying that the VLR "derive from French in a straight line."[86] He suggests (Cellier 1985a:357) the "idea that interference from Malagasy could account for what for R. Chaudenson is nothing but a systematicization of tendencies inherent in French."[87] He considers the interference from Malagasy in their creation as a natural consequence of the important number of Malagasies in Bourbon in the first 80 or so years of the colonly (Cellier 1985a:28). Cellier (1985a:361) speaks of "structural mutation" (*mutation structurelle*) in the creolization that took place in Réunion and of the "establish[ment] of a "new system" (*constitu[tion d']un nouveau système*) (Cellier 1985a:363). He considers a painstaking comparison of the grammars of French, the VLR, and Malagasy as necessary for understanding what mutations and interferences actually took place. He sees possible evidence for a Malagasy substrate in the structure of statements (*modalités énonciatives de la phrase*, Cellier 1985a:394ff), in the structure of time (Cellier 1985a:357, 197ff), and in syntactic relations (Cellier 1985a:363). Cellier (1985a:357) asks, for example, if "the structural schemata of Malagasy could have acted as the 'model' for the [complete] abandonment"[88] of the inflected forms of the French verb." "This would be," he adds, "nothing but a plausible interference, one quite comparable to the introduction of Malagasy vocabulary into the lexicon of the Creole [i.e. VLR], even if only few traces of it

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[86] "R. Chaudenson dont la thèse est que le créole descend en droite ligne du français" [Cellier 1985a:357].
[87] "... l'idée qu'une interférence avec le malgache a pu permettre ce qui n'est pour R. Chaudenson qu'une systématisation des tendances du français" [Cellier 1985a:357].
[88] "... l'abandon complet des désinences verbales ... dans les créoles. A la Réunion les schémas structurels du malgache ont-ils pu être le 'modèle' qui a permis cet abandon?" [Cellier 1985b:357].

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[i.e. of the interference] remain today."[89] Cellier's (1985a:376-389) meticulous analysis of the ASM *i* indicates clearly that, as he puts it, "the analysis of a number of structural issues in the VLR depend on as precise an analysis as possible of this element that one might at first glance consider to matter only little."[90] His position is summed up succinctly when he writes (Cellier 1985a:357): "It is probably all a matter of degree or proportion in what is sometimes called the mixed nature of languages."[91] It should be noted that Cellier (104-142) also discusses various linguists' notions of *diglossia* and *continuum* in terms of their appropriateness for describing the linguistic situation in Réunion.

3.3.9 Ramassamy (1985): exploring the role of a Malagasy substrate

In some respects Ramassamy's (1985) grammar of a set of monolingual speakers of a coastal lect, who are of Indian and Malagasy origin, follows Cellier's (1985a) lead. Her considerations (Ramassamy 1985:47) about different structures of statements (*modalité énonciatives*) in the VLR imply that they might possibly be the result of substratal influence and go back to Malagasy diatheses (or modes of transformation of a basic underlying sentence form) (cf. §5.5.4.3 below). She considers (Ramassamy 1985:147) there to have been an early core or set of preverbal markers in the VLR. The great value of her work is that her approach is not centered in the grammar of the standard reference point, namely French but rather in *the structure of the VLR themselves*.

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[89] "Ce ne serait qu'une interférence plausible tout à fait comparable à ce qu'a été l'introduction d'un vocabulaire malgache dans le lexique du créole, même s'il n'en reste que peu de traces aujourd'hui." [Cellier 1985b:357].

[90] "... de nombreuses analyses de la structure créole dependent d'une analyse la plus correcte possible de cet élément que l'on pourrait à première vue juger sans grande importance" [Cellier 1985:389].

[91] "Tout est probablement une question de degré ou de dosage dans ce qu'on appelle parfois la mixité des langues" [Cellier 1985a:357].

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3.3.10 Manessy ([1978], 1995): the VLR and "vernacularization" in African French

In Manessy (1995), the place the VLR occupy in the vast, moving, and often confusing field of language varieties derived from French, is very specific. It is the result of his meticulous study of structures common to African vehicular languages and vehicular varieties of African French, on the basis of which he has developed a form of interpolation. For Manessy (1995:31) it is "very likely that the Creole of Réunion [i.e. VLR] arose from a pidginized variety of Middle French [i.e. 17th century French], rather than from a hypothetical pidgin." It seems clear that for Manessy (1995) the VLR are the result of language creation (*vernacularisation*), a key notion in his model that is invaluable in explaining how the early vernacular emerged in Bourbon in the first 50 years of the settlement (cf. §6.2.1). Vernacularization is defined both by 1. the two characteristics of pidginization, namely simplification and reduction (Manessy 1995:23-25, *passim*), and 2. what characterizes creolization: "the restitution to a speech form of the attributes of a vernacular" by the expansion of its vocabulary and morpho-syntactic system (Manessy 1995:31). The description Manessy (1995:96-7) gives of the typical situation for vernacularization fits the Bourbon case extremely well, namely "what is common to all situations in which venacularization occurs is that the use of the simplified variety is interpreted not as a simple means of intercommunication, but as the expression of a solidarity which transcends ethnic differences and whose locus (*cadre*) can be the town, the region .... This solidarity is manifested by the community of discourse conventions."[92]

[92] "Ce qu'il y a de commun à toutes ces situations est que l'emploi de la variété simplifiée est interprété non comme un simple moyen d'intercommunication, mais comme l'expression d'une solidarité qui transcende les différenciations ethniques et dont le cadre peut être la ville, la région ... Cette solidarité est manifestée par la communauté des conventions de discours" [Manessy 1995:96-7].

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Indeed, the great value of Manessy's model is how precisely it brings linguistic data explicitly to bear on sociological data, and vice-versa.

In relation to Manessy's work, Deltel (1991) should be mentioned. In Cameroun, for example, he writes (Deltel: 1991:7-8) "knowledge of French has become widespread enough to make of it a vehicular language in urban marketplaces as well as life in general to the extent that it competes with the [local] pidgin and African languages. This function applies mostly to interethnic exchanges where a vehicular language is necessary. ... In this vehicularizing function outside of its [established] norms, French is totally in a contact situation and so freely undergoes 'africanization' and pidginization."[93] He does, however, express (Deltel 1991:3) a caution: "The theory of creolization is well enough established to serve as an analytical tool and to draw parallels between creoles and African varieties of French. However, it also shows the limits of such an analogy, as well as the necessary distance that needs to be maintained between creoles on the one hand and African varieties of French on the other."[94] Deltel (1991:15) speaks of a continuum in this *français camérounais* and distinguishes between acrolectal, mesolectal, and basilectal forms in it.

3.3.11 Detges (2000): reanalysis as restructuring in the VLR

[93] "... la connaissance du français est devenue assez générale pour en faire un véhiculaire sur les marchés urbains et dans la vie en général en concurrence avec le pidgin et les langues africaines. Cette fonction concerne surtout les échanges interethniques où un véhiculaire est nécessaire. ... Dans cette fonction de véhicularisation en dehors de la norme le français est totalement dans une situation de contact et alors il s''africanise" et se pidginise en liberté" [Deltel 1991:7-8].

[94] "La théorie de la créolisation est assez bien établie pour fournir un outil d'analyse et pour dégager des analogies entre créoles et français d'Afrique. Mais elle montre aussi les limites de cette analogie, et la nécessité de maintenir une distance entre les créoles d'une part, et le français d'Afrique d'autre part" [Deltel 1991:3].

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Detges' (2000:154-156) distinction between two "radically different types" of restructuring that occur at different times in the origin and development of creoles make possible an interpolation on the basis of comparison among the French-based creoles. For him, *reanalysis,* a process based on "cognitive mechanisms" which takes place early in the process of creolization, makes for results which can be distinguished from those that result from a later process of *grammaticalization.* "Historically," he writes (Detges 2000:155), "the generation of markers which are brought about by creole-specific reanalysis represent the earliest layer in the system of the language while markers which are the result of grammaticalization emerge in later stages of the creole's history". In this view, the origin of such markers as *la, (lé)té ki,*[95] *sava,* and *a/va/ava* in the VLR are early products of a hearer's strategy, "aimed at understanding", while a marker such as *fini* is the result of a speaker's strategy, i.e. "to speak convincingly" (Detges 2000:154). In fact, he gives (Detges 2000:149) a "principle of restructuring" for the cognitive processes at work in reanalysis that he sees as having been operative in the non-French speakers in the contact situation: "try to match salient elements of the situation, as you perceive it, with the sound chain you hear."

To the extent that Detges' "reanalysis" is a creole-specific kind of grammatical restructuring, some language creation is implied. This is hinted at, at least, when he astates: "Along with material continuity between French and the Fr[ench] C[reole]s, we find a clear-cut functional discontinuity" (Detges 2000:144). For example, for him, "[t]he simultaneous material transmission and functional loss of the French article forms provide

[95] This is really interesting with reference to the ASM *i* as a salient element that underwent reanalysis.

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a simple example of the cognitive mechanisms which governed the process of restructuring in the genesis of the Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s (Detges 2000:148)."

3.4. Conclusion

The stage reached at the end of the 20th century with regard to the origin and development of the VLR can be summarized well in the thes words of Alleyne (1986:301-2):

> It may be said that the development of of linguistics has taken two important directions. In the first case it becomes an autonomous science and views language as an autonomous phenomenon, a system *où tout se tient.* More recently it has been suggested that linguistics may really be a branch of cognitive psychology ... In this first case ... it claims that it is (only) able to arrive at valuable conclusions about language if language is isolated from other outside factors. In the second case, linguistics develops as a branch of anthropology and stresses the role of language in culture and society. The social content and the communicative networks in which language occurs become important in the consideration of language. ... The truth is that the situations ... in which substratum influences might best be examined have been rather neglected by language studies.

And he adds:

> Among creole languages themselves, differences which up to now have been underestimated and played down in favor of highlighting structural similarities in the postulation of a Creole Grammar are now appearing to be quite significant and may in large measure be due to differences in the social context of their emergence. *Le réunionnais,* for example, is now appearing to be perhaps not really a creole at all, and the important factor in its distinctiveness vis-à-vis the other Indian Ocean creoles would be the dynamics of the demographic relations between Europeans and slaves/indentured workers.

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Chapter Four: Description of the Verb in the VLR

4.0 Previous description of the verb forms in the VLR

This chapter provides a description of the verb forms in the VLR. It is based mainly on Sets A and B of the corpus[1] as well as on descriptions of the verb phrase and discussions of some of its aspects found in the literature, i.e. Chaudenson (1974:330-48; 1981a), Gamaleya (1975), Papen (1978), Valdman (1978), Corne (1982:11-30; 1999), Naze (1983), Cellier (1985a; 1985b), and Ramassamy (1985). All these authors, of course, analyze the verb phrase within their particular framework or from their particular theoretical standpoint. However, their contribution is particularly relevant in that much of the same corpus serves to illustrate their own description of the verbal system of the VLR. It should be noted that Naze (1983), Cellier (1985a, 1985b), and Ramassamy (1985) are based on Set A, while they also complement these data with other sources.

4.1 A non-French-centered approach

This chapter is descriptive in the sense that it attempts to present the forms of the verb system of the VLR *from the inside*, or in terms of its *own system*. It does not seem helpful—it may indeed be quite misleading—to describe this system from the point of view of the grammar of French *or* the non-standard superstrate of these lects, as if they were merely an altered French system. The VLR are the result of a *creative* effort by speakers of both the substrate languages and Popular French (cf. §5.0), which is why this

[1] Set A consists of selections from the recordings made by C. Barat and M. Carayol for the *Atlas linguistique et ethnologique de la Réunion* (Carayol & Chaudenson 1985, 1989), which Naze (1983), Cellier (1985b), and Ramassamy (1985) are partly based on. The text in Appendix B2 is from Barat et al. (1977), and the texts in Appendix B3 and Appendix B4 are from Set A. The text in Appendix B1 is from Set B, which consists of recordings made by S. Nicaise and transcribed in Nicaise (1992).

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chapter takes its lead from Ramassamy (1985). She is a native speaker of a coastal vernacular lect and her study is based on data from monolingual speakers her lect. She describes the workings of the system from within and with reference to the verb phrase and the sentence structure of Malagasy. She has brought to light important facts that had gone quite unnoticed and are diachronically quite revealing. Cellier (1985a; 1985c) shows how much the verbal system of the VLR can be brought in line with the system of French, since his main concern is pedagogical. However, he also asks pertinent questions about how much this view may distort the true nature of the system of the VLR.

4.2 The morphology of the verb in the VLR[2]

Before describing the morphology of the verb in the VLR, some preliminary remarks are in order to make clear what the relation of the verb is to the subject in the clause structure of these lects.

The sentence structure of the VLR is SVO. While the verb is usually preceded by an expressed, or overt, subject, either a noun, as in (1), or a pronoun,[3] as in (2), it is common for the subject not to be expressed or repeated,[4] especially in narrative, as in (3).

(1) ***domoun*** *lavé per osi*
people had fear also
'Also, people were afraid.' [Nicaise 1992:70]

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[2] Where there are different forms or uses in the lects, these may be dealt with in different sections first. However, in the general presentation of possible forms (§4.3), they are listed in the same section in order to facilitate comparisons among forms. The format may change from heading to heading because the way the lects concur and differ does not follow a neat pattern. References will be made to the various works mentioned above where necessary.

[3] For the forms of personal pronouns, cf. §5.6.2.

[4] Cellier (1985a:335) calls this absence of pronoun (*pronominalisation zéro*) "very common ... whether the pronoun be subject or object" ("très employée en créole, que le pronom soit sujet ou objet").

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(2) *sé Ø lané défin léopol lé Ø mor ... li lé Ø mor la o*
CLP year late Léopold CLP die 3s CLP die up there
'That was the year Léopold died ... he died up there.' [Nicaise 1992:78]

(3) *Ousa le garson dléopol lé Ø mor, la ginye in kou ros*
where DET boy Léopold CLP die **ØSubj** PAST get DET blow rock
'Where Léopold's boy died—he was hit in the head by a piece of rock

dan la tét dan lo, li lé Ø mor dan basin
in DET head in water—3s CLP dead in pool
(while he was) in the water—he died in the waterpool.
[ØSubj = absence of overt subject]
[Nicaise 1992:82]

In fact, the form *i di* 'say', almost serves to introduce quotations, as in (4), and often to follow them, too, in the manner of "oral inverted commas".

(4) *Landemin, la bonn dam i mont. Ø i ariv, Ø i di: Gran per,*
next day DET good woman ASM go up **ØSubj** ASM arrive ASM say grandpa
'The next day, the woman goes up. When **she** gets there, **she** says: Grandpa,

Ø i di, bin zordi, ou va venir la kaz. Ø i di ...[5]
ØSubj ASM say well today 2s FUT come DET house **ØSubj** ASM say ...
she says, today you will come to my house, and **she** says ...'
[Barat et al. 1977:16]
[ØSubj = absence of overt subject]

Further, the absence of an overt subject can indicate an impersonal subject, as in (5):

(5) *kan la tir l'kor la o, Ø té plans sapin sa, serkey*
when **ØSubj** PAST pull body up there ØSubj PAST wood fir tree that coffin
'When they fetched the body up there—it was fir tree wood, it was, the coffin ...'
[Nicaise 1992:79]

The morphology of the verb in the VLR includes the following, each discussed in turn below: 1) the long and short forms of the verb; 2) the Agentive Subject Marker (ASM) *i;* 3) the Tense and Aspect markers; 4) the auxiliary forms; 5) the so-called "inflected forms"; 6) the negation; 7) the imperative forms; and 8) the form in *an + V + an.* An inventory of the possible forms of the verb in the VLR is given in §4.3.

[5] In keeping with Ramassamy's (1985) analysis in §5.5.4, the ASM is *Ø i* and the CLP is *lé Ø.*

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The examples in this chapter are taken from the corpus (Set A and Set B) wherever possible, but are also taken from the descriptions in the literature listed above or other sources, where necessary. For examples taken from the latter, the spelling of the source text has mostly been respected. Elsewhere, the spelling used is as close as possible to the one adopted throughout (cf. notice on the orthography of the VLR on page xvii).

4.2.1 The long and short forms of the verb

According to Naze (1983:9), "it seems difficult to speak of a verbal base when speaking of the creole [i.e. VLR] verbal lexeme ... It seems more logical to speak of a long form and a short form ... of the type *kozé* and *koz* ['speak']." While verbs of this type constitute the "largest category", he points out, other verbs have "three (or four forms), with two (or three) long forms and one short form, of the type *dormir, dormi, dormé,* and *dor* ['sleep']" (Naze 1983:9-10).[6]

Ramassamy (1985) approaches the distribution of these forms in terms of what she establishes as the basic opposition in the types of predicates possible in the VLR (cf. §4.2.2 and §5.5.4.4). This basic opposition is between what she calls processive predicative statements, characterized by the marker *i*, and non-processive predicative statements, characterized by the marker *lé*. Here, by processive predicative statement is understood a *predicate that has an agentive subject,* while by non-processive predicative statements are meant predicates of identification and characterization, or statements with

[6] "Il semble difficile de parler de base verbale pour ce qui est du lexème verbal creole ... On fera donc plus logiquement appel à la notion *de forme longue* et *de forme courte* ... a) les verbes à 2 formes du type: 'kosé', 'kos' (= parler), verbes constituant la catégorie la plus nombreuse ... . b) Les verbes à 3 (ou 4) formes (deux [ou trois] longues + une courte) du type: 'dormir', 'dormi', 'dormé', 'dor'" [Naze 1973:9-10].

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a non-agentive subject (cf. Ramassamy 1985:58). To illustrate the system, Ramassamy (1985:67-70) uses the example *éklèr/ékléré*.

> A. When *ékléré* appears in a processive predicative context ... it can take both forms, in the following conditions: 1) It takes the short form *éklèr* ... when it is followed by an object or a circumstantial complement. 2) It takes the long form *ékléré* when no complement (object or circumstantial) is follows it. However, if the predicate is marked by *té i* or *Ø i*, it *never* takes the long form no matter what the context (with or without complements).[7]
>
> B. When *ékléré* appears in a non-processive predicative content ... it always takes the long form, even with the presence of circumstantial complements.[8]

Examples:

- *la kaz lé Ø ékléré* 'la maison est éclairée' ['The house is lit up.']
- *la kaz té* (ou *lé té*) *ékléré dépi yèr swar* 'la maison était éclairée depuis hier soir' ['The house has been lit up since yesterday.']
- *la kaz sra ékléré partou* 'la maison sera éclairée partout' ['The house will be lit up all over.']

Ramassamy (1985:69-71) illustrates the four possible "predicative contents" for *ékléré* with these examples (6) to (9):

(6) *Zan Ø i éklèr la kaz* 'Jean éclaire la maison' ['Jean lights up the house.']

(7) *Le zour Ø i éklèr* 'Le jour s'éclaire' ['The day becomes bright.']

(8) *Le zarden la fin ékléré* 'Le jardin est déjà éclairé' ['The garden is already lit up.']

(9) *La kaz lé Ø ékléré* 'La maison est éclairée' ['The house is lit up.']

The difference between Ramassamy's (1985) analysis and the analyses that see the verb phrase of the VLR as presenting remnants of inflectional verb forms

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[7] The violations of this rule, Ramassamy (1985:68) adds, "range from a basilectal [structurally, typically more distant from Popular French] statement with non-past value: *la kaz ø i éklèr* 'la maison s'éclaire', to an acrolectal statement [closer to Popular French] with past value: *la kaz i éklèré* 'la maison s'éclairait'."

[8] "A) Lorsque /éklèré/ entre dans un contenu prédicatif processif ... il est susceptible d'avoir les deux formes dans les conditions suivantes: 1) Il a la forme courte /éklèr/ ... quand il est suivi d'une expansion objet ou circonstancielle. ... 2) Il a la forme longue /éklèré/ lorsqu'aucune expansion (objet or circonstancielle) ne lui est rattachée. Néanmoins, si ce prédicat est marqué par /té/té i/ ou /ø i/, il ne se manifeste *jamais* sous la forme longue quels que soient les contextes (avec ou sans expansion). ... B) Lorsque /éklèré/ entre dans un contenu prédicatif non processif ... il revêt toujours la forme longue, même dans le contexte d'une expansion circonstancielle" [Ramassamy 1985:67-9]. "Circumstantial complements" are adverbials.

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(Chaudenson 1974; Naze 1983;[9] Corne 1999) is that it points to the restructuring, in fact actual creation, that underlies the system of these lects. Her analysis is crucial (cf. §4.2.2 and §5.5.4.4) for the understanding of the function of the marker *i* as well as its origin in that it sheds completely new light on both (cf. §5.5.4).

Table 4.1 below, in which shading is meant to clarify the options, shows the constraints on the uses of the long and short forms based on Ramassamy (1985:69-71):

Table 4.1 The distribution of the short and long forms of the verb in the VLR

Type of Predicate	Possible Markers	Long Form	Short Form
Processive (with agent)	other markers	w/o object or adverbial	w/ object or adverbial
	té (té i) or *Ø i*		ONLY
Non-processive (no agent)	*té, Ø*	ONLY	

This is illustrated in sentences (10) and (11) from *Petits Blancs* lects:

(10) *moin té fini péyé* [long form with no complement]
1s PAST COMP pay
'I had (already) paid.' [Cellier 1985a:432]

(11) *moin té fini pèy mon tad mang* [short form with complement]
1s PAST COMP pay 1s lot mango
'I had (already) paid my mangos.' [Cellier 1985a:432][10]

(12) *Kan l- arivé la met ali dan kamion pou amen laposesion*
when PAST arrive PAST put it in truck for take La Possession
'When (we) arrived, (we) put it on the truck to take it to La Possession.'
[long form with no complement] [Nicaise 1992:83]

(13) *La di, kan va ariv la, ...alor tout va rant dedan*
3s say when FUT arrive there then all FUT enter inside
'He said that when we got there, we would all get onto (the truck).'
[short form with complement] [Nicaise 1992:84]

---

[9] "... dans la mesure où le système désinentiel de cette langue (hérité du français) présente un caractère tout à fait résiduel et figé" ("... due to the fact that the inflectional system of the language (inherited from the French) presents a completely residual and fixed character") [Naze 1983:0].

[10] The *té* both in (10) and (11) does not have *té i* as a variant, since *té i* and *fin* are incompatible (cf. Ramassamy 1985:143).

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Unless it is for reasons of rhythm or phrasing, or perhaps even repetition, there seems to be some interference from Popular (or Standard) French in the data in Set B, which explains why only a sentence apart, two different forms may be found, as in (14):

(14) *La* ***rant*** *dan in boutik sinoi ... la rantré. ...*
PAST enter in DET bar Chinese PAST enter
'(We) went into the bar of the Chinese man ... (we) went in.

Tout la ***rantré*** *dan la boutik sinoi...*
all PAST enter in DET bar Chinese
All (of us) went into the Chinese man's bar.' [Nicaise 1992:84]

It is not clear if this chart applies to the form of the verb that that follows auxiliary-like verbs such as *vouli* 'want' *(vé/vouli/vouloir); dwa* 'have to' *(dwa/devoir/oblizé/blizé); pé* 'can' *(pé/pouvoir/geny); yabou* 'can'; *i fo* 'it is necessary' *(i fo/i fodra/i falé); désid* 'decide', as Ramassamy's (1985:150-1) examples (15) and (16) illustrate:

(15) *Mamay Ø i vé* ***manzé***
child ASM want eat
'The children want to eat.' [Ramassamy 1985:150]

(16) *Zan Ø i dwa* ***travay***
Jean ASM must work
'Jean has to work.' [Ramassamy 1985:151]

Since neither verb is followed by a complement, *both* forms should be long following the rules given above.

It would seem that the verb form often follows the rules given above in the case of such aspectual-like verbs (*para-aspectuels*) such as *komans* 'begin', *sot/vyenn* 'to have just', *alé* 'go', *veni* 'come', *parti* 'go', *arèt* 'stop', *kontinyé* 'continue'. However, there is

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a good deal of inconsistency, as can be seen in examples (17) to (23) from Ramassamy (1985:119-126):

(17) *Zot Ø i komans* ***krié*** [long form with no complement]
3p ASM begin shout
'They begin to shout.' [Ramassamy 1985:119]

(18) *Mon matant lapo komans* ***koud*** *mon rob* [short form with complement]
1s aunt PROG begin sew 1s dress
'My aunt is beginning to sew my dress.' [Ramassamy 1985:119]

(19) *Mi sava* ***travay*** [short form *without* complement]
1s go work
'I am going to work.' [Ramassamy 1985:122]

(20) *Mwen la arèt* ***manzé*** [long form with no complement]
1s PAST stop eat
'I stopped eating.' [Ramassamy 1985:124]

(21) *Koté ou va alé* ***antèr*** *a-li ou va mor* [short form with complement]
where 2s FUT go bury 3s 2s FUT die
'Where you go and bury him is where you will die.' [Ramassamy 1985:123]

(22) *Zan va vni* ***manzé*** [long form with no complement]
Jean FUT come eat
'Jean is going to come and eat.' [Ramassamy 1985:124]

(23) *Zan Ø i vyen* ***manzé*** *aswar* [long form *with* complement]
John ASM come eat tonight
'John is coming to dinner tonight.' [Ramassamy 1985:123]

Probably under the pressure of the Creolized Variety of French (CVF) or Standard French, the form of the verb following auxiliary elements such as *lavé* 'had', *nora* 'will', *noré* 'would' is sometimes long, but as, as examples (24), from Ramassamy (1985:146), and (25) and (26), from Nicaise (1992:82), show, the rules still seem to apply.

(24) *Mwen noré* ***manzé*** *si ou lavé fé kui*
1s would have eat if 2s had make cook
'I would have eaten if you had cooked something.' [Ramassamy 1985:146]

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(25) *in bon pe domoun o por osi lavé* ***monté***
a good bit people at Port also have come up
'A fair number of people had also come up from Le Port.' [Nicaise 1992:79]

(26) *Kan zot nora* ***anter*** *ali, son kor nora* ***antéré,***
when 2p have bury 3s 3s body have bury
'When you bury him, you will only bury his body,

mé selman sa tét noré ***rest*** *deor, noré pa* ***antéré***
but only 3s head have stay outside have not bury
but his head will stay above the ground, you won't bury it.' [Nicaise 1992:82]

After the element *pou* 'for, in order to' indicating purpose, the form of the verb seems to follow the rules given above by Ramassamy (1985), as shown in (27), from Ramassamy (1985:134-5) and (12) above:

(27) *La li di li vé ni lané-prosen pou* ***tir*** *sové son zanfan isi*
now 3s say 3s want come next year for remove hair 3s child here
'Now he says he wants to have his son's hair removed here;

si ou lé Ø la n -a envit a-ou;
if 2s CLP here 1p FUT invite 2s
if you are here, we will invite you;

w -a ni rann a-ou kont pou ***war*** *si lé Ø vré*
2s FUT come give 2s account for see if CLP true
you will come see for yourself if it is true.'

In the lect of the *Petits Blancs,* the long form is the form that indicates past durative or past iterative (as indicated in footnote 6 above), while in the coastal lect the form for past durative and iterative makes use of the Tense marker *té* and the ASM *i* with agentive subjects (cf. §4.2.3.1 and §4.2.5).

In both lects, the forms involving the past of the verb *awar/aoir* 'have': *navé* and *lavé,* as well forms such as *i fo / i falé* 'it is necessary / was necessary' constitute a system separate from the usual paradigm (cf. §4.2.5 and §4.2.6).

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4.2.2 The Agentive Subject Marker (ASM) *i*

The Agentive Subject Marker *i*, as its name indicates, marks the verb for an agentive subject (cf. §5.5.5.4.3). It is subsumed (or, if one prefers, it is incompatible in surface structure) in the case of the markers *la*, *lapo*, and *va*.[11] The markers compatible and incompatible with *i* (from Ramassamy 1985:110-136) are presented in Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2 The markers and semantics compatible or incompatible with the ASM *i*

Markers compatible with *i*	**Markers incompatible with *i***	**Semantics incompatible with *i***
*té [= té i]**	*la*	Non-processive statements
*sa [= i sa]**	*apo*	[i.e. with non-agentive subjects]
Ø [non past]	*va*	e.g. intransitive verbs
Ø [non future]		Exceptions: *i fo*, etc.

* as well as markers compatible with *té (i)* and *(i) sa*

In opposition to *i* stands the other "predicate indicator(s)" *lé* (and *sé)*, as the contrast between the following three sentences from Ramassamy (1985: 52-3) illustrates:

(28) *Mon papa i plant en pé kann* My father farms some sugar cane ***'Mon papa plante un peu de canne'***

(29) *Mon papa lé Ø plantèr* My father is a farmer ***'Mon papa est planteur'***

(30) *Mon papa sé/Ø plantèr* My father is a farmer ***'Mon papa est un planteur'***

Ramassamy considers *lé* as underlying all "non-processives of characterization". This results in an opposition between *té i* on the one hand and *lé té* on the other. As she points out, "the existence of *lé*, as seen above, must be understood in terms of its complementarity with *i*, and even, by anticipation, with *sé*."[12]

[11] Ramassamy (1985:56-7) considers this marker which indicates a processive predicate as underlying every such predicate at deep structure, and states that it manifests itself explicitly as compatible with past marker *té*, non-past Ø, non-future Ø, and future marker *sa*. It is, however, incompatible with the perfective marker *la*, the progressive marker *apo* (and its variants), and the future marker *va*.

[12] "... l'existence de /lé/, comme nous l'avons vu, doit être cernée dans sa solidarité avec /i/, voire, par anticipation avec /sé/ aussi" [Ramassamy 1985:60].

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The ASM *i* combines with subject pronominal forms as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 The subject pronominal forms combined with the ASM *i*

Combination	Example	Gloss
mwen + i → mi	*mi manz, mwen*	*I* eat (1 sg)
toué + i → ti	*ti manz, toué*	*you* eat (2 sg)
ou + i → vi	*vi manz, ou*	*you* eat (2 sg)
li + i → li	*li manz, li*	*he* eats (3 sg)
(èl + i → li)	*li manz, èl*	*she* eats (3 sg)
nou + i → ni	*ni manz, nou*	*we* eat (1 pl)

4.2.3 Tense and Aspect markers

Both Cellier (1985a:390ff) and Ramassamy (1985:108ff) discuss the relationship of Tense and Aspect in the VLR, which neither assumes to be the same as that of French (or probably even the Popular French of the 17th and 18th centuries). Cellier asks the question whether in these lects "there is a system of Tense as well differentiated from the system of Aspect as it is the case in French,"[13] especially as both are expressed by the same Tense and Aspect markers and auxiliary forms.

For Cellier (1985:393), the expression of time is "not properly left up to the verb" (*n'est pas le propre du verbe*), but rather to the here and now of the speaker, adverbs of time, and the time of the situation. In fact, in stories, time is most often not specified (*non marqué*). Many of the time relations in a statement are actually indicated by some anterior (*rétrospectif*), posterior (*prospectif*), or simultaneous marking. Since "the values of the present in the creole [i.e. the VLR] are those of permanence, either universal or habitual, of the time of the statement, that is to say, the the *hic et nunc* (*l'actuel*), the

[13] "Nous devons enfin nous demander s'il existe en créole un système temporel aussi bien différencié du système aspectif qu'il l'est pour le français ..." [Cellier 1985a:393].

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absence of any marking for the present in the creole" leads Cellier (1985a:396) to ask the question "whether there exists such a thing as 'Present Tense' (*un temps présent*) in the system of the language."[14]

For Ramassamy (1985:108ff) Tense and Aspect are so closely intertwined in the VLR that she combines them under the common term *modalité*, or Tense/Aspect mode. She (1985:105-8) shows how in the coastal lect of monolingual speakers, the preverbal markers follow a pattern where oppositions in terms of Tense and Aspect combine. "One same marker can contain both aspectual and temporal information," she writes (Ramassamy 1985:109). Ramassamy therefore deals with the markers in terms of the combinations they can occur in and the oppositions they stand in, rather than arbitrarily dividing them into markers indicating *either* Tense *or* Aspect. The fact that she is a native speaker of the lect makes this view all the more advisable to follow. For example, *va* and *i sa*, the two markers which indicate future time from a French point of view, are dealt with as temporal and aspectual markers, respectively. In fact, Ramassamy (1985) sees Aspect as dominating Tense in the VLR, especially considering the fact that it is possible for one and the same marker to express both Tense *and* Aspect.

The VLR use both preverbal markers and auxiliary forms (cf. §4.2.4) to mark verbs for Tense and Aspect. While the former are a closed set, the latter constitute a relatively open one for Ramassamy (1985:106-7).

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[14] "Les valeurs du présent en créole sont celles de la permanence, universelle ou habituelle, celles qui coincident avec le temps de l'énonciation, c'est-à-dire avec l'actuel; l'absence de marques pour le présent en créole peut nous conduire à nous demander si finalement il existe en 'temps présent' dans le système de la langue" [Cellier 1985a:396].

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It is virtually impossible to give a simple view of Tense and Aspect in the VLR because the synchronic situation is the result of a combination of various elements and presents two or three parallel systems (cf. §5.5.4.6), some of which have coexisted over time, not to mention the influence of the CVF and French on the VLR. It may well be that there is no real unity to the system and that each lect—maybe even each actual speaker in each lect—uses only various combinations.

The Tense and Aspect markers for **processive predicates** (with agentive subjects) are the following (cf. also Table 4.6):

1) *la* (Past);
2) *lapo* (also: *lapou, lapré, lépo, lépou, pou, po, apré, pré)* (Progressive);
3) *i sa* (Future);
4) *té* (also *té i)*[15] (Past);
5) *va* (Future); and
6) *fin* (Completive Aspect);

and the Tense markers for **non-processive predicates** (with non-agentive subjects) are:

1) *té* (Past); and
2) *sra* (Future).

Ramassamy (1985) divides the markers for processive predicates into Tense and Aspect according to their ability to combine with one another. As a result, some markers that may also give information about Tense are listed as aspectual markers. For her (Ramassamy 1985: 110-56, *passim*), the markers contrast in the following manner:

Processive statements

- *la ~ lapo*	(Aspect)*	[* with implications as to
- *lapo ~ i sa*	(Aspect)*	Tense in specific contexts]
- *i sa ~ la*	(Tense and Aspect)	
- *i sa/va ~ té(i)*	(Tense and Aspect)	
- *va ~ fin*	(Tense and Aspect)	

[15] For the acrolectal form of the past Tense form in *té (i)*, cf. §4.2.5 The so-called "inflected forms".

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Non-processive statements
- *té ~ sra* (Tense)

Ramassamy's (1985) distinction is adopted here between markers for agentive subjects, which are dealt with under §4.2.3.1.1, and markers for non-agentive subjects, which are dealt with under §4.2.3.1.2.

4.2.3.1 The Tense markers

Ramassamy (1985:108) makes it clear that *Tense* determines both processive and non-processive predicates, while *Aspect* determines only processive predicates. For her, while in French time "is organized around the central opposition: past/future" with respect to the "point of reference on the temporal axis," she explains (Ramassamy 1985:108-9) that "in oral discourse the speaker distributes Tense and Aspect according to very varied discursive strategies he develops. Thus, our informant quite commonly uses some past temporal marking to preface a group of statements which refer to an event he has experienced in order to indicate that they don't refer to a present situation, and then continues his discourse with the help of various aspectual markers for the accomplished, the progressive ... reconstructing in a sense the situation in which the experience unfolds."[16]

In order to deal with the Tense and Aspect markers in the traditional manner, while keeping in mind that *Aspect* and *not* *Tense* is primary in the VLR, three Tenses, or, more appropriately, moments in time, will be distinguished: 1. a Present Tense

[16] "Ainsi, notre informateur, très souvent, utilise, au début d'un ensemble d'énoncés se rapportant à un évènement qu'il a vécu autrefois, la marque temporelle du passé, pour nous indiquer qu'il ne s'agit pas du présent situationnel, puis continue son discours, en employant des marques aspectuelles d'accompli, de progressif ... Après avoir ancré son récit dans le passé, il reconstruit en quelque sorte la situation dans laquelle se déroule l'expérience" [Ramassamy: 1985:109].

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corresponding to the time of utterance or point of reference on the time axis; 2. a Past Tense, anterior to the time of utterance or the point of reference on the time axis (Cellier's *rétrospectif);* and a Future Tense, posterior to the time of utterance or the point of reference on the time axis (Cellier's *prospectif).*[17]

4.2.3.1.1 The Tense markers in processive predicates

The first opposition involving Tense is the *la ~ lapo* opposition, where the marker *la* indicates Past Tense and the marker *lapo* indicates Present Tense (only if no *other* time is specified). The marker *la* indicates accomplished (or perfective) Aspect while the marker *lapo* indicates non-accomplished (or imperfective) Aspect (Ramassamy 1985:112). (Cf. below in §4.2.3.3 for the accomplished vs. non-accomplished opposition in terms of Aspect.) This opposition is illustrated in (31) and (32) from Ramassamy (1985:111-2):

(31) *Li* ***la*** *tyé son fanm*
3s PAST kill 3s wife
'He has killed his wife.'
[PAST = perfective Aspect]
[Ramassamy 1985:111]

(32) *Zan* ***lapo*** *tyé son fanm*
John PROG kill 3s wife
'John is killing his wife.'
[Ramassamy 1985:112]

The second opposition involving Tense is the *lapo ~ i sa* opposition, where *lapo* indicates Present Tense and *i sa* indicates Future Tense. The marker *lapo* indicates progressive (and imperfective) Aspect, while the marker *i sa* indicates prospective (also non-perfective) Aspect (Ramassamy 1985:114-5). Ramassamy (1985:113-4) contrasts these markers in (33) and (34):

[17] Cf. chart in Cellier (1985a:401).

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(33) *Zan **lapré** bwar dolo*
John PROG drink water
'John is drinking some water.' [Ramassamy 1985:113]

(34) *Zan **i** **sa** bwar dolo*
John ASM go drink water
'John is going to drink some water.' [Ramassamy 1985:114]

The third opposition involving Tense is the *la* ~ *i sa* opposition, where *la* indicates Past Tense and *i sa* indicates Future Tense. The marker *la* indicates accomplished (and perfective) Aspect, while *i sa* indicates prospective (and non accomplished) Aspect (Ramassamy 1985:116). This contrast can be seen in (35) and (36):

(35) *Ben ma*[18] ***la*** *rakont aou en gayar zistwar en*
well 1s PAST tell 2s DET fun story well
'Well, I told you a fun story, didn't I?' [Ramassamy 1985:111]

(36) *Kel zistwar mi sa rakont aou la*
what story 1s FUT tell 2s here
'What story am I going to tell you now? [Ramassamy 1985:116]

The fourth opposition involving Tense is the *té /*or *té i/* ~ *va* opposition, where the marker *té /*or *té i/* indicates Past Tense and the marker *va* indicates Future Tense. Indeed, the marker *té /*or *té i/* indicates a time anterior, and the marker *va* a time posterior, to the present or point of reference in time, a difference Ramassamy (1985:127-8) contrasts in (37) and (38):

(37) *Mamay **té (i)** tap a-mwen dann somen*
child PAST hit 1s in way
'The children (used to) hit/were hitting me on the way (to school).'
[Ramassamy 1985:127]

(38) *Alé pa lékol, mamay va tap a-ou dann somen*
go NEG school child FUT hit 2s in way
'Don't go to school. The children will hit you on the way there.'
[Ramassamy 1985:128]

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[18] The form *mwen la* can become both *ma la*, by regressive assimilation of the vowel of *la*, and *ma*, by the further elision of the phonetic segment [l] of *la* [cf. "variants" of *mwen la* in Ramassamy 1985:113].

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Ramassamy deals with the Future marker *va* (opposed to past *té* or *té i)* in terms of Tense, while she deals with the Future marker *i sa* (opposed to *lapo)* in terms of Aspect (cf. below §4.2.3.2).[19] This is justified by the fact that *i sa* can combine with *té* (cf. §4.2.3.3), while *va* cannot combine with other markers. However, one can say that both *va* and *i sa* are future Tense markers *with reference to present time*, the first indicating non-accomplished (or imperfective) Aspect in the future, which Ramassamy also calls "prospective" (*prospectif*) versus imperfective Aspect in the past, and the second indicating perfective Aspect in the future versus progressive (non-accomplished) Aspect in the present (cf. Table 4.5 in §4.2.3.3). This can be seen in examples (39), from Ramassamy (1985:130), with *va,* and (40), from Ramassamy (1985:116), with *i sa:*

(39) *En not zour* ***m -a*** *rod en not zistwar* [*ma = mwen + va*]
DET other day 1s FUT look for DET other story
'Some other time I'll look for another story.' [Ramassamy 1985:130]

(40) *Kel zistwar* ***m- i sa*** *rakont a-ou la*
DET story 1s FUT tell 2s now
'What story am I going to tell you now?' [Ramassamy 1985:116]

The future marker *va* combines with subject pronominal forms as shown in Table 4.4 below:

Table 4.4. The subject pronominal forms combined with the future marker *va*

Combination	Example	Gloss
mwen + va → ma	*ma manz*	I will eat (1 sg)
toué + va → ta	*ta manz*	you will eat (2 sg)
ou + va → wa	*va manz*	you will eat (2 sg)
nou + va → na	*na manz*	we will eat (3 sg)

[19] "What essentially opposes the prospective aspectual marker *i sa* and the future time marker *va,* which are both semantically directional, is the strength of intention which underlies them." ("L'opposition essentielle entre la modalité aspectuelle prospective / i sa / et la modalité temporelle future / va /, toutes deux sémantiquement directionnelles, réside dans la force de l'intention qui sous-tend l'accomplissement du procès qu'elles déterminent") [Ramassamy 1985:132].

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There is no zero Tense marker. The Ø which precedes the ASM represents the **absence** of a possible marker. Indeed, the absence of Tense marker, where *la,* or *lapo,* or *té (i),* or *va,* or *i sa* could be used, does *not* indicate a *specific* Tense. The moment on the time line is unspecified (cf. Ramassamy 1985:135-7), and the absence of marker can correspond to 1. a progressive, as in (41); 2. an iterative, as in (42); a prospective, as in (43); an accomplished or past moment, as in (44); and even a future moment, as in (45):

(41) *Kosa marmay Ø i fé*
what child ASM do
'What are the children doing?' [Ramassamy 1985:136]

(42) *Papa Ø i travay lizin bwa-rouz*
Dad ASM work factory Bois-Rouge
'Dad works at the factory in Bois-Rouge.' [Ramassamy 1985:136]

(43) *Papa Ø i travay domen*
Dad ASM work tomorrow
'Dad is working tomorrow.' [Ramassamy 1985:136]

(44) *Yèr Zan Ø i yariv la kaz Ø i fout en kalot momon*
yesterday John ASM arrive DET house ASM give DET slap Mom
'Yesterday John came home and slapped his mother.' [Ramassamy 1985:136]

(45) *En zour mwen osi m- i sa an frans* [*sa(va)* = go]
one day 1s also 1s ASM go to France
'One day, I too will go to France.' [Ramassamy 1985:136]

"The non-specifying [of a Tense marker]," Ramassamy (1985:137) comments, "never gives specific and unvarying information" and "does not therefore represent ... a zero marking that would be in opposition to other markers [in the system]."[20] This is a result of the dominance of Aspect over Tense in the VLR.[21]

[20] "Ainsi, la non-détermination ne fournit jamais une information spécifique et constante. Elle recouvre, au contaire, tout le système aspecto-temporel. Il s'agit, par conséquent, d'une absence de choix de marque et non d'une modalité zéro qui s'opposerait, en système, aux autres marques" [Ramassamy 1985:137].
[21] Cf. Cellier [1985a:390] about Tense in the VLR and the absence of a Present Tense in them.

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In other words the Tense markers in processive predicates in the VLR are:

*lapo**	Present (progressive) [*if no *other* time is specified]
té (i)	Past (progressive, iterative)
la	Past (perfective)
va	Future (non accomplished, imperfective)
*i sa**	Future (prospective) [* in relation to present time only]

The forms in *té (i)* are also used to express irrealis or the conditional in the basilect. This is made clear in Gamaleya (1975),[22] who gives (46) as an example:

(46) *Si té di amoin depi avant, moin té gaigne fé*
if COND say1s from before 1s COND manage do
'If (they) had told me earlier, I would have managed to do (it).'
[Gamaleya 1975]

Gamaleya notes that there are variants in popular use (*parler populaire*), such as *laté, nora té,* and *lavé,* but that this does not take away from the fact that *té* is "very predominant". Tense is further specified with the use of "auxiliary forms" (cf. §4.2.4).

4.2.3.1.2 The Tense markers in non-processive predicates

According to Ramassamy (1985:152), non-processive statements are marked only for *Tense*. The past/future opposition is in the form *té ~ sra,* as can be seen in the following examples, (47) and (48), from Ramassamy (1985:152-3):

(47) *Mon papa té (en) pésèr lontan*
1s father PAST (DET) fisherman past
'My father was a fisherman years ago.' [Ramassamy 1985:152]

(48) *Mon gason sra (en) doktèr en zour*
1s boy FUT (DET) doctor DET day
'My boy will be a doctor some day.' [Ramassamy 1985:153]

[22] Gamaleya (1975) corrects Chaudenson's (1974:34) "incorrect analysis" of *té fini* as expressing the conditional in the *past,* as opposed to *té i* for the conditional in the *present.*

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The Ø, or zero marking, in both *lé Ø* and *sé Ø / Ø* is also undetermined for time. However, the opposition *lé Ø ~ sé Ø / Ø* resides in the fact that the former can refer to past, present, or future time, while the latter can only refer to present Tense (non-past and non-future Tense), as (49), (50), and (51), from

(49) *Mon rob lé Ø rouz*
1s dress CLP red
'My dress is red.' [Ramassamy 1985:154]

(50) *Yèr Zan lé Ø malad, zordi get a-li*
Yesterday Jean CLP sick today look 3s
'Yesterday Jean was sick. Today, look at him!' [Ramassamy 1985:152]

(51) *Mon papa sé Ø en plantèr*
1s father CLP DET farmer
'My father is a farmer.' [Ramassamy 1985:155]

It should be repeated that Ramassamy (1985:155) sees in Ø an "absence of marking and not a zero marking."[23] We are glossing *lé* as a Copula-like Particle (CLP), (cf. §5.5.4.1). However, Ramassamy considers it as marking a predicative content that implies the subjects is "characterized by a quality, a color, a behavior, a state, etc. with durable aspect."[24] For her (Ramassamy 1985:90), "predicative contents are incompatible with any marking of aspect."[25] Ramassamy (1985:88) illustrates this with (52) and (53):

(52) *Partou Le Port lé Ø ékléré la nuit*
everywhere Le Port CLP lit up DET night
'Le Port is entirely lit up at night.' [Ramassamy 1985:88]

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[23] "Since its value is neither constant nor specific, Ø consequently stands for an absence of marking and is not a zero-marking" ("Sa valeur n'étant ni constante ni spécifique, / Ø / représente, par conséquent, une absence de détermination et non une modalité zéro") [Ramassamy 1985:155].

[24] "The predicative content bears the marker *lé*. It infers that the participant [=subject] is characterized by a quality, a color, a behavior, a state, etc. ... with the feature [+durable]". ("Le contenu prédicatif a pour marque /lé/. Il infère que le participant est caractérisé par une qualité, une couleur, un comportement, un état, etc. ... assortis du trait [+durable]") [Ramassamy 1985:88].

[25] "The predicative content is incompatible with any aspect markers" ("Le contenu prédicatif est incompatible avec les modalités aspectuelles") [Ramassamy 1985:90].

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(53) *En moun lé Ø mor dann fon laba*
DET person CLP dead in back there
'Someone has died in the back of the valley.' [Ramassamy 1985:89]

Further, *lé* has a free variant *la* when the predicate is negative (Ramassamy 1985:91), as in (54) from Ramassamy (1985:91):

(54) *Mwen lé/la Ø pa fatigé aster*
1s CLP NEG tired now
'I don't feel tired now.' [Ramassamy 1985:91]

As Ramassamy (1985:58) explains, "...the marker *lé* ... is symmetrical with and opposed to *i* ... . It is opposed to *i* inasmuch as the units associated with it have a processive predicative content."[26] Like *i* it can be understood as underlying and disappearing in the presence of other markers.

The past marker *té* can appear with *lé* as *lété*, as in (t), making *lété* "appear as the corresponding face of *té i* in terms of how it functions (Ramassamy 1985:58):[27]

(55) *La kaz Ø té* (or *lé té) ékléré dépi yèr swar*
DET house PAST (CLP PAST) light up since yesterday evening
'The house has/had been lit up since last night.' [Ramassamy 1985:69]

(56) *Zan té i éklèr la kaz yèr*
John PAST ASM light up DET house yesterday
'Jean was lighting up the house yesterday.' [Informant MAP]

The Tense markers in non-processive predicates in the VLR are, therefore only:

té	Past
sra	Future

[26] "... la marque /lé/ ... est symétrique et opposée à /i/ . ... Elle s'oppose à /i/ dans la mesure où les unités qui lui sont associées, possèdent un contenu prédicatif non processif. [Ramassamy 1985:56-7] .
[27] "... the sole use of the marker *lé té* with non-processive predicates of characterization makes it appear as the corresponding face of *té i* in terms of how it functions" ("/lé té/ ne déterminant que des prédicats non-processifs de caractérisation, apparaît comme le versant opposé de /té i/ quant à son fonctionnement ...") [Ramassamy 1985:58].

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4.2.3.2 The Aspect markers

According to Ramassamy (1985), the VLR present three types of aspectual oppositions, of which only the first two are distinguished with Tense and Aspect markers:

1) accomplished and non-accomplished;
2) progressive and prospective (non-progressive); and
3) durative and non-durative.

According to Ramassamy (1985:106), Aspect in the VLR "is organized around the accomplished/non-accomplished opposition." Unlike Tense, Aspect determines only agentive predicates (or marks only non-processive statements). She distinguishes between the oppositions: *la* ~ *lapo* and *lapo* ~ *i sa*.

The first accomplished ~ non-accomplished opposition, *la* ~ *lapo*, can be seen in examples (57) and (58), given by Ramassamy (1985:111):

(57) *Antansyon! ou* ***la*** ***ranvers*** *dolo atèr*
beware 2s PERF spill water floor
'Be careful, you (have) spilled some water on the floor.' [Ramassamy 1985:110]

(58) *Antansyon! ou* ***lapo*** ***ranvers*** *dolo atèr*
Beware 2s IMPF spill water floor [IMPF = PROG]
'Be careful, you're spilling water on the floor.' [Ramassamy 1985:111]

The second accomplished ~ non-accomplished opposition: *lapo* ~ *isa* (or *i sava*, or even *i sar* and *i sra*) is illustrated by (59) and (60), from Ramassamy (1985:113-4):

(59) *Zan* ***lapré*** ***bwar*** *dolo*
Jean IMPF drink water [IMPF = PROG]
'Jean is drinking some water.'

(60) *Zan* ***i sa*** ***bwar*** *dolo*
Jean IMPF drink water [IMPF = PROG]
'Jean is going to drink some water.'

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Ramassamy (1985:14) explains that *i sar* and *i sra* are variants of *i sa*, and that *i sra* may be a result of pressure of Standard French on the VLR.

Further, as it is also opposed to *la*, *i sa* is non-accomplished. Ramassamy (1985: 118) presents this analysis in a table reproduced as in Table 4.5 below:

Table 4.5 The accomplished ~ non-accomplished opposition in the verb

Accomplished	Non - accomplished	
	Progressive	*Prospective*
la	*lapou* (and its variants)	*i sa* (and its variants)

The other Aspect, namely the durative vs. non-durative opposition, is dealt with under auxiliary forms (cf. §4.2.4).

Further, Tense and Aspect markers can combine in processive predicates, as, for example *té* + *i sa* [*té i sa* or *té sa*] (prospective in the past or conditional in the past) in (61) and (62) from Ramassamy 1985:138), *té* + *lapou* (in (63) from Ramassamy (1985:139) and *i sa* and *lapo* (prospective and progressive) in (64) from Ramassamy (1985:140):

(61) *Mwen té i sa manzé kan ou la rivé*
1s PAST PROSP eat when 2s PAST arrive
'I was about to eat when you arrived.' [Ramassamy 1985:138]

(62) *Mwen té i sa manzé si kari té kui*
1s PAST IRR eat if curry IRR cooked
'I would have eaten if the curry had been cooked.' [Ramassamy 1985:138]

(63) *Mwen té pou dansé kan momon la rivé*
1s PAST PROG dance when mother PAST arrive
'I was dancing when Mother arrived.' [Ramassamy 1985:139]

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(64) *Kan ou va vni **mi sa(r) po lavé***
when 2s FUT come 1s FUT PROG wash
'When you come, I will be doing the laundry.' [Ramassamy 1985:140]

The completive marker *fin* also combines with other Tense and Aspect markers. Ramassamy (1985:141) considers it an "aspectual lexeme" (*lexeme aspectuel*) to distinguish it from "aspectual monemes" (*monèmes aspectuels*), because *fin(i)* is also a verb in the VLR. However, in the immediate context this distinction is not relevant. The marker *fin* can also combine with other markers, except with *la*, which is "totally exclusive with regard to other markers" (Ramassamy 1985:141). In fact, for her it replaces (*supplante*) *la* in combination with other markers. Here are some examples of such combinations:

a. - prospective marker + *fin*: *i sa* + *fin*, as in (65), from Ramassamy (1985:142):

(65) *Mi **sa(r) fin manzé** kan ou va vni*
1s PROS COMP eat when 2s FUT come
'I will have eaten when you come.' [Ramassamy 1985:142]

b. - past marker + *fin: té* + *fin*, as in (66) from Ramassamy (1985:143):

(66) *Momon **té fin alé** kan Zan la tonm malad*
mother PAST COMP go when Jean PAST fall ill
'Mom had already left when Jean fell ill.' [Ramassamy 1985:143]

Ramassamy (1985:143) notes that the variant *té i* cannot combine with *fin* due to the incompatibility of *i* and *fin*.

The marker *fin* cannot combine with *la*, which is incompatible with any other marker. Ramassamy (1985:121) points out that "it substitutes for the accomplished marker *la*." In fact, the combination of *té* and *fin* fills that need in past time. There is no

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need for it in present time, as the past marker *la* can indicate a present result of a past action, as in (67), or a non-processive predicate can express a present state, as in (68):

(67) *Zan **la** mor*
John PAST die
'John died.' [Informant MAP]

(68) *Zan **lé Ø** mor*
John CLP dead
'John is dead.' [Informant MAP]

Ramassamy's (1985:137) summary of her analysis of Tense and Aspect markers is reproduced in Table 4.6 below:

Table 4.6 Tense and Aspect markers with their respective values

	Markers	Values
Aspect	*la*	accomplished
	i sa	prospective
	lapo	progressive
Tense	*té*	past
	va	future

4.2.3.3 Zero marking

Zero marking, though it is often non-past and non-future, is not as such in opposition to any particular marking. Indeed, as Ramassamy (1985:135) illustrates, it can indicate:

a. progressive, as in (69):

(69) *Kosa mamay **Ø i** fé*
what child ASM do
'What are the children doing?' [Ramassamy 1985:136]

b. iterative, as in (70):

(70) *Papa **Ø i** travay lizin bwa-rouz*
Dad ASM work factory Bois-Rouge
'Dad works at the factory in Bois-Rouge.' [Ramassamy 1985:136]

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c. prospective (or future), as in (71):

(71) *Papa Ø i travay domen*
Dad ASM work tomorrow
'Dad is working tomorrow.' [Ramassamy 1985:136]

d. perfective Aspect and past Tense, as in (72):

(72) *Yer Zan Ø i yariv la kas, Ø i fout en kalot momon*
yesterday Jean ASM arrive DET house ASM give DET slap Mom
'Yesterday Jean came home and slapped Mom.' [Ramassamy 1985:136]

e. Future Tense, as in (73):

(73) *En zour mwen osi m -i sa an frans*
DET day 1s too 1s ASM go in France
'One day I too will go to France.'

4.2.4 The auxiliary forms

Some Aspects are expressed in the VLR with lexical forms which function as a type of auxiliary (*para-aspectuel*). Ramassamy (1985:119) includes 1. the "inchoative" with *komans* 'begin'; 2. the completive (*terminatif*) *fin(i)* 'finish'; 3. "proximate completive" (*accompli proche*) with *sot* or *vyenn* 'to have just'; 4. the "directional" *alé / parti / sava /* 'go' and *vni / vyen* 'come'; 5. the "terminative" (*cessacif*) with *arèt* 'to stop'; and 6. the "durative" with *kontinyé* 'continue', as in (74):

(74) *li vyenn fin arèt travay*
3s come COMP stop work
'He has already stopped working.' [Ramassamy:1985:126]

Ramassamy (1985:150ff) also lists other such lexical forms expressing will: *vouli* 'want'; ability: *pé* and *geny*, and *yabou* 'be able'; decision: *désid* 'decide'; and obligation: *dwa* 'have to', and the expression *i fo* 'it is necessary', as in (75), from Ramassamy 1985:150-1):

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(75) *Zan Ø i pé/ yabou/ geny fé*
Jean ASM can do
'John can do it.' [Ramassamy 1985:105-1]

It should be noted that there are also adjective forms used to express obligation: *blizé* or *oblizé* 'forced'; and ability: *kapab* 'able', as in (76) from Ramassamy (1985:151):

(76) *Li Ø té blizé di*
3s CLP forced say
'He had to say so.' [Ramassamy 1985:151]

4.2.5 The so-called "inflected forms"

It is customary in the literature to refer to the forms in the lect of the *Petit Blancs* that seem to "correspond" to those of the superstrate, or Popular French, as "inflected forms" because of their etyma. If there were a pattern of inflection in the VLR that applied to *all* verbs, as is the case in Popular French, such a label might seem appropriate. There is, perhaps, a pattern in the VLR that could be considered a kind of inflection, namely the long and short forms of the verb, though this pattern is not to be found in Popular French. However, it seems rather arbitrary to refer to *té*, the Tense marker in all predicates, or to *sra*, the Tense marker in non-processive predicates, as "inflected forms". (Cf. §5.5.1 for discussion of the survival of so-called "inflected forms" or Popular French in the VLR.)

In the acrolect, the form used to express past progressive or past iterative, which has a Popular French etymon in the form ***(il) V + ait***, as in ***(il) chantait*** 'he was singing / he sang', is most often considered to be an inflected form in this lect. This form, *i santé* '(he) was singing / (he) sang' corresponds to the basilectal form *té i sant* '(he) was singing / (he) sang'. However, it does not correspond to the basilectal form *as an irrealis or conditional;* it only corresponds to it as a past form, as in (77):

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(77) *Kan li lé mor l -i rest -é orère*
when 3s PAST dead 3s ASM live PAST Aurère
'When he died, he was living in Aurère.' [Nicaise 1992:53]

The case is slightly different with the forms with inflected etyma of ***avoir*** "have" in Popular French. As Ramassamy (1985:144) points out, these forms are unique. In addition to the forms: *na* 'have' (with its variant forms *nana* and *néna*), which is used for the present (found in her corpus), there are *lavé* 'had', used for the past, and *nora* 'will have' and *noré* 'would have", used for the past in the future and the future in the past and the conditional respectively. Ramassamy (1985:145) gives examples (78) and (79). However, these forms (which provide auxiliaries and can combine with the Tense and Aspect markers of the core systems) are not found in her corpus of coastal monolingual speakers.

(78) *Mwen **nora** **(fin)** **manzé** kan ou va vni*
1s will have (already) eat when 2s FUT come
'I will (already) have eaten when you come.'

(79) *Mwen **noré** **manzé** si ou **lavé** fé kui*
1s would have eat if 2s had make cook
'I would have eaten if you had cooked something.'

In the acrolect, these forms are commonly used, however, as can be seen in §4.3. According to Gamaleya (1975), they are also common in "popular use" (*parler populaire*), and according to Ramassamy (1985:144) they are basilectal. This may be due to the influence of the Creolized Variety of Fench (CVF) or Standard French.

In this context, it should be mentioned that the negative future forms in *i + V + ra pa* are also often considered inflected forms in the literature. An example of such a form is (80) from Ramassamy (1985:133):

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(80) *Zan i **sant -ra pa***
John ASM sing FUT NEG
'John will not sing.' [Ramassamy 1985:133]

As will be seen in the discussion of this form (cf. §5.5.5.8), it is not considered in this study to be an inflected form in the VLR.

4.2.6 Negation

The most common negative particle in the VLR is *pa* 'not', which is used in all four kinds of negation. Other negative particles (or adverbs) are *pwin* 'not', *pi* 'no longer', and *pankor* 'not yet'. There are three kinds or scenarios of negation in the VLR, each a variant as to the position of the negative particle. The three scenarios are given below.

4.2.6.1 Negation of a verb form with the ASM *i*

The first type of negation is a separate, or free morpheme, placed *after the verb*, when it has the ASM *i*, as in (81) and (82), or the marker is a form with the marker *i*, as in (83):

(81) *Mi manz **pa** son kas aswar*
1s eat NEG 3s house tonight
'I am not eating at his/her house tonight.' [Ramassamy 1985:310]

(82) *Sa Ø **i ronflé** pa; ... sa Ø **i bouzé** pa non pli l' kamion*
DEM ASM murmur NEG DEM ASM move NEG neither DET truck
'It didn't murmur ... it didn't move either, this truck.' [Nicaise 1992:82]

(83) *Mwen té **i sa pa** manz son kaz*
1s PAST FUT NEG eat 3s house
'I wasn't going to eat at his/her house.' [Ramassamy 1985:311]

4.2.6.2 Negation of a verb form incompatible with the ASM *i*

The second type of negation is the same separate, or free morpheme, placed before the verb and *after a marker* incompatible with the ASM *i*, as in (84) through (88):

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(84) *Mwen la* ***pa*** *manz son kaz yèr swar*
1s PAST NEG eat 3s house yesterday evening
'I didn't eat at his/her house last night.' [Ramassamy 1985:311]

(85) *Mwen* ***pa*** *po manz son kaz*
1s NEG PROG eat 3s house
'I am not eating at hi/her house.' [Ramassamy 1985:311]

(86) *Mwen té* ***pa*** *po manz son kaz*
1s PAST NEG PROG eat 3s house
'I wasn't going to eat at his/her house.' [Ramassamy 1985:311]

(87) *Mwen lé/la Ø* ***pa*** *malad*
1s CLP NEG ill
'I'm not ill.' [Ramassamy 1985:313]

(88) *Mwen (lé)té* ***pa*** *malad*
1s PAST NEG ill
'I was not ill.' [Ramassamy 1985:313]

4.2.6.3 Negation of a future verb form

The third type of negation is the bound, or free morpheme, *-ra pa,* or *rapa,* which also exists in a form *-ar pa,* or *arpa,* with metathesis of the phonetic segments [r] and [p]. It is only used to negate the future forms in *i sa* (which has a variant *i sar*) or in *va,* as is illustrated in (89), with (90) and (91) both being ungrammatical:[28]

(89) *Mi manz* ***-ra pa*** *son kaz domen*
1s eat NEG 3s house tomorrow
'I won't be eating at his/her house tomorrow.' [Ramassamy 1985:311]

(90) **M -i sa pa manz*

(91) **M -a pa manz*

Since there is the presence of the ASM *i,* the postposition of the negation is not an exception. What is puzzling is the survival of the phonetic segment [r] from the Popular

[28] This form of negation of the future is found in various French-based creoles, such as Louisiana French Creole according to Cellier (1985a:422).

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French etymon ***mangera pas*** 'will not eat'. Striking is the fact that this form is a regular pattern in the VLR, as the form *fémalra pa* 'will not hurt' indicates. Indeed, there is no French—though there might just have been a Popular French—form ***fémalra pas*** 'will not hurt'. The verb *fémal* 'hurt', like the noun *fénwa* 'darkness',[29] from the Popular French ***il fait noir*** 'it is dark' seem to be creations of the speakers in Bourbon.

The case of *sra pa,* as in (92) can be included under this heading, but is more likely a fossilized form, as are the cases in the next section (§4.2.6.4)

(92) *Mwen sra pa malad*
1s FUT NEG ill
'I won't be ill.' [Ramassamy 1985:313]

In the acrolect, the negation of the future forms also includes the negation of the conditional forms or future in the past forms in *-ré,* as in (93):

(93) *E li la di, zot nora anter son kor, mé sa tét i ante(r) -ré pa*
and 3s PAST say 3p FUT bury 3s body but 3s head ASM bury COND NEG
'And he (had) said they would bury his body, but would not bury his head.'
[Nicaise 1992:82]

4.2.6.4 Special cases of negation

The negative form of such markers or expressions deriving from Popular French etyma as future marker *sra (sra pa)* 'will (not)', as in (93), existential *na (na pa/na pi)* 'there is/are (not/no longer)', as in (94), auxiliary forms *lavé, nora, noré,* as in (95) and (96), and *i fo /fodra/fodré (i fo/fodra/fodré pa)* 'it is/will/would (not) be necessary' are mainly fossilized forms in the negative as they are in the positive (cf. §5.5.3.)[30] The *i* in *i*

[29] Chaudenson (1974:991) lists "*fé nwa:r 'obscurité, ombre (de la nuit)*" among his *néologismes créoles.*
[30] Cellier (1985a:425-6) sees in the forms *lora, loré, nora,* and *noré* the result of a crystallization: "Le créole réunionnais a gardé certaines formes de cette copule en les figeant selon un processus de lexi-

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fo/fodra/fodré (pa) is the ***il*** of the Popular French etymon ***il faut/faudra/faudrait*** and not the ASM *i*.

(94) *la vierz na **pu**, déboulé la pri, na **pi** semin saret*
DET virgin exist NEG landslide PAST take, exist NEG path cart
'The virgin is no longer there, a landslide took it away, there is no cart path (left)
[Nicaise 1992:82]

(95) *mé selman sa tét noré rest deor, **noré pa** antéré*
but only 3s head have stray outside have not bury
"... but his head will stay above the ground, you won't bury it.' [Nicaise 1992:82]

(96) *pe apré moi lavé **pi** lé kramp **pi** d'fiév, **pi** ryin di tou*
a little later 1s had NEG DET cramp NEG fever, NEG nothing at all
'Soon I had no longer had any cramps, any fever, or anything at all.'
[Nicaise 1992:100]

4.2.7 The Imperative Forms

The imperative form of the verb in the VLR is attested without and with a pronominal form, as in (97), and (98) and (99), respectively:

(97) *Ø **manz** out manzé vitman*
Ø eat 2s food quickly
'Eat your food quickly.' [Ramassamy 1985:329]

(98) ***manz aou**, sa lé pou ou mèm sa*
eat 2s that CLP for 2s self that
'Eat! That's for you.' [Ramassamy 1985:330]

(99) *manz **azot***
eat 2p
'Eat!' [Ramassamy 1985:330]

For the first person plural, *anon* or *alon* (from the Popular French etymon ***allons*** 'let's go, come on') precedes the verb, as illustrated in (100). While the short form of the verb is used for the second person, the long form of the verb is used for the first person:

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calisation généralisé dans la formation des créoles qui a permis toutefois de garder certaines valeurs grammaticales plus anciennes." ("Réunionnais Creole has kept certain forms of this copula by fixing them through a process of generalized lexicalization when it was creolized, allowing it to retain some of the older grammatical values.")

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(100) ***anon/alon*** *manzé*
come on eat
'Let's eat!'
[Ramassamy 1985:330]

4.2.8 The form in *an + verb + an*

The gerund form of the French superstrate ***en + V + ant***, which was most likely used in Popular French in the 17th century as it is today almost in idiomatic expressions, has survived in the acrolect. It is formulaic or at least has survived as a fossilized form in adverbial expressions such as *an désandan* 'on the way down', as in (101):

(101) *kan l- ariv devan la ptit vierz* ***an désendan*** *la* ...
when PAST arrive in front of DET little virgin on the way down there
'When we arrived in front of the little (statue of the) Virgin, on the way down ...'
[Nicaise 1992:79]

4.3 The forms of the verb in the VLR[31]

4.3.1 Processive Predicates

4.3.1.1 Present Tense:

a. Non-progressive Present: *i + V*

(102) *Mi* ***arkont*** *sa; mi* ***menti*** *pa moin, oué* [Nicaise 1992:80]
1s tell this 1s lie NEG 1s yes
'I tell/I am telling you this; I don't lie/I'm not lying, you know.'

b. Present Progressive: *lapou + V* (including allomorphs of lapou, cf. §4.2.3 above)[32]

(103) *Kom v i voi amoi la mèm, moi toultan* ***apré kosé, apré rir***...
as 2s ASM see 1s here indeed 1s always PROG talk PROG laugh
'As you can see now, I'm always one to talk, to laugh ...' [Nicaise 1992: 118]

[31] Under this heading, examples from Sets A and B are given wherever possible.
[32] The progressive Aspect also includes the iterative.

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c. Present Conditional:

(104) *Si moi té kap travayé ankor moi* ***loré travayé mèm***
if 1s COND able work still 1s COND work indeed
'If I were still able to work, I would indeed be working.'
[Nicaise 1992: 118]

4.3.1.2 Past Tense

a. Accomplished in past: *la* + *V*

(105) *Moi* ***la kriyé*** *moi, moi lavé in pe d'toupé, mi di...*
1s PAST yell 1s 1s had a little nerve, 1s day
'I yelled out, I did; I had a little nerve; I said ...' [Nicaise 1992:80]

b. Past accomplished: (with verbs of change of state): *(té)* + adjective/noun/adverbial complement (in the acrolect)

(106) *Ousa le garson d'Léopol* ***lé mor,*** *la gingn in ros dan la tét...*
where DET boy of Léopold CLP die PAST receive DET rock in DET head
'Where Léopold's boy died, a rock hit him in the head ...' [Nicaise 1992:82]

c. Accomplished in past anterior: *la* + *fine* + *V*

(107) *Moi la komersé osi la, moi* ***la fine porté*** *bazaar osi la*
1s PAST do business also there 1s PAST COMP carry merchandise also there
'I also did business there; I had carried merchandise there, too.'
[Nicaise 1992:28]

d. Non-accomplished in past (durative/progressive): *té i* + *V*

(108) *Sa* ***i ronflé*** *pa; ... sa* ***i bouzé*** *pa non pli l' kamion*
DEM ASM murmur NEG DEM ASM move NEG neither DET truck
'It didn't murmur ... it didn't move either, this truck.' [Nicaise 1992:82]

e. Non-accomplished in past (durative/habitual): *té i* + *V*

(109) *Misel* ***i resté*** *Bra Sint Sizane ... Ø té in vie granmoun*
Michel ASM stay Bras Ste-Suzanne ... CLP PAST DET old man
'Michel lived in Bras Ste-Suzanne ... he was an old man.' [Nicaise 1992:82]

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f. Special Case: Non-accomplished Past: *lavé* 'had', cf. (105) and *navé* 'there was':

(110) *Kan lariv ... si lépol la* ***navé*** *sakén san kilo*
when PAST arrive PREP shoulder there have each hundred kilo
'When we reached ... we each had a hundred kilos on our shoulders.'
[Nicaise 1992:79]

g. Past progressive: *té* + *apo* + *V*

(111) *Moi la di mon vie papa—****li*** *t'* ***apré*** ***aranz*** *légliz ...*
1s PAST say 1s old father 3s PAST PROG fix up church
'I said to my old father--he was fixing up the church ...' [Nicaise 1992:31]

h. Past intention: *té* + *i sa* + *V*

(112) *Mwen* ***té*** ***(i) sa*** ***manzé*** *kan ou la rivé*
1s PAST PROSP eat when 2s PAST arrive
'I was going to eat when you arrived.' [Ramassamy 1985:138]

i. Past accomplished for past perfect: *la* + *V*

(113) *Sak li* ***la*** ***di*** *té vré*
what 3s PAST say CLP true
'What he (had) said was true.' [Nicaise 1992:77]

j. Past perfect: *té fine* + *V* [never *té i*][33]

(114) *Bé li* ***té*** ***finn*** ***dir*** *nora anvoiy o fon*
well 3s PAST COMPL say FUT send to bottom
'Well, he had said that he would send (the bearers) to the bottom (of the cliff).'
[Nicaise 1992:80]

k. Past perfect: *la* + *fini* (+ *d[e]*)[34] + *V*

(115) *Tout i lèv malgré* ***la*** ***fini*** ***d'*** ***boir*** [Nicaise 1992:81]
all ASM raise although PAST finish particle drink
'They all raised (their fingers) even though they had (just) drunk (a glass).'

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[33] "It is important to note that the *té i* variant of *té* is impossible in combination with *fine* due to the incompatibility of *i* and *fin*." ("Il convient de noter que la variante / té i / de / té / est exclue de la combinaison avec / fin / du fait de l'incompatibilité de / i / avec celui-ci") [Ramassamy 1985:143].

[34] In the same account there is also the following form, where *fini* is the verb form in the past:
Kan nou ***la*** ***fini*** ***boir*** *le kou nou la parti.*
when 1p PAST COMP drink DET shot 1p PAST leave
'When we had drunk our shots, we left.' [Nicaise 1992:80]

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l. Past perfect: *lavé + V*

(116) *Kan l ariv pou pasé Kap Miné, li* ***lavé di*** *nora anvoiy o fon*
when PAST arrive for pass Cap Miné 3s had say FUT send to bottom
'When the time came to cross Cap Miné, he had said he would send (the bearers) to the bottom (of the cliff).' [Nicaise 1992:80]

m. Past perfect + completive: *lavé finn + V*

(117) *Kan nou* ***lavé finn met*** *sa d'bout, mesié Esparon la anvoiy amoi ...*
when 1p HAD COMP put DEM upright mister Esparon PAST send 1s
'Once we had raised (the church), Mr. Esparon sent me ...' (in La Possession).
[Nicaise 1992:78]

n. Past conditional: *loré/noré + V*

(118) *Bé si nou té pa pré dérier pou trapé l'kor mor*
well if 1p PAST NEG ready behind for catch body dead (man)
'Well, if we hadn't been ready in the back to catch the body of the dead man,

bé ***noré arivé*** *ater mèm devan la kroi la* [Nicaise 1992:82]
well COND arrive aground self in front of DET cross there
well it would have reached the very ground there in front of the cross.'

o. Past conditional: *té + V*

(119) *Si* ***té di*** *amoin depi avant, moin* ***té gaigne*** *fé*
if COND say from before 1s COND manage do
'If (they) had told me earlier, I would have managed to do (it).'
[Gamaleya 1975]

p. Future in the past with auxiliary form: *nora + V*

(120) *Kan l ariv pou pasé Kap Miné, li lavé di* ***nora anvoiy*** *o fon*
when PAST arrive for pass Cap Miné 3s had say FUT send to bottom
When the time came to cross Cap Miné, he had said he would send (the bearers) to the bottom (of the cliff). [Nicaise 1992:80]

q. Future in the past with auxiliary form: *noré/loré + V*

(121) *E li la di, zot nora anter son kor, é sa tét i antéré pa*
and 3s PAST say 3p FUT bury 3s body and 3s head ASM bury NEG.
'And he said that they would bury his body, but that they shouldn't bury his head.

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Sa Ø i di sa. Kan zot nora anter ali, son kor nora antéré,
DEM ASM say DEM when 3p FUT bury 3s 3s body FUT bury
That is what he said. When they would bury him, his body they would bury,

mé selman sa tét ***noré rest*** *deor, noré pa entéré*
but only 3s head COND stay outside, COND NEG bury
only his head would stay above ground; they wouldn't bury it.'
[Nicaise 1992:82]

4.3.1.3 Future

a. Future fact: *i + V*

(122) *Kan* ***li ariv*** *pour li mor, li va mont la o pou li anvoiy sé kolon...*
when 3s arrive for 3s die 3s FUT go up there high for 3s send DET farmers
'When time comes for him to die, he is going to go up there to make these farmers fall down ...' [Nicaise 1992:79]

b. Definite intention: *i sa + V*

(123) *V* ***-i sa*** ***éséyé*** *touzour*
2s PROSP try always
'You're always going to give it a try.' [Nicaise 1992:99]

c. Non-definite intention:[35] *va + V*

(124) *Kan li ariv pour li mor, li va* ***mont*** *la o pou li anvoiy sé kolon...*
when 3s arrive for 3s die 3s FUT go up there high for 3s send DET farmers
'When time comes for him to die, he is going to go up there to make these farmers fall down ...' [Nicaise 1992:79]

d. Future progressive: *i sa + apo + V*

(125) *Kan ou va vni m* ***i sa(r) po lavé***
when 2s FUT come 1s PROS PROG wash
'When you come, I'll be doing the laundry.' [Ramassamy 1985:140]

[35] The use of the *va* future form is for a "process whose accomplishment depends on an intention of weak intensity and is situated in a more or less distant future" ("l'accomplissement d[u] ... procès ... est sous-tendu par une intention de faible intensité et projecté dans un avenir plus ou moins lointain") [Ramassamy 1985:131].

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e. Negative future:[36] *V + -ra + pa*

(126) *Mi* ***rakont -ar pa*** *aou tout son défo* (Epenthesis [*ra* + *pa*] → [*ar* + *pa*])
1s tell -ra NEG 2s all 3s defect
'I won't tell you about all his bad habits.' [Nicaise 1992:83]

f. Future perfect: *i sa + fine + V*

(127) *M* ***i sa(r) fine*** ***manzé*** *kan ou va vni*
1s PROS COMPL eat when 2s FUT come
'I will have eaten when you come.' [Ramassamy 1985:142]

4.3.2 Non-processive predicates

4.3.2.1 Present Tense

a. Present: *lé Ø* + adjective/noun/adverbial complement

(128) *Sak la dsandu la, lé zot lé Ø mor ...*
who PAST descend there DET other CLP dead
Those who went down there are dead (= have died) ... [Nicaise 1992:79]

b. Presentative: *sé Ø* + adjective/noun/adverbial complement

(129) *... mé zot lé Ø gro ker, zot i voudré sé Ø zot ki gingn*
but 3p CLP jealous 3p ASM WOULD CLP 3s who get
'... but they are jealous; they feel it is they who should get (the fruit of the work).'
[Nicaise 1992:110]

4.3.2.2 Past Tense

a. Past Tense: *Ø + té* adjective/noun/adverbial complement

(130) *Devan navé Giyom avek mesié Sarli. Zot Ø té lon*
in front had Guillaume with mister Charly 3p (CLP) PAST tall
'In front there were Guillaune and Mr. Charly. They were tall.' [Nicaise 1992:79]

(131) *Li la di, parsk Ø té in fay boug, fay boug é in bon boug*
3s PAST say for (CLP) PAST DET weak man, weak man and DET good man
'He said it because he was a weak man, a weak man and a good man.'
[Nicaise 1992:78]

[36] Cf. example (121) for negative *noré pa* (future in the past).

