ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF 'TA' IN AFRO-HISPANIC CREELOS

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1.0. Introduction: Verbal Markers in Ibero-Romance Creoles

A large subset of the Ibero-Romance creoles exhibits the temporal/aspectual particle *ta* in combination with an uninflected verbal stem, usually in an imperfective or progressive function. The existence of *ta* among creoles widely separated in both geographical and ethnolinguistic terms is one of the key components in monogenetic theories of Romance-based creoles, usually involving a form of 15th and 16th century maritime pidgin Portuguese or reconnaissance language. However, despite the phonological identity of the particle *ta* among creole languages, its syntactic and semantic characteristics vary widely, in a fashion that suggests more than one route of evolution.

The following remarks will be confined to Afro-Hispanic creoles (AHC), beginning with Caribbean *bozal* Spanish (CBS). Since there is evidence suggesting that the introduction of *ta* into CBS is due at least in part to the arrival of Papiamento (PP) speakers into Cuba and Puerto Rico (cf. Bachiller y Morales 1883, Granda 1973, Álvarez Nazario 1974:146, Lipski 1987a), relevant PP data will also be considered. Finally, since the triad CBS-PP-Palenquero (PL) is frequently cited as evidence of a single precursor Afro-Lusitanian creole (cf. Granda 1968; Otheguy 1975; Megenney 1984, 1985, 1986), data from the latter language will also be included.

Most accounts of the development of *ta* derive the particle and accompanying verbal stems from Spanish/Portuguese *estar*, which is both an auxiliary verb used in progressive constructions and an independent verb, expressing location and, with adjectives, indicating state or condition. Spanish/Portuguese progressive constructions with *estar* are relatively infrequent and semantically marked as compared with simple verb forms, not likely to be seized upon during pidginization as the principal representative of all present-tense verbs. This fact would not be problematic if it could be demonstrated that *ta* in all Iberian-based creoles came from a single precursor pidgin or creole (assuming that a plausible scenario could be constructed for introduction of *ta* into the 'first' creole), whence it passed un-
changed into other creoles. Thus, for example, Naro (1978:342) has claimed that the Portuguese pidgin 'reconnaissance' language, from which it was ultimately transferred to other creoles. However, any such claims must be based on inference rather than direct evidence. The earliest (literary or semi-literary) representations of such Portuguese, coming in the 15th and 16th centuries, contain no examples of ta, but rather use the portmanteau verb sar (apparently a fusion of ser and estar) or santar (possibly a fusion of sentir and estar). 4

Close inspection of the verbal system of related AHC varieties allows the postulate of a more straightforward transfer from nonstandard but noncreolized Spanish and/or Portuguese, rather than the adoption of a complete creole verb system from a 'reconnaissance language'. It has frequently been claimed that similarities between Spanish and AHC represent 'decreolization' (e.g. Baum 1976; Megenney 1986; Perl 1984, 1985, 1988; Wood 1972). However the linguistic and social history of the regions involved permit the hypothesis that contemporary manifestations of AHC verbal structures do not differ significantly from the formative periods.

2.0. Syntactic Status of ‘ta’ in Afro-Hispanic Creoles

In AHC, ta functions in conjunction with a verbal stem, marking at least imperfective aspect. In PP (and very rarely in PL), ta can also stand alone as a copular verb combining with nouns as well as adjectives (equivalent to Ibero-Romance ser as well as estar):

1a) (PP) Bo meresé pa ta felis
   'You deserve to be happy'
   Ferrol (1982:71)

b) (PP) Mi nombre ta Juan
   'My name is John'

2a) (PL) ta a tu gëno
   'They are all good'
   Friedemann & Patiño (1983:131)

b) (PL) fa ta ali demasiao cansado
   'I am very tired'
   Friedemann & Patiño (1983:131)

c) (CBS) Yo no que ta quieto ya
   'I can't be still now'
   Cruz (1974:148)

d) (CBS) Nangü ta buceo...
   'The nangü [tree] is good'
   Cabrera (1983:183)

In CBS and PL, ta is mainly used with predicate adjectives involving change of state, like Ibero-Romance estar. It is also used with locatives:

