

Lefebvre, Claire, and Renée Lambert-Brétière. "A Note on the Haitian Double-Object Construction and the Relabelling-Based Account of Creole Genesis." *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 29, no. 1 (January 1, 2014): 143–56. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jpcl.29.1.05lef>.

<https://doi.org/10.1075/jpcl.29.1.05lef>

<https://www.jbe-platform.com/content/journals/10.1075/jpcl.29.1.05lef>

Access to this work was provided by the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) ScholarWorks@UMBC digital repository on the Maryland Shared Open Access (MD-SOAR) platform.

Please provide feedback

Please support the ScholarWorks@UMBC repository by emailing scholarworks-group@umbc.edu and telling us what having access to this work means to you and why it's important to you. Thank you.

**A Note on the Haitian Double-Object Construction
and the Relabelling-based Account of Creole Genesis***

Claire Lefebvre and Renée Lambert-Brétière

Université du Québec à Montréal

Haitian, as well as its substrate languages, among which Fongbe, exhibit the double-object construction, that is, the Recipient-Theme construction rendered as V NP NP in the syntax (e.g. John sent Mary a book), as opposed to the Theme-Goal construction rendered as V NP PP (e.g. John sent a book to Mary) in the syntax (for an extensive discussion of the distinctions between the two constructions, see Lefebvre 1994 and the references cited therein). The double-object construction is exemplified in (1) for Haitian and Fongbe.

- (1) a. *Jan montre Pòl liv la.* HAITIAN
 John show Paul book DEF
 'John showed Paul the book.' (= (11b) in Lumsden 1994)
- b. *Kòkú xélé Àsibá xwé ɔ.* FONGBE
 Koku show Asiba house DEF
 'Koku showed Asiba the house.' (= (1b) in Lefebvre 1994)

Fongbe and Haitian corresponding double-object verbs are provided in (2) along with the French source of the Haitian verbs' labels.

(2) Fongbe and Haitian corresponding double-object verbs

FONGBE	HAITIAN		FRENCH	
<i>ná</i>	<i>bay</i>	<	bailler	'to give'
<i>xélé</i>	<i>montre</i>	<	montrer	'to show'
<i>xwélé</i>	<i>ofri</i>	<	offrir	'to offer'
<i>kplón</i>	<i>apran</i>	<	apprendre	'to teach', 'to learn'
<i>byó</i>	<i>mande</i>	<	demander	'to ask'
<i>tè</i>	<i>refize</i>	<	refuser	'to refuse'
<i>sú</i> (for some speakers)	<i>paye</i>	<	payer	'to pay'

(from Lefebvre and Brousseau 2002; Lambert-Brétière's fieldnotes)

As is argued in Lefebvre (1998, 2009), the presence of double-object verbs in Haitian is attributable to the substrate languages, among which Fongbe.¹ Even though French has provided the labels of the Haitian double-object verbs, it does not feature the V NP NP construction, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (3)a. It only exhibits the V NP PP construction exemplified in (3)b.

- (3) a. *Jean a montré Paul le livre. FRENCH
 Jean AUX shown Paul DEF book
 [Lit.: John showed Paul the book.]
- b. Jean a montré le livre à Paul. FRENCH
 Jean AUX shown DEF book to Marie
 ‘John showed the book to Paul.’

The Haitian data in (2) are thus derivable in a straightforward way from relabelling.

While the list of verbs in (2) represents the full range of double-object verbs in Fongbe, Haitian has a lot more verbs that can participate in the construction. These additional Haitian verbs are listed in (4) with the source of their labels.

- (4) Additional Haitian verbs participating in the double-object construction and the source of their labels

HAITIAN	FRENCH	
<i>prete</i>	< prêter	‘to lend, to borrow’
<i>rann</i>	< rendre	‘to give back’
<i>tounen</i>	< retourner	‘to give back’
<i>sede</i>	< céder	‘to yield, to give, to lend’
<i>lwe</i>	< louer	‘to rent, to hire’
<i>sèvi</i>	< servir	‘to serve’
<i>vann</i>	< vendre	‘to sell’
<i>di</i>	< dire	‘to say’
<i>poze</i>	< poser	‘to question’
<i>prèski</i>	< prescrire	‘to prescribe’
<i>pwòmèt</i>	< promettre	‘to promise’
<i>rakonte</i>	< raconter	‘to tell a story’
<i>swete</i>	< souhaiter	‘to wish’
<i>ekri</i>	< écrire	‘to write’
<i>tire</i>	< tirer	‘to deliver (a blow)’
<i>lanse</i>	< lancer	‘to throw’
<i>voye</i>	< envoyer	‘to send’