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(132) *Kan la tir la kour ...Ø té in pe kom le poi d' sa la*
when PAST take DET yard (CLP) PAST a little like DET weight of DEM there
'When we took (the coffin) out of the yard, it was about as heavy as that there.'
[Nicaise 1992:79]

(133) *... ousa lavé la kroi la, ousa lavé met son zanfan Ø té mor*
where HAD DET cross there where HAD put 3s child (CLP) PAST die
'... where the cross was, where he/they had put the child who had died ...'
[Nicaise 1992:82]

b. Past accomplished + completive: *la fini* + adjective/noun/adverbial complement

(134) *Misel ... mi kroi pa si lé ankor la, pour moi la fini mor sa*[37]
Michel 1s believe NEG if CLP still here for 1s PAST COMP die DEM
'Michel ... I don't believe he's still around, for me he has long since died.'
[Nicaise 1992:82]

c. Past completive: *(lé)té* + *fini* +adjective/noun/adverbial complement

(135) *té fini boir tro osi ... la nui tousa, Ø té fini tro sou*
PAST COMP drink too also DET night all DEM (CLP) PAST COMP too drunk
'I had drunk too much also ... all night ... I was already too drunk.'
[Nicaise 1992:83]

e. Future: *sra* + adjective/noun/adverb complement

(136) *Mon gason sra (en) doktèr en zour*
1s boy FUT DET doctor DET day
'My boy will be a doctor some day.' [Ramassamy 1985:153]

f. Imperative: short form with or without (object case) pronoun

(137) *mi di, dégaz vitman l'kafé*
3s say finish quickly coffee
'She said (to me): Hurry up and finish your coffee .' [Nicaise 1992:102]

(138) *débrouy azot, fé kom karo lé Ø azot*
manage 2p do as lot CLP 2p
'Figure it out? Act as if the land were yours.' [Nicaise 1992:32]

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[37] It could be argued that this is the verb *fini* in past form (*la fini*) + *mor*. Only in French the expression would have been: *finir par mourir*. It is different from *fini boir* in (Note 34) or even *fini d'boir* in (115) because it does not mean to "finish dying". Besides, if it came from the Popular French, the word *par* would have been crystallized.

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Chapter Five: The Role Malagasy in the Creation of the VLR

5.0 Terminology

Over the last decade, new theoretical approaches have introduced new terminology. Because the emergence and development of pidgin and creole languages are now increasingly considered from the more general point of view of language contact and language creation, what used to be discussed in terms of "substrate influence" is now discussed, for example, in terms of "language creation" (Baker 1994, 1995, 2002) and "contact-induced restructuring" (Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2002). Because this chapter on the role of Malagasy in the creation of the Vernacular Lects of Réunion (VLR) takes into account and refers to issues previously discussed in other terms, a certain flexibility is requested of the reader. The variation in terminology in what follows should not be seen as conflicting with the approach of this study, namely that a new vernacular was *created* in Bourbon between 1663 and 1715 and developed in the later 1700s. This section (§5.0) will discuss a working definition for "substrate influence" compatible with language creation; and the following section (§5.1) will address the relation of language creation to contact-induced restructuring, in order to introduce the questions this chapter addresses (§5.3). It should be made clear that the use of terms "substrate language", "substrate influence", and "contact-induced restructuring" does not mean that the VLR are understood as a simple continuation of Popular French, but as a new creation in which by "Malagasy substrate" is actually meant Malagasy as an input language on the same level as Popular French is considered to be an input language (cf. 5.3 below).

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5.1 Substrate influence: a working definition

The notion of *substrate influence*, or influence from one or more *substrate languages*, has commonly been invoked in pidgin and creole studies even though it remains controversial to some linguists. For them, as Muysken & Smith (1986:1) put it, "the particular grammatical properties of creole languages directly reflect universal aspects of the human language capacity." Creolistics and studies in language contact borrowed the notion of *substratum* from the field of historical linguistics and dialectology, where it refers to an underlying, foreign linguistic stock from which a language or dialect has retained, borrowed, or derived elements or structures, since such elements or structures were incorporated into it as it developed. In this way, for example, French is thought by some to have a Celtic *substratum* that might account for some of its non-Latin traits. However, in historical linguistics and dialectology the use of the term does not imply a break in normal language transmission, whereas the models of the genesis of pidgin and creole languages hinge critically both on whether these languages are the result of such a break and what the nature of that break is.

In pidgin and creole studies, there is a connotation of power relationships that characterizes the terms *substrate* and *superstrate* (also called target language), which, according to Holm (1988:5) is the following with respect to pidginization:

> Usually, those with less power (speakers of *substrate* languages) are more accommodating and use words from the language of those with more power (the *superstrate*), although the meaning, form, and use of these words may be influenced by the substrate languages. When dealing with the other groups, the superstrate speakers adopt many of these changes to make themselves more readily understood, and no longer try to speak as they do within their own group.

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It is the nature of this influence that is still the object of much debate. Can words simply be taken from a superstrate language without the "meaning, form and use of these words" being influenced by the structures of the substrate language, that is, without some borrowing, interference, or other consequence with roots in an underlying structure?

It has been shown (Thomason and Kaufman 1988) that in situations of language contact, borrowings from the lexicon and morpho-syntax of a substrate language, for example, depend on specific factors and vary in degree. There remains, however, the question: Do speakers of the substrate languages adopt the structures of the superstrate to the same degree as they adopt its vocabulary? Baker (1999:9-10) has shown, for example, that the overwhelming percentage of superstrate words in creole languages may be the result of a *gradual* development. It could well be that the proportion of substrate vocabulary was greater in early stages of creolization than it was later on. What about substrate morpho-syntactic elements, and syntactic and semantic structures? It can safely be said that the issue of the creative contribution of speakers of both the superstrate language *and* the substrate language is still a point of contention among creolists.

Substrate influence is understood here as *the contribution of the speakers of a substrate language in the creation and development of a new vernacular*, which, technically, translates into terms such as borrowing, interference, reanalysis, etc. It should be made clear at this point that this influence had an impact on the genesis and development of the VLR *along* with processes such as simplification, accommodation, and structural expansion, as well as consequences of such factors as bilingualism,

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proficiency in different registers, and the tendency for speakers of a community to mark their speech with respect to the speech of another community—processes whose relation to restructuring is discussed in §6.2. Different processes were at work as the Malagasy input and the Popular French input produced the new vernacular.

5.1.1 Substrate influence and the VLR

There has been disagreement in the literature about possible substrate influence in the emergence and development of the VLR. The debate has mainly concentrated on the verb phrase in these lects, since, as Chaudenson (1981a:193) points out, it is the elements of the verb phrase that seem to play a crucial role in indicating the origin of their morphological structure.

Views on the VLR have either agreed or disagreed with the earliest writing on them by Adam (1883), which portrayed them as a kind of *mixed* language. The debate, however, continues to this day. On the one hand, there is the position of Chaudenson (1974, 1981a, 1992), who presents a very extensive, well-documented, and detailed discussion of Malagasy contributions to the lexicon of the VLR in Chaudenson (1974:466-535), but who reduces any traces of Malagasy or African morpho-syntactic elements or syntactic structures to virtually nothing (cf. Chaudenson 1974:1109-11; 1981a:150). On the other hand, there is Cellier (1985a:357-9), who disagrees with Chaudenson's views, which for him are tantamount to saying that the VLR "derive from French in a straight line."[1] He argues (Cellier 1985a:361) that a "structural mutation"

[1] "... R. Chaudenson dont la thèse est que le créole descend **en droite ligne du français**" [emphasis added] [Cellier 1985a:357].

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(*mutation structurelle*) occurred in the creolization process that gave rise to the VLR. With regard to the simplified form of the verb in these lects, for example, Cellier (1985a:357) asks if "[i]n Réunion, the structural schemata of Malagasy could have acted as the 'model' for the [complete] abandonment"[2] of the inflected forms of the French verb. He puts forth (Cellier 1985a:357) the "idea that interference from Malagasy could account for what for R. Chaudenson is nothing but a systematizing of tendencies inherent in French."[3] "It would be," he writes (Cellier 1985a:357), "nothing but a plausible interference, one quite comparable to the introduction of Malagasy vocabulary into the lexicon of the Creole, even if only few traces of it [i.e. of the interference] remain today."[4]

Other creolists are either altogether skeptical about any substratal interference in the emergence of French-based pidgins and creoles (Valdman 1978:384)[5], or restrict the time period in which such interference might have occurred in the case of the VLR (Baker and Corne 1986),[6] and remain rather vague about substrate influence in the emergence of the VLR (Baker 1999:8).[7] Still others take the idea of substratal influence

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[2] "... l'abandon complet des désinences verbales ... dans les créoles. A la Réunion les schémas structurels du malgache ont-ils pu être le 'modèle' qui a permis cet abandon?" [Cellier 1985a:357].

[3] "... l'idée qu'une interférence avec le malgache a pu permettre ce qui n'est pour R. Chaudenson qu'une systématisation des tendances du français" [Cellier 1985a:357].

[4] "Ce ne serait qu'une interférence plausible tout à fait comparable à ce qu'a été l'introduction d'un vocabulaire malgache dans le lexique du créole, même s'il n'en reste que peu de traces aujourd'hui" [Cellier 1985a:357].

[5] "Those who defend such hypotheses as relexification or interference can only fall back on parallels of particular kinds in which the effect of universal processes [of language change] would be absolutely out of the question." ("Les tenants des hypothèses de la relexification ou de l'interférence ne peuvent s'appuyer que sur des correspondances de nature particulière où l'effet de processus universaux pourraient être absolument exclu") [Valdman 1978:384].

[6] Baker and Corne (1986:164ff) view the period during which large numbers of slaves arrived on Bourbon (i.e. after 1735) as the time when substratal influence likely occurred.

[7] "For Réunionnais, Pitcairnese and Indo-Portuguese, both Europeans and non-Europeans were agreed that the European language was the target of the non-Europeans. ... For all the other languages, the true

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from Malagasy, Indian, and African languages on the VLR almost for granted, though not all to the same degree (cf. Papen [1978:33][8] and Corne [1999:73][9]) with regard to specific points, including the verb phrase. Manessy (1995:31) clearly implies substratal influence when he speaks of the VLR as forms of French "restructured by reference to a foreign norm."[10] However, Detges (2000:150ff) is the creolist who definitely acknowledges such an influence in his views on the genesis of French-based creoles not only generally, but also specifically with respect to the VLR. Further, questions about *"métissage linguistique"* have been asked again (cf. Baggioni 1991 and Manessy 1995).

Today a number of grammars of various Malagasy dialects (Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976; Thomas-Fattier 1982; Rabenilaina 1983; and Rajaonarimanana 1995) as well as articles on specific characteristics of Malagasy (Keenan 1975, 1978) are available. This means that the role detailed workings of the Malagasy substrate may have played in the emergence and development of the VLR can be analyzed and discussed

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Creoles, the only target for all parties, initially, was the construction of a medium of interethnic communication" [Baker 1999:8]. However, in Baker (2000:53) he writes: "In the unusual Reunion case, I assume that the emergent language of the new community would have been a dialectically-levelled variety of French **with some influence from Malagasy and other languages** represented during this period and I will refer to this below by Chaudenson's term *Bourbonnais*" [emphasis added].

[8] Speaking in terms of 1735, when "the condition required for the creation of a pidgin" began and when "Bourbon Creole was already firmly established," Papen (1978:33) writes: "The Malagasy group remains the most important ethnic group in the servile population. ... we may safely assume that linguistically, the Malagasy dialects played a very important role in the creation of the pidgin-Creole. 3) The Indian population undoubtedly played an early and important role in the creation of the pidgin-Creole ..." What is to be noticed here is the *assumption* that substrate languages played an important role.

[9] "The language generally known as 'Reunion creole' is to be seen as a continuation of French (dialectically levelled), **with a Malgasy substrate,** subsequently subjected to further but relatively minor influences from large numbers of L2 speakers, especially L1 Bantu speakers, throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. ... Reunion Creole today is therefore a unique blend of continuation and of language creation" [emphasis added] [Corne 1999:73]. However, Corne (1982:120) writes that Chaudenson's (1974) argument "that substrate languages are unlikely to have played a **determining role** in shaping RC [i.e. Reunion Creole]" is "essentially correct" [emphasis added].

[10] "Il est très possible que le créole de la Réunion soit également issu d'une variété 'pidginisée' du moyen-français plutôt que d'un hypothétique pidgin. S'il est un risque de créolisation du français d'Afrique Noire, c'est à partir de telles variétés, **restructurées par référence à une norme étrangère,** et non point par contamination directe du français standard par les idiomes de substrat" [emphasis added] [Manessy 1995:31].

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more concretely. Indeed, it can be said that, generally, any substrate influence on the VLR has so far been considered marginal and, at best, most hypothetical. There are, however, both sociohistorical and linguistic reasons why the hypothesis of substratal Malagasy influence on the VLR is solid and should be taken quite seriously. Some linguistic evidence for it is what this chapter is about.

5.2 Language creation: substrate influence and contact-induced restructuring

The role of Malagasy in the creation of the VLR has been discussed in the literature under the heading of substrate influence and contact-induced restructuring. The definition of substrate influence given above is general enough to include different processes of language change, including phenomena as different from each other as lexical borrowing and reanalysis. It is also compatible with the notion of contact-induced restructuring, as well as the view adopted in this study of language creation (cf. Manessy's *vernacularisation* in §6.2.1). The reason for a cover term, language creation, is that it makes it possible to group together processes that involved the Malagasy input. As such, the language creation that Malagasy was involved in (including Manessy's *vernacularisation*), whether this role is referred to as "substrate influence" or put in terms of "contact-induced restructuring", is measured here in terms of *structural difference on the lexical, morphosyntactic, and semantic levels as a result of the contact of languages that distances the new verncular from either of the languages that served as input to the new vernacular*. The main input languages being Popular French and Malagasy dialects (or a Malagasy koiné), the term *Popular French* referring to the popular and dialectal varieties of 17th and 18th century French that became progressively leveled in Bourbon.

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The creation of a new vernacular is understood as constituting a break in normal language transmission to the extent that a system was established in the VLR that was different from the one that characterized the source language. This can be seen, as this chapter will argue, in typological differences between Popular French and the VLR that result from contact-induced restructuring, or language creation. Of key importance among the processes that might account for the break in transmission is *reanalysis*, a term that calls for some comment at this point. Indeed, the terms *reanalysis* and *grammaticalization* are used in the literature on pidginization and creolization with definitions that either overlap or vary considerably with theoretical implications that can differ widely.

5.2.1 Is restructuring grammaticalization or reanalysis?

In keeping with recent work presented at the Regensburg conference in 1998, restructuring is understood here essentially in keeping with the general definition that Lang & Neumann-Holzschuh (1999) have given for *reanalysis* in the field of Romance languages and the framework of second language acquisition. Lang & Holzschuh (1999:6) explain:

> It is only possible to speak of reanalysis in those cases where one compares the analysis of the learners with the 'correct' analysis the competent speakers of the target language already have at their disposal. As far as the learner is concerned, there is here no reanalysis of anything that he has analyzed differently earlier. He simply analyzes what for him had not yet been analyzed. ... Indeed, in the field of research on language change, only those cases are interesting where the *new analysis was not as yet possible in the preceding state of the language*. It is for these cases that we wish to reserve the concept of 'reanalysis'" [emphasis added].[11]

[11] "Von Reanalyse kann man in diesen Fällen aber nur sprechen, wenn man die Analyse der Lerner mit der 'richtigen Analyse vergleicht, über die die kompetenten Sprecher der Zielsprache schon verfügen. Der Lerner selbst reanalysiert hier nicht, was er zuvor anders analysiert hat. Er analysiert einfach, was für ihn

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However, recent studies in creolization have established some clear distinctions between reanalysis and grammaticalization. Indeed, as Kriegel and Neumann-Holzschuh (2002:8) mention, language change in contact situations has been explained in terms of both *universal* principles of grammaticalization and principles of reanalysis *specific* to creole genesis.

Referring to Lehmann's definition of grammaticalization,[12] they point out (Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2002:6) that "the term grammaticalization therefore refers to certain types of language-internal change which occur gradually and unidirectionally and in which a lexical item takes on a syntactic value."[13] However, given the fact that creole languages emerged in specific sociolinguistic conditions, where their source languages came into contact with a variety of unrelated and typologically other languages, they constitute a special case of language contact. Kriegel and Neumann-Holzschuh (2002:8) argue that: "certain phenomena in creole languages cannot be explained by universal mechanisms of internal language change", which is why in more recent studies there is to be found "a certain consensus that there are beyond the traditional gradual processes of grammaticalization, other processes of restructuring which produced changes in morpho-syntax rather swiftly even as the lexical continuity

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bislang unanalysiert war. ... Für die Sprachwandelforschung sind nun allerdings nur diejenigen Fälle interessant, bei denen die neue Analyse im bisherigen Sprachzustand noch nicht möglich war. Für diese Fälle wollen wir deshalb den Begriff von Reanalyse reservieren" [Lang & Neumann-Holzschuh 1999:6].

[12] "'Grammaticalization is a process leading from lexemes to grammatical formatives. A number of semantic, syntactic and phonological processes interact in the grammaticalization of morphemes and whole constructions. A sign is grammaticalized to the extent that it is devoid of concrete lexical meaning and takes part in obligatory grammatical rules' (Lehmann [1982], 1995:VIII)" [Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2000:6].

[13] "Le terme de grammaticalisation désigne donc certains types de changements linguistiques internes à la langue qui se déroulent de façon graduelle et unidirectionnelle et dans lesquels un signe lexical se charge d'une valeur grammaticale ..." [Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2002:6].

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with the base language was maintained."[14] It is precisely in this respect, they point out (Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2000:9), that "another process of change, namely *reanalysis,* becomes relevant, a concept which has not until now played any major role in the discussion."[15]

Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh (2000:9) give the classical definition of *reanalysis* by Langacker (1977:59)[16] and point out that this process is "generally considered to be abrupt." They claim (Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2000:9) that it will "facilitate our understanding of certain changes at work in the genesis of creoles, since we are dealing with speakers who have not mastered the target language and so have often given another meaning to structures that were not transparent to them."[17] Very appropriately they state (Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2000:9) that reanalysis "concerns ... the reinterpretation by a listener of the relations among the units of discourse."[18] In other words, recent research (Bruyn 1995, 1996 and Detges 2000) considers processes at work in the emergence and development of creole languages as being of different types: both of a language-internal (and usually unidirectional) kind and

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[14] "...certains phénomènes présents dans les langues créoles ne peuvent pas être expliqués par des mécanismes universels de changement interne. ... un certain consensus sur le fait qu'il existe, au-delà des processus de grammaticalisation graduels, traditionnels, d'autres processus de restructuration qui ont abouti assez rapidement à des changements morpho-syntaxiques, alors même que la continuité avec les langues de base respectives était maintenue dans le domaine du lexique" [Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2002:8].

[15] "C'est ici qu'entre en jeu un autre procédé de changement linguistique, celui de la *réanalyse*, un concept qui jusqu'à présent n'a pas joué de rôle majeur dans la discussion" [Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2000:9].

[16] "... the change in the structure of an expression or class of expressions that does not involve any immediate or intrinsic modification of its surface manifestation" [Langacker 1977:59, quoted in Kriegel & Neumann Holzschuh 2000:9].

[17] "... permettra de mieux comprendre certaines évolutions à l'œuvre au cours de la genèse des créoles, étant donné qu'on a affaire à des locuteurs ne maîtrisant pas la langue-cible et ayant, pour cette raison, maintes fois accordé un autre sens à des structures non transparentes pour eux" [Kriegel and Neumann-Holzschuh 2000:9].

[18] "La réanalyse, généralement considérée comme étant abrupte, concerne donc la réinterprétation par l'auditeur des relations entre les unités du discours ..." [Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2000:9].

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a language-external kind, arising from very specific kinds of processes that obtain in language contact situations.

Lang (2000:478), whose analysis follows a similar line of thinking, is particularly exact about the literal meaning of terms and makes the point that in an emergent pidgin or creole there can be no actual *reanalysis*, since the speakers of the new language have nothing to compare it with (such as any previous use *by them* of that language). For him, the listeners are analyzing the input they are exposed to *for the first time* (i.e there is no previous stage of the language spoken by *them*), but, at a later stage, there can indeed be either reanalysis or grammaticalization. Strictly speaking, Lang (2000) is right, but, for the purpose of a unified picture of the genesis and development of the VLR, Lang's distinction in terminology is adopted here. Restructuring will be taken in the sense of *reanalysis* in the sense of Lang & Neumann-Holzschuh (1999) and of Detges (2000).

5.2.2 Is restructuring the same as approximations of L2 by learners of French?

As stated in §1.3, it is not the position of this study that in Bourbon speakers of Malagasy dialects, or Indian languages, or Indo-Portuguese creoles were learning Popular French as a target language, even in the sense of what French linguists call *apprentissage non-guidé* or informal ("uncoordinated", cf. Detges 2000:147) second language acquisition, especially when it comes to the creatin of the new vernacular lect. There is indeed a difference between the fate of hypotheses made in the acquisition of a second language and the fate of hypotheses made in the language contact situation in which a new vernacular emerges. In the former, the hypotheses made by an L2 leaner of French *do not affect or change* the speech of the native speakers of French, while in the second, the

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hypotheses made by a contributor to the creation of a common vernacular *can and most likely will affect* the speech of other members of a same group, especially once the group marks its speech forms to distinguish itself from other speech communities.[19] Naturally, this does not technically preclude a similarity between the guesses made by speakers of a substrate language and guesses made by a person learning a target language in an informal second language acquisition setting. Why this distinction matters will become clear below (cf §5.5.5.2).

5.2.3 Contact-induced restructuring and multiple causation

That there was multiple causation in the creation and development of the VLR is taken as a given.[20] However, what is also clear is that specific morpho-syntactic elements and syntactic structures, and their corresponding semantic structures, would not characterize the VLR were it not for the contribution of the speakers of Malagasy dialects (and Portuguese, Indo-Portuguese, and African languages). One of the most difficult tasks of historical reconstruction in creolistics—one that is virtually impossible—is the teasing out of precise causes because different causes are known to have produced identical effects. In a field as complex and as frought with unconscious cognitive moves as that of language change or language creation, hypotheses should serve to sharpen the tools of analysis as well as make clear the limits of our ability to explain the course of language

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[19] Cf. Baker's (2000:54) notion of a creole as a "**medium of community solidarity**" (MCS), and Manessy's (1995:96-7) notion that "use of the simplified variety is interpreted [by its speakers] not as a mere means of mutual comprehension but as the **expression of a solidarity** which transcends ethnic differences and whose locus can be a town, a region ..." ("l'emploi de la variété simplifiée est interprétée non comme un simple moyen d'intercompréhension, mais comme l'expression d'une solidarité qui transcende les différenciations ethniques et dont le cadre peut être la ville, la région ...") [emphasis added].

[20] Cf. Thomason (1993:282): "The particular rival theory I would argue for, for instance, seeks to explain P[idgin and] C[reole] genesis through the complex interplay of a variety of influences whose effects vary under different social conditions—lexifier language(s), other languages in the contact situation, universal structural tendencies, and universal tendencies of second-language acquisition."

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change or language creation. Here, it seems, the interaction of causes remains one of the most fruitful roads to follow, both in terms of its explanatory power and the contribution it can make to the field of contact linguistic as such.

What makes the role of the speakers of Malagasy dialects (or a Malagasy koiné) on the VLR a challenging issue is that their language, as will be shown in §6.2, operated not only as an agent that introduced dramatic *innovations* into the new vernacular of Bourbon, but also acted as an agent of *preservation* which slowed or impeded the process of simplification usual in cases of such language creation (cf. Manessy's 1995 *vernacularisation*) because of an intriguing set of parallel structures between their language and that of the French settlers.

The restructuring, or the creation of new structures, is in the main the result of interlocutors misleading each other in the final analysis, as if identical lexical or phonetic items played the same role in the grammars of both speakers, while in actual fact they may not have. Speakers of the superstrate language and speakers of the substrate languages together eaked out and shared a common new language, proceeding along paths neither of them suspected or was even aware of. It is this sameness within difference that is presented here as the key to the origin and development of the VLR, in the sense that *one man's French is another man's creole, and one man's creole is another man's French.*[21] A Popular French form may have corresponded in surface structure to the form used by a Malagasy but have had a different deep structure. *As to certain specific forms* in the new vernacular, for the speaker of the substrate (or

[21] This is a way of putting it borrowed from Professor E. Bendix.

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Malagasy), the French speaker (or settler) may have been speaking the vernacular, while the settler thought he was speaking Popular French. Conversely, for the settler, the speaker of the substrate (or Malagasy) may have been speaking the vernacular, while the speaker of the substrate (or Malagasy) thought he was speaking Popular French. In the meantime, for those learning the vernacular from their input, the two were speaking the same language or the common vernacular. In general terms, on the level of the language *as a whole*, differences would naturally have remained among speakers—especially in terms of pronunciation, and these would have marked the respective speech variety of a speaker, or their idiolect, in varying degrees.

One could even say that *as to certain specific forms* for the speaker of Popular French the new vernacular seemed *hardly different* from his own speech variety, and that for the Malagasy speaker, the structure of the vernacular was in some ways consonant with the structure of his native Malagasy dialect. The words, of course, were different from their Malagasy counterparts, but their semantic value was not so altered since the syntax was, to all intents and purposes, *mostly maintained*, even as the morpho-syntactic structure of the vernacular was extremely simplified in comparison with the rich morpho-syntactic palette of his Malagasy dialect. If this is the case, the way the VLR misinform schoolchildren today about Standard French may be more easily understood. And it is the concern for such misinformation or confusion in the minds of schoolchildren in Réunion that initially led Cellier (1985c:3)[22] to take seriously the hypothesis of Malagasy substrate

[22] "The work presented in this book is therefore a comparative grammar of creole and French (both standardized), accompanied by some thoughts on the linguistic mistakes in the use of French [by creolophone children in elementary school], whether these be owing to the structures of French itself (L_2) or to the contact of the two languages (L_1 - L_2)." ("Le travail présenté dans cet ouvrage est donc une grammaire

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influence as the origin of what are here considered typological differences between the *créole* and Standard French. Such an analysis would also help elucidate the issue of *métissage linguistique* that has been discussed again (Baggioni 1991).

In the pidgin and creole literature, there seems, however, to be a fear, or at least misgivings, about "mixed languages" (what is referred to in French as *métissage linguistique*). This fear seems to have different causes. One may be a simple—indeed a sane—caveat, a hesitation to apply to the fate of languages too narrowly a metaphor taken from the theory of genetic evolution. However, another might be a continuation of racial prejudice: a refusal to believe that a cause originating from an "inferior" level (even if was inferior only in economic terms) could have participated equally with a cause operating at a "superior" level. It may well be that, in some respects, the VLR illustrate a *shared* level on which Europeans and non-Europeans cooperated, particularly when one considers the fact that the poor Whites as well as the maroons and freed slaves rejected the world of the *gros blanc*, the wealthy colonist, the economically and culturally superior "White man". This rejection in time became the cornerstone of the identity of *le rényoné*, the man and woman born in Réunion.[23] It is no wonder that this linguistic identity has been used to political ends and that the debates about granting the creole the status of language is essentially a political debate in Réunion, as it is elsewhere. At the emotional level the *créole* is one, no matter how many lects it may have.

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comparée du créole et du français—standardisés—accompagnée d'une réflexion sur les erreurs linguistiques en français [d'enfants créolophones dans le cycle élémentaire], qu'elles soient dues aux structures du français lui-même (L_2) ou au contact des deux langues ($L_1 - L_2$)" [Cellier 1985c:3].

[23] Cf. Armand (1990), Cellier (1985e), and Baggioni & Mathieu (1985).

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5.3 The question addressed in this chapter

This chapter looks at some morpho-syntactic items and syntactic structures (with their semantic correlates) that define and characterize the verb phrase and predication in the VLR, and reveal typological differences between Popular French and these vernacular lects. They touch on issues that have been discussed in the literature but that, so far, have not been analyzed in detail in relation to *discrete* points in the grammar of Malagasy dialects. A case is made for the creation of new morpho-syntactic traits characterizing the new vernacular due to the dual input of Malagasy dialects (or a Malagasy koiné) and Popular French. (This includes contact-induced restructuring of the grammar of the speakers of Popular French on specific points, due to the influence of Malagasy grammar). Malagasy grammar can be shown as a clear operative in the creation of the new syntactic system found in the VLR. In some cases, a particular lexical element, or phonetic element(s), derived from Popular French has been grammaticalized, but in others there has been a reanalysis of salient morphemes, or even phonetic segments, in the superstrate. The question this chapter tries to answer is: *What role did the Malagasy dialects play in the creation of the new vernacular?*[24] The relation the contact-induced restructuring bears to other processes of language creation, such as simplification, reduction, and adaptation, is dealt with in §6.2.

Indirectly, it should be added, this chapter also asks three further questions, which arise from the answer given to the questions mentioned above: 1. Does the role of Malagasy (or of the Malagasy "substrate") only come into play when all other avenues

[24] To the extent that the Popular French spoken by the descendants of the French settlers was influencedS by the speech of the Creoles, maroons and ex-slaves, this also implies a restructuring of the Popular French spoken by the descendents of the settlers in Bourbon (cf. §6.2.5).

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leading to an explanation fail, as a solution apologetically brought to bear on the data, or does it constitute a *full-fledged agent* in the creation of the VLR? 2. Does the role of the Malagasy (or the influence of the Malagasy "substrate") go beyond the specific points considered here? And 3. Are all instances of contact-induced restructuring due to Malgasy substratal influence instances of *convergence*, as (Cellier 1985a:359) states in agreement with Chaudenson, i.e. instance swhere there were similarities of structure between the two input langages? If they are instances of such *convergence*, with discreet (also discrete) restructuring hidden from view, then the VLR would merely give the *appearance* that there is no direct contamination of Popular French. It is precisely such an "appearance" is what can make a position like Chaudenson's (1974, 1981a) seem perfectly plausible.

5.4 The role of Malagasy in the contact-induced restructuring in Bourbon

As Cellier (1985a) and Ramasssamy (1985) hint, there is a typological difference between Standard French and the VLR today. Such a difference, however, also exists between the Popular French of the original settlers and the vernacular lect that had emerged in Bourbon by the first half of the 18th century. For Chaudenson (1992:136ff.) this difference is essentially the result of merely internal changes, or what he has called "autonomisation", a term that aims to capture the changes French underwent in the colonies as a result of the autonomy which varieties of French enjoyed away from the grammatically watchful eye of their homeland, when they are not also the result of approximations due to second language acquisition (1992:165). The view adopted here is that the typological difference is such, however, that it is not primarily in Chaudenson's

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free internal developments in the use of the language, whose speakers were freed from the pressures exerted by the rigorous norms of the *Académie française* in the 17th century, that the VLR have their roots. Nor is it in approximated second-language acquisition. Their roots must rather be sought either in principles of universal language change or in language contact phenomena (cf. Baker 1995, 2000). If there are significant typological differences between the Romance structure of the base language and the *sui generis* structure of the VLR, the question that needs to be asked is: *What was the role played by the Malagasy substrate that is manifest in this result?*

One lesson the close study of varieties of French, Malagasy dialects, and the different lects of the vernacular spoken in Réunion can teach us is not to mistake *lexical identity* between an item in the vernacular and its etymon, or source word in the superstrate, for *identical function* or *identical meaning*. Unless this distinction is clearly made, misconceptions are fostered about a supposed unbroken, natural development of the superstrate in a colonial setting, where the norms imposed in a colony's homeland are relaxed, thereby reducing the specificity of pidgin and creole languages to mere sociological givens particular to a specific time in history (Chaudenson 1992, Mufwene 1996). The question about the nature of the VLR, i.e. whether they are a form of *français avancé* (Chaudenson 1974:1135ff), or *français autonomisé* (Chaudenson 1992:165), and therefore to be considered dialects of French genetically or, as it is claimed here, or the result of language creation (*vernacularisation*, cf. §6.2.1) due to language contact, classified as creoles or partially creolized varieties, hinges centrally on this matter. Very different political choices about language policy in education are at stake here for the

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people of Réunion. Indeed, if the VLR are varieties of French, then students are *not* learning *another language* in school when they are learning the standard variety of French. If, however, the VLR and Standard French are separate languages, these students are learning a *second language* in school when they are exposed to the standard variety. In Réunion, the saying, "The emperor is wearing no clothes" might take the form: *"Nout kréol sa la pa fransé."* 'Our creole is a different language from French.'

Cellier (1985a:358) puts his finger on the issue when he writes about the syntactic similarities between Malagasy and Standard French: "It seems difficult without a very exacting comparison of Malagasy and French, to decide on the limits of one and the other language on points where they can indeed look alike not lexically but syntactically."[25] It may well be that this *syntactic* similarity has acted as a kind of screen, hiding from sight the *actual* contribution of Malagasy in the creation of the new vernacular in Bourbon. Because of the lexical continuity between the VLR and Popular French, this screen has been all the more efficient. One thing Cellier's (1985a) attempt at a "standardization" of the VLR has done is to call for a study to clarify 1. what the typological distance between Standard French and these lects really is; and 2. how great it really is. The question then is *to what extent* it is due to Malagasy substrate influence. Cellier (1985a) puts one on the track here, and Ramassamy (1985) gives some specific evidence on the same basis. It should be added that for Cellier (1985a:359) "everything, when it comes to mixed languages (*mixité de langue*), is a matter of the difficult gauging of the degree of influence of one substrate versus the other. For us, it is also clear that the Malagasy

[25] "Il semble donc qu'il soit difficile—à moins d'une comparaison très précise entre malgache et français—de décider les limites de l'une et de l'autre langue sur des points où elles peuvent en fait se ressembler non lexicalement mais syntaxiquement, simple disposition morpho-syntaxique" [Cellier 1985a:358].

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substrate can only have determined (*marquer*) the creole [languages] of the Indian Ocean *as a result of the similarities between their structural models and that of French*. Perhaps it is this conception of the facts that made possible the *real innovations* which deeply distinguish the verbal system of the creole from that of French" [emphasis added].[26]

5.4.1 Cognitive processes in creole-specific reanalysis

A more complete theoretical account of the contact-induced restructuring is presented and discussed in §6.2. At this point, however, some theoretical clarification is appropriate before the evidence for Malgasy substrate influence is presented. The *reanalysis* which it is argued in this chapter took place at the time of the emergence of the VLR is based on "cognitive strategies" in the processing of Popular French input by speakers of Malagasy dialects. This reanalysis is understood in the vein of the argumentation presented by Detges (2000).

In his "cognitive-pragmatic" approach, Detges (2000:146ff) makes a distinction between a "hearer's strategy", responsible for *reanalysis*, and a "speaker's strategy" responsible for *grammaticalization*. He shows (Detges 2000:149) how the former can account for "highly typical restructuring patterns in the grammar" of the French-based creoles, including "morphological restructuring". He sees the emergence of some Tense and Aspect markers in French-based creoles as the result of *reanalysis* and the emergence

[26] "... tout, en fait de mixité de langues, renvoie à l'évaluation difficile du degré d'influence d'un substrat plutôt que de l'autre. Pour nous, il est clair aussi que le substrat malgache n'a pu marquer le créole de l'Océan Indien **qu'à travers des convergences de modèles structuraux avec le français**. C'est peut-être cette accentuation des faits qui a permis l'innovation réelle, qui différencie profondément le système verbal du créole de celui du français, conduisant à l'abandon de toute marque désinentielle en provenance des sociolectes et des régiolectes du français du début du XVIIIème siècle" [Cellier 1985a:359].

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of others as the result of *grammaticalization* at an early stage.[27] However, both for him are creole-specific processes of restructuring. Detges (2000:146) considers such Tense markers as *la* in the VLR, *té* in the French-based creoles, and *sa/sera* in Louisiana French Creole, for example, to be the result of reanalysis, or "morphological reanalysis". The reason for this is that some of the elements reanalyzed in the substrate *already had a grammatical function* in the superstrate to begin with. Tense markers such as *fine/fine*, however, are the result of early *grammaticalization*, being innovations (in terms of the previously existing morphology) for a purpose that Detges (2000:136-7) describes as the speaker's "goal ... to speak convincingly."[28] Detges (2000:139-44) sees the creole-specific nature of the process of grammaticalization that gave rise to the completive marker *fin(i)/n* in French-based creoles and in the VLR in the fact that it is a marker "derived from *a lexical item* denoting FINISHEDNESS" [emphasis added]. He points out (Detges 2000:144) that in this case "there is a clear material continuity from French to these languages", but that "[n]either in Standard French nor in any of the dialectal varieties of 17th c. French were *finir* or *fini* used as anteriors in the sense outlined above." "The grammaticalization processes which turned *fin(i)* into an anterior marker in some of the Fr[ench] C[reoles]," Detges (2000:144) writes, "are developments specific to these languages."

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[27] For Detges (2000:139-44) the early process of grammaticalization is different from a later process of grammaticalization, which, in time, took place in these creoles in the same way as such developments occur in any language.

[28] "... some of the grammatical elements of the FrCr's, typically elements which, in the base language, already had grammatical or near-grammatical function, are not the result of grammaticalization in the sense above. This applies to the anterior *la* in RéuFrCr (Fr *il/elle a*) and to the tense markers which are the survivors of the French *être*-paradigm, particularly the past-tense marker *ti/te* (Fr *était (à)*) which we find in all the FrCr languages and the future marker *sa/sera* (Fr *sera*) in LouFrCr" [Detges 2000:146].

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Detges (2000:154) makes it clear that "forms that are selected in creole-specific reanalysis have in common that they refer to situationally salient concepts". The "principle of restructuring" he suggests makes it clear that the reanalysis is the work of the *hearer*, say a substrate language speaker in Bourbon processing the Popular French input (and the emerging vernacular lect). Detges (2000:149) defines the *Principle of restructuring* in his cognitive-pragmatic approach in these terms: "Try to match salient elements of the situation, as you perceive it, with the sound chain you hear." *It is this principle of selection (or matching) of a salient element in the situation* ***and*** *the coincidence of marked structures, or constructions, in the substrate and superstrate languages that underlie the instances of restructuring this chapter discusses.*[29] They will be shown to have been the two operatives in specific morphological and semantic changes that occurred in the emergence of the VLR.

The salient element may be an element that corresponds to a parallel element in the structure of the hearer's language, but it may also be the association of a salient element in the superstrate with an *obligatory* marking in the substrate, or hearer's language. The advantage of Detges' "principle of restructuring" is that it allows for an active and creative contribution on the part of the speakers of the substrate languages in the emergence of a new vernacular. Saliency in marked constructions *together with* parallels between Malagasy structures and structures in Popular French are presented as explaining specific instances of restructuring that took place in the VLR due to Malagasy influence (cf. §6.2.2). This line of reasoning is also consonant with Lang's (2000:478-9)

[29] Cf. Muysken and Smith (1986:4) on this point: "In other words, to *prove* substrate influence we have to look for 'marked' structures appearing in both languages—the language potentially subject to substrate influence and the potential substrate language."

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view that as speakers of substrate languages analyzed and structured the input they were exposed to, "one cannot help but think that they did this by making use of the only linguistic structures they had at their disposal, namely those of their own languages."[30] (It should be said that, in this study, it is not such linguistic structures *exclusively* that are seen as having provided substrate speakers with structures.)

The contact-induced restructuring this chapter suggests took place can be seen as an attempt, with respect to the VLR, to answer Detges' (2000:146) question about the "survival" of "clitic and inflectional elements of the base language", which "have normally disappeared in the French Creoles." "The problem," he writes (Detges 2000:146), "is to find an explanation which accounts for the fact that some of these grammatical elements disappeared while others were retained."[31]

5.5 Instances of contact-induced restructuring in the VLR verb phrase

At first glance, various elements in the verb phrase of the VLR would seem to point to a rough continuation in these lects of much of the structure of the verb phrase of Popular French (cf. Chaudenson 1981a:193)[32], despite the significant simplification of the system of Popular French due to language creation (cf. Manessy's *vernacularisation* in §6.2.1). However, a closer look at the data and a comparison of the systems of Malagasy and Popular French reveal a rather different picture. This section presents three points where

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[30] "Et l'on ne peut pas s'empêcher de penser qu'ils l'ont fait en recourant aux seules structures linguistiques dont ils disposaient déjà, à savoir celles de leurs langues d'origine" [Lang 2000:478-9].

[31] Detges (2000:146-8) shows convincingly how on the basis of his principle of restructuring such a clitic element as the French definite article, which had no saliency for speakers of substrate languages, survived phonetically in French-based Creoles.

[32] "... les créoles offrent en fait la forme systématisée de tendances permanentes du français" [Chaudenson 1981a:193].

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the syntactic patterns and morpho-syntactic systems of Malagasy, on the one hand, and Popular French, on the other, are both different and similar in order to pinpoint where and how the Malagasy grammatical system interacted with the grammatical system of Popular French in the creation of the VLR (cf. §5.5.2). It follows a step-by-step presentation of facts and hypotheses that make up a tightly woven, incremental argument. It follows Ramassamy's (1985) analysis of two different types of predicates in the VLR and makes use of an analysis proposed by Frajzynger (1985) of agentive and non-agentive semantics and grammaticalized marking of stative and non-stative verbs across languages. Both Ramassamy (1985) and Frajzynger (1985) approach the issue from a semantic/syntactic point of view. It is indeed the relation of semantics and syntax that the contact-induced restructuring in the verb phrase and predication system of the VLR essentially concerns.

There are various terms used in this chapter, such as Creolized Varitey of French, acrolect or acrolectal speech variety, basilect or basilectal speech variety. The definitions of these terms and some discussion of them are to be found in Appendix C. An attempt has been made to use the terms that are used in the literature wherever possible.

5.5.1 The survival of inflected Popular French etyma of ***avoir*** and ***être*** in the VLR

Some inflected forms of the Popular French verbs ***avoir*** 'have' and ***être*** 'be' are clearly the etyma of such forms as *na (nana, éna)* (Fr. [***il y***] ***en a***), *navé* (Fr. [***il y***] ***en avait***), *lavé* (Fr. [***i***]***l avait***), *nora* (Fr. [***il y***] ***en aura***), *noré* (Fr. [***il y***] ***en aurait***), *lété* (Fr. [***i***]***l était***), *sra* (Fr. ***sera***), and *sré* (Fr. ***serait***) in the VLR. Their "survival" in the VLR seems to confirm the view held in the pidgin and creole literature that these lects are a continuation of the

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variety of French spoken on the island of Réunion in the 17th century (Chaudenson 1974:1133[33], Corne 1982:127[34], 1999:73[35]). In this view, it constitutes part of the evidence for downplaying considerably any substratal influence Malagasy dialects or other substrate languages may have had on the emergence of the VLR (cf. Chaudenson 1981a:157; 1992:168-70).[36]

In the first place, however, as has been pointed out (cf. §4.2.5), the forms listed above as having Popular French inflected etyma cannot be considered *inflected* forms in the VLR verb system for a number of reasons: 1. In these lects, inflection is not a characteristic of *all* verbs. 2. In a language with inflected verbs, inflection refers to either differences in *person*, e.g. French: ***(je) vais*** 'I go', ***(tu) vas*** 'you go', or in *number*, e.g. French: ***(il) va*** 'he goes', ***(ils) vont*** 'they go', and the verb in the VLR inflects *neither* for

[33] "The creole is the result of the evolution of 17th century popular and dialectal varieties of French and ... the role of the languages of the slaves is minor when one considers the 'positive elements' that they can have introduced into the [new] speech variety." ("... le créole résulte de l'évolution du français populaire et dialectal du XVIIe siècle et ... le rôle des langues vernaculaires est mineur si l'on considère les 'éléments positifs' qu'elles ont pu introduire dans le parler" [Chaudenson 1974:1133, quoted here from Corne 1982:120]. The "positive elements" here refer to the lexical contribution of Malagasy to the *VLR*.

[34] "For the first time, Réunion Creole has been described in a way that reveals its basic mechanisms. These show that R[eunion] C[reole] must be categorized as a variety of French" [Corne 1982:127].

[35] "The language generally known as 'Reunion Creole' is to be seen as a continuation of French (dialectally leveled), with a Malagasy substrate, subsequently subjected to further but relatively minor influences from large numbers of L2 speakers, especially L1 bantu speakers, throughout the 18th and 19th centuries" [Corne 1999:73].

[36] "...we have not minimized the role played by substrate languages, but tried to show the true nature of their influence. It manifests itself much more on the socio-linguistic level and in the kind of facts dealt with above than in **the transfer of grammatical structures, much less of a whole morpho-syntactic system**." ("...nous n'avons pas minimisé le rôle des langues serviles mais essayé de faire apparaître la véritable nature de leur influence. Elle se manifeste beaucoup plus au niveau socio-linguistique et dans les faits évoqués précédemment que par **des transferts de structures grammaticales et moins encore de l'ensemble d'un système morpho-syntaxique** (cf. Chaudenson, 1978:c)" [emphasis added] [Chaudenson 1981a:157]. "The second type of innovation comprises the facts or processes which are foreign to the French model of variation. This is, of course, where interference on the part of the substrate languages can be suggested, but **it may well be that we are dealing with more general phenomena** involving either restructuring related to communication outside of the realm of French or to general if not universal phenomena of second-language acquisition." ("Le second type d'innovation est constitué par des faits ou processus étrangers au modèle de variation du français; c'est bien entendu là qu'on peut postuler une action des langues serviles, **mais il peut s'agir aussi de phénomènes plus généraux** tenant, soit à des restructurations liées à la communication exolingue, soit à des strategies générales voire universelles, de l'apprentissage des langues..." [Chaudenson 1992:168].

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person *nor* for number. 3. While inflection also refers to differences in *Tense,* the verb in the VLR does not *inflect* for Tense. It should be noted here that Malagasy, as Keenan (1975:249-250)[37] makes clear, "predicates, whether *verbal,* adjectival or nominal, do *not vary in form* with the *person, number,* or noun class of their *subjects* or objects" [emphasis added].

What some claim has survived in the VLR of the inflection in the Popular French verb system is limited exclusively to indications of Tense (and in some cases auxiliary mode) on forms of ***être*** 'be' and ***avoir*** 'have' (as well as on forms of ***il faut,*** [*i fo*] 'it is necessary', the past form of which is ***il fallait*** [*i falé*] 'it was necessary'). This extremely limited number of lexical items derived from Popular French etyma that seem to have "survived" in the vernaculars because they are marked for Tense (from a French perspective), are better understood, some as the result of reanalysis, and others as fossilized units, or unanalyzed units. Some lexical etyma of the Popular French verb ***être*** 'be' or lexical etyma of the Popular French verb ***avoir*** 'have' have indeed been invested with a different syntactic role within the new morpho-syntactic system of the VLR (cf. §5.5.4 and §5.5.3, respectively). Such units indeed include the Tense marker *té* (from Fr. ***était*** 'was') (cf. §5.5.7) and the Tense marker *la* (from Fr. **[*i*]*l a*** 'it/he has') (cf. §5.5.5.8). Both of these morphemes have been seen as the result of processes of restructuring (cf. Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2001; Detges 2000:146). There has been a strong tendency in the Francocentric approach to French-based creoles, however, such as that of Chaudenson (1974, 1981a, 1992), to consider a form in a creole system that is either phonetically similar to a French etymon or derived from a French etymon as having the

[37] Cf. also Domenichini-Ramiaramanana (1976) and Rabenilaina (1983).

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same function and morphological definition as the etymon in the source language, without leeway for contact-induced restructuring. The only kind of inflection that one could possibly argue has partially survived in the VLR is what has been considered a characteristic of the acrolectal lect of the *Petits Blancs*, but is probably not really such a form at all (cf. §5.5.4.4). It may, however, be an inflected form in the Creolized Variety of French (cf. Appendix C), where the restructured form is confused with the past continuous form of French, i.e. the restructured form *mwen i manzé* 'I ate/used to eat/was eating', is used instead of the Standard French ***je mangeais*** 'I ate/used to eat/was eating'.

The fate of the superstrate verbs ***être*** 'be' and ***avoir*** 'have' in the emergence of the VLR remains enigmatic until some of the more subterranean workings of substrate influence on the part of Malagasy on the VLR are considered, due to an intricate network of relationships between the structures of the two languages spoken by the first settlers of Bourbon, namely Malagasy and Popular French. It is this network of relation-ships that must be considered first in terms of three types of sentence structure in these lects.

5.5.2 The role of three basic Malagasy sentence structures in the genesis of the VLR

A close look at the fate of some inflected Popular French etyma of the verbs ***avoir*** 'have' and ***être*** 'be' in the VLR reveal the likely influence of various Malagasy structures on these lects. This influence, which can be traced to the genesis of the vernacular lects, gave the VLR a typological stamp, which distinguishes them from Popular French even though the two systems can *appear* to be very similar.

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There are three basic Malagasy sentence structures that can be shown to have been operative in this sense in the genesis of the VLR. Each contributed to the grammar of these lects in that they were key in the processing of the Popular French input by the speakers of Malagasy in a first stage of language contact (cf. §6.1.1 and §6.2.1.4), in keeping with the role Detges (2000:147ff) has shown "salient elements" played in the reanalysis that created new structures in French-based creole languages. The influence of Malagasy structures can be shown to have contributed significantly to three basic sentence types in the VLR:

1. existential sentences with *na/nana/éna* 'there is/there are' and *navé/lavé* 'there was/were';
2. sentences with an agentive subject (or processive predicate)[38] whose verb is preceded by the marker *i* ; and
3. sentences with a non-agentive subject (or non-processive predicate)[35] separated from the subject by the particle *lé*.

What is significant in terms of saliency is that these structures involve a derived or marked sentence structure in Malagasy as well as a marked sentence structure in Popular French, in two cases.

5.5.3 Existential sentences in Malagasy and the Popular French etymon *il y (en) a*

Unlike Popular French, which has SVO sentence structure, Malagasy has basic VOS sentence structure (cf. Appendix A2). However, despite this major difference, in so-called "existential sentences" this difference in sentence patterns becomes *unapparent*.

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[38] Ramassamy (1985:52) states: "The analysis of the corpus allows one to make a distinction between two large *semantic* categories: the processive and non-processive contents [of the predicate], which are differenciated by the kind of role allotted to the subject by the predicate. In the first, **the subject is an agent**. In the second, it is **the support for complements of the subject**." ("L'analyse du corpus permet de faire le départ entre deux grandes catégories *sémantiques:* le contenu processif et non-processif qui se différencient par la nature du rôle distribué par le prédicat au sujet. Dans le premier, **le sujet est un agent**. Dans le second, il est le **support d'attributs**") [emphasis added].

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Existential sentences occur in Malagasy as a consequence of a constraint on subjects that allows only ***definite*** noun phrases[39] to be the ***subject*** of a sentence. (The minimal and most common marker that can make a Malagasy subject definite is the definite marker, or definite determiner, *ny* 'the'.) Compare, for example, (1) and (2) from Keenan (1975:252). In (1), which is grammatical, the subject is definite, whereas in (2) the subject is indefinite, which makes the sentence ungrammatical:

(1) *lasa* ***ny*** *mpianatra*
leave **DEF** student [DEF = Definite Determiner]
'The student(s) left.' [Keenan 1975:252]

(2) **lasa mpianatra*
leave student
*'Some students/a student left.' [Keenan 1975:252]

In order to make an *indefinite* noun phrase the *subject* of a sentence, Keenan (1975:267) points out, an "existential construction" (Keenan 1975:253) must be used, involving a turn with the verb *misy* 'exist'.[40] He labels such sentences "existential sentences" (Keenan 1975:266). Compare (3), which has a definite subject, and (4), which has an indefinite subject:

(3) *m- itomany* ***ny*** *zaza*
PRES cry **DET** child
'The child is crying.' [Keenan 1975:267]
[Note: 'The children are crying' is also a possible gloss.]

(4) *m-* ***isy*** *zaza m- itomany*
PRES **exist** child PRES cry
'Some child is crying.' [Keenan 1975:267]
[Note: 'Some children are crying' is also a possible gloss.]

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[39] "Syntactically speaking, the definiteness requirement on lexical NP subjects requires that they either be proper names, definite pronouns, or common nouns with demonstrative adjectives or definite articles" [Keenan 1978:253].

[40] "We note that since subjects are obligatorily definite, the only way to express a sentence with all indefinite NPs is with the existential construction" [Keenan 1975:267]. Cf. also Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:66).

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There exists in the VLR a form corresponding to the Malagasy *m- isy* 'exist', namely *na* (*nana, éna*), as can be seen in (5), and a form corresponding to *n- isy*, as can be seen in (6):

(5) ***na*** *inn ti* *vierz paranba la*
exist DET little (statue of the) Virgin down there
'There is a little statue of the Virgin down there.' [Nicaise 1992:79]

(6) ***navé*** *inn* *vierz osi*
exist DET (statue of the])Virgin also
'There was also a statue of the Virgin (there).' [Nicaise 1992:83]

According to Keenan (1975:267), in Malagasy "*m- isy* is a full verb, taking normal voice and Tense inflections. ... This suggests that sentences like ... [7] are merely ones whose subject is an R[elative] C[lause] in which the optional *izay* is deleted. Indeed ... [8] is well formed":

(7) *m-* ***isy*** *zaza m-* *itomany*
PRES **exist** child PRES cry
'Some child is/children are crying.' [Keenan 1975:267]

(8) *m-* ***isy*** *zaza (izay) m-* *itomany*
PRES **exist** child (REL) PRES cry
'There is/are child/children who is/are crying.' [Keenan 1975:267]

In Malagasy, the "full verb" *m- isy* 'exist' takes the usual prefixes indicating Tense, namely *m-* for present and *n-* for past: *m- isy* 'there is/are', and *n- isy* 'there was/were'. Interestingly, in the VLR, the existential expressions are *na(na) / éna* 'there is/there are' in the present and *lavé* or *navé* in the past.[41] Cellier (1985a:469ff)[42] calls these forms "presentatives"; and according to Ramassamy (1985:95) these forms "place the predicate as an existing element (*existant*) which is not dependent on any agent

[41] Papen (1978:390) lists *nave* in *Lôtân nave kariol* 'Long ago there were carriages' next to *lave* in *Si muè lave pti pe larzân* 'If I had a little money', which is acrolectal [Papen's orthography].

[42] Ramassamy (1985:144) views *avoir* (*na, nana néna, lavé, nora, noré*) as "having its own paradigm," since it "never combines with the Tense and Aspect system" ("... ne se combine jamais avec le système aspecto-temporel ... en ce sens qu'il possède son propre paradigme").

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(*actualisé par un participant*)"[43] but are not marked for Tense with the Tense and Aspect markers used in the VLR for present and past. There are, nevertheless, different forms, one for the present and one for the past. The question is why these two supposedly "inherited" forms do *not* have either the *inflection* of Popular French nor the *Tense marking* of the system of the VLR? This is an indication of possible restructuring.

It seems likely that a first step in the emergence of the VLR was a parallel established by Malagasy speakers between the Malagasy turn *m-isy* and the marked Popular French turn ***il y a,*** or its salient form ***il y <u>en</u> a,*** i.e. a parallel between a Popular French sentence such as (9) and the Malagasy structure of (10):

(9) ***Il y en a un enfant qui pleure***
exist DET child REL cry
'There is a child which cries.'

(10) *m- **isy** zaza (izay) m- itomany*
PRES **exist** child (who) PRES cry
'Some child is crying.' [Keenan 1975:267]

A French master might well have explained the distribution of work by stressing *who* was doing *what* work: ***il y en a un, Jean, qui ... et il y en a un autre, Pierre, qui ...*** 'there is one, John, who ... and there is another, Peter, who...'. The result of this parallel can be seen in a VLR sentence such as (11):

(11) ***na(na)/éna zanfan Ø i plèr***[44]
exist child ASM cry [ASM=Agentive Subject Marker][45]
'A child is/Some children are crying.'[46] [Informant MAP]

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[43] "... pose le prédicat comme existant, non-actualisé par un participant" [Ramassamy 1985:95].
[44] Following Ramassamy (1985:137), the notation Ø *i* indicates "the absence of any marking" and is "not a zero marking" that "would systemically contrast with other markers". ("Il s'agit ...d'une absence de choix de marque et non d'une modalité zéro qui s'opposerait, en système, aux autres marques.")
[45] For the origin and nature of the Agentive Subject Marker *i*, cf. §5.5.5.2.
[46] This sentence is modeled on the construction in *alor lavé larivyèr i dsandé kom sa* (then had river ASM descended like DEM) 'then there was the river (that) came down like this' [Nicaise 1992:82].

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Another parallel was then likely established between Malagasy *n- isy* 'existed' and Popular French ***il y avait***, or its salient form ***il y (en) avait***, 'there was/there were', which produced sentences such as (12):

(12) ***navé*** *inn vierz, lavierz na pu... semin loto koméla ousa lavierz lété*
existed DET virgin virgin exist no more path car now where virgin be
'There was a Virgin, which is gone now... a road now where the statue was.'
[Nicaise 1992:82]

The fact that the VLR have different forms, some for the present and some for the past, seems to indicate that such parallels were made. The presence of a variety of forms suggests different possible scenarios.

In one scenario, first, the forms chosen to express the parallel with the present form *m-isy* 'there is/are' may have been *éna* or *na*. This form also exists in French-based creoles as well as in African varieties of French, which indicates the use of the marked form in restructuring. The forms chosen as parallels for the past form *n-isy* 'there was/were' may have been either *navé* or *lavé*, or both. Later, however, since the Malagasy uses the regular prefix for present and past Tense on the verb *-isy* 'exist', and *nana* (or *na* or *éna*) and *navé* did not share any common morphological element (as *m-isy* and *n-isy* do in Malagasy),[47] the forms *nana* and *navé* may have been interpreted as having the phonetic element [na] in common and seen as parallel to each other, especially since it was the common salient element in *na/nana* and *navé*. The difference between the Popular French etymon ***il y <u>(en) a</u>*** 'there is/are' and ***il y <u>(en) avait</u>*** 'there was/were' would have been a particularly salient one for speakers who had two distinct forms in their own

[47] It may, of course, be the case that the form *lavé* was analyzed as having the past marker *la*, which was used as a past marker on verbs generally, and that this element contributed to its maintenance rather than its loss. (It is interesting, in this respect, that the simplification that occurs in the emergence of African varieties of French tends to eliminate this lexeme.)

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language. The form *nana* may actually be an instance of reduplication, a pattern that is a common phenomenon in Malagasy, because it either is not known to exist in French-based creoles spoken beyond the Indian Ocean or African varieties of Frenc or, at least, is not a common form in them. Maybe the form *nana* itself was born by analogy, molded on the bi-syllabic form *navé* to make things more regular or make the present and past form more alike in terms of rhythm.

In another scenario, the same forms might have been chosen to parallel the present and past forms in Malagasy; however, *lavé* may have been reanalyzed. An analogy may have been drawn between *lavé* and the regular past forms with the marker (or prefix)[48] *la* indicating past time, as in *mi di* 'I say' and *mwen la di* 'I said'. To establish a parallel between the present form *m-isy* 'thre is' and the past form *n-isy* 'there was/were' in Malagasy dialects, the element *la* in the new vernacular was reinterpreted as marking the past form. This would be exemplified by a sentence such as (13):

(13) *la boutik sinoi mi di aou la alor* ***lavé***
store Chinese 1s say 2s there then **existed**
'A grocery store, I'm telling you, there was there then.' [Nicaise 1992:82]

What both these scenarios have in common, however, is that both interpretations present a possible confusion between the past form and the past Tense in the Creolized Variety of French (CVF).[49] Indeed, both *navé* and *lavé* appear to be similar to French forms of the imperfect Tense. The form *lavé* sounds like ***[i]l avait*** 'he had' and *navé* like

[48] For the past marker *la* originating as a prefix, cf. §5.5.8.

[49] "... in a creolized form of French [i.e. Chaudenson's term for the lect of the *Petits Blancs* as well as the CVF], no doubt, coexisted one form with one ending, judging from the statistically most common form of the imperfect in -é (transcribed -ait or sometimes -er): 'li hallait' [he pulled], 'li causait' [he talked], and another form for the definite past originating in the turn 'était qui' + Present Tense. ("... en français créolisé coexistaient sans doute une forme à terminaison unique, sur la forme statistiquement la plus commune de l'imparfait, soit -é (noté -ait ou parfois -er): 'li hallait', 'li causait', et une autre forme de passé défini provenant du tour 'était qui' + présent") [Chaudenson 1981a:207].

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[*il*] *en avait* 'he had (some)'. There is even an analogy between the negative form in French ***il n'y en avait pas*** 'there weren't any' and *navé pa* 'didn't exist'. Further, the French form of the verb ***avoir*** 'have' in the negative imperfect form ***il n'avait pas*** 'he didn't have' and *navé pas* 'didn't exist' sound similar. The confusion this gives rise to in VCF can be seen in a sentence such as (14), in which the presence of *el* 'she' and *de tou* 'of everything' are French:

(14) *El* ***lavé*** *in pti magazin;*[50] *dan sa,* ***lavé*** *de tou...*
she **had** DET little store in DEM **had/there was** of all
'But she had a small store, in which she had/there was everything.'
[Barat et al 1977:34]

Indeed, in the CVF the verb ***avoir*** 'have' exists in the forms *na* 'have/has' and *navé* 'had'. Such forms are common in stories such as those Barat et al. (1977) recorded in Grand Ilet, an area in the *Cirque de Salazie* where some *Petits Blancs* speak French.[51] Items (14), (15) and (16) appear in those stories.

(15) *sa la kantité bef ou* ***nana*** *la*
DEM there quantity ox 2s **have** there
'That's a lot of beef you have there.' [Barat et al. 1977:54]

(16) *in zenn ke* ***lavé*** *le fon de kilot an or*
DET young REL **had** DET bottom of pants in gold
'a young man who had the seat of his pants made of gold' [Barat et al. 1977:39]

However, the important point here is that no *inflected* pattern is to be found in any of these forms in the VLR. That Malagasy speakers established such parallels as those mentioned above, in their attempts to reanalyze the Popular French input, does not mean that the forms derived from the Popular French etyma ***il y (en) a*** and ***il y (en) avait*** constitute evidence of the *survival* of any Popular French inflection in the verb phrase of

[50] The spelling in Barat et al (1977:34) is *el avé in pti magazin*, which makes it look very much like French. However, note the spelling *ke lavé* in (16).
[51] There is this use of *nana* in a creole song of protest quoted by La Selve (1995:172): *Marmay nou nana vint an zordi* (children 1pl. have twenty year today) 'Children, we are twenty years old today."

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the VLR.[52] These vernacular forms are restructured forms (albeit with the presence of some further reanalysis) in the way the Tense and Aspect markers themselves are restructured forms.

In the the acrolect (as well as in the Creolized Variety of French) and the so-called inflected form of the Progressive Tense of the Popular French, e.g. ***mangeait*** 'was eating', it has been said, produced a pattern *mwen / toué / li* etc. *i manzé*. However, these forms are better understood as consisting of the Agentive Subject Marker (ASM) *i* + the long form of the verb (cf. §5.5.4.4). This indicates, too that what has been claimed as the survival from Popular French of inflected forms in the VLR is not correct. From a French perspective, it would seem so, but from even a synchronic point of view such as Ramassamy's (1985), it does not. The use of the ASM *i* indicates restructuring, for one thing. And the form *manzé* is the long form of the verb in the VLR, and really not an inflected form at all.

The coincidence that the VLR have the form *navé* 'had' and French has the form ***(il) n'avait pas*** 'he didn't have' should also be mentioned at this point. The two sentences in (17) and (18) spoken by a monolingual speaker of an acrolectal lect (whose father came from, was married, and lived in Grand Ilet) show that there is no relation between the French negative form and the form in the VLR:

(17) *sak* ***lavé*** *bef, mé in bon pé* ***navé poin***
who have ox but DET good deal have NEG
'... those who had an ox, but many did not.' [Nicaise 1992:62]

[52] Cf. Chaudenson (1981a:218): "Le réunionnais, en revanche, présente à date ancienne des formes directement issues du français: 'l'avait' ou 'n'avait' ou 'l'aura' (et non par exemple: 'l'était en a' ou 'va y en a' qui ont cependant pu exister)."

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(18) *persone **lavé** ler dan s'tan, ni révéy ni mont ni ryin*
no one have time in those days NEG alarm, NEG watch, NEG nothing
'No one had the time then, either an alarm clock, or a watch, or anything.'
[Nicaise 1992:99]

Although the form *navé poin* in (17) might be considered to have its origin in the CVF, the presence of *lavé* rather than *navé* in (18) after *persone* 'no one' shows that there is no relation between the French negative form ***(il) n'avait point (de)*** 'he had no ...' and *navé poin* 'didn't have' and the French negative form ***personne n'avait*** 'nobody had' and *person lavé* 'no one had'. If anything, it shows that both *navé* 'had' and *lavé* 'had' are used interchangeably in this informant's lect, as they are in this area.

In other words, what the VLR inherited of the inflected Popular French etyma of ***avoir*** 'have', where inherited does not mean continuation, but rather break in language transmission, is essentially the use of two salient elements present in the expressions ***[(il) y (e)]n a***, ***[(il) y (e)]n avait***. They survived as a parallel turn to the Malagasy existential turn with *m- isy / n-isy*. That there exist two forms derived from the superstrate, ***il y en a*** and ***il y en avait*** in the VLR does, however, not indicate the survival of any *pattern of inflection*. In fact, the survival of the phonetic segment [n] from with the superstrate partitive particle ***en*** in itself indicates a certain degree of restructuring (which also took place in French-based creoles even though these creoles do not have a past form *navé*).[53] It should be pointed out here that there are forms with [ã] from the French etymon ***il y (en) a*** 'there is/are' in vehicular varieties of African French varieties as well as in the interlanguage of informal second-language learners, as if ***il y en a*** or ***il y en avait*** were the basic form, rather the form without the partitive pronoun ***en***. In Standard French the

[53] Cf. Chapuis 1998.

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partitive pronoun ***en*** is only used when its antecedent must be referred to.[54] The reason for this is probably that the forms with [ã] are salient or marked forms.

There seems to be no continuous presence of such forms of Popular French in Réunion. The presence of French forms in the CVF, which in turn bring about hypercorrections in the speech of the *Petits Blancs*, whether they be bilingual or monolingual speakers of the VLR, make the reconstitution of the development of *navé* and *lavé* very difficult to surmise. That there existed some overlap over one hundred years ago between them is clear from a sentence (19) given by Focard (1895:25) that might point to how *nana* 'there is/are' obtained the meaning 'have':

(19) *larivyèr sinni nana bokou dlo zordi*
river Saint-Denis exist much water
'There is a lot of water in the Saint-Denis River today.'
'The Saint-Denis River has a lot of water today.' [Focard 1895:25]

From a French point of view, *rivyèr sinni* appears to be the subject of the sentence: 'the Saint-Denis River', while, from the restructured point of view adopted here, it constitutes an adverbial phrase: '**in** the Saint-Denis River', since no preposition is used with place names in the VLR.

Ramassamy does not mention or give any instances of *navé* as occurring in her corpus. However, she does give one instance of *lavé* (20):

(20) *le boug la vni yèr, lavé moustas gidon bisiklèt*
DET man PAST come yestwerday have mustache handlebars bicycle
'The man who came yesterday, who had a mustache shaped like handlebars ...'
[Ramassamy 1985:392]

[54] Compare: ***Il y a un enfant qui pleure*** 'There is a child that is crying' and ***Il y en a un qui pleure*** 'There is one (of them) that is crying'.

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It might well be that over time the form *lavé* replaced *navé* for three reasons: 1. by analogy, it seemed to have the element *la*, which marked other verb forms for the past (cf. §5.5.5.8); 2. under the influence of the confusion in the CVF between *navé* and *lavé;* and 3. by analogy with the form *lavé* increasingly used as an auxiliary instead of *té i* (cf. §5.5.4.6) under the pressure of the CVF and later Standard French.

Ramassamy (1985:145) sees in the uses of *na (nana/néna), lavé, nora, noré* "the stamp of the French model" (*le sceau du modèle français*), a stamp which "intervenes in the use of auxiliary elements, where the forms *lavé, nora* and *noré*, associated with the verbal predicate, are in competition with the aspecto-temporal combinations of the central system."[55] By "central system", Ramassamy means the "original" system that predates the effects of later developments (such as the effects of Standard French, for example).

There is evidence that the Malagasy substrate influenced the restructuring of Popular French to the extent that a parallel structure between the two languages resulted in salient elements being chosen in one to correspond with salient elements in the other.

It should be noted that other forms derived from the Popular French verb ***avoir*** 'have' are dealt with elsewhere. The forms *nora* and *noré* (derived from the Popular French etyma ***il en aura*** 'he will have' and ***il en aurait*** 'he would have' respectively) and the past Tense marker *la* (derived the Popular French etymon ***il a*** 'he has') are dealt with below in §5.5.5.8, while the relationship between *lavé* (derived from the Popular French etymon ***il avait*** 'he had') in the above sense and in the sense it has in a sentence such as

[55] "Le sceau du modèle français est, ici, évident. Et c'est précisément la pression de ce modèle qui intervient dans 'l'auxiliation' où les formes / lavé /, / nora / et / noré / associées au prédicat verbal concurrencent les combinaisons aspecto-temporelles du système central" [Ramassamy 1985:145].

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lavé mèt 'had put' is dealt with below in §5.5.4.6. However, further considerations must follow before this relationship can adequately be established.

5.5.4 Malagasy marked sentence structure and the Popular French etymon ***il est***

The issue of the "survival" in the VLR of such Popular French inflected etyma as ***(il) est*** '(he) is', ***(il) était*** '(he) was', ***(il) sera*** '(he) will be', and ***(il) serait*** '(he) would be' is much more complex than the literature on the VLR seems to imply. There is every indication that *lé* in the VLR arose as a Copula-like Particle (CLP) similar to that found in Malagasy dialects. There are six arguments to support this hypothesis:

1. the fact that the CLP in the VLR occurs where an obligatory CLP in Malagasy occurs in marked sentence structure (with sentence-initial subjects) and topicalization (§5.5.4.1-2);

2. the incompatibility of the morphemes *i* and *lé* in the VLR, which occur in different types of predicates (§5.5.4.3);

3. the association of the long and short forms of the VLR verb with each morpheme due to the agentive nature of the subject, or the stative/non-stative nature of the verb in the predicate (§5.5.4.4);

4. the fact that *i* is a destativizing marker of the verb in the VLR (§5.5.4.4);

5. the distribution of *la* and *lé* in stative and non-stative constructions with *fine/fini* in the VLR (§5.5.4.4); and

6. the common origin of two different forms, one acrolectal and the other basilectal, in the *lété ki* construction in the earliest vernacular lects (§5.5.5.1).

The complex argumentation here first requires for its full understanding a detailed consideration of the crucial question: *Does Malagasy have a copula?* The answer to this question will, in turn, lead to a series of other questions and considerations.

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5.5.4.1 Is the marker *lé* a Copula-like Particle?

In his description of subject-final languages, Keenan (1978:300) states that such languages "do not have overt copulas." And "Malagasy," he adds, "is typical here":

(21) *mpampianatra Rajaona* [Keenan's (65)]
teacher John
'John is a teacher.' [Keenan 1978:301]

"By *copula*," Keenan (1978:300-1) explains, "I mean a morphophonemically independent element which has the characteristic properties of stative verbs in its language and which functions as the main verb in sentences with nominal predicates, like *John is a thief*." In this sense, Malagasy has no copula, though it does have Copula-like Particles (henceforth CLP), or copula-like devices, such as *dia* and *no*, which are used in topicalization. It has a particle *dia*, which is "invariable in form and otherwise has none of the properties of verbs" (Keenan 1978:301), but can "allow the subject to be separated from the nominal predicate."[56] For Keenan (1978:301), this construction, which he illustrates with (22), "is clearly a form of topicalization":

(22) *Rabe **dia** mpampianatra*
Rabe CLP teacher [CLP = Copula-like Particle]
'Rabe is a teacher.' [Keenan 1978:301]

It should be noticed here that this Copula-like Particle, or copula-like device, is only used in *marked* sentence structure, namely one where the subject is *not* sentence final. To illustrate topicalization, Keenan provides the contrast between (23) and (24):

(23) *m- anasa lamba Rasoa*
PRES wash clothes Rasoa
'Rasoa is washing clothes.' [Keenan 1975:252]

[56] Malagasy also uses particles that separate predicate and subject in non-marked sentence structure, such as the interrogative particle *ve*, as in: *Nanome vola an-dRabe **ve** ianao?* (Give money to Rabe QUESTION you) 'Did you give money to Rabe?'; and the exclamative particle *anie*, as in: *Manasa lamba **anie** Rasoa* (wash clothes EXCLAMATION Rasoa) 'Boy, is Rasoa ever washing clothes' (cf. Keenan 1975:252).

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(24) *Rasoa **dia** m- anasa lamba (Ø / ?izy)*
Rasoa CLP PRES wash clothes (Ø / 3s)
'Rasoa, she's washing clothes.' [Keenan 1975:272]

To make clear what Keenan (1987:301) means by topicalization, the function of the particles *dia* and *no* in Malagasy sentences with marked structure needs to be understood in more detail and with relation to intonation. Indeed, as Domenichini-Ramiaramanana (1976:67) explains about the inverted (or marked) order in which the subject precedes the predicate, "all inversion must be indicated in the phonetic chain:[57]

- either by a strong pause (‖) between the preposed subject and the predicate, in (26):

(25)	PREDICATE	PAUSE	SUBJECT
Normal order:	*Mi- hinana*	|	*ny trondro -nay*
	PRES bite		DET fish 1s
	'Our fish bite.'		[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:67]
(26)	SUBJECT	PAUSE	PREDICATE
Inversion:	*Ny trondro –nay*	‖	*mi- hinana*
	DET fish 1s		PRES bite
	'Our fish bite.'		[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:67]

- or by the insertion of the disjunctive morpheme *dia*, in (27):

(27)	SUBJECT		PREDICATE
Inversion:	*Ny trondro –nay*	***dia***	*mi- hinana*
	DET fish 1s	**CLP**	PRES bite
	'Our fish bite.'		[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:67]

How this inverted order represents a *weak* emphatic turn can be verified in its use in statements with predicates of definite existence (*prédicats d'existence déterminés*), of which Domenichini-Ramiaramanana (1976:74) gives the following example (28):

(28) *Halina* ‖ (or: ***dia***) *n- isy alika n- ivovo olona teto an-tanàna*
night ‖ (or: **CLP**) PAST exist dog PAST bark (at) someone in the village
'Last night there was a dog barking at someone in the village.'
'Cette nuit, il y avait un chien qui aboyait (contre) quelqu'un au village'
[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:74]

[57] "Cette valeur dominante du prédicat s'appuyant sur sa position en tête de phrase, toute inversion est marquée dans la chaîne parlée..." [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:67].

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and how the inverted order represents a *strong* emphatic turn can be verified in (29) and (30), which both have the CLP *no:*

(29) *Halina* ***no*** *n- isy alika n- ivovo olona teto an-tanàna*
night **CLP** PAST exist dog PAST bark person in the village
'It was last night that there was a dog barking at someone in the village.'
'C'est cette nuit qu'il y avait (un) chien qui aboyait (contre) quelqu'un au village'
[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:76]

(30) *Teto an-tanàna* ***no*** *alika ilay n- ivovo olona halina*
in the village **CLP** dog (it was a) PAST bark someone night
'It was in the village that a dog barked at someone last night.'
'C'est au village que (c'était un chien) ce qui aboyait (contre) quelqu'un.'
[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:76]

About a sentence such as (22), Keenan (1978:301) comments that it "represents a clear, if weak, topicalization of the subject (or any noun phrase)." It is intended for "items that have some momentary importance in the conversation", somewhat like a stressed subject pronoun in French (or English) or a construction like the French sentence ***Rasoa, elle lave des habits*** ('As for Rasoa, she is washing clothes'). Malagasy speakers analyzing such sentences as ***Mon papa, il est maître*** 'My father is a teacher' could easily establish a parallel with a Malagasy sentence structure involving the CLP *dia* or *no.*

Domenichini-Ramiaramanana's (1976:67-8) has a most revealing comment about the contemporary use of *dia* in the written language (Merina): "It should be noted that the use of this *dia* is more and more common in the written language, where it tends to replace the comma used in early transcriptions, all the while being considered by many users and theoreticians **a kind of copula equivalent to the verb *être* in French sentences** ... (19th century: *Ny alika, biby* ['the dog, animal'])... a turn used essentially in sentences definining a nature or role (cf. its frequent use in proverbial types of sentences)

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... 'It is in the nature of our fish to bite.'" [emphasis added] (Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:67-8).[58]

In terms of intonation (which, strictly speaking, lies outside the scope of this discussion), it must be mentioned here that there is an important phonological element that comes into play, namely the way predicate-subject relation, inverted order and suprasegmental intonation are related. In order to understand what may have occurred in the restructuring of the Popular French under Malagasy influence, some remarks on Malagasy sentence structure and focusing in the Malagasy sentence are in order. The explanations given by Rabenilaina (1983) about these workings in the Bara dialect, which also apply to Merina, can illustrate the point.

According to Rabenilaina (1983:40-60 passim) the Malagasy sentence has three characteristic elements: 1. the predicate-subject relation (or voice, or orientation); 2. the types of relation between syntactic elements, which determine how they are ordered; and 3. the prosodic pattern or intonation contour determining its basic elements.

First, various types of constituents—verbal as well as non-verbal elements—can be predicates. Second, elements can be permutated within the sentence allowing changes in focus, in ways similar to the active-passive permutation of object and subject in French

[58] "... et il faut noter que l'emploi de ce *dia* est de plus en plus fréquent dans la langue écrite, où il tend à remplacer la virgule employée dans les textes des débuts de la transcription, tout en étant interprété par de nombreux usagers et théoriciens comme étant une **copule équivalent au verbe *être* des énoncés français**. ... (XIX[e] s. *Ny alika, biby* ['le chien, animal']) ... un procédé qui est essentiellement consacré aux énoncés de définition de nature ou de rôle (cf. sa fréquence dans les énoncés de type proverbial) ... 'Il est dans la nature de nos poissons de mordre'" [emphasis added] [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:67-8].

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or English. The relation between subject and predicate is one where there is correlation between the *grammatical form of the predicate* and the *semantico-grammatical content* of the subject. This is what is meant by *voice* or *orientation*. Further, predicate and subject order is either *unmarked* (predicate—subject) or *marked* (subject—predicate). In terms of intonation, contour also indicates non-marked (↗ ↘) or marked (↗ ↗) predicate-subject order, as in (31) and (32) from Rabenilaina (1983:41) [with, in the latter a "more or less long strong pause" while the "melodic curve remains ascending"]:[59]



(31) *Añotania* *réni* *-ny*
is an opportunity for being interrogated mother 3s
'His mother is being interrogated.'



(32) *Hanaréo* | *vahiny*
2p stranger
'You are foreigners.'

How this is relevant to the VLR is that perhaps the most striking difference for a native speaker of French between Popular French and the VLR is in their intonation patterns. While varieties of Popular French do have strong or accentuated rising itonation patterns, the pattern in the VLR is extremely accentuated and can occur in two parts of the same sentence. A sentence such as the Malagasy sentence in (29) can be translated into the VLR as (33):

[59] "Le lien est non-marqué, lorsque les deux éléments ne sont pas liés formellement par une particule copulative. Mais tout se passe comme si la langue remédie à cette absence de marque formelle, en faisant appel, non plus à l'ordre segmental ou monématique, comme dans le cas du lien marqué, mais à l'ordre supra-segmental ou prosodique de l'intonation de la courbe mélodique de la voix. Deux cas peuvent alors se présenter: 1. - ou bien les deux éléments (P[rédicat] et S[ujet]) sont liés (ou séparés) par un changement de la courbe mélodique: tout en restant continue, celle-ci, d'ascendante au niveau du premier élément, devient descendante au niveau du second; ... 2. - ou bien les deux éléments (S[ujet] et P[rédicat]) sont liés (ou séparés) par ... une forte pause plus ou moins longue interv[enant] entre l'émission du premier élément et celle du second, sans que la courbe mélodique cesse d'être ascendante ..." [Rabenilaina 1983:41].

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(29) *Halina **no** nisy alika nivovo olona teto an-tanàna*
'It was last night that there was a dog barking at someone in the village.'
'C'est cette nuit qu'il y avait (un) chien qui aboyait (contre) quelqu'un au village'



(33) *Sèt nwi (lété) navé in sien li té aboiy ek demoun* [Informant MAP]
'Last night there was a dog barking at someone.'