3a) (PP) Mango ta smak bon
   'Mango taste good'
   Maurer (1987:35)

b) (CBS) Siempre ta regalá dinero a mi
   'He always gives me money'
   Álvarez Nazario (1974:384)

c) (PL) pero kumo nu ta yobé, tuul së mori tolo
   'But since it doesn't rain, everything dies'
   Schwegler (MSb)

Occasionally in CBS, ta combines with a verbal stem to indicate punctual or even past aspect, usually in the presence of an expression fixing the temporal reference:

4a) Yo ta llorá poscque Calota y ta mori
   'I am crying because Carlota died'
   Morales (1976:190)

b) Yo no ta mirá cuando Cuevita Mabona ¿que? gonizando no, taba mueto difunto...
   'I wasn't watching when Cuevita Mabona [what?], she wasn't dying, she was dead...'
   Cabrera (1979:174)

In all three creoles, ta combines with verbal stems to indicate progressive aspect, usually in the present. In CBS, very occasionally in PL, but not normally in PP, ta alternates with esta, which hints tantalizingly at a form of estar as a historical source:

5a) (PP) Aworaki nos ta kome
   'Now we are eating'
   Maurer (1987:36)

b) (PL) pueblo mi ta pelé lengua and
   'My people are losing their language'
   Friedemann & Patiño (1983:116)

c) (CBS) de to eso que yo ta nombrá
   'Of all that I am naming'
   Cabrera (1983:229)

d) (CBS) Que to mi caepo me vu te mba
   'My whole body is trembling'
   Cabrera (1979:40)

Ta in Iberian-based creoles is often referred to as a 'particle', but its syntactic status has seldom been empirically demonstrated. Most contemporary syntactic models assign such particles to the auxiliary component, i.e. as part of INFL, presumably an instantiation of [TNS] or a similar specification (cf. Ziegler n.d., Muysken 1981, Koopman & Lefebvre 1982, Bickerton 1981:80f.). Most of the usual syntactic tests for overt items in INFL (e.g. modal verbs, English to) are not applicable to ta. First, Ibero-Romance has no set of verbs which share the distinctive morphological and syntactic characteristics of English modals (cf. Steele et al. (1981) in favor of modals in English and lack thereof in German). There are no Ibero-Romance verbs which remain unconjugated, or which have no infinitive form. Nor are there verbs (with the arguable exception of poder 'be able') which only take other verbs as complements. Unlike English, all verbs in Ibero-Romance undergo movement in INFL and then to COMP in questions (cf. Raposo 1987, Pollock 1989). In Ibero-Romance, the 'auxiliary' verbs estar 'be' and haber/haver 'have', which combine with nonfinite verb forms in perfective and progressive combinations, are part of the VP (Zagona 1988).
In AHC, all inflectional morphology is absent, and syntactic movement is minimal. No AHC variety shows evidence of INFL-to-COMP movement in the syntax, or even of Verb Movement in INFL. All three AHC varieties have a reflex of poder (PP por, PL pol, CBS puede), but this verb gives at best ambiguous evidence of belonging to INFL (see below). PL and PP have a set of verbs which normally appear without ta or other preverbal 'particles', and most are cognate with Ibero-Romance verbs which take verbal complements; however, nothing suggests that these are other than true verbs in AHC. Finally, in all AHC varieties, ta is an independent verb, in addition to an element which combines with verbal stems; ta itself can be preceded by other 'particles'.

Although preverbal ta in AHC usually involves some type of 'imperfective' or 'progressive' aspect, there is no morphological signalling of TNS or AGR in AHC; Mufwene & Dijkstra (1989) have argued that these creoles have no AGR or TNS, and arguably, no INFL at all. Even assuming that AHC retains INFL, albeit without AGR, a close examination casts some doubt on the status of ta as a component of INFL.