(from (9) in Lefebvre 2009)

Haitian is not the only Caribbean creole showing more double-object verbs than its substrate languages. Papiamentu, a Portuguese/Spanish-based creole, has even more double-object verbs than Haitian does. Olguín (2006) provides a list of some 45 double-object verbs for this language. This raises the question of whether this type of data could constitute a counter-example to the relabelling-based account of creole genesis. Lefebvre's (2009) answer to this question is a threefold claim: First, by hypothesis, after relabelling, the incipient creole of the Gbe speakers would present the same inventory of double-object verbs as in Gbe languages, that is, the range of verbs in (2). Second, still by hypothesis, in the incipient Haitian Creole of the Gbe speakers, verbs which do not have a Gbe double-object verb counterpart, that is, the verbs in (4), would manifest the properties of the Gbe corresponding verbs. An hypothetical example could consist of a Haitian verb such as *rakonte* 'to tell story', which is part of the Recipient-Theme inventory of verbs in modern Haitian, but not in Fongbe; by hypothesis, in the incipient creole, this verb would have had the properties of Fongbe *kpi* 'to tell story'. As will be seen below, this claim is supported by the data. Third, the variation in the range of double-object verbs between the incipient creole, that is, those corresponding to the Fongbe inventory in (2), and those corresponding to the range of double-object verbs in modern Haitian, results from diffusion across the lexicon, a process hypothesized to have taken place in the further development of the creole. By this process, the properties of a small set of verbs were diffused to a larger set of verbs.

While Lefebvre (2009) focuses on the implementation of the proposal according to which diffusion across the lexicon is responsible for the variation in the range of double-object verbs in Fongbe and in Haitian (the third aspect of her claim), she does not document the second aspect of it. The aim of this paper is to substantiate the second aspect of her claim by providing the

relevant data. We show that, in addition to being double-object verbs, in modern Haitian, verbs that do not have a Fongbe double-object verb counterpart also manifest the properties of the Fongbe corresponding verbs. By hypothesis, these properties would have entered the creole by means of the process of relabelling. Our conclusion is thus that the discrepancy between the range of double-object verbs in Fongbe and in Haitian does not constitute a counter-example to the relabelling-based hypothesis of creole genesis.

Haitian double-object verbs that do not have a Fongbe double-object verb counterpart fall into different groups. These will be discussed in turn. The first group consists of pairs of Fongbe and Haitian transitive verbs that may optionally appear with a Locative adjunct. These are listed in (5).

(5)	FONGBE	HAITIAN	FRENCH	
	<i>dà</i>	<i>tire</i>	< tirer	‘to shoot’
	<i>nyí</i>	<i>lanse</i>	< lancer	‘to throw’
	<i>nyì</i>	<i>prete</i>	< prêter	‘to lend, to borrow’
	<i>wlán</i>	<i>ekri</i>	< écrire	‘to write’

The pair of Fongbe and Haitian verbs in (6) illustrates this case.

- (6) a. *Ùn dà gá dókpo (dó àtín ɔ mē).* FONGBE
 1SG shoot arrow one into tree DEF in
 ‘I shot one arrow (into the tree).’ (Maxime da Cruz pc)
- b. *Mwen tire yon flèch (nan³ piebwa a).* HAITIAN
 1SG shoot one arrow into tree DET
 ‘I shot one arrow (into the tree).’ (Lambert-Brétière’s fieldnotes)

The pairs of Fongbe and Haitian verbs have the same properties. By hypothesis, the properties of the Haitian verbs in (5) would follow from relabelling. In this case, however, these properties are no different from those of the corresponding superstrate verbs. As is shown in (7), the French verb corresponding to the Fongbe verb in (6) is also a transitive verb that may appear with an optional locative adjunct.

- (7) Jean a tiré une flèche (dans l' arbre). FRENCH
 Jean AUX shot one arrow into DEF tree
 'John shot one arrow (into the tree).'