Domenichini-Ramiaramanana (1976:73) points out that the "purpose (*fonction*) of the strong pause or the use of *dia*" in separating the subject from the predicate "is to indicate either the inversion in the order of words (e.g. Predicate-Subject > Subject-Predicate) or a change in the nature of the relation that joins them (e.g. application > identification)." Strikingly, the parallels with the VLR here again involve a *marked* construction in terms of a Malagasy input.

A comparison of the data from Malagasy, as in (22), with examples from the VLR (34) and (35), taken from Ramassamy (1985:53), reveals significant parallels:

(22) *Rabe **dia** mpampianatra* [= Keenan's (67)]
Rabe **CLP** teacher
'Rabe is a teacher.' [Keenan 1978:301]

(34) *mon papa **lé** Ø plantèr*
1s father **NPM** Ø farmer [Ramassamy's NPM = CLP]
'My father is a farmer.' [Ramassamy 1985:53]

(35) *mon papa **sé** (~ **Ø** ~ **sa**) en plantèr*
1s father **NPM** (~ **Ø** ~ **PM**) DET farmer [Ramassamy's NPM = CLP]
'My father is a farmer.' [Ramassamy 1985:53]

Of course, it is undeniable that in the late 19th and in the 20th century the presence of the Creolized Variety of French (CVF) as well as Standard French in Réunion affected the uses of *lé* in the vernacular lects, especially where it seems to corresponds to the French ***il est*** 'it / he / she is' (cf. Corne 1982:109-10). However, it is necessary to see

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beyond this later interference of CVF or Standard French in the case of acrolectal varieties, and maybe even in the basilectal varieties of the VLR.[60] There are definite indications that the supposed "copula" of the VLR may well have its origin in the Malagasy CLP. This is discussed further in §5.5.6. In the meantime, the question of a past form of the supposed "copula" needs to be addressed, for linguists such as Chaudenson (1981a:214-5)[61], Cellier (1985a:382-3)[62]; and Corne (1999:83)[63] consider *lété* to be the past form of what they consider to be the "copula" *lé*.[64]

5.5.4.2 Is *lété* a past form of the supposed "copula" in the VLR?

For Ramassamy (1985:152-5) *lété* is not a past copula any more than *lé* is a present copula. She sees in the zero of the [*lé* + *Ø*] marker, not a zero marker, but an "absence of marking" (*absence de détermination*) in terms of Tense. It is the marker *té*, either by itself or combined with *lé*, as *lété*, which indicates Past Tense, just as it is *sra*, which

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[60] It should be mentioned that there is also a form *laté*. The existence of the form *laté* (from the French passé compose form *il a été* 'he has been') either points to a later restructuring of the copula-like *lé* of the *VLR* as a result of the continued presence of CVF or Standard French in Réunion (cf. §6.1.3), or is a consequence of the confusion between *lé* and *la* (cf. §5.5.4.5).

[61] "...en réunionnais: 'li' et 'l'est' jouent le rôle de copule au présent (quoique le degré Ø ne soit pas rare); en revanche, à la forme négative, 'n'a pas' est seul attesté ('l'est pas' ou 'n'a pas l'est' ne se rencontrent pas, 'n'est' est très rare). ... 'li' et Ø, formes archaïques et / ou basilectales ... disparaissent (la première totalement) en créole réunionnais au profit de 'l'est'..." [Chaudenson 1981a:214-5].

[62] Cellier (1985a:385) makes this significant comment: "On comprend que le système du français, qui utilise 'être' et 'avoir' dans une structure d'auxiliaire aspecto-temporel avec des formes proches phonétiquement // i l é // vs // i l a //, ait engendré un nouveau système lors de sa créolisation où les deux formes ont été mal différenciées, voire confondues sémiologiquement puisqu'on en trouve aujourd'hui encore de très nombreux exemples (// li la fini mort // vs // li lé fini mor //)."

[63] Corne (1999:83) claims that "with non-durative statives the completive (*li la fini vye* 's/he is old') competes with a simple completive construction (*li le vye* 's/he is old')."

[64] Cellier's (1985a:421) comparison of the *VLR* and Mauritian Creole leads him to consider these stages in their development:

(1)	"Bourbonnais":	moi est pas malade
	(sabir and proto-creole):	moi Ø pas malade
(2)	Réunionnais:	moin lé pa malad
(3)	Mauritian Creole:	mo Ø pa malad

What is interesting in these stages of development in terms of the *VLR* is evidence in favor of a restructuring of the Popular French ***[i]l est*** that gave rise to the CLP *lé*. This restructuring would not have occurred in Mauritian Creole because of the little access to the superstrate by Malagasy speakers and a process of creolization versus access to the superstrate and a process of language creation in Bourbon.

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replaces [*lé* + *Ø*], which indicates Future Tense. For Ramassamy, *té* and *sra* are Tense markers (*modalités temporelles*) and the morpheme *lé* is a marker of a type of predication. Its variant *lété*, Ramassamy (1985:153) makes clear, is used in predicates of characterization and has in the form *sété* a "morphological variant" (*variation morphologique*) for determining predicates of "identification". In order to understand this analysis, however, the relation of the markers *lé* and *i* must first be considered.

Indeed, the question of the survival of forms of Popular French ***être*** in the VLR is intimately related to the nature of the indicator, or marker, of processive predicates *i*, which precedes the verb and will later be called Agentive Subject Marker (ASM). On the one hand, as indicated above (§4.2.2), Ramassamy (1985:54-6) sees in *i* an "indicator of processive predication" (*indicateur du prédicat processif*). Coincidentally, this ASM marker *i*, as will be shown in §5.5.5.2, also marks the verb for the subject as an agent rather than as process. On the other hand, Ramassamy (1985:88-93) sees in *lé* (and its allomorph *la (pa)* in negative statements) the marker of "qualitative", and "situational" (space and time) characterization, and in the marker *sé* (or *sa* ~ Ø) the "identifying" marker. This is illustrated in (36), (37), and (38):

(36) *mon kouzin* ***lé*** *Ø fatigé / mor/ mason*
1s cousin NPM tired / die / mason
'My cousin is tired / dead / a mason.'
[NPM = Non-processive Predicate Marker]
[Ramassamy 1985:88-89]

(37) *aster nou* ***lé*** *Ø la / an ivèr*
now 1p NPM here / in winter
'Now we're here / in winter.'
[Ramassamy 1985:92]

(38) *mon monmon (sé ~ sa) Ø en malgasin*
1s mother (NPM) DET Malagasy
'My mother is a Malagasy.'
[Ramassamy 1985:94]

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While Chaudenson (1974:968) simply notes that *i* and *la* "mutually exclude each other" (*s'excluent mutuellement),* as do *i* and *lé,* and Cellier (1985a:384) that *i* "cannot be a temporal marker and is incompatible with the presence of forms derived from old French auxiliary forms of 'être' and 'avoir' (with one exception),"[65] Ramassamy (1985:55-60), however, takes the matter further when she writes (Ramassamy 1985:55) that "/ *i* / disappears in a non-processive context ... where *lé* and *sé* replace it."[66] She comments (Ramasssamy 1985:59-60) that the view that "assimilate[s] *lé* with the French copula draws on considerations based on French, in which the specificity of the functioning of *lé* in the creole of Réunion is covered up, for the existence of *lé* ... *must be understood in its solidarity with i,* even, by anticipation, with *sé* as well. To which must be added the fact that *lé* appears in statements in which *the subject cannot possibly be an agent*" [emphasis added].[67] This is a hypothesis worth pursuing for it seems to point to restructuring.

Ramassamy (1985:53;59-60) sees in the incompatibility of the marker *i* with the marker *lé* an indication that they mirror the basic opposition in Malagasy between what Domenichini-Ramiaramanana (1976:96) characterizes as "processive" and "non-processive" statements. According to her (Ramassamy 1985:55) "the occurrence of *i* in

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[65] "...le morphème //i// ... ne peut pas être un marqueur temporel et il est incompatible avec la présence des formes issues des anciens auxiliaries français' 'être' et 'avoir' à une exception près" [Cellier 1985a:384]. The exception is the use of *lé* as a "predicate of existence" (*prédicat d'existence*), as in the question "*Ou sa zot i lé?* 'Where are you?'" [Cellier 1985a:383].

[66] "/ i / disparaît dans un contexte de non-processivité ... au profit des marques / *lé / et / sé* /" [Ramassamy 1985:55].

[67] "Signalons que certains auteurs assimilent /lé/ à la copule du français. Mais cette hypothèse relève de considérations calquées sur le français où la spécificité du fonctionnement de /lé/ en créole réunionnais est occultée, car l'existence de /lé/, comme nous l'avons vu, doit être cernée **dans sa solidarité avec /i/,** voire, par anticipation avec /sé/ aussi. A cela s'ajoute le fait que /lé/ apparaît dans des énoncés où l'actualisation du sujet s'avère impossible" [emphasis added] [Ramassamy 1985:59-60].

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[her] corpus is intimately connected with the existence of a processive predicate, which follows it, and the opening of the predicate in which it is inserted," while "the marker *lé*, which shows a close affinity to predicates of a characterization, stative, or non-processive type, occurs as an indicator of contents of the latter sort."[68] "In this sense," she concludes (Ramassamy 1985:58), "the marker *lé* is symmetrically opposed to the marker *i*".[69]

Ramassamy (1985:58) gives three reasons for this. The marker *lé* lies 1. "outside the scope of Aspect"; 2. "outside the scope of Tense"; and 3. "in deep structure in non-processive predicates of characterization". In this way *lé té* and *té i* "correspond to each other in how they function."[70] For Ramassamy (1985:59) *lé* is an indicator of non-processive predication (*marque l'ouverture de propos dans les énoncés à prédication de caractérization*) and as such "is opposed to *i*". Ramassamy (1985:60) indicates at this point that *lé* can occur with the marker *i:* "when *lé* becomes a special type of process with the meaning of 'exist, be located', it can combine with *i*,"[71] and gives (39) as an example:

(39) *mi koné ousa zot Ø i lé*
1s know where 2p **PPM** exist [PPM = Processive Predicate Marker]
'I know where you are'
'Je sais où vous vous trouvez.' [Ramassamy 1985:60]

This sheds an entirely new light on the nature of the element *lé*.

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[68] "...son apparition [i.e. de /i/)] dans le corpus est intimement liée à l'existence d'un prédicat processif qui lui est postposé et à l'ouverture du propos de l'énoncé dans lequel il s'insère ... la marque /lé/ présentant une affinité étroite avec les prédicats de type caractérisation, statif, non-processif, se pose comme indicateur de ce contenu" [Ramassamy 1985:55; 58].

[69] "En ce sens, [la marque /lé/] est symétrique et opposée à /i/" [Ramassamy 1985:58].

[70] "...la marque /lé/... est hors aspect ... hors temps ... présente en structure profonde dans les énoncés à prédicat non-processif de caractérisation. ... /lé té/... apparaît comme le versant opposé de /té i/ quant à son fonctionnement..." [Ramassamy 1985:58].

[71] "En outre, lorsque /lé/ devient un procès de type spécial à signifié 'se trouver, exister', il se combine avec /i/. Exemple: */mi koné ousa zot Ø i lé/ 'je sais où vous vous trouvez'*" [Ramassamy 1985:60]. Cf. also Cellier (1985a:383) in Note 57.

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Here, how *lé té* and *té i* "correspond to each other in how they function" must be considered. Ramassamy (1985:152-3) is indeed first and alone in pointing out and commenting on the *reverse image position* of the Tense marker *té* in non-processive predicates, where it accompanies the Non-processive Predicate Marker [NPM] *lé (*or *sé*), and in processive predicates, where it accompanies the processive predicate marker [PPM] *i*, as illustrated in sentences (40) and (41) respectively:

(40) *mon papa (lé) té ~ sété pésèr lontan*
1s father (NPM) **PAST** ~ NPM **PAST** fisherman long ago
'My father was a fisherman in the old days.'
'Mon papa était pêcheur autrefois.' [Ramassamy 1985:152]

(41) *mon papa té i travay lizin lané pasé*
1s father **PAST** PPM work plant year past
'My father used to work at the factory years ago.' [Ramassamy 1985:129]

Example (40) illustrates how, as Ramassamy (1985:152) points out, non-processive predicates *only* combine with the Tense markers *(lé)té/sété* (past) and *sra* (future). They *cannot* combine with any *Aspect markers*.

Indeed, the same Tense markers do not occur in processive and non-processive predicates. Compare (42), (43) and (44), in which the Tense marker precedes the PPM *i* and (45) and (46), in which the Tense marker follows the NPM *lé*. The notation adopted in this study *always indicates this contrast* by placing the Ø before the PPM *i* and after the NPM *lé* (in the absence of *té*). This *Ø* is, however, omitted in the gloss.

(42) *mon papa Ø i travay lizin koméla*
1s father PPM work factory now
'My father works at the factory now.' [Informant MAP]

(43) *mon papa té i travay lizin lané pasé*
1s father PAST PPM work factory year past
'My father worked at the factory last year.' [Ramassamy 1985:129]

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(44) *mi koné ousa zot Ø i lé*
1s know where 2p PPM exist
'I know where you are'
'Je sais où vous vous trouvez.' [Ramassamy 1985:60]

(45) *yer Zan (lé)té ~ Ø malad, zordi get ali*
yesterday John (NPM) **PAST** ~ (no NPM) sick today look 3s
'Yesterday John was sick; today, look at him!'
'Hier Jean était malade, aujourd'hui regarde-le!' [Ramassamy 1985:154]

(46) *kontinyé pléré, domen ou lé Ø fay ou*
continue cry tomorrow 2s NPM malade 2s
'Continue de pleurer, demain, toi, tu seras malade.' [Ramassamy 1985:154]

These data indicate that *i* and *lé* are different types of morphemes. The morpheme *i* marks the *verb* and can be *preceded* by the Tense marker *té*, while the morpheme *lé* precedes the *predicate* (or at least *opens* the predicate cf. Ramassamy [1985:59]) and is *followed* by the Tense marker *té*. It appears that the Popular French etymon ***il est*** or [le] 'it is' has been reanalyzed. Malagasy speakers most likely associated the salient element ***[i]l est*** or [le] 'it is' with the Copula-like Particles in their dialects and so created what will be shown is a Copula-like Particle (CLP) *lé* in the VLR (cf. §5.5.4.3-5). However, though the CLP *lé* is used in the present and past, it is replaced by *sra* in the future.

In place of *lé*, in the case of characterization or identification, *sra* is used, as in (47), but not in (48) because *sé* cannot be used for the past or the future:

(47) *mon gason sra (en) doktèr en zour*
1s boy **CLP** (DET) doctor DET day
'Some day my son will be a doctor.'
'Mon garçon sera médecin un jour.' [Ramassamy 1985:153]

(48) *mon papa sé Ø ~ Ø en planter*
1s father **CLP** ~ **(no NPM)** DET farmer
'My father is a farmer.'
'Mon papa est un planteur.' [Ramassamy 1985:155]

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The morpheme *sera* in the VLR, which is used for future reference, may derive from the Popular French etymon ***sera*** 'will be' but has the same function as *lé* and *sé*. This means that it does not correspond to the inflected Popular French etymon ***sera*** 'will be', but is rather a restructured form as a result of reanalysis.

What also appears from these data is that *lé* is a different entity than the Popular French copula, and that, again, similarity of form in the superstrate and the VLR does not indicate similarity of structure or meaning. Ramassamy (1985:58) is correct in seeing a parallel between *i* and *lé*, which she considers discourse openers or *markers* of a predicate type. However, while they may seem parallel, or as Ramassamy (1985:60) puts it "to be understood in relation with one another", the truth of the matter is that they are *coincidentally* in relation, but have originated in different ways.

Ramassamy (1985:57) points out that the two predicate markers seem to share the property that they are subsumed in the presence of various Tense markers. The marker *i* is subsumed in the presence of the Tense markers *la*, *lapo*, and *va*, while the marker *lé(té)*, or *sé(té)* is subsumed in the Tense markers *té* and *sra*, as in (45) and (47) respectively. The question that this raises is what the origin of the marker *i* is, which will be dealt with in the next section (§5.5.4.3). As this question is answered, the nature of *i* as an Agentive Subject Marker (ASM) will become clearer. As a result, the question whether the morphemes *i* and *lé* are both predicate markers, as Ramassamy (1985) sees it, will also be addressed.

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What is important in terms of establishing Malagasy substrate influence at this point is the difference there is between a processive and a non-processive statement and how this represented a difference pertinent enough for the Malagasy speakers to have introduced it into the VLR, as can be shown. This is an issue where the typological difference between Popular French and the VLR involves the difference between Malagasy and Popular French. It would seem plausible that the marking of processive or non-processive predicates was introduced in these vernacular lects. However, it must be remembered that the presence of Popular French and the Creolized Variety of French (CVF) has in turn influenced the vernaculars, bringing their forms more in line with their system.

The difference here between an approach of the VLR from *French grammar* and from the angle of *restructuring* with Malagasy substrate influence is the following. From the French point of view, the form *lé* is a survival of the Popular French copula ***est*** 'is', while from a Malagasy-based point of view, *lé* is a copula-like morpheme, which precedes a different kind of predicate than one where the verb is marked with the PPM *i*. The fact that in the VLR different Tense markers are used in the two kinds of predicates and that there are no aspectual markers possible in a predicate with a non-agentive subject *cannot just constitute a continuation of French syntax* and the preservation of French inflected forms of the verbs ***avoir*** 'have' and ***être*** 'be'. It indicates rather a *restructuring* of the syntax of Popular French and the *creation* of morphemes, which may indeed, lexically, indicate some degree of continuity, but morpho-syntactically present a *break from the syntax of Popular French*. It is hard to see how such a change could have arisen from a language-internal evolution of Popular French even in a geographical area

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removed from the motherland's grammatically watchful eye. The great proximity of marked sentence structures in Malagasy and Popular French and the apparent similarity of a sentence in Popular French and the VLR should not be taken as indicating simple continuity. *The apparent similarity may well act as a screen hiding a break in language transmission.*

5.5.4.3 Is the marker *i* a destativizing morpheme?

What Ramassamy's (1985) analysis reveals about the marker *i* as a marker or "indicator of processive predication" (PPM) leads to considerations about the inherent stativity or non-stativity of the verb in the VLR as well as the nature of *lé*, the marker or "indicator of non-processive predication" (NPM). Henceforth, however, as the conclusion in §5.5.7 will warrant, Ramassamy's (1985) Processive Predicate Marker (PPM) will be called the Agentive Subject Marker (ASM) *i* and Ramassamy's Non-processive Predicate Marker (NPM) *lé* will be called the Copula-like Particle (CLP) *lé*. This is to make a clear distinction between Ramassamy's (1985) view on the one hand and the hypothesis suggested in this study on the other.

Some theoretical considerations are necessary at this point in order to understand the distinction between processive and non-processive predicates and its role in the verb phrase of the VLR. This distinction is not only basic in Malagasy, but seems to have played a *central role in the restructuring of Popular French* that resulted in the system of the VLR. How Malagasy and Popular French are typologically different is crucial in this respect. The difference between them hinges on *whether verbs are inherently stative or*

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non-stative in each of these languages. And, later, the question has to be asked about the difference on this point between Popular French and the VLR.

Frajzynger (1985) presents a framework for answering these questions in an analysis of inherent stativity and non-stativity of verbs in languages in terms of the existence or absence in them of a *grammaticalized procedure* to stativize non-stative verbs or to destativize stative verbs. He explains it as "the relationship between a semantic feature and the grammatical system of language" (1985:61), where the semantic feature is [±stative] and the grammatical system is the marking of verbs for stativity or non-stativity. What Frajzynger (1985:64) demonstrates is crucial as to the nature of *i* and *lé* in the VLR. Indeed, he explains that "although it is usually the verb, or to be more exact, the predicate, that is inherently stative or is marked for stative, the scope of the feature 'stative' may include either patient or agent, and that one should expect languages to have *some devices to indicate which argument is in the scope of the feature 'stative'*, if this feature has been grammaticalized" [emphasis added].

Explaining the situation in Indo-European languages, Frajzynger (1985:64) writes: "In a typical nominative-accusative language, when the patient is the grammatical object of the sentence, it is not in any way in the scope of the feature 'stative'. In fact, there are no means in Indo-European languages to indicate that the grammatical object is in the scope of the stative. If one wants to indicate that the patient is in the scope of the stative, one has to use a construction in which it will become subject. ... Accordingly, most of the IE languages have two constructions for passive sentences, one indicating

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stative and the other non-stative passive. ... Among the non-stative markers are reflexive morphemes, auxiliary verbs such as 'to come,' 'to get', 'become' etc."

In English, for example, by passivization, the statement *The virus infected John* can become either a stative passive, as in *John is infected,* or a non-stative passive, as in *John got infected.* In French, the statement *Le virus a infecté Jean,* by passivization, can become either a stative passive, as in *Jean est infecté,* or a non-stative passive, as in *Jean s'est infecté.* Malagasy has a number of transformations, called *diatheses*— including a passive diathesis—which enable statements to be derived from a basic statement, or from each other. Morphologically, a diathesis consists in marking the verb with a prefix, which allows a different element in the sentence to be in subject position, Malagasy being rich in different kinds of prefixes a verb can receive to allow such transformations.

If Malagasy and Popular French are considered in this respect first, some light will be shed on the restructuring that occurred in the VLR. Beginning with Malagasy, the data and explanation given by Domenichini-Ramiaramanana (1976:79) can illustrate the point. By a diathesis similar to the passivization in English or French, called "patient-subject diathesis" statement (50) can be derived from statement (49), in which the "agentive property" (*caractère d'agent*) is implicit by virtue of the Durable Resultative Marker *ma:*

(49) PREDICATE PATIENT-SUBJECT
Ma- zava ny alina
DRM brighten DET night [DRM = Durable Resultative Marker]
'The night has brightened.'
'La nuit [est] claire.' [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:79]

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(50) PREDICATE PATIENT-SUBJECT = OBJECT
Ha- zava -ina ny alina
DODM brighten (DODM) DET night [DODM: *ha- ... -ina*]
'The night is lit up.'
'La nuit [est] éclairée.' [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:79]

The transformation with the circumfix, or Direct Object Diathesis Marker (DODM) *ha- -ina*, enables the patient of the action to become the syntactic subject.

In the same fashion, statement (52) "with semantic agent" (*à agent sémantique*) [i.e. with the agent expressed in the passive construction] can be derived from statement (51) by means of a "Syntactic Agent Expansion" (*expansion à agent syntaxique*), in this case the agent *ny diavolana*. [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:79]

(51) PREDICATE PATIENT-SUBJECT FUNCTIONAL CAUSAL CIRCUMSTANTIAL
Ma- zava *ny alina* *noho* *ny diavolana*
RES brighten DET night because of DET moonlight
'The night has brightened because of the moonlight'
'La nuit [est] éclairée à cause du claire de lune.'
'La nuit s'éclaire à cause du clair de lune.' [DC]

(52) PREDICATE CAUSAL CIRCUMSTANTIAL AGENT EXPANSION PATIENT-SUBJECT = OBJECT
Ha- zava -in' *ny diavolana* *ny alina*
brighten* moonlight DET night [*with DODM]
'The night is lit up by the moonlight.'[72]
'La nuit [est] éclairée par le clair de lune.' [DC]
[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:79]

As the French translations given (by DC) indicate, like other Indo-European languages, French has a stativizing procedure to indicate that the verb, which is inherently non-stative, becomes stative. This can be seen in (53), where the verb is non-stative on the one hand, and in (54), on the other, where the verb is stativized, the

[72] The presence of the agent *ny diavolana* **without any functional marking** can be compared, in terms of its effect, with the presence of *a watch* in the English sentence *I was given a watch for my birthday*, where *a watch* seems to have no function inasmuch as it is not marked as the **object** of *given*, except as a **logical** one. In sentence (52), however, its function is made clear by the marking on the verb.

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stativizing procedure in French being the passive transformation. (In French, the object cannot be in the scope of the stative; however the subject can be in the scope of the stative in a passive construction.)

(53) ***La lune éclaire la nuit***
DET moon light up DET night
'The moon is lighting up the night.'

(54) ***La nuit est éclairée***
DET night be light up
'The night is lit up.'

In contrast, the predicate in (55) below, in which the verb is intransitive, is non-stative. The form indicates that the subject is agentive:

(55) ***La nuit s' éclaire***
DET night 3s light up
'The night is lighting up.'[73]

What the situation is in the VLR is clear from the examples Ramassamy (1985:69-71) gives to illustrate the four possible "predicative contents" for *éklèr/ékléré* 'light up', presented in (56) to (59):

(56) *Zan Ø i éklèr la kaz*
John ASM light up DET house
'John is lighting/lights up the house.'
'Jean éclaire la maison.' [Ramassamy 1985:69]

(57) *le zour Ø i éklèr*
DET day ASM light up
'The day is becoming bright.'
'Le jour s'éclaire (se réveille).' [Ramassamy 1985:70]

(58) *le zarden la fin éklére*
DET garden PAST COMP light up
'The garden has become bright.'
'Le jardin est déjà éclairé.' [Ramassamy 1985:69]

[73] As Frajzynger (1985:68) makes clear, a sentence such as the English sentence *John is swimming* [as opposed to *John is floating*], shows that "agentivity does not by definition, nor empirically, contradict the feature 'stative', as the stativizing construction may have agentive subjects in English." [The progressive form, as Frajzynger (1985:65-8) explains, is the "stativizing construction" in English, an Indo-European language in which, as expected, verbs are inherently non-stative.

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(59) *la kaz lé Ø éklére*
DET house CLP light up
'The house is lit up.'
'La maison est éclairée.' [Ramassamy 1985:69]

Further, there are differences between basilectal and acrolectal forms, illustrated in (60) and (61) respectively:

(60) *la kaz té (i) éklèr*
DET house PAST ASM light up
'The house was lighting up.'
'La maison s'éclairait.' [Ramassamy 1985:68]

(61) *la kaz i éklére*[74]
DET house ASM light up
'The house was lighting up.'
'La maison s'éclairait.' [Ramassamy 1985: 68]

In the VLR, the verb is inherently stative, as can be seen in (56), in which the Agentive Subject Marker (ASM) *i* destativizes the verb, and in (59), where the verb is stative. In (57), in which the subject is agentive, the verb is also destativized. The system is different from that of Popular French (or Standard French). It is important that the morpheme *lé* does not serve to stativize an inherently non-stative verb, as it is the case of ***est*** 'is' (or other forms of ***être*** 'be') in Popuar French (or Standard French). What is notable is that in (58) the absence of the destativizing marker indicates a stative result.

If we compare the statements in Malagasy and in the VLR, a parallel can be established between (62), with the Durable (Aspect) Resultative Marker in Malagasy (which is a marked construction) and (63), the resultative stative statement in the VLR:

[74] The occurrence of the marker *i* in this example is explained by its acrolectal form, which coprresponds to the basilectal form: *té (i) éklèr* in (60).

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(62) PREDICATE PATIENT-SUBJECT
= (49) *Ma- zava ny alina*
DRM brighten DET night [DRM = Durable Resultative Marker]
'The night has brightened.'
'La nuit [est] claire.' [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:79]

(63) *le zarden la fin éklére*
= (58) DET garden PAST COMP light up
'The garden has become bright.'
'Le jardin est déjà éclairé.' [Ramassamy 1985:69]

A parallel can also be established between (62) and (64).[75] In (64) as in (63) there is a verb marked for stative:

(64) *la kaz lé Ø éklére*
(=59) DET house CLP light up
'The house is lit up.'
'La maison est éclairée.' [Ramassamy 1985:69]

Further, if we compare the statements in Malagasy and in the VLR, a parallel can be established between (65), with a passivized form and an (optional) expressed agent in Malagasy, and (66), with an agentive subject in the VLR:

(65) PREDICATE (CAUSAL CIRCUMSTANTIAL PATIENT-SUBJECT = OBJECT
= (50/52) AGENT EXPANSION)
Ha- zava -in' (ny diavolana) ny alina
brighten* (moonlight) DET night [*with DODM]
'The night is lit up (by the moonlight).'[76]
'La nuit [est] éclairée (par un claire de lune).'
[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:79]

(66) *le zour Ø i éklèr*
=(57) DET day ASM light up
'The day is becoming bright.'
'Le jour s'éclaire (se réveille).' [Ramassamy 1985:70]

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[75] A similar construction is given by Cellier (1985a:381): *le jour la fini kléré* ***'le jour est déjà levé'***, which is probably slightly acrolectal (with *fini* compatible with *la*) but has the long form of the verb.

[76] The presence of the agent *ny diavolana* **without any functional marking** can be compared, in terms of its effect, with the presence of *a watch* in the English sentence *I was given a watch for my birthday*, where *a watch* seems to have no function inasmuch as it is not marked as the **object** of *given*, except as a **logical** one. In sentence (52), however, its function is made clear by the marking on the verb.

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In (65) and in (66) the subject is not in the scope of the stative, while in (62), (63), and (64) the subject *is* in the scope of the stative. In this respect, Malagasy and the VLR are typologically consonant with one another, while Popular French (as well as Standard French) and the VLR are *not* consonant. In the VLR, the verb appears to be inherently stative, while in Popular French and Standard French the verb is inherently non-stative. What is interesting again here is that the Malagasy construction with or without Causal-Circumstantial Subject Expansion, in statements (52) and (65) above, involves a marking on the verb (*ha-* -ina) that consitutes a marked form, that is, one that is salient.

The example chosen to illustrate this point is important to the extent that many verbs in the VLR are not used in the same way as their etyma are used in Popular French. As we have seen, the ways the verb *éklèr* 'brighten' functions in the VLR and the way ***éclairer*** 'brighten' functions in Popular French are different. The table (partially reproduced in Table 5.1 with glosses in English) that Ramassamy (1985:90) gives of the various contexts in which a form such as *éklèr/éklére* 'brighten' can be used in other than qualificative contexts (i.e. with the marker *lé*), reflects parallels with the options given in Malagasy of possible diatheses (cf. below). In the same way as *éklèr/éklére* 'brighten' can be transitive or intransitive (also stative and non-stative, as shown above), the Malagasy root *zava* 'bright' can be used with an array of verbal (diathetic) prefixes to produce predicates with various orientations (diatheses). The range of such affixations allowing diathetic changes for each root in Malagasy is limited for each individual root. It

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is in a similar way that the uses of lexical items are limited in the VLR, i.e. in terms of occurring in stative or non-stative predicates.[77]

Table 5.1 Contexts of use of various morphemes in the VLR

Morphemes	Intransitive Process	Transitive Process	Modifying a Noun	Noun	Gloss
maryé	+	-	+	-	married
sek	+	-	+	-	dry
mor	+	-	+	+	dead
ékléré	+	+	+	-	bright(en)(ed)
malad	-	-	+	+	sick

It stands to reason that the lexical items taken from the superstrate by Malagasy speakers whould have been used in constructions that reflected the *syntactic possibilities* of the parallel word *in Malagasy*. Such a process, of course, resulted in various degrees of restructuring, as was seen above in the case of ***éclaire/éclairer/éclairé(e)/éklèr/éklére***.

Ramassamy (1985:100-1) explains this well when, referring to Domenichini-Ramiaramanana's (1967) view, she writes that in the VLR: "Predication interacts with the lexicon in the sense that lexical units combine preferably with a particular predicative content, which implies a certain *syntactic programming* of lexical units";[78] and "what is preeminent in determining the possible combinations a unit will fit into is not the fact that it belongs to a class, but rather its relation to a particular predicative content bound with

[77] What Ramassamy (1985:59) points out in relation to the *i / lé* dichotomy in terms of types of predicate is crucial for understanding the restructuring of Popular French that occurred in Bourbon: "This dichotomy at the level of syntax interacts with the lexicon in the sense that it allows a distinction to be made between processive lexical items and non-processive lexical items **on the basis of preferential combinations** due to the affinities they entertain with predicative contents." ("Cette dichotomie, sur le plan de la langue, interpelle le lexique en permettant de faire le départ entre unités lexicales processives et unités lexicales non processives **selon une combinatoire préférentielle** basée sur les affinités avec les contenus prédicatifs") [emphasis added].

[78] "...la prédication interpelle le lexique en ce sens que les unités se combinent préférentiellement avec tel ou tel contenu prédicatif, impliquant ainsi une certaine programmation syntaxique des unités lexicales" [Ramassamy 1985:100].

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such a combination. Indeed, taking the lexical unit *fé* [factitive 'make' DC], for example, it enters quite legitimately a processive predicative content, while if the predicate is determined by *kapab* 'able', or *blizé / oblizé* 'obligated to', it combines with *lé* and fits into a predicative content of characterization."[79]

This echoes the comment made by Domenichini-Ramiaramanana (1976:76)—which Ramassamy (1985:47) quotes—about the constraints each lexical item has on possible *diatheses* which characterize Malagasy sentence structure and verb form structure: "The exact meaning of a statement, its syntactic structure, and the form of its predicate depend on the semantic/grammatical status of the element which fills the role of subject and from whose point of view reality is described. Each statement can receive as many orientations [diatheses] as it has elements that can assume the role of subject ... on the condition, however, that the root of its predicate can receive the affixes of diathetic forms that such orientations call for, or to the extent to which substitutes can be provided for the required forms in the event that such do not exist."[80] This statement is a map for understanding the restructuring of Popular French that occurred as a result of Malagasy substrate influence.

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[79] "... ce qui est prééminent pour la détermination de la combinatoire d'une unité n'est pas son appartenance à une classe, mais bien ses rapports avec tel ou tel contenu prédicatif lié à cette combinaison. En effet, si l'on prend l'unité / fé / par exemple, il entre, de plein droit, dans le contenu prédicatif processif, mais lorsqu'il est determiné par / kapab / ou / blizé / oblizé /, il se combine avec / lé / et entre dans le contenu prédicatif de caractérisation" [Ramassamy 1985:101].

[80] "Le sens exact d'un énoncé, sa structure syntaxique et la forme de son prédicat dépendent du statut sémantico-grammatical de l'élément qui y assume la fonction de sujet et du point de vue duquel on décrit la réalité. Chaque énoncé peut recevoir autant d'orientations qu'il comporte d'éléments pouvant assumer cette fonction de sujet ... à condition toutefois que le radical de son prédicat soit susceptible de prendre les affixes des formes diathétiques qu'exigent ces orientations ou que l'on puisse suppléer à l'inexistence des formes voulues" [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana (1976:96].

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The *uses* of verbs in the VLR derived from Popular French etyma such as those given by Naze (1983) are bound to reveal substratal influence and restructuring due to Malagasy semantico-syntactic relations. Such an analysis of the lexicon of the VLR is, strictly speaking, beyond the scope of this study. However, Table 5.2 below lists a few examples of lexical parallels with *éklèr/éklére* 'brighten' to illustrate this point, which is of major importance in terms of the reanalysis of the Popular French etymon ***il est*** '(it) is'. It should ne noted that Naze's notation has been followed.

Table 5.2 Verbs in the VLR occurring in both stative and non-stative predicates

Verb	**Non-stative**	**Stative**
anmay(é) / (a)may(é)	*La line i (a)may* (Naze 1983:43) ***'La ligne s'emmêle'*** 'The line is getting entangled.'	*... lu lé anmayé ...* (Naze 1983:43) ***'... il est englué ...'*** '... it is caught ...'
défé)	*Esèy... déf le neu-la* (Naze 1983:51) ***'Essaye de défaire ce noeud'*** 'Try to undo this knot.'	*La kord la fine défé*[81] (Naze 1983:51) ***'La corde est défaite'*** 'The rope has come undone.'
arang(é) / aranz(é)	*... aranj mon pti radio* (Naze 1983:63) ***'...réparer mon petit poste de radio'*** '... fix my little radio'	*inn ti ronm aranjé* (Naze 1983:63) ***'un petit rhum arrangé'*** 'a little aromatized rum'
asiz(é)	*Le loto té i asiz...* (Naze 1983:64) ***'La voiture s'affaissait'*** 'The car was sagging.'	*Le boug té apré asizé* (Naze 1983:64) ***'L'homme était assis'*** 'The man was seated.'
Verb	**Non-stative**	**Stative**
béz(é)	*Ma bèz atoué!* (Naze 1983:69) ***'Je vais te rosser!'*** 'I'm going to beat you.'	*Li lé bézé.* (Naze 1983:69) ***'Il est pris.'*** 'He's caught.'
boukan(é) *	*I boukan le ni mouch a myèl ...* (Naze 1983:118) ***'On enfume la ruche...'*** 'You smoke out the beehive ...'	*... la vyand i sra fine boukané...* (Naze 1983:121) ***'... la viande sera à point'*** '... the meat will be well done'
mafizé	*Maniok i mafiz...* (Naze 1983:155) ***'Le maniok devient blet...'*** *'Maniok becomes soft ...'*	*Patat la fine mafizé* (Naze 1983:154) ***'Les patates ...sont ... aqueuses.'*** 'The potatoes are now soggy.'

* This word has its origin in the *vocabulaire des isles* (seafaring or island vocabulary)

[81] Cellier (1985a:385) comments significantly: "On comprend que le système du français, qui utilise 'être' et 'avoir' dans une structure d'auxiliaire aspecto-temporel avec des formes proches phonétiquement // i l é// vs // i l a //, ait engendré un nouveau système lors de sa créolisation où les deux formes ont été mal différenciées, voire confondues sémiologiquement puisqu'on en trouve aujourd'hui encore de très nombreux exemples (// li la fini mort // vs // li lé fini mor //)." Cf. also §5.5.4.5.

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5.5.4.4 The morphemes *i* and *lé* and the short and long forms of the verb in the VLR

There is yet a further issue involved in the stative or non-stative nature of the verb in the VLR. Indeed, there is the variation in the verb forms between a long and a short form (cf. §4.2.1). These forms have also been used as evidence that there are inflected verb forms in the VLR (Chaudenson 1974:330ff: "*désinences*"), or as proof that the VLR are a continuation of the Popular French spoken in Réunion by the early settlers.

While Chaudenson (1974:332; 1981a:195), Naze (1983:9),[82] Corne (1982:54-7; 1991:80), and Cellier (1985a:369ff; 487ff) see only causes of a phonological and syntactic nature as the possible reason for this variation, Ramassamy (1985) approaches the distribution of these forms in terms of what she sees as the basic opposition in the VLR between processive predicative statements, characterized by the marker *i*, and non-processive predicative statements, characterized by the marker *lé*. As it was made clear above, by a processive predicative statement is understood a *predicate that has an agentive subject*, while by a non-processive predicative statement is meant a predicate of identification or characterization, or a *predicate with a non-agentive subject* (Ramassamy 1985:58).[83] To illustrate the system, Ramassamy (1985:67-70) uses the example *èklèr/èklèré*:

> A. When *èklèré* appears in a processive predicative content ... it can take both forms, under the following conditions: 1. It takes the short form *èklèr* ... when it is

[82] "... dans la mesure où le système désinentiel de cette langue (hérité du français) présente un caractère tout à fait résiduel et figé" ("... insofar as the inflectional system of the language (inherited from the French) presents a completely residual and fixed character") [Naze 1983:9].

[83] For discussion of Mauritian Creole as distinguishing between long and short forms on the basis of "semantic categories of Action as opposed to Process and State", cf. Corne (1982:49-56). Corne (1982:55) writes about the verb final truncation (VFT) rule (i.e presence of short form) in the *VLR*: "The syntactic contexts in which VFT is 'required' to apply are essentially the same as in I[sle] de F[rance] C[reole]. However, this statement is true only of the most basilectal varieties of R[eunion] C[reole]. In general, **the closer a given variety is to the acrolect, the greater the preference for long forms**" [emphasis added].

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followed by an object or a circumstantial complement. 2. It takes the long form *éklére* when no complement (object or circumstantial) is attached to it. However, if the predicate is marked by *té i* or *Ø i*, it *never* takes the long form no matter what the context (with or without complements).[84]

B. When *éklére* appears in a non-processive predicative content ... it always takes the long form, even with the presence of circumstantial complements.[85]

Examples:

- *la kaz lé Ø éklére* 'la maison est éclairée' ['The house is lit up.' DC]
- *la kaz té* (or *leté*) *éklére dépi yèr swar* 'la maison était éclairée depuis hier soir' ['The house has/had been lit up since last night.' DC]
- *la kaz sra éklére partou* 'la maison sera éclairée partout' ['The house will be lit up all over.' DC]

The difference between Ramassamy's (1985) analysis and the analyses that see the verb phrase of the VLR as presenting remnants of inflectional verb forms is that her analysis points to the restructuring that may underlie the system of these lects. Ramassamy's (1985) analysis is crucial (cf. §5.5.5.2) for understanding of the function of the marker *i* as well as its origin.

Table 5.3 below shows the constraints on the uses of the long and short forms in the basilect according to Ramassamy (1985:69-71):

Table 5.3 The distribution of *i* and *lé* with the long and short forms of the verb

Type of Predicate	Possible Markers	Long Form	Short Form
Processive (with agent)	other markers	w/o object or adverbial	w/ object or adverbial
	té (té i) or *Ø i*		ONLY

[84] The violations of this rule, Ramassamy (1985:68) adds, range from a basilectal (i.e. structurally typically creole) statement with non-past value: *la kaz Ø i éklèr* 'la maison s'éclaire', to an acrolectal statement (i.e. closer to French) with past value: *la kaz i éklére* 'la maison s'éclairait'.

[85] "A) Lorsque /éklére/ entre dans un contenu prédicatif processif ... il est susceptible d'avoir les deux formes dans les conditions suivantes: 1) Il a la forme courte /éklèr/ ... quand il est suivi d'une expansion objet ou circonstancielle. ... 2) Il a la forme longue /éklére/ lorsqu'aucune expansion (objet or circonstancielle) ne lui est rattachée. Néanmoins, si ce prédicat est marqué par /té/té i/ ou /ø i/, il ne se manifeste jamais sous la forme longue quelles que soient les contextes (avec ou sans expansion). ... B) Lorsque /éklére/ entre dans un contenu prédicatif non possessif ... il revêt toujours la forme longue, même dans le contexte d'une expansion circonstancielle" [Ramassamy 1985:67-9].

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What is notable here is the incompatibility in the basilect of the long form and the marker *i*, on the one hand, and the incompatibility of the short form and the marker *lé*, on the other. This is further evidence that processive and non-processive predicates are a basic distinction in the VLR, since what appears from the distribution of the short and long form is that the latter, *éklèré*, is associated with a stative meaning, while the former, *éklèr*, is associated with a non-stative meaning. The fact that with other markers than *i*, *lé*, *sé*, *sra*, *sré*, both forms can be used may also involve the stative and non-stative nature of the verb (cf. §5.5.4.5 for the use of the long form with *la* and *fini* in a stative sense). Table 5.4 below, summarizes the differences between stative and non-stative forms in (Popular or Standard) French and the VLR:

Table 5.4. Stative and non-stative forms in Popular/Standard French and the VLR

Stative: French	Stative: VLR	Non-stative: French	Non-stative: VLR
X est éclairé	*X lé Ø éklèré*	***X s'éclaire***	*X Ø i éklèr*
X était éclairé	*X (lé)té éklèré*	***X s'éclairait***	*X té (i) éklèr**
		X s'est déjà éclairé	*X la fin éklèr*
X est/était déjà éclairé	*X la fin éklèré*		
		Y éclaire X	*Y Ø i éklèr X*
		Y a déjà éclairé X	*Y la fin éklèr X*

* The acrolectal form would be *X i éklèré*.

The pattern that this table reveals is that either the morpheme *lé* is a marker of stativity or the morpheme *i* is a marker of non-stativity. Following Frajzynger (1985), the question is whether the VLR stativize an inherently non-stative verb with a particular morpheme or construction, the way French does (or English), or whether they destativize a stative verb with a particular morpheme or construction. (Or might it perhaps mark both?) Frajzynger (1985:62) defines "as stativizing a morpheme or a construction whose function, primary or secondary, is to change a non-stative verb into a 'stative' verb or a

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non-stative construction into a stative one." Either *lé* would appear to be a stativizing morpheme, or [*lé* + *the long form of the verb*] a stativizing construction. However, according to Frajzynger (1985:63), in the case of the feature 'stative', "if a construction can occur with a stativizing device, then it is inherently non-stative." This means that either *i* would appear to be a destativizing morpheme, or [*i* + *the short form of the verb*] a destativizing construction. "If it can occur with a destativizing device, then it is inherently stative." Since *lé* is not an obligatory element and appears to be a Copula-like Particle, it seems more likely that it is *i* that is the destativizing morpheme in the VLR. What is interesting in this respect is that the destativizing morpheme is found in *both* basilectal and acrolectal forms, in (66) and (67) respectively, though the latter does *not* present the short form of the verb:

(66) *la kaz té (i) éklèr*
= (60) DET house PAST (ASM) light up
'The house was lighting up.'
'La maison s'éclairait.' [Ramassamy 1985:68]

(67) *la kaz i éklére*
= (61) DET house ASM light up
'The house was lighting up.'
'La maison s'éclairait.' [Ramassamy 1985: 68]

The fact that the marker exists in both the basilectal and the acrolectal varieties would seem to indicate how early a development the marking of the non-stative is in the VLR. The fact that the acrolectal form of the verb is the long form is not consistent with the rules of the basilect. It is most likely due to the influence of the Creolized Variety of French, by analogy with the French form ***s'éclairait*** 'was brightening up'. It is most revealing that here the collision of two typologically different languages makes for a contradictory form. If the analysis is correct, this occurrence would be a *mixed or hybrid*

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form, born of a contradiction in terms or a conflict in typologies. As such it is indeed most revealing. From the French point of view, it is an inflected form, while from the point of view of the VLR it is illogical because of its long form, but logical in terms of its non-stative marking.

Further, inasmuch as it is a destativizing morpheme, *i* becomes *ipso facto* incompatible with the morpheme *lé*, for as Frajzynger (1985:70) suggests: "If the semantic feature 'stative' has been grammaticalized, [there are two possibilities ... 2.] Transitive verbs are inherently stative. In this case, one should find morphemes whose function is to destativize, and these morphemes should be able to occur with transitive constructions. One should not, however, find morphemes that could occur with transitive constructions and whose function is to make a verb or construction stative."

This analysis is consonant with the hypothesis that *lé* is a Copula-like Particle rather than a copula (i.e. a full verb such as the Popular French or Standard French ***être*** 'be', which inflects for Person and Tense). The long form of the verb, associated with a stative predicate indicates that the verb is inherently stative. The sentence *La kaz lé Ø ékléré* 'The house is lit up' is therefore an expected form, where the particle *lé* links the subject and the predicate, as in the Malagasy sentence *Ha- zava -ina ny alina* 'The night is lit up.' The marked form in the VLR is not *ékléré*, but rather *i éklèr*. However, in French, it is the opposite: ***est éclairé***, rather than ***éclaire***, is the marked form. French, then, has inherently non-stative verbs, and consequently a grammatical device to stativize the verb, namely the passive construction, as in the sentence ***La maison est éclairée*** 'The

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house is lit up' vs. a non-stative verb both in ***Jean éclaire la maison*** 'John lights up the house' and ***La maison s'éclaire*** 'The house is lighting up.' By contrast, the VLR has inherently stative verbs, and consequently a grammatical device to destativize the verb, namely the Agentive Subject Marker *i* on the verb, and the use of the short form of the verb, as in the sentence *Zan i éklèr lakaz* 'Jean lights up the house' vs. a stative verb with the long form, as in the sentence *La kaz lé éklére* 'The house is light up.'[86] In French the marked form is ***est éclairé***, whereas in the VLR the marked form is *i éklèr*.

What it is important to note here is that while *i* and *lé* are, as Ramassamy (1985:60) points out, to be understood in relation one with the other, their incompatibility has to do with how they originated as different types of morphemes as well as—coincidentally—with their association with stative and non-stative predicates. As *lé* is a copula-like morpheme, it is not a stativizing morpheme, even though it is associated with stative predicates. This is because the verb is inherently stative. In French the picture is quite different in the sense that the passive construction with ***être*** 'be' is a destativizing construction. This argues against *lé* being a copula in the VLR. And it is here that the influence of French on the vernacular lects has misled both speakers of the vernacular and linguists, it would seem. Quite coincidentally, too, both constructions actually arose out of the *lété ki* construction (cf. §5.5.4.7).

[86] A strong argument in favor of the stative nature of the verb in Malagasy is given by Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:86: "On peut évidemment se demander si l'extrême complexité du système diathétique de la langue actuelle ne remonterait pas à un état de langue qui n'aurait connu que des énoncés à prédicat d'existence non-verbal (sans doute même sans actualisateur) déterminé par des qualificatifs dont la valeur n'aurait été que sémantique."

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This point is important, because it appears, in analyzing *i* and *lé* in the VLR, that they *arose independently* even as they are incompatible. What is being suggested is that the origin of the ASM *i* and the origin of the marker *lé* are in fact independent of each other and *coincidentally* came to be used in functions that make them occur in different contexts, namely processive and non-processive predicates.

Unless there is a sense of the Malagasy influence in the emergence of the VLR, there seems to be no need to make any external element intervene in something that can seem to be a simple development of Popular French (*à la Chaudenson*)—and an interior development at that! Of course, with time, the VLR and the Creolized Variety of French spoken on the island began to look indistinguishable on this point. However, some incompatibility remains between the two speech varieties all the same.

The whole matter hinges on the origin of the marker *i*. If the VLR simply derive from 17th and 18th century Popular French, then the use of the ASM *i* by the descendants of the French settlers (e.g. *Petits Créoles*) remains a mystery and a seeming contradiction. Why would the descendants of the French, who spoke a kind of popular leveled dialect of French, have adopted what is seemingly a creole feature? It makes more sense to view the descendants of the French settlers as having taken the restructured Popular French form to be the *same thing* as the form in their own language. To the Malagasy ear, *i* was a marker, while to the ear of the *Petit Creole* it was a subject reprise that ended up as a kind of prefix on the verb on all persons in the present Tense. It is a well-known fact that in isolated places, the use of pronouns and the use of inflections became very free or

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confused.[87] Besides, as the discussion below about the evolution of the *lété ki* construction (§5.5.7) shows, the fusion of the [i] of *ki* and the [i] of the emphatic pronoun *li*, the change from the Popular French to the vernacular form must have been quite imperceptible over time.

5.5.4.5 Stative and non-stative constructions with *fine/fini* in the VLR

There is some lack of a clear distinction in the VLR when it comes to constructions with the marker *la fine/fini*. The confusion is threefold. 1. It is not entirely clear, in some cases, whether [*la fine/fini* + Verb] is a form of the verb *fini(r)* 'finish' (V^{α}), preceded by the Past Tense marker *la*, which is followed by another verb (V^{β}): [*la* + V^{α} + V^{β}], or whether it is a verb (V^{γ}) preceded by the Past Tense marker and the Completive marker *la* + *fine/fini*: [*la fine/fini* + V^{γ}]. 2. The form [*la fine/fini*] seems to be one marker that can have an agentive subject and therefore be non-stative, but it can also be stative without any agentive subject.[88] 3. The forms *la fine/fini* and *té fine/fini* seem to be synonymous when they have a stative meaning.

1. As to the first point, in a statement like (68), it seems to be unclear whether *fine/fini* is a completive marker added to the past Tense marker *la*, or an instance of a Tense marker *la fine/fini*, and therefore an equivalent of (69), discussed below under 3.

[87] Cf. Brasseur (1997) for examples taken from North American varieties of French.

[88] Cellier (1985a:385) has this very significant comment: "On comprend que le système du français, qui utilise 'être' et 'avoir' dans une structure d'auxiliaire aspecto-temporel avec des formes proches phonétiquement // i l é // vs // i l a //, ait engendré un nouveau système lors de sa créolisation où les deux formes ont été mal différenciées, voire confondues sémiologiquement puisqu'on en trouve aujourd'hui encore de très nombreux exemples (// li la fini mort // vs // li lé fini mor //)."

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(68) *tout Ø i lév malgré la **fini** dboir*[89] [Nicaise 1992:81]
all Ø ASM raise even though PAST COMP drink
'They all raised [their hands] even though they had just finished drinking.'

(69) *la rebu sak té **fini** boir* [Nicaise 1992:81]
PAST drink again REL PAST COMP drink
'They rank again, those who had already just drunk.'

Ramassamy (1985:118-9) sees in *fine/fini* and *komans* what she calls "para-aspectual" (*para-aspectuels*) markers, which give more precise detail to what the Tense markers indicate. In this way, statements such as (70) with *komans* 'begin' and (71) with *fin(i)* 'finish'can be seen as parallel:

(70) *Zan **la** **komans** travay yèr*
John **PAST** **begin** work yesterday
'John began working yesterday.'
'Jean a commence à travailler hier.' [Ramassamy 1985:119]

(71) *mwen **la** **fin** manzé*
1s **PAST** **finish** eat
'I have finished eating.'
'J'ai fini de manger' [Ramassamy 1985:120]

Ramassamy (1985:85) sees in *la fin* a single marker, which she calls a Resultative Marker of Characterization (*marque de caractérisation résultative*), while Cellier (1985a:445-6) sees in the Completive Marker *fine* a device which "can be used with a verb that has an underlying non-durative meaning" to give it a "resultative value."[90] He illustrates (Cellier 1985a:446) this with (72):

(72) *lu la **fine** arivé*
3s PAST **COMP** arrive [COMP = Completive marker]
'He has already arrived / He is already here.' [Cellier 1985a:446]

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[89] The fact that (68) has *dboir*, which is acrolectal or frenchified, while (69) has *boir* does not affect the issue. The form in *kan nou lavé finn met sa dbout* 'When we had finished putting it [i.e. the church] up' (Nicaise 1992:78) shows that the superstrate *de* 'of' in *dboir* is not necessarily used.

[90] "Ainsi en créole il est possible d'utiliser ce marqueur avec un V[erbe] de sens sous-jacent ponctuel (à un instant); il a une valeur résultative: *lu la fine arivé* (il est arrivé déjà)" [Cellier 1985a:445-6]. Cellier (1985a:446) also gives the following example: "*moin fine dir aou...* " 'Je vous ai déjà dit'". Ramassamy (1985:121), on the other hand, considers **Zan Ø i fin manzé* ungrammatical, while she considers *Zan Ø i fini manzé* "'Jean finit de manger'" grammatical.

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2. In terms of the second point above, statements (73) and (74) can be compared with statement (75):

(73) *Lé deu pti katsou ou lavé, ou* ***la fine gaspiyé?***
DET two small coin 2s have 2s PAST COMP spend
'The few coins you had, have you already spent them?' [Naze 1983:80]

(74) *moi la komersé osi la, moi* ***la fine porté*** *bazaar osi la*
1s PAST do business also there 1s PAST COMP carry goods also there
'I did business there too, I (had) also carried goods to those places.'
[Nicaise 1992:28]

(75) *La kord* ***la fine*** *défé*
DET rope **PAST RMC** undo [RMC = Resultative Marker of Characterization]
'The rope has come undone.' [Naze 1983:51]

It can be said that while (73) and (74) have a verb form that is non-stative with an agentive subject, the verb form in (75) is a result of a non-stative action with an underlying agentive subject. The present form of *ou la fine gaspiyé* in (73) would be ... *ou i gaspiy* 'you are spending' (and the present form of *moi la fine komersé* in (74) would be *moi i komers*), while the present form of (75) would be *i dèf* 'is undoing itself.' (Just as *i éklèr* in §5.5.4.4 is agentive in *Zan i Ø éklèr la kaz* 'John lights up the house' and *Le zour i Ø éklèr* 'The day is becoming bright.') Ramassamy (1985:70) explains that *la fin* can be used in both transitive and intransitive predicates, lending the processive predicate the value of a terminated accomplished action (*la valeur d'accompli terminatif*), and she gives as an example *Zan la fin manzé* 'John has already eaten'. The marker *la fin*, she writes (Ramassamy 1985:70) "is constituted by the accomplished marker *la*, which can be eliminated at will, and *fin*, which also has the meaning of 'finish'."[91]

[91] "Nous constatons, ici, la présence d'une marque spécifique /la fin/ constituée de l'accompli /la/, éliminable à volonté et de /fin/ qui, par ailleurs, a le signifié de "finir" [Ramassamy 1985:70].

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It seems, however, that (73)—and perhaps also (74)—is acrolectal and may even be the Creolized Variety of French. Indeed, the relative clause, although it has a zero-object pronoun in (73), is rather French. The VLR (certainly the basilect) have no such construction.[92] The sentence seems a creolized form of the French sentence ***Les deux petits quatre sous que tu avais, tu les as déjà dépensés?*** In contrast, the statement in (75) is a staple in the VLR. Indeed, Ramassamy gives the example in (76):

(76) *piman la fin krazé*
hot peppers PAST RMC crush [RMC = Resultative Marker of Characterization]
'The peppers are already crushed.'
'Les piments sont déjà écrasés.' [Ramassamy 1985:85]

The confusion here is that (76), despite the presence of the marker *la* (which subsumes the ASM *i*), is stative in meaning. According to Ramassamy (1985:85) the past Tense marker *la fin* "implies that the participant actualizing the predicate is characterized by the state resulting from a process accomplished at a preceding moment in time."[93] She calls the marker *la fin* a Resultative Marker of Characterization (*marque de caractérisation résultative*). About the predicative content with resultative characterization [e.g. *la fin ékléré* in (58)], Ramassamy (1985:70) notes: "This predicative content is incompatible with aspectual modalities" [Tense markers] (cf. Table 5.3). This is also the case with the markers *lé, (lé)té, sé,* and *sra.* What seems to be clear is that *la fine* is not marked for stative or destativized.

'There would appear to be a cancellation of the distinction between stative and non-stative with the use of the Resultative Marker of Characterization (RMC). It can be

[92] The examples Ramassamy (1985:373) gives: *le fiy O koné* ***'la fille que je connais'*** ['the girl I know'] are probably developments due to the influence of the Creolized Variety of French or Standard French.
[93] "Il implique que le participant actualisant le prédicat est caractérisé par l'état résultant d'un procès accompli au préalable" [Ramassamy 1985:85].

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argued that the agentive marker *i* (which Ramassamy considers underlying, but incompatible with *la*) is not used and that there is no clear destativization in this case. As if to prove this, the construction seems to be extended to a use with adjectives such as *gran* 'big' and *vyé* 'old' too, as illustrated in (77). This no doubt illustrates the fact that it is not the class a word belongs to that is "preeminent", but a "relation to a predicative content" (Ramassamy 1985:100):

(77) *ti marmay la* ***la*** ***fin*** *gran koméla*
small child here **CLP RMC** big now
'This child has become a grownup now.'
'Cet enfant est devenu grand actuellement.' [Ramassamy 1985:87]

This means that the presence of the RMC together with the long form of the verb indicates stativity, since the verb is not marked by the desativizing agent *i*, while when it is the verb *fini(r)* it is marked for non-stativity or destativized by the marker *la*.

3. With regard to the third point, to make everything more complex, there is a construction *té fine* with the long form of the verb, illustrated in (78):

(78) *lé bra* ***Ø té fine poiké****, la po la sorti dsu*
DET arm **PAST COMP burn** DET skin PAST leave on it
'The arms were burned; the skin fell/had fallen off them.'
'Les bras étaient brûlés, la peau s'en allait.' [Cellier 1985a:369]

However, the (Ø) marker and *té* indicate stativity here. The fact remains that the forms *la fine + long form* and *Ø té fine + long form* are decidedly similar and semantically identical. They are so identitical in fact that the stative character of the expression *Ø té fine* seems to extend to even the resultative of an underlying agentive verb form such as *la met* in the case of (79) and *la rivé* in the case of (80) to indicate a state that resulted from an action that had an agentive subject:

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(79) *kan li larivé ... ma manman Ø té fine met amoi lékol*
when 3s arrive 1s mother **PAST COMP put** 1s school
'When he came back [from the war] ... my mother had just put me in school.'
[Nicaise 1992:37]

(80) *moi lé marié la posesyon— Ø té fine ariv la-o* [Nicaise 1992:38]
1s CLP marry La Possession PAST COMP arrive up-there
'I was married in La Possession—I had already started living up there.'

Again the difference between agentive subject or non-agentive subject or stativity and non-stativity sems to be annulled in this stative construction. This could not be done if there did not exist the difference between processive and non-processive statements, each of which are marked either by the destativizing markers *i* and *la* on the one hand, and *(lé) té* on the other. According to Ramassamy (1985:) the marker *i* is underlying in the *la fine/fini* construction, while the marker *lé* is underlying in the *té fine/fini* construction.

In the VLR, it seems that the Agentive Subject Marker (ASM) *i* (subsumed in *la*) serves as a destativizing marker that marks the predicate by marking the verb, while the Copula-like Particle (CLP) *lé* is the optional marker separating the subject from a non-processive predicate, the former taking only the short form and the latter only the long form. In the cases where *i* and *lé* are subsumed, the long form as well as the short form occur seemingly depending upon the presence or absence of a complement of the verb. It also seems to be the case that the completive marker *fine/fini* can lend a stative meaning to a verb with agentive marker, as it can also with *lavé* (cf. §5.5.4.5)

This is further evidence that *lé* is a CLP and neither a copula nor a stativizing morpheme in the VLR. The evidence is to be found in the transitive and intransitive non-stative construction *la fine/fini* as opposed to the stative or resultative construction *té*

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fine/fini. According to Ramassamy (1985:70) the marker *i* is underlying in the *la fine/fini* construction, while the marker *lé* is underlying in the *té fine/fini* construction.

According to Ramassamy (1985:85) the past Tense marker *la fin* "implies that the participant actualizing the predicate is characterized by the state resulting from a process accomplished at a preceding moment in time."[94] She calls the marker *la fin* a Resultative Marker of Characterization (*marque de caractérisation résultative*) and gives the following illustrations of it:

(81) *piman la fine krazé*
= (76) hot peppers **PAST RMC** crush [RMC Resultative Marker of Characterization]
'The peppers are already crushed.'
'Les piments sont déjà écrasés.' [Ramassamy 1985:85]

(82) *ti marmay la la fin gran koméla*
= (77) small child here **CLP RMC** big now
'This child has become an adult now.'
'Cet enfant est devenu grand actuellement.' [Ramassamy 1985:87]

Ramassamy (1985:121) points out that the marker *fin/fini* is "particular" in that "its long form can be combined with all other markers, while its short form is incompatible with *Ø i.*"[95] It also substitutes for past Tense marker *la*, which is incompatible with any other marker, in combination with other marker, she explains (1985:121, 141).

(83) *le soley la fini kléré*
DET sun **PAST COMP** brighten
'The sun has already brightened.'
'Le soleil est déjà levé.' [Cellier 1985a:435]

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[94] "Il implique que le participant actualisant le prédicat est caractérisé par l'état résultant d'un procès accompli au préalable" [Ramassamy 1985:85].

[95] "/fin(i)/ a un comportement particulier. Sa forme longue /fini/ peut se combiner avec toutes les modalités tandis que sa forme courte est incompatible avec /Ø i/'" [Ramassamy 1985:121]. "Il convient de noter que la variante / té i / de / té / est exclue de la combinaison avec / fin / du fait de l'incompatibilité de / i / avec celui-ci" [Ramassamy 1985:143].

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(84) *moi la komersé osi la, moi la **fine** porté bazaar osi la*
= (74) 1s PAST do business also there 1s **PAST COMP** carry goods also there
'I did business there too, I (had) also carried goods to those places.'
[Nicaise 1992:28]

(85) *kan li larivé ... ma manman té **fine** met amoi lékol*
= (79) when 3s arrive 1s mother **PAST COMP** put 1s school
'When he came back [from the war] ... my mother had just put me in school.'
[Nicaise 1992:37]

(86) *moi lé marié la posesyon—té **fine** ariv la-o*
= (80) 1s CLP marry La Possession **PAST COMP** arrive up-there
'I was married in La Possession—I had already started to live up there.'
[Nicaise 1992:38]

There seems indeed to exist much confusion in the various idiolects when it comes to the use of the Completive marker *fine/fini*. This too is evidence that there are two systems at work, one more acrolectal and the other more basilectal. For Ramassamy (1985:144), the system with *la* is more basilectal, the earlier system having only contained *fin/fini*. The acrolect, under the pressure of the Creolized Variety of French preferring the use of *lé*, while the basilect prefers the use of *la*.

To add to the complexity of the issue somewhat further, there is in the acrolect a construction *lavé fine/fini* which, if it does not occur in Ramassamy's (1985:146) corpus, according to her is gaining ground in widespread use. This construction is clearly influenced by the Past Perfect form in the Creolized Variety of French (as well as Standard French). The influence of the CVF and Standard French in the use of this form can be seen in (87), where the usual form *lavé achté* 'had bought' seems to be affected by the French form ***(il) avait acheté*** '(he) had bought' and even the usual form *lavé* 'had' form is affected by the French form *il avait* 'he/she/it had':

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(87) *Sa li avé aseté, sa li avé lakt sa*
DEM 3s **had** buy DEM 3s **had** deed DEM
'He had bought that (lot); he had the deed to it.' [Nicaise 1992:31]

That this construction is used with a stative sense is apparent in (89), whose meaning is very close to that of (88):

(88) *kan défin léopol lé mor té **fini** met zist leboi,*
when late Leopold CLP dead **PAST COMP** put only wood,
'When Leopold died, they had just put up the wooden frame;'

(lé) té pokor kouver
(CLP) PAST not yet covered
[the church] still had no roofing.' [Nicaise 1992:78]

(89) *kan nou **lavé finn** met sa dbout, mesié esparon la anvoiy amoi sersé*
when 1p **have COMP** put DEM upright Mr. Esparon PAST send 1s find
'When we had finished putting that up, Mr. Esparon sent me to get...'
[Nicaise 1992:78]

The acrolect and the Creolized Variety of French, then, also extend the stative value of *la fin* and *té fin* to the form *lavé fin.*

Related to this confusion between stative and non-stative meanings is the confusion between *lé* and *la,* as in (90) and (91) and (92) and (93):

(90) *Zot **lé** déklaré grandilet, banna **la** marié grandilet, légliz grandilet*
3p **CLP** register Grand-Ilet 3p **PAST** marry Grand-Ilet church Grand-Ilet
'They are registered in Grand-Ilet, they got married in the church in Grand-Ilet.'
[Nicaise 1992:37]

(91) *Tout **lé** marié grandilet. Na lontan **lé** marié, **la** pa yer*
all **CLP** marry Grand-Ilet exist long ago **CLP** marry **CPL** NEG yesterday
'They all got married in Grand-Ilet. That was long ago, it wasn't yesterday.'
[Nicaise 1992:37]

(92) *Selman li té ankor zén kan li **la** mor, lé mor 53 zan*
but 3s PAST still young when 3s **PAST** die, **CLP** die/dead 53 year
'But he was still young when he died, he died at 53.'
[Nicaise 1992:53]

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(93) *Kan li lé mor li resté orèr ... ben li lé mor la li*
when 3s **CLP** die/dead 3s stay Aurère ... well 3s **CLP** die/dead there 3s
'When he died, he stayed in Aurère ... well, he died there, he did.'
[Nicaise 1992:53]

It is hard to see any difference in terms of stative or non-stative meanings here. The fact that *maryé* and *mor* can mean both 'marry' and 'married', and 'die' and 'dead', respectively muddies the issue a little. In addition, the phenomenon that *la* and *lé* are interchangeable in such cases is only made worse by the fact that *lé pa* has become *la pa*, as in (91). In the acrolect, the use of both auxiliary verbs ***avoir*** and ***être*** of French and the Creolized Variety of French has, of course, played havoc on the VLR. (It should be noted in Table 5.1 that *mor* 'die', like *maryé* 'marry', is only used in a non-transitive context.)

5.5.4.6 The presence of the two different verbal systems in the VLR

The relation of the form *lavé manzé* to *la fini manzé* and *té fini manzé* touches upon a point that Ramassamy (1985:144ff) raises: Are there two verbal systems in the VLR? Her evidence for this lies in the fact that the forms of what she calls *auxiliation*, namely the use of morphemes derived from the superstrate ***avoir*** 'have': *na (nana, néna, lavé, nora,* and *noré* are in competition with other forms of a "central core" (*système central*) of the VLR. Ramassamy (1985:144-6) points out that the marker *la* never enters into combination with any other Tense and Aspect marker, while *fine/fini* does, and that the other forms derived from ***avoir*** 'have' "never combine with the Tense and Aspect system ... in the sense that it [the system] has its own paradigm" and "the forms *lavé, nora, and noré* associated with the verbal predicate are in competition with the Tense and Aspect marker combinations of the central system." Concerning this, she comments that "[t]he

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stamp of French is clear here."[96] For Ramassamy (1985:146-7), what she calls the "central system" was originally composed of *fin, i sa, lapo, té* and *va,* while *la* and the competing "French" forms entered the system later on.

This question is important diachronically, but her view is problematic if the earliest data extant of the VLR, the sentence utterered by the housemaid Marie around 1723, which contains *moin la parti marron,* is taken as representative of the early vernacular of Bourbon. The existence of *la* in all the VLR argues in favor of its being an early development. (Cf. §4.3.1.2 for equivalent forms in the two systems.)

It seems clear that the forms *la, nana (na, éna) navé* are products of the early reanalysis that gave rise to the original vernacular spoken by 1715/1723. The early use of *fine/fini* is also very likely due to its presence as a completive marker in all French-based creoles (cf. Detges 2000:138ff) and the existence in Malagasy of a resultative circumfix *aha- ... a* (cf. §5.5.4.3) as well as a completive marker *efa,* as in (94):

(94) *mazava fa* ***efa*** *lasa ny mpianatra*
clear CONJ **COMP** gone DET student
'That the students have already left is clear.' [Keenan 1975:254]

It also stands to reason that Malagasy speakers would resort to whatever patterns they could find in the Popular French input they had to add to the "modalities" or ways of indicating nuances of Aspect or time they wanted to express.

[96] "...[avoir] ne se combine jamais avec le système aspecto-temporel ... en ce sens qu'il possède son propre paradigme. ... Le sceau du français est, ici, évident. ... les formes /lavé/, /nora/ et /noré/ associées au prédicat verbal concurrencent les combinaisons aspecto-temporelles du système central" [Ramassamy 1985:144-5].

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The use of salient forms chosen among the Popular French forms of ***avoir*** 'have' most likely goes back to the reanalysis of the early period of small-scale farming, and is not to be considered wholesale as the result of influence from the Creolized Variety of French or Standard French. The use of a second type of form is in keeping with the nature of the Malagasy diathetic possibilities as explained by Domenichini-Ramiaramanana (1976:96): "Each statement can receive as many orientations [diatheses] as it has elements that can assume the role of subject ... on the condition, however, that the root of its predicate can receive the affixes of diathetic forms that such orientations call for, or to the extent to which substitutes can be provided for the required forms in the event that such do not exist."[97] This ability to make up for the missing forms points to the inventive character of the Malagasy language, and this inventiveness was certainly put to use in choosing *salient* forms in the Popular French input which the Malagasy speakers used to communicate effectively with their masters and fellow domestics and, later, slaves.

5.5.4.7 The origin of acrolectal *i ékléré* and basilectal *té i éklèr* in the *lété ki* construction

A clear instance of different forms in different lects is the basilectal *té i éklèr* and the acrolectal form *i ékléré*. As will be shown in §5.5.7, the form *té i éklèr* evolved from the *lété ki* construction. However, so did the form *i ékléré*. The acrolectal form arose from the Popular French ***éclairait*** 'brightened/was brightening', but interestingly has the ASM *i*. This would indicate that the ASM, which marks processive predicates, had become such an integral part of the VLR that even the Creolized Variety of French had integrated it. If the VLR simply had the same form as the Popular French Imperfect Tense ***il éclairait*** 'he

[97] Cf. Note 74.

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was brightening', it would constitute an argument for the simple continuation of Popular French in the VLR. The presence of the ASM in the acrolect, and even in the Creolized Variety of French, indicates that Popular French was restructured under the influence of a distinction between processive and non-processive predicates in Malagasy. In turn, this is an argument in favor of *lé* being a CLP and not a supposed "copula" in the Popular French sense of the term (i.e. a full verb).

According to Cellier (1985a:378-9) there is no doubt that the form *té i* "arose from the Imperfect Tense of the verb *être* 'be' [etɛ] ... probably through the periphrase *il était à + verb,* as Chaudenson suggests, which would have given forms found in the lects of the contemporary vernacular such as *lété* or even *été + i + verb,* the latter being very rare."[98]" And he suggests reconsidering its presence in the form *ki* in the expression *moin lété ki manz* and *m-i manzé,* whose distribution, he points out, is parallel to that of the present *m-i manz.* "

Valdman (1977:181-3) writes about the *lété ki* construction derived from Popular French that it is "a construction with an embedded main verb introduced by *qui* and where the higher verb is a form of *être*" and "expresses present and past progressive as well as future". "Reflexes of this [Popular French] construction", he notes, "are found in the speech of leeward Saint-Bart whites and in the Carénage section of Saint-Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands. ... This construction occurs with the same meaning in

[98] "Dans une de ces constructions du passé //i// semble s'ajoindre à //té// dont il ne fait pas de doute qu'il est issu de l'imparfait du verbe *être* en français (/etɛ/), et comme le suggère R. Chaudenson, probablement à travers la périphrase 'il était à + V' qui aurait donné des formes que l'on rencontre encore aujourd'hui en créole (lété ou même été + i + V, cette dernière forme étant rare)" [Cellier 1985a:378-9].

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Reunionnese (Chaudenson 1974): *li lete ki asiz* 'She was sitting down' and appears to be the source of one of the variant expressions of past Tense: *mwẽ lete (te) i mãz lavian* 'I ate meat.'"

5.5.5 Malagasy marked sentence structure and the Popular French etymon ***il***

It is more than likely that the emergence of the marker *i* in the VLR, which Cellier (1985a:376), with a touch of humor, dubs le "mystery *i* " (*le / i / mystérieux*), is an instance of restructuring due to Malagasy substrate influence. Ramassamy (1985:54ff) points out that *i* indicates the processive nature of the predicate it is in, or, if one prefers, the agentive quality of its subject, in keeping with the distinction between processive and non-processive clauses in Malagasy (Ramassamy 1985:47). The origin of the Agentive Subject Marker ASM *i* can indeed be traced to the processing of a *marked* sentence structure in Popular French which Malagasy speakers understood in the light of a *marked* sentence structure in their dialects.

5.5.5.1 The marker *i* in the literature on the VLR

Most creolists in the literature on the VLR are in agreement on one point, namely that the lexical element *i* derives from the Popular French 3 pers. sg. pronoun *il* 'he'. Early, Chaudenson (1974:333) claims that *i* is the Present Tense morpheme (*morpheme de présent*); an impersonal morpheme which "allows one to evoke a fact that constitutes the present situation (*actualité*) of the speaker; which situation, as in the case of the French Present Tense, is taken in the broadest sense and may sometimes include facts yet to

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occur or that have occurred in the past" (Chaudenson 1974:340);[99] further, combined with the morpheme *té (té i,)* it "serves to evoke, in the past, a process, as *i* allows one to express a process in the present" (1974:336; 341);[100] and "indicates the impossible nature of a likelihood (irrealis in the present *té i* = *té* contrasts with past irrealis *té fini*. It is also found in subordinate clauses whose content does not lie in the present" (Chaudenson 1974:341).[101]

For Papen (1978:331) *i* is "subject reprise". "In R[eunion] C[reole]," he writes, "subject reprise occurs with the Present Tense, the *-e* form of the Past Tense, the Definite Future, the *-re* Conditional, the *ape* Progressive, the Future Completive, the Immediate Past (Present) and the Future Progressive. It occurs in both positive and negative sentences. However, it is blocked by the Copula in the Present, Past and Completive aspects" (Papen 1978:331). The very term "subject reprise" seems to indicate that Papen views the element *i* as connected with the *subject* rather than with the *verb*.

Corne (1982:18-23) sees in the morpheme *i* a survival of the *lété ki* construction[102] (with subsequent "*le* deletion" and "*ki* reduction") and calls it a verb marker". "Note in particular", he writes, "that I am not suggesting that that this analysis

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[99] "... permet d'évoquer un fait qui constitue l'actualité du locuteur; cette actualisation, comme celle du présent français, est entendue au sens le plus large et peut éventuellement concerner des faits à venir ou passés" [Chaudenson 1974:340].

[100] "... sert à évoquer, dans le passé, un procès comme [i] permet de l'évoquer dans le présent" [Chaudenson 1974:341].

[101] "... marque le caractère impossible d'une éventualité ([té i] irréel du présent s'oppose à [té fini] irréel du passé). On le rencontre aussi dans la subordonnée dont le contenu est exclu du présent" [Chaudenson 1974:341].

[102] "I have argued elsewhere (Corne 1974-5) that this [i.e. the element *i*] may arise from a procedure of embedding a verb into a matrix containing either the present or the past form of the Copula" [Corne 1982:18].

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represents any kind of psychological reality for present-day R[eunion]C[reole] speakers. In fact, if *i* has any "meaning" in modern R[eunion] C[reole], it is presumably that of marking what follows as a verb, and I therefore propose to refer to it as a "verb marker"... (Corne 1982:20). He adds: "Although there is no attestation of *le ki* to support this analysis, it is supported by comparative data from the French isolates of St. Barts and St. Thomas in the Caribbean."[103]

Corne (1982:20) notes that "[t]wo verbs are not, as a rule, embedded under /le ki/. They are *a(v)uar* 'have' and *et(r)* 'be'." He also notes (Corne 1982:20) both that "the Future/Conditional of *etr, s(o)ra/e* frequently co-occurs with *i*, and that "if *i* is seen as a verb marker, then sentences such as *ki sa ou i le?* 'who are you?'/ *usa mi le?* 'where am I?/ *usa loto i le?* 'where is the car?' suggest that *etr* here is a full verb (State, Location/Existence /Equivalence...), rather than simply a copula. But the presence of *i* does not appear to be obligatory..."

Corne (1982:23) also "forestall[s] some objections", namely "the possibility of deriving *i* from French *reprise du sujet* generalized from the third persons. Valdman (1977:181-82)," he continues, "notes the use of embedded clauses introduced by *qui* in the speech of children and in colloquial varieties of French to express Progressive: the possibility that this use was generalized independently in St. Barts and in Reunion cannot be ruled out." And he adds about his derivation from a "somewhat apochryphal Old French model for *je suis qui* + Clause" that "it is merely a suggestion as to the possible

[103] Corne cites the examples (in Highfield's orthography): *t'è ki vèy* 'you are watching' and *j'été ki vèné* 'I was coming' [from Highfield 1979:94-100, quoted in Corne 1982:20].

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history of *i* in R[eunion] C[reole]." That Corne is not "wedded" to his derivation comes as no surprise. The truth of the matter is that there is little in the documents we have to make any watertight case for what remains at best an awkward explanation.

In his comparison of the state of the VLR and Mauritian Creole (MC) in early texts (i.e. 18th and 19th century) Chaudenson (1981a) concludes that the two languages were mostly identical. However, about the marker *i*, which is specific to the VLR and does not exist in MC, he writes (Chaudenson 1981a:200): "From the beginning of the 18th century, one often finds 'y' preceding the verbal theme for all persons in Present Tense in Réunionnais Creole, and this usage sometimes extends to the copula 'l'est' ... in Héry the sytem of formation of the Present Tense is not regular ... and there coexist two types: the 'i' type morpheme (which is always transcribed 'y') [and] a type without the morpheme 'i'".[104] Chaudenson (1981a:201) comments further: "The use of this 'i' is clearly linked to the presence of a subject noun, either singular or plural, and this turn must no doubt be related to the popular French construction already mentioned (of the type 'les soldats, il est malheureux' ['the soldiers, he is miserable' DC] in Frei, or 'tout le monde, il est gentil' ['everybody, he is kind' DC]; the French spoken by children also offers many examples."[105]

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[104] "En réunionnais, dès la fin du XVIIIe siècle, on trouve souvent 'y' préposé au thème verbal à toutes les personnes au présent, et cet usage s'étend parfois à la copule 'l'est'. ... chez Héry le système de formation du présent n'est pas régulier et ... coexistent deux types différents: le type à morphème 'i' (toujours noté 'y'); [et] un type sans morphème 'i'" [Chaudenson 1981a:200].