In some other creoles, two or more preverbal particles can be combined, thus suggesting a Tense-Mood-Aspect cluster in INFL. AHC varieties do not exhibit this configuration. In CBS, there are no examples where ta combines with other particles. In PP, ta may combine with the future/irrealis lo, but the latter element occurs preclusally, and hence cannot be considered as part of a particle cluster located in INFL. In PL, ta does not normally combine with other particles,7

In none of the AHC varieties can ta be displaced from the verbal stem, e.g. by negatives or adverbials, which might permit a glimpse into the internal structure of the creole verb, nor is there verbal ellipsis or other processes which selectively affect individual components of the verb phrase. A partial exception is predicate clefting in PP, in which a bare verb stem may appear in proposed position, duplicated by a verb including ta:

6) (ta) pena bo ta pena
   'What you're doing is thinking'  Maurer (1988:144)

However, initial ta can also combine with a different preverbal element in second position, thus suggesting that the first instance is an independent copular usage of ta:

7) ta kome el a kome
   'What he did was eat'  Maurer (1988:141)

The same holds of clefting involving the 'gerund', where the left-dislocated verb can only be the bare stem with ta, not the gerund:

8) ta kome/*kumendo nos ta komiendo
   'What we're doing is eating'  Maurer (1988:144)

Moreover, when conjoining clauses with, e.g., de'or, ta cannot be separated from one of the conjuncts (Maurer 1988:144).

The PP data show that ta can be fronted together with the main verb. Byrne (1987:44-45) uses the inability of ta and similar particles in Saramaccan to be fronted as evidence that they are part of INFL; the opposite conclusion is suggested for PP, and by extrapolation, for PL and CBS, although fronting constructions of any kind are vanishingly rare in the latter two languages.

Not only when AHC ta operates as an independent verb, but also when it appears preverbally, it may in turn be preceded by a 'modal' verb. In PP, ta can be combined with por 'be able', mester 'need to', etc.:

9a) e por ta kanta
   'He can sing'  Maurer (1988:51)

b) Bo no mester ta mara na kapricho ridikulo di moda
   'You don't have to be bound by the ridiculous whims of fashion'
   Lauffer (1971:71)

PL occasionally allows pol 'be able' to combine with preverbal ta, although in 'conditional' sentences ak is used instead; no extant CBS text illustrates this possibility. Since AHC shows no other evidence of 'double modals', this would suggest that ta is part of VP, rather than an auxiliary. Moreover, if por, mester, etc. are themselves part of full VPs, then ta cannot be an instantiation of INFL.

In AHC, preverbal ta may also occasionally appear after the complementizer pa (<para 'in order to'):

10a) (PP) Hose ke pa Ramon ta traba avoraki
   'José wants Ramón to be working now'
   Maurer (1988:253)

b) (PL) pi (pa j) ta kumendo
   'For me to be eating'
   Schweger (p.c.)

Overt components of INFL are not normally found after AHC complementizers, which is another indirect indication of the non-INFL location of ta.

In PP, when conjoined verbs appear, ta is optional before the second verbal stem, if the conjunction i is used. However, if the conjunctor ku is used, ta does not normally occur before the second verb (Richardson 1977:58):

11a) E mucha mubah ta hari i (ta) baiwa
   'The girl is laughing and dancing'

b) E mucha mubah ta kanta ku ('ta) baiwa
   'The girl is singing and dancing'

Richardson (1977) analyzes conjunction with ku as involving reanalysis, i.e. formation of a single verbal nucleus. Conjunction with i is analyzed as involving reduction of two full clauses, each of which contains ta as a manifestation of INFL. There is no reason to consider conjunction of VPs as involving clause reduction (cf., e.g. Goodall 1987), and no pressing reason for considering ta as part of INFL, even when repeated before verbs conjoined with i.
All AHC varieties show alternation between bare verb stems and gerunds, in combination with ta; thus in CBS:

12) Tú siempre ta hablando a mi ... yo tu queré mucho a ti Álvarez Nazario (1974:384)
   'You are always talking to me. I love you a lot'