The fact that the pairs of Fongbe and French verbs have the same properties does not preclude a relabelling account of the Haitian data, though it does not provide an argument in favour of it. But what is important to note here is that, in addition to being used as double-object verbs, unlike the closest Fongbe verbs, the Haitian verbs in (5) may be used as two-place predicates, like the corresponding Fongbe verbs.

The second group consists of Fongbe and Haitian pairs of complex predicates that are rendered in the serial verb construction. These pairs are shown in (8) with the French source of the Haitian verbs' labels.

- (8) a. *kàn...byɔ* 'search (something)... ask (someone)' FONGBE
 = 'to question' (Segurola & Rassinoux 2000)
- fouyé...mande* 'search (something)... ask (someone)' HAITIAN
 = 'to question' (Mapou 2009)
- < fouiller 'to look for'; < demander 'to ask' FRENCH
- b. *sè...dó* 'send (something)... put (somewhere)' FONGBE
 = 'to send' (Segurola & Rassinoux 2000)
- voye...mèt* 'send (something)... put (somewhere)' HAITIAN
 = 'to send' (Hall 1953:79)
- < envoyer 'to send'; < mettre 'to put' FRENCH

The pair in (8)b is illustrated in (9).

- (9) a. *É sè kpò dó tò.* FONGBE
 3SG send stick put river
 'He threw a stick in the river.' (Lambert-Brétière's fieldnotes)

- b. *Li voye manjé mèt sou tab la.* HAITIAN
 3SG send food put on table DET
 ‘He threw food on the table.’ (Hall 1953:79)

The serial verb construction is not available in French. In this language, the complex predicates corresponding to the Fongbe and Haitian ones in (8) are rendered in a single three-place predicate: *demande quelque chose à quelqu'un* ‘to ask something to someone’ and *envoyer quelque chose à quelqu'un* ‘to send something to someone’. It thus appears that the serial verb constructions of Fongbe were reproduced as such in Haitian, and that this must have been achieved through relabelling. In modern Haitian, in addition to being used as double-object verbs unlike the closest Fongbe verbs, the predicates in (8) may still be used in a serial verb construction, just like the corresponding Fongbe predicates.

The third group consists of pairs of Fongbe and Haitian verbs that may be used as two-place predicates. These pairs are listed in (10) with the French forms that have provided the labels of the Haitian verbs.

(10) FONGBE	HAITIAN	FRENCH	
<i>qɔ</i>	<i>di</i>	< dire	‘to say something’
<i>kpi</i>	<i>rakonte</i>	< raconter	‘to tell a story’
<i>xáyà</i>	<i>lwe</i>	< louer	‘to rent, to hire something’
<i>sà</i>	<i>vann</i>	< vendre	‘to sell something’
<i>jó</i>	<i>rann</i>	< rendre	‘to give back something’
<i>lé</i>	<i>tounen</i>	< retourner	‘to return something’

The data in (11) illustrate the fact that the Haitian and Fongbe verbs in (10) may be used as two-place predicates.

- (11) a. *Ùn sà mótò ɔ.* FONGBE
 1sg sell car DEF
 ‘I sold the car.’ (Lambert-Brétière’s fieldnotes)

- b. *M vann machin nan.*
 1sg sell car DEF
 'I sold the car.'

HAITIAN

(from Valdman et al. 2007: 738)

The data in (11) thus show that in addition to being used as double-object verbs, unlike the corresponding Fongbe verbs, the Haitian verbs, like their Fongbe counterparts, may also be used as two-place predicates. By hypothesis, this property of the Haitian verbs results from relabelling. There is more to say in this case, however, since, as is shown in (12), the French corresponding verbs may also be used as two-place predicates.

- (12) *J' ai vendu l' auto.*
 1sg AUX sold DEF car
 'I sold the car.'

FRENCH

It could thus be claimed that these data are not pertinent for the evaluation of the relabelling-based account of creole genesis, were it not for the following additional facts. While the Fongbe and Haitian verbs in (10) are two-place predicates (with the additional possibility for the Haitian verbs to participate in the double-object construction), the French verbs in (10) may also be used as three-place predicates involving an Agent, a Theme and a Goal, as illustrated in (13). In (13), the Goal appears in the dative case.

- (13) a. *J' ai vendu l' auto à Marie.*
 1sg AUX sold DEF car to Marie
 'I sold the car to Marie.'

FRENCH

- b. *J' ai rendu l' auto à Marie.*
 1sg AUX given.back DEF car to Marie
 'I gave back the car on behalf of Marie.'