[105] "L'emploi de cet 'i' est nettement lié à la présence d'un substantif sujet, singulier ou pluriel, et ce tour est assurément à mettre en relation avec la construction du français populaire déjà signalée (type 'les soldats, il est malheureux' Frei, ou 'tout le monde, il est gentil'; le français enfantin en offre aussi beaucoup d'exemples" [Chaudenson 1981a:201].

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Cellier (1985a:379-83) takes a new look at *i* and rejects the idea that it is a "subject reprise" marker. He mentions the need to reexamine the link between *i* and *ki* in the form *moin lété ki manz*, "in which Chaudenson," he writes (Cellier 1985a:379), "merely sees an 'effort within the framework of the French (***était qui***) system to normalize the turn *té i* in speech'. ... Other forms, which were in the majority, should have made it disappear long ago."[106] Cellier (1985a:379) considers Corne & Moorghen's (1978) view that *i* is a "3rd person reprise generalized to all persons" as impossible. Though he does not rule out the possibility that it "may have played that role at the time the structure stabilized"[107] According to their thesis, he adds, "the term of 'reprise' can be confusing, for this reprise can proceed from emphasis—which is Chaudenson's diachronic analysis—or from the relativization (*ki*) of the subject."[108] This leads him to analyze freshly the function of *i* in the verb phrase. Cellier (1985a:387) concludes his analysis of *i* by stating that "this marker which has been integated in the VLR seems to have no other value than that of a actualizing signal in present and past contexts..."[109]

It is at this juncture that Ramassamy (1985) picks up the gauntlet. The issue then becomes quite another matter as one reads a very astute observation made by her that

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[106] "Il faudra dans ces conditions réexaminer les liens de parenté du //i// avec le //ki// de Cb-2 ([i.e.] moin lété ki manz) pour lequel R. Chaudenson ne voit qu'un *effort de normalisation dans le cadre du système français ('était qui') du tour //té i// de la langue parlée* (ibid. [i.e. 1974] p. 336) ... Les autres formes—majoritaires—auraient dû ... l'avoir fait disparaître depuis longtemps" [Cellier 1985a:379].

[107] "Mais il semble impossible en créole réunionnais de faire du morpheme //i// une reprise de la 3e personne, ni même une reprise généralisée à toutes les personnes. Certes, lorsque nous disons que le //i// réunionnais ne peut pas être un pronom de reprise du sujet, cela ne veut pas dire qu'il n'ait pas joué ce rôle au cours de la période où s'est stabilisé cette structure" [Cellier 1985a:379].

[108] "Selon la thèse de C. Corne et de P. Moorghen le terme de "reprise" peut prêter à confusion; en effet cette reprise peut procéder de l'emphase—c'est la thèse de Chaudenson en diachronie—ou de la relativisation (//ki//) du sujet" [Cellier 1985a:380].

[109] "Il semble donc que cet //i// intégré au système verbal du créole réunionnais n'ait pas d'autres valeurs que celle d'un signal actualisant dans un contexte de présent ou de passé 2 (imperfectif) ..." [Cellier 1985a:387].

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both solves the puzzle and leads to strong evidence of Malagasy substrate influence. As seen in §4.2.2, Ramassamy (1985:54-6) sees in *i* an "indicator of processive predication" (*marqueur de prédicat processif*), in other words, a marker on the verb whose subject has a semantic role of agent.

5.5.5.2 The Malagasy origins of the Agentive Subject Marker (ASM) *i*

It is very likely that the marker *i*, which marks the verb in the VLR as having an agentive subject, is the result of a series of steps in a progressive development in which the following four elements interacted with one another to produce a new syntactic / semantic morpheme:

1. an emphatic Popular French stylistic turn with ***c'est*** 'it is', which uses marked personal pronouns and changes a simple main clause into a relative clause (***C'est Jean qui parle*** 'It is John who is talking');
2. a periphrastic expression, used in 17th century Popular French, ***était qui*** 'was/were who', which indicates the Progressive Aspect of a past action (***Jean était qui parlait*** 'John was talking');
3. the constraint in Malagasy relative clauses on relativized subjects; and
4. an emphatic "stylistic turn" in Malagasy, which changes the regular VOS word order to an SVO order.

The interaction of these elements resulted in the so-called "*lété ki* construction", which both Chaudenson (1981a:206; 2000) and Corne (1982:106; 1999:69) see as characteristic of the early vernacular lect (*créole bourbonnais*, or "Bourbonnais") that emerged in the *période d'habitation*, or small-scale farming era (cf. Stage I in §6.1.1 and §6.2.1), and was spoken by 1715/1723. It is present in the only sentence extant from that period: *Moin la parti marron parce qu'Alexis l'homme de jardin* ***l'était qui*** *fait à moin trop l'amour* (or, transcribed more appropriately: *Moin la parti maron pask Aleksi lom de*

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zardin lété ki fé amoin tro lamour), which, according to Chaudenson (1974:444, 1106, 1147), is a reliable quotation taken from court records dating back to 1720-3).

The emphatic form ***c'est / c'était moi qui*** 'it is/was I who' (***c'est toi / lui / elle / nous / vous / eux [les autres] qui*** 'It is you / he / she/ you / they who') is one that was very likely used—perhaps originally even in a simplified or *petit nègre* form: *moi qui fait* or even *moi y fait*—with domestics and slaves to indicate whose job it was to do what.[110] Summarizing what he had said, or emphasizing what he was saying, a master would likely have said: ***C'est toi qui fais ça; c'est lui qui fait ça,*** '**You** are the one doing this, **he** is the one doing that,' etc.

At the same time, the Popular French speaking masters also used the periphrastic expression ***était/étaient qui*** 'was/were who' amongst themselves to indicate a past progressive action, e.g. ***Lui était qui travaillait là bas*** 'He was working there'.[111] In keeping with Detges' (2000:146ff) cognitive approach to reanalysis, the non-French speakers may well have chosen this turn for its salient *lété ki* to form simple sentences such as *Li lété ki travay* 'he / she was working', as in the sentence *Moin la parti pask*

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[110] In contemporary popular Swiss French, children (and many immigrant workers) are commonly heard saying "*C'est moi qui fait / C'est toi qui fait,* 'I'm / You're doing it.' etc., where *qui fait* is a kind of fossilized form, possibly under the influence of the Swiss German turn *I bi / Du bisch dä wo's macht* (1s / 2s be **3s** REL 3s **do**) 'I am the one who does it'. In Standard French, it is ***C'est moi qui le* fais** (DEM be **1s** DET one REL [**1s do**] 3s) 'I am the one who does it' and ***C'est nous qui le* faisons** (DEM be **1p** DET ones REL [**1p do**] 3s) 'we are the ones who do it' with the verb in the relative clause in agreement with the **antecedent** of the relative pronoun (with which the relative pronoun "agrees" in number and in gender).

[111] The present form of this periphrastic expression is attested in St. Barths and St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands. Cf. Valdman (1978b:49): "une tournure durative-progressive...: *al é ki vèy* 'Elle est en train de regarder'" ['She is looking.'] "... Cette tournure a aussi été relevée à la Réunion (Chaudenson 1974)." Also Valdman (1977:182): "This construction occurs with the same meaning in Reunionnese ... and appears to be the source of one of the variant expressions of past tense: *mwẽ lete (te) i mãz lavian* 'I ate meat."

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Aleksi lom de zardin lété ki fé amoin tro lamour 'I left because the gardener Alexis wanted to make love to me too much.'

In time, in an environment with relaxed norms, the two constructrions may have blended into one single structure for the Popular French speakers. Soon there was little, if any, difference for them between the periphrastic form with ***était qui*** and the emphatic form ***c'était ... qui*** in the language they used with their domestics, on the one hand, and, on the other, the turn used with their fellow Popular French interlocutors. In turn, the expression was simplified to *té i + verb* 'was V + ing' by the Malagasy speakers.[112] However, it can be shown that there was more to this change than merely possible phonetic causes (cf. Corne 1982:22: "*le* deletion and *ki* reduction") that can be invoked (such as greater ease of pronunciation and the effects of fast speech.)[113]

In other words, in a first step, the restructuring process merged the Popular French expressions ***c'était ... qui*** 'It was **he** who' and ***lui était qui*** 'he was [V + ing'].

This simplification of *lété ki fé* to *té i fé* by the Malagasy speakers was facilitated by three contributing causes: 1. the absence of (subject) relative pronouns in Malagasy and the linking of the phonetic segment [i] of ***qui*** 'who, which' with the verb; 2. the confusion between the Popular French emphatic turn ***lui, il*** '**he**' and the subject ***il*** 'he' used on the verb in a relative clause; and 3. a parallel between a marked construction of topicalization in Malagasy and a similar marked one in Popular French.

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[112] The simplification of *était* to *tait* in Canadian isolates with no substrate influence indicates that this change might have been accelerated by the speakers of French themselves or at least gone quite unnoticed by them. Cf. "[tɛ] (imparfait et participe passé)" in Brasseur (1997:156).

[113] That fast speech is a characteristic of vernaculars is pointed out by Manessy (1995).

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1. The simplification of *lété ki* to *té i* was no doubt facilitated by the fact that Malagasy restricts the use of relative clauses to those where the antecedent is the subject of the relative clause. As Keenan (1975:265)[114] points out, Malagasy can only form relative clauses from ***subjects*** by "moving an NP to the left of the verb and optionally inserting a morphologically invariable particle (*izay*)." This is illustrated in (95) and (96):

(95) *ma- nasa ny lamba ny zazavavy*
PRES wash DEF clothes DEF girl [DEF = Definite determiner]
'The girl is washing clothes.' [Keenan 1975:265]

(96) *ny zazavavy (izay) manasa ny lamba*
DEF girl (RM) wash DEF clothes [Relative marker]
'the girl (that) is washing the clothes' [Keenan 1975:265]

Consequently, as Keenan (1975:265) also makes clear, "it is the verb form that encodes the underlying role of the head NP in the relative clause." Further, "Malagasy allows no pronoun retention" (Keenan 1978:297) in relative clauses, i.e. pronouns referring to roles other than subject. Popular French, on the other hand, contrasts subject pronoun and object pronoun in relative clauses, which is illustrated in (97) and (98) respectively:

(97) ***C'est moi qui l'ai vue.***
'It is I who saw her.'

(98) ***C'est moi qu'elle a vu.***
'It is I whom she saw.'

Because this contrast does not exist in Malagasy (which, as it is, did not have obligatory relative particle), it would not have been salient to Malagasy speakers. This contributed to a weakening of the semantic value of the phonetic segment [k], which was therefore detached from the phonetic segment [i]. A parallel disjunction of the phonetic

[114] Indeed, the relativization of the object is ungrammatical: **ny lamba (izay) manasa ny zazavavy* 'the clothes (that) wash the girl' (cf. Keenan 1975:265).

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segment [k] from the phonetic segment [i] also occurred in the case of the conjunction ***que*** 'that' in the VLR. For example, it is agglutinated to the superstrate conjunction ***parce que*** 'because', which has become *pask* 'because'. The segment [k] has even been added, probably by analogy, to the conjunction ***quand*** 'when', which in the VLR has become *kank* 'when', as in *kank lariv* [Nicaise 1992:79].[115]

While, as the disjunction of [k] from [i] indicates, the phonetic segment [k] was *not* salient for the Malagasy speakers, the phonetic segment [i] *was* salient. Indeed, it was salient to the extent that in Malagasy it is the *verb* that is marked for the syntactic role of the relativized noun (Keenan's head NP). Consequently, the *i* was taken to be a marker on the *verb*, a verb whose morphological marking indicated the role of *subject*. This amounts to a clear reanalysis.

There seems, in fact, to have been a general restructuring of the ***que / qui*** opposition in the new vernacular. There may even have been a confusion of the *relative pronoun* ***qui*** 'who, which' and the *conjunction* ***que*** 'that', which, in an intermediate stage,[116] may actually have brought about the use of [ki] for both, something which would have helped the next stage along. Such confusion of relative ***qui*** 'who/which' and ***que*** + il 'that he', which merge into a single ***qu'il*** is rife today both in Popular French as

[115] Other examples of this agglutination are: the relative pronoun *sak* 'the one(s) who', as in *sak lé mizer* 'the one who is poor' [Cellier 1985a:336] or 'what', as in *sé sak i apèl in lok* 'That's what is called firing someone' [Cellier 1985a:336]; also the interrogative *kosak* 'what?' as in *kosak lu sar fèr* 'What is he going to do?'" [Cellier 1985a:202].

[116] The confusion of ***qui*** 'who' and ***que*** 'that' can be seen in interlanguage sentences such as: a) ***C'est lui*** <u>**qu'il**</u> ***dit*** (instead of Standard French ***C'est lui*** <u>**qui dit**</u> ... 'It is he who says ...'); and b) ***Elle sait*** <u>**qu'il**</u> ***dit*** ... 'She knows that he says...' (corresponding to Standard French ***C'est lui*** <u>**qui dit**</u>...)

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well as interlanguages of learners of French as a second language,[117] and this was probably an even more common occurrence at the time the VLR emerged.

In other words, in a second step, the restructuring process merged the Popular French relative pronoun ***qui*** 'who, which' and the Popular French subordinating conjunction ***que*** 'that'.

2. Further, an element that likely encouraged this restructuring is that the phonetic segment [i] was now *coincidentally* in the same position as the subject pronoun in the emphatic popular turn: ***Lui, il,*** as in ***Lui, il fait ça bien*** '**He** does that well' or 'As for him, he does that well'. A consequence of the restructuring which linked to the phonetic segment [i] *with the verb* rather than with a superstrate relative pronoun ***qui/que*** 'who(m) / which' or complementizer ***que*** 'that' was a confusion of the [i] in the relative construction and the [i] in the emphatic turn *lui, il* ... '**he**...'. As a result, another change took place in the vernacular. The [i] which appears with the verb ***with all persons*** in a superstrate relative clause (*C'est moi (toi, lui, etc.) qui / C'était moi (toi, lui,* etc. *qui*) was now associated ***with all persons*** in the emphatic construction, thereby extending its use to all persons: *mwen i mâz, toué i mâz, li i mânz (li mâz).*

In other words, within the second step the restructuring process merged ***qui*** 'who' and ***qu'il*** 'that he' into one form *ki(l).*

[117] Speakers of pro-drop languages such as Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, etc. tend to say ***C'est lui qu'il dit*** ... 'It is he who he says ...'' partly by analogy with ***Je sais qu'il dit*** ... 'I know that he says ...'.

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3. Finally, a parallel was established between a *marked* construction in Popular French and a *marked* construction in Malagasy. It is at this point that the Malagasy substrate provided Malagasy speakers of the nascent vernacular with a *raison d'être* for this "mystery" [i], which Ramassamy (1985:56) sees in an "indicator of processive predication" (*indicateur de prédicat processif*) (cf. §4.2.2). The marker *i* may actually be a marker on the verb emphasizing that the subject is an agent rather than a verbal process (see below). It may well have arisen from the analogy between two markings, one in a Malagasy construction, on the one hand, and another in a Popular French construction, on the other. At this stage in the restructuring the element [i], whose origin was the Popular French lexical *il* 'he' ***as well as*** the [i] of ***qui***, 'who, that', was interpreted as functioning in a way similar to the non-definite article in a parallel Malagasy structure.

The emphatic (or marked) form in Popular French ***lui, il*** '**he**' and the emphatic (or highly marked) construction ***c'est moi / toi qui*** 'It is I / you who' were matched with and interpreted as equivalent to a highly marked form in Malagasy. The marked Popular French form ***c'est ... qui***, which is used in such emphatic expression as ***C'est moi / toi / lui... qui...*** has an equivalent in Malagasy when the *subject is a verbal*. This is explained below, using the Bàra dialect, although the "stylistic turn" is used (with the marker *ňy*) in other Malagasy dialects as well (cf. Keenan 1975). What is notable here is that the turn with which Malagasy speakers associated the phonetic segment [i] is one where the order is SVO, is the *marked* order in Malagasy. The parallel established by Malagasy speakers was likely between a marked sentence in Popular French and a marked sentence form in Malagasy. Saliency here was working in both directions. This is in keeping with what

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Muysken and Smith (1986:4) have pointed out, namely that "to *prove* substrate influence we have to look for 'marked' structures appearing in both languages—the language potentially subject to substrate influence and the potential substrate language."

Some explanation about the "stylistic turn in the Malagasy dialects is in order here. As Rabenilaina (1983:167-8) explains, "In general, the speaker orients the sentence towards a verbal subject when he needs to emphasize the process rather than the agent, the circumstance, the locus of the process, the injunctive agent, the causative circumstance or the reciprocal agent itself. The sentence then takes on a *very particular stylistic turn* [emphasis added]. It is often expressed in the marked order, i.e. by placing the verbal subject in front of the predicate. In such a case, the verbal subject is defined by the Non-deictic Article *ň/ń'* 'the', and a copulative particle of the *da* type, or a strong pause separates it from the predicate. ... Let us try to show these facts with the help of some examples."

	SUBJECT		PREDICATE	
(98)	*Ňy ni- téraki ày*	‖	*àndra tadiàvin- areo*	[Rabenilaina 1983:167]
	NDA PAST beget 3s	‖	indeed look for you	[NDA=Non-deictic Article]
	Is it indeed the one who begat him that you are looking for?			
	Est-ce donc bien celui qui l'a engendré que vous cherchez?			

Instead of separating the subject from the predicate by a strong pause, a "copulative particle of the *da* type" (*une particule copulative*or the particle *ro,* can be used, as in (99):

	SUBJECT			PREDICATE	
(99)	*Ňy tsy hi- àly móa*	***dà***		*mi- àńo*	
	NDA NEG FUT make war	**CLP**		PRES yield	[Rabenilaina: 1983:167]
	'Those who do not want to make war give themselves up.'				
	'Ceux qui ne veulent pas combattre (eux) se rendent.'				

In other words, the emphasis is on the verbal activity: 'the one who *begat* him' as opposed to 'the one who *killed* him', say, with the clause *Ňy ni téraki ày* in (98) being

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the subject of the predicate *àndra tadiàvin- areo.* This could be expressed literally in English as '(The one who) **begat** him is the one you are looking for?'

Some comment is in order at this point. There are two marked features in this "stylistic turn": 1. the order of the subject and predicate, and 2. the marking on the verbal subject, which itself is morphologically marked as the *agent* of the process.

What may have occurred is that two marked forms, a Malagasy marked form (i.e. S + P order), which was highlighted by the Non-deictic Article *ňy,* and a Popular French marked form, which was highlighted by ***(c'est ... qu)i...*** were equated by Malagasy speakers. In the process, the marking in Malagasy on the verbal subject which is indicated by the highlighter *ňy* and the highlighting in Popular French which is done by the [i] of ***qui*** were seen to be parallel. A sentence in Popular French such as (101) could well have been interpreted as parallel to the Malagasy sentence in (100):

	SUBJECT	PREDICATE	
(100)	*Ňy ni- téraki àzy*	*àndra tadiàvin- areo*	[Rabenilaina 1983:167]
	NDA PAST beget 3s	indeed look for you	[NDA=Non-deictic Article]

Is it indeed the one who begat him that you are looking for?
[Est-ce donc bien celui qui l'a engendré que vous cherchez?]
Celui qui l'a engendré est qui vous cherchez
Celui qui fait à moi trop l'amour est qui vous cherchez

The Popular French sentence ***Celui qui fait à moi trop l'amour est Alexis*** 'The one who wants to make too much love to me is Alexis' and the Popular French sentence ***Alexis l'était qui fait moi trop l'amour*** 'Alexis wanted to make too much love to me' could easily have produce a sentence in the emerging vernacular such as (101):

(101) *Alexis lété ki fé amoin tro lamur*
'Alexis was making too much love to me.'

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In a sentence in the emergent vernacular lect such as *Alexis (lé)té (k) i fé amwen tro lamur*, a Popular French speaker would see ***Alexis était qui faisait amoin trop l'amour*** 'Alexis wanted to make too much love to me'. The Malagasy speaker may even have meant ***C'était Alexis qui faisait amoin trop l'amour*** 'It was Alexis who wanted to make too much love to me,' which the Popular French speaker might have heard as ***C'est Alexis qu'il faisait amoin trop l'amour.'***

What is crucial in this process, if there is any reanalysis in it at all, is that the change would have gone ***unnoticed*** by the Popular French speaker, who thought the Malagasy speaker was saying what a Popular French speaker would say, while for the Malagasy speaker, he was marking the verbal subject. When the Malagasy speaker used *i*, the Popular French speaker may have thought he was speaking redundantly (as if repeating *il*), but that did ***not impede*** communication.

The next step would have consisted in using the subject marker, that is the marking on the verb, in the non-highlighted sentence (from the French point of view), but still the marked form from the Malagasy point of view, since S + P is the marked order for the Malagasy sentence. In this way a sentence such as: *Celui qu* ***i*** *fait trop l'amour, c'est Alexis* would become *Alexis* ***i*** *fait tro lamur*. We see some possible confirmation of this hypothesis in the fact that in the VLR expressions such as ***ce qui fait, quand il fait,*** and ***parce qu'il fait*** became *sak i fé, kank i fé* and *pask i fé* respectively. In other words, what started out as the marker on a verbal subject that highlighted the *process* in Malagasy became the marker on the verb indicating an *agentive* subject because both

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languages used a marked form to highlight, in one language the verb form, and in the other the subject. Both, however, were using a form of topicalization: "the one who".

A third step in the restructuring process was the equivalence established between the Non-deictic Article *ňy / ň / ń'* in Malgasy dialects and the [i] of Popular French ***qui***.

There may be further confirmation of the role of this marking on the verb in an early stage of development of the VLR due to what what occurs in Malagasy in the non-marked order (P + S) of the same sentence structure, namely where the verbal subject is postposed to the predicate. According to Rabenilaina (1983:168): "The verbal subject ... postposed to the predicate... is definite when the speaker wants to designate directly the agent of the action ...; in this case the Non-deictic Article *ňy* 'the' means 'the one who, that which', and so defines an erased noun such as *ólo* 'people' or *ràha* 'thing'... ."[118] And he gives the following examples (102) and (103):

	PREDICATE	SUBJECT
(102)	*Bétsaky*	***ňy*** *màha-làla ňy* *firazàńa -ny*
	many	NDA CAUS ART lineage 3s [NDA =Non-deictic Article]
	'Many are those who know his lineage.'	[Rabenilaina 1983:168]
	'Nombreux sont ceux qui connaissent sa lignée.'	

	PREDICATE	SUBJECT
(103)	*Sàrotsy*	***ňy*** *h- àh(a)- azo-a-nao àhy*
	difficult	NDA FUT CAUS do 2s 1s
	'It is difficult (for you) to catch me.'	
	'Difficile est la circonstance avec laquelle tu m'obtiendras	
	=il est difficile de m'avoir'	[Rabenilaina 1983:169]

[118] "Le sujet verbal ... postposé au prédicat ... est défini lorsque le locuteur veut désigner directement l'agent de l'action ...; dans ce cas, l'article non-déictique *ňy* 'le, la, les' signifie 'celui qui, cela qui'..." [Rabenilaina 1983:168].

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The verbal subject, Rabenilaina (1983:169) comments, "is non-definite when the speaker designates the process rather than the agent, the object or the circumstance of the action [11 = (104)], rather the process than the locus or the circumstance of the action [12 = (105)]."[119] The mark Ø in the following examples indicates the non-definiteness of the verbal subject:

(104) *Ø ràha lóza màh(a)-àzo an- drangàhy ity*[=11]
Ø something extraordinary CAUS do CIRC man DEM
'Something extraordinary affects this man.'
'Quelque chose d'extraordinaire atteint cet homme ...' [Rabenilaina 1983:169]

(105) *Ø Hàin -ào nan-(t)óño àndro*
Ø PASS know you designate day [PASS = passive]
'You know how to designate a day.' [Rabenilaina 1983:169]
'Est su par toi désigner un jour = Tu sais désigner un jour.'

There is, in other words, highlighting of the *agent* even in a sentence with unmarked order; cf. (102) and (103) above. Interestingly, this turn corresponds in Popular French to the expression used to highlight a subject: ***C'est celui qui...*** 'he who / the one who'. In example (101), above, the sentence in Popular French would be ***C'est celui qui l'a engendré que vous cherchez?*** 'Is it the one who *begat* him that you are looking for?' In example (102) above, the sentence in Popular French would be ***'Ils sont nombreux, ceux qui connaissent sa lignée'*** 'They are many those who know his lineage.'

A complex set of causes and steps gradually brought about the existence of the ASM *i*. Table 5.5 below shows the three successive steps that led to the emergence of the ASM *i* in the emerging vernacular in Bourbon in Stage I (cf. §6.1.1 and §6.2.2).

[119] "Il est non-défini, lorsque le locuteur désigne plutôt que l'agent l'objet ou la circonstance de l'action [11], plutôt le procès que le siège de l'action ou la circonstance de l'action [12]" [Rabenilaina 1983:169].

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Table 5.5 The three steps of restructuring leading to the emergence of ASM *i*

Step One	***c'etait ... qui*** 'it was **he** who' and ***lui était qui*** 'he was [V + ing'] merge and become *été ki*
Step Two	*the relative pronoun* ***qui*** 'who' and the conjunction ***que*** 'that' merge as [k]
	qui 'who' and ***qu'il*** 'that he' merge into *ki*
Step Three	an equivalence is established between the Non-deictic Article in Malgasy dialects *ňy / ň / ń* ' and the [i] of Popular French ***l'était qui***

The evidence for Malagasy substrate influence here is based on two factors: 1. the fact that *both* languages in contact had a "stylistic turn" highlighting the *agent* and the fact that the turn in *both* languages was a *marked* structure; and 2. the fact that a necessary element was associated with the turn in each language, namely both the Non-deictic Article *ň/ń* ' in Bara or the defnite article *ňy* and the ***(qu)i*** in Popular French found in sentences such as ***C'est lui qui*** ... (both of which shared the sound [i]!).[120] The result would be the interpretation of the phonetic segment [i] of ***qui*** 'who, which' as the *marker of the emphasized subject*—a subject emphasized for being agentive rather than verbal—whence the name Agentive Subject Marker (ASM) chosen for this morpheme. Technically, the dissociation of *i* from *ki* is based on the disappearance of [k] corresponding to the Popular French subordinator ***que*** 'that', except in lexical items where it became part of a fossilized element, such as *kank* 'when', *sak* 'those who', etc.

This analysis presents two advantages: 1. it explains why the morpheme *i* is present with *all* the persons of the verb, singular and plural; and 2. it gives a *motivation* in the VLR for marking the verb for *agentive subject*, coincidentally with the grammatical marking of the stativity or non-stativity of the verb (cf. §5.5.4.3). The highly organized

[120] In this respect, Schuchardt's (18) note on the use of *ni* for *i* by Mozambicans in Réunion is perhaps not a coincidence. They may have adopted it from Malagasy speakers who actually identified their non-deictic *ňy* and the Popular French [i]; but then again, the use of *ni* may have a purely phonological explanation.

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and subtle organization of the Malagasy dialects would be bound to affect the interpretation of a Popular French turn such as ***C'est X qui*** ..., especially as it is likely to have been used, together with pointing of the hand, to make such things as who was responsible for what job or what action. This interpretation also makes the *lété ki* hypothesis, with some necessary changes brought to it, not so irrelevant as might at first be supposed. ***J'étais qui*** ... might after all have commonly been used in Popular French to emphasize *who the agent was* in a past circumstance as well as to simply indicate the continuous nature of the action. It is usually the Imperfect Tense in Romance languages that gives background information.[121]

What is particular about the ASM *i* is that it marks the verb for the nature of the subject. Here the emphasis on the agentive nature of the subject and the processive nature of the predicate seem to be a mere coincidence. It is typical for Malagasy to mark the verb for the nature of the subject. Even though the VLR do not have VOS order, the reanalysis by the Malagasies still took the [i] of ***qui*** as a marking on the verb.[122]

5.5.6 The *i* vs. *lé* opposition and the Malagasy *ny* vs. *da/ro* opposition

The parallel established between the ASM *i* in the VLR and the Non-deictic Article *ny* in Malagasy dialects leads to the question whether there is any parallel between the CLP *lé* in the VLR and such Copula-like Particles as *da/la/dia* and *ro/ny* in Malagasy?[123]

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[121] Cf. Detges (2000:150ff) for the origin of *té* as a foregrounding marker in the French-based creoles.

[122] Cf. Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1967:96 (quoted in Note 77 above) and Ramassamy 1985:101 (quoted in Note 76 above.)

[123] In her analysis of *ny*, Dyen (1971:219-20) distinguishes between ny_1 (the determiner) and ny_2 (the non-deictic marker) and shows how the alternation *ny* ~ *no* "depends on whether the predicator precedes or

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Malagasy dialects have both strong and weak Copula-like Particles (CLP), which correspond to the Copula-like Particle in the *VLR*. While *da/la* in Bara (*dia* in Merina, or Classical Malagasy) are like a pause between Subject and Predicate, as in (104), *ro* and *ňy,* as in (105), are actual markers. The difference seems to lie in the "blocking power" of the marker as to further syntactic conversions (or diatheses). As Rabenilaina (1983:21) writes, "It seems that in Bara, as is the case also in Classical Malagasy [i.e. Merina, DC], *ro/ňy* [The latter is not the NDA marker, DC.] is morphologically a marker, in opposition to *da/la*, whose marking (if it is indeed a marker) no doubt has only a stylistic value. In fact, while a phrase with *da/la* can undergo syntactic conversion, the operation cannot be applied to a phrase which is the result of the introduction of *ro/ňy* after the extraction of a subject and/or a complement."[124]

What this means is that (106) can undergo a diathesis, or syntactic conversion, while (107), which has an extracted subject (or a verbal subject derived from an underlying sentence) cannot undergo such a conversion. In other words, *ro/ňy* (which Rabenilaina calls "exclusive", that is exclusive of any syntactic conversion), is a stronger binder than *da/la* or a pause (which Rabenilaina calls "non-exclusive", that is not exclusive of a syntactic conversion). Compare (106), which can undergo diathesis, and (107), which cannot undergo diathesis:

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follows: in normal order *Ny vehivavy no manasa lamba;* and in reverse order *ny manasa lamba dia ny vehivavy*. 'The ones who do the laundry are the women.'" She illustrates how ny_2 and *no* alternate:

(i)	*Tsara no mampandeha azy*	(ii)	*Tsara ny mampandeha azy*
	(lit. good *no* making-leave him)		lit: good *ny* make-leave him
	'The one making him leave is good.'		'It is good to make him leave.'

[124] "Il apparaît qu'en bàra, comme en malgache classique aussi d'ailleurs, *ro/ňy* est morpho-syntaxiquement une marque, par opposition à *da/la* dont la marque (si marque il y a) n'a sans doute de valeur que stylistique. De fait, si la conversion syntaxique peut s'appliquer à une phrase comportant *da/la*, cette opération ne peut pas intervenir dans une phrase résultant de l'introduction de *ro/ňy* à la suite de l'extraction du sujet et/ou d'un complément" [Rabenilaina 1983:21].

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SUBJECT PREDICATE [Rabenilaina: 1983:167]

(106) *Ňy tsy hi- àly móa dà mi-àńo*
NDA NEG FUT make war **CLP** PRES give up
'Those who do not want to make war give themselves up.'
'Ceux qui ne veulent pas combattre (eux) se rendent.'

(107) *Ňy tsy m- if- an-(t)andrify ro apifanandrifia*
NDA NEG PRES REFL CIRC correspond **CLP** make correspond
'It is what does not correspond that one makes correspond.'
'C'est ce qui ne se correspond pas qu'on fait se correspondre.'
[Rabenilaina: 1983:168]

This sheds light on the obligatory or non-obligatory presence of *lé* in the *VLR*. The Malagasy speakers may have considered the presence of *lé* in the *lété ki* construction as necessary or not, based on their sense of when either a pause, or non-obligatory *da*, or *la* was used or an obligatory *ro* or *ňy* was used. The presence or absence of *lé* was not an issue for them, thus helping along the elision of *lé* in the new vernacular lect. If anything, the presence of *lé* was a *marked* form and seems to have been generalized in the *VLR* as a salient form and *significant* form marking a relation of subject and predicate. This can be seen in the subject-predicate relation in *sak lé mizer* 'the one who is poor' [Cellier 1985a:336]. In the meantime the marking of the verb by means of *i* was a constant feature, just as the NDA *ňy* was a staple in Malagasy. The phonetic segment [i] in the Popular French etymon ***Ce qui*** 'what' and ***celui qui*** 'the one who', as well as in ***l'était qui***, the form for past continuous action or repeated action, became a marking on the verb. This can be seen in the marking of the verb in *sé sak i apèl in lok* 'That's what is called firing someone' [Cellier 1985a:336].

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What is remarkable in this marking on the verb is that such marking on the verb to indicate the syntactic role of the subject is characteristic of Malagasy, as Domnichini-Ramiaramanana (1976:96) points out (cf. footnote 80 above)

5.5.7 The common origin of the ASM *i* and the CLP *lé* in the *lété ki* construction

As it was pointed out above (cf. §5.5.4.2), Ramassamy (1985:60) sees *i*, which she considers the marker or "indicator of processive predicates", and the marker *lé*, which she considers the marker or "indicator of non-processive predicates", as complimentary or opposed. It is acknowledged here that they do indeed occur in these different contexts, however, they are not seen as similar in their *function*. The former, *i*, which is here considered a marker on the verb indicating an agentive subject, or Agentive Subject Marker (ASM), marks the *verb*, while the latter, which is here considered a Copula-like Particle occurring (optionally) between the subject and the predicate, marks the *predicate*, a predicate which is not necessarily a verb form.

The reason for this difference can be traced back to the *lété ki* construction in the early vernacular lect of Bourbon. Indeed, this construction has both elements in it from which the markers originated. The marker *i* is in the [i] of *ki*, and the particle *lé* is in the [le] of *lété*. As was shown in §5.5.5.2, out of the former originated the non-stative forms *Ø i fé* 'make(s)', *té (i) fé* 'was/were making', and *Ø i fésé* 'was/were making' (in the acrolect, from the French ***il faisait*** 'he was doing'), while out of the latter originated *lé Ø / (lé)té malad* 'NON PAST / PAST sick'. The Tense marker *té*, which originated in the *lété ki* construction, seems to have had a different origin in the VLR than it did in the

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French-based Creoles if Detges' (2000: 150ff) hypothesis is correct. However, both would have originated from a form of Popular French ***(il/elle) était*** '(he/she/it) was'.

5.5.5.8 Other forms derived from inflected etyma of Popular French ***avoir***

The forms in the verb phrase of the VLR derived from inflected etyma of the Popular French verb ***avoir*** 'have' which have not been discussed are *la, nora,* and *noré.* The form *lavé,* which has been mentioned, also needs to be discussed under this heading.

There is general agreement in the literature that the past Tense marker *la* is derived from the Popular French etymon *il a* 'it/he has'. It should be noted that no French-based creole spoken either in the Caribbean or in the Indian Ocean has this Tense marker, though it is found in varieties of African French. Where there is disagreement, however, is mainly about the order in which this marker entered into the VLR. Ramassamy (1985:146ff) considers it an element introduced at a later date than the marker *fine/fini* because it does not combine with any other marker. As such, for her, it is to be ranked along with *na(na), lavé, nora,* and *noré,* which, as forms used as auxiliaries (*auxiliation*), or parallel system of Tense and Aspect marking are in competition with the "original" Tense and Aspect markers. For Detges (2000:146), however, *la* is the consequence of an early reanalysis just as *ti/té* is in the French-based creoles. Of course, if the sentence from ca. 1720 of the house domestic Marie is genuine, as Chaudenson (1974:444, 1106, 1147) indicates it is, the early existence of the marker *la* is to be confirmed.

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From the point of view of possible Malagasy influence, the early development of the Tense marker is plausible. Malagasy dialects mark the past by prefixing the stem of the verb with *n-*, while they mark the present with the prefix *m-*, as was mentioned in the discussion of the existential marker *na(na)* 'exist', which corresponds to Malagasy *m- isy* 'exist'and *navé* 'existed', which corresponds to Malagasy *n- isy* 'existed'. The VRL mark the verb with the marker *la* for past, a marker which for all intents and purposes might well have been perceived by the Malagasy speakers as a prefix, while the Popular French speakers saw in it the auxiliary for the Popular French *passé composé*. The forms *lartir* 'pulled back' (Nicaise 1992:81), *larmet* 'put back' (Nicaise 1992:80), *lariv/larivé* 'arrived' (Nicaise 1992:80), *larpri* 'took up again' (Nicaise 1992:81), which have an elided *l'* form show how much the Tense marker is a kind of prefix.

Detges (2000:146) comments on how "the survival of such forms [as *la*, etc.] is all the more remarkable as clitic and inflectional elements of the base language normally have disappeared in the Fr[ench] Cr[eoles]", and states that "[t]he problem is to find an explanation which accounts for the fact that some grammatical elements disappeared while others were retained." In this instance, the Malagasy substrate influence is not only a likely explanation, but a convincing one to the extent that it is one parallel *among others* that was drawn by the early Malagasy speakers of the emerging vernacular in Bourbon. The combination of the past marker *la* and the completive marker *fini* is to be seen as a marked form, indicating the completed process of an action at some past time.

One problem is how to explain the negative form [*la pa* + Verb], as in (108):

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(108) *mé selman li la pa anvoiyé o fon, selman la rate selman*
but only 3s **PAST NEG send** to bottom only PAST miss only
'However, he did not send (us) to the bottom; he only missed, that's all.'
[Nicaise 1992:80]

The occurrence of the negation after the verb in the VLR rather than before it, as is the case in most French-based creoles, has been seen as evidence that the VLR are a continuation of Popular French. However, although the negation in Malagasy precedes the verb, as in (109):

(109) ***Tsy*** *tonga ny reni -nao*
NEG arrive DET mother 2s
'Your mother has not arrived.'
'Votre mère n'est pas arrivée.' [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:92]

the negation *follows* the CLP *dia* (or the pause in when the CLP is not used), as in (110):

SUBJECT NEGATION PREDICATE
(110) *Ny omby namidy* ‖ (or *dia*) ***tsy*** *an'ny tena*
DET ox sell ‖ (CLP) **NEG** for DET self
'The sold ox is no longer our property.' [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:68]
'Le boeuf vendu ne nous appartient plus.'

It is also possible that the form *lapa* originated in the regressive assimilation of the vowel of *lé* to the vowel of *pa* and was then adopted as a fossilized element. In this sense, the unit *lapa* 'PAST + NEG' can be compared to the future negative unit *rapa* 'FUT + NEG', which is added as a fossilized element to innovations such as the verb *fémal* 'to hurt' in (111):

(111) *i fémal* ***-rapa***
SAM hurt **FUT NEG**
'It won't hurt.' [Cellier 1985a:420]

The form *lavé* is most likely a form that has its origin in the Créolized Variety of French. Its use in the acrolect, where it is used instead of *té fini* (cf. [113]), is a sign of this, while its use in the basilect, as in (110), might be explained by its adoption as a fossilized element, in the same way as *navé* 'there was/were' was adopted as a fossilized

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element. There seems to be some evidence for a parallel with *navé* 'there was/were' in their common use to indicate the same existential meaning, as in (114) and (115) respectively:

(112) *in bon pé domoun o Por osi* ***lavé*** *monté* [Nicaise 1992:79]
quite a few people in Le Port also existed/had come up
'There were quite a few people (there) who had come up from Le Port.'

(113) *kan* ***té Ø fini boir,*** *le sofer kosa Ø i di anou ...alon pous*
when **PAST COMP drink** DET chauffeur like this ASM say1s come on push
'... when we had all drunk, the chauffeur said to us ... push!' [Nicaise 1992:83]

(114) ***navé*** *inn vierz osi*
existed DET virgin also
'There was a (statue of the) Virgin there too.' [Nicaise 1992:83]

(115) *dérier moi* ***lavé*** *in bou dkor lé té kom sa*
behind 1s existed DET piece body CLP PAST like DEM
'Behind me there was a part of the body which was this long.' [Nicaise 1992:80]

As far as the forms *nora, noré* and *loré* are concerned, they seem to have originated in the Creolized Variety of French.[125] "It is not clear," Papen (1978:492) indicates, "what the factors (if any) may be that determine the choice between *nore* and *lore.*" They correspond to basilectal *té i.* Compare acrolectal *nora* and *noré* in (116), which indicate the past in the future; basilectal *té (i)* and acrolectal *loré* in (117), which express the conditional in the present; and basilectal *té (i)* and acrolectal *noré* in (118), which express conditional in the past; and basilectal *té i* in (119), which expresses the conditional in the present:[126]

(116) *Kan zot* ***nora*** *anter ali, son kor* ***nora*** *antéré,*
when 2p **FUT PAST** bury 3s 3s body **FUT PAST** bury
'When you have buried him, you will have buried his body;

[125] Cellier (1985a:464) writes that Chaudenson "was right in classifying forms such as //loré//, //lora//, //lété// etc. (1974, pp. 974-975) among the creole neologisms in the lexicon even if he explains things differently" ("a classé des formes comme //loré//, //lora//, //lété//etc. ... dans la néologie lexicale créole, il ne s'y était pas trompé même s'il explique les choses différemment.")

[126] Papen (1978:375) also gives a variant *té i sa: Li te i sa travaj* 'he would work' [Papen's orthography].

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mé selman sa tét ***noré*** *rest deor,* ***noré*** *pa antéré.*
but only 3s head **FUT PAST** stay outside **FUT PAST** NEG bury
but his head will have stayed above the ground, you will ot have buried it.'
[Nicaise 1992:82]

(117) *si moi té (i) kapab travayé ankor moi loré travayé mèm*
if 1s **COND** able work still 1s **COND** work indeed
'If I were still able to work, I would indeed be working.'
[Nicaise 1992:118]

(118) *si nou té (i) pa pré derier ... bé* ***noré*** *arivé ater mèm*
if 1p **COND** NEG ready behind well **COND** arrive aground indeed
'If we hadn't been in the back, well ... it would indeed have touched the ground.'
[Nicaise 1992:82]

(119) *si muê te i gañ, muê te i esplik a-u*
if 1s **COND** manage 1s **COND** explain 2s
'If I could, I would explain it to you." [Papen 1978:491]

5.6 Other characteristics of the VLR indicating the role of Malagasy

There are other indications that the VLR underwent the influence of a Malagasy substrate. As they lie beyond the scope of this study, they are not analyzed in detail here.

5.6.1 The existence of articles in the VLR

Keenan (1978:297) indicates out that "all subject-final languages possess articles", and that "with more than chance frequency ... have definite articles (distinct from the ordinary demonstrative adjectives). Malagasy, he notes, is illustrative on both counts. Keenan (1978:298) also points out that in subject-final languages "[w]ith much greater than chance frequency articles precede nouns." The Definite Determiner *ny* in Malagasy (glossed 'the', even though it does not quite correspond to the English definite article) precedes the noun, which certainly played an important role in the survival of both the Popular French definite article *lə* 'the' and indefinite article *in* 'a' in the VLR.

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precedes the noun, which certainly played an important role in the survival of both the Popular French definite article *lə* 'the' and indefinite article *in* 'a' in the VLR.

According to Detges (2000:147ff), the French definite article was not *salient* for speakers of substrate languages in the emergence of French-based creoles, in which it generally appears to have been agglutinated. In the instance of the Malagasy speakers in Bourbon, however, this view must be qualified although it is true that the difference in gender among nouns (and articles) cannot have been transparent to them. In the VLR there is variation between agglutinated Popular French articles such as in *lakaz* 'house' (as in *mo lakaz* 'my house', Cellier 1985a:326) or *zâfâ* 'child' (from the Popular French ***les enfants*** with the effect of liaison), which are typical of the basilect, on the one hand, and non-aggutinated forms such as *la kaz* 'the house', on the other, which are more frequently met with in the acrolect (and CVF) in opposition to *inn kaz* 'a house'. Some of these forms, however, seem to be the result of the adoption of the French indefinite article in the acrolect (and CVF) in the single form *inn* 'a/an', as in (120):

(120) *navé* ***inn*** *vierz,* ***la*** ***vierz*** *na pu... semin loto koméla ousa* ***lavierz*** *lété*
existed **DET** virgin **DET virgin** exist no more road car now where **virgin** be
'There was a Virgin, which is gone now... a road now where the statue was.'
[Nicaise 1992:82]

The form *lavierz* '(the) statue of the Virgin' might be agglutinated or not, depending on the speaker, though the same speaker might be unaware of the discrepancy between the two systems, as example (120) above seems to show.

In any case, the existence of the article as a free or separate morpheme as well as in its agglutinated form might not have characterized the VLR, were it not for the

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influence of Malagasy dialects in which are to be found both a definite determiner *ny* as well as an acute sense of definite and indefinite nouns phrases and even predicate phrases which are indicated by markers such as the Non-deictic Article *ňy / ň / ń'* (cf. §5.5.5.2)

5.6.2 The Personal Pronouns in the VLR

What has been often pointed out as particular about the personal pronouns in the VLR is the way their forms combine with the Tense markers and the ASM *i*. Indeed, these combinations, it would seem, are due to phonotactic rules typical of the Malagasy dialects. However, what is more particularly characteristic about the personal pronouns in the VLR is the fact that they have *two* forms: a subject form and an object (and possessive) form. Even Chaudenson (1974:952), who downplays any substrate influence of Malagasy on the VLR outside of the areas of phonology and the lexicon, seems to grant a possible influence of Malagasy dialects on the system of personal pronouns in the VLR.

In discussing Dietrich's (1891) and Göbl-Galdi's (1934:275-6) views of a possible Malagasy (or Mozambique) influence on the personal pronouns with a "prothetic 'a': *lui, ali, nous, anou, vou, avu*" in the VLR, Chaudenson (1974:952ff) gives his view on the origin of the prefixing on the pronouns. "This type of pronoun only exists in Réunion and we believe that it must have established itself in the second half of the 18th century, unless of course one supposes that it existed in Bourbonnais and later only survived in Réunion."[127] However, he adds that a relation (*rapprochement*) might be

[127] "Ce type de pronom n'existe qu'à la Réunion et nous pensons qu'il a dû se constituer dans la seconde moitié du XVIII[e] siècle, à moins de supposer qu'il ait existé en bourbonnais, pour ne subsister, par la suite,

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sketched with the Malagasy pronouns, which he indicates as having two distinct series of pronouns. Referring to the presence of an initial "a" on the whole object/possessive series in Malagasy, Chaudenson (1974:954) does grant that "this morphological trait may have passed into Réunionnais Creole, given the fact that the French system itself presented pronominal forms phonetically, if not morphologically close [to those of Malagasy]."[128] He points out that the form *à moi*, etc., though rarely used, is used more commonly with an interlocutor who does not understand French well. Table 5.6 below is taken from Chaudenson (1974:954):

Table 5.6 Forms of Malagasy personal pronouns in Chaudenson (1974)

	sujet	*objet, possessif*
Sg 1	*izaho, aho*	*ahy*
Sg 2	*ianao*	*anao*
Sg 3	*izy*	*azy*
Pl 1	*isika* (inclusive)	*antsika*
	izahay (exclusive)	
Pl 2	*ianareo*	*anareo*
	izy ireo	*azy ireo*
Pl 3	*izy*	*azy ireo*

The free-standing personal pronouns in the Malagasy dialects have a prefixed *a-* that is added to the subject pronoun. Table 5.7 below (with data from Rabenilaina 1983:91) gives the parallel forms in the two languages. What should be underlined here is that the VLR are the only lexically French speech varieties to have object pronouns with a prefix *a-*. The attempts to show that this "prefix" is the agglutinated Popular French preposition *à* 'to' are frought with such problematic hurdles that it is better to consider its origin in

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qu'en réunionnais. Il n'est d'ailleurs pas nécessaire d'invoquer une influence portugaise ou espagnole; au XVIe siècle, on trouve fréquemment des emplois de 'à' explétifs chez les écrivains gascons" [Chaudenson 1974:953].

[128] "... mais nous pensons que ce trait morphologique a pu passer en créole réunionnais dans la mesure où le système français présentait lui-même des formes de pronoms proches phonétiquement, sinon morphologiquement" [Chaudenson 1974:954].

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the Malagasy substrate. However, the restructuring of the Popular French pronouns (or borrowing of the Malagasy prefix) may have been accelerated by the presence of the phrases *à moi* 'to me, mine', *à vous* 'to you, yours' in Popular French. What to a French settler might have seemed to be such a phrase, could simply have been a pronominal form in the mind of the Malagasy speaker.

Table 5.7 Free-standing personal pronouns in Malagasy and the VLR

Person	Malagasy*	VLR	Gloss
1st sing.	*àhy*	*amwen*	me
2nd sing.	*anào*	*atoué, aou*	you
3rd sing.	*àzy (m)* *anàzy (f)*	*ali*	him her
1st plural	*atsika / anày***	*anou*	us
2nd plural	*anaréo*	*azot*	you
3rd plural	*àzy / andry / androzy / andreo*	*azot*	them

* These are the forms in the Bara dialect (Rabenilaina 1983:91)
** The first form is inclusive, the second exclusive of the speaker.

5.6.3 The absence of reflexive pronouns in the VLR

Keenan (1978:315) observes that "frequently in subject-final languages specifically reflexive constructions are not well-developed." While Malagasy has a reflexive pronoun *tena* 'body, self', as in (121), it also has the option of prefixing the verb with a reflexive morpheme or of using the intransitive form of the verb (*mis-asa* 'wash') rather than the transitive form of the verb (*man-asa* 'wash').

(121) *Na-* *mono* ***tena*** *Rakoto*
PAST kill self Rakoto
'Rakoto killed himself.' [Keenan 1978:312]

However, as Keenan (1978:315) adds: "To judge from claims made in early, nineteenth century, grammars of Malagasy, the use of *tena* 'body, self' is an innovation as a

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reflexive pronoun." It is striking that the VLR do not have a reflexive pronoun use the direct object pronoun instead, as illustrated in (122):

(122) *Li noré veni a bout débrouy* ***ali***, *li*
3s COND manage free **3s** 3s
'He would have found some way out by himself.' [Barat et al. 1977:55]

This is interesting to the extent that most French-based creoles, as well as African varieties of French use a turn with "body" for the reflexive. The absence of a reflexive pronoun in Malagasy dialects during the time when the VLR emerged and the fact that the use of *tena* 'self' appears to be a later development in them, both seem to indicate that the Malagasy substrate had more influence on the development of the VLR than any African Indian (or Indo-Portuguese) substrate. These facts might, among other elements, provide evidence for the view that the massive arrival of slaves from Africa had little effect on vernacular established by the early 18th century (cf. Corne 1982:106).[129]

5.6.4 The absence of relative pronouns in the VLR

Keenan (1978:296) indicates that "subject-final languages do not have relative pronouns. In addition to the restriction on subject-pronoun relative clauses in Malagasy (cf. §5.5.5.2), he points out (Keenan 1987:296) that such languages "always present the head of the noun to the left of the restricting clause." He (Keenan 1978:296) illustrates with the following Malagasy example (123):

(123) *ny zazavavy (izay) m- anasa lamba*
DET girl (**RP**) PRES wash clothes
'the girl who is washing clothes' [Keenan 1978:296]

[129] "The very fact that this language of ca. 1722 is essentially that of modern times suggests that it was in widespread use, sufficiently widespread at least so that the massive immigration which characterized the second period of Reunion's history had a relatively minor impact on it" [Corne 1982:106].

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This throws light on the absence of relative pronouns in the VLR, illustrated in (124) below. This absence, it should be noted, may not be due *only* to the simplification these lects underwent as a result of the process of vernacularization (cf. §6.2.1) but to convergence with the Malagasy substrate.

(124) ... *ousa lavé met son zanfan Ø Ø té mor*
where have put 3s child (no RM) CLP dead [RM = Relative Marker]
'...where he had buried his child (who) was dead' [Nicaise 1992:82]

5.6.5 Demonstrative adjectives framing noun phrases in the VLR

Keenan (1978:299) indicates that while he can make no generalizations about the place of demonstrative adjectives in subject-final languages, Malagasy is one language of this category in which such demonstratives "'frame' noun phrases". He illustrates (Keenan 1978:299) this with example (125):

(125) ***ity*** *trano fotsy* ***ity***
DEM house white **DEM**
'this white house' [Keenan 1978:299]

It is very characteristic for speakers of the VLFR to frame statements as well as noun phrases in such a way. Compare (126) and (127), for example, with (125):

(126) ***se*** *zanfan* ***la***
DEM child **there**
'that child' [Cellier 1985a:309)

(127) ***sa*** *lé* *fasil* ***sa(-la)***
DEM CLP easy **DEM there**
'That's easy.' [Informant MAP]

While this is a common, though somewhat pejorative, demonstative turn in Popular French (e.g. ***cet enfant-là*** 'that child'), its occurrence in the VLR with greater frequency (and neutral meaning) and much more emphasis, together with a rising intonation, is

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(128) *Moin la parti maron pask Aleksi lom de zardin lété ki fé* ***amoin tro lamour***
[Chaudenson 1974:444] VERB IND OBJ DIR OBJ

the ordering of object complements in the verb phrase in the VLR is not constrained to the usual order in Popular French [Verb + Direct Object + (preposition) Indirect Object], as in (127). It goes without saying that there was more freedom in popular and dialectal varieties of French than in Standard French when it comes to pronominal objects.

(129) ***Jean donne l'argent à Paul.***
'John gives Paul the money.'

In the VLR, the order can be either Direct Object + Indirect Object or Indirect Object + Direct Object. According to Ramassamy (1985:269ff) the order of the indirect and direct object is free in two cases: 1. when *neither* is a pronoun, as in (130) and (131), except for *sa* 'this' and *bann-la* (*banna*), as in (132) and (133):

(130) *Zan la di tout mon ségré* ***momon***
John PAST say all 1s secret mother
'John told Mother all my secrets.' [Ramassamy 1985:271]

(131) *Zan la di* ***momon*** *tout mon ségré*
John PAST say mother all 1s secret
'John told Mother all my secrets.' [Ramassamy 1985:271]

(132) *Zan la répèt* ***sa*** *banna*
John PAST repeat DEM 3p
'John repeated this to them.' [Ramassamy 1985:272]

(133) *Zan la répèt banna* ***sa***
John PAST repeat 3p this
'John repeated this to them.' [Ramassamy 1985:272]

and 2. when the pronoun forms with *a-* are used, the indirect object must follow the verb, as in (134):

(134) *Momon la di* ***a-li*** *sa*
mother PAST say 3s DEM
'Mother told him/her this.' [Ramassamy 1985:272]

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However, when the pronoun forms with *a-* are used, the indirect object must follow the verb, as in (134):

(134) *Momon la di* ***a-li*** *sa*
mother PAST say 3s DEM
'Mother told him/her this.' [Ramassamy 1985:272]

According to Keenan (1975:267-8), Malagasy has no constraint on the order of direct and indirect objects, even though the following sentences, (135) to (136), show a preference for the order [Direct Object + Indirect Object]:

(135) *N- anome vola* ***an- dRabe*** *aho*
PAST give money **OBP Rabe** 1s [OBP = Object Prefix with names]
'I gave money to Rabe.' [Keenan 1975:251]

(136) *N- anome azy* ***an- dRabe*** *aho*
PAST give 3s **OBP Rabe** 1s [OBP = Object Prefix with names]
'I gave it to Rabe.' [Keenan 1975:251]

(137) *N- anome vola azy aho*
PAST give money **3s** 1s
'I gave him/her money.' [Keenan 1975:251]

Interestingly two pronouns, one direct and the other indirect, cannot follow the verb in Malagasy. Indeed, the sentence in (138) is ungrammatical:

(138) **N- anome azy azy aho*
PAST give 3s **3s** 1s
**'I gave it to him/her.'* [Keenan 1975:252]

It can be asked if this is why, in the VRLF, only a demonstrative pronoun can follow the personal pronoun, as in (131) and (132) above. This avoids any kind of ambiguity of the kind the Malagasy sentence in (k) would present. What may explain the fact that the forms in *a-* directly follow the verb is analogy with the *a-* forms following the verb when there is only one object. Also, the loss of the non-salient clitic pronouns in the process of restructuring left the VLR with only simple or clearly unambiguous

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sentences involving two objects. It is unlikely that any influence of Standard French will restore anything like a clitic to the vernacular. This may remain a source of confusion for students learning French in Réunion for a long time, as errors on this point indicate (Cellier 1985c:171-5).

Indeed, in the restructuring of Popular French, either through simplification or Malagasy substrate influence (or, more likely, both) the word order in the verb phrase underwent a change. The clitic personal pronouns of Popular French (***me*** 'me', ***vous*** 'you'), which occurred before the verb and before infinitives, disappeared. Compare variants of the same sentence in Popular or Standard French, illustrated in (139) and (140), and the same sentence in the VLR in (141):

(139) ***Je ne vais pas <u>vous</u> raconter tous ses défauts***
1s NEG^1 go NEG^2 <u>2s</u> tell+FUT all 3s fault
'I'm not going to tell you all his faults.'

(140) ***Je (ne) <u>vous</u> ranconte -rai pas tous ses défauts***
1s (NEG^1) <u>2s</u> tell FUT NEG^2 all 3s fault
'I won't tell you all his faults.'

(141) *M -i racont arpa aou tou son défo*
1s ASM tell NEGFUT <u>2s</u> all 3s fault
'I'm not going to tell you all his faults.' [Nicaise 1992:83]

As is the case in Malagasy, in the VLR the indirect object pronoun can precede the direct object. Interestingly, here three pieces of evidence concur: a sentence of 1715/23 uttered by the domestic Marie (128); a sentence uttered by a monolingual speaker of a vernacular lect (141) who grew up in Salazie when there were no roads and from there moved to Mafate, which is completely isolated; and a sentence uttered by a monolingual speaker of Indian descent (134): the direct object follows the indirect

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pronoun object in the verb phrase. It is true, of course that the postpositioning of direct objects and indirect objects is common amont the French-based creoles. However, the fact that this is the case in the VLR may well principlally be due to the VOS order of the Malagasy dialects or Malagasy koiné.

5.6.7 The absence of marking of the possessive

The VLR indicate possessive as well as qualification without the use of a preposition, similarly to Malagasy. Compare (142) and (143), and (144) and (145), respectively:[130]

(142) *ny didin' ny fanjakana*
DET law DET kingdom
'the laws of the kingdom' [Malzac 1912:10]

(143) *la boutik sinoi*
DET bar Chinaman
'the Chinaman's bar' [Nicaise 1992:82]

(144) *trano vato*
house stone
'stone house' [Malzac 1912:10]

(145) *té plans sapin sa serkey*
PAST wood fir tree DEM coffin
'It was fir-tree wood, that coffin.' [Nicaise 1992:79]

6.6.8 Tense markers as prefixes rather than preverbal Tense markers in the VLR

The fact that a marker such as the Past Tense marker *la* exists in the VLR and not in any other *Lexically French* variety might indicate that the Malagasy speakers understood it as a prefix rather than as a preverbal marker, as a speaker of a West African language might

[130] In the case of *karo d'boi* 'wooded area, forest', it is hard to say if *d'boi* is 'wood', like *d'ri* is 'rice' and *d'lo* is 'water', or if it is influence from French ***de bois*** 'of wood'. It may be just as well be a confusion of both.

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have done. The Past Tense prefix *n-* in Malagasy dialects, which corresponds to the Present Tense prefix *m-*, was discussed above in relation to *na/nana/éna* 'exist' and *navé* 'existed' in §5.5.3. What seems to indicate that they did are the rules of elision and other phonotactic phenomena that affect this marker. *Mwen la* can be simplified to *moi a* or *ma,* for example, as in (146), just as *mwen va* is simplificed to *ma* for example:

(146) *moi a ~ ma di mon vie papa*
1s say 1s old father
'I told my aging father.' [Nicaise 1992:31]

Such phenomena of regressive assimilations found in the VLR are also indicative of restructuring.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to provide evidence of how the VLR were influenced by a Malagasy substrate in the period of their emergence. Such contact-induced restructuring clearly seems to to have occurred. The distinction between agentive and non-agentive predicates with grammatical marking on destativized verbs in the case of the former and the use of a Copula-like Particle in the case of the latter, could not possibly be a result of an "internally motivated" development of Popular French. The reanalysis (in Detges' sense) involved in the emergence of the ASM *i* and the CLP *lé* illustrate well the idea of grammaticalization given by Lehmann ([1982], 1995:VIII, quoted in Kriegel & Neumann-Holzschuh 2000:6):

> Grammaticalization is a process leading from lexemes to grammatical formatives. A number of semantic, syntactic and phonological processes interact in the grammaticalization of morphemes and whole constructions. A sign is grammaticalized to the extent that it is devoid of concrete lexical meaning and takes part in obligatory grammatical rules.

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Other traces in the VLR pointing to Malagasy influence mentioned in §5.6 together with the emergence of the ASM *i* and the CLP *lé* suggest that 1. the Malagasy substrate does not only come into play when all other avenues that can lead to an explanation fail, but constitutes a *full-fledged agent* in the processes that contributed to the creation of the new vernacular in Bourbon (VLR); and 2. the influence of the Malagasy substrate seems to extend beyond the characterization of the predicate. Each of the traces that point to Malagasy substrate influence needs to be studied.

As far as the question that arises from this chapter, whether all instances of restructuring based on substrate influence are instances of *convergence*, as (Cellier 1985a:359) states, in agreement with Chaudenson, the answer does not seem to be a clear affirmative. The typological difference between the VLR, in which the verb is inherently stative, and Popular (as well as Standard) French, in which the verb is inherently non-stative, hints that the restructuring based in Malagasy introduced into the VLR some characteristics that are different from a French or Romance type of structure.

The evidence provided in this chapter also indicates that role of speakers of Malagasy dialects (or a Malagasy koiné) in the workings that produced the vernacular in Bourbon was not only to create the new vernacular (and *restructure* the Popular French spoken by the settlers), but also, as the next chapter will show, to *limit the extent to which the Popular French input underwent simplification* in the process of language creation (cf. Manessy's [1995] *vernacularization*).

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Chapter Six: Theoretical Discussion

6.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to show: 1. how the socio-historical data presented in §2.1-5 support and confirm the linguistic evidence for the Malagasy-influenced restructuring of Popular French, or language creation, presented in §5.1-7; and 2. what the place of this contact-induced restructuring is with respect to other processes of language change that one can presume were also operative in the creation and early development of the Vernacular Lects of Réunion (VLR).

The first section (§6.1), titled **the sociolinguistic evidence,** discusses:

1. what dialects were spoken by the Malagasy population the French came into contact with in Madagascar and Bourbon (§6.1.1.1);

2. what evidence there is to argue in favor of the survival of a Malagasy speech variety in Bourbon and the role played by such a speech variety in the creation and early development of the VLR (§6.1.1.2; §6.1.2.1-4); and

3. what the speech variety spoken by the *Petits Créoles*, or poor Whites, of the island was, considering the mixed nature of their origin as well as the lifestyle and living conditions they shared with maroons and ex-slaves (§6.1.2.5-6).

The second section (§6.2), titled **the linguistic evidence**, discusses the role of the contact-induced restructuring involving Malagasy dialects with respect to other processes of language change, drawing on the following three explanatory elements:

1. Manessy's (1978, 1995) model of interpolation based on his analysis of language creation (*vernacularisation*) in contemporary vehicular African languages and vehicular varieties of African French (§6.2.1.1-4);

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2. Detges' (2000) model of interpolation based on creole-specific processes of language change in the genesis and development of French-based creoles (§6.2.2); and

3. the likelihood of a dual bilingualism among speakers of Popular French and speakers of Malagasy dialects, respectively, during the early period in which the VLR emerged and developed in Bourbon (§6.2.5).

In both sections, the argumentation follows these four successive stages in the history of the island of Réunion:

Stage I: The era of small-scale farming (from 1663 to 1714)
Stage II: The era of the coffee plantations (from 1715 to 1817)
Stage III: The era after the abolition of the slave trade (from 1817 to 1946)
Stage IV: The era since the *départementalisation* (1946 to the present).

In the conclusion (§6.3), a general chronological picture is drawn reflecting the place of contact-induced restructuring in the creation and development of the VLR with respect to other processes of language change, including *vernacularisation* (cf. §6.2.1) and decreolization (§6.2.8).

6.1 The sociolinguistic evidence

A characteristic of recent studies on the origins and early developments of pidgin and creole languages is that explanations accounting for linguistic change have been more and more painstakingly rooted in detailed socio-historical research. This has sometimes been due to the discovery of new historical data that, in some cases, have prompted studies arguing in favor of creolization as a gradual process (e.g. Arends 1993; Singler 1996) rather than one of abrupt creolization (Thomason and Kaufman 1988). The need to ground any explanation firmly in the history of the speakers of the languages that came into contact with one another is by no means a new imperative (cf. Chaudenson 1974:441ff). However, it is even more critical at a time when the processes of

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pidginization and creolization are increasingly being considered mere language contact phenomena among others (cf. Mufwene 2001). Indeed, the question of whether there was a break in transmission from a superstrate to a pidgin or a creole language can be crucial. It is certainly crucial to the issue of contact-induced restructuring of Popular French and the emerging vernacular lects in Bourbon.

6.1.1 Stage I (1663-1715): The Malagasies on the small-scale farms

Beginning in 1663, the handful of Frenchmen and their Malagasy wives and servants (*domestiques*) who launched the first permanent settlement on the island of Réunion—at that time called "Bourbon"—lived with one another in close daily contact as they established farms on a small scale (*habitations*). If anything, this contact was probably even closer than it had been in the Fort-Dauphin area since 1643, or the Sainte-Marie area since 1648, because once in Bourbon the French speakers probably had less contact with other French speakers during the day as they worked on their farms. This contact between French and non-French speakers remained close on all the farms established before 1686, when the number of inhabitants had reached 271, and even until 1715, when the population had grown to over 500 inhabitants. At that date, the average farm probably had between 1 to 5 slaves, and the proportion of speakers of Popular French and speakers of Malagasy dialects remained about 1 to 1, if children are included.

Over the first fifty years, the small community grew, as a result predominantly of mixed marriages, but also the arrival of new settlers and their servants—soon to be called slaves (*Noirs*). The population for the period 1663-1715 is known in quite some detail because the French authorities kept careful records and there are figures from a 1686

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census.[1] In 1686 there were 36 Frenchmen, whose wives were French (10), Malagasy (14), and Indian (12),[2] and 8 Malagasy men, whose wives were also Malagasy. There were 33 children from marriages between French spouses, 50 from Franco-Malagasy marriages, and 42 from Franco-Indian marriages, accounting for a total of 151 children for a population of 271. By 1714, the population had risen to 538, and by 1717, there were 900 Whites and 1,100 Malagasies, Indians and Creoles (who were mostly of Malagasy descent), making up a total population of roughly 2,000 inhabitants. It is after 1715 that the ratio of White to non-White drew dramatically away from the 1 to 1 characteristic of the previous period.[3]

6.1.1.1 The languages spoken by the Malagasies in Bourbon until 1715

What Malagasy dialect (or perhaps dialects) was spoken in Bourbon in the first fifty years of the French settlement, or *société d'habitation,* is of course not known. It is more than likely, however, that the dialect spoken in Bourbon originally was Antanosy, the one spoken in the area of Fort-Dauphin, or perhaps a leveling of this dialect and other dialects of southern Madagascar as a result of contact. Such dialects may have included

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[1] Cf. Table 2.2 in §2.1.1.

[2] These slaves had been brought over by Caron in 1672: "15 Black prisoners from São Tomé" ("15 prisonniers noirs de Saint-Thomé"), who were "the first Indians to disembark on the island" ("les premiers Indiens qui débarquèrent dans l'île") [Filliot 1974:30]. According to Bénard & Monge (1994:39), the Indo-Portuguese women have been "perfectly identified" ("parfaitement identifiées"): "They are called Indo-Portuguese simply because they came from Portuguese outposts in India. However, they are well and truly Indian." ("On les appele Indo-Portugaises parce qu'elles sont originaires des comptoirs portugais des Indes, c'est tout. Mais elles sont bel et bien Indiennes.") Of the five listed in Bénard & Monge (1994:39), two were from Surate, two from Daman (Malabar coast), and one from Pondichéry. One from Surate was of mixed parentage, as was one from Daman. All but one of them arrived in Bourbon on the *Rossignol* from Surate in 1678; one arrived in 1679.

[3] According to Bourquin (1994:87), "in 1735, 4.5% of the landowners had 1 to 5 slaves" ("On note en 1735 que 4,5% des propriétaires possédaient de 1 à 5 esclaves"). According to Baker (2000:44), "in Reunion in 1705, when there were four whites for every three slaves overall, several whites owned more than ten slaves (Barassin 1978)".

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Mahafaly, Bara, and even Sakalava, the extreme south of Madagascar being the area that the wives and servants the French brought with them most likely came from.[4]

These dialects cannot have been very different from each other due to their common Malayo-Pacific origin. Indeed, the Malagasy dialects share most of their basic traits despite a diversification among them through geographical isolation in Madagascar and slight influences from local or imported languages that predated or followed the arrival of speakers of the Malayo-Pacific family of languages in Madagascar, a great many of whom were from Indonesia. According to Ramiandrasoa (1975:10), by the 9th century the Malagasy people and language were born. "This language was certainly to evolve," he writes, "but would keep the fundamental traits of its originality. ... All later borrowings were to enrich its lexicon, but would not modify its fundamental traits in any significant manner."[5]

Indeed, according to Ralaimihoatra (1969:8), a constant Malagasy tradition endows the island with a primitive population that came from elsewhere. This population had "the fundamental elements of the language", while the diversity that characterizes the Malagasy peoples does not date back to its origins, but "is the result both of contributions on the part of later ethnic arrivals and individualization in the natural settings they

[4] Chaudenson (1974:460) gives the origins of Malagasy slaves listed in the parochial archives of Réunion for the year 1670, namely places in the south and on the east coast of the island; and he writes: "It appears that the slaves came mainly from two regions: that of Fort-Dauphin ... and that of Antogil and Foulepointe" ("Il apparaît donc que les esclaves venaient de deux régions surtout: celle de Fort-Dauphin ... et celle d'Antogil et de Foulepointe...") [Chaudenson 1974:461].

[5] "La langue malgache est née: cette langue évoluera certes mais gardera les traits fondamentaux de son originalité. ... Tous les apports untérieurs l'enrichiront (lexicologie) mais ne modifieront pas d'une manière sensible ses traits fondamentaux" [Ramiandrasoa (1975:10].

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occupied." The island became a "land of human mixing, of linguistic osmosis from the basic elements shared by all on the island."[6]

The history of the warfare among the inhabitants of the island of Madagascar and the succession of kingdoms from the 17th to the 19th century is quite complex. The picture Rajemisa-Raolison (1966) gives of the various movements arising from war, conquests, upsets, and immigration seems to set the stage for a situation in which a kind of Malagasy koiné was bound to have developed in order for people to communicate among different tribes and certainly for prisoners of war and slaves to communicate both with each other and with their masters, thus increasing the likely common linguistic stock among the domestics and slaves brought to Bourbon from the start. Such a koiné would, however, have preserved the basic features of the Malagasy dialects. The fact that in the first half of the 18th century the French East India Company avoided importing too many Malagasy slaves to the Isle de France and to Bourbon (Chaudenson 1974:453; Filliot 1974:166) seems to indicate that besides being prone to plotting revolts, they could understand each other well using their own respective dialects or some leveled variety of Malagasy.

Despite the diverse origins of the peoples of Madagascar, a comparison of the different dialects for which a detailed modern grammar is available (Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1967 for Merina, Rabenilaina 1983 for Bara, Thomas-Fattier 1982 for Sakalava), reveals that morpho-syntactically speaking these dialects have essentially the

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same structure, even though lexically speaking they might show a significant degree of diversity. This study seems justified therefore in taking its lead from the grammars of Bara and Merina[7] and, though to a much lesser extent, Sakalava. Indeed, in some respects, Sakalava today shows evidence of some significant restructuring and simplification over later periods as a result of contact with Bantu languages spoken in the neighboring Comoro Islands. It is, however, striking to see the maintenance of a highly complex morphology in the verb forms as well as in the different transformations (diatheses), both of which characterize the Malagasy dialects of Bara and Merina. And it is on such features that this study is essentially based.[8]

It can be assumed, therefore, that the Malagasy dialects spoken by the early settlers and their descendants—as well as later arrivals of domestics or slaves from Madagascar—until 1715 were basically mutually intelligible. It can safely be presumed, then, that the Malagasy influence on the emerging vernacular in Bourbon stemmed essentially from the linguistic reflexes of speakers of these dialects with a common origin. Therefore, what evidence of restructuring there is—including the non-French traits manifest in the first utterance in a vernacular lect in Bourbon—the now famous sentence of Marie about fleeing the farm (cf. §5.5.5.2), for example—can be verified

[7] How much more conservative the life—and, it can be supposed, also the language—of a Bara is than that of a Mérina can be gathered from a remark by Faublée (1947:16): "after 1815, a Merina was further removed from a traditional Malagasy than a Bara following the traditional lifestyle of his parents is today" ("dès 1815, un mérina était plus loin d'un Malgache traditionnel que n'est actuellement un Bara vivant de la vie traditionnelle de ses parents").

[8] This study does not share Chaudenson's view of the disparity of the Malagasy dialects ("d'importantes différences de dialects") in the 17th century; nor his claim that "today's extension of the Merina dialect over the whole island as official language has contributed to unify the other dialects, but that in the 17th century, when the enormous distances constituted among them almost unsurmountable obstacles, the situation was wholly other" ("... aujourd'hui l'extension du merina dans toute l'île, comme langue officielle, a contribué à unifier les autres parlers, mais au XVIIe siècle, quand l'énormité des distances constituait entre eux des obstacles quasiment infranchissables, il en était évidemment tout autrement" [Chaudenson 1974:461].

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against the actual dialect or dialects spoken by the early settlers who came from Madagascar from 1663 to 1715.

6.1.1.2 Arguments for Malagasy-based substrate influence on the emerging VLR

In the 17th and 18th centuries, there were sociological conditions—conditions that are specific to the island of Bourbon—that support the hypothesis of an *active role of Malagasy* in the creation and development of its vernacular lect. The sheer numbers of Malagasies and their descendants, as well as their fate on the island, provide arguments to support the case for Malagasy-based substrate influence on the vernacular lect both as it emerged before 1715 and developed beyond that date (cf. Corne 1999:69).[9] These arguments are given below, while more details are provided in the linguistic discussion in the second part of this chapter (§6.2.1-4).

6.1.1.2.1 The small number of French-speaking households

Corne (1982:123-124) draws a parallel beween the early situation on the island of Bourbon and that on the island of Pitcairn, which for him would argue "inferentially" for there having been no creolization process before the massive arrival of slaves (after 1715) and the VLR being "typologically French". The parallels are that: 1. the French were men and culturally dominant (There were indeed no French-speaking women on the island of Bourbon until 1667 [of whom very few survived] and only 11 out of 45 households where both parents were French by 1686.); 2. the settlers on Réunion remained in isolation (Indeed, only once the island played a clear role in the plans of the French East

[9] "That Malagasy should have influenced the developing vernacular in Reunion at this early period is unsurprising given the contact situation involving mainly French and Malagasy speakers living in domestic or semi-domestic conditions in a *société d'habitation*" [Corne 1999:69].

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India Company was there any direct interference in the lives of its settlers.); 3. the wives spoke mainly non-European languages; and 4. "there was a rapid constitution of a locally-born infant population within a 'family setup'."[10]

These parallels hold for the most part, but there was an important difference between the two settlements. While it is true that during the very early years the French in Bourbon spoke Popular French amongst themselves and with speakers of Popular French on the few incoming ships, as well as, in time, with their French-speaking wives, the question must still be asked: Is it likely that after their arrival in Bourbon the Malagasy wives and domestics—and their sons and daughters—spoke a Malagasy dialect (or various dialects) or koiné during this early period? The important proportion of the Malagasy population over three to four generations—and maybe even beyond—leads one to think that conditions were not ripe for a wholesale shift to some form of lexically French vernacular at this early stage.

In 1686, among the adults, there were 47 French speakers, compared with 46 Malagasy speakers and 24 speakers of Indian or Indo-Portuguese languages (a total of 117 inhabitants). Out of the 271 children, who were more than twice as numerous as the adults, 33 had been born in French households, 72 in Malagasy households, 50 in Franco-Malagasy households, and 42 in Franco-Indian households.[11] The fact that of the 151 children, who made up 55.7% of the population, 72 (i.e. just under one half) most likely

[10] Manessy (1995:31) sees in Pitcairnese an example of the fact that "[t]heoretically at least, there is nothing to prevent the process of creolization from applying directly to a *pre-pidgin continuum*." ("Théoriquement du moins, rien ne s'oppose à ce que le processus de créolisation s'applique directement à un *pre-pidgin continuum*.")
[11] Cf. Table 2.2 in §2.1.1.

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spoke a Malagasy dialect must seriously be taken into account. What makes their number important is the fact that these dialects were not at first considered a threat to the economic viability of the East India Company project. To give a point of comparison, Manessy (1996) gives evidence of the survival of African languages in the Caribbean islands at a time when these colonies were already a viable economic venture. He mentions (Manessy 1996:61-62) that on the farms (*habitations*), "it has been proved that certain African languages had a certain vitality before dying out, in the 17th century and even into the early 19th century in Brazil", where "African languages were possibly used on plantations by new arrivals and even by Creole slaves."[12] How much more likely was this to have been the case in Bourbon, with Madagascar being so much closer than Africa was for the slaves in Brazil and there being a continuous presence, as well as continuous arrivals, of Malagasy speakers from the beginning of the colony until the end of the 19th century.

6.1.1.2.2 Was an *early* shift of the non-French speakers to the common vernacular likely?

It is hard to speculate in what language the individuals in early Bourbon spoke to one another. It must be remembered, however, that at the outset the wives were not slaves and that the domestics were not treated as slaves until the ordinance of La Haye of 1674. This means that Malagasy mothers would have spoken quite freely to their children in Malagasy. Indeed, mothers always speak to their children in their native tongue.

[12] "... et cela nous incite à restreindre l'enquête au domaine des 'habitations'. Là-même, certaines langues de l'Afrique ont fait preuve d'une certaine vitalité avant de s'affaiblir à leur tour: au XVIIe siècle, le kimbundu (angolais), puis jusqu'au début du XIXe siècle le Yoruba (guinéen) étaient plus largment parlés que le portugais par les esclaves au Brésil ... il est assuré d'autre part que les langues africaines étaient éventuellement utilisées sur les plantations par les nègres nouveaux et même par ceux 'faits au pays'" [Manessy 1996:61].

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Naturally, the situation on each of the various farms was probably different, given the different numbers of slaves on each farm.[13] However, according to Filliot (1974:30), the ordinance of La Haye "separated Whites and Blacks for a long time to come" (*séparait pour longtemps blancs et noirs*), as the *Code noir* of 1670 must equally have done.[14] That the situation was not the same on all the farms is also evident, since it is known that some Whites and Blacks had fled together to the mountains to escape from the tyranny of the governors. Before 1674, for example, under the governorship of Regnault, some Frenchmen had fled to the mountains with some Blacks. Also, for Filliot (1974:30), the "cordial *entente* imposed by the force of circumstance would imply that Blacks and Whites had gotten along well ... Frenchmen who had married Malagasy women must have felt willing to help the Blacks, many of whom were their allies."[15] While under Father Bernardin (1680-1686) the maroons were peacefully brought down from the mountains again, between 1674 and 1680 there had been more than 6 revolts and plots to kill the French. By 1690 the reprisals were ferocious, including the penalty of death in cases of a second attempt at revolt. For Filliot (1974:31), "because of La Haye's ordinance of 1674, the mentality of the Blacks towards the Whites had changed," and "the domestics become rebels and a permanent danger to the colony."[16] After the

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[13] According to Baker (2000:44), "in Reunion in 1705, when there were four whites for every three slaves overall, several whites owned more than ten slaves (Barassin 1978). In the early stages in colonization ... there were always also some larger groups of slaves among whom a contact language is likely to have begun to develop." This would have been the case for the Malagasy and Indian slaves in Bourbon.