PL also employs the gerund with ta, and includes gerund forms like kumendo 'eating' and sindindo 'feeling' (together with the bare stem kumé and sind) whose phonetic shape (probably reflecting the Portuguese cognates) indicates that they have been part of PL since the beginning. PP routinely combines ta with gerunds, at times with partially different meaning (Maurer 1988:84):

\begin{itemize}
\item[(a)] (PL) ta kantando ele
   'I am singing to him/her'
   Friedemann & Patiño (1983:120)
\item[(b)] (PP) Nos ta kinumando
   'We are beginning'
   Maurer (1988:84)
\end{itemize}

Given the paucity of movement phenomena in AHC, and the inability to intercalate, e.g., adverbs or negatives between ta and the main verb stem, the precise inner structure of the AHC VP is not yet clear. The default hypothesis is that preverbal ta is a direct continuation of Ibero-Romance estar, and therefore that it represents a full VP, whose complement is the VP containing the verb (Zagona 1988). This then means that ta has never 'left' VP. In Ibero-Romance, however, estar + gerund constructions are invariably progressive, while the AHC varieties exhibit greater diversity.

3.0. On the Origin of AHC Verb Stems

In AHC, the invariable verbal stem that accompanies ta appears to derive from the Ibero-Romance infinitive from which the final /r/ has been dropped; except in PP, oxyronic stress is also retained in AHC verb stems. However, each of the AHC languages contains a subset of verbal stems which derive from conjugated verbs, in the third person singular (3s) (cf. also Taylor 1977:176, Friedemann & Patiño 1983:125, Lenz 1928:118).

The multiple source of AHC verb stems, including, the simultaneous retention of stems based on more than one Ibero-Romance form (e.g. in PL), requires explanation. Gradation toward the 3s form of the verb is a recurring characteristic of many vestigial and isolated dialects of Spanish and Portuguese. There is much accumulated evidence (e.g. Bybee 1980:166ff; 1985) that the 3s present is in many cases the minimally marked form. This contrasts with rudimentary pidgin Spanish and Portuguese use of the bare infinitive, which was common in boaz Spanish and Portuguese of the 15th and 16th centuries:

\begin{itemize}
\item[(a)] am po esto tan bro como tu penzar
   Feliciano de Silva (Segunda Celestina [1534]);
   Mack 1973
\item[(b)] Protegá san tar diablo!
   Antonio Ribelro Chiado (Autos das Regateiras
   1970:v. 552 [1550])
\end{itemize}

For most Ibero-Romance verbs, the only difference between the 3s form and the infinitive lacking final /r/ is the position of word stress. If the input environment for the formation of AHC included speakers of marginalized but not pidginized Spanish/Portuguese, who tended to reduce the verbal paradigm to 3s, the results would often be indistinguishable from postulating the infinitive as the original source of creole verb stem. When the 3s stem differed from that of the infinitive, this would be reflected in the eventual creole verb stem. It might even be that, as a verbal system including use of ta was consolidated, those proto-creole verbs that were perceived as already 'conjugated' were not drawn into the complex patterns.

Like the infinitive, the Ibero-Romance gerund receives stress on the desinence (a theme vowel plus -ndo); assuming that a plausible mechanism for loss of the desinence could be proposed, the gerund would then be indistinguishable from the infinitive or 3s as a source of AHC verb stems.10 Precedents for loss of final syllables are not hard to find within Ibero-Romance, particularly among vestigial/isolated dialects, and in AHC:11 (PP) mes 'same' <mesmo/mismo, cos 'thing'; PL blo <bloque 'cement' block; CBS buan <buscando 'searching' (Cabrera 1983:183), etc.

4.0. Integration of ‘ta’ in the Developing AHC Verbal System

Accepting tentatively that the sources of AHC verb stems include Ibero-Romance 3s, infinitive and phonologically reduced gerunds, it must be explained how ta (originally a form of the auxiliary verb estar) came to be associated with verb forms that never participated in progressive constructions. Conjugated 3s forms which differed from the infinitive only in stress placement could easily be drawn into conformity through stress shifting, or by failure to adopt a uniform stress pattern as an obligatory concomitant of the AHC verb stem. A gerund, in turn, would undergo erosion of its last syllable, a process which would be spurred on by the existence of two other sources of target patterns (infinitives and 3s forms). The original auxiliary estar(r), in turn, would also participate in the gravitation toward the 3s form, accompanied by erosion of the first syllable, a phenomenon which affects estar in vernacular Spanish and Portuguese to this day. The result would be ta plus a morphologically (and syntactically) reduced verbal stem.