FRENCH

- c. *J' ai dit un secret à Marie.*
 1sg AUX said a secret to Mary
 'I told a secret to Mary.'

FRENCH

As is extensively argued in Lefebvre (1994), in languages such as Gbe languages and the creoles that are based on them, the expression of an Agent-Theme-Goal argument structure has to be rendered in a serial verb construction. The verbs in (10) thus combine with a verb meaning 'to

give’ as the second verb of the series. This is illustrated in (14) for Gungbe and Xwlagbe where the verb meaning ‘to give’ is *ná*.⁴

- (14) a. *Séná sà kéké ná Bàyí.* GUNGBE
 Sena sell bicycle give Bayi
 ‘Sena sold a bicycle to Bayi.’ (from (10) in da Cruz 2004: 48)
- b. *Séná sà kèké ná Bàyí.* XWLAGBE
 Sena sell bicycle give Bayi
 ‘Sena sold a bicycle to Bayi.’ (from (12) in da Cruz 2004: 48)

Similar data are found in Fongbe. In this Gbe language however, the combination of the verbs in (10) with the verb *ná* ‘to give’ can only be observed when the Goal argument has been fronted.

This is illustrated in (15).⁵

- (15) a. *Mè à qò xó ná?* FONGBE
 who 2sg say word give
 ‘Who did you say a word to?’ (Anonymous 1983:VIII,2)
- b. *Mè é kpì tán ná?* FONGBE
 who 3sg tell story give
 ‘Who did he tell a story to?’ (Lambert-Brétière’s fieldnotes)
- c. *Mè é xáyà mótò ó ná?* FONGBE
 who 3sg rent car DEF give
 ‘Who did he rent the car to?’ (Lambert-Brétière’s fieldnotes)

Likewise, in Haitian Creole, the verbs in (10) combine with the verb *ba(y)* meaning ‘to give’ in a serial verb construction involving an Agent, a Theme and a Goal, as is illustrated in (16) (for extensive discussion, see Déchaine 1988). According to both Déchaine (1988) and Gilles (1988), as a second verb in a series, the verb *ba(y)* introduces a Goal.

- (16) a. *Li tounen liv la ba Jan* HAITIAN
 3sg return book DET give John
 ‘He/she returned the book to John.’ (= (11b) in Déchaine 1988:21)

- b. *L' ap rakonte istwa a ba Mari.* HAITIAN
 3sg IMP tell story DET give Mary
 'He/she is telling the story to Mary.' (= (11d) in Déchaine 1988:21)
- c. *L' ap lwe machin nan ba touris la* HAITIAN
 3sg IMP rent car DET give tourist DET
 'He/she is renting the car to the tourist.' (= (11f) in Déchaine 1988:21)

So, whereas the argument structure Agent-Theme-Goal is projected in the syntax as a dative construction in French (see (13)), it is projected as a serial verb construction in the Gbe languages and in Haitian Creole. Since French does not have the serial verb construction, the Haitian verbs involved in the serial verb constructions must have acquired their properties by means of relabelling.

An additional set of data relative to the verbs in (10) still needs to be discussed at this point. The Fongbe verbs in (10) may also appear with an Agent and a Theme followed by a participant introduced by the preposition *nú*, essentially a Benefactive preposition glossed as 'for'.⁶ This is exemplified in (17).⁷

- (17) a. *Ûn qɔ́ xó nú mɛ̀.* FONGBE
 1sg say word for person
 'I said a word to someone.' (Anonymous 1983:VIII,2)
- b. *É kpì tán nú mí.* FONGBE
 3sg tell story for 1pl
 'He told stories to us.' (from Höftmann 2003:275)
- c. *É xáyà mótò ɔ́ nú xóntòn tòn.* FONGBE
 3sg rent car DEF for friend GEN
 'He rented the car to his friend.' (from Höftmann 2003:394)

The categorial status of *ná* and *nú* is identifiable on the basis of tests. The salient ones are summarized in (18), based on Lefebvre & Brousseau (2002:303-312).

(18)	$ná = V_2$	$nú = P$
a. Possible to extract the complement of	yes	no
b. Possible to extract XP	no	yes

In a similar fashion, the Haitian verbs in (10) may also appear with an Agent and a Theme followed by a participant introduced by the Benefactive preposition *ba* ‘for’ (see Déchaine 1988), as is illustrated in (19).