[14] According to Filliot (1974:30), the first instance of domestics on Bourbon being referred to as "slaves" is in a report of a ship's lieutenant in the suite of the vice-roy [of the Indies], which refers to the wives of the settlers as "Negro women, their slaves" (*des négresses, leurs esclaves*). From the time of the *Code noir*, the words "noir" and "négresse" were used in the sense of "slave", unless it was specified that the person was "free" (*libre*).

[15] "Cette entente cordiale imposée par d'impérieuses circonstances impliquerait que noirs et blancs faisaient bon ménage: des Français qui avaient épousé des Malgaches ... devaient se sentir portés à l'assistance des noirs dont plusieurs étaient leurs alliés ..." [Filliot 1974:30].

[16] "La mentalité "La mentalité . l'égard des blancs avait changé par l'ordonnance de La Haye; les domestiques devinrent des rebelles et un danger permanent pour la colonie" [Filliot 1974:31].

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attempts to colonize Madagascar had failed (1674), the attitude in Paris towards Bourbon as a colony also hardened. As Filliot (1974:30) makes clear, "Ten years earlier, the [East India] Company had vowed to treat the natives of Madagascar with 'humanity, tenderness,' and 'according to a sense of justice without regard to differences.'" Now that was a thing of the past. On the whole, however, it would seem that during this period the Malagasies were able to express themselves rather freely in their own dialects.

If mothers spoke to their children in their first language, second generation children in Franco-Malagasy households certainly understood and spoke enough Malagasy for everyday use. At the same time, children from Malagasy households also spoke their parents' native language. Malagasy couples must have continued to speak and raise their children in their own language. The question, how early was there among the small-scale farm workers/slaves a social sense of belonging to a group that would adopt a (lexically French) vernacular as its code, will be addressed later (§6.1.2.3). In the meantime, with about 44% (122 out of 271) of the population descending from Malasgasy mothers—and some from two Malagasy parents—the chances of some form of Malagasy (or Malagasy koiné) being spoken and understood among them by 1686 are very high. In this respect, what Baker (2000:52) writes is relevant, even though he is referring to plantation societies, in which "it appears that a plurality of linguistic groups were represented by the end of the second decade":

> During the same two decades, the first locally-born people—of European, non-European and mixed descent—were growing up. My belief is that, like children elsewhere, they would acquire those languages to which they had access and which seemed useful to them. Depending on the rate of settlement, these might well, in the early years, include both the European language and the M[edium of] I[nterethnic] C[ommunication] as well as, for some, a non-European language.

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In terms of Bourbon, a certain fluency in a Malagasy and an Indian language most probably extended even beyond the second generation, due to new arrivals which were to increase significantly as time went on for the Malagasy, especially. Consequently, there existed in this segment of the population a wide basis to support grammatical influence of Malagasy on the structures of the emerging vernacular. It must be remembered, too, that statistically the elements of this mixed segment of the population are listed as Creoles.

Carayol & Chaudenson (1978:180) are of the opinion that "the functional distribution of French and the creole was undoubtedly no different at that time from the one that can be observed today, even though the number of bilinguals was very small outside of the community of European origin, where there were practically only monolinguals (in the creole or a substrate language)."[17] To assume that this was so and that there was an "unequal social status" (*inégalité de statut social*) is, however, to go too far. The number of speakers of a second language was probably quite high in the slave population beyond 1686. At this point, a parallel with Pitcairn may be useful, in the sense that there was greater equal participation among the early inhabitants.[18] Equal participation means equality in the use of languages: both Popular French, the emerging vernacular, and Malagasy. The Europeans may have considered the White man superior, but, in a society with such prominent intermarriage, a different sense of social rapports arose, one that the governors appointed by the East India Company tried put an end to

[17] "La distribution fonctionnelle du français et du créole n'est sans doute pas, à cette époque, très différente de celle que l'on peut observer aujourd'hui, quoique le nombre des diglottes soit très réduit hors de la communauté d'origine européenne où l'on ne trouve guère que des unilingues (créole ou langue servile). On voit aisément par là l'origine de la différenciation de fonction et, de ce fait, de prestige entre les langues; l'inégalité de statut social des deux langues n'est naturellement pas la cause de leur distribution fonctionnelle mais sa conséquence" [Carayol & Chaudenson 1978:180].

[18] For the period from 1665 to 1674, Corne speaks of "an atmosphere of mutual, interethnic good will" [Corne 1999:68].

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early by making such marriages illegal (1674). However, this did not stop children from being born from interracial relations, nor the languages of the Malagasy or Indian mothers from continuing to be spoken by their descendants.

Sociolinguistically, the situation on the small-scale farms is hard to reconstitute. That non-French speaking wives and domestics should have tried to use the language of the master to communicate with him, however, is rather obvious. On avergage, there were a small number of slaves on each farm, no farm likely having more than 4 or 5 as a rule. How much the masters (and, in time, their wives) learned in the way of Malagasy or Indian words or rudimentary expressions must have been rather minimal. It is much more likely that the masters (and their French wives), while speaking Popular French with each other (which provided input for the non-French speakers), simplified their French and used the emerging grammar of the (lexically French) vernacular used by the Malagasy and Indian or Indo-Portuguese speakers in their household.[19]

Among the Malagasy, on the other hand, there were likely to be several people who had learned to speak some French. Indeed, it is known that "a good number" of the Malagasy of the east coast "who had had dealings with the French" spoke French "a little".[20] In any case, the Malagasy wives and domestics must have learned to make themselves understood as clearly as possible by their husbands and masters by using French vocabulary. The same would have been true of the Indian wives, who most likely

[19] As Corne (1999:74) rightly points out: "the early *société d'habitation* pattern in Reunion meant that both the local variety of French and the new Malagasy-influenced vernacular were evolving together to a large extent, rather than independently as in the New Caledonian case."
[20] Deschamps (1961), quoted in Cellier (1985a:28).

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came from the areas in India where the French had settled. Exactly how many, or if indeed any at all, spoke a kind of Portuguese pidgin or creole can only be surmised (cf. Note 2 in §6.1.1). What can be said is that several of them had likely had some slight exposure to a variety of language of Romance origin (derived either from French or Portuguese). They too, would have communicated with their husbands, and also their children to some extent, in the same rudimentary French as their Malagasy counterparts. However, it is the large number of Malagasy wives and domestics that is crucial at this point. With Cellier (1985a:22), who underscores the importance of the large number of Malagasy speakers, it can be considered that this gave the Malagasy dialects a "right to status". The tradition of having many children, which existed from the very outset in Bourbon (Scherer 1994; Chane-Kune 1993), would quite naturally have translated into letting them use the language of their mothers as well as that of the developing language community of non-French speakers that gave rise to the VLR.

At play, the children of the Malagasy-French or Indo-Portuguese-French households would communicate with each other in the common French-based vocabulary, as would the children of French households. While not discussing here the merits of arguments (Chaudenson 1974, 1992; Bickerton 1981) which ground the emerging of creoles in the speech of children, it cannot be denied that in the multilingual situation existing in Bourbon from 1663 to 1715, the children communicated in a vernacular whose lexicon must have been French, but whose grammar was influenced by substrate languages, as was the emerging vernacular spoken by the adult non-French

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speaking members of the community in their efforts to communicate with their Popular French speaking masters. A wholesale shift to the vernacular was therefore unlikely then.

6.1.1.2.3 A Malagasy and (lexically French) vernacular bilingualism from 1663 to 1715

Especially when it comes to morpho-syntactic structures, the presence of bilingualism over a significant time span in a contact situation is an important factor for substrate influence to be operative (Weinreich 1953:40[21]; Thomason & Kaufman 1988:41[22]). The criticisms that have been leveled at substratist arguments have often been based on the hypothesis that most creoles have developed on the basis of a rapid shift of the language of the slave population to the language of the masters. Such a language shift is much more likely to have occurred once Bourbon was converted to a plantation-style economy with the large-scale production of coffee that began after 1715. Both the fact that slavery was not clearly established until the ordinance of 1674 had been put into practice (by about 1690) and the fact that only a small number of slaves worked on each farm, with the majority of non-French-speakers familiar with a Malagasy dialect, argue against a wholesale shift by Malagasy speakers to the emerging vernacular before 1740. Only then, when the numbers of imported slaves grew dramatically and the make-up of the slave population became significantly more various, is such a shift likely to have occurred.[23] A

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[21] "Taking its cue from the speech of bilinguals, a language community can, by systematically extending the functions of morphemes in its language, not only change the use of individual forms, but also develop a full new paradigm of obligatory categories on the model of another language. Such is ... the partial aspective system in Irish based on English" [Weinreich 1968:41].

[22] In fact, substratum features are more likely to enter a T[arget] L[anguage] rapidly than slowly: if the shift takes place over long centuries, then the shifting population is likely to be truly bilingual in the T[arget] L[anguage]" [Thomason & Kaufman 1988:41].

[23] Referring to the early 18th century, Baker (2000:53) writes: "While an embryonic M[edium of] I[nter-ethnic] C[ommunication] might well have been used with and among new slave arrivals at this time, their offspring—already accounting for 40% of the slave population in 1709—would also acquire *Bourbonnais*, the principal language of the settlement and would have little use for the MIC thereafter. Not until the rate of arrival increased substantially would the MIC acquire a more important role."

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significant Malagasy and (lexically French) vernacular bilingualism most likely existed during the period of small-scale farming among the Malagasies and their immediate descendants—most certainly before 1715 but very likely even beyond that date—though later for slightly different reasons. Before 1690 and perhaps even until 1715, the reason was that languages other than French spoken in households, in fields, over fences, or in the marketplace were not necessarily considered unwarranted or generally interpreted as a sign of danger to the masters. They were a characteristic element of the essentially friendly multi-ethnic social make-up of the settlement, which continued to exist for a few decades after the ordinance of 1674. It should be mentioned that by bilingualism is meant a dual system of reference in morpho-syntactic structure, with an increasing interpenetration of the two systems over time.

In this respect, a point made by Filliot (1974:32) is important, namely that it is with the exploitation of the island by the East India Company for produce, i.e. around 1690, that a radical change occurred.[24] In Cellier's (1985a:22) words, "the ethno-social differences became stark." Increasingly, Malagasy and the emerging venacular, which had enjoyed a more or less egalitarian status or had at least been considered different languages but of equal status with Popular French, now increasingly became the *language spoken by the slaves*, and the non-French-based languages now took on a different character in the eyes of the masters. It must be remembered that the settlers were unwillingly managed and exploited by the governors of the island, who were put in place by the East India Company. As time went on, the company exacted more and more from

[24] "The change coincides with the first real attempts to grow produce" ("La mutation correspond aux premiers vrais essais de culture") [Filliot 1974:32] (Quoted in Cellier [1985a:22]).

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them—well into the coffee-plantation era. As Cellier (1985a:28) writes of the period that lasted until 1740, "the important changes that occurred in the population between 1715 and 1720 ... must have brought about changes in mentality, perhaps even more so in internal relations among the slaves than in those between masters and slaves."[25] The fact that the non-French languages now took on a different character probably does *not* mean, however, that they were successfully *eliminated*, at least not before the middle of the 18th century. This was most likely true of the Malagasy dialects (or koiné), which continued to have a hold on their speakers. It may not, however, have been the case of Indian languages or Indo-Portuguese. It must be remembered that the proportion of Indian slaves diminished dramatically after 1715. While 23% of the slave population was Indian (or Indian and Indo-Portuguese) in 1709, it was only 5% by 1765, when the population was 42% Malagasy and 38% Creole (which means predominantly made up of descendents of Malagasy women),[26] with the proportions of Creole slaves (mostly of Malagasy origin) and African slaves having remained practically unchanged since 1709.[27]

The picture being drawn here is significantly different from the one given by Chaudenson (1974:462), who expresses his agreement with a statement (he quotes) that "starting with the second generation, the Black slaves knew no other languages,"[28] meaning that the Creole slaves only spoke the emerging vernacular. The linguistic

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[25] "De même les changements importants qui se produisent dans les structures de la population entre 1715 et 1720 obligent à élargir ce cadre jusqu'en 1740, car ils ont dû entraîner des changements de mentalité dans les rapports internes du groupe servile, plus peut-être que dans les relations entre maîtres et esclaves" [Cellier 1985a:28].

[26] Cf. Cellier's (1985a:23) remark about the population from 1715 to 1740: "the Creole [slaves] being totally or partially of Malagasy origin" ("Les Créoles étant eux-mêmes totalement ou partiellement d'origine malgache ...").

[27] Cf. Table 2.5 in §2.1.3.

[28] "Nous sommes sur ce point tout à fait de l'avis de P. Perego: 'Dès la deuxième génération, les esclaves noirs ne connaissent plus d'autres langues'" [Chaudenson 1974:462].

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situation before 1715 (as well as later) was indeed quite other. There no doubt existed two forms of bilingualism: one, a Popular French and emerging (lexically French) vernacular bilingualism among the Whites (or, at least, the use of two distinct registers), and the other, a Malagasy and (lexically French) vernacular bilingualism among the Blacks, i.e the Malagasy and Creole slaves (of Malagasy origin). The result of the former was an increased leveling of Popular French and, in time, a blurring of the boundaries between the two registers (see below, §6.2.7.2), while the result of the second was a substrate influence that restructured the Popular French as the vernacular was created—and, in turn, affected the speech of the Whites themselves.

6.1.2 Stage II (1715-1817) The Malagasy slaves on the coffee plantations

Once Bourbon was destined by the East India Company to provide France with coffee, to be produced and imported on a very large scale under the absolute monopoly the company had been granted, the make-up of the population of the island and its complex social relations changed dramatically.

6.1.2.1 The slave trade with Madagascar

After 1715, especially once great numbers of slaves were brought in from India and the African coast (Mozambique) as well as from Madagascar (i.e. around 1750), the use of non-French-based languages, especially Malagasy, were probably felt by the White plantation owners to be a worrisome reminder of the increasingly insecure conditions they lived in. Some form of Malagasy most likely continued to be used by the newly arrived slaves as the language of the homeland as well as of organized revolt against their

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masters. The majority of the slaves who escaped from the inhuman treatment they received on the plantations were Malagasy,[29] perhaps, it is thought in the hopes of getting back to their island. Madagascar was, after all, much closer to Bourbon than the areas other slaves originated from. The number of maroons living in the highlands at the end of the 18th century is not known exactly, but some historians estimate that there were more than a thousand by end of the 18th century, out of a total slave population of just under 50,000.[30]

6.1.2.2 Arguments for Malagasy influence on the developing VLR

The influence of Malagasy speakers on the development of the vernacular lect in Bourbon hinges on whether the Malagasies continued to be bilingual well into the 18th century. The answer to the question whether the Malagasy dialects died out after 1715, is that they most likely did not undergo serious attrition, at least not before 1750.[31] However, the Malagasy dialects (or koiné) survived in a different climate and the number of its speakers was probably inferior to that of the total number of speakers of non-French-derived languages in the previous period. It is known that the Malagasy slaves lorded it over the other slaves, likely with the intent of becoming the masters in case a rebellion were to succeed. They must have seen themselves as the rightful masters of this

[29] Nicole (1996:77) comments: "The [male] Malagasy most often appears as the archetype of the rebel, given to nostalgia for his homeland" ("... c'est en archétype d'insoumis qu'apparaît le plus souvent le Malgache, nostalgique du pays.")

[30] "Certains auteurs affirment qu'ils [les marrons] étaient plus de mille à la fin du XVIIIe siècle" [Vaxelaire 1999:181].

[31] Interestingly, Baker (1990:110) notes about the survival of Malagasies in Mauritius: "Malagasy speakers were well represented among slave arrivals in Mauritius for as long as the slave trade itself continued. It is known, for example, that both Malagasy and M[auritian] C[reole] were being used by the London Missionary Society in its work with former slaves in 1838. It thus seems clear that the replacement of native languages was not a rapid process, and this resulted primarily from the death of their foreign-born speakers rather than from individual slaves having given up speaking them."

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part of the world. Besides, the history of Madagascar at this time shows that the chief who could impose himself was considered the *de facto* master, whether he was Indian, Malay, Arab or Indonesian. This meant that every Malagasy slave with influence over others became a potential danger as a likely leader of a rebellion—and such rebellions took place as late as 1799 and 1811, the second at the time the English fleet had been sighted off shore.

6.1.2.2.1 The overwhelming majority of Malagasy slaves

In 1704, 35.5% of the slave population was made up of Malagasy slaves (14.4% being Indian and 33% Creole). By 1709, only 24% of the slave population was made up of Malagasies (24% being Indian, 40% Creole, and 14% African). However, it must be remembered that the Creole slaves were "totally or partially of Malagasy origin,"[32] a fact that Chaudenson quite overlooks.[33] By 1735, however, the percentages had risen to 58% for Malagasy slaves (versus 7% of Indian slaves, 23% of Creole slaves and 12% of African slaves), and by 1765, there were 42% of Malagasy slaves, compared with 5% of Indian slaves, 15% of African slaves, and 38% of Creole slaves.[34] Even though the percentage of Malagasy—some of whom were actually of African origin—wavered, their language remained the dominating non-French-derived language on the island, with a percentage of speakers superior to the number of Creole slaves. It should also be noted

[32] "Les Créoles étant eux-mêmes totalement ou partiellement d'origine malgache ..." [Cellier 1985a:23].
[33] Chaudenson (1974:1110) considers the high percentages of slaves born in Réunion (33% in 1704 and 40% in 1709), "who could have spoken the creole as their mother tongue" ("pouvant avoir le créole comme langue maternelle") as monolingual speakers of the emergent vernacular and states quite confidently that "during the first half century of the colony French was both the language of the dominant class and of the most important ethnic group." ("Le français, durant le premier demi-siècle de la colonie, se trouve donc être à la fois la langue de la classe sociale dominante et du groupe linguistique et ethnique le plus important") [Chaudenson 1974:1111].
[34] Cf. Table 2.5 in §2.1.3.

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that from 1700 to 1750, many "repented pirates" found in Bourbon a promising place for them to settle down. Many of them did not speak French and most of them married Creole wives who were of Malagasy descent. Their children can only have increased the number of speakers of a contact-induced vernacular.

The likelihood of a wholesale language shift on the part of the new arrivals was much greater once the plantation-style slave system was put in place, especially after they began being brought from very different areas (Mozambique, the Comores, etc.). One of Chaudenson's (1974:450)[35] arguments for such a shift, beginning at a much earlier date, is that most slaves were quite young in age, usually between the ages of 5 and 15,[36] and therefore more apt to abandon their mother tongue as well as more skilled in second-language learning. One would think, however, that a very young slave, unless he or she were brought up to be a faithful house slave, would find comfort in the company of slaves who spoke his or her language, even if the young slave learned the new vernacular at the same time. All the slaves were not young, however. The East India Company brought to the island what slaves their dealers could find, and its requests for younger slaves were not always met.

All this means that Malagasy dialects (or a koiné) may well have continued to be spoken among the new arrivals, a tendency that would have been encouraged especially

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[35] "A very important sociological factor contributed to the extensive influence and use of the creole. Indeed, imported slaves were almost always young ..." ("Un facteur sociologique très important contribue à étendre l'influence et l'emploi du créole. En effet, les esclaves importés sont presque toujours jeunes ...)" [Chauden-son 1974:450].

[36] According to Nicole (1996:75): "Very young slaves are acquired during the 'plantation era'. A slave over 30 years old is worthless as a purchase. Most of the imported slaves are younger than 15." ("On acquiert dans 'la société de plantation' de très jeunes esclaves. Un esclave de plus de trente ans est sans valeur à l'achat. La plupart des importés a moins de quinze ans.")

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by the slaves who were more rebellious, which many Malagasies were. Such rebels would have needed a secret code—and preferably a code that could have kept their plans from being detected by other slaves, who also spoke the vernacular. In fact, after 1725, the East India Company actively sought out non-Malagasy slaves for this very reason, though, due to various difficulties in doing so, it had to continue to supply the plantations in Bourbon and Mauritius with slaves from Madagascar.[37]

If the Malagasies used their dialects (or koiné) as a means of communication amongst themselves well into the 18th century, the continued presence of some bilingualism during this period can therefore be considered as having contributed to the maintenance of Malagasy traits in the developing vernacular lects. It can also be considered as having played a stabilizing role at a time when, for some (cf. Corne 1982, 1999; Baker 2000) a new process of creolization is thought to have begun on account of the large number of arrivals from other shores than Madagascar.[38] It should be noted that the places on the east coast of Madagascar that the Malagasy and African slaves were brought from in the 18th century were Foulepointe and Antogil—the second

[37] Filliot (1974:166) writes: "In 1735 ... the [East India] Company admits that the slaves from Mozambique are more appropriate for the island [of Bourbon] because they are less prone to becoming maroons, but states that one should not count on [getting slaves from Mozambique] due to the difficulties in acquiring any from there." ("En 1736 ... la Compagnie reconnaît que les noirs de Mozambique conviennent mieux dans l'île parce qu'ils sont moins sujet au marronage, mais affirme qu'il ne faut pas trop y compter à cause de la difficulté qu'il y a à en faire la traite.") And Chaudenson (1974:453) mentions the dilemma the East India Company had: the advantage of the low cost of slaves from Foulepointe, on the one hand, and, on the other, the risk of slaves speaking the same language being able to organize plots more readily. This is an argument in support of his belief that the Malagasy did not constitute an "overwhelming majority" ("une majorité écrasante") in Bourbon (Chaudenson 1974:454).

[38] As Corne (1999:69) notes: "The obligation for new arrivals to the island in the 18th and 19th centuries to acquire a knowledge of the pre-existing community vernacular meant that their pidginized L2 versions thereof gave rise to some measure of restructuring."

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predominantly—from 1720 to 1735, and Foulepointe from around 1750 on.[39] The dialect spoken in these areas (Betsimisaraka) and the dialects spoken further inland (which included Merina), where some of these slaves may have come from (if they were prisoners of war, for example), had enough in common, however, to allow for mutual understanding with the slaves who had previously come from the south of Madagascar.

6.1.2.2.2 The large number of Malagasy maroons

Throughout the 18th century, marronage became more and more common and the highlands became inhabited by slaves who had managed to escape and settled the most inaccessible wooded areas of the *cirques* and *plaines*. Unrelenting, brutal efforts were made to recapture them and cruel punishments inflicted on them in order for them to serve as examples to others who might be tempted to escape from the plantations. The lore of Réunion is replete with tales of escape and recapture, which are an indication of the tenacity of the Malagasy to regain their freedom and to take over the land in their part of the world.[40] It is hard to imagine that this would not have been accompanied by a long-lasting survival of their language. In fact, many of the place names in these upper reaches have kept their Malagasy names, which seems to attest to the survival of the Malagasy dialects on the island. For example, the three *cirques* have Malagasy names: *Cilaos*, which means (the place) "that one doesn't leave';[41] *Salazie*, which is said to derive from the Malagasy word *saloosie* meaning 'stake, post' (*pieu*);[42] and *Mafate*, which means

[39] Filliot (1974:128; 131). According to Larson (2000:62), "[u]ntil mid-century Betsimisaraka chiefs administered the food and slave trade export in a relatively coordinated and cooperative fashion."
[40] Cf. Reydellet (1995:26-26-43).
[41] Josse et al. (1998:165).
[42] Jardel (1996:137).

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'poison-dog', comes from *mafatam-bwa*, a toxic plant used to poison dogs.[43] As was mentioned above, by the end of the 18th century, it is estimated by some that there were as many as one thousand maroons in the higher-lying areas of the island.

6.1.2.2.3 The important number of children of mixed origin

The number of children born in Bourbon of parents of different origins on the island of Bourbon remains important during the 18th century, as it does beyond. The increase in the population was largely due to the high number of births among the Creole slaves and Creole freedmen, not to mention the many children born outside of marital relations. According to Nicole (1996:79-80), "no definite end was put to marriages between Whites and Black women by the measures taken to make them illegal. There were mulatto Creoles, and colored Whites who occupied important functions, and if, as Wanquet [1980] stresses ... endogamy [among Whites] was encouraged in the 18th century by more numerous arrivals from Europe, the miscegenation of the early years continued at that time to influence the Réunionnais in his particular way of viewing color and considering the problems it gives rise to."[44] Besides the illegitimate children the French had from their slaves, she continues (Nicole 1996:80), "during the years of slavery it happened that unions between women of color and Whites were consented to by the parents of the mulatto women, thereby becoming almost legal. It is mostly the closeness between White women and freedmen [of color] that were not tolerated. The existence

[43] Armand (1987:213).

[44] "Quant aux unions entre Blancs et Noires, elles n'ont pas été définitivement arrêtées par les mesures d'interdiction. Il existe des Créoles mulâtres, des Blancs colorés qui ont des functions importantes et si, comme le souligne C. Wanquet [1980] ... l'endogamie a été au XVIIIe siècle renforcée par des arrivées plus nombreuses d'Européens, le métissage du début continuera à cette époque à influencer le Réunionnais dans sa manière spéciale de percevoir la couleur, et d'en aborder le problème" [Nicole 1996:79-80].

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among freedmen of color, who number 9,000 in 1836, of illegitimate children of masters and freed slaves attests to the continuity of the attraction between Whites and Blacks."[45] The fact that the largest proportion of children born in the 18th century were of mixed origin, since most of them descended from Malagasy women or their descendents, is also an important argument in favor of the survival of Malagasy traits in the VLR.

6.1.2.3 The mixed origins of the *Petits Blancs*

It was shown in §2.5 that there was an attempt in the 19th century to rewrite the history of the *Petits Créoles*, literally 'little Creoles',[46] by renaming them *Petits Blancs des Hauts*, literally 'little Whites of the highlands'. As Grondin (1998:109) puts it succinctly: "[W]hile the 'Petit Créole' had been an object of shame, the 'Petit Blanc'—mentally—was reinstated in [colonial] society."[47] What needs to be seen is that the attempt to change the origins of the poor Whites on a sociological level has a linguistic aspect as well. Indeed, the full meaning of the term *Petits Blanc* can only truly be understood if, first, some sense is made of two contradictions inherent in the past of the island.

The first contradiction is inherent in the status and psychology of the inhabitant of mixed race (*Métis*) "in a world", as Nicole clearly puts it, "that decides to condemn miscegenation while it has been born of it."[48] It is the result of an "ideology that attempts

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[45] "En période d'esclavage il arrive que des unions entre femmes de couleur et Blancs se contractent avec le consentement des parents de la Mulâtresse et en deviennent de ce fait presque légalisées. C'est surtout les rapprochements Blanches/Affranchis qui ne sont pas tolérés. L'existence, parmi les Libres de couleur, qui sont 9 000 en 1836, d'enfants illégitimes de maîtres et d'esclaves affranchis, atteste la continuité de l'attirance Blancs/Noires" [Nicole 1996:80].

[46] Sometimes they are also referred to as *Créoles des bois* "Creoles of the woods", as in Focard (1885:67).

[47] "... si le 'Petit Créole' était object d'opprobre, le 'Petit Blanc' réintègre, mentalement, le corps social."

[48] "Dans la société de 'pré-plantation' qui précède la future 'société de plantation' vont apparaître avec l'idéologie de blanchiment, une évolution des mentalités et le préjugé. En naîtront les contradictions du

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to whiten things" (*idéologie de blanchiment*). The attempt to whiten the history—and the language—of the poor Whites is indeed nothing but a continuation of the attempts to separate the races that were made the plantation era.[49] The second contradition consists of a socio-economic paradox. Indeed, on the one hand, the poor Whites, by their very origins, shared with the rich landowners of the island—the *Gros Blancs*, who were their distant relatives—the mentality that they could have slaves (before 1848) and would not, or could not, work the land side by side with other slaves (before 1848) or ex-slaves (after 1848), whether those slaves were Blacks or Creoles. They considered themselves a separate class, which, as time went on, survived increasingly by intermarrying. On the other hand, these same poor Whites shared with the maroons (before 1848) and ex-slaves (after 1848) a refusal of the world of their distant, wealthy land-owning relatives. In other words, sociologically, the poor Whites had a hierarchical feeling of *superiority* to the Black and Creole slaves (or ex-slaves), while economically, that is hierarchically, they shared the feeling of *inferiority* the Blacks and Creole slaves had, since they joined them in their refusal of the world of the *Gros Blancs*. The *Petit Créole* Billiard ([1822], 1988) remembers meeting around 1815 in the highlands, who lived with his slave and had a Black mistress among the slaves on the rich White proprietor's plantation, is a typical example. He illustrates these contradictions well. The question here is: What do these contradictions mean in terms of the development of the VLR?

Métis, et les ambiguïtés d'un monde, qui décide de condamner le métissage, alors qu'il en est issu" [Nicole 1996:23].

[49] It must also be acknowledged that the proximity of the Blacks was not always welcomed by the poor Whites. Souffrin (1992:46-7) writes: "[I]t must not be forgotten that the end of slavery brought White and Black families closer, which all of the former did not always take to willingly. But the hope of finding some land to cultivate was also an important motive for their settling in the *cirque*." ("... il convient de ne pas oublier que la fin de l'esclavage rapprochait des familles Blanches et Noires, ce que ne supportaient pas toutes ces premières. Mais l'espoir de trouver de la terre pour la travailler était aussi un motif réel de leur installation dans le Cirque.") The *cirque* referred to here was that of Mafate.

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Was there by the end of the 18th century a mentality shared by separate segments in the population that had rebelled against and refused the world of the *Gros Blancs?* And was it strong enough to translate into shared linguistic traits, if it did not constitute one single lect? Are there already by this time linguistic traits that distinguish one ethnic or geographic sub-group from another? It seems that the answers are affirmative. The time coincides with the trials of 1799/1800, in which different registers already seem to appear in the language of the house slaves (cf. §6.2.7.3). Whatever the answer to these questions are, it is certainly very doubtful that the poor Whites spoke a form of French that descended directly from the Popular French spoken by the original settlers on the island. It should be remembered that the original settlers were, as Chaudenson (1974:464) puts it, "men from the provinces and of the most modest social level, who, one can surmise, only had rather distant notions of the French language."[50] Except perhaps for the lexicon, it is likely that by the end of the 18th century there was very little difference between the reconstructed Popular French of the very poor Whites and the vernacular speech of the Creoles and freedmen.

The history of the poor Whites of Bourbon, or *Petits Créoles,* as they were called by the time they had begun selling off their scaps of land that no longer allowed them to make a living and moving to the higher reaches of the island, is part and parcel of the miscegenation that characterizes the early history of the island of Bourbon and also the births of mixed parentage that continued to characterize the island's population after 1715. The early miscegenation in Bourbon from 1665 to 1715 as well as the racially

[50] "On peut donc penser que les premiers habitants de Bourbon, provinciaux de condition des plus modestes, ne devaient avoir du français qu'une connaissance assez lointaine ..." [Chaudenson 1974:464].

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mixed nature of descendants of French and European settlers at later periods are now both well-established facts (Nicole 1996:21-25). As Nicole (1966:18) points out, "there is really not in Réunion, as there is in Mauritius, a group of Whites that is rigorously white as a result of Whites marrying Whites."[51] The phenomenon of interethnic relations is so characteristic of Réunion that Nicole writes: "The island has always—at every epoch in its history—clearly made available the opportunity for biological mixing." It constitutes, she states, "a very old, deep, and widespread phenomenon."[52] The evidence for this view, it should be noted, challenges what Chaudenson (1981a) asserts in a blanket statement, namely that: "Bourbon and Réunion have both always had a more important White population than any of the other islands [of the Indian Ocean], a portion of which 'was reduced to a proletariat' beginning in the 18th century; and therein, no doubt, is to be found the origin of the formation of the *français créolisé*.[53] Because it was commonly used in the *Bourbonnais* community, this *français créolisé* [i.e. lect of the *Petits Blancs*] had a superior status to it, the speakers of the creole being, no doubt, less able to judge any differences among the local sociolects, the local regional variety of French used by the local aristocracy, and the 'standard' French of the administration" (Chaudenson 1981a:250-1).[54] However, the variation that can be seen in the trials of 1799/1800 is certainly reflects a greater a degree of sophistication among bilingual house slaves than

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[51] "Nous signalerons, en outre, qu'il n'y a pas vraiment à la Réunion, comme à l'île Maurice, de groupe blanc, rigoureusement endogame" [Nicole 1996:18].

[52] "Il y a eu, en fait, quelle que soit l'époque, une évidente disponibilité de l'île pour le métissage biologique. Ce métissage constitue dans le cas spécifique réunionnais, un phéonomène très ancien, profond et étendu" [Nicole 1996:19].

[53] Cf. Appendix C2 for the use of this term designating the lect of the *Petits Blancs* in Carayol & Chaudenson (1973, 1978).

[54] "Bourbon, puis la Réunion, ont toujours eu une population blanche beaucoup plus importante que celle des autres îles et dont une partie s'est 'prolétarisée' dès le XVIIIe siècle; c'est sans doute là l'origine de la formation du 'français créolisé.' Ce 'français créolisé', étant d'usage courant dans la communauté bourbonnaise, y avait un statut supérieur, les créolophones étant sans doute peu aptes à juger des différences entre sociolecte local, la forme régionale du français en usage dans l'aritocratie locale ou le français plus 'standard' de l'administration" [Chaudenson 1981a:250-1].

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Chaudenson would give them credit for. It seems to indicate as much sophistication as was met with, if we are to believe Chaudenson, among some monolingual speakers of the *français créolisé*.

The changes that occurred in the 19th century, which affected the speech variety of the poor Whites, and the pressures of Standard French on it since the early 20th century have done much to cover up the true nature of the speech of the poor Whites in the 18th century. To be sure, the pockets of the so-called *français créolisé* [i.e lect of the Petits Blancs], as in the *Plaine des Grègues* near Saint-Jospèphe, for example, indicate: 1. that in the 19th century all the Whites in the highlands were not poor; and 2. that all did not speak the same lect (or register). The people living in such isolated pockets have a higher level of sophistication in their speech, which is perhaps due to the speech of 18th- and 19th- century immigrants from France who settled in this area. A careful study of the origins of the more sophisticated Whites in such areas, including in the *cirques* and *plaines*, needs to be done. The geographical definition that the Whites are defined by, namely the higlands (*Hauts*), will otherwise continue to give the monolithic impression that they were all poor, or all more sophisticated than was the case.

It should indeed not be thought that all the *Petits Blancs* were of the same social level. Bourquin (1994:708) makes this clear when she writes of them in the 19th century: "The *Petits Blancs* of the *cirques* were not all the same. Depending on the axis of the penetration of what is called 'civilization', they remained more or less 'wild'. In Salazie, in Cilaos, and also in Mafate, the differences were great. The *Petits-Blancs* of the high *plaines* of the interior [of the island] were not similar to those of the heights above Saint-

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Philippe, for example. ... if it is appropriate to talk of a modest society of farmers, there also existed in Cilaos, authentic families which cultivated meager farms in an isolated manner on the small jutting pieces of land."[55] To such socio-economic variety among a category certainly corresponds a linguistic variation in terms of geographic lects and even idiolects. To the "penetration of so-called civilization" also correspond varying degrees in an awareness of a standard form of language.

From the time the Whites and Blacks became maroons together, i.e. even before 1690, and definitely by the time the *Petits Blancs* rejected the world of the *Gros Blancs* in the 1730s, a common vernacular was in the making which reflected their common mentality. This vernacular was most likely marked with linguistic traits that differentiated it from the speech of the group in power in the colonial world, namely the plantation owners. While the original vernacular, the *bourbonnais* (Chaudenson 1974) or *lété ki* French (Corne 1982) may not have born any such sociologically motivated characteristics rooted in the rejection of the world of the *Gros Blanc* before 1715, in time lects most certainly developed such traits. The common element in the new lects may well have been the widespread use of the ASM *i*, with perhaps a distinction between Whites and Blacks in the sense that the Whites used the long form of the verb with the ASM *i* for the Past Continuous, while the Blacks used the *té i* or *té* form (cf. §6.2.7).

[55] "Les Petits-Blancs des Cirques ne sont pas semblables. Selon l'axe de pénétration de ce qu'on appelle la 'civilisation', ils demeurent plus ou moins 'sauvages'. A Salazie, à Cilaos, à Mafate enfin, les différences sont importantes. Les Petits-Blancs des Hautes-Plaines de l'intérieur ne ressemblent pas aux Petits-Blancs des Hauts-de-St-Philippe, par example. ... Si l'on peut parler de petite société paysanne, à Cilaos, en revanche, il existe aussi des familles authentiques qui cultivent de manière isolée, sur de petits ilets, de maigres exploitations..." [Bourquin 1994:708].

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6.1.2.4 The world of the highlands and the close proximity of its social groups

What Nicole states about the contradictions touching the mixed population (*Métis*), which includes the Creole slaves and freed Creoles, also seems apply to the *Petits Créoles*, who fled to and later established themselves in the *cirques* of Salazie, Cilaos, and Mafate, north of the centre of the island, and the *Plaine des Cafres* and the *Plaine des Palmistes*, south of the centre of the island. This is where the maroons had established themselves, and where the *Petits Créoles* in turn cleared land to cultivate. Living in close proximity with Creole freedmen, as well as maroons of Malagasy or Creole origin, whose refusal of the world of the *Gros Blancs* they shared, the poor Whites were bound to be affected not only in terms of the lifestyle and living conditions they shared with them,[56] but also in terms of their speech—more so morpho-syntactically perhaps than lexically. Being the descendants of men from French provinces with "distant notions of French"[57] and therefore a certain linguistic flexibility, not to say insecurity, they must have had a greater tendency to be influenced by structures of the vernacular lect as it developed.

In time, on the morpho-syntactic level, the vernacular lect spoken by these poorer relatives of the landowning Whites, who began to move to the highlands as early as 1732, was probably not so very different from the variety spoken by the freedmen of Creole origin. They continued, no doubt, to use traits common to the variety spoken by the maroons (the use of the ASM *i* in the past progressive forms is a case in point, cf. §6.2.7.3), even as they may have held on to vocabulary that was particular to their White ancestors. It is hard, however, to imagine the poorest Whites, who had lived on the outer

[56] Grondin (1998:110) describes these poor Whites as being, by 1848, "a marginal population which shares with the freed slaves or freedmen of color a common lifestyle and shared space" ("une population marginale qui partage avec les Affranchis ou les Libres de Couleur un mode de vie et un espace commun").
[57] Chaudenson (1974:464).

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margins of colonial French society for so many generations by 1848, speaking anything but a rudimentary remnant of Popular French, much closer to the speech of Creole freedmen, Creole slaves, or even Malagasy maroons than to the spoken French of the *Gros Blancs*. It is even possible that the better-educated house slaves living in the mansions on the rich plantations spoke something much closer to the French their masters had learned in France. What this means is that the *Petits Blancs*, as they were later to be called, likely spoke a much more restructured Popular French than the 17th century one it is often supposed they inherited directly from their ancestors, although phonetically and lexically their speech may have owed much to it. The origins of the present-day *Petits Blancs* (cf. §2.5) are probably much more closely intertwined with the presence of the Creole and Malagasy population than has been thought. In this respect, it is interesting to note that the presence of Black families in the *cirque* of Mafate is denied, or at least overlooked, in the texts and discourse of the administration at a time when a second wave of poor Whites arrives in the *cirque* in 1880.[58]

What this racial mixing,[59] which has a previous long history on the island, entails linguistically is that the lect of the *Petits Créoles* reflects much of the lects of other outcasts of colonial society. Naturally, it would probably be a mistake to consider all—or even most—of the words and expressions of 17th and 18th century French that have survived to this day as having been equally shared by all the outcasts from colonial

[58] "In Mafate ... the Blacks are excluded from any official discourse, and the description of the inhabitants focuses on this category of White creoles" ("A Mafate ... les Noirs sont exclus du discours officiel, et les descriptions des habitants visent essentiellment cette catégorie de créoles Blancs ..." [Souffrin 1992:54].

[59] According to Billiard (1829), "Most [of the Petis Blancs] have hues of African color because they belong to or associate with families of freed slaves" ("La plupart ont des nuances de couleur africaine, parce qu'ils appartiennent ou s'allient à des familles d'affranchis" [Billiard (1829:442-448), quoted in Bourquin (1994:104)].

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society. There were indeed many lects, or a "bundle of lects", to use Corne's (1999:74) expression about the highland variety of the VLR.

Though it is impossible for us to know exactly what the variety spoken by the *Petits Créoles* was, it can be said that it was certainly very different from that of a farmer in Salazie in 1915. The *Petit Créole* had no sense of a social status other than the fact that he was poor. The sense that your speech reflects your social status and your level of education is a recent, 19th century heritage, which the schooling in French in the 20th century has done much to encourage. The extensive, scholarly, and very detailed study Chaudenson (1974) has done of the vocabulary of the island of Réunion leaves no doubt that French expressions as well as vocabulary dating from the 17th and 18th century have survived in the VLR, albeit in a form that is often fossilized. However, that does not mean that simplification and restructuring have not been a party to the history of these lects. While there is indeed very little reason to believe that the presence of masses of slaves and indentured servants brought in between 1800 and 1900 did much to alter the vernacular adopted by them in terms of morpho-syntax, there is reason to believe that the shared space and the close quarters of the maroons and *Petits Créoles* did affect the speech of the latter. It is hard to see how men and women who had Black slaves and who shared their territory with maroons could have had a sense of preserving and maintaining intact their "French heritage". Language for the *Petits Créoles* was just a matter of making oneself best understood by one's interlocutor. When "the need to educate this part of the population naturally came to be felt", Bourquin (1994:90-1) writes, "the attitude of the free Creoles [i.e. the descendants of Malagasy or African and White

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ancestors] was to be quite different from that of the poor Whites. While a significant portion of the former was to do its utmost to succeed, the majority of the latter would be hostile to being pressured into any form of schooling."[60]

There may well be a parallel to be drawn here with the situation in Lousiana, about which Neumann (1985:41) writes: "So far it has been hard to explain adequately how the Whites can have adopted the language of the Blacks. It may be supposed that the process which reduced a part of the White population to a proletariat and the fact that these poor Whites and Black slaves lived together on the plantations, as well as later the system of 'working separately' (*métayage*) led to [a kind of] intense linguistic interchange."[61] In any case, in her conclusion, Bourquin (1994:707) states: "[L]ittle by little it has become apparent to us that the *Petits Blancs* of the island, whether they be from the highlands or the intermediate hillsides, developed no real, i.e. specific, ethnic culture ... They speak the same creole as their brothers in misery do."[62]

6.1.2.5 The immigration from France in the 18th century

As the production of coffee became lucrative and there was "literally an invasion of new immigrants" in Bourbon (Scherer 1994:13), the White population grew steadily (cf. Table 2.4 in §2.1.3) from 580 in 1735 to 3,762 in 1758. Unfortuately what its distribution was

[60] "La nécessité d'instruire cette partie de la population s'est naturellement fait sentir. Mais la démarche des Libres sera tout à fait différente de celle des Blancs défavorisés. Alors qu'une partie non négligeable des premiers mettra tout en oeuvre pour réussir, la majorité des seconds sera hostile à toute contrainte éducative" [Bourquin 1994:90-1].

[61] "Jusqu'ici on s'explique assez mal comment les Blancs ont pu adopter la langue des Noirs. Il est permis de supposer que la prolétarisation d'une partie de la population blanche et la coexistence de ces Blancs pauvres et des esclaves Noirs sur les plantations ainsi que, plus tard, le système de 'travailler à part' (métayage) ont conduit à des échanges linguistiques intenses" [Neumann 1985:41].

[62] "... peu à peu, il nous est apparu que les Petits-Blancs-de-l'île, fussent-ils des 'Hauts' ou des 'collines intermédiaires', n'ont pas développé de véritable culture ethnique, i.e. spécifique .... Ils parlent le même créole que leurs frères de misère" [Bourquin 1994:707].

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across the island has not yet really been studied. The implications of this immigration are highly relevant to the existence of a *français créolisé* and in terms of the interpretation to be given to it.[63] Such a study is very necessary if one is to assess the effects the oral French of these immigrants and their children may have had between 1715 and 1817 on the speech of the Whites generally along the coastal areas and in the higher-lying areas of the island in particular. The question also needs to be asked: How much was the speech of these White immigrants tainted by the créole? In such a scenario, a *français créolisé* would seem to make more sense. Interestingly, the effects of this immigration are generally overlooked entirely in discussions of the variety called *français créolisé* (Carayol & Chaudenson 1973, etc; Carayol 1977, etc; Beniamino & Baggioni 1993; Beniamino 1996). It should be asked how much of the *français créolisé* is actually a survival of the French of these 18th century immigrants from France rather than of the Popular French spoken by the original settlers, as Chaudenson (1981a, 1981b, 1992) supposes. This has yet to be ascertained. Indeed, one can ask, too, how many descendants of these immigrants married into families of the not-so-poor *Petits-Créoles* in various pockets above the 400m line?

During the 18th century there was also a steady, if numerically rather insignificant, stream of noble immigrants that arrived on the island. The nobles seem to have been less numerous than Corne (1999:69) appears to think.[64] Indeed, ill-behaved sons of noble birth were often sent to the colonies, including to Bourbon, by embarrassed fathers who did not know how to deal with them. Around the time of the French Revolution, some

[63] Cf. Appendix C2 for a definition and the use of this term in the literature.
[64] According to Corne (1999:69), "[t]he 18th century saw also immigration from France, much of it aristocratic or middle-class, as opposed to the humbler origins of the early settlers."

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noblemen, who had chosen exile rather than facing the social changes taking place in France, also arrived on the shores of the island. It is sometimes difficult to tell these nobles apart from the local inhabitants because many Frenchmen who were not of noble origin had taken noble-sounding names after arriving in the colony. However, historians have counted 13 deserters in Saint-Benoît and a total of 33 families by 1776, with the "maximum of immigrants coming in between 1770 and 1779".[65] While this immigration may well have added to the number of people who spoke a more educated register of oral French, they can only have slightly strengthened the permanence of official or so-called Regional French[66] in the higher social circles of such wards (*quartiers*) as Saint-Denis, Saint-Benoît, or Saint-Pierre.

6.1.3 Stage III (1817-1946): The years after the abolition of the slave trade

There are two main phenomena that characterize this period of 150 years beside the large numbers of indentured servants that came to Réunion to replace the slaves in the sugar cane fields. They are: 1. the peopling of the highlands, where grants of lands began to be alotted to particulars even before the emancipation of the slaves (1848), in an effort to establish worthwhile agricultural projects; and 2. the access of the population to education, which was to lead to the pressure exerted by Standard French on the VLR.

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[65] "Wanquet (1980) has counted 13 deserters in Saint-Benoît ... he also mentions the presence of a number of adventurers who swelled the ranks of this fleeting population. The number of nobles remains very small in relation to the general population. Philippe Haudrère sets at 33 the number of noble families in 1776." ("Claude Wanquet a comptabilisé 13 déserteurs à Saint-Benoît ... il signale, par ailleurs, la présence de nombreux aventuriers qui grossissent les rangs de cette population volatile. L'effectif noble reste très modeste par rapport à l'ensemble de la population. Philippe Haudrère fixe à 33 le nombre de ces familles nobles en 1776. Le maximum d'immigrants se situant entre 1770-1779 ...") [Grondin 1998:70].

[66] See Appendix C1 for a definition of the Regional French (of Réunion).

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Beginning around 1830, a substantial effort was made by the local authorities to attract French farmers to Réunion in order to people its higher-lying areas. According to Bourquin (1994) and Grondin (1998), the creation of the social category of *Petits Blancs* was part and parcel of a project to attract new immigrants from France both to stem the deforestation and destruction to the natural environment caused by the hap-hazard clearing practiced in the highlands as well as to whiten the local population. Though the statistics in this respect are not known, the increase in self-pride brought about by the alottment of parcels of land and the development of farming and the culture of the geranium all contributed to a greater sense of self-worth among the *Petits Blancs*. Education and the importance of learning, which was soon to spread through the island by the establishment of schools also brought about a sense of the value of Standard French. With the promotion of the island to a French *département* in 1946, the full weight of education and the superiority of the French language over the VLR would come to be sorely felt. As a result, the speakers of the VLR felt increasingly inferior. To speak *créole* was considered "dirty" or "vulgar", and chidren began to be spoken to and were encouraged to speak in French.[67]

In the face of Chaudenson (1981a:253ff) denial of the likelihood of any decreolization even over the second half of the 20th century and his ascribing all traces of French to the survival of the Popular French of the 17th century in the *français créolisé*, the question has to be asked: What was the effect of the beginnings of elementary education on the island (in the 1880s) on the speech of the descendants of the poor

[67] According to the informant MAP, who comes from the area of Sainte-Marie, parents told their children that speaking *créole* was "dirty" when they caught them speaking it. This practice, she attests, goes back as much as four generations.

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Whites? Did the continuous arrival of people from France and the teaching of French give these descendants a sense of the cultural worth of the standard? The sense of belonging to a well-spoken and schooled elite, even if only from a distance, can have affected the speech of the Whites from the towns to the more isolated regions in the south of the island and even the higher reaches of it.[68] The more sophisticated Whites in the *Plaine des Grègues* in the region of Saint-Josèphe, on the southwestern coast of the island, whose speech variety has been studied by Gueunier (1980, 1982) had a higher register than is commonly found in the *plaines* and *cirques* of the island. These people would most certainly have objected to being labeled *Petits Blancs des Hauts*, since, according to Gueunier 1980:46), their speech variety was closer to a "regional French".[69] They, like others, had long had a keen awareness of the prestige of a higher register.

Chaudenson (1981a:253-6) makes a case for what he calls "basilectal erosion",[70] or "debasilectalization", that began in the 19th century and explains, according to him, why the VLR are less similar to Mauritian Creole than they were in the early 1800s. The process consisted of a weeding out of more basilectal traits from one's *français créolisé*. It is hard to see this as the general phenomenon Chaudenson claims it to have been, and one cannot help feeling that "debasilectalization" is brought in for the sole purpose of explaining why Mauritian Creole has kept original traits it shared with the VLR, while such traits have disappeared from the VLR.

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[68] The bilingual speakers in the Barat & Carayol recordings of the 1970s are constantly alluding to and apologizing for their insufficient command of French (cf. the example of CVF in Appendix C2).

[69] "En outre le créole des Petits-Blancs du sud de l'Île dans une communauté aussi 'haute' et fermée que celle où j'ai travaillé se rapproche du français régional décrit par M. Carayol 1977..." [Gueunier 1980:46].

[70] "[T]he most basilectal forms, which are socially stigmatized, disappear during the 19th century, thereby increasing significantly the linguistic gap between Reunionnais Creole and Mauritian Creole" ("les formes les plus basilectales, socialement défavorisées, disparaissent au cours du XIXe siècle, augmentant très sensiblement la 'distance' interlinguistique entre le réunionnais et le mauricien" [Chaudenson 1981a:254].

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It seems fairer to say that some decreolization—that is some influence of a higher register of French—may have contributed to clean up the speech of certain speakers of the VLR. Nicole (1996:40) makes the stigma attached to the VLR quite clear, when she writes: "The opposition between white, legalized speech and creole speech, remains to the disadvantage of the latter. The act of 'bad speech' (*mal dire*) that the creole [i.e. VLR] constitutes and which has substituted itself to the imposed muteness of the slave, does not always escape devaluation. This devaluation makes of it a basilectal, inferior speech form. There is no doubt that: the consciousness of the indignity of the creole [i.e. VLR], vis-à-vis the French language, which embodies the prolongation of the recognized racial superiority of the white man and of the racial superiority of the master, is the manifestation in social terms of what might be called the 'Uncle Tom's complex'. Given the incapacity [of a speaker] to perform (adequately), it brings into the linguistic arena the institutional inferiority of the Black man with respect to the White man, which serves as the ground for the relationship between master and slave" (Nicole 1996:40).[71] If it had already existed before the advent of schooling in French (circa 1880), this trend, can only have been reinforced by it, while after national education was instituted in the newly created *département* of Réunion, it can only have given it all the force which it is known to have today. The informants on the recordings made by Barat and Carayol in the late 1970s who were in their 70s and 80s still spoke a variety of the VLR that reveals their

[71] "Subsiste l'opposition entre la parole blanche légalisée et la parole en créole, au détriment de cette dernière. L'acte de mal dire que constitue la parole créole, qui s'est substitué au mutisme obligé de l'esclave, n'échappe pas toujours aux dévaluations. Elles en font une parole basilectale, infériorisante. Il ne fait pas de doute que: la conscience de l'indignité du créole, face au français qui constitue le prolongement naturel de la reconnaissance de la supériorité raciale du Blanc, et de la supériorité raciale du maître est une manifestation au plan sociologique de ce qui pourrait s'appeler 'le complexe de l'Oncle Tom.' Il ramène en effet, au plan linguistique, avec l'incapacité avouée de performer au niveau de la langue l'infériorité institutionnelle du Noir par rapport au Blanc qui sert de fondement au rapport du maître et de l'esclave" [Nicole 1996:40].

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state around the 1900s. However, they often stated that the way the *créole* was spoken at the time of the recordings was no longer the way it had been spoken in the old days.

With regard to decreolization, or "debasilectalization", a comment by Ottino (1999:72) about the attitude of the poor Whites to their mixed origins may be relevant here for a small group of social outcasts. Speaking of the "mixed milieu of the Réunionnais [social] continuum *(le milieu mélangé du continuum réunionnais)*, he writes: "While the great majority of Réunionnais who are normally integrated in society and belong to this milieu lay claim to this mixing among the principal positive attributes of their identity—Creole or Réunionnais according to each case—conversely, the Réunionnais of this same continuum who have been rejected by society in no way lay claim to this characteristic. In their case, far from being considered a positive characteristic, this mixing is considered pejorative and stigmatized ... having shown themselves as incapable of preserving their most precious capital: their quite symbolic White or Southern Indian identity."[72] Such an attitude would indeed explain a tendency to whiten one's speech and to be upwardly mobile.

6.1.4 Stage IV (1946 to the present)

That there has been an important process of decreolization since 1946 (not only in terms of the lexicon, which Chaudenson [1981a:256] is willing to admit) is quite obvious. The

[72] "Alors que la grande majorité des Réunionnais normalement insérés dans la société, qui appartiennent à ce milieu, revendiquent le métissage qu'ils valorisent comme l'un des premiers attributs de leur identité, suivant les cas, créole ou réunionnaise, à l'inverse, les Réunionnais appartenant à ce même continuum, mais laissés-pour-compte, ne se prévalent nullement de ce caractère. Dans leur cas, loin d'être perçu comme une caractéristique positive, le métissage est péjoré et stigmatisé ... ils se sont montrés incapables de préserver leur capital le plus précieux: celui tout symbolique de leur identité blanche ou sud-indienne" [Ottino 1999:72].

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changes that occurred as a result of the *départementalisation* in 1946 brought the monolingual speakers of the VLR progressively out of their social and geographical isolation. The construction of roads and the improvements in transportation led to a new mobility, which meant more contact with people who were bilingual and a greater sense of the relation between the way one spoke and one's social status. The mass media, especially radio and then television, not to mention public education, has made people even more increasingly aware of the inferior status of the VLR vis-à-vis Standard French. Today callers on a radio call-in program for request for records to be played tend to make use of French rather than the vernacular lects. This is only partly due to the fact that the host of the program is from France and is not fluent in the local vernacular speech. However, recent studies have shown that in the world of young musical performers the speakers of the VLR are developing new uses of the language (Dupuis 1999).

While the basic French/VLR diglossia remains somewhat unchanged (for ecample, the VLR are still excluded from the classroom), the vernacular lects are gaining ground in terms of the areas in which they are acceptable, and the pride speakers take in their own vernacular is diminishing the negative view of it that is instilled in them at home and in school. There is bound to be a further degree of decreolization as a result of these changes.

It is therefore difficult to agree with Chaudenson (1981a:249) when he writes: "Nothing proves that the presence (*situation*) of a continuum evident today is the result of a recent 'decreolization', due particularly to the important effects of economic, cultural

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and social pressure of on the part of oral and Standard French, whose importance has, in our opinion, been considerably overstated from the linguistic point of view. We even believe that there has been no such thing and that the ancient texts provide us, in this respect, with the essential information" (Chaudenson 1981a:249).[73]

Chaudenson sees in the *français créolisé* of today a descendant of the Popular French spoken by the poor Whites of the 18th century. The sociological evidence does not point in this direction, however. As he explains about "reserving the term 'decreolization' for the evolutions which can occur within the creole system under the influence of the French system and, in particular in more recent times, as an effect of the mass media and the democratization of education ... This explanation is often given in Réunion to explain the existence of the français créolisé; ... At least in historical terms, it can be affirmed that the main evolutions in the VLR took place well before the *départementatisation* and have much more to do with the internal evlution of the system than with external pressures, ... over the recent 15 years ... no essential changes have been noticed" (Chaudenson 1981a:253).[74] This is not the first time, it would seem, that a theory of linguistic change blinds a linguist's eyes to the consequences of social factors on language change. However, under a different term, namely that of *dévernacularisation,*

[73] "Rien ne prouve que la situation de continuum qu'on observe aujourd'hui est l'effet d'une récente 'décréolisation', sous l'effet en particulier de l'importante pression économique, culturelle et sociale dont on a, selon nous, considérablement surestimé les effets au point de vue linguistique. Nous pensons même qu'il n'en est rien et que les textes anciens fournissent, à ce propos, des indications essentielles à nos yeux" [Chaudenson 1981a:249].

[74] "... réserver le terme de 'décréolisation' aux évolutions qui peuvent se produire au sein du système créole sous l'influence du système français et, en particulier à date récente, par l'action des moyens de communication de masse et sous l'effet de la démocratisation de l'enseignement. ... Cette explication est souvent avancée à la Réunion pour expliquer l'existence du 'français créolisé'; ... Sur le plan historique en tout cas, on peut affirmer que les principales évolutions du réunionnais ont eu lieu bien antérieurement à la départementalisation et qu'elles tiennent donc davantage à une évolution interne du système qu'à des pressions extérieures. ... ces dernières années ... on ne constate pas de changements essentiels" [Chaudenson 1981a:253].

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Chaudenson (1981a:255) admits that there have been innovations in the lexical field as a result of the "socio-economic and technological evolution".[75]

6.2 The linguistic evidence

Now that grounds have been established in the island's social history for contact-induced restructuring of Popular French, or creation of the (lexically French) vernacular (cf. §1.2), there are questions to be addressed concerning the linguistic evidence of such restructuring. These questions are dealt with in each of the historical stages identified earlier, resorting to the three explanatory elements also mentioned earlier (cf. §6.0). While, sociologically speaking, the history of the island of Réunion is very particular, linguistically speaking, it is equally idiosyncratic in its evolution. Just how particular this evolution is, is what this section aims to show.

There is an important link between the socio-historical data and the linguistic data, which is made clear in these words of Manessy (1995:96-7) about any simplified form of a superstrate language in a multilingual contact situation—a situation that, in Bourbon, would correspond to the vernacular that emerged from the Popular French spoken on the island from 1663-1715:

> The use of the simplified variety is interpreted [by its speakers] not as a mere means of mutual comprehension but as the expression of a solidarity which transcends ethnic differences and whose locus can be a town, a region ... This solidarity is made manifest by the sharing of conventions at the discourse level.[76]

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[75] "Le dernier processus est, sur le plan lexical essentiellement, ce que nous avons appelé la 'dévernacularisation' (Chaudenson, 1974:1094-1100) et qui résulte avant tout de l'évolution socio-économique et technologique" [Chaudenson 1981a:255].

[76] "... l'emploi de la variété simplifiée est interprétée non comme un simple moyen d'intercompréhension, mais comme l'expression d'une solidarité qui transcende les différenciations ethniques et dont le cadre peut

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These sentences capture the essence of the VLR, namely that they are the identifying characteristic of the "Réunionnais" (or inhabitant of Bourbon/Réunion) and the linguistic counterpart of the miscegenation, or racial mixing of people of different origins, which has characterized the population of the island from the very outset.

6.2.1 Stage I (1663-1715): *Vernacularisation* and contact-induced restructuring

A question that must be answered with regard to the emergence of the VLR is, what relation any Malagasy-based restructuring (i.e. language creation) bears to other processes of language change in the language contact situation that existed in the first 50 years of the settlement in Bourbon. The sociolinguistic model of Manessy (1995) is adopted here to answer this issue because, while there may be more recent theories and models available to resolve such matters (e.g. Mufwene 2001),[77] not only is Manessy's (1978,1995) position rooted in a traditional view of the genesis of pidgin and creole languages (which assumes a break in natural language transmission),[78] but it suggests parallels with contemporary vehicular varieties of French in Africa, which have been and

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être la ville, la région ... Cette solidarité est manifestée par la communauté des conventions de discours" [Manessy 1995:96-7].

[77] Mufwene's (2001) genetic model based on the evolution of a laguage as a "species" with its "Founder Principle" does not in any way contradict the position taken here. The problems concerning the place of idiolects within the (for him) inexistant (or theoretical) construct that is a sociolect, lies outside the scope of this study. His notion of restructuring in no way conflicts with the understanding of it here. The advantage Manessy's [1995] model presents is that it gives their rightful place to the Malagasy speakers and other non-French language speakers in their "rejection" of the norm, which is not a generative principle in the sense of language transmission or evolution, but a **break in transmission**. That this break is not unlike the break in other contact situations of dominance does not take away from the fact that some specific linguistic choices were made based on the L1 of these populations. Mufwene's model does not allow for different stages of creolization because it does not appropriately take into consideration the speed of the processes at work in language contact. "**Restructuring** itself amounts to a reorganization of the mechanical system of a language and/or of the pragmatic principles regulating its use. The process is in fact similar to genetic recombination in biology ... ." He does recognize "syntactic examples of **adaptations** which amount to system restructuring" and "include using 'say' as a complementizer" [Mufwene 2001:12].

[78] For Manessy (1995:12), "in this light, creole, pidgin, and vehicular languages ... have their origin in a state of language which represents to a given degree **a break** with a preceding tradition ..." ("Ainsi conçus, les créoles, pidgins et véhiculaires ... ont pour origine un état de langue qui est à quelque degré **en rupture** avec la tradition antérieure ... ") [emphasis added].

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are undergoing a kind of pidginization and, in some cases, are on the brink of creolization (Manessy 1995:121). Manessy's comparisons on the basis of these contemporary developments allow for a degree of *interpolation* that can inform attempts to reconstitute the scenarios of pidgin and creole genesis in the world of the European colonies of the 17th and 18th centuries. However, the great advantage of Manessy's model is that it brings linguistic data *explicitly* to bear on sociological data and vice-versa. Indeed, as this model indicates, vernaculars do not develop outside of the needs of the speakers or their sense of community. It is assumed in this study that part and parcel of the emergence and development of the VLR is their being a "socially unifying speech variety". The question is, just what group of speakers did it unify and when? An answer to this question is attempted below (§6.2.7).

If there is a case to be made for Malagasy-based restructuring in the VLR, i.e. a role in the creation of the new (lexically French) vernacular, it must be shown that what is claimed to be the result of such contact-induced restructuring is not due to other processes of change usually met with in language contact situations. Increasingly, the tendency in creolistics today is to use normal language change processes to account for language change in pidgin and creole genesis (e.g. Mufwene 2001). In other words, it is shown that processes that account for language change *without a break* in normal language transmission can adequately explain those where a break in transmission has previously been assumed to require other types of explanation (cf. Thomason and Kaufman 1988). In fact, this tendency has reached a point where the specificity of pidgin and creole languages—in the cases where this distinction is still maintained—is reduced

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to the time and place in which they occurred (cf. Chaudenson 1992; Mufwene 2001).[79] A number of creolists, however, have even quite recently defended the position that there are creole-specific processes (cf. Detges' [2000] "cognitive-pragmatic" model) or creole-specific characteristics (cf. McWhorter [1998]) that have to be acknowledged as setting these languages apart in terms of their emergence or their nature.

What is here attributed to substrate influence others have attributed to other causes. Chaudenson (1981a; 1992), for example, sees the VLR as the result of a process of evolution of Popular French without any substratal influence until 1715 (by when *bourbonnais créole* alredy existed) with no break in transmission and a process of approximations of approximations of this *bourbonnais* through informal second language acquisition after 1715. It should be noted, however, that the origin of the ASM *i* has essentially eluded the creolists who deny the soundness of the substratist position.

6.2.1.1 The sociolinguistic model in Manessy (1978, 1995)

Manessy's model, which "corrects", or nuances, the classical views of pidginization and creolization on the basis of what he observed in language change occurring in various parts of contemporary Africa, distinguishes between different causes at work in these processes: 1. principles of what could be labeled *language universals* (in the simplification and reduction that characterize pidginization); 2. principles of *language*

[79] The notion of a "break" in transmission is too often seen as a corollary of the genetic view of language transmission. However, a break is not necessarily related to that particular model. Besides, changing the paradigm from **genetic** to the development of **species**, as in Mufwene (2001), does not as such render the idea of a break irrelevant. It seems rather to do away with the idea of restructuring or language creation **due to the speakers of a substrate language**. It is the cognitive-based contribution of these speakers that this dissertation addresses.

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contact (such as interference and transfer, for example), which are implied in substrate influence; and 3. principles underlying *interlanguages* (such as simplification, analogy, or the creation of hypotheses) of the kind also observed in second language acquisition. His view is rooted in the *social motivation* that for him underlies all language change, ranging from simple communication of facts to the marking speech to indicate one's belonging to a group. The interpolation based on his observation of language change in contemporary contact situations provides a kind of map of *correspondences* between social contact and linguistic contact and translates characteristics of social dynamics into linguistic characteristics.

Such interpolation, which affords the chance to link linguistic phenomena with social scenarios, facilitates a kind of unique progress in the reconstitution of the past of vernacular lects such as those of Réunion. It makes it possible, for example, to link three elements: 1. the period of small-scale farming (*période d'habitation*, Chaudenson 1992); 2. an early phase of restructuring (Detges 2000, Lang 2000); and 3. phenomena typical of a pre-creole continuum, or the beginnings of *vernacularisation*. There is in Manessy (1995) a living sense of the parallels between social and linguistic mutations. His comparison of the emergence of the VLR and a possible creolization of French due to processes detectable in contemporary vehicular languages in Africa may be intuitive, but it is also scientific.

One key notion in Manessy's (1995) model sheds great light on the language creation that took place in Bourbon in the first fifty years of its settlement (Stage I). He

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refers to this process of language creation as *vernacularisation*. *Vernacularisation* is defined both by 1. the two characteristics of pidginization, namely simplification and reduction (Manessy 1995:23-25, *passim*); and 2. what characterizes creolization: "the restitution to a speech variety of the attributes of a vernacular" by the expansion of its vocabulary and morpho-syntactic system (Manessy 1995:31). It should be pointed out here that Manessy (1995:31) sees it as "very likely that the Creole of Réunion [i.e. VLR] arose from a pidginized variety of Middle French [i.e. 17th century French] rather than from a hypothetical pidgin."[80]

Vernacularisation, which is translated as "language creation" in this study,[81] is Manessy's answer to two questions that need to be answered about the VLR. These are actually points made by Reinecke (1971:500, quoted in Manessy 1995:97), who himself presented them under the guise of "two suggested fields for research": 1. "Under what circumstances do some languages undergo extreme simplification and others are only slightly simplified?" and 2. What are the "circumstances under which languages suffer a rapid simplification of the sort which we generally attribute to trade contacts or similar superficial contacts in the case of recognized pidgins, but where *speakers of the simplified languages are in intimate, continuous, and non-discriminatory contact?"*

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[80] In speaking of the VLR, Manessy (1995:102) also states that: "at their origin a pidginized variety of French must be supposed" ("à l'origine duquel il faut bien supposer une variété pidginisée du français"). The idea that the VLR originated in a pidginized form of French is also found in Bollée (1977a, 1977b).

[81] While Manessy's (1995) notion of *vernacularisation* is based in early concepts (cf. Hymes 1971) of pidginization and creolization, it essentially implies the "restructuring" of a language in a contact situation. Indeed, Manessy (1995:98) writes of "a significant reworking of the structure of the said speech variety once it is detached from its linguistic entity" ("un remaniement profond des structures du parler en question, dès lors que celui-ci se trouve détaché de l'entité linguistique à laquelle il appartenait."), a reworking he calls "restructuring" (cf. Note 134). In keeping with the sense in which his model taken in the framework of this study, *vernacularisation* has been translated as "language creation", indicating the input of languages in a conbtact situation, where the reworking is filtered through of the main language of the place of contact. (Cf. Note 92.)

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[Emphasis added.] Manessy's answer is *vernacularisation*, which creates neither pidgins nor creoles, but semi-pidgins. The term "semi-pidgin" here is really less important than the processes involved. Such processes are what Manessy observed in vehicular African languages that have become and are becoming the languages of communites in specific geographic areas.[82]

What Manessy (1995:98) shows characterizes the African examples he refers to not only applies to the VLR extremely well, but pinpoints their essence as a socially unifying speech variety: "They owe their linguistic peculiarity precisely to the fact that they are used by people who are in intimate, continuous, and non-discriminatory contact, who use it like a neutral variety in terms of ethnic and social connotations, for purposes that arise from a daily cohabitation, which implies in turn a shared life-style, and common interests and worries, as well as representations that the vernacular expresses."[83] Further, "what is common to all situations" in which venacularization occurs "is that the use of the simplified variety is interpreted not as a simple means of intercommunication, but as the expression of a solidarity which transcends ethnic differences and whose locus (*cadre*) can be the town, the region... This solidarity is manifested by the community of discourse conventions."[84]

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[82] Manessy (1995:22) mentions that he preferred the term *vernacularisation* to *véhicularisation*, and he also mentions (Manessy 1995:98) that *vernacularisation* allows for "an interpretation of what Alleyne (1971:171) calls 'regular slow historical change'..." ("une interprétation de ce qu'Alleyne (1971, p. 171) désigne par 'regular slow historical change'").

[83] "... ils doivent leurs particularités linguistiques précisément au fait qu'ils sont employés par des gens en contact intime, continu, non-discriminatoire qui en usent comme d'une variété neutre quant aux connotations ethniques et sociales, pour les besoins que suscite une cohabitation quotidienne, celle-ci impliquant à son tour un mode de vie, des intérêts et des soucis partagés, des représentations communes dont le vernaculaire est l'expression" [Manessy 1995:97-8].

[84] "Ce qu'il y a de commun à toutes ces situations est que l'emploi de la variété simplifiée est interprété non comme un simple moyen d'intercommunication, mais comme l'expression d'une solidarité qui transcende

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For Manessy (1995:30), the processes of simplification, reduction, and adaptation (or convergence),[85] which define *vernacularisation*, are all consequences of "the freedom from the constraints imposed by traditional norms" (Manessy 1995:103), or "the weakening of the norms of the source language or their absence" (Manessy 1995:23)."[86] On this point he is in agreement with Chaudenson (1992). However, Manessy (1995) sees the *simplification* that produces vehicular languages and pidgins[87] as resulting—just as reduction (cf. §6.3.2) and adaptation (cf. §6.3.7) do—from the freedom from the constraints imposed on the ways of speaking the source language in its usual official (e.g. administrative, academic, or political) context. The simplification of the source language makes for a greater functional potential (*"fonctionnalisation"*) of a smaller number of parts of speech (Manessy 1995:24), which can be illustrated by what is known of the vehicular varieties of African languages (Manessy 1995:120). What is remarkable for Manessy (1995:106) is that not only can the Camerounian pidgin be included in this respect, but also, to a large extent, the French of the "non-educated" of southern Togo,

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les différenciations ethniques et dont le cadre peut être la ville, la région ... Cette solidarité est manifestée par la communauté des conventions de discours" [Manessy 1995:96-7].

[85] These are originally Hymes' (1971b) terms, Manessy (1995:22) notes. The term "convergence" in English usually implies the "coming together", or "merging", of two actions or processes, while in French it can simply indicate similarities between two situations or processes without any sense of "merging". Despite this fact, and considering its use in Hymes (1971), the term is used here with its French connotation. Given the fact that the systems of reference (in the dual bilingualism) actually merged over time both in the case of the Malagasy and the *Petits Créoles*, diachonically, at least, some merging is implied anyway. Ther term is, however, also used in Manessy 1995 in the sense of "merging" (cf. §6.2.1.4).

[86] "A notre avis, *ce qui caractérise essentiellement le pidgin est l'abolition de toute référence à une norme*, même virtuelle; c'est là la contrepartie sur le plan linguistique, du critère sociolinguistique généralement admis: un pidgin n'est la langue première de personne, l'idiome d'aucun groupe conn groupe connu" 30].

[87] Manessy (1995:22) points out that creolists who write in English use no separate term for the process that produces vehicular languages and subsume it under pidginization.

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taking care to "weed out what is the result of (Ewe) substrate influence."[88] Further, this holds across languages that are typologically different.

By reduction, Manessy (1995:25) means the "effects on the internal structure of a pidginized variety." However, he finds that the term *reduction* is "not precise enough": "What is reduced, it seems, are the conventions imposed by the language on its semantic categories".[89] And he gives as an example the use by Togo's "non-educated" speakers of a marker for number only in cases where an indication of number is necessary. He speaks of clear evidence of a *restructuring* process here that "seems to operate in a very similar way among pidginized varieties which are actually extremely different from one another from a genetic as well as typological viewpoint."[90] Among the shared characteristics, for example, is a tripartite tense system with present, future and past.

Adaptation, or convergence,[91] Manessy (1995:23) sees as possibly allowing one to "distinguish a vehicular variety from an approximated variety on a linguistic level."[92] The vehicular use of such a contact language implies for Manessy (1995:23) its adaptating to a "different linguistic structure", namely that of the "dominant language of

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[88] "Nous n'avons, bien entendu, retenu que les traits qui ne sont pas imputables à l'influence du 'substrat' ewe" [Manessy 1995:103].

[89] "La libération des contraintes qu'exerce la norme traditionnelle, ou l'absence de celle-ci, ont des effets remarquables sur la structure interne de la variété pidginisée. Le terme de réduction", communément employé à ce propos, n'est pas suffisamment précis. Ce qui nous paraît être réduit, ce sont les conventions imposées par la langue à l'expression des catégories sémantiques. ... un exemple: le français des Togolais 'non-lettrés': n'exprime le nombre que dans la mesure où la quantification s'avère nécessaire [Manessy 1995:105]

[90] "Beaucoup plus manifeste en revanche est un processus de restructuration qui paraît opérer de façon fort analogue dans les variétés pidginisées de langues par ailleurs extrêmement différentes du point de vue généalogique aussi bien que typologique" [Manessy 1995:106].

[91] Cf. Kouwenberg (2001) for recent, renewed interest in this concept in pidgin and creole studies.

[92] "... et ce peut être un des critères permettant, sur le plan linguistique, de distinguer la variété véhiculaire d'une langue de ses variétés approximatives (mal apprises)" [Manessy 1995:23].

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the place of exchange"[93] either by "conforming" to it or by "eliminating" (cf. Samarin (1970:668) from it. By the former, the language is "to a certain degree reinterpreted from the point of view of a foreign model (*dans une certaine mesure réinterprétée d'après un modèle étranger*); and by the latter, "a point on which Samarin insists, the source language is received through a sieve provided by the source language and the characteristics of one that have no equivalent in the other risk being lost".[94] In the case of Bourbon, the "dominant language of the place of exchange" would have been the Malagasy dialect(s), which had already been in contact with Popular French in Madagascar previously. An example of such adaptation is the difference between stative and non-stative verbs, which seems to exist in the VLR in a manner that is neither present in Malagasy dialects nor in Popular French (§5.5.5). This is a new typological feature born of contact, which is not strictly a matter of convergence, since neither of the languages in contact had this feature. The effect of convergence, on the other hand, can account for the slowing down of the process of *vernacularisation* (cf. §6:3).

The effect of these three processes (i.e. simplification, reduction, and adaptation, or convergence) on the Popular French spoken in Bourbon in Stage I is discussed in the next three sections (§6.2.1.1-3) with reference to parallel effects on French in contemporary Africa. It should be noted here that Manessy (1995:135) admits that the circumstances in today's African context are different from those of the French colonial setting of the 17th and 18th centuries. Although the French model offered to "non-

[93] "L'emploi véhiculaire détermine au contraire une adaptation de la variété considérée à une structure linguistique différente, celle de la langue dominante au lieu de l'échange" [Manessy 1995:23].
[94] "Samarin (1970b, p. 668) insiste sur ce point; selon lui, la langue (langue cible) est reçue à travers la grille fournie par la langue première (langue source) et les caractéristiques de l'une qui n'ont pas d'équivalent dans l'autre risquent d'être perdues" [Manessy 1995:23].

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educated" Africans who have an indirect access to the standard at school and on the radio is not the same as that of the Popular French spoken in 17th century Bourbon, Manessy (1995:135)[95] points out that "the mode of acquisition remains the same" and "its goal has not changed." He comments further: "Schematized in this way, the locus (*cadre*) of acquisition and the usage of French are not even at the present time radically different from those which one may suppose obtained in the first period of the colonization of the West Indies and the islands of the Indian Ocean. It is, of course, gainsaid that the hierarchical relations were of a totally different nature there. Further, the model that was proposed was not Standard French, but a popular speech variety, steeped in the dialectal usage of the first 'settler-farmers'".[96]

Manessy (1995; 1987) provides generalizations about simplification and reduction at two levels: 1. vehicular African languages not related to French;[97] and 2. vehicular varieties of African French (in Togo, Cameroun, and the Ivory Coast). Manessy (1995) gives particular details about the vehicular variety of African French that is most likely to undergo a form of creolization: the *français populaire d'Abidjan* (ou *ivoirien*) and establishes parallels with French-based creoles and the VLR. The simplification and reduction in each of the two types of vehicular varieties will be compared with the simplification and reduction that occurred or failed to occur in the VLR.

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[95] Manessy at this point refers to Labov's (1971:423) Unitarian Principle, according to which: "The linguistic processes taking place around us are the same as those that have operated to produce the historical record."

[96] "Ainsi schématisé, le cadre d'acquisition et d'utilisation du français n'est pas, même à l'heure actuelle, foncièrement différent de celui qu'on suppose avoir prévalu dans les premiers temps de la colonisation aux Indes Occidentales et dans l'Océan Indien. Il est admis, bien entendu, que la relation hiérarchique y était d'une tout autre nature. En outre, le modèle proposé n'était pas le français standard, mais le langage populaire et fortement marqué d'usages dialectaux des premiers 'habitants'" [Manessy 1995:134-5].

[97] It is important to understand that these languages are not pidgins in the usual sense (cf. Note 87).

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6.2.1.2 Simplification and reduction in vehicular African languages and the VLR

The purpose of the simplification that has occurred in the vehicular African languages, independently of the typological differences between them, Manessy (1995:25) claims, is to "simplify the task for the speaker and the listener." "The interlocutors are less concerned about speaking well than they are about *understanding each other well*" (Manessy 1995:22).[98] The simplification at the morpho-syntactic level (Manessy 1995:26; 102) consists typically of what is summarized in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Common morpho-syntactic traits among vehicular African languages

A. Simplification

1. the reduction of the number of parts of speech;
2. the reduction of the inventory of grammaticalized categories;
3. the impoverishment of the repertoire of grammatical relationships (the confusion of identification (***c'est le chef*** 'it is the boss'), actualization (***voici le chef*** 'here is the boss'), and equation (***il est le chef*** 'he is the boss') [Manessy 1995:26];
4. the grammaticalization of the order of words, which has become the main indicator of the fonction of the constituents of a statement and of the syntactic relations that unite them [Manessy 1995:102].[99]

B. Reduction

1. a tripartite system of present, future, and past, characterized by two marked forms for the future and the past, respectively, or perhaps more exactly, for the posterior and the anterior;
2. an aspectual contrast between process in development, and punctual or accomplished process [Manessy 1995:105].[100]

[98] "... les interlocuteurs se soucient moins de bien parler que de se bien comprendre" [Manessy 1995:22].