Given that ta continued to co-occur with gerunds in later stages of AHC, it is likely that the increased range of combination of proto-AHC ta occurred before all awareness of the syntactic origins of all main verbs was lost. I believe that it was the second event mentioned above, the expansion of (estar)ta(r) to acquire copular functions, that was directly responsible for increasing the repertoire of elements with which preverbal ta could combine.

Ibero-Romance estar, originally meaning 'to stand', gradually acquired many of the functions of the copula (particularly to convey the result of change or the
imminent possibility of transformation), as well as a universal locative function (cf. Holm 1988:155-6). This distribution is more apparent than real, however, reflecting normative usage and written codification, but failing to account for the linguistic behavior of many native or quasi-native speakers of Spanish and Portuguese. Isolated and vestigial Spanish demonstrates incipient incursions of estar into the territory of ser, including combination with adjectives normally reserved for ser, and even combination with predicate NPs (cf. Silva-Corvalán 1986, Lipski 1987b). These examples demonstrate that internal evolution in Ibero-Romance can result in significant changes in the combinatorial potential of estar.

Possible as a collateral source of expanded AHC verbs is the use, in many varieties of Ibero-Romance, of gerunds with adjectival force. The gerund is not normally used to modify nouns, but a few 'futerum' cases are found (cf. Gill Gaya 1961: par. 146-148; Ramsey & Spaulding 1956:368): 'le encontramos muriendo de hambre' 'we found him dying of hunger'.

The preceding paragraphs have amassed a number of pieces of indirect evidence that AHC *ta* is not generated under INF, but is rather a full V, whether part of its own VP or contained in the VP headed by the main verb. A key factor in the generation of verbs under INF or VP is the ability to assign θ-roles. Verbs that are generated under INF are unique in assigning no θ-roles. If we accept Roberts' (1985:29) extension of the Visibility Condition, that V assigns θ-roles if V is governed, then it is clear that a verb with no θ-roles to assign must appear in an un governed position, i.e. INF. The converse conclusion is that a verb which assigns θ-roles cannot be generated under INF.

AHC *ta* takes verbal complements, some of which originally shared nominal [+N] characteristics, e.g. infinitives and gerundal adjectives. According to all indications, AHC *ta* continues to assign a θ-role, namely the one assigned to its verbal complement. This status as a θ-role assigner is enhanced by the concurrent existence of *ta* as an independent copular or locative verb. I propose, then, that AHC *ta* has retained and perhaps even enhanced its position as a true verb, and that the type of parametric shift that resulted, e.g., in the creation of the English modal system (cf. Lightfoot 1979, Roberts 1985) was not part of the history of AHC *ta*. This claim does not extend automatically to *ta* in other Ibero-Romance creoles, where *ta* may indeed be generated under INF. Nor does it necessarily encompass other AHC 'particles', at least some of which may be elements of INF. The fundamental claim advanced here is that *ta* more directly continues the syntactic configurations represented by Ibero-Romance *estar + V*, while leaving open the possibility that other Tense/Mood/Aspect markers in AHC may have evolved to become part of INF.

In Ibero-Romance, *estar*, together with non-auxiliary verbs, undergo Verb Movement to INF to acquire their Agreement features. In languages with little or no verbal inflection, including English and AHC, Verb Movement does not take place, except as required by other grammatical structures. This, then, is the syntactic innovation represented by AHC *ta*: not movement from generation under VP to INF (as occurred with the English modals), but failure to undergo Verb Movement.

Once *ta* becomes part of INF, the language learner need only attend to simple linear order: *ta* (or other particles that instantiate INF) + verb stem. As an inflectional marker, *ta* is stripped of its combinatorial complexities, and parsing is eased. Plausibly, this increased ease of processing would be favored for during creole evolution.