(19)	<i>Li te pote liv sa a ba ou.</i>	HAITIAN
	3sg ANT bring book DEM DET for 2pl	
	‘He/she brought this book for you.’	(= (25iii) in Déchaine 1988:41)

The preposition *ba* ‘for’ is most probably derived from the verb *ba(y)* ‘to give’. This homophony between the verb and the preposition replicates that found in Gungbe and Xwlagbe, where the form *ná* has the function of a verb meaning ‘to give’ and that of a preposition meaning ‘for’ (see Da Cruz 2004). For Haitian, based on Jansen et al. (1978), Déchaine (1988) shows that the category of *ba(y)*, as a verb or as a preposition, is identifiable on the basis of tests. The salient ones are summarized in (20).

(20)	$ba(y) = V_2$	$ba(y) = P$
a. Possible to extract the complement of	yes	no
b. Possible to extract XP	no	yes

Having established that there is a categorial distinction between a form occurring as V_2 and as P , the question at stake is whether the Benefactive PPs in (17) and (19) occupy an argument position within the clause structure, as is the case of the French dative construction in (13), or whether the PPs in (17) and (19) are syntactic adjuncts. Tests arguing for the adjunct status of the Benefactive PPs in (17) and (19) are summarized in (21), based on Lefebvre & Brousseau (2002:314-317). Most tests also apply to the Haitian Benefactive PP.

It thus appears that the verbs in (17) and (19) are two-place predicates and that the Benefactive PPs following the Theme are syntactic adjuncts. We thus conclude that the Benefactive PPs in Fongbe (16) and Haitian (18) do not occupy an argument position, unlike the Goal PPs of French (13).

(22) a. J' ai vendu l' auto pour Marie. FRENCH
1sg AUX sold DEF car for Marie
'I sold the car for Marie.'

b. J' ai raconté l' histoire pour Marie. FRENCH
1sg AUX told DEF story for Marie
'I told the story for Mary.'

c. J' ai loué l' auto pour Marie. FRENCH
1sg AUX rent DEF car for Mary
'I rent the car for Mary.'

As is extensively discussed in Pinsonneault (1995), the syntactic positions of these two types of PPs can be distinguished on the basis of tests, a sample of which is presented here. First, while the Goal PP may be pronominalized by a clitic (see (23)b), the Benefactive PP cannot be (see (24)b).

(23) a. J' ai vendu l' auto à Marie. FRENCH
1sg AUX sold DEF car to Marie
'I sold the car to Marie.'

- b. Je **lui** ai vendu *l'* auto FRENCH
 1sg 3sg.DAT AUX sold DEF car
 'I sold her the car.'
- (24) a. J' ai vendu *l'* auto pour Marie. FRENCH
 1sg AUX sold DEF car for Marie
 'I sold the car for Marie.'
- b. *Je **lui** ai vendu *l'* auto FRENCH
 1sg 3sg.DAT AUX sold DEF car
 [Lit.: 'I sold for her the car.']
- c. J' ai vendu *l'* auto pour elle. FRENCH
 1sg AUX sold DEF car for 3sg
 'I sold the car for her.'

Second, while topicalization of the Goal PP requires a resumptive clitic pronoun in the clause, topicalization of the Benefactive PP forbids it. This contrast is illustrated in (25) and (26), respectively.

- (25) a. À Marie_i, je lui_i ai vendu *l'* auto. FRENCH
 to Marie 1sg 3sg.DAT AUX sold DEF car
 'To Mary_i, I sold her_i the car.'
- b. *À Marie, *j'* ai vendu *l'* auto. FRENCH
 to Marie 1sg AUX sold DEF car
 [Lit.: 'To Mary, I sold the car.']
- (26) a. *Pour Marie_i, je lui_i ai vendu *l'* auto FRENCH
 For Mary 1sg 3sg.DAT AUX sold DEF car
 [Lit.: 'For Mary_i, I sold for her_i the car.']
- b. Pour Marie, *j'* ai vendu *l'* auto FRENCH
 For Mary 1sg AUX sold DEF car
 'For Mary, I sold the car.'

Third, pronominalization of VP includes the Goal PP, but it excludes the Benefactive PP, as is illustrated by the contrast in grammaticality between (27)a and (27)b.