[99] "... réduction du nombre des parties du discours; la réduction de l'inventaire des catégories grammaticalisées; l'appauvrissement du répertoire des relations syntaxiques codifiées (la confusion des rapports d'identification ('c'est le chef'), d'actualisation ('voici le chef') ou d'équation ('il est le chef')" [Manessy 1995:26]; "la grammaticalisation de l'ordre des mots, devenu le principal indice de la fonction qu'assument les constituents de l'énoncé et des relations syntaxiques qui les unissent" [Manessy 1995:102]; "l'élimination de toute redondance grammaticale, chaque morphème n'étant exprimé qu'une fois dans la proposition et généralement toujours à la même place; par voie de conséquence, la grammaticalisation de l'ordre des mots. Ce catalogue sommaire pourrait être illustré, par exemple, par ce que l'on sait des variétés véhiculaires des langues africaines" [Manessy 1995:102].

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Although Manessy's (1995) model is based on vehicular African languages, it should be pointed out that for him the parallels he observed between vehicular languages hold despite the (sometimes significant) typological differences between the languages in contact.[101] This makes the interpolation with the VLR possible since the languages in contact in Bourbon were not typologically related (Popular French, Indian languages, Indo-Portuguese, and Malagasy). It should also be borne in mind that the grammar of the emerging vernacular lect of Bourbon must have been more primitive than it was even in 1715. However, from what is evident on the basis of the later states of the grammar, some comments can be made.

Looking first at the effects of simplification, there is first the "reduction of the number of parts of speech". Here the VLR would seem to stand out as an anomaly to the extent that the French category of article has not disappeared from them. Quite to the contrary, while the marking of definiteness is not very clear cut (cf. §5.6.1), there is a clear use of an indefinite article, which is occasionally contrasted with a definite article even in basilectal varieties. In fact, the VLR have not reduced the number of parts of speech in the sense that they distinguish among verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, all to a certain—even though it may be quite uneven—morphological degree. For example, *vitement* 'quickly', etc. It should be pointed out, however, that this quality of part of speech is mostly encoded lexically, not morphologically. Indeed, to the extent

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[100] "Ainsi peut-on décrire nombre de systèmes verbaux de langues pidginisées comme fondés sur la combinaison d'une distinction chronologique entre une forme neutre et deux formes marquées respectivement pour le futur et le passé ou peut-être, plus précisément, pour l'ultérieur et l'antérieur, et d'une opposition aspectuelle entre le procès en développement et le procès ponctuel ou achevé" [Manessy 1995:105].

[101] "Such convergence among varieties of typologically very different languages (for there is hardly any closer resemblance between Swahili in East Africa and Sango in Central Africa, for example, than there is between either of these and French) can only be explained by what they have in common: their functions and the conditions in which they are used." ("Une telle convergence entre des variétés de langues typologiquement très différentes (car il n'y a guère plus de ressemblance entre le swahili d'Afrique Orientale et le sango centrafricain, par exemple qu'entre l'un ou l'autre et le français) ne peut s'expliquer que par ce qu'elles ont de commun: leurs functions et leur conditions d'emploi") [Manessy 1978:99].

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that the morphological marking is singularly reduced, there is also a blurring of the boundaries between parts of speech. For example, it is likely that the noun *fénwa* 'darkness' was at one time a verb also, though the only marking on the verb *i fénwa* 'it is dark' was not a prefix or a suffix. An exception, however, must be made in the case of conjunctions and relative pronouns (which can be grouped together as complementizers). The replacement of subordination and relative clauses by asyndetic constructions is a characteristic of the VLR (cf. §5.6.7, §5.6.4, and §5.5.5.2), even though the use of a construction with *pou* to express purpose serves as a complement to various adjectives or verbs, e.g. *kapab pou fé* 'able/manage to do' compared to *i moyen pas sorti son têye* 'he cant' get his head out' in Manessy (1995:124) in the *français populaire d'Abidjan* (FPA).

The second aspect of simplification is the "reduction of the inventory of grammaticalized categories", or the number of items in each grammatical set. The multi-functionality, or increased functionality of the same item is evident in the VLR. To give just a few examples, there are: 1. the reduction of the number of demonstrative pronouns, mainly limited to *sa(la)* 'this/that'; and 2. the reduced number of prepositions, as well as the concentration on a few choice prepositions for a multiplicity of meanings, which is evident in the passe-partout use of *pou* 'for' and *ek* 'with' (even the use of the preposition *ek* 'with' to replace the Popular French coordination *et* 'and'). Since simplification occurs mostly on a lexical basis and the order of words replaces morphological marking, the inventory of grammaticalized categories is bound to be reduced. Interestingly, there is no reduction in the number of personal pronouns, the VLR having both subject and (direct and indirect) object pronouns (cf. §5.6.2).

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The third aspect of simplification is the "impoverishment of the repertoire of grammatical relationships". Although on this point the situation might well have been quite different very early on, it cannot be said that the simplification was as radical.

Finally, but most importantly, there is the "grammaticalization of the order of words", which is the map of grammatical relations among elements and of each of their functions. The adoption in the VLR of the word order of the Popular French, or the marked order of Malagasy, sentence structure put a heavy load on the order of words as *the* grammatical map or indicator, with the consequences described in §5.5.

Turning to the effects of reduction, there is first the "tripartite system of present, future, and past, characterized by two marked forms for the future and the past, respectively, or perhaps more exactly, for the posterior and the anterior." As Cellier (1985a:396) makes clear, this is the situation for the VLR, where such a thing as "present time" may well not exist in the sense of the Popular (or Standard) French view (cf. §4.2.3). His description of an anterior and posterior distinction as the core of the tense system, is proof enough. Second there is the "aspectual contrast between process in development and punctual or accomplished process." As the discussion of aspect in §4.2.3.3 indicates, such distinctions are characteristic of the VLR and their being seen as part of the core set of markers by Ramassamy (1985:147) attests to this convincingly for the early stages of the vernacular lect in Bourbon.[102]

The comparison of the VLR and the vehicular African languages reveals that the former do not present as radical a simplification and reduction as do the latter. Was there,

[102] Ramassamy does not include the past marker *la* in her original set of markers, but *fin, té, i sa* and *va*.

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it must be asked, an element in the contact situation that stemmed the kind of radical simplification and reduction (phase of *vernacularisation*) that one might expect would have occurred judging form the nature of vehicular African languages? This question is answered below in §6.2.1.4. It is interesting to note, in the meantime, that according to Manessy (1995:99), "One difference between *vernacularisation* and pidginization proper is that the effects of the former are not as radical as can be those of the latter."[103]

6.2.1.3 Simplification and reduction in vehicular varieties of African French and the VLR

Turning now to the common morpho-syntactic traits among the contemporary French-based vehicular African languages, a more detailed consideration is possible. Most important is the fact that there is a very great similarity among these languages born of "vulgar French". From a broadly morpho-syntactic point of view, there are shared characteristics among the contemporary vehicular varieties of African French, which include the speech of the "non-educated" in Togo and Cameroun, the *français populaire d'Abidjan* (ou *ivoirien*), and to some degree the *petit nègre.*[104] What all these have in common is that they are varieties of French born of indirect input and are not the result of second language acquisition, i.e. they are varieties that have developed as the speech form of a group separate from the group that speaks the official, administrative, or academic variety of the superstrate, or "imposed" standard.[105] The typical traits shared by

[103] "Une différence importante entre la vernacularisation et la pidginisation proprement dite est que les effets de la première ne sont pas aussi radicaux que peuvent l'être ceux de la seconde" [Manessy 1995:99].
[104] The data for Togo are from Lafage (1985); for the Ivory Coast from Lafage (1979a, 1979b), Lescutier (1982); for Cameroun from Manessy (1978b). The *petit nègre* or *petit français* is the variety spoken by the household staff and workers in the employ of the French. (Cf. Note 106 below.)
[105] Manessy (1978:97) distinguishes between these two kinds of French as "imported French" and "imposed French", respectively.

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these vehicular languages and *petit nègre* or *petit français* (Manessy 1978:97-8 and 1995:134) are listed in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2 Morpho-syntactic traits in vehicular varieties of African French

- simple forms of the verb: infinitive, or past participle, or imperative form, or regularized forms (in *-er*):
  je parler 'I speak', *je fini* 'I finish', *je vois/vu* 'I see', *je vouler* 'I want to';
- negation expressed simply by the word *pas* 'not' after the verb:
  il parti pas 'he doesn't leave'
- no distinction for gender and number;
- loss of article or its permanent presence (sort of prefix to noun):
  son la maison 'his house';
- common use of *gagner* 'win' and *il y a/y en* 'there is/are' as verbal particles:
  *moi y a gagné perdu (**'j'ai perdu'** 'I have lost'), lui ya gagn crevé (**'il est mort'** 'he has died'), il a gagné gros (**'il est devenu gros'** 'he has become fat'), il a gagné petit (**'elle a eu un enfant'** 'she had a child');*
- use of the word *là* 'there' as a demonstrative;
- common suppression of *à* 'to' and *de* 'from/of' or their replacement by the preposition *pou* 'for':
  *moi parti village (**'je vais au village'** 'I'm going to the village'), le fusil mon camarade (**'le fusil de mon camarade'** 'my friend's rifle');*
- *Dié i défendé bouffer, si tu bouffer tu va mort* 'God doesn't allow you to eat; if you eat, you will die'. *(petit français,* Manessy 1995:134)

Manessy (1978:92) points to the "uniformity" of the forms of "imported French" (as opposed to "imposed French") in Africa, a language which survived in "linguistic islands" and spread out from them. While acknowledging different causes at work in the development of each one, Manessy (1978:92) points out that "such uniformity cannot be a matter of coincidence, nor is it due to some tendency in French itself." "The uniformity of effects," he also comments (Manessy 1978:91), "is what precludes any attempt at explanation via *vehicular substrates*, whose diversity is so great."[106] This imported French has been stated by some as being "the product", Manessy (1978:97) writes, "of

[106] "Une telle uniformité ne peut pas être imputée à des convergences de hazard, ni à une quelconque 'tendance' de la langue française ... " [Manessy 1978:92]; "l'uniformité des effets ... ruine d'avance toute tentative d'explication par un substrat véhiculaire dont la diversité est extrême" [Manessy 1978:91].

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the of non-educated social categories in direct contact with the White man: household staff and workers."[107] Though he hesitates to call this a process of creolization, he sees the process creolization as having applied *to* such a state of language.[108]

The best documented example of this kind of contemporary vehicular variety of African French is the *français populaire d'Abidjan* (ou *ivoirien*) (FPA/I), whose morpho-syntactic characteristic traits (Hattiger (1979, 1980)[109] are given in Table 6.3 below:[110]

Table 6.3 Morpho-syntactic traits of the FPA/I

- reduced form of verb (infinitive/past participle/imperative of French): e.g. [kury] (Fr. ***courir***, inf.) 'run'; [parti] (Fr. ***partir/parti***, inf./PP) 'leave'; also found are [prãn] (Fr. ***prends***, imper.) 'take'; [vãdu/vãdi] (Fr. ***vendu***, PP) 'sell'; [vã] (Fr. ***vends***, imper.) 'sell'
- inflected markers of time [suffixed morphemes] disappear and are replaced by "auxiliaries": [va] (for future), [a] (for past);
- negation reduced to [pa], only used with verbs, which it follows;
- [gaŋ] for 'acquire, own'

Written F.P.A./I[111] is slightly different in that it has inflected forms for the future auxiliary [*je vais, tu vas* ...] and the past auxiliary [*j'ai, tu as* ...]. However, it has pairs for the verbs: [*pèle/pélé*] (Fr. ***appeler***] 'call'; [*commence/commencé*] (Fr. ***commencer***) 'begin'; [*pose/posé*] (Fr. ***poser***) 'stay'.

*One speaker has an imperfect inflected form in –é: [*i vãd mais*] Fr. ***il vendait du maïs***] 'he sold/used to sell corn'

The parallels with the VLR are very striking. They are summarized in Table 6.4 below.

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[107] "... est le fait de la catégorie sociale non instruite et en contact direct avec le Blanc: domestiques et main d'oeuvre ouvrière" [Manessy 1978:97].

[108] Manessy (1978:93) mentions "the affinities [African French] reveals with respect to the creoles that arose out of it" ("les affinités qu'il présente à l'égard des créoles qui en sont issus").

[109] "... a corpus extracted from Hattiger's (1981) thesis, recorded with the participation of 16 informants ranging from 15 to 55 years of age belonging to different ethnic groups and having lived in Abidjan for 5 years ... and two previous articles by Hattiger (1979, 1980)" [Manessy 1995:122]. [Note: In the bibliography, Manessy gives Manessy gives 1978 and 1980, which we have indicated as the dates in the bibliography of this study.]

[110] The data from the oral source are given in phonetic transcription in squared brackets, while the data from the written source are given in italics and a spelling that approximates them to French words. Hattiger's (1981) recordings constitute his oral material, and the magazine *Zazou* his written material.

[111] "an issue of a weekly titled *Zazou*, and a few cartoons titled *Dago*, and a fable published in the daily *Fraternité-Matin*, 12.25.78 'la grénouille et la [*sic*] bèf'" [Manessy 1995:122].

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Table 6.4 Simplification and reduction in the VLR (Stage I: 1663 - 1715)

- simplification of the verb form (*parti* in *la parti* and *fait* in *lété ki fait*)
- reduction of pronoun forms: *mwen* [instead of Fr. *je* 'I']
  and use of *amoin* after the verb (i.e. loss of preverbal Fr. clitic ***me*** 'me')
- loss of gender distinction: *lhomme*and *lamour* (with agglutinated article)
- loss of preposition in *l'homme de jardin* [which was probably *lom zardin*, with the Fr. ***de*** 'of' most likely not distinct from the onset consonant of [*zaʳdĩ*] or perhaps [*žaʳdĩ*]]

Some comments are in order about the parallels between the morpho-syntactic traits common to French-based vehicular African languages, and the VLR, with particular reference to FPA. Each point is considered in turn.

1. The "simple" or "reduced" form of the verb is evident in the VLR, although there are the long and short forms to be accounted for (cf. §6.2.1.3 below under "convergence"). The parallels with FPA here are striking since the forms that survive are either the infinitive, the past participle, or the imperative, which are all salient forms in the superstrate. Such forms are *pèle/pélé* 'call' (Fr. ***appeler / appèle***) and *vã, vãdu/vãndi* 'sell' (Fr. ***vend/vendu***) in the FPA correspond to *apèl/apelé* 'call' and *vã, vãdi* 'sell' in the VLR. The parallels here include the bringing of irregular verb forms in line with regular forms by analogy, as in *tu vouler* 'you want' in the FPA and *asizé* 'sit' (Naze 1983:64) in the VLR (cf. §4.2.5 for so-called inflected forms).

2. The disappearance of "inflected markers of time" and the use of auxiliaries in their stead presents a clear parallel case, too. Corresponding to *va* for posterior (*je vas lui gorger* 'I am going to kill him') and *a* (*on a verse sa figure par terre* 'he was covered in shame') for anterior, the VLR also have *va* and *la*, respectively.

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3. The "negation expressed simply by the word [pa] after the verb" presents an important parallel with the VLR because French-based creoles for the most part (cf. Mauritian Creole) have a negation that precedes the verb.[112] Even with the differences in pattern noted in the VLR (cf. §4.2.6), the parallel still holds, e.g. *il parti pas* 'he isn't leaving' in FPA and *li par pa* 'he isn't leaving' in the VLR (vs. MC: *li pa 'n parti*).

4. There is "no distinction of gender or number" in either the FPA or the VLR. Just as in the VLR *son monmon* is 'his/her mother', *son zãfã* is either 'his/her child' or 'his/her children', in the FPA [sɔ̃ sãmilfrã] is 'his/her 100,000 francs' and [sɔ̃ frɛr ... sɔ̃ sœr] is 'his/her brothers ... sisters' (Manessy 1995:125).

5. The "loss of the article or its permanent presence" is illustrated by *son lamison* 'his/her house' (Manessy 1995:125), which corresponds to *son lakaz* in the VLR, both containing agglutinated articles, i.e. loss of the article. The FPA seems to have retained the indefinite article to some degree. However, as was mentioned above, the VLR have also retained the indefinite article and make use of the definite article. In the FPA, the definite article is "redundant when it is present", as in *le gars-là*, literally 'the guy (the)' (Manessy 1995:126), and one can wonder if the article is not agglutinated there, too.

6. The "use of the word *là* as a demonstrative" is an instance where there is a partial correspondance between the FPA and the VLR. There are instances in the VLR where the word *là* alone following the noun is used as a demonstrative, as in *boug la* (ce

[112] *Li pa 'n resi gayhe dah sa duz mwa-la* [3s. **NEG** PERF manage get in DEM twelve month DEM] 'It did not succeed in getting [a lamb] in that twelve month' [Baker 1972:197].

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type) 'this guy' (Cellier 1985a:307), which also occurs as *se boug la* (ce type) 'this guy' (Cellier 1985a:307). While in the former [ʒve plãte kafɛ] means 'I'm going to plant some coffee', [kafɛ la sa dɔnə pa] means 'this coffee does not produce' (Manessy 1995:125). The VLR use *sa* 'this/that' (followed or not by *la*) more often as a demonstrative.

7. As for the "common suppression of *à* and *de* or their replacement by the preposition *pou*", this is the case in both the FPA and the VLR. In both the use of the [d] of the superstrate *de* is mostly agglutinated. Compare [larzã də syrãs] 'insurance money' (Manessy 1995:126) in the FPA and *l'homme de jardin* 'gardener' in the VLR, in which both expressions may well be a fossilized form. Cf. also *fini boir* and *fini d'boir* as variants in (Nicaise 1992:83).

8. In the lexical field, most vehicular varieties of African French make a "common use of *gagner*" and *il y a/y en a* is "used as verbal particle" or "use [gaŋ] for 'acquire, own'. In the FPA, *quelle bon chose j'ai gagné depuis je posé dans monde-là?* 'what happiness has befallen me since I was put in this world?' (Manessy 1995:123) illustrates the meaning of 'acquire', while in the VLR the uses of *gagne* are many, including *demin i peu gagn alu* 'tomorrow you can get it' (Cellier 1985a:364), although it is mainly used as meaning 'manage, be able' as a kind of auxiliary verb, as in *mi gagn pa lir, moin* 'I can't read'.

Other parallels that should be mentioned are the distinction between subject and object personal pronouns, with the direct object pronouns following the verb, as in [5

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dwa prãd sa] 'we have to take it' (Manessy 1995:125) and [ʒve mwajɛ̃ lyi] 'I will manage it' (Manessy 1995:124). The object pronouns postposed to the verb are [mwa] 1s, [twa] 2s, [lyi] 3s, [nu] 1p. [vu] 2p, and [løʀ] 3p., as in the sentence [patrɔ̃ il a pɛje mwa][113] 'The boss has paid me' (Manessy 1995:124). However, the FPA also has clitic personal pronouns which come before the verb. Also the use of the emphatic postposed *même* in the FPA should be mentioned as a parallel to the *minm* in the VLR. Finally, *fini* is used in the FPA in an adverbial sense, as it is in the VLR. The expression *fini complet* in the FPA means 'completely finished', much like *fin(i) pret* means 'quite ready' in the VLR.

On the whole, many forms in the FPA are still close to the variety of French that constitutes its superstrate, but it is hard to tell which ones are subsisting as fixed or crystallized forms—much in the way fossilized forms do, and which are not. There is naturally a significant amount of variation, as there must have been in the emergent vernacular in Bourbon. It is, however, the striking parallels that are informative. The striking parallels seem to indicate that the same processes of simplification and reduction were operating in the *vernacularisation* of Popular French in Bourbon as operate in the vehicular varieties of African French.

The comparison of the morpho-syntactic characteristics of vehicular African languages and contemporary vehicular varieties of African French, on the one hand, and those of the VLR, on the other, make some interpolation possible. This interpolation can

[113] The PFA has a subject reprise in the 3s. as in: *type-là i veut pas personne i va connaître son secret.* However, this is an altogether different case from the *i* in the VLR and presents no parallel.

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help tease out what changes may be due to language universals operative in vehicular languages in general (across typological boundaries), from changes due to other processes of language change from language contact, such as adaptation (or convergence) and even creole-specific changes and later grammaticalization in the sense of Detges' (2000) model in §6.2.5.

6.2.1.4 Adaptation and convergence in the emerging vernacular: substrate influence

By 1715, the effects of simplification and reduction can be considered manifest to a degree in the sentence uttered by the house slave Marie: *Moin la parti parce qu'Alexis l'homme de jardin l'était qui fait à moin trop l'amour* (Chaudenson 1974:444, 1106, 1147). However, this sentence also shows the results of a phenomenon Manessy (1995:102) sees as associated with pidginization without its actually being characteristic of it, namely adaptation or convergence (Hymes 1971:84).[114] Also a result of the weakening of the norms of the source language, Manessy (1995:23) sees adaptation as possibly allowing one to "distinguish a vehicular variety from an approximated variety on a linguistic level."[115] This distinction is one that can enable one to establish substratal influence where otherwise only improper second language learning (approximations of approximations, cf. Chaudenson 1992) has otherwise been thought to be operative.

The vehicular use of a contact language implies for Manessy (1995:23) its adaptating to a "different linguistic structure", namely that of the "dominant language of

[114] Cf. Kouwenberg 2001 for recent, renewed interest in this concept in pidgin and creole studies.

[115] "... et ce peut être un des critères permettant, sur le plan linguistique, de distinguer la variété véhiculaire d'une langue de ses variétés approximatives (mal apprises)" [Manessy 1995:23].

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the place of exchange"[116] either by "conforming" to it or by "eliminating" (cf. Samarin (1970:668) from it. By the former, the language is "to a certain degree reinterpreted from the point of view of a foreign model (*dans une certaine mesure réinterprétée d'après un modèle étranger*); and by the latter, "a point on which Samarin insists, the source language is received through a sieve provided by the source language and the characteristics of one that have no equivalent in the other risk being lost".[117] This double role of "conforming" and "eliminating" is what can account for the two effects the Malagasy substrate had on the *vernacularisation* of popular French: 1. the creation of new forms;[118] and 2. the stemming of the processes of simplification and reduction. An example of substrate influence illustrating "conforming" is the case of the past marker *la*. This prefix is unique to the VLR. It is not found in any French-based creole and its closest form is to be found in the *français populaire d'Abidjan (*ou *ivoirien)* in the form of *a* (Manessy 1995:123). This is most likely a restructured form based on a shared feature of Malagasy and French. Malagasy uses a prefix to mark tense and the Malagasy speakers most likely interpreted the Popular French *[i]l a* as equivalent to the prefixing found in Malagasy (cf. §5.5.3).

It is this process of adaptation or convergence that supports, for example, the case made in the last chapter for the contact-induced origin of the ASM *i*, namely that the substrate structure of marking the agent in a subject role contributed to changing the [i] of

[116] "L'emploi véhiculaire détermine au contraire une adaptation de la variété considérée à une structure linguistique différente, celle de la langue dominante au lieu de l'échange" [Manessy 1995:23].
[117] "Samarin (1970b. p. 668) insiste sur ce point; selon lui, la langue (langue cible) est reçue à travers la grille fournie par la langue première (langue source) et les caractéristiques de l'une qui n'ont pas d'équivalent dans l'autre risquent d'être perdues" [Manessy 1995:23].
[118] "As Samarin points out (1971:125), pidginization does not necessarily entail the impoverishment of a vernacular language. If certain semantic distinctions are eliminated, others may appear or develop" Manessy (1977:145).

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the *lété ki* construction into an agentive marker (§5.5.5). This is possibly just *one* among other instances of adaptation or convergence. It is in this regard that Manessy (1995:102) mentions in passing that the VLR (*le créole de la Réunion*), "it must be supposed, arose out of a pidginized variety of French" (*à l'origine duquel il faut bien suppposer une variété pidginisée du français*).[119] For Manessy (1995:102), by convergence is meant "any and all phenomena of reciprocal interference between languages in contact."[120] It is the specific role of Malagasy in this reciprocal interference that makes substratal influence an *essential explanatory key* in the issue of its genesis.[121] Interestingly, in a very recent article, Thomason (2001:255), in speaking of shift-induced interference in pidgin/creole genesis, supports this very same idea:

> That's not all there is to the process: there is also creation of new grammatical structures, through a process of (implicit) negotiation among all the speakers involved in the genesis of the new creole.[122] ... in ordinary shift situations there is no negotiation among shifting speakers, because they all share the same L1; and if they learn the TL [target language] imperfectly, they are likely to make similar or identical "errors". These "errors" may include (among other things) marked features of their original L1. Not so in creole genesis: *unless some particular substrate group is especially prominent in the new contact community*, no marked features from substrate languages are likely to turn up in the resulting creole [emphasis added].

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[119] Manessy (1995:102) gives percentages of lexical data as an indication of this convergence as possible, though not necessarily characterizing a pidgin: in the VLR, 10.8% is "truly réunionnais", the "survival of popular of dialectal French 31.6%, and the "French-based neologisms" 57.6%".

[120] "... la convergence, si l'on entend par là l'ensemble des phénomènes d'interférence réciproque entre langues en contact" [Manessy 1995:102].

[121] Cf. also what McMahon (1994:213) writes of convergence, "a type of contact-induced linguistic change which, in some senses, is the inverse of borrowing... ." "While borrowing," he writes, "requires only very limited bilingualism, and often involves influence of a more prestigious on a less prestigious language, convergence occurs only in cases of widespread and stable bilingualism and requires the participating languages to be perceived as socially equal ... ."

[122] Although Thomason uses the term "creole" here, it must not be taken in a sense that excludes its relevance to the VLR. It is the fact that the result is not due to imperfect language learning of the shift of one language group that is essential.

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Thomason here is in agreement with Manessy, and their point is crucial when it comes to the role Malagasy may have played as an "especially dominant" group in the early history of Bourbon.

Manessy (1978:102) is very explicit in his view of the emergence of the VLR. It is the "reinterpretation of a second language as an indicator of one's belonging to a community that goes beyond the ethnic group," a "phenomenon that is likely not limited to French". "If there is a chance," he explains, "or a risk, of a process of creolization occurring ... it is according to this mode of appropriation that it is likely to occur." And he makes the risk explicit by indicating that he means "the formation of a lexically French language that would bear the same relationship to 'central' French as, for example, the *gros créole* of Réunion [i.e. coastal basilcetal variety] does."[123] He mentions (Manessy 1978:95) the "franlof" of Senegal, a mixture of French and Wolof, which was at one point a very good candidate for such a process of creolization.

6.2.2 Manessy's (1995) interpolation and Detges' (2000) interpolation

The interpolation from contemporary vehicular varieties of African French (which are at a pre-creole stage) sheds important light on the processes at work in the language change that occurred in Stage I in Bourbon. Interestingly, what Manessy (1978, 1995) contributes to the diachronic study of the VLR dovetails with Detges' (2000) findings for

[123] "Ce phénomène de réinterprétation d'une langue seconde comme indicateur d'une appartenance à une communauté plus grande que le groupe ethnique ... n'est probablement pas proper au français. ... S'il y a une chance, ou un risque de créolisation, c'est-à-dire de formation d'une langue à base lexicale française, mais qui serait dans le même rapport au français 'central' que, par example, le 'gros créole' de la Réunion, c'est dans ce mode d'appropriation qu'il réside" [Manessy 1978:102].

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the VLR based on interpolation from French-based creoles in terms of creole-specific restructuring and grammaticalization.

Indeed, Stage I (1663-1715) is the period in which the emerging vernacular of Bourbon (Chaudenson's *bourbonnais*), the earliest form of the VLR, arises from the contact of speakers of a superstrate, Popular French, and speakers of substrates, namely Malagasy (dialects), and Indo-Portuguese or Indian languages, with a Malagasy substrate as predominant. The creation of "new grammatical structures" (Thomason 2001b:255) are what Detges' (2000) principle of restructuring make explicit, and what Manessy's notion of adaptation, or convergence, accounts for.

For Detges (2000:135) "instances of universal grammaticalization do occur in creole languages, especially at later stages of their development, but grammaticalization and the particular kind of grammatical restructuring which is typical of creolization[124] are two fundamentally different types of processes."[125] While recognizing a "clear material continuity from French to Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s," Detges (1995:144) states emphatically that "the grammaticalization processes that turned *fin(i)* into an anterior marker in some of the Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s are developments specific to these languages. Neither in Standard French nor in any of the dialectal varieties of 17th c. French were *finir* or *fini* used as anteriors in the sense outlined above. Along with material continuity between French and the Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s, we find a clear-cut *functional discontinuity*" [emphasis added]. In his study of French-based creoles, Detges (200:146ff) distinguishes

[124] The term "creolization" refers here to the restructuring in the French-based creoles.
[125] Cf. also Lang 2000.

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between an early process of reanalysis and an early process of grammaticalization. For him the former is a "hearer's strategy" grounded in specific "cognitive meachnisms", while the latter is a "speaker's strategy'. His "principle of restructuring" operative in the non-French speakers in the contact situation is: "Try to match salient elements of the situation, as you perceive it, with the sound chain you hear."

Detges' (200:148) aim is to "show that some of the grammatical elements of the Fr[ench Cr[eole]s, typically elements which, in the base language, already had grammatical or near-grammatical function, are not the result of grammaticalization ... . This applies to the anterior *la* in Réu[nion] Fr[ench] Cr[eole] (<Fr *il/elle a*) and to the tense markers which are the survivors of the French *être*-paradigm, particularly the past-tense marker *ti/té* (<Fr *était (à)*) which we find in all the Fr[ench] Cr[eole] languages and the future marker *sa/sra* (<Fr *sera*) in Lou[siana] Fr[ench] Cr[eole]." Further, for him, "[t]he simultaneous material transmission and functional loss of the French article forms provide a simple example of the cognitive mechanisms which governed the process of restructuring in the genesis of the Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s" (Detges 2000:148). Detges (2000:154), for whom "both types of restructuring are radically different," points out two differences between the products of reanalysis, on the one hand, and those of grammaticalization, on the other:

> 1. "Grammaticalization is brought about by speakers who try to speak convincingly, creole-specific reanalysis is *the result of a hearer's strategy, aimed at understanding*" [emphasis added] (Detges 2000:154).
>
> 2. "Historically, the generation of markers which are brought about by creole-specific reanalysis represent *the earliest layer in the system of the language* while markers which are the result of grammaticalization emerge in later stages of the creole's history" [emphasis added] (Detges 2000:155).

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Detges' (2000) idea that reanalysis is "the result of a hearer's strategy" goes along with both Manessy's (1995:30) idea that in simplification speakers are more concerned with "making themselves understood" than with "speaking correctly" and Thomason's (2001b:255) notion of "negotiation among all the speakers involved in the genesis of a new creole".

The two most interesting elements here in terms of the present discussion are: 1. the distribution of *two* different kinds of restructuring into early and later periods; and 2. the value of *saliency* in the early period, which dovetails with Manessy's understanding of adaptation or convergence. In this respect, two points made by Detges (2000:154) are particularly striking: 1. "Markers which are the result of creole-specific reanalysis are conceptually isolated: in the Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s *té/ti* never had a function other than marking background past events." This is particularly interesting with reference to the ASM *i*, a salient element that underwent reanalysis, as well as *la, sava* and *a/va/ava;* and 2. "On the other hand, periphrastic *être pour* already existed in Middle French ... In all of the Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s, this construction was conceptually motivated in that the link between the concepts of DESTINATION and NEAR FUTURE was originally accessible to the speakers (as it still is in Hai[tian] Fr[ench] Cr[eole] and Réu[nion] Fr[ench]Cr[eole])" (Detges 2000:155-6). How Detges' (2000) concept of reanalysis dovetails into Manessy's (1995) approach is evident from what the latter says about the survival of old forms of the source language in its vernacularized variety, illustrated in Table 6.5 below.[126]

[126] Manessy (1995:120) points to this interesting fact in these words: "In any case, the lack of interest for the [linguistic] model held up by the dominant group probably blocked the efforts at approximation at a level of compatibility with the needs of conversation ... the learner is motivated by an active attitude without any concern for correctness [of expression]. All he needs is to understand and make himself

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Table 6.5 Detges' (2000) distribution of TMA markers into early and later forms [127]

Early Forms	Later Forms	Comment
Have been reanalyzed: *la* (RéuFrCr)* *té/ti* (all FrCr)[1] *(lé)té ki* (RéuFrCr)[2] *pou* (Hai/RéuFrCr & 19th c. MauFrCr)[3] *sava* (RéuFrCr)° *ale* (LouFrCr)** and *prale* (HaiFrCr)** *a/va/ava* (RéuFrCr)[a] *sa/sra* (LouFrCr) ˙		* from Fr. ***il a*** [1] from Fr. ***il était à*** [2] from Fr. ***il était qui*** [3] from Fr. ***être pour*** ° from Fr. ***il s'en va*** ** from Fr. ***après aller*** [a] from Fr. ***il va*** ˙ from Fr. ***sera***
Have retained their form: *yavé/navé* (LouFrCr) *navé/lavé* (RéuFrCr)	Have been grammaticalized: *fini* (all FrCr)[128] *ka* (GuyFrCr) *ap* (HaiFrCr) *pou* (Mau/SeyFrCr)	

Table 6.5 above summarizes Detges' point without going into any of the detailed arguments and other aspects crucial to his demonstration (such as "loss of present relevance" and "narrative framing").[129] It gives the distribution of Tense and Aspect markers into early forms and later forms:

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understood. The model aimed at is the [speech] variety which obtains in the community he belongs to. As soon as he is satisfied with the tool at his disposal, his speech fossilizes ... However, the developments in the socio-economic context and the role of this speech variety as an interethnic vehicle would make it evolve in the direction of creolization ... without the fossilized morpho-syntactic structures being questioned again." ("Quoi qu'il en soit, le désintérêt à l'égard du modèle proposé par le groupe dominant a vraisemblablement bloqué l'effort d'approximation au niveau compatible avec les nécessités de la communication ... l'apprenant est motivé par une attitude active sans aucun souci de correction. Il lui suffit de comprendre et de se faire comprendre. Le modèle visé est la variété qui a cours dans la communauté à laquelle il appartient. Dès qu'il est satisfait de l'outil à sa disposition, son parler se fige ... Cependant le développement du contexte socio-économique et le rôle de ce parler comme véhiculaire inter-ethnique le feraient évoluer vers une créolisation ... sans que les structures morphosyntaxiques fossilisées soient véritablement remises en question" [Manessy 1995:120].

[127] From Detges (2000:154-6).

[128] This is quite the opposite of what Ramassamy (1985:147) hypothesizes, namely that *fini* preceded *la*, which later was added to the basic markers, or "système originel": *fin, i sa, lapo, té* and *va*.

[129] Detges comments in particular: "Further evidence in favor of my hypothesis is provided by the fact that in some Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s not only *il était (à)*, but also *(il) y avait* 'there was', whose function consists of marking the expositional frame of narratives, has been preserved in forms like *yavé, navé* (Lou[isiana]

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In keeping with the distinction made above between adaptation and convergence, it is the convergence on certain points between the grammar of Popular French and that of Malagasy that could have *slowed down the simplification process* in the VLR. While adaptation made for some new creations, such as the *i* and *lé* opposition (cf §5.5.5-6), convergence maintained elements from the grammar of Popular French that would otherwise have been screened out according to Samarin's (1970:668) view.

6.2.3 The role of "foreigner talk" in the emergence of the VLR

A matter that must be touched upon at this point is whether foreigner talk was part of the input to the emerging vernacular in Bourbon. There has been much discussion about the issue of foreigner talk in the genesis of pidgin and creole languages. Baker (1995:9; 2000:57) makes a good case for it, and it is indeed very unlikely that the French settlers should not have resorted to the use of foreigner talk with their domestics and slaves, or even that they should not have resorted to the use of a form of pidgin French (a kind of relexified pidgin Portuguese) that they would have learned in harbors and on board ships (where it was commonly used for interethnic communication).[130] However, the idea that the input was exclusively foreigner talk has long been disproved.[131]

Fr[ench] Cr[eole]) and *navé, lavé* (Réu[nion] Fr[ench] Cr[eole]) in its specific inflectionally marked temporal form and has retained the corresponding function" (Detges 2000:154).

[130] Baker (1995:9) writes that: "The early attestations of corresponding French items in Antillais, Mauritian, and other French lexicon Creoles suggests that the French similarly employed 'foreigner talk' French in addressing their slaves." And Baker (2000:48) notes that "18th century data ... generally indicate that Europeans addressed non-Europeans in the contact language and not in the European language."

[131] Manessy (1978:100) states: "There seem to be few differences too between the linguistic structures that appear in early L2 learning and those that characterize vehicular varieties of African languages and French. **This analogy is so great that pidgins were thought to be, in their first form, mere simplifications of foreigner talk**" [emphasis added]. ("Il ne semble pas d'autre part y avoir de différence de nature entre les structures linguistiques qui apparaissent lors des premières tentatives d'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère et celles qui caractérisent les variétés véhiculaires des langues africaines et du français. L'analogie est si manifeste qu'on a pu penser que les 'pidgins' n'étaient rien d'autre, en leur état premier, que des versions simplifiées à l'usage des étrangers (*'foreigner talk'*) des langues dont ils sont issus ... .")

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Interestingly, both Manessy and Detges greatly downplay the presence of such foreigner talk. The latter sees proof in the creoles of forms clearly derived from Popular French. Indeed, Detges sees Popular French input as making the agglutinated articles of French-based creoles possible,[132] while Manessy clearly acknowledges the role of the substrate speakers in interpreting *different* kinds of input. Indeed, speaking of the simplified French of domestics in Africa often referred to as *petit français*, for Manessy (1995:134), "it would be unwise ... to ascribe this *petit français* only to the colonizer, as Jaffre's remark quoted above might be seen as suggesting. ... The characteristics that he [i.e. Jaffre] presents of them derive much more from the most general processes of simplification, which are operative in many vehicular African languages, as well as in pidgins or in the first stages of second language acquisition."[133] Manessy's (1978:98) comment about DeBose's notion that "[c]reolization... may be thought of as accepting a 'broken X' input and producing a new X-based pidgin or creole output," is that: "'Broken X' being any form of non-school French, the process is not one of contamination analogous to that of language contact, but rather *a significant reworking of the structure of the said speech variety once it is detached from its linguistic entity.*" "Such discontinuity," he explains (Manessy 1978:98):

> can be the result of speakers of the 'broken X' having no access to the received norm ... from a *deliberate refusal of the norm*, or simply from a functional differentiation that excludes reference to correct usage. ... The ensuing

[132] For Detges (2000:147), for example, the agglutinated articles in noun forms in the French-based pidgins and creoles indicate that "the loss of the French article forms in the Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s was not brought about by some type of simplification strategy on the part of the speakers, i.e. by white French native speakers who deliberately omitted the article forms because they wanted to avoid unnecessary linguistic complexity in the contacts with their Black servants ('foreigner talk')".

[133] "Il serait imprudent cependant d'imputer ce petit français à la seule initiative du colonisateur, comme pourrait le suggérer la remarque de Jaffre citée plus haut" ... Les caractéristiques qu'il lui reconnaît ressortissent aux processus de simplification les plus généraux, à ceux dont on constate l'opération aussi bien dans les variétés véhiculaires des langues africaines que dans les pidgins ou dans les premiers stades d'acquisition d'un idiome" [Manessy 1995:134].

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> restructuring can go in one of two opposed directions: enhanced efficiency of the linguistic tool in communicating content and *perfecting of the linguistic code considered as the expression of a cultural tradition and index of belonging to the group* [emphasis added].[134]

He further explains (Manessy 1978:99-100):

> By its utilitarian character *'petit fançais'* belongs to the former group. It is affected mainly by interethnic communication, as much between Africans as among Africans when they have no other means of understanding one another... generally under circumstances in which the content of the message is much more important than its form. Such is also the function of vehicular African languages and the similarity is striking in terms of structural characteristics. ... Such convergence among a variety of typologically very diverse languages can only be explained by what they have in common: their function and the conditions in which they are used. ... Of course, interference may occur too, but only in so far as its effects help the functionalization of the vehicular variety. ... Everything happens as if the student were reconstructing a system ... .[135]

Manessy's point is that the input is used by the speakers of a substrate in a creative fashion, especially since there is little concern for, or even a rejection of, the norms of the

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[134] "Le 'broken X' en l'occurrence est toute variété de français non conforme à la norme scolaire; quant au processus lui-même, il ne consiste pas en une contamination analogue à celle qu'implique le contact des langues, mais **un remaniement profond des structures du parler en question, dès lors que celui-ci se trouve détaché de l'entité linguistique à laquelle il appartenait**. Cette continuité peut résulter d'un état de fait lorsque les usagers du 'broken X' n'ont pas accès à la norme reçue ... d'un refus délibéré de cette dernière, ou plus simplement d'une différenciation fonctionnelle qui exclut la référence au bon usage ... Quant à la 'restructuration' qui en résulte, elle est susceptible de s'effectuer selon deux orientations opposées: efficacité accrue de l'outil linguistique, s'il est principalement affecté à la transmission d'informations objectives (fonction référentielle); **perfectionnement du code linguistique conçu comme l'expression d'une tradition culturelle et comme l'indice d'appartenance au groupe** ... ." [Manessy 1978:98].

[135] "Du fait de son caractère utilitaire, le 'petit-français' ressortit sans doute à la première des deux orientations précitées. Il est affecté principalement à la communication interethnique, ce terme désignant à la fois les relations entre Européens et Africains et entre Africains de langues différentes lorsqu'ils n'ont pas d'autre moyen de se comprendre ... dans des circonstances où, généralement, le contenu référentiel du message importe beaucoup plus que sa forme. Telle est aussi la fonction des langues africaines véhiculaires et le parallélile parallélisme en ce qui concerne les caractéristiques structurales, entre celles-ci et celui-là.
... Une telle convergence entre des variétés de langues typologiquement très différentes ... ne peut s'expliquer que par ce qu'elle ont de commun: leurs functions et leurs conditions d'emploi." 'L'interférence n'est certes pas exclue du processus ici considéré, mais il semble bien que ses effets ne se fassent sentir que dans la mesure où ils concourent à la fonctionnalisation de la variété véhiculaire. ... Tout se passe comme si l'élève reconstruisait un système ..." [Manessy 1978:99-100]. Manessy gives examples of the restructuring with the new use of personal pronouns according to new grammar rules in the speech of students from the Ivory Coast and the Republic of Volta. [Manessy 1995:99].

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superstrate. The same must have been true of the speakers of Malagasy and Indian languages in early Bourbon.

While some amount of foreigner talk must have served as input to the new vernacular—indeed, a master may have made a greater use of such talk with some slaves than with others—it is safe to assume that it is the restructuring that the Popular French input underwent as the speakers of the substrate languages tried to make sense of it that gave rise to the new vernacular, with, of course, the participation of the speakers of this Popular French, who also contributed to the new vernacular by adapting to the speech of the Malagasies and Indians.

6.2.4 Reduction in vehicular African languages and in the VLR: some points

Manessy's (1995:105) model of *vernacularisation*, with its reduction to a tripartite division of time in the vehicular African languages, is verified in the vehicular varieties of African French. If such a reduction occurred in the VLR, one should hypothesize a marker for the past and one for the future in the early period or their emergence. That *la* was used by 1715 seems to be established by the sentence of Marie (Chaudenson 1974:444). However, what the future marker might have been in not as clear.

Extrapolating from the vehicular varieties of African French today, *va* is a rather likely candidate. The opposition of *té* and *va* pointed out by Ramassamy (1985:127ff) would also argue for *va*. However, Detges' approach would argue for the reanalyzed *i sa(va)* (from Fr. **il *s'en va*** 'he goes/is going away'), unless the two forms coexisted from

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the outset (cf. Ramassamy 1985:147)[136]. What is interesting is the presence of the ASM *i* in *i sa* and its absence in *va*. Detges (2000:156-8) points out:

> The most complicated situation is found in what at first sight seems to be the clearest cases, namely the Fr[ench] Cr[eole] future markers in etymological relation to Fr *aller* 'go'. In all of the Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s and in Standard French as well as in the koiné of the population segment of French origin, there existed or still exist, as a result of grammaticalization, future markers deriving from lexical items which mean 'to go' ... In the Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s, many of these items underwent developments of the type described in 1.1 and 1.3. [i.e. early or late grammaticalization]. ... Réu[nion] Fr[ench] Cr[eole] *sava*—which was itself the product of the reanalysis of French *(il) s'en va* 'he goes', 'he leaves'—started out as a marker of the near future.

Also, Detges (2000:156) points out: "There are indications that Lou[isiana] Fr[ench] Cr[eole] *ale* and Hai[tian] Fr[ench] Cr[eole] *prale* (composed of the progressive marker *(a)pr* and *ale* 'to go') represent the same type of development, namely the grammaticalization, within the creole in question, of a lexical item meaning 'to go'." If the future marker *va* is an early reanalysis, as Detges suggests, the absence of the ASM *i* makes good sense. Further, according to Detges (2000:156-7):

> A fundamental condition for the assumption that in a given creole some grammatical element originating from French *aller* was brought about by grammaticalization (and not by reanalysis) is, of course, that this grammatical element can be traced back to a lexical item which, in the same creole, at one moment had the meaning 'to go'. This condition is not fulfilled in the case of *a/va/ava*, the oldest future paradigm which at one stage existed in all the Fr[ench] Cr[eole]s. ... Even though in 17th c. varieties of French, the link between dialectal forms of the periphrastic future and the forms of *aller* 'to go' was doubtlessly accessible to the speakers, it was most probably obscure to creole speakers, in whose language the concept GO was never expressed by forms which resembled *a/va/ava*.

"The ony exception in this respect," adds Detges (2000:157, Note 29), "seems to have been Réu[nion] Fr[ench] Cr[eole], where *va* is documented not only as a future marker, but also as a full verb meaning 'to go' in the poetry of L. Héry... Wherever Fr[ench]

[136] Ramassamy (1985:147) includes both the marker *va* and the marker *i sa* in her original "core set" of markers.

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Cr[eole]s other than RéuFrCr dispose of a lexical item *va* meaning 'to go', it is borrowed from French and reflects some degree of decreolization. In contemporary Lou[isiana] Fr[ench] Cr[eole], *va* 'to go' is due to the influence of Cajun (cf. Neumann 1985:62f.)]." Unfortunately, Héry's work is not a reliable source for the VLR, and so Detges' argument is rather weakened. The presence of the ASM *i* in *i sa(va)* becomes therefore an argument for it being a later grammaticalization, leaving *va* as the best candidate for the original restructured etymon *va* 'goes' in the Popular French. The fact that the Past marker *la* was likely interpreted by the Malagasy speakers as a prefix corresponding to the Past prefix m- in the Malagasy dialects might indicate that the Future marker *va* was also interpreted as a prefix, paralleling the Future prefix *h-/ho* in the Malagasy dialects (cf. Rabenilaina 1983:113ff for the Bara dialect). In other words, the effects of reduction and the restructuring on the basis of the Malagasy substrate in this instance could have worked hand in hand.

The other aspect of reduction is the "aspectual contrast between process in development, and punctual or accomplished process" (Manessy 1995:105). It would seem that the progressive marker *lapo* as well as the Past marker *la* and the Completive marker *fine*, which are all three included in Ramassamy's (1985:147) original "core set" of markers, would have corresponded to the two aspects found as a result of the *vernacularisation* process. There is a question for Ramassamy (1985:146-7) whether the marker *la* preceded the marker *fine*. She tends to consider the former as the older marker because it is incompatible with any other marker, while *fine* combines with other markers.

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Interestingly, the Malagasy dialects also have prefixes on the verb to indicate aspect. The Bara dialect had non-durative and resultative prefixes, non-durative and non-resultative prefixes (depending on the type of verb) and durative and resultative prefixes on verbs (cf. Rabenilaina 1983:127ff). It would seem that in this respect, too, the effects of reduction and the restructuring on the basis of the Malagasy substrate could have worked hand in hand. How the effects of reduction and convergence worked together is what §6.2.5 below deals with in terms of a likely dual bilingualism in early Bourbon.

6.2.5 Convergence and the the role of a likely dual bilingualism

As was mentioned above (§6.1.1.2.3), it is most likely that the Malagasy wives and domestics (later the Malagasy slaves) continued to speak their dialects, or a leveled form of their dialects (or koiné). This would imply, on the part of these speakers, a Malagasy and (lexically French) vernacular bilingualism,[137] while on the other hand the speakers of Popular French would have exhibited a Popular French and (lexically French) vernacular bilingualism, or, if one prefers, a competence in both Popular French and in the emergent vernacular—perhaps perceived as different registers. By bilingualism is meant a dual system of reference in morpho-syntactic structure, with an increasing interpenetration of the two systems over time. This would mean, among other phenomena, that innovations (i.e. the new grammatical structures) would pass from the vernacular lect of the Malagasy bilinguals into the vernacular lect of the Popular French bilingual speakers. This is most certainly how the acrolectal form *i mâzé* 'was/were eating' originated. The bilingual

[137] In order to communicate with speakers of Indian and Indo-Portuguese languages, the Malagasies would have needed a contact language. As Baker (2000:3) makes clear: "In the early stages in colonization ...there were always also some larger groups of slaves among whom a contact language is likely to have begun to develop."

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Popular-French speaker would adopt the forms of the Malagasy bilingual speaker to the extent that this became a specific feature that distinguished them as members of a same group rejecting the world of the *Gros Blancs*. This phenomenon is likely to have occurred early among such speakers, even before the *Petits Créoles* started to share the lifestyle of the maroons in the highlands, but most likely became more common in Stage II.

Manessy (1995:121) explains what occurs in a situation where there are many different idiosyncratic rules, as is the case in *Gastarbeiter Deutsch:*

> One might think that it is this common core that provides the basis for later processes of elaboration. In fact, what can be directly observed of this phenomenon suggests quite a different explanation. It seems indeed that the consensus that is established among the members of the community in the process of forming itself does not bear on the rules concerning reference but on those concerning usage; *these usages,* considered as distinctive of the group, take on an integrating function; they play the role of indices of belonging to the community and *impose themselves even on speakers who have otherwise a sufficient knowledge of the norm;* the latter find themselves in the situation described by Widdowson (1977:13): 'The learner appears to be competent in the target language system but to perform in the interlanguage.' We will try to illustrate these statements by examining what is presently occurring in the Ivory Coast, where, beginning with approximate variants of the French used by 'non-educated' townspeople, a speech variety is constituting itself which is tending to become the 'primary means of interethnic communication', competing with Dioula (Hattinger, 1978; Lafage: 1979b). This variety, which naturally presents a high degree of variation, is claimed as properly theirs by the 'educated' Ivorians of the middle class, who otherwise have a good knowledge of school French, but who see in this 'petit français', more commonly referred to as 'français populaire ivorien (F.P.I.)' or 'français populaire d'Abidjan (F.P.A.)', the expression of a modern distinctively Ivorian culture. ... If the present situation does not change, it is most likely that developments will sooner or later give rise to an Ivorian Creole" [emphasis added] (Manessy 1995:121).[138]

[138] "On pourrait penser que c'est ce noyau commun qui sert de base aux processus ultérieurs d'élaboration. En fait, ce qu'on peut observer directement du phénomène suggère une tout autre explication: il semble bien que le consensus qui s'établit entre les membres de la communauté en voie de formation ne porte pas sur les règles de référence, mais sur des règles d'usage; ces usages, tenus pour propres au groupe, assument une fonction d'intégration, ils jouent un rôle d'indice d'appartenance à la communauté et ils s'imposent même aux locuteurs qui ont d'autre part une connaissance suffisante de la norme; ces derniers se trouvent alors dans la situation décrite par Widdowson (1977, p. 13): 'The learner appears to be competent in the target language system but to perform in the interlanguage'. Nous allons tenter d'illustrer ces propositions

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6.2.6 Conclusions about Stage I (1663-1715)

The vernacular speech variety that arose in Bourbon by 1715 from Popular French input was a result of the following principles in language change: 1. principles of language universals (namely the processes of simplification and reduction which are implied in pidginization); and 2. specific principles of language change (adaptation; convergence; substrate influence; and negotiation among speakers). It consisted in the gradual developement of linguistic forms or items in a speech community that in time would mark a member's belonging to a social group. Table 6.6 below gives the processes at work in the *vernacularisation* and contact-induced restructuring that took place in Stage I with some examples of their respective results.

In Stage I (1663-1715) there was likely a very high degree of variation among the many idiolects spoken on the island. However, some of the early forms found in these idiolects later became staple forms, even forms by which members of a social or geographic group of speakers could be identified. The markers *i* and *la* can almost definitely be identified as such forms by 1715—and there were likely others. The stabilization of the emerging vernacular in the subsequent stage was indeed to be the product of a general rejection of the world of the masters of the great coffee plantations called *Gros Blancs*.

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par l'examen de ce qui se passe actuellement en Côte-d'Ivoire où se constitue, à partir des variantes approximatives du français utilisées par les citadins "non lettrés", une variété qui tend à devenir, en concurrence avec le dioula, 'le principal outil de communication interethnique' (Hattinger, 1978; Lafage: 1979b). Cette variété, qui présente naturellement un haut degré de variabilité, est revendiquée par les 'lettrés' ivoiriens de la classe moyenne, qui d'autre part ont une bonne connaissance du français scolaire, mais qui voient dans le 'petit français', plus communément appelé 'français populaire ivoirien (F.P.I.)' ou 'français populaire d'Abidjan (F.P.A.)', l'expression d'une culture moderne proprement ivoirienne." "Sans modification de la situation actuelle, il semble que l'on doive s'attendre à un développement du F.P.I. donnant naissance à plus ou moins brève échéance à un *créole* ivoirien" [Manessy 1995:121].

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Table 6.6 Stage I (1663-1715): linguistic processes at work

Input	Type of Principle	Processes	Examples of Result
	Principles of Language Universals (for interethnic communication)	Simplification	reduced number of verb forms and prepositions
		Reduction	tripartite division of time
Popular French Lexicon and Structures (also some Foreigner Talk and Pidginized French) Malagasy structures	Specific Principles of Language Change: Creation of a new language that identifies a member as belonging to a group	Manessy's (1995) "adaptation and convergence" (substrate influence) Detges' (2000) "creole-specific reanalysis" Thomason's (2001b) "negotiations among speakers"	Agentive Subject Marker *i* Non-Agentive Copula-like Marker *lé;* long and short form of the verb; *la* (past marker); *fini* (completive marker) equivalence of Popular French */qu/i* and Malagasy *ňy, ň,* or *n'*

6.2.7 Stage II (1715-1817): The role of Malagasy in the stabilization of the VLR

After 1715, the island of Bourbon turned to large-scale coffee production, and by the middle of the 18th century plantations covered its coastal areas. The Malagasy and (lexically French) vernacular bilingualism described above (§6.2.5) as having played an important role in the emergence of vernacular speech forms before 1715 likely continued to exist beyond this date (cf. §6.1.2). The period of *vernacularisation* (Manessy 1995) and the early stage of reanalysis in Detges' (2000) sense had come to an end. However, this bilingualism most likely provided support for the continuing influence of the Malagasy substrate on the now stabilizing VLR. The stabilization consisted, among other

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things, in the selection of the markers that in time would make the VLR both distinct from the French spoken on the island by the *Gros Blancs* and from one another as acrolectal and basilectal speech varieties became more defined.

There are five sociological facts that were important in this period of roughly one hundred years: 1. The change in the slave-master relations as the farming system changed from a small-scale type of farming (*société d' habitation*) to a large-scale type (*société de plantation*), as the whole island was given over the production of coffee versus that of produce; 2. the huge increase in the number of slaves brought onto the island; 3. the different origins of the slave population, including those of the Malagasies themselves; 4. the large influx of men and women from France; and 5. the significant increase in the number of freedmen.

6.2.7.1 The role of the Malagasy substrate in stabilizing the VLR

By 1715 there existed a community of speakers of the new vernacular lect (Chaudenson's [1974] *Bourbonnais* and Corne's [1999] *lete ki* French), albeit one with a considerable amount of variation probably even from speaker to speaker. The sociological changes that took place as a result of the establishment of a plantation-style system of slavery affected this vernacular. Indeed, the identity of this community of speakers from 1715 on was increasingly in terms of the rejection of the world of the *Gros Blanc*, or plantation owners. In keeping with Manessy's (1995) view of the traits adopted by a community of

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speakers to set itself off from others, there came to be a form of vernacular speech that is referred to in the literature on the linguistic continuum in Réunion as basilectal.[139]

The change in slave-master relationships at this time is important to note. It is a fact that the new arrivals were put into the hands of *commandeurs*, or slave overseers, who were mainly Creole slaves. Before 1715, some masters may have had as many as five to ten slaves, whose children played with their own children.[140] However by 1735, when the number of masters who had one to five slaves was reduced to 4.5%, the distinction of rank and the separation of quarters very dramatically reduced the contact between speakers of Popular French and their slaves. Probably, by then masters spoke to their slaves in the vernacular register and slaves on the plantations who were not house slaves, that is, had no exposure to Popular French from this period on. Also, what most probably occurred was that whatever Malagasy and (lexically French) vernacular bilingualism there had been earlier now tended to decrease and, in time, most likely disappear altogether. Two facts would also have diminished the likelihood of a continued bilingualism after 1750: 1. the fact that there were slightly fewer Malagasy slaves (cf. Table 2.5 in §2.1.3) than there were Creole slaves; and 2. the fact that the slaves from Madagascar—many of whom may actually have been of African origin—now came from

[139] Baker's view of an MIC (medium for inter-ethnic communication) becoming an MCS (medium for community solidarity) is relevant here. Indeed, he writes the following about the Réunion situation: "During the 18th century when the MCS kown today as Mauritian Creole was developing, there was also a very substantial increase in the rate of slave arrivals in Reunion. There would thus have been a greater role in Reunion as well for an MIC for use with and between foreign-born slaves; but there would also have been two very important differences from the Mauritian situation. First, the Reunion MIC would result largely from contacts between slaves and speakers of *Bourbonnais* (rather than varieties of metropolitan French). Second, by the 1730s, *Bourbonnais* would already have been the established language of locally-born slaves for several decades. This would have made it difficult for an elaborated MIC to replace *Bourbonnais* as the MCS of locally-born slaves, but it could well be that the more basilectal varieties of modern Reunion Creole were influenced by this elaborated MIC" [Baker 2000:54].

[140] According to Bourquin (1994:87), "in 1735, 4.5% of the landowners had 1 to 5 slaves." ("On note en 1735 que 4,5% des propriétaires possédaient de 1 à 5 esclaves.")

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a different part of the Great Island and other slaves were increasingly brought in from the coast of Mozambique. Indeed, for such a bilingualism to survive there have had to be close cultural ties among speakers.

Such a diminished rate of bilingualism, does not, however, mean that the traits of Malagasy orgin in the restructuring that had taken place no longer had any significant support for them to survive. It must also be remembered that the Creole overseers were usually of Frenco-Malagasy origin themselves and that there were Franco-Malagasy slaves in sufficient numbers for the traits born of Malagasy substratal influence that existed by 1715 to be maintained in their input. There are views in the literature (Chaudenson 1992; Mufwene 2001) that have made of the fact that 1. the slaves no longer had any direct access to the Popular French superstrate once the large-scale production of coffee was established, and 2. could therefore only resort to the vernacular input of the slaves already in Bourbon, an argument for seeing the development of the VLR after 1715 as a succession of "approximations of approximations". What this tends to obscure is that the slaves had a first language no matter how young they were. Even if most of the Malagasy slaves brought in after 1715 were for the most part from the slave trading posts of the east coast (Antogil, Foulepointe, and Tamatave), the Malagasy structure of their own speech contributed to the maintenance of whatever restructured elements due to earlier Malagasy substrate influence.[141] The structures in the vernacular would be closer to their speech than the structures of Popular French had been for the slaves who came to Bourbon earlier.

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[141] Cf. Note 20 above.

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6.2.7.2 The stabilizing vernacular and the speech of the *Petits Créoles*

One consequence of the establishment of the large-scale production of coffee and its plantation system after 1715, was the impoverishment of the Whites, who became knwn as the *Petits Creoles* living in the higher regions of the island.[142] By the second half of the 18th century, the stabilizing vernacular increasingly became the shared language of those who rejected the world of the *Gros Blancs*, or great landowners. Besides the slaves rejecting the world of the wealthy Whites, there were the maroons and the *Petits Créoles* who they shared a common lifestyle with them.

Because of their impoverishment and subsequent rejection of the world of the *Gros Blancs*, there likely came a point where the *Petits Créoles* were no longer bilinguals who alternated between a distinctly Popular French community of speakers and a distinctly vernacular community of speakers. This would have an effect on their speech in the sense that there would have tend to be a greater degree of convergence of the two speech forms. It is true, as Haugen (1977:76)[143] puts it, that "bilinguals whose contacts alternate between monolingual communities have a stronger motivation to approach the norms of those communities than those who form bilingual communities of their own. The latter know that they will be understood in either language and are hence less motivated to maintain traditional norms. Code switching will therefore be more common... causing them to disregard the markings ("tags") that distinguish their languages, i.e. the language norms will converge."

[142] First they moved to the higher slopes facing the ocean and then into the *cirques* and onto the *plaines*.
[143] Quoted in Manessy (1978:94).

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It is, of course, impossible to say exactly what the speech variety of the *Petits Créoles* was like in the 1750s because it was to undergo such great changes in the second half of the 18th century, in the 19th century, and especially in the 20th century.[144] What can be surmised is that the differences between the Popular French they may have spoken among themselves and the (lexically French) vernacular they used with their slaves and marrooin neighbors became less and less distinct. It takes skill to distinguish between such different codes. According to Manessy (1978:95), who refers to African speakers of a vehicular language and either the standard norm of the superstrate of the vehicular language or one's own language, such "capability" of producing coherent speech in either language or register "requires great dexterity of a speaker, which all speakers don't have. ... The functional equivalence ... actually favors the transfer of linguistic usage and structural schemata from one system to another. ... there ensues an accommodation of norms, in fact, in the individual, the establishment of a 'composite' bilingualism."[145] In other words, even if the *Petits Créoles* had tried to keep speaking one way among themselves and another way with their slaves and neighbor maroons, they would have been hard put to keep out any interference or to stem any accommodation, especially given the common feeling of being cast out of the colonial sytem. This would constitute,

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[144] The important immigration from France in the 18th century likely had an effect even in these remoter regions of the island. Further, during the 19th century, as the *Petits Créoles* became proprietors of small farms and had the opportunity to obtain some elementary education, they began to feel socially inferior and, in given circumstances, saw it as incumbent on themselves, or simply as socially expedient, to produce speech closer to the standard form, i.e. as much as possible the speech of the monolingual French speaker. Then, in the 20th century, they became "upwardly mobile" and education exposed them further to standard forms of French. (Cf. also Note 67 above.)

[145] "Un tel exercice exige une dextérité dans le maniement des codes qui nest pas à la portée de tous les usagers. ... L'équivalence fonctionnelle ... favorise au contraire le transfert des usages linguistiques et des schémas structuraux d'un système à l'autre ... il y a accommodation des normes, soit, chez l'individu, instauration d'un bilinguisme 'composé'" [Manessy 1978:95].

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then, an additional element in explaining how the speech of the *Petits Créoles* might have become structurally more and more similar to that of their slaves and neighbors.

A phenomenon of *accommodation* takes place in terms of one's interlocutors and the social situation speakers are in. It is at this time that ASM *i* likely spread to the speech of the *Petits Créoles,* or became generalized in it if it had only been an interference in it before then (cf. §6.2.7.3 for confusion about the use of the ASM *i* in the speech of house slaves). One of the characteristics that mark the speech of today's *Petits Blancs* as a vernacular speech variety is the ASM *i,* which appears even on the past progressive form of the verb: *mi manzé* 'I was eating'. It is generally considered as a marker of the lect of the highlands. In the lowlands, the form would be a more basilectal *moin té i manz* 'I was eating.' The fact that the marker appears on the form that is considered to be inherited from the Popular French form ***i(l) mangeait*** 'he was eating', makes it look like a continuation of French. However, the interpretation of this form as the ASM *i* before the long form of the verb (*mange* as opposed to the short form *mang*) makes of it a form that fits into the pattern of the vernacular.[146]

The confusion at the root of the two interpretations seems to indicate restructuring with a degree of convergence of the Popular French and the verncular spoken by the *Petits Créoles.* It seems to indicate—and to remain as a witness of—the blurring of then line between the two codes at a specific point in time for the *Petits Blancs.* Concurrent with the incorporation of the ASM *i* into their speech also came the incorporation of the pronominal forms *mwen* 'I', *ou* 'you' (2nd per. sg.), *zot* 'you, they' (2nd per. and 3rd per.

[146] Cellier (1985a:384) sees it as a long form of the verb preceded by the marker *i.*

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pl), with their contracted forms such as *mi, vi, ni,* as well as many other traits. Among the traits that were most probably adopted would have been the CLP *lé*. Some of the confusion between this CLP *lé* (and its forms *lété* and *sera*) and the forms of ***être*** 'be' of Popular French (cf. §5.5.4.2) might have been present from the outset, though it is more likely that it began with the presence of the French of the men and women who came from France in the 18th century or the influence of schooling in French and the social pressures encouraging the use of standard forms of French.

It is unlikely that Chaudenson (1974) is correct when he claims that the *Petits Blancs* are "in a diglossic situation."[147] The problem with his position is that he assumes that the same diglossic situation obtained on the island all through its history and that he takes fossilized forms in the speech of the *Petits Blancs* and French vocabulary as indicating a Popular French structure in their speech across the board. This is interstingly side by side with a significantly large inventory (Chaudenson 1974:895-1051) of *neologismes créoles* or expressions created in their speech according to a clearly restructured pattern.

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[147] "If in this group the creole is in almost all cases the mother tongue, often there coexists along with it different varieties of regional French. As a result, while the *Petits Blancs* are in a diglossic situation, their speech is closer to French and the phenomena of interference or of survival play a much larger role than in the creole of other groups in the population, whose members are often only monolingual speakers (of the creole). In a few families, it seems as though the mother tongue is regional French itself, even though it is accompagnied by a quasi simultaneous acquisition of the creole. It is among this White population of speakers that is to be found the sharpest awareness of the levels of language that can exist in their speech." ("Dans ce groupe, si le créole est, dans la quasi-totalité des cas, la langue maternelle, souvent coexistent avec lui des variétés diverses de français régional. Il en résulte que, si les 'petits blancs' sont en situation de diglossie, leur parler est plus proche du français et que les phénomènes d'interférence ou de survivance y ont une importance beaucoup plus grande que dans le créole d'autres groupes de population dont les membres sont parfois presque unilingues (créole). Dans quelques familles, il semble que la langue maternelle soit le français régional même s'il est accompagné d'un apprentissage quasi simultané du créole. C'est dans la population blanche qu'on trouve la conscience la plus aigüe des niveaux de langue qui peuvent exister dans le parler") [Chaudenson 1974:XVII].

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Later, with their status of house-owner and so on and the effects of education, their language would change, even while at the lexical level not much may have occurred in the way of change. It is interesting to note that as late as the 1940s or 50s, when a *Petit Blanc* needed to write a formal letter to obtain a young woman's hand, he did not know how to write it and needed the help of a person with knowledge of written standard French to write it out for him. Such letters are couched in a highly formal style not only in terms of lexical content but also syntactic structures. Mostly, the *Petits Blancs* even today are not really diglossic,[148] but have a range of speech registers, some of which are clearly closer to the French they are taught in school and others closer to the vernacular and the everyday forms of the language.

If at the end of the 18th century differences in pronunciation were noted by travelers to Réunion—differences that could still be noted a century later by Focard (1885), as well as differences in the lexicon—what of differences in terms of morpho-syntax? Manessy's (1995) interpolation is useful here to the extent that socially, allegiances had formed, and the speech variety of one group was likely characterized already by some specific forms, phonetically, lexically and, possibly morpho-syntactically. Although we do not have any direct observations of the speech varieties of this period, luckily, for this period. there are some samples of vernacular speech in the form of court archives for the years 1799-1800. The plot that was being investigated most probably involved field slaves, the ones whose life was the hardest, rather than house slaves. However, some of the house slaves seem to have been a party to the plot. There is,

[148] If by 'diglossic' is meant the use of each code in different specified functions (such as home and school). There is, however, often much overlap of the two codes for the same function or in the same context.

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in particular, talk of roots given by one slave to another to put into the master's food; and to have access to what the master eats clearly indicates the involvement of house slaves. The testimony from the court hearings seems to reveal that, at least the house slaves, had two kinds of registers: one that could be called an *acquired* form of Standard French and another, a basilectal form of the vernacular. As is hinted in the discussion below (§6.2.7.3) these documents can give an idea of the differences between the VLR and French in Stage II. The most interesting aspect here is the relation of French-like forms and more basilectal forms characterized by the presence and absence of the ASM *i* respectively.

6.2.7.3 The documents of the court hearings of 1799-1800

The court records relating to arrests made during a plot by slaves to kill some Whites in 1799—records discovered and published by Chaudenson (1981a:4-7)—are of inestimable value. If we are to believe Chaudenson, "excerpts from cross-examinations of witnesses and persons arrested have in the main been transcribed in the creole [i.e. VLR] rather than translated." "This," he comments, "is no doubt due to the nature of the case at hand, which is largely based on the seditious purport of statements made by some of the accused. As a result these statements are quoted a number of times..." (Chaudenson 1981a:4).[149] The documents are interesting in three respects: 1. Linguistically, because of the many repetitions, they present in one or two instances variants of the same statement. 2. Sociolinguistically, they reveal the linguistic registers or ability of the slaves—in this instance apparently house slaves—to speak in an acquired form of Standard French as

[149] "En effet, des passages d'interrogatoires des témoins et des accusés ont été largement transcrits en créole au lieu d'être traduits; la chose tient sans doute au caractère de l'affaire qui repose largement sur les propos séditieux tenus par certains accusés; il en résulte que ces propos sont cités à de nombreuses reprises tant au cours des interrogatories que des confrontations" [Chaudenson 1981a:4].

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well as the local vernacular (VLR). 3. Psychologically as well as sociolinguistically, the position of the witnesses and the accused is one where the speech form aligns them with the slaves (i.e. the rebellious element) or with their masters. It must be borne in mind also that the clerks taking down the statements were used to formal proceedings in official French and may have tended here and there to render some of the statements in a more official register. However, even allowing for this last point, the documents clearly warrant the conclusion that house slaves had two speech registers: one, a vernacular lect and the other, an acquired form of the educated man's oral French, that is the French of the plantation owner, or *Gros Blanc*.

The fact that there are variants can unequivocally be ascribed to the care taken by the court clerks to take down the actual wording of each statement. They are clearly not be accounted for by a desire to couch the statement into an acceptable official or legal French. This does not mean, however, that the ear of the court clerks was perfect. Some things may reasonably be ascribed to their offical French "ear", i.e. their linguistic reflexes—even in the rather unlikely case where they had been locally born to to their "ear" trained to official forms of French.

The variants are of a type that clearly reveals a hesitation between two registers—either for the purpose of sounding official and more deserving of trust in a place where the power is in the hands of the speakers of the official register of French, or for the purpose of showing one's allegiance to those in power. For the accused, a more polished speech form—that is a higher register—would have been preferable either way, no matter

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what one's leanings may have been in terms of one's psychological allegiance, namely with the revolt. This may be some of what lies behind the back and forth between two registers, in the manner of an intra-sentential code-switching.

The most notable hesitation is that between the use and non-use of the ASM *i* before *lé*. Compare (1) and (2):

(1) *vou lé inn fouti bèt* (Vous l'est une foutue bête)[150]
2s lé ART wretched beast
'You are a wretched beast' (Chaudenson 1981a:6)

(2) *twa i lé inn fouti bèt* (Toi y l'est une foutue bette)
2s ASM lé ART wretched beast
'You are a wretched beast' (Chaudenson 1981a:6)

It would seem that the clerk heard a distinct *i* after *toi*, and before *lé*, as he also did following *moi* 'I' in *moi y va te donner* 'I am going to give you', *moi y sera capitaine* 'I will be captain', and *moi y'en a pas besoin* 'I don't need' (Chaudenson 1981a:5). Other instances of a similar hesitation are recorded in the case of *Nous autres y l'est/l'est plus que les blancs* 'we outnumber the Whites' (Chaudenson 1981a:5).

The question is whether the clerk had trouble figuring out whether he heard an *i* or not only in the cases with *lé* or in other instances too. There is a hesitation by the accused Morvant with reference to *moi va/s'en va foutre le camp* 'I am going to leave' (Chaudenson 1981a:5) as well as by the accused Hylarion with reference to *moi va/y va foutre le camp* 'I am going to leave' (Chaudenson 1981a:6). The instance with 3s *li* in Frontin's statement *quand l'y va gronde à vou* 'when he scolds you' (Chaudenson

[150] The transcriptions given in parentheses are from Chaudenson (1981a). The corresponding forms to the left of them present a transcription that is more in line with the nature of the VLR and are given to facilitate comparison with data given in Chapter 4.

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1981a:6) does not seem to be a clear case where *i* is used because *li* is the subject form. It does show how confusing the whole transcription is for a clerk unused to transcribing the vernacular or doing so mechanically (as if he were following rules, such as adding *y* to every verb in Present Tense) There is also a variation to be noted between two instances with *y*: *si toi y veut* 'if you want to', uttered by Pierre (Chaudenson 1981a:5), and *si toi y veut quitter ton maître* 'if you want to leave your master' (Chaudenson 1981a:6); and *moi y veut* 'I want to' and *et lui dit moi veut avoir la femme de mon maître* 'and he says that I want to have my master's wife' (Chaudenson 1981a:7). A last instance worth noting is a hesitation of Jacotot's between *vous y ne connaît/vous ne connez* 'you don't know' (Chaudenson 1981a:5). Cases in which there seems to be no hesitation with reference to the use of *i* are: *Si les anglais y viennent* 'if the British come', *moi y connais* 'I know' and *nous y tuent* 'we kill', *moi y travaille* 'I work' (Chaudenson 1981a: 5-6).

The clerks who took down court proceedings were apparently attentive to minor linguistic details, such as the presence or absence of the ASM *i*, the use of inflected forms in the 3rd person singular or in the first person plural after a first person plural subject pronoun, though some of the latter could be ascribed to their habit of writing French. There is reliable evidence here of the use of two registers, which is not surprising on the part of domestics. The variation appears to be between simplified forms typical of the effects of *vernacularisation* such as Manessy 1995 finds in African vehicular languages, on the one hand, and acqusition of a second language, on the other. Except for the occurrence of the ASM *i*, one might argue that the simplified forms are typical

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interlanguage forms. However, there is clearly a pattern here between two different registers.

The case is interesting in so far as as the use of French forms show an allegiance to the masters, while the pidginized forms betray an allegiance to the community in revolt. The vernacular forms would be the forms actually used by the slaves when they spoke to each other; and the use of these forms could have been seen as arguing for the veracity or sincerity of their testimony. The very fact that the clerks noticed the precise forms that were used is probably in itself an indication of the awareness of the social differences associated with different registers. They would show also how taken for granted or current this use of two registers was, and, to a certain extent, how sensitive to such variants or aware of them the local more educated population was.

The presence of the ASM *i* in the lect of the *Petits Créoles* (as well as in today's *Petits Blancs*) may well be an indication of the abandonment by them of the Popular French of the 18th century as they distanced themselves socially from their rich, landowning relatives and shared their lives with the less fortunate, including maroons and ex-slaves. What is argued is that the *Petits Créoles,* that is the descendents of the original French owners of the land who joined the ranks of the outcasts from plantation society, adopted the speech forms of their peers. A speech form or lect, as Manessy (1995) rightly points out, signals one's belonging to a group and the rejection of another group implies the use of markers of the new group one belongs to. Interestingly, the *Petit Créole* whom Billiard (1988:230) met in the higher reaches of the island speaks in the same lect to his

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slave as he does to the stranger come from France.[151] He does not use one register with his subordinate and another with the Frenchman, as might have been expected of someone showing off his "high lineage".

What has been done in the Francophone literature on the VLR is to invest the *Petits Créoles* with a *français créolisé*, an "acrolect" that is meant to betray their supposed high French lineage and perpetrate the language of the original settlers (cf. Appendix C). This actually constitutes a historical contradiction in terms, the truth of the matter being that their speech is as mixed as their blood is. This rewriting of history is made rather clear by the change in the terminology used to refer to this portion of the population (cf. §2.5). No longer referred to as *Petits Créoles*, this population is referred to as *Petits Blancs*. The "whitening" of their lect is the linguistic corollary of the whitening of their genealogy—all thanks to the powerful catalyst of a European-like topography.

The speech of monolingual speakers of this supposed "acrolectal" variety from the highlands (*cirques* and *plaines*), however, contains forms that are usually considered to be basilectal. The monolingual informant in Nicaise (1992) can be considered an example, although he did spend very little time close to the coastal area as a child. This informant (cf. Appendix B1), who had practically no education in French at all and who is not known ever to have uttered a single French sentence (Nicaise: communication), uses both acrolectal and basilectal forms. For example, in (3) below, in the same sentence, he uses the basilectal irrealis marker *té i* and acrolectal irrealis marker *noré:*

[151] Cf. Appendix B5.

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(3) *Bé si nou té pa pré dérier pou trapé l'kor mor*
well if 1p **PAST** NEG ready behind for catch body dead (man)
'Well, if we hadn't been ready in the back to catch the body of the dead man,

bé ***noré arivé*** *ater mèm devan la kroi la* [Nicaise 1992:82]
well COND arrive aground self in front of DET cross there
well it would have touched the very ground there in front of the cross.'

The fact that in the literature (Carayol & Chaudenson 1977, 1978) the linguistic continuum is established on the basis of the closeness of the forms in the VLR to those of Standard French gives the impression that this closeness is the only aspect to consider. A form such as the past progressive *mi manzé* 'I was eating' may seem close to the superstrate ***je mangeais*** 'I was eating'. However, the presence of the ASM *i* is not considered as of any importance. Nor is the fact that *mange* is the long form of the verb in the VLR considered important. Their presence is actually crucial and very revealing. The same holds true of the so-called inflected forms. A form such as *fémalra pa* 'won't hurt' (Cellier 1985a:420) is not in any way close to the superstrate ***ne fera pas mal*** 'won't hurt', but rather shows the pattern of adding *ra pa* as a future negation to the short form of the verb.

6.2.7.4 The large influx of men and women from France

Although it has largely been ignored in the literature on the VLR, the large number of immigrants from France in the 18th century is an important sociological element in the changes that occurred at that time. According to Scherer (1994:13) the number of new arrivals from France contributed to a very remarkable increase of the French population from 580 in 1735 to 3,762 in 1758. Even if all of these people from France may not have stayed on the island when the coffee era ended—it is likely that most of them did—this

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increase is of great significance in terms of the effect of French on the VLR. From now on, the VLR were in contact with oral French on a daily basis in certain areas of life and in certain areas of the island. A study needs to be made to assess just how significant this effect was. What is clear is that it changed the linguistic situation remarkably. In fact it is hard to believe that this crucial element in the development of the VLR has been so widely overlooked in the literature. Indeed, such questions as the following need to be answered: What kind of people were these immigrants? Did they all become landowners and join the ranks of the *Gros Blancs?* According to what patterns did they establish themselves on the island? Who did their children marry?

With the little information available today, the answers to these questions can only be surmised. The immigrants were attracted by the lucrative prospects the coffee plantations offered them. 1. Some of them were without a doubt more skilled and educated than the original settlers and probably had a knowledge of Standard French while their oral French more may have been more or less consonant with it. 2. Some became wealthy as landowners and tradesmen. 3. They likely established themselves around the coastal towns and swelled the population of such places as Saint-Pierre, Saint-Benoit, Saint Leu, while their children might have married and moved to more remote places such as the Plaine des Grègues, where speakers of a higher register are to be found. In such places an awareness of the social standing of the VLR must have come to be felt by its monolingual speakers, thus setting the stage for a desire to speak "better".

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6.2.7.5 The large number of freedmen

A phenomenon that is characteristic of Stage II is the increase in the number of freedmen in Bourbon. As Table 2.7 in §2.2.2 indicates, their number increased from 40 in 1740 to 919 in 1788.[152] Due to the emancipation of the slaves decreed under the French Revolution, this number shot up to 2,700 in 1802, two years after Napoleaon had actually reestablished slavery and the old restrictive laws. Also, marriages between Blacks and Whites, which had been illegal until the French Revolution were no longer so until 1802. The consequences of these changes on the speech of the freed men and women were probably rather minimal except in cases where they were able to be schooled in Standard French. However, it must have contributed to the stabilization of the VLR insofar as they and their descendants possibly spoke a less basilectal lect than the slaves did.

6.2.7.6 Conclusions about Stage II (1715-1817)

The principle of stabilization, or the gradual alignment of idiolects with a shared set of rules and selection of forms marking one's belonging to a social group, which are the normal consequence of the use of a language in a speech community, is what characterizes the second stage in the history of Bourbon. To use Manessy's (1995:120) words, what was at work were "the processes of unification which transform a group of individual variants into a variety that is sufficiently structured to constitute in its turn, if

[152] According to Chaudenson (1993:108), until 1789 it can be assumed that the great majority of slaves who were freed had been born of relations between a free person and a slave, in which cases no official permission from the authorities was required.

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not a norm, at least a model."[153] However, as he points out (Manessy 1978:101), this process as a whole is not well known.

Creoles have traditionally been thought to have emerged in a situation where an overwhelming proportion of Black slaves on plantations had little or no access to the speech of their masters. The theory of approximations of approximations in the framework of second language acquisition (Chaudenson 1992; Mufwene 2000) follows this lines of thinking. However, in this study it is rather the "creative" approach of Baker that is followed. Baker (1996) has shown that the purpose of the slaves was not to learn a target language, a position that some authors have been in agreement with.[154] This seems to have ben the case in the 18th century in Bourbon, where the incoming slaves, rather than trying to acquire the language of their master (except for house slaves, who could see a possible social advancement for them in so doing) joined the ranks of the locally-born slaves and rejected the world of the *Gros Blancs*. The revolts that took place until the abolition of slavery attest to that.

The input to the VLR in Stage II would seem to have been the local (lexically French) vernacular (Chaudenson's [1974] *Bourbonnais* and Corne's [1999] *lete ki* French). However, while such authors as Chaudenson (1992) and Valdman (1978a) attibute the "stabilization and homogeneization of individual variants" in the VLR to the

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[153] "... les processus d'unification qui transforment un ensemble de variantes individuelles en une variété suffisamment structurée pour se constituer à son tour sinon en norme, du moins en modèle" [Manessy 1995:120].

[154] For example, Muysken (2001:157-8) comments: "I am sympathetic to the position taken by Baker, e.g. in his thoughtful (1996) review of Chaudenson (1992), that the colonial languages are not really the target that slaves are aiming at. This does not mean, however, that the processes of second language learning were not important, but only that the construction of the new grammar was not necessarily target-directed."

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absence of the norm, Manessy points out that this norm had actually accessible to the slaves during Stage I. He therefore concludes (Manessy 1995:119): "It must be acknowledged that if the pressure of the norm [i.e. French on Popular French] had ceased to have any effect, it was probably due to the fact that, at a certain point in time, the speech of the masters no longer appeared to their inferiors as adequate for their own means of communication. No doubt the vague sentiment of solidarity must be invoked that develops among people who find themselves, to use Reinecke's (1971:500) expression, in intimate, continuous, and non-discriminatory contact, especially when these people are aware that they belong to an oppressed group, cut off from any participation other than passive in the socio-economic system in which they find themselves placed."[155] Such a sense of solidarity can only have increased as the coffee plantations spread across the island and an organized form of slavery developed on them, including the *Petits Créoles*, also excluded from the ranks of the landowners.

Manessy (1995:120) has a very perceptive view of the process whereby the various idiolects undergo an extension of the lexicon, while their morpho-syntactic forms remain unchanged or fossilized. It is based on a phenomenon observed by Lafage (1985:422) in forms of vehicular varieties of African French. He writes that even while the learners "reconstructed different of simplified variants of French ... by applying universal strategies of language acquisition ... the lack of interest in the model proposed

[155] "Il faut admettre que si la pression de la norme a cessé d'être efficace, c'est vraisemblablement que l'usage des maîtres, à un certain moment, n'est plus apparu à leurs subalternes comme adéquat à leurs propres besoins de communication. Sans doute doit-on invoquer ici le vague sentiment de solidarité qui se développe entre gens qui se trouvent, selon l'expression de J.-E. Reinecke (1971, p. 500), en contact intime, continu et non discriminatoire, surtout lorsque ces gens ont conscience d'appartenir à un groupe opprimé, exclu de toute participation autre que passive au système socio-économique où il se trouve inséré." [Manessy 1995:119].

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by the dominant group most likely blocked any effort of approximation at a level compatible with the demands of communication. ... [T]he learner is motivated by an active attitude without any concern for correctness [of expression]. It is enough for him to understand and to be understood. The model aimed at is the variety that is current in the community he belongs to. As soon as he is satisfied with the tool at his disposal, his speech fossilizes ... However, the development of the socio-economic context and the role of this speech variety as an interethnic vehicular form would make it evolve in the direction of a creolization process, entailing an obligation to extend the lexicon without however the fossilized morpho-syntactic structures being brought into question."[156] This would explain the fact that the so-called acrolect in Bourbon (and later Réunion) can seem close to Popular French, even while the morpho-syntax is far removed from that of Popular French. It is quite likely that many lexical forms that are considered remnants of the past are in fact more recent developments due to the presence of a standard form of French on the island.[157]

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[156] "S'ils [les apprenants] ont reconstruit un français simplifié, ou plus exactement diverses variantes simplifiées (nous préférions dire: "fonctionnalisées") du français, c'est bien plutôt par application des stratégies universelles d'acquisition du langage évoquées par A. Valdman. Quoi qu'il en soit, le désintérêt à l'égard du modèle proposé par le groupe dominant a vraisemblablement bloqué l'effort d'approximation au niveau compatible avec les nécessités de la communication. Ce phénomène a été décrit par S. Lafage (1985, p. 422) à propos du français pratiqué en Afrique par les 'non lettrés': 'l'apprenant est motivé par une attitude active sans aucun souci de correction. Il lui suffit de comprendre et de se faire comprendre. Le modèle visé est la variété qui a cours dans la communauté à laquelle il appartient. Dès qu'il est satisfait de l'outil à sa disposition, son parler se fige'; la description qu'elle donne d'autre part du 'petit-français' de Côte d'Ivoire correspond bien à l'idée que nous nous faisons du créole naissant: un parler de type pidgin, développé à partir de contacts naturels, non pas entre locuteurs natifs et non-natifs [comme dans l'apprentissage scolaire] ... Cette variété correspondait à un système approximatif stabilisé à un niveau très bas. Cependant le développement du contexte socio-économique et le rôle de ce parler comme véhiculaire inter-ethnique le feraient évoluer vers une créolisation, en entraînant, par exemple, l'obligation d'étendre le lexique sans que les structures morphosyntaxiques fossilisées soient véritablement remises en question" [Manessy 1995:120].

[157] The continued presence of the substrate of a vernacular lect can lead to changes which are due to the development of the vernacular but that can appear as though they were due to the influence of the superstrate, even while this is not the case. Cf. Lang 2000. This is very important in the case of the VLR because the presence of Standard French, which was **not** the original superstrate, also influenced them.

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Further, in answer to the question of how the many idiolects may have been unified into one speech variety, surprisingly Manessy (1995:121) does not think that it is the number of shared rules in the speech variety that is the basis for the elaboration of the unified variety. Observations of the phenomenon would reveal that "the consensus arrived at by the members of the [speech] community in formation ... has to do with ... rules of usage established in the speech community. This usage, considered as particular to the group, takes on a function of integration, plays a role of index of how much one member belongs to the community; it even imposes itself on speakers who have otherwise a sufficient knowledge of the norm; the latter then find themselves in the situation described by Widdowson (1977:13): 'The learner appears to be competent in the target language system but to perform in the interlanguage'."[158]

This describes the position the *Petits Créoles* were in when they moved off their small plots of land. While competent in Popular French, they began to perform in the vernacular lect spoken by the outcast. In time, they most likely adopted many of the forms of the speech of the maroons and ex-slaves, perhaps less so in terms of vocabulary, but certainly in terms of the morpho-syntax of the vernacular. If they had previously spoken in two distinct registers, one to each other and another to their slaves, these two registers would now become increasingly fused into one.

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[158] "En fait, ce qu'on peut observer directement du phénomène suggère une tout autre explication: il semble bien que le consensus qui s'établit entre les membres de la communauté en voie de formation ne porte pas sur les règles de référence, mais sur des règles d'usage; ces usages, tenus pour propres au groupe, assument une fonction d'intégration, ils jouent un rôle d'indice d'appartenance à la communauté et ils s'imposent même aux locuteurs qui ont d'autre part une connaissance suffisante de la norme; ces derniers se trouvent alors dans la situation décrite par Widdowson (1977, p. 13): 'The learner appears to be competent in the target language system but to perform in the interlanguage.'" [Manessy 1995:121]

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Table 6.7 below gives a summary of the conclusions about Stage II.

Table 6.7 Stage II (1715 – 1817): linguistic processes at work

Input	Type of Principle	Processes	Examples of Result
Lexicon of Popular French and the early vernacular Structures of the early Vernacular (and in some cases of Popular French) Malagasy-based structures of the early vernacular	Stabilization, or aligning of idiolects with shared set of rules of usage and markings of one's belonging to social group	Selection of forms that signal one's belonging to a social group Beginning of decreolization due to the presence of oral French of immigrants	Maintenance and generalization of ASM *i* vs. Copula-like Particle *lé* Use of ASM *i* + long form of verb in Past Progressive by the *Petits Créoles* Confusion of CLP *lé* and French copula ***il est*** 'he/it is'

6.2.8 Stages III (1817 – 1946) and IV (1946 to the present): decreolization in the VLR

The key to this period is naturally the emancipation of the slaves on December 20, 1848, which is celebrated annually in Réunion as *la fèt kaf* 'African holiday'. Socially and linguistically, the bond between the *Petits Créoles* and the freed slaves—many of whom moved off the land of the proprietors of the sugar plantations and also moved to the highlands to make a living for themselves—became tighter. The rejection of the *Gros Blancs* was now a clearly marked social division. However, it was an increasingly an economical watershed that was to divide them into separated parts of the population at least until 1946, even though, to all practical intents and purposes, this watershed still continues to sparate the haves from the have nots today.

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Interestingly, the distinctions between lects made by the *Petits Blancs*, who claim a White heritage is basically racial (cf. Cellier 1982).[159] This unfortunately further muddies the waters. The truth is, a clear distinction between the lect of such a *Petit Blanc* and a *Kaf*, tha is a descendant of African and perhaps also some Malagasy origin, cannot be established very easily. Impressions such as these do, of course, reveal something of what certain ethnic groups have adopted as distinctive traits signifying—consciously or unconsciously—their belonging to distinct group. However, they remain rather subjective, and are often contradictory. What has, however, been considered a watershed between acrolectal and basilectal speech varities is the use of the long form of the verb for the past progressive by the *Petits Blancs* and the use of the *té i* form by the rest of the population.[160] Not that the same speaker cannot use both in in consecutive sentences or even the same sentence, as in (4), quoted in Cellier (1985b:192):

(4) ***nou travayé*** *dann bitasion ... kan nou... la nou travay suk de fon ...*
1 pl worked in farm ... when 1 pl there 1 pl work sugar of bottom
'We worked on a farm ... when we worked ... we worked on the concentrate

té i mèt *la é pui* ***zot i gagné*** *dzambrozat épui de liod ...*
PAST ASM put there and then **3 pl ASM get** jamerose and iodine
they used to put it there and then they would get jamerose[161] and iodine ...

Chaudenson's (1981a) hypothesis is that an "erosion of the basilect" occurred in the 19th century. For him, speakers weeded socially stigmatized forms of the basilect out of their speech. However, this hypothesis entails two problems. 1. It seems to admit that the speech of the *Petits Blancs* was more basilectal than a survival of 17th century Popular

[159] This article is based on the recordings made by Barat and Carayol (Set A) in the late 1970s, which contain responses by various speakers to questions about what characterized the speech of speakers of different ethnic origin.
[160] Cf. Cellier (1985a:488).
[161] According to Armand (1987:385), the light pink fruit of a tree of Indo-Malay origin smelling like a rose (*sygyzium jambos*).

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French in their speech would imply. And 2. For such a phenomenon to occur the *Petits Blancs* would have had to have some social consciousness that is itself a *product* of the 19th century. There is very little chance that such a phenomenon could have taken place in isolated areas before the middle of the 20th century when the *départementalisation* opened up roads and made public education available to all. Such generalized debasilectalization can only have been a later phenomenon, as Cellier (1985c) has shown. The difficulty school children have in adapting to the French model without falling into the patterns of the VLR are almost unsurmountable for the children who did have not been exposed at home to spoken some form of Standard French before attending school. Of course, the presence of speakers of Standard French who may have come from France could explain isolated cases of such an alignment of the acrolectal forms with those of Standard French, increasing thereby the use of a *français créolisé*. Chaudenson's "basilectal erosion" at such an early date seems, however, to be a hypothesis that has as its purpose to account for the elimination of traits that, according to him, were common to Mauritian Creole and the VLR in the early 19th century.

For Chaudenson (1981a:250), "generally speaking, the items ... which were eliminated from in the VLR, while surviving in M[auritian] C[reole], were the ones that were characteristic of the 'basilect'", of which he gives a list of five:

1. the agglutinated article;
2. the 3 pers. sg. pronominal form *li;*
3. the Present Tense of the *moi manzé* type;
4. the Past Tense form *était manzé;* and
5. the zero copula.[162]

[162] "... dans l'ensemble, les faits qui ont été éliminés en réunionnais tout en subsistant en mauricien, sont ceux qui étaient caractéristiques du créole 'basilectal' (1. Article aggluliné; 2. 'li'; 7. Présent du type 'moi

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These five traits that he sees as characteristic of the basilectal variety in Bourbon in 1800 were replaced for Chaudenson (1981a:251) by "competing forms that corresponded to them in the *français créolisé*"[163] (i.e. the speech used by the Whites that was tainted by vernacular traits), as a result of "conflicting rules". "This evolution," he indicates (Chaudenson 1981a:249-50), "took place during the 19th century, and certain traits were still apparent around 1880."[164]

Some of Chaudenson's arguments do not hold up in the face of the evidence based on Malagasy restructuring presented in § 5.5, and some do not hold up because of the sociolinguistic situation. It should be noted that Chaudenson's reliance on the texts of Héry casts doubts on his theory. Héry was a French academic whose poems written in the VLR are heavily criticized by Focard (1986). The latter takes him to task for using too many French forms and expressions that are definitely not forms of the *creole*. However, apart from this fact, there are a number of problematic points.

Taking the items in Chaudenson's list one by one, there is first the agglutinated article. As is said in §5.6.1, there is some confusion about the use of the definite article in the VLR. Despite this, however, the existence of an article in the Malagasy dialects was an element that worked in favor of the maintenance of the definite and indefinite articles even in the early vernacular, by congruence, despite the forces of simplification (cf.

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manzé'; 9. Passé du type 'était manzé'; 13 et 14. Degré zéro de la copule--'n'a pas' à la forme négative--" [Chaudenson 1981a:250].

[163] " ... se sont vus concurrencés par les éléments correspondants du français créolisé (conflits de règles) avant de disparaître" [Chaudenson 1981a:251].

[164] "Cette évolution s'est réalisée au cours du XIXe siècle et certains traits apparaissent encore vers 1880" [Chaudenson 1981a:249-50].

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§6.2.1). To consider the absence of articles, as Chaudenson seems to be doing, as a trait of the basilect seems to be at best a sleight of hand. Much agglutination did occur early, as the presence of *sô zanfan* 'his/her child' as well as *son enfant* 'his/her child in the speech of a *Petit Blanc* (cf. Appendix C1) shows. This in itself is enough to indicate that the supposed erosion in the speakers of the basilect probably did not occur in this respect. If this evolution did not occur in the texts in Set B, why should it have occurred in the speech of speakers of the true basilect.

Second, there is the 3 pers. sg pronoun *li* 'he/she/it'. Chaudenson (1981a:255) sees the replacement of *li* by *lu* (for the masculine form) as the result of "mesolectal hypercorrection". "It is not to be analyzed," he writes (Chaudenson 1981a:255), "in terms of interference of French in basilectal creole. It is one of the "clearest" of the "traits [of *français créolisé*] that set themselves off (*démarcatifs*) [as a speech forms]" and "are possibly the result of the conscious desire (*volonté*) to distinguish a sub-system from the basilectal (creole) subsystem."[165] It is interesting that such a formula as the *i di*, which serves as a kind of quotation marks in narratives, should remain untouched by this phenomenon of "hypercorrection".

The third point (as well as the fourth) is a much more crucial issue in terms of possible Malagasy-based restructuring. The "Present Tense type [personal pronoun + long form of the verb]" for Chaudenson (1981a:251) was "eliminated by the type in [*i* +

[165] "... l'hypercorrection mésolectale: le 'français créolisé' se caractérise par des traits spécifiques (qui ne doivent pas s'analyser en termes d'interférence entre français et créole basilectal) mais aussi des traits 'démarcatifs' qui peuvent résulter d'une volonté de distinguer le sous-système du sous-système créole basilectal. Le cas le plus net nous paraît celui du pronom de 3ème personne du singulier 'lu'" [Chaudenson 1981a:255].

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short form of the verb]" due to basilectal erosion. This view is problematic in the following respect. If the ASM *i* is the result of contact-induced restructuring before 1715, as is suggested in §5.5.5, the supposed elimination of the Present Tense with the long form of the verb would be a basilectization rather than a result of "basilectal erosion". Simplification, as can be observed in the vehicular varieties of African French, as well as in the *petit français*, does produce the form *moi manzé* 'I eat'. However, the *français créolisé* has the form in [*i* + short form]. If the ASM *i* existed in the early vernacular, how would it find its way into as acrolectal a form as that of the *français créolisé?* And, further, how could its adoption possibly be a debasilectification. The facts here seem rather to speak in favor of the basilect having changed the *français créolisé* (or Popular French). That there existed forms such as *moi manzé* as variants in the early speech of non-Popular French speaking wives and domestics before 1715 is more than likely. However, the adoption across the board of the form in [*i* + short form] is a basilectal early trait rather than the result of a "sociolinguistic rule which opposes a socially valued variant ... to the socially devalued variant" as Chaudenson (1981a:255) argues for the adoption of the form *lu*[166].

As far as the fourth point is concerned, much the same logic applies. For Chaudenson (1981a:251), "it is possible that three types of past coexisted, namely, the type in -é ... and the type in *té ki* (***était qui***) [in *français créolisé*]; and the type [*té* + long form of the verb] (***était, été***) [in the basilectal creole]. The disappearance of the third type brought about the adoption of the second *té ki* (often found today in the form *té i* as the

[166] "Donc 'lu' est le résultat d'une extension 'démarcatrice' de la règle sociolinguistique qui oppose une variante socialement valorisée ('lu') à la variante dévalorisée ('i') du créole basilectal" [Chaudenson 1981a:255].

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basilectal form, perhaps by analogical influence with the present)."[167] Again it is hard to see how a form with the ASM *i* such as *mi manzé* 'I was eating', which dates to the early vernacular as it betrays restructuring based on Malagasy influence, could be a form of *français créolisé*, and 2. could represent a form of basilectal erosion, for the reasons outlined above as to point three.

The origin of the marker *i* in the VLR, associated with the Malagasy distinction between processive and non-processive predicates plays a crucial role in determining which lect affected which other lect and whether the firm adoption of this marker in all the VLR is the result of the power of the vernacular in representing the community of speakers that distinguished themselves from the ruling *Gros Blancs* or a result of their intimidation by the economically powerful party. Again, if there has been little effect on these lects in terms of decreolisation, as Chaudenson (1981a:253ff) seems to think, one wonders why socially stigmatized forms would have mattered earlier. Contrary to the logic of Malagasy substrate influence is also the point Chaudenson (1981a:251) makes in a note, namely that "today in Réunion the turn *moin lété i* is considered characteristic of the lect of the Cafres [i.e. descendants of the African slaves] or the lect of the Malbars [i.e. descendants of the Tamils or immigrants from southern India]; however, one notes that that it is no doubt originally linked to a popular or regional French periphrastic expression."[168] One does not see how a speech community originally born into slavery or

[167] "On peut en effet penser qu'ont coexisté plusieurs types de passé: - français créolisé: type en -é ... type en té ki ('était qui'); - créole basilectal: type 'té + thème verbal' ('était', 'été'). La disparition du troisième type a entraîné l'adoption comme forme basilectale du second 'té ki' (qu'on trouve aujourd'hui souvent sous la forme 'té i', peut-être par influence analogique du présent) ..." [Chaudenson 1981a:251].

[168] "Aujourd'hui, à la Réunion, on considère le tour 'moin lété i...' comme caractéristique du parler des "Cafres" ou des "Malbars"; or, on constate qu'il se rattache sans doute, à l'origine, à une périphrase populaire ou régionale française" [Chaudenson 1981a:251].

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born to indentured servants would adopt a Popular French turn to set itself off from the world of its masters. It is rather the opposite phenomenon that one would expect, namely that a turn that arose out of a restructured Popular form should become characteristic of the speech of such a community of slaves or endentured servants, the fact that the form *té ki* may have survived in the acrolect notwithstanding.

Finally, the zero copula, point five in Chaudensons's list, has amply been discussed in §5.5.4. The evidence that the supposed copula in the VLR *lé* is not a copula, but rather a Copula-like Particle of Malagasy origin, makes the very notion of "zero copula" a nonsequitur. If anything, on an ironic note of agreement with Chaudenson, the interference of the Popular French form ***il est*** 'it/he/she(?) is' has interfered with the basilect by creating a confusion between the Copula-like Particle *lé* in the vernacular lects, on the one hand, and the superstrate "copula" ***il est***, on the other.

Despite Chaudenson's (1981:253ff) statements to the contrary, the establishment of some schools and the formal study of French which began at the end of the 19th century—however irregular school attendance might have been—had an impact on the vernacular speech cannot be denied. This issue is crucial when it comes to the fate of the CLP *lé*. What iss mentioned (cf. §5.5.6), i.e. the confusion of the VLR *lé* and French ***il est*** 'he/she/it is', as well as of the VLR *lété* and French ***il était*** 'he/she/it was' ar clear examples of the impact of French, which became stonger and stronger as the 20th century progressed.

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The campaign to attract farmers from France to the highlands of Réunion seems to have been a failure on the whole. However, there was important immigration from the *Héxagone*, or France, which occurred towards the end of Stage II (1715-1817) and continued into the early years of Stage III (1817-1946). Between 1830 and 1899 an estimated XXX people came from various rural areas of France to farm in the *cirques* and *plaines* of the island. This new linguistic force was bound to have an effect on the speech of the *Petits Blancs* in these regions as well as in others where their descendents might have moved. Much of the vocabulary of the supposed *français regional* spoken in these parts probably dates back to the arrival of this population. This mater, too needs to be researched and studied. The history and the mixing of the population is such that a real study would mean going through all the local church and municipal records.

Linguistically, however, one thing is certain, the second generation of these immigrants would not speak like their parents, but much more likely like their peers. This makes any sort of influence of the oral French thus introduced hard to measure. What is certain also is that these people's confidence in writing French was as limited as that of the locally born people. It is made quite clear in the recordings made by Barat and Carayol (Set B) that even at the beginning of the 20th century a young man who wanted to ask for a young woman's hand in marriage had to get the official letter written for him. While the parents of the young woman might have understood the letter, they would likely not have been able to read it. The 70- or 80-year-old speakers on these tapes are not confident in their own knowledge of French, for their schooling has been rudimentary. The stereotypical use of expressions from this kind of French also betrays the distance

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that lies between their everyday register and their specialized or official register. They themselves may know the difference between the two. In the sample of this kind of mixed register Appendix B2 and C2 presents its features and also shows the hesitations between forms of each register, the distinction being often unclear to the speaker herself. However, as a catalyst in maintaining and reviving what French elements existed in the acrolectal lects spoken in the uplands, the effect of this immigration may have been fairly important.

Surprisingly, Chaudenson (1981a) considers the powerful effects of decreolization that have been alluded to by others for the 20th century as overstated—he who advocates a "basilectal erosion" at an *earlier* stage. It is a little difficult to see why he denies such decreolization other than for the fact that the *départementalisation* has done little to change the economic status of the speakers of the so-called *créole*. One cannot help wondering, however, why things would not have remained more stable at an earlier date.

The present-day situation on Réunion and the different varieties distinguished by linguists over the past 30 to 40 years (cf discussion in Apendix C) provides a rather unclear picture. However, the greatest drawback to the analysis of variation is the continuation of a division in which the geographical and the racial watersheds are wedded together: a dichotomy of the highlands (*Hauts*) and the Whites versus the Lowlands (*Bas*) and the Blacks, or those of mixed origins, which correspond to acrolectal and basilectal, respectively.

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The influence of the substrate languages of the slaves and indentured servants on the VLR that Baker (1982) and Corne (1982, 1999) write about in Stage III (1817-1946), do not directly concern the issue discussed in this study and are not commented on here.

Table 6.8 below gives the conclusions about Stage III.

Table 6.8 Stage III (1817-1946): linguistic processes at work

Input	Type of Principle	Processes	Examples of Result
Vernacular lects of Réunion	End of VLR and Malagasy bilingualism	Second language acquisition of the VLR	No significant innovations
	Creation of new ethnolects	Selection of markers	*té i* a Kaf marker?
Oral French of immigrants and Standard French in schools		Decreolization of the VLR	Confusion of CLP *lé* and French copula ***il est*** 'he/it is', VLR *lété* and French ***il était*** 'he/it was'

Table 6.9 below gives the conclusions about Stage IV:

Table 6.9 Stage IV (1946 to the present): linguistic processes at work

Vernacular lects of Réunion	End of VLR and Malagasy bilingualism	Second language acquisition of the VLR	No significant innovations
	Creation of new ethnolects	Selection of markers	*té i* a Kaf marker?
Oral French of immigrants and Standard French in schools		Decreolization of the VLR	Confusion of CLP *lé* and French copula ***il est*** 'he/it is', VLR *lété* and French ***il était*** 'he/it was'

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6.3 The role of Malagasy in the history of the VLR

Beginning in 1663, the dialectal and popular varieties of French the settlers spoke continued to come into contact with Malagasy dialects, as they had in the Fort-Dauphin area since 1643. Over the next 50 years, as the small community grew, as a result of predominantly mixed marriages as well as the arrival of new settlers and their servants or slaves, this language contact, enriched by contact with other languages, gave rise to a new vernacular (first perhaps a sort of pre-pidgin continuum)[169] whose lexicon it is quite likely was predominantly French. The French syntactic input during this period of settlement (1663 to 1715) was plausibly colored to some degree by foreigner talk and pidginized forms of French commonly used with indigenous people at the time, as well as by likely elements of nautical French and (Indo-)Portuguese pidgin. However, the input from the Malagasy speakers together with this lexically French input created *a new language* which became the principal means of communication of the overwhelming majority of the population of Réunion. Only the members of the elite, who were educated in France did not speak it on a daily basis, although they may have learned to speak it from their nannies and their play companions as children. As the influence of a standard kind of spoken French gained in importance and prestige, added to that of Standard French with schooling, from the 1880s on, the forms of the vernacular lects that had established themselves in the second half of the 18th century began to be overlaid with forms of a creolized kind of variety.

[169] For theoretical models with pidginization, cf. Bollée 1977, Papen (1978:), Stein 1984, Corne 1999, etc. Manessy refers to it as "une variété pidginisée du français" (1995:102) and "possible ... variété 'pidginisée' du moyen-français" (Manessy 1995:31).

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Table 6.10 below gives the scenario for the language creation and its subsequent retentions and spread to other lects.

Table 6.10 Chronology and scenario for language creation in Bourbon/Réunion

Input	Type of Principle	Processes	Examples of Result

Stage I: 1663 – 1715 (*Habitation* Era)

Input	Type of Principle	Processes	Examples of Result
Popular French Lexicon and Structures (also some Foreigner Talk and Pidginized French) Malagasy structures	Principles of Language Universals (for interethnic communication)	Simplification Reduction	reduced number of verb forms and prepositions tripartite division of time
	Specific Principles of Language Change: Creation of a new language that identifies a member as belonging to a group	Manessy's (1995) "adaptation and convergence" (substrate influence) Detges' (2000) "creole-specific reanalysis" Thomason's (2001b) "negotiations among speakers"	Agentive Subject Marker *i* Non-Agentive Copula-like Marker *lé;* long and short form of the verb; *la* (past marker); *fini* (completive marker) equivalence of Popular French */qu/i* and Malagasy *ñy, ñ,* or *n'*

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Stage II: 1715 – 1817 (Plantation Era)

Input	Type of Principle	Processes	Examples of Result
Lexicon of Popular French and the early vernacular Structures of the early Vernacular (and in some cases Popular French) Malagasy-based structures of the early vernacular	Stabilization, or aligning of idiolects with shared set of rules of usage and markings of belonging to a social group	Selection of forms that signal one's belonging to a social group	Maintenance and generalization of ASM *i* vs. Copula-like Particle *lé* Use of ASM *i* + long form of verb in Past Progressive by the *Petits Créoles*

Stage III: 1817 – 1946 (Post-Slavery Era)

Input	Type of Principle	Processes	Examples of Result
Vernacular lects of Réunion Oral French of immigrants and Standard French in schools	End of VLR and Malagasy bilingualism Creation of new ethnolects	Second language acquisition of the VLR Selection of markers Decreolization of the VLR	No significant innovations *té i* a Kaf marker? Confusion of CLP *lé* and French copula ***il est*** 'he/it is', VLR *lété* and French ***il était*** 'he/it was'

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Stage IV: 1946 to the Present

Input	Type of Principle	Processes	Examples of Result
Vernacular lects of Réunion		First language acquisition of the VLR	No significant innovations
Standard French in media and education		Accelerated Decreolization of the VLR	Confusion of CLP *lé* and French copula ***il est*** 'he/it is', VLR *lété* and French ***il était*** 'he/it was'
	Creation of new sociolects	Selection of markers	

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Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.0 A Few essential points

This study has attempted to establish evidence, on both socio-historical and linguistic grounds, for the role of Malagasy in the creation of morpho-syntactic traits characteristic of the vernacular lects of Réunion (VLR). Using a general framework of multiple causation and a model of language creation (Manessy 1995), it has argued that:

1. speakers of Malagasy dialects, or a Malagasy koiné, contributed to the creation of structures in the new vernacular that emerged in Bourbon from 1663 to 1715 and continued to develop during the 18th century;

2. a Malagasy dialect and lexically-French vernacular bilingualism must have existed among the Malagasies to make possible the contact-induced structures that permanently left their stamp on the VLR by the late 1700s;

3. various characteristic structures in the VLR, which distinguish them from French creoles of the Indian Ocean, are difficult to account for without assuming the role of Malagasy in their creation; and

4. specific traces of the role of Malagasy in the morpho-syntax (and semantics) are to be found in *all* the vernacular lects spoken in Réunion from the end of the 18th century to the present day.

Further, this study has attempted to establish the likelihood that Malagasy speakers both contributed to the creation of new forms *and* slowed down the simplification (Manessy 1995) of the Popular French input, due to several points of similarity in morpho-syntax between Popular French and the Malagasy dialects.

Finally, evidence of the role of Malagasy in the emergence of the VLR sheds light on two indirectly related issues: 1. the nature of the linguistic continuum in Réunion; and

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2. the place its vernaculars occupy on the broader linguistic map of speech varieties sharing a French vocabulary, i.e. with respect to the French creoles of the Indian Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, and America, as well as lexically French vehicular languages spoken in various parts of Africa.

7.1 The contribution of Malagasy speakers to the contact-induced vernacular

It was argued in §6.1 that speakers of Popular French *and* speakers of Malagasy dialects contributed to the creation of the vernacular that existed by 1715 from the contact between them as well as with speakers of Indian and Indo-Portuguese languages, and African languages. The early contact between the French settlers and their Malagasy wives and domestics (1663-1690), which was itself the continuation of a previous contact between speakers of Popular French and speakers of Malagasy dialects in southern and eastern Madagascar, was one in which the Malagasy speakers had direct access to the language spoken by the French settlers. On certain farms in Bourbon this access may have lasted until at least 1735, by which time the cleared lowlands on the island had begun to be completely covered with coffee plantations. Since they were the speakers of the main substrate language in the contact situation, speakers of Malagasy dialects principally contributed to what language creation occurred through contact with speakers of the Popular French, i.e. the earliest settlers and immigrants in Bourbon, and kept the new contact language or vernacular within certain linguistic bounds.

As shown in §5.5, the simplification the Popular French input provided by the settlers and immigrants underwent was limited in the new vernacular because of the

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similarities in morpho-syntactic structure between Popular French and the Malagasy dialects, or Malagasy koiné. Specific points of similarity allowed the Malagasies to use structures from their languages to communicate with the French settlers using a French lexicon. In terms of surface structure, it was argued, the speech of the French and the Malagasies could, in some specific respects, i.e morpho-syntactic respects, have seemed quite similar, even while the deep structure of their respective utterances in the contact language may actually have been different. As far as the speakers, who also spoke either Popular French or Malagasy, were concerned, of course, they were not only speaking the same language—the new vernacular of Bourbon, but using the same morpho-syntactic forms.

A word must be said with regard to the hypotheses that consider the French input as having been a French pidgin. If the input of the settlers from France in the earliest period had been *primarily* (or exclusively) a French pidgin, the similarities in morpho-syntactic structure between Malagasy and French could not have produced what are claimed here to be characteristic traits of the VLR. In fact, a pidgin French input would have contributed to a greater degree of simplification than the VLR seem to have presented early, as the utterance by Marie (Chaudenson 1974:1147). Hence the importance of the dual bilingualism that has been hypothesized.

It was indeed argued in §6.1 that bilingualism existed among the Malagasies, a number of whom must have spoken both their own dialects (or a koiné, as time went on) and the new vernacular until well into the 18th century. By bilingualism is meant a dual system of reference, particularly in morpho-syntactic structure, with an increasing

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interpenetration of the two systems over time. It is such bilingualism, coupled with a Popular French and vernacular bilingualism (or the presence of two distinct registers, due to the emergence of a freshly created vernacular) among the French settlers, that according to this study, most likely facilitated the morpho-syntactic structures that were created in the new vernacular. Indeed, the kind of new structures that characterized the new vernacular would have necessitated such a dual bilingualism to emerge at all. The bilingualism in Popular French and the new vernacular—initially two registers—gradually became one register over time. This was particularly the case with the *Petits Créoles*, among whom it finally merged into their specific speech variety or lect. Until 1715, even if the children born in Bourbon to French parents learned the emerging vernacular, they may have continued to speak with their parents in a register that was reminiscent of the Popular French of their immediate ancestors.

Even if the Malagasy dialect and vernacular bilingualism had waned early in the 18th century (i.e. before 1735), the vernacular lect of the many Creole slaves of Malagasy descent would have been a vehicle for the transmission of the forms born of contact and their maintenance as syntactic (and semantic) turns of speech that had been characteristic of the speech of Malagasy speakers in earlier generations. In time the speech of the descendants of the French settlers themselves would also have changed as a result of contact with the Malagasies, the Creoles, and others as well as with other settlers. Their "White" speech among themselves, due to interference from the new vernacular that they now increasingly spoke as their first language, would have begun to drift away from the original Popular French spoken by the original settlers upon *their* arrival. This is what

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can still be traced particularly in terms of specific morpho-syntactic structures that have survived in their lect from those times. In the case of the *Petits Créoles*, this would have been a considerably faster process than in the case of the rest of the White population. The process might have been a very gradual over time, and may explain why any difference between a *français créolisé* ["creolized" form of French] and a *créole francisé* [Frenchified creole] is so hard to establish.

In other words, from 1663 to 1715 (and probably until the late 1700s), the speakers of a Malagasy dialects, or a Malagasy koiné, would *principally* have contributed to the formation and maintenance of a new vernacular (i.e. Chaudenson's [1974] *bourbonnais* and Corne's [1982] *lete ki* French), the presence of speakers of Indian, Indo-Portuguese, and African languages notwithdstanding. It is during this time that, among other features, the use of the ASM *i* and the CLP *lé*, which marked stative and non-stative predicates, most likely developed. Even though these elements were developments that resulted from similarities between Malagasy dialects and Popular French (cf. §5.5), they nonetheless constitute a *contribution of the Malagasy speakers to the new vernacular*. Such contributions have not previously been considered as resulting from any similarities existing between the two languages in contact *except* in the sense of second language acquisition (Chaudenson 1996), which leaves little room for creativity on the part of all members of the new community of speakers.

What is particular about the hypothesis presented here is that *it identifies certain elements that are present in all the vernacular lects and have survived from the earliest*

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times to the present day as having been created by the speakers of a substrate language as well as by the speakers of the superstrate language. The ASM *i* and the CLP *lé* are such elements; and it would seem that they are part and parcel of the morpho-syntactic and semantic makeup of *all* the vernacular lects, whether that of the *Petits Blancs*, or of the descendants of the African slaves, or of any ethnic group on the island. It would also seem that they amount to significant language creation, even if it does represent a lesser degree than that found in such creoles as Mauritian Creole or Seychelles Creole. The difference the ASM *i* and the CLP *lé* alone show exists between the VLR and either oral (Metropolitan) or Standard French is such that, in Cellier's (1985a:361) words, it constitutes the kind of "structural mutation" one finds in other diglossic situations where the forms of a *creole* misinform a creole speaker about the nature of Standard French. In fact, the difference is such that it remains one of the main stumbling blocks of children in Réunion as they learn Standard French in school (cf. Cellier 1985c). It is fundamental enough to constitute a reason why the VLR cannot simply be considered a "continuation of French" (Corne 1999:73)[1] or as having "derived straight from French" as Cellier (1985a:357) says Chaudenson's (1974-2000) view would have one believe. One can only surmise at this stage of the inquiry what other contributions the Malagasy speakers may have made to the early vernacular, of which few traces may be detectable in the present form of the VLR. The contribution they made may have a wider scope than has been surmised.

[1] Corne's 1999:73) statement is: "Reunion Creole today is therefore a unique blend of continuation and of language creation."

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If this hypothesis is correct, some of what has been attributed to a later creolization in the coastal lects during the 18th and 19th centuries,[2] might actually have an earlier origin in the language creation that occurred before 1715. The question of whether the coastal lects are partially the result of a pidginization and/or creolization process that has previously been thought to have occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries on the basis of similar creole traits in the VLR and Mauritian Creole (cf. Corne 1999:73), for example, would be disproved, as would the hypothesis that the lect of the *Petits Blancs* had been influenced by the lects of the coastal regions (hence the expression *français créolisé*, or creolized type of French). The view that the *(té k)i + long form of the verb* past progressive form, which has come to characterize the lect of the *Petits Blancs*, and the past progressive form in *té i*, which is characteristic of the African lect (*kréol kaf*), have a different origin—the latter being the result of later pidginization and/or creolization, or an influence of the creoles of the Incian Ocean, would not hold up (cf. §5.5.7). Of course, the early origin of both forms does not make it impossible for one to have become a form that today characterizes one lect and the other one that today characterizes the other lect. Also, as the data in Appendix B2 show, the so-called "basilectal" form seems to have a high frequency in areas where the speech varieties are usually considered to be characterized by "acrolectal" forms. The historical facts that support the Malagasy contribution to the emergence of the vernacular (1663-1715) and its development (in the late 1700s) should, it would seem, outweigh arguments that are based on judgments of native speakers about different ways of speaking in different ethnic groups. They would favor the scenario in which an early form of the vernacular became one that speakers of a community began to use as a mark of belonging to their particular group., namely the one

[2] Cf. Baker and Corne (1986), Corne (1999:69), and Baker (2000:54).

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that rejected the world of the *Gros Blancs*. The geographical distribution here may also seem to argue against historical evidence. The issue therefore still requires much further study—perhaps even a kind of "geosyntax" that Corne (1999:96) deems necessary, to solve such matters. Unfortunatlely, there is a question, how viable such a project is, for changes and flexibility at the morpho-syntactic level in idiolects are such that generalizations on the basis an isoglottic plotting may be extremely difficult to make.

It should be said that if this hypothesis is correct, Chaudensons's (1981a:255) claim that a type of decreolization (*dévernacularisation*) took place in the speech of the *Petits Blancs* might become relevant, to the extent that the presence of an oral standart-like variety of French probably contributed to Frenchify their speech (cf. §2.5). However, it would not indicate decreolization in terms of the lexicon alone, as *he* conceives of it.

7.2 The VLR: a case of linguistic hybridization?

The first author to write about the VLR used the term "Malayo-Aryan" to refer to them in his *essai d'hybridologie linguistique*. This is not surprising, given the genealogical climate created by the naturalistic approach of Schleicher's *Sprachbaumtheorie* of the 1860s. Since then, however, beginning already with Schuchardt as early as the 1880s (Baggioni 1991:187), there has been great suspicion in the field of what is today called creolistics of anything reminiscent of such hybridization.[3] Recently, interestingly enough,

[3] According to Baggioni (1991:189), "To put it plainly, since the discovery of the genetic relationship among Indo-European languages, western linguistics has been extremely wary of any notion of 'language mixture'. And even if the language contact in discourse does not make for conflict, the changes in and out of the languages [in contact], to the extent that they are frequent and/or never totally controlled, necessarily lead to mixing, or to '*linguistic* miscegenation', in the taking of turns and also in code-switching in the turns taken by the same interlocutor." ("A vrai dire, depuis la découverte de la parenté génétique des langues indo-européennes, la linguistique occidentale est fortement réticente face à toute idée de 'mixité

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such notions as *métissage linguistique* (language mixing) have come to the fore again. While in the English-speaking creolistic world studies about mixed languages have continued to be published, few studies comparing the phenomena of cultural creolization with linguistic creolization have as yet appeared. The Francophone world of creolistics has moved into the field of the relations of language and identity and the appropriateness of using socio-anthropological notions in its approach to linguistic creolization. The topic of language and identity is one that is particularly crucial and much debated in Réunion (cf. Cellier 1985e).

The late creolist Baggioni (1983, 1991) was among those who spearheaded the study of what he called *métissage linguistique* in the sense of comparing and contrasting what can be observed in the formation and development of creole languages with other language processes in the fields of L2 interlanguage, language contact situations, informal language acquisition by migrants, not in the sense of *langue* but of *parole*, or discourse. In this view, (Baggioni 1991:191-2):[4 and 3]

> speakers master a *linguistic repertoire* and the overlap of part of the "linguistic repertoires" of the individuals and groups involved in regular communicative exchanges constitutes a human whole in the shape of a *plurilingual community* in which the languages and language varieties function in complex relationships of dominance and complementarity. ... And even if the language contact in discourse does not create any conflicts, the change from one language to another, to the extent that they are frequent and/or never totally mastered, necessarily leads to mixtures, or *linguistic mixture* in the alternating speech forms and code-switching within the speech of the same speaker

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des langues'. ... Et même si le contact de langues dans le discours n'est point conflictuel, les passages d'une langue à l'autre, dans la mesure où ils sont fréquents et/ou jamais totalement maîtrisés, aboutissent nécessairement au mélange, ou *métissage linguistique*, dans l'alternance des tours de parole et aussi dans l'alternance *codique (code-switching)* dans la prise de parole d'une même locuteur") [Baggioni 1991:189].

[4] "Les locuteurs ont donc la maîtrise d'un *répertoire linguistique* et la coïncidence d'une partie des 'répertoires linguistiques' des individus et groupes en contact dans des échanges communicatifs réguliers constitue un ensemble humain en une *communauté plurilingue* où les langues et variétés de langues fonctionnent dans des rapports complexes de dominance et de complémentarité" [Baggioni 1991:191-2].

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This is a very apt description of the kind of mixing that occurred in the elaboration that created the VLR. It also leaves ample room for the high level of variation that has always characterized them. It is indeed at the level of the speakers that the "negotiation", to use Kaufman's (2001) term, or language change or creation, occurs in the final instance.

7.3 The dual effect of the role of Malagasy in the creation of the VLR

The hypothesis of this study has been that the speakers of Malagasy dialects, or a Malagasy koiné, played an important role in the creation and development of the VLR. This role, it was argued, seems to have been twofold, for it may explain: 1. the creation of new morpho-syntactic traits in the verb phrase that are specific to these lects and did not exist as such in either the Popular French or the Malagasy input; and 2. the stemming of the simplification process, i.e. Manessy's (1995) simplification and reduction (cf. §6.2.1) to the extent that morpho-syntactic traits common to both Popular French and Malagasy dialects were retained or transformed. The role of Malagasy limited the degree to which the Popular French input underwent simplification and reduction, which is a lesser degree than the one characteristic of the products of language creation in similar circumstances. The fact that the Malagasy speakers stemmed the simplification typical of *vernacularisation* constitutes no less an important role than the fact that they may have helped create new forms in the emerging vernacular. In fact, the VLR may well illustrate the point that, while a lesser access to the lexifier language usually leads to a greater degree of simplification in a contact-induced language, a greater access to it can lead to language creation that transforms the input of the lexifier language to a *significant* degree. Indeed, in a case like that of Bourbon, it may well be a mistake to assume that the

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greater access to the lexifier language was tantamount to the abandonment of one's first language. In a setting where many children were born in a multi-ethnic population, the notion that the members of the population that did not speak Popular French simply abandoned their own language seems, to say the least, rather hasty.

7.4 The nature of the linguistic continuum in Réunion

The VLR, which include the lects of the poor Whites of the highlands (*Petits Blancs des Hauts*), as well as the so-called African lects (*krèol kaf*) have beeen considered as forming a continuum with the former as acrolectal varieties and the latter as basilectal varieties, and variation among idiolects across the spectrum. What this study suggests, however, is that they all have common roots in the rejection of the world of the *Gros Blancs*, and before that in the rejection of the oppressive governors of the early settlement. It must be remembered that Whites as well as Blacks became maroons very early in Bourbon and that both the *Petits Créoles* and the slaves (and later ex-slaves) rejected the world of the *Gros Blancs*. It was argued that the vernacular lects emerged as the language of a social group to which one's belonging was marked by the specific traits of that lect. This continuum does not, however, include the supposed or so-called *français régional* (Chaudenson 1974, Chaudenson & Carayol 1977), which was a variety of French that was spoken by the plantation owners and the local bourgeoisie of the island, whose members essentially learned it in France.

7.5 The nature of the VLR and their place among lexically French varieties

The main disadvantage of the "Francocentric" approach to the VLR (cf. Chaudenson 1992 and Carayol 1978, 1979) is that it makes distance from the standard variety of

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French the point of reference for all varieties that derive their lexicon from a form of French. In this view, the continuum in Réunion today is considered as spanning the gamut from the Metropolitan French spoken by administrative personnel that have come to Réunion from France, through regional French and creolized form of French (*français créolisé*) spoken by the *Petits Blancs des Hauts* (Chaudenson 1974:xxx ;Carayol 1977:47; Carayol & Chaudenson 1978; Cellier 1985a:136-7) to the most basilectal or *Kaf* variety. Further, unfortunately, the *créole* (i.e. VLR) is too much considered what Cellier (1985e:87) has aptly called a "racial mirror" (*miroir phénotypique*), in which the varieties of the language are so many corresponding shades to the mixtures of racial/ethnic origin.[5]

Although the term "linguistic continuum", originally "post-creole speech continuum", implied the consequences of decreolization in situations where the superstrate continued to exist in the area where a creole had developed (DeCamp 1971), it is now used rather freely in the pidgin and creole literature to refer to the range of varieties of a creole spoken anywhere, sometimes even in cases where these varieties have not necessarily been affected by the continued co-presence of the superstrate from the beginning. As was seen in the discussion of Stages III (1817-1946) and IV (1946 to the present) in the history of Réunion, the role played by the new superstrate, namely Standard French, has been relatively recent—after a long period of practically total absence from the everyday life of the speakers of the VLR. Nevertheless, some authors

[5] "The study of variation only highlights certain ethnic or regional markers ..." ("L'étude de la variation ne met en valeur que quelques marqueurs d'ethnicité ou quelques marqueurs régionaux ...") [Cellier 1985c:87].

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(cf. Carayol and Chaudenson [1976][6]; Carayol [1978] and Corne [1999:69]) still refer to the range of varieties from French to the basilect on the island of Réunion as a "linguistic continuum".

The VLR, commonly called the Creole of Réunion, are a language in its own right, with its literature and its tradition.[7] It is perhaps one of the key elements in what is nowadays called "Réunionnais identity" (*l'identité réunionnaise*). Sadly and regrettably, an analysis by Cellier's of the situation in Réunion in 1985 is still true. He wrote (Cellier 1985e:87) then:

> The prevailing identity in Réunion would like to endorse the idea of a Réunionnais identity that would not include the creole language, that would arise from a French sense of identity but in open denial of both the identity of Metropolitan France and the deep linguistic reality of the island. This attitude has no other purpose than to hand complete power—political as well as cultural—to a bilingual minority born of a bilingual middle class able to serve as the managers of the great majority of unilingual creolophones or passive bilinguals."[8]

It is little wonder that these speakers of the VLR are highly suspicious of any analysis of their speech variety, which they would rather see left alone, condemned as they are to feel ashamed both of the inferior status of their mother tongue and their lack of proficiency in the standard.

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[6] It should be remembered here how much Chaudenson (1981a:253ff) questions any such decreolization in Réunion (cf. §6.2.8).

[7] Cf. Gauvin 1977.

[8] "L'identité dominante à la Réunion voudrait accréditer l'idée d'une identité réunionnaise qui serait sans la langue créole, qui se ferait dans l'identité française mais en opposition affirmée avec l'identité métropolitaine et avec la réalité linguistique profonde. Cette attitude n'a pour finalité que la prise de pouvoir total, politique et culturel, d'une minorité bilingue issue d'une classe moyenne bilingue capable de servir de 'cadre' à la grande majorité de créolophones unilingues ou bilingues passifs" [Cellier 1985e].

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Whether one wishes to call it a "post-creole continuum" or not, there has very clearly been a linguistic continuum among the VLR and even among the registers of individual speakers depending on the interlocutors and the occasion or situation. There is a phenomenon of adaptation to one's interlocutor that makes any speaker vary his/her speech register. While there are reasons for considering the situation in Réunion today one of diglossia, it is doubtful that this was the case for the majority of the population until Standard French came to obtain the status it continues to have today, in fact, increasingly so over time since a higher level of speech is more than ever considered an advantage or a mark of social status.[9]

In comparison with other lexically French varieties, it can certainly be said that the VLR have a lesser degree of structural difference from 17th and 18th century Popular French (or even from today's Standard French) than did or do varieties such as Mauritian Creole or Seychellois Creole. There is clearly evidence of more than just "slight" language creation in their origin, which means that they cannot simply be considered "forms of Popular French", or even a "continuation of Popular French". However, further study to establish how much language creation lies in the emergence of these lects will be necessary to bring to light just how much evidence there is for such a claim.

[9] Cf. Robillard (2000).

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Appendix A. Malagasy data: a tale and some points of grammar

A1. A Bara Folktale

This folktale taken from Faublée (1947:223-9) illustrates Bara narrative. Commenting on the homogeneous nature of Malagasy civilization, he (Faublée 1947:482) writes: "If there is such a striking similarity among the tales, while the songs, which are aesthetic creations, vary from place to place, it is that they play an important role in Malagasy life." For Faublée (1947:485) their many archaic traits indicate how ancient they are. In this tale, which is very similar to one told in Réunion (Barat et al. 1977:13-8), "what has many mothers" is one of countless riddles typical of this part of the world (cf. Bavoux 1993).[1] An English translation accompanies the complete text in Faublée (1947:223-9).

Ñi pila teteli – Le chercheur de miel – The Honey-Seeker

Reṯirembi lehilahi nipila teteli, iša maray mãndeha aṅala, ñi lehilahi šašani atana mibuaki maray kua, mijuṯu atanimbuli. Hwi valini taṅamini:

Reṯirembi était un homme qui cherchait du miel, chaque matin il va dans la forêt, des hommes du village sortent aussi le matin, ils descendent aux champs. La femme de Reṯirembi lui dit:

Reṯirembi was a honey-seeker; every morning he went into the forest; men of the village too went out in the morning; they went down to the fields. Reṯirembi's wife said to him:

"Ń-ulu miaša, hanao ṯi miaša, inu ñi hu haniṯika amini ñi mušari?"

"Les gens travaillent la terre, tu ne travailles pas, que mangerons-nous pendant la disette?"

"People are working the land; you do not work; what shall we eat during the drought?"

"Mipetrahanao fa yaho hahay ñi hu haniṯika, fa ṯi hainao minda hu pañariku ṯika amini ñi tãteli": Manavali ñi valini ñi pãnjaka, ta hihina tãteli:

"Tais-toi, je sais ce que nous mangerons, tu ignores peut-être que nous serons riches grâce au miel." La femme du roi est enceinte, elle a envie de manger du miel:

"Be quiet, I know what we shall eat; perhaps you do not know that we shall be rich because of the honey." The king's wife was pregnant; she felt like eating honey:

[1] Faublée (1947:228) indicates that it is common to designate an object by a kind of riddle.

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"Aya Ravali hahitanao maru reni?" "Inu Ravali marureni izao? Raha ţi haiku izao, ti miši aŕarani hafa?"

"Seigneur-Mari, où trouveras-tu ce qui a beaucoup de mères?" "Qu'est 'ayant-beaucoup-de-mères?' femme, c'est une chose que j'ignore, n'a-t-elle pas d'autre nom?"

"Lord-husband, where will you find 'what has many mothers'?" "Wife, what is 'what has many mothers; it is something I do not know; does it not have another name?"

"Ţi miši" hwi ŕ-apela "aŕara hafa ahafataraku azi." "Akuri avao hahezaku n-aŕarani?"

"Il n'y a pas d'autre nom que je connaisse," dit la femme. "Alors, comment connaîtrai-je son nom?"

"There is no other name that I know of," said the woman. "So how will I know its name?"

"Hu afaki ñi truku laha ţi hu hitanao yu, ñi šua hu anao" hwi ŕapela "maŕiraki ulu hirembi anyu atana hafa."

"J'avorterai si tu ne trouves pas ceci, il serait bien pour toi," dit la femme, "d'envoyer quelqu'un en chercher à un autre village."

"I will miscarry if you do not find it; it would be good for you," said the wife, "to send someone to find some in another village."

Nãndeha ulu raiki atana haŕuţani ŕ-ulu mahay n-aŕarani yu raha yu. Avi atanan-ulu:

Une homme est parti du village pour demander aux gens compétents le nom de cette chose. Arrivé à un village étranger:

A man left from the village to go and ask competent people the name of this thing. When he arrived at a foreign village, [he asked]:

"Mba miši mahafaţaţi maru reni etu aminareo?" "Ţi miši mahay an-izao ŕ-etu aminay, mãndehãna kua hanao haŕutani amini ŕ-ulu amini ñi tana rihu eŕi."

"Quelqu'un parmi vous sait-il 'ayant-beaucoup-de-mères', qu'est-ce?" "Personne ici chez nous ne le sait, va encore demander aux gens du village là-bas."

"Does any one of you know what 'having-many-mothers' is?" "No one here among us knows; go and ask the people in yonder village."

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Tendriki ulu raiki ãndala: "Mba hainao raha mana n-aṅara: maru renini?"

En route il a rencontré une personne: "Connais-tu la chose 'ayant-beaucoup-de-mères'?"

Along the way he met someone: "Do you know [what] thing having-many-mothers is?"

"Aha, aṅarãndraha ṯi haiku zao, maṅutanea eṅi atana, minda hiši ulu hanay an-izay"

"Non, c'est le nom d'une chose que j'ignore, demande-là au village, peut-être des gens le sauront-ils?"

"No. That is the name of something I do not know; ask there in that village; maybe some people [there] will know."

Niliṯi atraṅumi ñi be tana: "Mba hainao lunaki maru renini?" "Aha, aṅaran-draha ṯi nireku izay. Maṅutanea ulu hafa." "Ṯi hitaku ñi hataoku, hiheri aho hitalili amini ñi nañiraki ahi."

Il est entré dans la maison du chef de village: "Chef, connais-tu ce qui a beaucoup de mères?" "Non, c'est le nom d'une chose dont je n'ai pas entendu parler. Demande à quelqu'un d'autre." "Je ne sais que faire, je retournerai annoncer cela à celui qui m'a envoyé."

He entered the house of the village chieftain [and asked]: "Chieftain, do you know what has many mothers?" "No. That is the name of something I have not heard of. Ask someone else." "I do not know what to do. I will go back and tell this to the one who sent me."

"Pãnjaka, ṯi niši ulu nahafaṯati n-aṅarani ñi raha teani valinao, mãngataki anao aho haṅiraki ulu hafa."

"Roi, il n'y a personne qui sache le nom de ce que désire ta femme, je te demande d'envoyer une autre personne."

"King, there is no one who knows the name of what your wife is longing for; I ask you to send someone else [to find out]."

"Mãndehanao hanao Keli mahihiṯi hirembi ṅ-ulu mahay ñi marurenini."

"Pars, toi petit intelligent, chercher quelqu'un qui connaisse ce qui a beaucoup de mères."

"Go, you little intelligent one, and find someone who knows what has a lot of mothers."

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"Hipetraki elaela aṅi aho fa šaruti ñi hamataṭi anyu." "Eka" hwi pãnjaka"fe atovu ñi hahitanao anyu." Nãndeha Kelimahihiṭi, avi atana miši apelambatuṭi maru: "Inu ñi ilainao ruzafi?"

"Je resterai longtemps là-bas, car il est difficile de l'apprendre." "Oui," dit le roi, "mais fais le nécessaire pour le trouver." Le petit intelligent est parti, il arrive à un village où il y a beaucoup de vieilles femmes: "Petit-fils que cherches-tu?"

"I will stay there a long time, for it is difficult to find it out." "Yes," said the king, "but do what it takes to find out." The little intelligent one left [and] he arrived in a village where there were many old women: "Grandson, what are you looking for?"

"Yaho nišiani ñi pãnjaka vui, ka napirembi ñi raha mana aṅara "marurenini" ṭi miši ulu mahafataṭi an-yu, minda hainareo i? fa laha ãmbaranareo ahi ñi tani miši azi hanume raha anareo aho, fa laha ṭi hitaku yu tapahini aho."

"Je suis puni par le roi, et il me fait chercher ce qui a pour nom: ses mères sont nombreuses, personne ne peut me l'indiquer, peut-être le savez-vous? si vous me montrez l'endroit où c'est, je vous donnerai quelque chose, mais si je ne le trouve pas je serai tué."

"I am being punished by the king, and he is making me find what has the name 'its mothers are many'; no one can tell me. Perhaps you know it? If you [can] show me the place where it is [to be found], I will give you something, but if I don't find it, I will be put to death."

Namali ṅ-apelambatuṭi: "Etu atana miši lehilahi mahay tateli, fe ṭi hainay ndre mahay "marureni".

Les vieilles femmes répondirent: "Ici au village une homme connaît le miel, mais nous ignorons s'il connaît ce qui a beaucoup de mères.

The old women answered: "Here there is a man who knows [about] honey, but we do not know if he knows what has many mothers.

Riaka, alaonareo atwi Reṭirengi, haṅutaneanay ṅ-aṅarandraha maru renini, minda hu haini."

Enfants, amenez ici Reṭirembi, nous lui demanderons le nom de ce qui a beaucoup de mères, peut-être le saura-t-il."

Children, bring Reṭirembi here; we will ask him the name of what has many mothers; maybe he will know it."

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"Yahay mapãngalaki anao fa ingu miši vuãmbui amini ñi pãnjaka ka apilaini "maru renini" fe ti fataṯay izao, vaša hanao hahafataṯi azi?" "Yaho paneteli, fe yaho mbu ṯi nahita raha mana aṅara"maru renini"fa teteli ñi fataṯu, minda teteli apilaini ñi pãnjaka anao."

"Nous t'avons fait chercher, car voici un homme puni par le roi, et ce dernier lui fait chercher ce qui a beaucoup de mères, mais nous ne le connaissons pas, peut-être le connais-tu?" "Je suis chercheur de miel, mais je n'ai pas encore vu de chose ayant pour nom: ses mères sont nombreuses, c'est le miel que je connais, peut-être est-ce du miel que le roi te fait chercher."

"We summoned you because here is a man who is being punished by the king, and the latter is making him find what has many mothers; but we do not know it; perhaps you know it?" "I am a honey-seeker, but I have not yet seen anything with the name: its mothers are many; perhaps it is honey that the king has sent you to find."

"Mãngataki anao aho hindray aṅamiku eṅi amini ñi pãnjaka haṅazava anizao aṅamini." "Ṯi haiku ñi hanuru pãnjaka anyu, fa jaṅarahinay ñi tateli, amin yu apibuhanay ñi truki ñi valinay mavešaṯi; ñi ṯi mana aumbi mišavati amin yu;

"Je te demande de venir avec moi chez le roi pour le lui expliquer." "Je ne peux pas le montrer au roi, car le miel est notre dieu, avec lui nous célébrons la grossesse de nos femmes;

"I ask you to come with me to the king to explain it to him [yourself]." "I cannot show it to the king, for honey is our god. With it we celebrate the pregnancies of our women;

ṅ-auli faṅafahanay ṅ-anakay lemea amin-yu, ṯi matuki aho, vaša laha hãmbaraku ñi pãnjaka yu hu rarani ṯi hila tateli aho, hitanao ṅ-ulu miaša tani, yaho ṯi miaša fa amin-yu amelumaku ṅ-anaku vuhu ñi valiku."

ceux qui n'ont pas de boeufs s'en servent pour faire la circoncision; les remèdes avec lesquels nous soignons nos enfants en sont enduits, je n'ai pas confiance, peut-être que si je le montre au roi, il m'empêchera de chercher du miel, tu vois, les gens travaillent la terre, moi qui ne travaille pas la terre, j'en fais vivre mes enfants et ma femme."

those who have no oxen[2] use it to perform circumcisions; the medicines with which we treat our children are coated with it; I feel distrustful; perhaps if I show it to the king, he will stop me from gathering honey; you see, people work the land, [but] I who do not work the land, provide for my children and my wife with it."

[2] According to Ralaimihoatra (1969:66), the Baras, like the Masikoros, the Tandroy, and the Mahafaly were essentially a cattle-herding people.

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"Mãndeha ṯika" hwi Kelimahihiṯi "fa ñi pãnjaka ṯi hamunu anao, fa hu fali aminao." Avi eo: "Ingu rañãndriya, ñi lehilalahi mahafataṯi ñi 'marurenini'".

"Allons", dit le petit intelligent, "le roi ne te tuera pas, il sera content de toi." Ils arrivent là: "Voici, Seigneur, l'homme qui connaît ce qui a beaucoup de mères."

"Let's go," said the little intelligent one. "The king will not kill you, he will he happy with you." They arrive there: "Here, Lord, is the man who knows what has many mothers."

"Akuri fataṯao ñi 'maru renini', raha teani ñi valiku?" "Ṯi mba nahita raha mana ańara marurenini aho, fa tateli ñi nihitaku vuhu fataṯu."

"Comment connais-tu ce qui a beaucoup de mères, ce que désire ma femme?" "Je n'ai pas encore vu ce qui a pour nom 'qui a beaucoup de mères', c'est le miel que j'ai vu et que je connais."

"How do you know what has many mothers, what my wife longs for?" "I have not yet seen what has as its name 'having many mothers'; it is honey that I have seen and that I know."

Nãngehi ń-apela mańavali, avi eo. "Ṯi miši ulu mahafataṯi n-ańarani ñi raha tianao, ingu lehilahi paneteli, mahafataṯi ñi tateli."

Il a appelé la femme enceinte, elle arrive là. "Personne ne connaît le vrai nom de ce que tu veux, voici un chercheur de miel, il connaît le miel."

He called the pregnant woman; she arrived. "No one knows the true name of what you want; here is a honey-seeker; he knows honey."

"Alao atwi handramaku ñi tateli, minda ñi raha teaku izao." "Hãndeha hila azi ańi ańala aho, humaray hu avi aho." Nahazu ñi teteli, avi eo atanani ñi pãnjaka: "Itwi ñi raha nilaiku rañãndria, vaša hu halani ñi valinao." "Aya hanao apela huva" Itwi ñi raha ilainao."

"Apporte ici du miel que j'y goûte, c'est peut-être ce que je désire." "J'irai le chercher là-bas dans la forêt, je viendrai demain." Il a trouvé du miel, il arrive au village du roi: "Voici ce que j'ai cherché, Seigneur, peut-être que ta femme ne l'aimera pas." "Où es-tu? Reine, voici ce que tu demandes."

"Bring some honey here that I [may] taste it; perhaps it is what I long for." "I will go and get it there in the forest; I will come tomorrow." He has found some honey; he arrives at the village of the king: "Here is what I looked for, Lord, [but] maybe your wife will not like it." "Where are you, Queen? Here is what you are asking for."

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"Eka", hwi ń-apela huva "fe izao ń-ahi, mãngataki anao aho hańãndra azi keki." Nańãndra Retirembi. "Mihinana hanao" hwi "vaša mba ni raha teanao." Mańãndra ń-apela huva: "Itwi ñi raha teaku."

"Oui," dit la reine, "mais voici ce que je dis, je te demande d'en goûter d'abord un peu." Retirembi a goûté. "Mange-le", dit-il, "c'est peut-être ce que tu veux." La reine goûte: "C'est ce que j'aime."

"Yes," said the queen, "but here is what I say: I ask you first to taste a little of it." Retirembi tasted it. "Eat it," he said, "it may be what you want." The queen tasted it. "It is what I like."

"Inu ñi teanao Retirembi, undevu fulu mua aumbi telupulu?" "Ñi teaku aumbi telu pulu." Ãndešu ń-aumbinao, fa laha ti hanao nimati."

"Que préfères-tu? Retirembi, dix esclaves ou trente boeufs?" "C'est trente boeufs que je préfère." Emmène tes boeufs, sans toi elle serait morte."

"What do you prefer, Retirembi? Ten slaves or thirty oxen?" [3] "Thirty oxen is what I prefer." "Take them away; without you she would have died."

Nuli Retirengi[4] amini ń-aumbini telu pulu, miakati atana, mifańutani ń-ulu: "Iya mãndruaki aumbi maru ao?"

Retirembi est retourné avec ses trente boeufs, il monte au village, les gens se demandent l'un l'autre: "Qui amène beaucoup de boeufs?"

Retirembi has come back with his thirty oxen; he walks up to the village; the people ask one another: "Who is bringing many oxen?"

Hwi ñi zaza madidiniki : "Retirengi mãndruaki aumbi maru ao." "Taya riaku nahazuani aumbi, minda nãngalati i." Maraindray: "Mãngaiki anareo puni etu atana, fa ñi fila tateli nahazuaku aumbi maru."

Les jeunes enfants disent: "Retirembi amène beaucoup de boeufs ici." "Enfants, où aurait-il trouvé des boeufs, peut-être les a-t-il volés." Le matin: "Je vous appelle, gens du village, la quête du miel m'a fait gagner beaucoup de boeufs."

The young children say: "Retirembi is bringing many oxen here." "Children, where would he have found oxen? Maybe he has stolen them." The next morning [Retirembi announces]: "I am calling you, people of the village, honey-gathering has made me earn many oxen."

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[3] The custom of having slaves here is to be noted.

[4] According to Faublée (1947:228) the storyteller sometimes says Retirembi and sometimes says Retirengi.

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"Meńaṯi ṯika niṯara azi ṯi miaša, ingu i nahazu harea hita mašu." "Taluha n-anaraku Reṯirembi fa haniniki Velumihari n-ańaraku.

"Nous avons honte, nous lui disions qu'il ne travaillait pas la terre, voici qu'il a gagné des biens visibles." "Jadis mon nom était Reṯirembi, maintenant mon nom est Velumihari.

"We feel ashamed; we told him that he didn't work the land; here he has earned visible goods." "Before, my name was Reṯirembi, [but] now my name is Velumihari.

Akuri ruvali, laha nańaraki n-ańaṯao aho, ṯi nahita raha mahavelu tahaki an-yu aho."

Alors, femme, si j'avais suivi ton conseil, je n'aurais rien trouvé qui me fasse vivre comme ceci."

So, wife, if I had followed your advice, I would not have found anything that would let me live like this."

"Ka akuri" hwi ń-apela "aumbi azunao akerimpo yu, mãmbuara šufi hu aṯika."

"Aussi," dit la femme, "ce sont des boeufs gagnés par toi avec courage, invente une marque d'oreilles pour nous."

"Also," says the wife, "they are oxen that you have earned with courage. Make up an earmark for us."

"Ṯi hahita šufi hafa ṯika, Mila ñi hu ańarani ñi šufiṯika."

"Nous ne trouverons pas une autre marque, 'Cherchons' est le nom de notre marque d'oreilles."

"We will not find another mark; 'Let us seek' is the name of our earmark."

Ñi fila teteli nahašua ñi taluha, hananiki ñi mišutri mapibuaki truki amini ñi teteli, mamura amini ñi tuadutu.

La quête du miel a fait du bien à ceux de jadis. Maintenant les pauvres célèbrent la grossesse avec du miel, et font la circoncision avec de l'hydromel.

Honey-gathering benefited people of yore. Now the poor celebrate pregnancies with honey and perform circumcisions with hydromel.

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A2. Some Malagasy grammar points illustrated in sample sentences

The sentences illustrating the Malagasy grammar points are numbered from (A1) to (A36). In brackets on the line immediately below this numbering appear the numbers the same sentences are given in §5.5.

1. Only existential sentences can have an indefinite noun as complement.

In (A1), a definite noun, determined by *ny* 'the', is the subject of the verb 'cry':

(A1) *m- itomany **ny** zaza*
(3) PRES cry **DET** child
'The child is crying.' [Keenan 1975:267]
[Note: 'The children are crying' is also a possible gloss.]

In (A2), an indefinite noun is the complement of the verb *-isy* 'exist':

(A2) *m- **isy** zaza m- itomany*
(4) PRES **exist** child PRES cry
'Some child is crying.' [Keenan 1975:267]
[Note: 'Some children are crying' is also a possible gloss.]

2. Existential sentences resemble sentences in which complements of an existential take an optional relative pronoun.

(A3) *m- **isy** zaza m- itomany*
(7) PRES **exist** child PRES cry
'Some child is/children are crying.' [Keenan 1975:267]

(A4) *m- **isy** zaza **(izay)** m- itomany*
(8) PRES **exist** child (REL) PRES cry
'There are children who are crying.' [Keenan 1975:267]
'There is a child who is crying.'

3. There is an absence of any overt copula in Malagasy.[5]

(A5) *mpampianatra Rajaona* [Keenan's (65)]
(21) teacher John
'John is a teacher.' [Keenan 1978:301]

[5] "By *copula*," Keenan (1978:300-1) explains, "I mean a morphophonemically independent element which has the characteristic properties of stative verbs in its language and which functions as the main verb in sentences with nominal predicates, like *John is a thief*."

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4. A Copula-like Particle (CLP) is used for topicalization.

(A6) *Rabe **dia** mpampianatra*
(22) Rabe CLP teacher [CLP = Copula-like Particle]
'Rabe is a teacher.' [Keenan 1978:301][6]

It should be noticed that this CLP is only used in *marked* sentence structure, namely one where the subject is *not* sentence final, as in (A8), in contrast with (A7), in which there is no topicalization:

(A7) *m- anasa lamba Rasoa*
(23) PRES wash clothes Rasoa
'Rasoa is washing clothes.' [Keenan 1975:252]

(A8) *Rasoa **dia** m- anasa lamba (Ø / ?izy)*
(24) Rasoa CLP PRES wash clothes (Ø / 3s)
'Rasoa, she's washing clothes.' [Keenan 1975:272]

5. There is both a marked and an unmarked order in Malagasy sentences.

Normal or unmarked order, i.e. VOS, is illustrated in (A9). Marked order, i.e. SVO, is indicated either by a strong pause (‖) between the pre-posed subject and the predicate, as in (A10), or by the insertion of the disjunctive morpheme *dia*, as in (A11).[7]

(A9)	PREDICATE	PAUSE	SUBJECT
Normal order:	*Mi- hinana*	|	*ny trondro -nay*
(25)	PRES bite		DET fish 1s
	'Our fish bite.'		[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:67]
(A10)	SUBJECT	PAUSE	PREDICATE
Inversion:	*Ny trondro –nay*	‖	*mi- hinana*
(26)	DET fish 1s		PRES bite
	'Our fish bite.'		[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:67]
(A11)	SUBJECT		PREDICATE
Inversion:	*Ny trondro –nay*	***dia***	*mi- hinana*
(27)	DET fish 1s	**CLP**	PRES bite
	'Our fish bite.'		[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:67]

[6] For Keenan (1978:301), this construction "is clearly a form of topicalization".
[7] Domenichini-Ramiaramanana (1976:67): "All inversion must be indicated in the phonetic chain."

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6. There are both a weak emphatic turn and a strong emphatic turn of phrase.

The weak emphatic turn is illustrated in (A12) and the strong emphatic turn in both (A13) and (A14). The latter emphasize a different adverbial phrase in the original sentence.

(A12) *Halina* || (or: ***dia***) *n- isy alika n- ivovo olona teto an-tanàna*
(28) night || (or: **CLP**) PAST EXT dog PAST bark (at) someone in the village
'Last night there was a dog barking at someone in the village.'
'Cette nuit, il y avait un chien qui aboyait (contre) quelqu'un au village'
[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:74]

(A13) *Halina* ***no*** *n- isy alika n- ivovo olona teto an-tanàna*
(29) night **CLP** PAST EXT dog PAST bark person in the village
'It was last night that there was a dog barking at someone in the village.'
'C'est cette nuit qu'il y avait (un) chien qui aboyait (contre) quelqu'un au village'
[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:76]

(A14) *Teto an-tanàna* ***no*** *alika ilay n- ivovo olona halina*
(30) in the village **CLP** dog (it was a) PAST bark someone night
'It was in the village that a dog barked at someone last night.'
'C'est au village que (c'était un chien) ce qui aboyait (contre) quelqu'un.'
[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:76]

7. Diatheses make a non-subject of a sentence into the subject of a derived sentence.

With a "patient-subject diathesis", a syntactic conversion similar to passivization, the sentence in (A16) can be derived from statement (A15), in which the "agentive property" is implicit by virtue of the Durable Resultative Marker *ma.* The transformation with the circumfix, or Direct Object Diathesis Marker (DODM) *ha- - ina* enables the patient of the action to become the syntactic subject.

(A15) PREDICATE PATIENT-SUBJECT
(49) *Ma- zava ny alina*
DRM brighten DET night [DRM = Durable Resultative Marker]
'The night is bright.'
'La nuit [est] claire.' [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:79]

(A16) PREDICATE PATIENT-SUBJECT = OBJECT
(50) *Ha- zava -ina ny alina*
DODM brighten (DODM) DET night [DODM: *ha- ... -ina*]
'The night is lit up.'
'La nuit [est] éclairée.' [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:79]

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By applying a diathesis, the sentence in (A18) "with semantic agent" [i.e. an agent expressed in the passive construction] can be derived from sentence (A17) by means of a "Syntactic Agent Expansion", in this case the agent *ny diavolana* 'the night'.

(A17)	PREDICATE	PATIENT-SUBJECT	FUNCTIONAL	CAUSAL CIRCUMSTANTIAL
(51)	*Ma- zava*	*ny alina*	*noho*	*ny diavolana*
	RES brighten	DET night	because of	DET moonlight

'The night has brightened because of the moonlight'
'La nuit [est] éclairée à cause du claire de lune.'
'La nuit s'éclaire à cause du clair de lune.' [DC]
[Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:79]

(A18)	PREDICATE	CAUSAL CIRCUMSTANTIAL AGENT EXPANSION	PATIENT-SUBJECT = OBJECT
(52)	*Ha- zava -in'*	*ny diavolana*	*ny alina*
	brighten*	moonlight	DET night [*with DODM]

'The night is lit up by the moonlight.'[8] [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:79]
'La nuit [est] éclairée par le clair de lune.' [DC]

8. Verb marking indicates the underlying role of a subject NP in relative clauses

The relative clause in (A20) is derived from the independent clause in (A19):

(A19)	*ma- nasa ny lamba ny zazavavy*	
(95)	PRES wash DEF clothes DEF girl	[DEF = Definite Determiner]
	'The girl is washing clothes.'	[Keenan 1975:265]

(A20)	*ny zazavavy (izay) manasa ny lamba*	
(96)	DEF girl (RM) wash DEF clothes	[RM = Relative Marker]
	'the girl (that) is washing the clothes'	[Keenan 1975:265]

According to Keenan (1975:297) "Malagasy allows no pronoun retention" in relative clauses, i.e. pronouns referring to other than subject position.

9. A stylistic turn of phrase in Malagasy dialects

"In general," Rabenilaina (1983:167-8) explains, "the speaker orients the sentence towards a verbal subject when he needs to emphasize the process rather than the agent ...

[8] The presence of the agent *ny diavolana* **without any functional marking** can be compared, in terms of its effect, to the presence of *a watch* in the English sentence *I was given a watch for my birthday*, where *a watch* seems to have no function inasmuch as it is not marked as the **object** of *given*, except as a **logical** one. In sentence (A18), however, its function is made clear by the marking on the verb.

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The sentence then takes on a very particular stylistic turn. It is often expressed in the marked order, i.e. by placing the verbal subject in front of the predicate. In such a case, the verbal subject is defined by the Non-deictic Article *ň/ń'* 'the', and a copulative particle of the *da* type, or a strong pause separates it from the predicate," as in (A21):

(A21) SUBJECT PREDICATE
(98) *Ňy ni- téraki àzy* ‖ *àndra tadiàvin- areo* [Rabenilaina 1983:167]
NDA PAST beget 3s ‖ indeed look for you [NDA=Non-deictic Article]
Is it indeed the one who begat him that you are looking for?
Est-ce donc bien celui qui l'a engendré que vous cherchez?

Instead of separating the subject from the predicate by a strong pause, a "copulative particle of the *da* type" or the particle *ro,* can be used, as in (A22):

(A22) SUBJECT PREDICATE
(99) *Ňy tsy hi- àly móa dà mi- àńo* [Rabenilaina: 1983:167]
NDA NEG FUT make war **CLP** PRES yield
'Those who do not want to make war give themselves up.'
'Ceux qui ne veulent pas combattre (eux) se rendent.'