- (27) J' ai vendu *l'* auto, FRENCH
 1sg AUX sold DEF car
 'I sold the car,'
- a. *et je *l'* ai fait à Marie. FRENCH
 and 1sg 3sg AUX done to Mary
 [Lit.: 'and I did it to Mary.']

- b. et je l' ai fait pour Marie. FRENCH
 and 1sg 3sg AUX done for Mary
 'and I did it for Mary.'

These tests show that, in French, while the Goal PP occupies an argument position within the VP, the Benefactive PP does not. Not surprisingly then, a Benefactive PP turns out to be a syntactic, as well as a semantic, adjunct in all three languages under analysis here (see (17), (19) and (22)).

The salient points pertaining to the third group of Haitian verbs (see (10)) that do not have a Fongbe double-object counterpart may be summarized as follows. In addition to being used as double-object verbs, unlike the closest Fongbe verbs, the Haitian verbs may also be used as two-place predicates like their Fongbe counterparts (see (11)). The closest French verbs may also be used as two-place predicates (see (12)). The latter may, however, also be used as three-place predicates involving an Agent, a Theme and a Goal (see (13)). Such an argument structure does not exist in Fongbe nor in Haitian for a single verb and recourse to the serial verb construction is required in order to project, in the syntax, such an argument structure (see (14) and (16)). Benefactive PPs are syntactic adjuncts in all three languages.

The types of argument structures of the third group of verbs are summarized in (28) together with the syntactic structures that they project for all three main languages under discussion in this paper.

(28)	FONGBE	HAITIAN	FRENCH
Agent-Recipient-Theme:			
Double-object construction	+	+	—
Agent-Theme-Goal:			
Serial verb construction	+	+	—
Dative construction	—	—	+
Agent-Theme	+	+	+

Of the list in (4), there are five double-object verbs that have not been discussed as yet. These are *swete* ‘to wish’, *sèvi* ‘to serve’, *sede* ‘to lend’, *prèskri* ‘to prescribe’, and *pwomèt* ‘to promise’. They are exemplified in (29).

- These Haitian verbs have no corresponding Fongbe verbs at all. Since the labels of these Haitian verbs are traceable to French, it could be hypothesized that these verbs have been borrowed from French, were it not for the fact that French does not have the double-object construction. We thus propose that these verbs have been incorporated from French into the Haitian lexicon as double-object verbs. Assuming that this is correct, the data in (29) further illustrate the fact that, whence

a construction is available in a given grammar, new verbs may associate with it, thus enlarging the size of the inventory of such verbs in the lexicon.

To conclude, the fact that modern Haitian has more double-object verbs than Fongbe does not constitute a counter-example to the relabelling-based account to creole genesis.

Notes

* Work underlying this note was financed by SSHRCC. We would like to thank Donald Winford for his most insightful comments on an earlier version.

¹ This is congruent with Michaelis & Haspelmath (2003) who show that the double-object construction is available only in those creoles whose substrate languages have the double-object construction (contra Bruyn, Muysken & Verrips 1999).

² In Fongbe, *dó* may be used as a verb meaning ‘to put into, to plant’ and as a preposition meaning ‘on, into’ (see e.g. Lambert-Brétière 2010: 240; section 6.2.5).

³ For the correspondence between the Haitian preposition *nan* and pairs of Fongbe pre- and post-positions, see Lambert-Brétière & Lefebvre (to appear).

⁴ Da Cruz (2004) analyses *ná* as it occurs in these languages as a verb meaning ‘to give’ in some contexts and as a Benefactive preposition in other contexts. It is not clear whether Da Cruz would analyze *ná* as a verb in (14), but on the basis of the fact that the complement of *ná* can be extracted (see (13) and (15) in Da Cruz 2004), we analyze *ná* as a verb in this context. As is discussed at length in Lefebvre & Brousseau (2002), in Gbe languages, it is always possible to extract the object of the second verb in a series, but it is not possible to extract the object of a preposition without having recourse to the resumptive strategy.

⁵ The discussion of why this is so will be taken up elsewhere for it would take us too far afield of our short note.

⁶ Similar data are provided in Da Cruz (2004) for Gengbe where the Benefactive preposition is *né* instead of *nú*.

⁷ Note that, although *nú* is generally claimed to introduce a Benefactive and thus glossed as ‘for’, it is sometimes translated as to as if it were introducing a Goal. Whether this reflects an ongoing change in the language, or simply a loose translation will have to await future research. In agreement with the vast majority of sources, we will consider *nú* to be a preposition introducing a Benefactive and gloss it as ‘for’. However, we reproduce as such the translations provided by the various authors.