According to Rabenilaina (1983:168): "The verbal subject ... postposed to the predicate... is definite when the speaker wants to designate directly the agent of the action ...; in this case the Non-deictic Article *ňy* 'the' means 'the one who, that which', and so defines an erased noun such as *ólo* 'people' or *ràha* 'thing'... ."[9] He gives the following examples (A23) and (A24):

(A23) PREDICATE SUBJECT
(102) *Bétsaky* ‖ *ňy màha-làla ňy firazàńa -ny*
many ‖ NDA CAUS ART lineage 3s [NDA =Non-deictic Article]
'Many are those who know his lineage.' [Rabenilaina 1983:168]
'Nombreux sont ceux qui connaissent sa lignée.'

(A24) PREDICATE SUBJECT
(103) Sàrotsy ‖ **ňy** h- àh(a)- azo-a-nao àhy [Rabenilaina 1983:169]
difficult ‖ NDA FUT CAUS do 2s 1s
'It is difficult (for you) to catch me.'
'Difficile est la circonstance avec laquelle tu m'obtiendras = il est difficile de m'avoir'

[9] "Le sujet verbal ... postposé au prédicat ... est défini lorsque le locuteur veut désigner directement l'agent de l'action ...; dans ce cas, l'article non-déictique *ňy* 'le, la, les' signifie 'celui qui, cela qui'..." [Rabenilaina 1983:168].

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The verbal subject, Rabenilaina (1983:169) comments, "is non-definite when the speaker designates the process rather than the agent, the object or the circumstance of the action [(A25)], rather the process than the locus or the circumstance of the action [(A26)]." The mark Ø in the following examples indicates the non-definiteness of the verbal subject:

(A25) *Ø ràha lóza màh(a)-àzo an- drangàhy ity*[=11]
(104) Ø something extraordinary CAUS do CIRC man DEM
'Something extraordinary affects this man.'
'Quelque chose d'extraordinaire atteint cet homme...' [Rabenilaina 1983:169]

(A26) *Ø Hàin -ào nan-(t)óño àndro*
(105) Ø PASS know you designate day [PASS = passive]
'You know how to designate a day.' [Rabenilaina 1983:169]
'Est su par toi désigner un jour = Tu sais désigner un jour.'

There is, in other words, highlighting of the *agent* even in a sentence with unmarked order; cf. (A23) and (A24) above. What this means is that (A27) can undergo a diathesis, or syntactic conversion, while (A28), which has an extracted subject (or a verbal subject derived from an underlying sentence) cannot undergo such a conversion. Thus, *ro/ňy* (which Rabenilaina calls "exclusive", that is exclusive of any syntactic conversion), is a stronger binder than *da/la* or a pause (which Rabenilaina calls "non-exclusive", that is not exclusive of a syntactic conversion).

(A27) SUBJECT PREDICATE [Rabenilaina: 1983:167]
(106) *Ňy tsy hi- àly móa* ***dà*** *mi-áño*
NDA NEG FUT make war **CLP** PRES give up
'Those who do not want to make war give themselves up.'
'Ceux qui ne veulent pas combattre (eux) se rendent.'

(A28) *Ňy tsy m- if- an-(t)andrify* ***ro*** *apifanandrifia*
(107) NDA NEG PRES REFL CIRC correspond **CLP** make correspond
'It is what does not correspond that one makes correspond.'
'C'est ce qui ne se correspond pas qu'on fait se correspondre.'
[Rabenilaina: 1983:168]

10. In Malagasy the negation precedes the verb and follows the CLP:

The negastion *tsy* precedes the verb, as in (A29), and follows the CLP *dia* (or the pause in its absence), as in (A30):

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(A29) ***Tsy*** *tonga ny reni -nao*
(109) **NEG** arrive DET mother 2s
'Your mother has not arrived.'
'Votre mère n'est pas arrivée.' [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:92]

(A30) SUBJECT NEGATION PREDICATE
(110) *Ny omby namidy* ‖ (or *dia*) ***tsy*** *an'ny tena*
DET ox sell ‖ (CLP) **NEG** for DET self
'The sold ox is no longer our property.' [Domenichini-Ramiaramanana 1976:68]
'Le boeuf vendu ne nous appartient plus.'

11. In Malagasy the reflexive pronoun is a recent development.

The Malagasy reflexive pronoun *tena* 'body, self', as in (A31), is a recent development.[10] The older option consists in prefixing the verb with a reflexive morpheme or using the intransitive form of the verb (*mis-asa* 'wash') rather than the transitive form of the verb (*man-asa* 'wash').

(A31) *Na- mono* ***tena*** *Rakoto*
(121) PAST kill self Rakoto
'Rakoto killed himself.' [Keenan 1978:312]

12. Malagasy has "framing" demonstrative pronouns.

According to Keenan (1978:299), Malagasy is one subject-final language in which demonstratives "'frame' noun phrases", as in (A32):

(A32) ***ity*** *trano fotsy* ***ity***
(125) **DEM** house white **DEM**
'this white house' [Keenan 1978:299]

13. Malagasy has no constraint on the order of direct and indirect objects.

According to Keenan (1975:267-8), Malagasy has no constraint on the order of direct and indirect objects, even though the following sentences, (A33) to (A35), show a preference for the order [Direct Object + Indirect Object]:

[10]: "To judge from claims made in early, nineteenth century, grammars of Malagasy," Keenan (1978:315) writes, "the use of *tena* 'body, self' is an innovation as a reflexive pronoun."

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(A33) *N- anome vola an- dRabe aho*
(135) PAST give money **OBP Rabe** 1s [OBP = Object Prefix with names]
'I gave money to Rabe.' [Keenan 1975:251]

(A34) *N- anome azy an- dRabe aho*
(136) PAST give 3s **OBP Rabe** 1s [OBP = Object Prefix with names]
'I gave it to Rabe.' [Keenan 1975:251]

(A35) *N- anome vola azy aho*
(137) PAST give money **3s** 1s
'I gave him/her money.' [Keenan 1975:251]

There is, however, a constraint on two pronouns, one direct and the other indirect, following the verb. The sentence in (A36) is ungrammatical:

(A36) **N- anome azy azy aho*
(138) PAST give 3s **3s** 1s
*'I gave it to him/her.' [Keenan 1975:252]

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Appendix B. Data from the VLR: samples of different lects

B1. Data in the lect of *Petits Blancs des Hauts*

This text illustrates narrative in an acrolectal variety of the VLR. It is an extract from *"Bor la pant": vie et croyance d'un habitant de Mafate* (Nicaise 1992:78-84), which is reproduced here with the permission of the author. Some minor changes have been made to the printed text upon listening to the tape recording, as well as some changes in the orginal orthography. The questions asked by Stéphane Nicaise are indicated in brackets, as are words spoken by the informant's daughter.

Bor la pant	**A Life in the Highlands**
Mé sa an 37 la komans met le zit. Sé lané défin Léopol lé mor. [Lé mor la o Léopol?] Li lé mor la o, li resté isi an ba, Kap-Le Bot li resté. Li la di, parsk té in fay boug, fay boug é in bon boug. Kan li ariv pour li mor, li va mont la o pou li anvoiy sé kolon o ranpar si Kap Miné. La di, li monté mor la o, o moin kan li dsandé li fézé la malis. Sé planter li anvoiyé ali o fon. E a sak kantine i falé met ali ater pou sé planter boir, bé la fé osi. Sak li la di té vré.	But that (was the) year 37 (that I) started putting up the shelter. That (is) the year (the) late Léopold died. [He died up there, Léopold?] He died up there—he lived down here, (at) Cap Le-Bot, he lived. He (had) said—because he was a poor guy, (a) poor guy and a good guy—when (the time) came for him to die, he would go up there in order to send his fellow farmers to the cliff at Cap Miné. He (had) said (that) he would go and die up there (so) at least when (they) brought (him) down, he could play a trick (on them). His fellow farmers, he would send (them) over the cliff. And at each bar (they) would have to set him (down) on the ground for his fellow farmers to drink. Well, (they) really did it. What he said was true.
[Bottom of page 78]	
Kan la tir l'kor la kour, la o la rest trwa zour, dizon o bout troisiém zour la tir lo kor la o Aurère. Kan la tir l'kor la o, té plans sapin sa serkey. Kan la tir la kor	When (we) carried the coffin (into) the yard, (we) stayed up there for (a vigil of) three days. After about the third day (we) brought the coffin down from up there in Aurère. When we

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pour arivé si l'bor Bazar la, dizon té in pe kom le poi d'sa la [il désigne un objet léger]. *Oué. Kan sa larivé si l'bor Bazar si ou plé, devan la ti vierz, na in ti vierz par an ba la. Kan lariv la, li voulé pli port ali, la li péz anou.*

carried the coffin from up there—(it was) fir-tree wood that coffin—when we we were carrying it to the cliff at Bazar there, let's say it (was) about a little like the weight of that [*he points to a light object*]. Yes. When it reached the cliff at Bazar, please, in front of the little Virgin—there is a small Virgin down there; when (we) got there, (we) didn't want to carry it any more—it was weighing us (down).

Dérier lavé amoin, e domoun lavé, in bon pe domoun o Por osi lavé monté, dérier lavé amoi ek mesie Diverné, mesie Diverné té pli vié k'moi li, selman té pa tro vié ankor, é nou té mèm grander, nou té kourt, égalizé dérier pou dsann, é sak té gran i mété devan. Devan navé Giyom avek mesie Sarli. Zot té lon. Kan lariv devan la ptit vierz an désandan la si vou plé, si lépol la navé sakén san kilo. Oué. Avec mesie Diverné pou dsann la, dérier la nou marsé a kat pat kom sa, oué. Kan k'lariv dan l'fon la sours Banbou, la in ti pe d'lo la, néna kat la vni dmandé in bout, nou la doné. La pa fé l'kontour par an ba, la pa arivé. Nou mém nou larpri. Tou lé zot la, mouyoung – mouyoung – mouyoung, loin dérier.

Behind there was me and there were people—quite a number of people from Le Port had also come up; behind there was me and Mr. Diverné. Mr. Diverné (was) older than me, he (was), only (he wasn't) too old yet; and we (were) the same height: we (were) short, evened out in the back to carry; and those who (were) tall went in front. In front there was Guillaume and Mr. Charly. They (were) tall. When (we) arrived in front of the little Virgin on the way down, there, please, on our shoulders there, each had a hundred kilos. Yes. With Mr. Diverné on the way down there, behind, there—we were walking on all fours like this, yes. When (we) got to the depression at Bambou spring—there's a little water there—there were four (men who) came and asked (if they could carry the coffin) for a bit (and) we gave (them the coffin). (They) didn't go around the bend down there; they didn't manage (it). We ourselves took it again. All the others there, *mouyoung—mouyoung—mouyoung*—(were) well behind (us).

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Kan lariv pou pasé Kap Miné la, li lavé di nora anvoiy o fon, la pa oubliyé mé la raté. I rest moi mèm pou rakont aou. [Koi la fé?] La malis. [Koman?] Ma rakont aou. Sak la dsandu la, lézot lé mor, i rest moi mèm pou rakont aou. Moin dérier avek mesie Diverné la, na in karo d'boi avan d'ariv le kap la, par isi kan vi kité la ter prop, Palmist i apel, karo d'boi par an ba, apré sa i pran le kap, [Bottom of page 79]

When (we) got to (the point) for passing Cap Miné—he had said (he) would send (all) over the cliff, (he) didn't forget, but (he) missed. There is myself left to tell you (of it). [What did he do?] A trick. [How?] I'll tell you. Those who carried (him) down, the others, (are) dead; there is myself left to tell you (of it). Me, behind, and Mr. Diverné, there—there is a little area of woods before getting to the cliff down there, on this side when you leave the ground itself—Palmiste, it's called, the area of woods below—after that (we) took on the cliff,

bana, bann dérier la rest loin dan karo d'boi isi la, kom mi di aou dérier navé domoun, dé zom ankor, mouyoung – mouyoung – mouyoung. Pa pou zot voi kan ki pas la si l'kap, bé li té finn dir nora anvoiy o fon.

(while) the group, the group behind, stayed away in the wooded area here—as I told you, behind there were people, two more men—*mouyoung—mouyoung—mouyoung*. So that they wouldn't see when (we) passed there on the cliff—well he had said that (he) would send (us) over the cliff.

Kan nou la pri l'kap, sak dvan, lé dé dvan la, bour azot kom sa, le kor la i fezé anou kom sa [geste de serpentin]. *Mi arkont sa mi manti pa moin, oué. [Le serkey té i bouz!] Kan lé dé dvan i bour azot dan kap an o kom sa, anou ni pas si l'bord d'ranpar, kom sa dan vid isi la. Kan li lartir anou, li larmet anou isi bana, bann devan.* (Fille: *Zot navé pa per d'porté?*) *bé oblizé, Silvia. [Bé la fé sa toultan?] Atan ma dir aou! Depui isi an o, kom mi di aou, ti bondié, sa i pezé anou mèm, sé kan*

When we took on the cliff, those in the front, the two in front there, (he) pushed them like this: the coffin there was going like this on us [*he makes a swaying gesture*]. I am telling you this, I am not lying, I'm not, yes. [The coffin moved!] When the two in the front, he pushed them up on the cliff, we walking on the edge of the cliff, like this on the edge, there. When (they) pulled us back again, (they) put us back here, the ones in front. [Daughter: Weren't you afraid to carry (the coffin?)] We had to, Silvia. [Well, you did that all your life!] Wait, I'll tell you! From up here, like I tell you, oh Lord,

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k'lariv la li la fé la malis, kan la pri l'kap. Li la fé sa malis kom li la di, mé selman li la pa anvoiyé o fon, selman la raté selman.

that (thing) was really weighing us down. It (is) when (we) got there (that) he played his trick, as (we) were took on the cliff. He played his trick, as (he) had said, only he didn't send (us) over the cliff, he just missed.

Moitié ranpar la, dérier moi lavé in bou d'kor lété kom sa, amoi ek mesié Diverné, hé dizon nou té finn ratrapé lé dé zot devan, oué, gran bout kom sa. Mi fé kom sa, mi éséy – mi éséy, i ginye pi mèm, mi fé kom sa mi voi dé gro mesié le vant lé kom sa, dernié bout laba, lété moitié l'ranpar, mi voi dé gro mesie laba i vyin, mouyoung – mouyyoung – mouyoung. E tou lé zot la ... Moi la kriyé moi, moi lavé in pe d'toupé moi, mi di, mesie arét blagé dérier, mi di, vyin apuiy le kor don mesie, kom sa. Selman bana la kouru. Kan zot larivé, zot la atrapé le bou d'kor dérier kom sa la tené, la nou la parti. Kan nou lariv o bout, o bout le Kap Miné, nou kat la kriyé ansanm, nou kat la kri: tir. E la nou la rest debout nou la pi marsé osi. Nou kat la kri: tir. Nou té fini le ranpar, nou pu marsé osi. Alor lé dé boug té dérier nou la, sak moi la krié: mesie vyin apiuy le kor dérier. Mesie Diverné [Bottom of page 80]

At half (way across the) cliff, there, behind me there was a piece of coffin (that was) like this. Me and Mr. Diverné, well, let's say we had caught up (with) the two in front—yes, a big piece like that! I moved like this, I tried, I tried, I no longer managed really, I moved like this. I saw two big men (whose) stomachs were like this—(on) the last bit there—it was half (way across the) cliff—I saw two big men (who) came—*mouyoung—mouyoung—mouyoung*. And all the others there ... I shouted, I did—I had a little cheek, I did—I said, "Gentlemen, stop joking back there," I said, "Come and hold the coffin, then, gentlemen"—like that. But the guys ran. When they arrived, they caught the part of the coffin, behind—like this they held (it). (Then) we quit. When we got to the end, the end of Cap Miné, the four of us shouted together, the four of us shouted, "Carry (it)." And there we stayed upright—we no longer walked, either. We were done with the cliff, we no longer walked, either. Then the two guys (who were) behind us (carried it)—those (to whom) I had shouted "Gentlemen, come and hold the coffin (from) behind." Mr. Diverné

la sorti. Banna la ramplas lé dé dvan. Moi

quit. Some (men) replaced the two in the front.

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la pi porté l'kor. Nou la dsann selman, nou la vni ziska La Possession.

I no longer carried the coffin. We only walked down; we came as far as La Possession.

E li la di, a sak kantine i falé met ater l'kor pou porté a boir l'kou. Bé la fé. A sak boutik. Kan l'ariv koté la boutik Etién, té in sinoi dan s'tan la, la met kat ti ros ater, la met le kor dsu, la rantré la boir. Kan lariv anba, loi boutik anba koté Kap Le-Bot, sa kaz té par an o, kan k'lariv la la rmet ater, la rebu, sak té fini boir, ankor ver kom sa [Grand verre?] i buvé plin, oué. E dé nui la fé la o la, la zourné tousa i buvé, vin le rom i buvé, manzé pa, lé zom té kui osi la.

And he (had) said (that) at every bar (we) had to set the coffin (down) on the ground to bring out glasses to drink. Well (we) did it. At every bar. When (we) arrived near Etienne's bar—(it was) a Chinaman in those days, (we) put four small stones on the ground, put the coffin on them, went in (and) drank. When (we) reached the bottom, the other bar below Cap-Le-Bot—this house was above there. When (we) got there, (we) put (it) back on the ground (and) drank again. Those who had already drunk—still glasses (as big) as this [big glasses!]—drank (them) full, yes. And two nights (we) spent up there. All day (they) drank—rum wine* they drank; (they) didn't eat, the men were also full of drink there.

La boutik Kap Le-Bot la, lavé l'garson René, dernié garson, i kri, i di, mé zami tou sak la pokor bu i lév le doi, kisa i lév pa, bé tout i lév. Tout i lév malgré la fini d'boir. I di, mé zami tou sak la pokor ginyé lév le doi. Li kosé abalala – abalala li René, i bégéyé in pe li. Kan larpri l'kor pou dsann, bé dizon lété kom sa, moi la pi porté, amoi granmoun Diverné nou la pi rant sou l'kor nou.

At the bar (at) Cap Le-Bot, there, there was René's boy, (his) youngest boy—he shouted. He said "My friends, all those who haven't drunk yet raise their fingers." Who doesn't raise their finger? Well (they) all raise (them). They all raise (them) although (they) have already been drinking. He said, "My friends, all those who haven't been able to, raise their fingers." He was going on: "Abalala, abalala," René was. (He) stuttered a little, he did. When (they) picked up the coffin again to walk down, well, let's say (it was) like this: I didn't carry (it) any longer. Me and Mr. Diverné, we didn't get under the coffin, we didn't.

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Lézot la porté, garson Gro-Loui, frer Ti Loui, Ti-Loui sé lboper d'Zustinyin, son frer Misel, tousa sa ankor zén marmay, la sorti la boutik, zot la dsann la, marmay la zamé port le kor. [Bottom of page 81]

The others carried (it): Gros-Louis' boy, Petit Louis' brother, Petit Louis, that's Justinien's father-in-law, his brother Michel—they (were) still all young men. (They) came out of the bar, they carried (it) down. (These) young men had never carried a coffin (before).

Ousa le garson d'Léopol lé mor, la ginye in kou ros dan la tét dan lo, li lé mor dan basin. Alors ousa li lé mor la met én kroi si l'semin. [Kel basin sa?] Devan Kap Brunis. La boutik sinoi mi di aou la, alor lavé, la rivier i dsandé kom sa, mintnon la pi d'basin [entrecoupé de remarques de personnes présentes], *la met én kroi si l'kap, oué, lavé in gran basin kom sa, la parti binyé, é in galé dan ler la vni la tonm dan sa tét, bé li lé mor, alors ousak li lé mor la met én kroi. I porté* (le cercueil de Léopold), *kan li lariv vizavi la met son zanfan ater, lu té mor, le kor té finn arrivé presk ater osi, bé si nou té pa pré dérier pou trapé l'kor vitman, bé noré arivé ater mèm devan la kroi la, ousa lavé met son zanfan té mor. Li osi li voulé arest la li. E li la di, zot nora anter son kor, mé sa tét i antéré pa. Sa i a di sa, oué. Kan zot nora anter ali, son kor nora antéré, mé selman sa tét noré rest deor, noré pa antéré.*

Where Léopold's boy died—(he) got a blow (of a) rock in the head in the water—he died in the pool. So where he died, (they) put a cross on the path. [What pool is that?] Opposite Cap Brunis. The Chinaman's bar, I told you (about), there, there was then. The river went down like this, now there is no pool any more [*others present comment here*] (they) put up a cross on the cliff, yes. There was a pool like this. (The boy had) gone off to swim and a rock (which got loose) above at that moment came down, fell on his head—well, he died, so where he (had) died, (they) put up a cross. (They) were carrying (Léopold's coffin), when (they) reached (the spot) across from where (they had) put his child in the ground—(with) him (who was) dead—the coffin had almost also reached the ground—well, if we had not been ready in the back to quickly catch the coffin, well, it would indeed have touched the ground, in front of the cross, there, where (they) had put his child (who was) dead. He, too, wanted to stay there. And he (had) said, "You will bury his coffin, but his head (you) will not bury." That, he said that, yes. "When you bury him, his coffin you will bury, only his head will stay out, you will not bury (it)."

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Kan la Rivier dé Galé la, pli zoli ankor... [Ou la pa anter ali Kap Brunis alor?] A non. Ma rakont aou, pa ankor fini sa. Kan ou ariv la Rivier dé Galé, navé én vierz, la vierz na pu, déboulé la pri, na pi semin saret, semin loto koméla ousa la vierz lété. La vierz sé pa si la pa met in ti pe pli ba, pou moi la sanzé... La rivier la fouyé, mé selman zot la tiré la vierz, la met pli o. Ou sak la vierz lété mi voi sé semin loto kan i sort la Rivier dé Galé i mont. Kan la ariv la, navé sa. Tifok, li navé én boutik la Rivier dé Galé la, kan larivé la, met ali dan kamion, pou amén La Posésyon. La met le kor d'dan, nou tout la rantré, nou té disuit persone, la rantré dan kamion. Le boug la séy, bé l'volan li noré kasé, bé l'volan i tourné pa, i pété pa non pli, ryin di tou. Mi manti pa moin. Li noré kasé

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When (we got to) La Rivière-des-Galets, there, (it got) even better ... [You didn't bury him at Cap Brunis, then?] Oh no. I will tell you (about that). This (is) not finished yet. When you get to La Rivière-des-Galets—there was a Virgin—the Virgin is not there any more; a landslide removed (it). There is no longer a cart path. Now (there is a) car road where the Virgin was. The Virgin, (I) don't know if they didn't put it a little further down there. For me, (they) moved (it) ... The river made a hole, but they removed the Virgin (and) put (it) up further up. Where the Virgin was, I see it (is) a road, (which), as (it) leaves La Rivière-les-Galets, winds upward. When (they) arrived there, there was this. Tifok—he had a bar at La Rivière-les-Galets there—when (they) got there, (they) put the coffin on a truck to bring (it) to La Possession. (When they) put the coffin on it, we all got up on it—there were 18 of us (who) got on the truck. The guy tried—well, the steering could have (been) broken; well, the steering was not turning, (it) was not starting either, nothing at all. I am not lying, I'm not. It could have (been) broken

son volan, mé sa i tourné pa, non! Sa i ronflé pa, sa i pété pa, sa i bouzé pas non pli l'kamion. Misel, i resté Bra Sint Sizane, in ti pe par an ba Bra Détour, té in vie granmoun, i resté par an ba, mi kroi pa si lé ankor la, pour moi la fini mor sa, i di kom sa, li la di a sak kantine i fo boir l'kou, la di, tout alé boir sé mesié Rivier, alé boir.

his steering, but it, it wasn't turning, no. This (thing) wasn't snoring, it wasn't exploding, it wasn't moving either, the truck. Michel—he lived in Bras Sainte-Suzanne, a little bit below Bras Détour—he was an old man (who) lived down below there—I don't know if (he is) still there—for me, (he) has long since died, he has. He spoke like this, "He said (that) at every bar

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la di, tout alé boir sé mesié Rivier, alé boir. Son garson René, la di, abélala – abélala tout lé sou, vréman sak la di té én vérité, la di tout lé sou. La di, la si i sar boir l'kou, bé la di, kisa i anter papa? La di i anter pa li. Bé tout té fini désann ater. Tout la dsann. Arparti sé mesié Rivier. Larbu la, gran ver mèm, touzour gran ver.

(we) had to drink a glass, he said. (We) are all going to drink at Mr. Rivière's." His son René said, "Abélala, abélala; (they) are all drunk." Truly what he said was the truth. He said that they were all drunk. He said, "There, if they go and drink a glass," he said, "well, who is going to bury Dad?" (He) said that (they) wouldn't bury (him), he did. Well, (they) all came down onto the ground. They all got down (and) went off again to Mr. Rivière's. (They) drank again, there—even big glassfuls, always big glassfuls.

Kan té fini boir, le sofer kosa i di anou, nou té a disuit persone, kan larivé i di kom sa, persone i rant pa d'dan, i di, li va rant dedan, alon pous, li va met an mars, alon pous, kan va arrivé devan la vierz koté par isi mesié Antonin, avan dariv la kroisé la, navé ine vierz osi, zuska ler lé ankor la sa. La di, kan va ariv la, si i mars, alor tout va rant dedan, apré i va dsann. Kan la fini boir le kou nou la parti, le sofer la rant dedan, trap son volan, la di aou kamion loré dsann tousel, in. Fé la malis, li la pezé, falé alé boir mèm avan. Atandu aster.

When (they) were done drinking, the driver, what did he say to us?—there were 18 of us—when we reached (the truck), (he) spoke like this, "No one gets on," he said. He would get in (and then) "Push", he would start (it), "Push!". When (we) got in front of the Virgin—near there (where) Mr. Antonin's (is), before getting to the crossroads there—there was a Virgin also—to this day (it is) still there. He said (that) when he got there, if (the truck) started, then all would get on; (and) then he would drive down. When (we) were done drinking our glasses, we left, the driver got in, took his steering—there, (I) tell you, the truck would have taken off by itself, right. (He) played tricks. (He) had (some) weight, (you) had to really go and drink indeed before. Now wait.

E le per lavé di béni pa l'kor. [Poukoué?] Li voulé pas bénir l'kor défin Léopol. Li a sové Do d'An. [Le per?] Oué. Le per La Posésyon li la sové Do d'An. [Té kel per

And the priest had said (that he would) not bless the coffin. [Why?] He didn't want to bless late Léopold's coffin. He escaped to Dos d'Ane. [The priest?] Yes. The priest of La Possession, he escaped to Dos d'Ane. [What

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sa?] A bé sa, son non ... té in zén per. [Poukoua li té ve pa bénir l'kor?] Parsk défin Léopol lété tro sal, li té in pe tout zafer, mi rankontar pa aou tout son défo. Alors li la pa voulu bénir l'kor, li la sové Do d'An, oué. Kan lariv La Posésyon, la met le kor devan la kroi, devan légliz la,

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priest was that?] Well, that ... his name ... (it was) a young priest. [Why didn't he want to bless the coffin?] Because late Léopold (was) too immoral. He (was) a little (in) all (kinds of) business. I am not going to tell you all his faults. So he didn't want to bless the coffin (and) he escaped to Dos d'Ane, yes. When (we) reached La Possession, (we) put the coffin in front of the cross, in front of the church there;

la met le kor la, parti rod le per, le per Do d'An. René la téléfoné, la di, oui li vyin. [Té kel ané sa?) An 37 sa. La di li vyin. Véy le per -- véy le per, la poin. La rant dan in boutik sinoi, navé in boutik sinoi an fas, la rantré, le kor devan la kroi laba, poin d'per ryin la. Tout la rantré dan la boutik sinoi, René larpéy le kou pou boir.

(we) put the coffin there (and) went off to find the priest; the priest (was) in Dos d'Ane. René called (him) up, and (he) said he would come. [What year was that?] (The) year 37, that (was). (The priest) said (he) was coming. (They) waited for the priest, (there came) none. (They) went into the Chinaman's bar—there was a Chinaman's bar opposite. (They) went in (with) the coffin in front of the cross, there, no priest, nothing. (They) all went into the Chinaman's bar. René paid the round of drinks.

Moi té dbout a la port, lavé amoi mesié Diverné, té dbout a la port kom sa. Mesié Diverné i trap le pti, selman té dan ti ver aster, mesié Diverné i trap ti ver laba, kan moi la fé sa moi osi, moi la tonm dav, té fini boir tro osi ... la nui tousa, té fini tro sou. Selman in instan l'mor la la tiré ma rak la, ma rakont aou. Kan moi la fé kom

I (was) standing by the door—there was me and Mr. Diverné—we (were) standing at the door like this. Mr. Diverné catches the little (glass)*— only it was in small glasses now. Mr. Diverné takes the small glass, there, (and) when I did the same thing—me too, I fell knocked out. (I) had been drinking too much too ... all night ... (I) ended up too drunk. Only (for) one moment did the dead man get the better of me there, I'm telling you. When I did

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sa moi té dav. Bana larmas amoi. La met amoi dan kamion. La di si kit amoi ater, ma rest ater, kan l'kamion va alé ma rest ater. Dé kou René la téléfoné. Selman mesié Diverné la rest avek moi dan kamion.

that, I (was) out. (They) picked me up (and) put me on the truck. (They) said (that) if they left me on the ground, I would stay on the ground, that when the truck was going to leave, I would stay on the ground. Twice René called (the priest). But Mr. Diverné stayed with me on the truck.

* *vin le rom* 'rhum wine', which is the first part of the distilled rum, is less strong than *pti (ver)* 'little (glass)' which has been distilled twice (Chaudenson 1974:92).

B2. Data in an acrolectal speech variety: a tale from *Kriké Kraké* (1967)

This following tale is taken with the editor's permission from *Kriké Kraké: recueil de contes créoles réunionnais* (Barat et al. 1977:37-8). The speaker is from Grand Coude, in a "predominantly White area", and illustrates an acrolectal variety of the VLR. The French traits in the tale are highlighted in bold characters, the most notable being *el* 'she'.

Conte 8 (Grand Coude)

In zour navé troi fiy, lété apré travayé dan enn bitasyon. Aster, lété apré ral la pyos, aprè santé, tout ***an mem tan****. Alor, navé dé lété fyansé, é nana enn* ***el été*** *pa. Mé fo kroir* ***ke****, sé sa, sé* ***el*** *lété in pti pé zalou. Alor* ***el*** *di a* ***sé*** *dé ser, la di:*

- *Moi, pour moi maryé, la di, in zour, si lé pa in garson* ***ke*** *le fon de kilot lé an or, la di, moi, mi mari pa.*

Alor, ***a se moman la, lé dé zot*** *la maryé;* ***é el****, kom* ***de vré****, na in zour, l'arivé in garson devan* ***el****, tou le fon de kilot lété an or.*

Mé koman li la fé? Li la rod in fey fer blan, kom in bout de tol, li la klouté déyer, la fé ***parey ke*** *la kalité de lor. Li la mi la pintir zonn* ***la kouler de l'or****, la fé parey* ***tel ke*** *lor vréman.*

Anfin *la veni* ***fer la demand de maryaz pour el****. La di oui, la* ***dispozé de*** *maryé.*

Tale 8 (Grand Coude)

One day there were three daughters, who were working on a farm. Then, they were hoeing, singing, all at the same time. Well, two were engaged to be married and one was not. But it must be supposed that, indeed, that one was a little jealous. So she said to her two sisters:

- Me, she said, for me to get married one day, if it isn't a young man who has the seat of his pants made of gold, she said, I will not marry him.

Well, at that time, the other two sisters were married. And she, in truth—there came a young man who presented himself to her who had the seat of his pants made of gold.

But how did he do it? He had looked for a sheet of tin, like a piece of sheet-iron, and he nailed it to his backside, making it look like gold. He put yellow paint on it, the color of gold, making it really like gold.

Then he came to ask her hand in marriage. She said yes, she was disposed to marry him.

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Mé aster, kan le soir di maryaz, kan ke l'ariv pour zot partir ***sé el*** *aster,* ***érezman k'el été*** *abityé ek in pti frer, kan* ***el été*** *ankor pti; le pti frer la vouli pléré pour partir ansanb* ***el.***

Le papa i di:

- *Non, vi amenra pa* ***set anfan*** *la, la di;* ***de tout fason*** *li rest la.*

Mé le pti marmay la gagn fon de sagrin. Alor la di:

- *I fo* ***désidé de partir*** *ansanb* ***el.***

Erezman *sé sa la sov* ***ael*** *ankor.*

But on the evening of the wedding, when the time came for them to leave her house, luckily she had lived with a little brother when she was still little. The little brother wanted to cry so he could leave with her.

The father said:

- No, you will not take this child, he said. In any case, he is staying here.

But the little child got very upset.

Then he [the father] said:

- We must decide that you leave with him.

Luckily, that is what saved her again.

Anfin*, i sava, i mars; mé zamé i ariv. Mé lété* ***le demon ke lété*** *apré tant* ***ael****, vi voi, le zenn zan* ***ke*** *le déyer lété an or, lété* ***le demon****. Aster,* ***anfin****, i mars, i mars. Zamé i ariv a la* ***mézon*** *de le* ***nouvo maryé*** *alor.* ***Anfin****,* ***semin fézan****, li* ***a fé paretr ael*** *in* ***otel.*** ***El avé*** *fin, le pti marmay osi lavé fin* ***de tout fason.*** *Fé paretr* ***ael*** *in* ***otel.*** *La manzé, apré sa la* ***relevé lank****, la parti.*

Well, they left and they walked, but they never got there. But it was the devil who was tempting her, you see. The young man who had the golden seat of the pants was the devil. So they walked and walked. But they never reached the house of the new husband. Then, as they were walking, he made a hotel appear to her. She was hungry; and the little boy was hungry of course. They ate, and then they lifted anchor again and left.

Anfin*, na in zour, la* ***veni a bou d'arivé a la mézon****. Mé la kit* ***ael*** *la, é le pti marmay, é li, aster, li a artraversé pour alé rod* ***dot****, li, vi voi.* ***Le demon*** *li ta[n]t; kan li trouv* ***enn****, bin, li,* ***firamzir****, li rod* ***dot****. Li arsava rod* ***dot*** *li, aster.*

Then, one day, they managed to get to the house. But he left her there, and the little boy too. And then he went back to look for others, you see. The devil tries his luck. When he finds one, he looks for others in succession. So then he went to look for others.

Anfin*, li arpran* ***le*** *semin, li sava. Aster, na degré ou sa le pti marmay li dormé.* ***E el, li*** *voi tou le tan li arive a minui, ek in paké de senn ek li, apré dansé, sot an ler; na degré li arpran son semin, li arsava.*

Finally, he went on his way, he left. Then there was a point where the little boy was sleeping. And she always sees him [the devil] arriving at midnight with a bundle of fishing nets with him. After dancing and jumping in the air, he then sets out again and leaves.

Anfin*, kan ke* ***el a*** *vi sa,* ***el a*** *resté dé troi zour la mem. Na in zour* ***k'el a dormi a son tour****,* ***é*** *sé pti marmay* ***ke*** *la revi ali arive* ***a se moman la.*** *Kan ke le pti marmay la vi sa, la rakont* ***ael.***

El *i di:*

- *Bin, i fo rod enn* ***fason pour sortir de la.***

Anfin*, le pti marmay sé de* ***metr a pléré;***

Then, after she had seen this, she stayed another two or three days there. Then came a day where she in turn slept, and it was the little boy that saw him [the devil] arrive at that moment. When the little boy saw that, he told her [the sister]. He said:

- Well, we have to find a way to get out of here.

Then the little boy tried to begin crying;

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tou le zour li met a pléré.
Nadfoi, li ariv ***an plin midi:***

- *Bin, i di, akoz* ***se*** *pti marmay i pler? I vé pa resté la?*
- *Bin, aster, la di, pask... sé pa...*

he started to cry all day.
Sometimes he [the devil] arrived at noon.

- Well, he said, why is the little boy crying? He doesn't want to stray here?
- Well, she said then, because ... I don't know ...

Li konpran pa, la; i fo ***ké*** *li arsava ansanb son papa.*

- *Bin,* ***de tout fason****, la di, ma rod in zoué* ***pour pouvoir doné*** ***a*** *le pti marmay.*

He doesn't understand, then; he has to go back to his father.

- Well, in any case, he said, I will look for a toy to give to the little boy.

Anfin*, tout* ***lé zoué ke*** *li la* ***donn a*** *le pti marmay, le pti marmay zamé i kontanté son zoué; tou le tan li* ***été*** *apré pléré.*

- Bin, la di, - li kalkil, li di ek le pti marmay -, kosa ou i ***voudré kom*** *zoué* ***konvyin*** *aou?*

Bin, le pti marmay li, i voudré in pti panyé.

Then all the toys that he gave the little boy the little boy was never happy with; he was always crying.

- Well, he said – he figured it out and said to the little boy – What toy would you like that would please you?

Well, the little boy would like a little basket.

Anfin*, li la parti, li a rod lyann, li a fé in pti panyé, la donn* ***o*** *pti marmay.*
Aster, le pti marmay, ***tou lé zour*** *li mont dan le pti panyé; li fezé lélan, lélan, pour li arprandr* [sic]*, parey in zoizo* ***ki*** *apran* ***a volé*** *alor,* ***a se moman la.***

So then he left, went looking for creepers, made a little basket, and gave it to the little boy. Then the little boy went up in the little basket every day; he picked up speed, speed, for him to learn, like a bird which is learning to fly, at that time.

Anfin*, kan li* ***a veni a bou prandr*** *lélan, li la mi sa ser dedan, li la pri lélan, li la parti. E, an* ***semin fézan****, li la pri tout sort kalité de zépinn, kom rons, rézin maron, tout sa; li a mi tout* ***sé*** *kalité de zépinn dan son pti panyé;* ***é apré sa, an semin fézan****, a sak plas* ***ke*** *li pasé, li largé touzour in ker;* ***é kan*** *li largé le ker* ***a ter****, i fezé in karo.*
Li, aster, kan li l'arivé, li la vi lavé pli personn; li la bour déyer; li la di li va partir rodé. Mé, partout ke li arrivé ***pré de*** *zot, i largé in ker de rons, i fézé in karo de zépinn. I artené ali.*

Then, when he managed to build up speed, he put his sister in [the basket], picked up speed and took off. And, while walking around, he picked up all kinds of thorns, like brambles, wild vines, all that [sort of thing], put all those kinds of things into his little basket, and then, on his way, everywhere he went through, he dropped brambles; and where he dropped the brambles to the ground, it made a field.

When he [the devil] arrived [home], he saw there was no one there any more; he ran off after [them]; he said he was going to look for them. But every time he came close to them, [the little child] dropped fresh brambles, he made a area of thorns., which held him [the devil] back.

Mé anfin*, zot la* ***veni a bou de partir****. Arivé zot* ***mézon****, li la pli pi arzoindr azot.*

But in the end, they managed to escape. When they got to their house, he [the devil]

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***Par lé zépinn ki** largé, li la pa veni **a bou arzoindr** azot aster. Zot la **veni a bou de** sapé kom sa.*
Li lété pa in kouyon!

could no longer catch up with them. Because of the thorns he [the little boy] threw down, he was not able to catch up with them then. That is how they managed to escape. [The little boy] was no fool.

B3. Data in a basilectal speech variety

In the recording[1] transcribed here Mrs. Mahave, born in 1894, a descendant of African slaves, tells about an execution she witnessed, namely that of Sitarane, the infamous criminal guillotined in Saint-Denis in 1911. The traits that are characteristic of her basilectal speech variety (*kaf*) are highlighted. The extract is the part in which her speech is least "Frenchified". The transcription is as accurate as MAP and DC could make it.

L'exécution de Sitarane (extrait)

*Mwin té mwin tou sèl. Ma pwin frèr sèr. Bin mi di m'alé. ... Mi èm travay, mwin **té i èm**. É bin, mi sa travayé; pé prè rant in trwa mwa, mem pa, mi koné pa ankor kont le mwa. A mi antand, le jour i ariv.*

I di, Louiz—sa fanm i apèl Louiz, i di, Louiz, demin mardi, i di, i mèt lésèl, i di Sitarane i vyen in. I sa koup viktim Sitarane. Mwin té... la ma fin parti travay ek li la in, mwin nénèn d'zanfan in fran sinkant le mwa.

*Alor, navé in ot servant, mé **té 'pel** Zili, sa i fé la kuizine, pli vièy sa, vièy fiy, vièy, i fé la kuizine, mwin **té i balay** la kour, soign ti marmay. A ni akout Sitarane i vyin. A di domin, i di Louiz demin mèt tout lésèl an lèr. ...la prizon alor tout s' ke nora ou va voir, ma fé levé aou sink èr de matin. Sitarann i ariv avek premyé wagon.*

Sitarane's execution (extract)

I was all by myself. I had no brother or sister. Si I said I would go. ... I like to work; I liked [to work]. Well, I would work. I had brought in about three months' (wages), not even that—I still don't know how to count a month. Ah, I heard that the day was come [for Sitarane].

[He] said: "Louise"—his wife's name was Louise, he said, "Louise," "tomorrow, Tuesday," he said, "they are putting up the guillotine," he said, "Sitarane is coming, yes. They are beheading Sitarane." I was ... I had gone to work for him by then. I [was] the nanny of the children—one franc fifty a month.

Then, there was another servant, but her name was Julie—she did the cooking, she [was] older, she [was], an old maid, old, she did the cooking; I swept the yard, looked after the little children. Ah, we heard [that] Sitarane was coming. "Ah, say, tomorrow," he said, "Louise, tomorrow they are raising the guillotine up in the air ... at the prison then everything that happens you will see. I will have you woken up at five in the morning. Sitarane is coming on the first train."

[1] The tape made by C. Barat and M. Carayol on 06.21.78 in the Ravine des Cabris is labeled "Echantillons de variétés de créole", Side 2:055-255.

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Alé Louiz plu vièy sa, sa la kuisinyèl sa. La di Sitarane mem la antandi la fé, tyé demoun, tyé demoun in.

Well, Louise—she [was] older, she [was], she [was] the cook, she [was]—said, "Sitarane himself, we have heard what he did, kill people, kill people .

La mèt lésèl, grand lésèl la desi la barikad an'dan la prizon, la pa en deor. Sét' an'dan. An'dan... dan fon. Demoun, pli for fey do boi. Alor kan la di la, la di ... y giny pa kosé lui, dégaz a twé. Alé monté, vyen vitman, alé tout partout, partout laba lé mésié fé mèt zot madame tout lé bann gar... lé fanm tout, mé an'dan'dan.

They put up the guillotine, the big guillotine up on the barricade, inside the prison, it was not outside. It was inside. Inside ... in the back. A crowd, thicker than leaves on a tree. So when he spoke, he said—he didn't know how to talk (respectfully)—"Move off!" "Come on, come up, come quickly, go anywhere you can. Everywhere in there the men let their wives through, all of the men ... all the women, but all the way inside.

Mm, mm. Alor ni sa voir, ni sa gété nou kosa i sé lé zistwar wagon. Sink ér de matin, mardi matin, ni debout, ou voi, dan la kour, i voi dan le fon le... lalé. La mèt in tab, pli gran le myèn. Byin servi, sé fig-miyone montan, zèn fig-miyone byin mir in, lé karaf dolo, i mèt tou sak i vé pou dézir la rasyon dé dé bononm. Sitarane ek le Sintange, le Sintange i apelé in ot ... mé navé in nom li apelé li. Le bononm lété byin klèr, lo premyé la koupé té byin kler li, in zoli bononm.

Yes. Yes. Then we will see, we will look, we will, and see what this story is about a train. At five o'clock in the morning, Tuesday morning, we got up, you see; [standing] in the yard, you [can] see, in the yard, you see all the way back into ... the alley. [They] set up a table—bigger than mine—well garnished—there were white climbing [type of] bananas, young bananas well-ripened, yes; there was a water pitcher—they put out all that they wanted as a ration (?) for the two men: Sitarane and Saint-Ange. Saint-Ange had another name ... but he had a name that they called him. The man was quite fair-skinned; the first one they beheaded was quite fair-skinned he [was]—a handsome man.

B4. The *Petit Créole* in Billiard ([1822] 1988:230)

This dialogue is a contemporary rendering of the conversation Auguste Billiard had with a *Petit Blanc* on the higher slopes of the island of Bourbon in the early 1800s.

Dialogue de Billiard et d'un Petit Blanc

- Monsieur, pourriez-vous me procurer un verre d'eau?
- *Petit noir, donne tout' suite coco à ce blanc-là pour lui boire.*
- Vous avez là une jolie petite habitation: vous donne-t-elle de quoi vivre?
- *Oh! Oui, n'en a bon champ de patates.*
- Et votre petit noir, comment le nourrissez-vous?

Dialogue of Billiard and a Poor White

- Sir, could you get me a glass of water?
- *Boy, give this white man a coconut (of water) to drink immediately.*
- You have a nice little place here; does it provide you with a living?
- *Oh yes. It has a good potato field.*
- And your boy, how do you feed him?

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- *Oh, petit noir mange patates même.*
- Mais comment faites-vous pour vous procurere des habits?

- *N'en a pied de tabac; moi fais une, deux, trois carottes, et puis moi porte vendre à la ferme que le diable emporte, et puis achète toile bleue pour faire z'habits à moi. N'en a aussi deux petits cochons.*

- Comment les nourrissez-vous, vos petits cochons?
- *Avec champ de patates donc.*
- Et qui est-ce qui le travaille votre champ de patates?
- *Petit noir même.*
- Et vous, que faites-vous?
- *Moi, Monsieur? Moi reste la comme ça même.*
- Mais vous n'avez pas de femme, vous devez vous ennuyer?
- *Oh! Que si, moi n'en a camarade.*
- Et qui ça votre camarade?
- *La négresse de M. z'hose donc.*

- *Oh, my boy eats those very potatoes.*
- But what do you do to provide for clothing?

- *There is a field of tobacco. I grow two or three carrots and then I bring them to sell at the farm—may the devil take it—and then buy some blue denim to make myself some clothing. There are also two little pigs.*

- How do you feed them, your little pigs?

- *With the potato field.*
- And who works in your potato field?

- *My very boy does.*
- And you, what do you do?
- *I, Sir? I stay here, as you can see.*

- But you have no wife? You must get bored?
- *Oh, but I do. I have a companion.*
- And who is your compagnon?
- *Well, the black slave or Mr. So and So.*

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Appendix C. The Regional French (of Réunion), the Creolized Variety of French (CVF), and the VLR

C1 The Regional French (of Réunion)

A Regional French (of Réunion), or *français régional (de la Réunion)*[1], has been claimed to exist by various authors (Carayol & Chaudenson 1973, 1976, 1978; Carayol 1977, 1978, 1979; Beniamino & Baggioni 1993, Beniamino 1996, Bavoux 1996, 1999). There may be legitimate reasons for using such a term to refer, *in a synchronic, descriptive sense,* to a high register of French of some speakers in Réunion. However, these speakers mostly speak in a lower register, itself hard to distinguish from a type of discourse such as the Creolized Variety of French (cf. C2) or indeed the VLR themselves on account of heavy interference from the latter two or a mixing of either of them with French.

It is the position of this study that the so-called Regional French (of Réunion) is nothing other than spoken French, in the same way as Belgian French and Swiss French today are oral French.[2] Further, this supposed regional variety of French in Réunion has not *at any point in time* been distinct from the educated French spoken in France. It is not a form of French which would have relied on itself for its survival and distanced itself from the educated register of the spoken French of France by social and geographical isolation.[3]

From the historical and theoretical point of view adopted here, the term "Regional French (of Réunion)" is a misnomer for three reasons:

1. There was never any *substantial difference* between the French spoken by the educated classes in France and the so-called Regional French (of Réunion). The educated French spoken by the *Gros Blancs*, or rich local bourgeoisie of Bourbon, beginning in the 18th century, was the French they themselves learned

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[1] Carayol (1986) and Beniamino (1996) also call it *francais réunionnais.*

[2] According to Warnant (1973), "Non-structuralist and non-generative linguists ... have always spoken and still speak of a *regional French* and mean by it a type of speech considered as being at variance with the prescriptive rules of French." ("Les linguistes non structuralistes ou génératives, les grammairiens philologues ... ont toujours parlé et parlent encore de *français régional* et désignent ainsi un parler considéré comme un écart par rapport à un français de 'bon usage'.")

[3] According to Baker (personal communication) Mauritius is more likely to have had an important Francophone tradition in a standard variety of French than Réunion.

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in France, where they were sent to attend schools,[4] or the French they learned from those who had learned to speak it well in the colony's homeland.[5]

2. The view that the Regional French (of Réunion) was spoken uninterruptedly on the island[6] from its earliest Bourbon days to the present does not correspond to the facts. First of all, the French of the original settlers was quite removed from the educated standard of the time, and it was only in the first half of the 18th century that the educated register was spoken by a significant minority on the island at all.[7] Second, the norms of educated French were maintained by the constant return to France of the young of every successive generation of *Gros Blancs* and the arrival from France of both officials (in the administration, the law courts, the clergy, etc.), and men and women who were better and better educated as the 18th and 19th centuries drew on.[8]

3. The specific lexical items that are seen as characterizing the Regional French (of Réunion) do not by themselves constitute a sufficient basis for considering it different from the spoken educated French of France. That a substantial number

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[4] Chane-Kune (1993:74) mentions that until 1759, when the first secondary school (collège Saint-Cyprien) was built by the Lazarists, "the children of the wealthy were sent to school in France" ("les jeunes les plus aisés allaient étudier en France"), a custom never totally abandoned. During his stay in France from 1784 to 1786, Henri-Paulin Panon-Desbassayns looked for schools to send his children to (La Selve 1997:8,29ff).

[5] Hazaël-Massieux (1996:666) points out in the case of the regional French spoken in the French Antilles: "What can be said is that it is not the prescriptive French whose rules are recommended by the French Academy or the universities that is spoken, but rather, as in all regions of France, the language spoken is a French that is first characterized by a certain number of spoken traits (common, no doubt, to all forms of spoken French), but also a French that is often called 'regional' in order to underscore that it is characteristic of a region, and bears the stamp in one way or another of its continuous contact with the creole." ("Ce que l'on peut affirmer, c'est que l'on ne parle pas le français de la norme, le français dont l'usage est recommandé à l'Académie française ou même à l'université, mais, comme dans toutes les régions de France, le français que l'on pratique est un français d'abord caractérisé par un certain nombre de traits d'oralité (communs sans doutre à tous les français oraux), mais aussi un français que l'on dit souvent 'régional' pour souligner qu'il est caractéristique d'une région, et marqué, d'une façon ou d'une autre, par son contact continué avec le créole") [quoted in Bretegnier 1999:186-7].

[6] According to Carayol 1977 (48-49), "... from the beginning of the peopling of Réunion there has existed a speech variety which arose directly from the regional French speech varieties of Western France used by the first settlers on the island of Bourbon" ("depuis les origines du peuplement a donc existé à la Réunion un parler issu directement des parlers régionaux français de l'Ouest qu'employaient les premiers occupants de Bourbon") [quoted in Beniamino 1996:7]. According to Beniamino, "it can therefore be considered that despite the absence of educational structures and in a social situation characterized by the impoverishment of a sector of the White population that sought refuge in the higher reaches of the island, a variety of French, which was essentially transmitted orally, survived in Réunion" ("on peut donc considérer que s'est maintenue à la Réunion, en l'absence de structure éducative et dans une situation sociale caractérisée par la prolétarisation d'une fraction de la population blanche qui s'est réfugiée dans les Hauts de l'île, une variété de français de transmission essentiellement orale. En revanche, à partir de la période de la société de plantation, apparaît une classe sociale dominante (les Gros Blancs) servant de modèle et procurant une norme linguistique implicite [cf. Beniamino et Baggioni, 1993]").

[7] Until then only a handful of high ranking administrative and military personnel spoke an educated register of French, and often in official functions only.

[8] As Beniamino (1996:10) explains, the absence or poor functioning of schools into the early 18th century and the arrival of new settlers "maintained a 'presence' of French" which was "certainly probably limited" ("a maintenu une 'présence' du français, certes probablement limitée.")

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> of lexical items from the VLR were borrowed into this essentially *standard* type of French is clear. However, the fact that the educated French spoken by the *Gros Blancs* made use of such a lexical stock does not by itself make of it a different variety of French. No differences on *other* levels of the language (e.g. syntactic, morphological, etc.), have ever really existed which were comparable, for example, to those between French and the VLR. What differences do exist are borrowings from the VLR (*créolismes).*

Interestingly, as Bretegnier (1996:84) points out, "the theoretical view adopted by Carayol (1985) about the 'français réunionnais' in his lexicon of Reunionnais French is rather different ... since there it is described as an intermediate variety between French and the creole."[9] There seems to be a problem when it comes to the issue of Regional French in Réunion that arises from the confusion of *sociological* description (such as that of a continuum) and the *measuring of different varieties in terms of distance* from the standard. Both of these matters should also be seen as distinct from the strictly historical question of the presence of Popular French on the island, on the one hand, and the presence of educated, spoken or oral French on the other.

Perhaps the best way of referring to the French spoken in Réunion is to be found in Beniamino & Baggioni's (1993:166) conclusion that there is "a form of French spoken in Réunion" (*...on peut sans doute conclure à la réalité réunionnaise du français.*)

In the study of varieties of French (dialectology) and lexically French speech varieties (creolistics), the unwritten law of the French academic tradition is adhered to. It is the notion of measuring all linguistic manifestations that make use of a lexicon derived from French in terms of *distance from the standard, prescriptive variety of French.* Whether in diachronic or synchronic studies, all linguistic data of French origin are subordinated to this concept, which, like Chaudenson's notion of *français zéro,* constitutes a kind of theoretical abstraction. This may be what most confuses the issues of variation in the VLR. In historical as well as theoretical terms, such a position can skew

[9] "Pourtant, la position théorique adoptée par Carayol dans le lexique du 'français réunionnais' (1985) est sensiblement différente, puisque le F[rançais] R[égional de la] R[éunion] y est décrit comme une variété interstitielle au français et au creole ..." [Bretegnier 1996:84].

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the data and throw off reconstruction of past scenarios in a way that can mislead.[10] It is in this sense that the term Regional French (of Réunion) is also misleading. However, it should be addded that both Chaudenson (1992:155-6), who typifies this tradition, and an author like Corne (1982:109), who respects it,[11] distinguish two continua in discussing the linguistic situation in Réunion. They distinguish between a linguistic continuum, which ranges from Standard French (*français métropolitain*) to the most basilectal varieties of the VLR, and a "creole continuum" (Corne 1982:155), which ranges from the lect of the *Petits Blancs* to the most basilectal varieties of the VLR, such the *kréol kaf*, or African creole.

In discussing the theoretical issues, Bretegnier (1996:83-4) points out that for both Chaudenson (1978) and Beniamino (1996) Regional French is not to be confused with a *français créolisé*, a sort of "creolized French",[12] while for Carayol (1985) it is a kind of "interlect" between French and the VLR.[13] Bretegnier makes it clear that among the informants she interviewed, the only speakers whose mother tongue was French were members of the social élite.[14] She also indicates that there is now a new class of speakers of French as a result of widespread schooling in French. When interlocutors acknowledge the existence of a *français réunionnais*, it is described, according to Bretegnier (1996:94)

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[10] Cf. Alleyne (1996:175): "It is illogical to say that the French system of determination constituted the point from which the creole system developed. This is tantamount to saying that the slave populations would first have learned/acquired French and then made it undergo an evolution that produced the present day creole structures." ("Il est illogique de dire que le système de détermination française est le point de départ du système créole, ce qui laisserait penser que les populations serviles auraient appris/acquis le français et puis l'auraient canalisé dans une évolution qui a abouti aux structures créoles contemporaines.")

[11] The concept of variation Corne (1999) adopts to organize his book on new vernaculars in the French colonial world moves from French dialectology to the varieties of French most structurally different from Standard French.

[12] For Chaudenson, Bretegnier (1996:84) writes, "it would be wrong 'to attribute all the particular traits of Regional French to interferences from the creole'" ("il serait faux de 'porter au compte d'interférences avec le créole toutes les particularités du français régional' [1978:12]"); while Beniamino, according to Bretegnier (1996:84), "shows that Regional French is ... not to be confused with a kind of French studded with creolisms" ("montre que le français régional n'est nullement à confondre avec un français empreint de créolismes [1996:12-13]").

[13] Bretegnier (1996:84) writes that Carayol describes Regional French "as an intermediate variety between French and the creole, whose lexicon is characterized 'by a certain number of terms from the creole lexicon'" ("comme une variété interstitielle au français et au créole, dont le lexique est caractérisé par 'un certain nombre de termes du lexique créole' [1985:5]").

[14] Bretegnier (1996:87) points out that during her first inquiries into Regional French, "the only interlocutor who acknowledged the actual existence of a speech variety such as *Réunionnais* French belonged to that socio-ethnic category" ("le seul locuteur ayant reconnu l'existence d'une variété effective de français *réunionnais* appartenait à cette catégorie socio-ethnique").

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as "having French syntax (which constitutes an essential criterion for distinguishing it from possibly *incorrect* forms of French) and a set of particular 'local' lexical traits, which may exist in the creole, but are not defined as creole traits".[15]

In other words, the Regional French of Réunion is a kind of sociolect that serves more to identify a social group than it constitutes a type of French distinct from the oral standard variety. Bretegnier calls it an "archaic variety both mythical and rejected" (*une variété archaïque à la fois mythique et rejetée*). Interestingly, outside of the sphere of the social élite, Bretegnier (1996:97) writes, "interlocutors seem to assimilate the Regional French of Réunion with *a primarily discursive reality,* whose existence is due to the fact that the speakers who use such constructions are mostly speakers of the creole, and native speakers of it at that. One speaks in such cases of a 'creolized' variety of French."[16] Bretegnier (1996:99) asks if it is appropriate to speak of "a group of 'mixed' discursive traits" (*un ensemble de faits discursifs 'métissés'*) which may or may not be systematic as a "linguistic variety". She seems (Bretegnier 1996:99) to favor the term *français 'créolisé'* for the kind of variety that is "the result of both an ongoing decreolization and an (as yet) insufficient competence in French. In other words a pure product of diglossia."[17]

Bretegnier (1999:189) mentions the concept of *interlecte* (interlect) suggested by Prudent (1982:38), who writes about such an *interlecte* in the Antillean situation: "The interlect presents itself ... as a set of linguistic manifestations on the part of a community which more or less acknowledges two languages of unequal status. These manifestations, which are sometimes labeled 'creolisms' (*créolismes*) in the local educational tradition, mark both discourse acknowledged or felt to be 'French' and discourse acknowledged or

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[15] "Cette variété est décrite comme possédant une syntaxe française (ce qui constitue un critère essentiel de distinction d'avec un éventuel français *fautif*), et un ensemble de particularités lexicales 'locales', qui peuvent par ailleurs se retrouver en créole mais ne se définissent pas comme des créolismes" [Bretegnier 1996:94].

[16] "... les informateurs semblent assimiler le F[rançais] R[égional de la] R[éunion] à **un fait avant tout discursif,** dont l'apparition est due au fait que les locuteurs qui emploient ce genre de constructions sont avant tout créolophones, et en tout cas créolophones de langue maternelle. On parle alors de français 'créolisé'" [Bretegnier 1996:97] [emphasis added].

[17] "... résultat à la fois d'une décréolisation en cours et d'une compétence (encore) insuffisante en français. Autrement dit, un français 'créolisé' qui serait un pur produit de la diglossie" [Bretegnier 1996:99].

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felt to be 'creole'. They touch both the phonetic (including prosodic) phase and the morpho-syntactic phase of the languages."[18]

This study considers the supposed Regional French (of Réunion) as oral Standard French. It is most often the high register of speakers who express themselves in a register in which this French is heavily influenced by the Creolized Variety of French (CVF) or the VLR themselves, when it is not actually confused with the latter two.

C2 The Creolized Variety of French (CVF)

What is said above gives some idea of how the term *français créolisé* has been used over the last 30 years in the literature that describes the linguistic situation in Réunion. It must be remembered, however, that although they are related, this *synchronic* issue is different from the *diachronic* issue discussed below.

It is Carayol & Chaudenson (1973) who first suggested using the term *français créolisé*, which for Chaudenson (1992:155-6) "remains the most appropriate term to designate that linguistic variety which today can be regarded as the acrolect of the continuum of the Réunionnais Creole, but which diachronically can indeed constitute a kind of social 'fossilization' of the central part of the continuum of approximations of the French that was in use in Bourbon in the 18th century."[19] They describe (Carayol & Chaudenson 1978:181) this *français créolisé* as:

> the speech variety of a White population of modest socio-economic level which is referred to by the name of *Petits Blancs* or *Petits Blancs des Hauts* (due to the fact that this group constitutes the majority of the inhabitants in certain elevated regions of the island); naturally this creolized variety of French can also be spoken by mixed populations which live in the zone where the former constitute

[18] "L'interlecte s'impose ... comme un paquet de réalisations linguistiques d'une communauté qui se reconnaît peu ou prou deux langues de statut inégal. Ces manifestations, appelées parfois créolismes dans la tradition scolaire locale, affectent à la fois les discours délarés ou ressentis 'français' et les discours délarés ou ressentis 'créoles'. Elles concernent aussi bien la phase phonique (et j'y inclus la prosodie) que la phase morphosyntaxique des langues" [Prudent 1982:38, quoted in Bretegnier 1999:189].

[19] "Le terme 'français créolisé' que nous avions proposé (M. Carayol et R. Chaudenson, 1973) demeure le plus approprié pour désigner cette variété linguistique qui actuellement peut être regardée comme l'acrolecte du continuum créole réunionnais, mais qui en diachronie, peut tout à fait constituer une sorte de 'fossilisation' sociale de la partie centrale du continuum d'approximations du français en usage à Bourbon au XVIIIe siècle" (Chaudenson: 1992:155-6].

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> the majority [of the population]. This speech form (*état de langue*) is relatively homogeneous and cannot be confused with unstable and sporadic interferences [from the Creole, i.e. VLR] ... The creolized variety of French can actually, just like the Creole, present this type of interferences from French without it altering its essential characteristics in the slightest. The existence of this speech variety is no doubt related to the social and economic conditions which brought about the formation of a White proletariat, which was often geographically and economically isolated, as well as characterized by its physical features and its language.[20]

Carayol & Chaudenson (1973:34ff) "do not consider it possible that the linguistic continuum in Réunion is simply the result of decreolization of a creole system which would be considered primitive." For them, "[a] number of arguments counter this hypothesis: first, the coexistence of the creole and of French throughout the history of the island due to the [numerical] importance of the White population; and, second, the existence of the creolized variety of French, which was no doubt characteristic at the outset of a White social group forced by economic circumstances to [undergo] a [process of] proletarization, and thus a specific [type of] loss of culture, whose linguistic manifestation is what we have defined as *français créolisé*" ("creolized" French) [Carayol & Chaudenson 1973:34ff].[21]

Chaudenson (1992:155-6) considers that "Réunion is no doubt particular in that, to a certain extent, it has kept traces of an approximate variety of French in its *français*

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[20] "Ce parler est propre à une population blanche de condition socio-économique modeste que l'on désigne du nom de *Petits Blancs* ou *Blancs des Hauts* (en raison du fait que certaines régions élevées de l'île sont majoritairement occupées par ce groupe); bien entendu, ce français créolisé peut également être parlé par des métis qui vivent dans des zones où cette population est majoritaire. Cet état de langue est relativement homogène et ne peut être confondu avec les interférences instables et sporadiques auquel[les] fait allusion Ferguson; le français créolisé peut d'ailleurs, comme le créole, présenter avec le français ce type d'interférences sans que cela change quoi que ce soit à ses caractères essentiels. L'existence de ce parler est sans doute liée aux conditions sociales et économiques qui ont amené la formation d'un prolétariat blanc, géographiquement et souvent économiquement isolé, caractérisé par son phénotype et sa langue" [Carayol & Chaudenson 1978:181].

[21] "Il ne nous paraît pas possible de considérer qu'à la Réunion le continuum linguistique est issu d'une simple décréolisation du système créole considéré comme primitif. Plusieurs arguments s'opposent à cette hypothèse: la coexistence tout au long de l'histoire de l'île du créole et du français en raison de l'importance de la population blanche d'abord; l'existence du français créolisé ensuite, sans doute caractéristique, à l'origine, d'un groupe social blanc conduit par les circonstances économiques à la prolétarisation et de ce fait à une déculturation spécifique, dont la manifestation linguistique est ce que nous avons défini comme français créolisé" [Carayol & Chaudenson 1973:34ff].

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créolisé ("creolized" French), the present acrolectal creole, originally conserved by the rapid proletarization of a part of a group called *Petits Blancs*."[22]

As the discussions in §6.1.2.5 and §6.2.7.4 try to make clear, this view is the result of a linguistic "whitening" of the lect of the *Petits Blancs*. The constant addition of "no doubt" in Chaudenson's statements on this point seem to indicate the tenuous nature of his position. The truth is most probably that over time the influence of French, as new immigrants came to Réunion (beginning in the 18th century with the development of the coffee plantations), and, more recently, the effects of schooling have quite obliterated the state of the lect of the *Petits Créoles* in its 18th century form. The *français créolisé* of Chaudenson is a rather romantic view of the survival of Popular French, which may have some justification in terms of pronunciation and lexical items that were handed down, but whose syntactic nature was probably far removed from that of Popular French by the end of the 18th century. To make this supposed lect occupy the "intermediate position between Regional French and the creole" and to make of it the "essential element of the French-creole continuum" seems all in all to be a rather unsound view of things.[23]

There seems to be an inherent contradiction in Chaudenson's view (1981a) of the *français créolisé* ("creolized" French). On the one hand, it has preserved the Popular French of the 18th century[24] and on the other hand, it has undergone "debasilectalization". If it represents the survival of the leveled popular and dialectal varieties of French spoken in the 17th and 18th centuries (i.e. Popular French), what basilectal traits could have been weeded out of it? This view seems to imply that the Popular French was contaminated by

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[22] "La Réunion présente sans doute la particularité d'avoir gardé, dans une certaine mesure, des traces de cet état de français approximatif dans le 'français créolisé', créole acrolectal actuel, originellement conservé par la rapide prolétarisation d'une partie d'un groupe dit des 'Petits Blancs'..." [Chaudenson 1992:154].

[23] "... the important point," writes Chaudenson (1979a:549) of the *français créolisé*, "is that this speech variety occupies an intermediate position between Regional French and the creole, and therefore constitutes the essential element in a French-creole continuum" ("... le point important est que ce parler occupe une position intermédiaire entre le français régional et le créole et constitue donc l'élément essentiel d'un continuum français-créole" [Chaudenson 1979a:549].

[24] In fact, Chaudenson (1973:34ff; 1992:55ff) tries to diminish the crucial distinction between Popular French and French as much as possible. His idea that there always existed an important number of White, French-speakers on the island is essential to his definition of *français créolisé* and to the "whitening" of the population as well as its vernacular.

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restructured forms (basilectal forms), which were then abandoned in the course of the 19th century. However, if the *Petits Blancs* lived largely in isolation, as Chaudenson would have us believe, what would have motivated this change? Would it have been contact with French? Why would this population suddenly become aware of its basilectal forms and want to discard them? It seems rather the opposite that might have occurred, namely that Chaudenson's *français créolisé* (i.e. the lect of the *Petits Créoles* and later *Petits Blancs*) had its origins in the early vernacular of Bourbon, which was *already* characterized by traits considered "basilectal" in the literature.

The whole problem with Chaudenson's (1974, 1981a, 1992) approach is that 1. it assumes that the same diglossic situation and continuum obtained in the past as obtains today;[25] and 2. the basilectal variety of Reunion Creole (i.e. VLR) of the 17th and 18th centuries was more like Mauritian Creole in the beginning of the 19th century (proof of which is tenuous given the artificial nature of the texts he bases his demonstration on). It is not argued in this study that the lect of the *Petits Creoles* of the 18th century (1730-1885) was less restructured than that of the *Petits Blancs* is today. Indeed, if anything, it was probably much *more* restructured (cf. §6.1.2 and §6.2.7). What is argued is that any possible "debasilectalization" was the consequence of French immigration and, later, schooling in French. Of course. the nature of the speech of the *Petits Créoles* may not have been uniform, but probably varied from area to area and even, though perhaps to a lesser degree, from family to family. This is the reason why so many different fossilized elements of Popular French have remained in use in the speech of the *Petits Blancs* (from 1850 to the present day).

In this study, the lect of the *Petits Créoles* and its decreolized form, the lect of the *Petits Blancs* of today, are different from what it calls the Creolized Variety of French

[25] "The functional distribution of French and the creole at this period [i.e. 1709], no doubt, is not very different from that which can be observed today, although the number of bilingual speakers was quite limited outside of the population of European origin, where could be found only monolingual speakers (of either the creole or slave languages) or bilingual speakers (of the creole and slave languages)." ("La distribution fonctionnelle du français et du créole n'est sans doute pas, à cette époque, très différente de celle qu'on peut observer aujourd'hui, quoique le nombre de diglottes soit très réduit hors de la communauté d'origine européenne où l'on ne trouve guère que des unilingues [créole et langue servile] ou des bilingues [créole et langue servile]") [Carayol & Chaudenson 1978:180].

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(CVF). Following Bretegnier (1996), the term Creolized Variety of French (CVF) refers to the *discourse type* of native speakers of the VLR, who are attempting to speak French as well as the higher register of descendents of French immigrants which is permeated with interference from the VLR. In the case of the former, it is a discourse type in which there is heavy interference from their native lect. It is the kind of speech produced by speakers who either have a limited knowledge of French and whose (usually more basilectal) native lect interferes in their less than competent French or, much less often, have a certain knowledge of French but whose native lect produces interferences, i.e "creolizes" this French. It is, however, not considered a vernacular lect as such.

The following statements taken from the corpus collected by Barat and Carayol (Set A) for the linguistic and ethnographic atlas of Réunion (Carayol and Chaudenson 1985)[26] are typical examples of the Creolized Variety of French (CVF). They are the speech of a woman who has had schooling in French, but whose basic grammar is that of a vernacular lect, despite the French flavor the orthography used by Barat et al. (1977) may lend it:

Parce que moi, quand que mi entend à la télé, des fois,
'Because I, when I hear on the television sometimes

des certaines façonn parler —pourtant mi parle pas bien du tout
certain ways of speaking —although I don't speak well at all

parce que mi réussis pas —mi dis: ben zot aurait pu parler
because I don't manage to—I say, well, they could have spoken

un petit peu mieux pour la séance-là—Ben zot i doit dire pareil pour moi.'
a little better for the session here—well they must say the same about me.'

Quand que moi n'a besoin d'aller dans des certains bureau,
'When I need to go into certain offices

moi l'est chagriné de dire que tout le moune a pu aprenn
I am saddened to say that everybody has been able to learn

et puis moi l'a pas appris. Moi l'a pas été assez à l'école.
and I haven't learned. I didn't go enough to school.

[26] They are printed in Carayol & Chaudenson (1978:185), whose orthography has been reproduced.

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Mais moi l'a honte que mi connais pas, mais quoça m'a faire?
I feel shame that I don't know, but what am I going to do?'

Et puis, tous les jeunes qui vont entend' à nous, causer in jour,
"And all the young people who are going to hear us speak one day,

si zot i entend' à nous causer comme ça, zot i va rire.
if they hear us speak like that, they are going to laugh.'

Typical traits of restructured Popular French in these data are the use of:

1. the ASM *i* (*mi antan* 'I hear', *mi parl* 'I speak', *mi réisi* 'I succeed', *mi di* 'I say', *zot i doi* 'they must', *mi koné* 'I know', *zot i entend'* 'they hear', and *zot i va rire* 'they are going to laugh' (*qui vont entend' a nous* 'who are going to hear us' is a case where the ASM *i* can be seen as welded to the relative *k* 'who' in an item with hypercorrection (the French form ***vont*** '[they] go');

2. the past marker *la* in *moi la pas appris* 'I didn't learn', *moi l'a pas été* 'I didn't go', and the confusion of *la* and the French ***j'ai*** 'have' in *moi l'a honte* 'I am ashamed';

3. the future marker *va* in *zot i va rire*'they are going to laugh';

4. the CPL *lé* in *moi l'est chagriné* 'I am saddened';

5. *na* 'there is/are' for *'have'* in *moi n'a besoin* 'I need';

6. the restructured pronominal forms in *mi* 'I" + ASM *i* , *moi* 'I', *à moi* 'me', *zot* 'they';

7. the restructured preposition *pour* in *pour moi* 'of me' instead of French ***de moi*** 'of me'; and

8. ***kank*** 'when' instead of French ***quand*** 'when'. Interesting too is the restructured form *moun* 'people' followed by an item with hypercorrection (the French form ***a pu*** '[he/she/it] was able' instead of the VLR form *la pu* 'was able'.

This informant's speech can be summarized, as she herself indicates, in the words : *mi parle à demi français* 'I speak half-way French', which means half creole and half educated French.

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C3 Variation among types of discourse and the vernacular lects in Réunion

No definitive basis has yet been established to distinguish between vernacular speech varieties spoken in Réunion which are *lects* and other varieties which are *types of discourse*. It is simply acknowledged generally in the Francophone literature that the variation in the VLR is a very elusive problem.[27] It is a very difficult problem—not to say a practically impossible one to solve—to determine what different kinds of lects there are among the vernacular varieties, despite the general agreement that there is a continuum among the speech varieties, which include at least an acrolect and a basilect (for Chaudenson [1981b] also a mesolect). The reasons for this are fourfold:

1. the different kinds of lects are established on different criteria, themselves not easy to discern: lexical elements, phonetic elements, prosodic elements, and morpho-syntractic elements[28], all of which do not always overlap neatly, making the boundaries between the lects hard to draw;

2. it is not clear if the variation is ethnic or geographical, or a combination of both; or of it is socio-cultural[29] as well as either or both of the former;

3. the identification of different lects by the speakers of the VLR is usually done on the basis of racial and ethnic categories, which give rise to different labels, each denoting the lect of a group of speakers; and

4. the terms used to refer to the linguistically established lects in the literature are themselves not used consistently to refer to the same speech varieties, making one linguist's continuum very different from that of the next, and the dichotomy between the VLR and French is itself most often unclear.

The main studies of linguistic variation in Réunion are: Carayol (1977, 1985) and Carayol & Chaudenson (1977, 1978) for the linguistic continuum; Gueunier et al. (1978) and Gueunier (1980, 1982) for specific acrolectal speech varieties; and Bretegnier (1996, 1999) for discourse types distinct from the VLR (*français régional* and *français créolisé*).

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[27] "Within the framework of the diglossic situation in Réunion," writes Beniamino (1996:10), "there is indeed an 'interlectal zone' which is quite difficult to analyze. All those who have attempted to analyze the situation have realized **the complexity of this task**." ("Il existe en effet dans le cadre de la situation de diglossie une zone interlectale assez difficile à analyser. Tous ceux qui se sont penchés sur l'analyse de la situation linguistique réunionnaise ont en effet constaté **la complexité de la tâche**") [emphasis added].

[28] Carayol (1977:42-3).

[29] Carayol (1977:41).

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The continuum proposed by Carayol (1977:44-50) ranges from what he calls *le français non marqué* (unmarked French), through what he labels *le français régional* (Regional French) and what he labels *le français créolisé* (creolized French), to what he calls *le créole* (the Creole). The *français non marqué* is the speech variety of the French who were not born in Réunion, which is usually referred to as *français métropolitain* (a standard type of oral French) and spoken by a tiny portion of the population. The *français régional* (Regional French) is sometimes referred to as *le français de la Réunion* and is spoken by speakers born in Réunion. The *français créolisé* ("creolized" French) is usually referred to as *le créole des Hauts* (highland Creole) and spoken by the speakers born in the highlands; and *le créole* (the Creole), often also referred to as *le créole des Bas* (lowland or coastal Creole), is spoken by the Black and mixed population born the coastal regions. One real problem, as this study has tried to show is the "racial" stamp that defines the vernacular lects.

Chaudenson's view of the continuum is similar (cf. Carayol & Chaudenson 1977, 1978) to Carayol's. However, his position (Chaudenson 1981a, 1981b, 1992) is open to criticism inasmuch as his approach seems to be based on *a priori* givens that *skew* the data from the outset. His main concern seems to be to maintain the unity of all the speech varieties with a French lexicon, which implies the following principles:

1. all variation follows essentially inner tendencies of French itself;
2. all variation is a matter of degrees of distance from Standard French;
3. whatever geographical, sociological, or other elements that affect variation among varieties are subordinated to the first two principles;[30]

[30] An example of such subordination of *sociological* change to the linguistic principle of *distance from the standard* can be seen when Chaudenson (1981b:26) writes: "...it is **logical** to consider that the upward and generative motor dynamics of the continuum should manifest itself in a society where there is a kind of **upward mobility,** or at least a sort of unified pattern of social fabric" ("...il est **logique** de penser que la dynamique ascensionelle, génératrice et motrice du continuum linguistique, se manifeste dans une société où existe une forme **de mobilité sociale** ou, au moins, une certaine homologie de l'organisation sociale") [emphasis added]. Chaudenson takes the mesolect of the Réunion continuum as proof that sociological change dovetails neatly into the scale where varieties are measured against the standard speech variety. This should be seen as a **historical coincidence** or a historical accident, not as proof that the linguistic *a priori* principles are correct. Chaudenson's principles **exclude** any creolization of the Popular French spoken by the *Petits Créoles* **by definition.** They exclude it by subordinating sociological change to a closer approximation with the standard. Chaudenson's approach is one of unidirectional change either by

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4. by definition variation within one particular creole ("intralinguistic continuum") and variation among different creoles ("interlinguistic continuum") are measured on the same scale.

C4 The Vernacular Lects of Reunion French

An exhaustive study of variation in Réunion today would have to include a number of sociolects and, to some degree, also ethnolects. However, these cannot be the starting point for answering the question of contact-induced restructuring. The term VLR underlines this in the sense that this study seeks to find in the restructured forms common to the speech of *all* speakers those elements that indicate the effects of contact with the substrate languages, and with the main substrate language, namely the Malagasy dialects.

The fact that such elements are seen in the literature as traits that characterize or define points on the linguistic continuum in Réunion confuses matters. It leads to two problems. First, the use of the terms acrolect and basilect seems to indicate a wholesale agreement with views in the literature which this study disagrees with. Second, it gives the impression that this study accepts the continuum as it has been defined. The term vernacular lects of Réunion (VLR), as is stated in §1.1, serves to acknowledge the existence of lects while *not locking itself into any pre-established diachronic picture*. The terms acrolect and basilect are however used here in the sense of a greater or lesser degree of restructuring in today's lects, as well as to refer to a arguments couched in these terms in the literature. It should also be quite clear that this study does not include either the educated French or the Popular French of the 17th and 18th centuries in these vernacular lects, any more than it includes Standard French or the *français créolisé* (in Bretegnier's 1996 sense) in these vernacular lects (VLR).

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virtue of inner workings in the language (*autorégulation*) or by closer approximation of the standard for sociological reasons. This is what the notion of "debasilectalization" comes from. This tendency is a given in the basic principles. It needs **no historical justification** by virtue of the fact that such sociological change is motivated by his basic premise, namely that change is either towards Standard French or a result of inner forces in the language itself. Both all creolization and sociologically motivated change are therefore to be found in the inner workings of the French language itself. For a linguist who stresses the importance of verifying all linguistic changes in the socio-historical evidence, this is most surprising. The question remains how and why the *Petits Blancs* would suddenly have wanted to weed the basilectal forms out of their speech in the first half of the 19th century. The key seems to be in Chaudensons's need to show that Mauritian Creole is an outgrowth of Bourbonnais. He needs to show how Réunionnais Creole became different form Mauritian Creole, which **logically** must have occurred in the 19th century. This, however, makes of the idea of "debasilectalisation" a theoretical dinosaur.

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