⁸ While arguments are obligatory, adjuncts are optional (see e.g. Randall 1987; Pinker 1989).

⁹ Unlike Fongbe, Haitian does not feature nominalized VPs (see Lefebvre 1998)

References

Anonymous. 1983. *Éléments de recherche sur la langue fon*. Ms. Cotonou, Benin.

Bruyn, Adrienne, Pieter Muysken & Maaïke Verrips. 1999. Double-object constructions in the creole languages : Development and acquisition. In Michel DeGraff (ed), pp. 329-373. *Language Creation and Language Change: Creolization, Diachrony, and Development*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Da Cruz, Maxime. 2004. Ná dans les parlers gbe. *Revue ouest-africaine des enseignants de langues, littérature et linguistique* 2.1: 45-54.

Déchaine, Rose-Marie. 1988. Opérations sur les structures d'arguments: Le cas des constructions sérielles en Haïtien. Master's Thesis, Université du Québec à Montréal, Montreal.

Gilles, Rolande. 1988. Réalisation du Cas en créole haïtien dans trois environnements: les prépositions, les marqueurs de cas et les noms. Master's Thesis, Université du Québec à Montréal, Montreal.

Hall, Robert A. 1953. *Haitian Creole: Grammar, Texts and Vocabulary* [American Anthropologist Association 74]. Menasha: Georges Banta Publishing Company.

Höftmann, Hildegard. 2003. *Dictionnaire fon-français avec une esquisse grammaticale* [Westafrikanische Studien 27]. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.

Lambert-Brétière, Renée. 2010. Les constructions sérielles en fon : approche typologique [Afrique et langage 15]. Paris / Leuven : Peeters.

Lambert-Brétière, Renée & Claire Lefebvre. To appear. Chapter 3: The cognitive process of relabelling in two different theories of the lexicon. In Claire Lefebvre, *Relabelling in Language Genesis: The Hong Kong Lectures* [provisional title]. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Lefebvre, Claire. 1994. The role of relexification in creole genesis: The case of functional categories. *Arbeitsstelle für Mehrsprachigkeit*. Hamburg.
- Lefebvre, Claire. 1998. *Creole Genesis and the Acquisition of Grammar: The Case of Haitian Creole* [Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 88]. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lefebvre, Claire. 2009. A note on lexical diffusion in the development of creole: The case of double-object verbs. In Rachel Selback, Hugo C. Cardoso & Margot Van den Berg (eds), pp. 101-113. *Gradual Creolization. Studies Celebrating Jacques Arends* [Creole Language Library]. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Lefebvre, Claire & Anne-Marie Brousseau. 2002. *A Grammar of Fongbe* [Mouton Grammar Library 25]. Berlin / New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Lumsden, John S. 1994. Possession: Substratum semantics in Haitian Creole. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 9: 25-51.
- Mapou, Jan. 2009. Ayisyen nan "little haiti" swete Viter Juste bon fèt. *Tigout Pa Tigout* 15. http://sosyetekoukouy.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=71/
- Michaelis, Suzanne & Martin Haspelmath. 2003. Ditransitive constructions: Creole languages in a cross-linguistic perspective. *Creolica. Revue du Groupe Européen de Recherches en Langues Créoles*. <http://www.creolica.net/>
- Olguín, Maribel. 2006. *Analyse comparative des propriétés lexicales de dix classes de verbes en papiamentu et en espagnol*. Master's Thesis, Université du Québec à Montréal.
- Pinker, Steven. 1989. *Learnability and Cognition: The Acquisition of Argument Structure*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Pinsonneault, Reine. 1995. *La correspondance entre la structure sémantique et la structure syntaxique: la représentation des arguments optionnels*. Doctoral's Thesis, Université du Québec à Montréal, Montreal.

Randall, Janet H. 1987. Indirect positive evidence: Overtuning overgeneralisations in language acquisition. Ms. Indiana University Linguistics Club, Bloomington.

Segurola, Basile & Jean Rassinoux. 2000. Dictionnaire fon-français. Madrid: Société des Missions Africaines.

Valdman, Albert et al. 2007. Haitian-English Bilingual Dictionary. Bloomington: Indiana University, Creole Institute.