5.0. On the Linguistic Input of AHC Verbs

Many models describe creole genesis in an extremely limited language-learning environment, with the first generation pidgin-learning (i.e. creole-forming) children struggling to make sense of their elders' pidginized speech, while extending and stabilizing this speech via the addition of grammatical structures and constraints (e.g. Givón 1982:116). In the case of AHC, the development of *ta* suggests a richer ontological environment for what eventually became solidified into a creole, in particular as regards the availability and density of native-speaker models.

Although little accurate information is available on the formation and early evolution of AHC languages, it is clear that each has been in contact with Spanish, usually of a nonstandard variety, almost from the outset. The African slaves who escaped from Cartagena to form Palenque de San Basilio evidently spoke little Spanish of any sort. However, contact was reestablished with the Spanish-speaking population within less than a century from the time of founding of Palenque, which presumably antedates the creation of PL, and popular, nonstandard Spanish has been in contact with PL ever since (Arrazola 1970).

Curaçao has always been a linguistic and cultural melting pot, and even after the Dutch takeover of the island, commercial trade, as well as proximity with Venezuela, guaranteed that (nonstandard, coastal or maritime) Spanish would continue to be a decisive force in its development. Slaves escaped from Curaçao to the Venezuelan coast, while Venezuelans were a constant presence on Curaçao, and nothing suggests that PP, except perhaps during the first few decades of its existence, was out of touch with Spanish. CBS came into its own as more than a transitory phenomenon as part of the sugar plantation boom that affected Cuba and to a lesser extent Puerto Rico beginning around the turn of the 19th century. Presumably formed and expanded on plantations, where contact with Spanish was usually through overseers and native-born slaves, CBS received a strong dose of nonstandard but quasi-native Spanish input. Travellers' accounts of 19th century CBS indicate varying degrees of approximation to regional nonstandard Spanish, in a fashion which cannot be attributed simply to 'decreolization'.

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The analysis of *ta* in the AHC languages does not correspond to the type of abrupt restructuring of originally disparate elements which is frequently postulated as the origin of creole TMA particles (e.g. by Bickerton 1981:80-81, Seuren 1983:219-220). The high degree of congruence between AHC verbal structures involving *ta* and Ibero-Romance combinations with *estar* points not to radical re-building of a verbal system virtually ab ovo, but rather an application of something like the Transparency Principle of Lightfoot (1979). The combination of depleted morphological inflection, multiple sources for main verb stems, and expanded combinations involving *estar* would present the proto-AHC learner with a gamut of variation whose complexity could be significantly reduced by a single restructuring: *ta* extended its range to accept all verbal stems, at the same time forgoing the possibility of movement to INFL.

6.0. Conclusions

The preceding remarks indicate that verb systems even among closely related creoles may contain considerable diversity, especially with respect to the lexifier language. The concept of creole 'particle' has come under scrutiny, and it has been suggested that, at least in some circumstances, there may be a less discontinuous transition from the verbal system of the lexifier language to that of a creole.

NOTES

1. Caribbean *bota* Spanish has been included in the present study because of its importance in claims regarding creole monogenesis and the prior existence of a pan-American Spanish or Portuguese-based creole. It is a risky enterprise to include a creole which has been reconstructed from fragmentary information, much of which comes from literary or folkloric texts and is likely to have been the product of exaggeration and stereotyping. Even under the best of circumstances, the corpus of CBS materials is very small, and there are no available informants whose intuitions can be probed. All remarks concerning CBS are therefore extremely tentative, and are offered as contributions to the ongoing study of CBS, rather than as definitive conclusions. Cf. Lipski (1987a), Taylor (1971), Whinnom (1956, 1962) for comparative data from Ibero-Romance creoles, including relevant bibliography.


3. Many thanks to Armin Schweger for being a constant source of data and insights on Paelquero, as well as for helping me shape many of the ideas contained in this study. Thanks to Philippe Maurer for elucidation of the Papiamento data.


5. Muyssen (1981:190) claims that the placement of particles in AUX/INFL represents the least marked alternative in any of the development of creole verbal systems from a pidgeon precursor. However, he does not elaborate on the justification for the minimally-marked status.

6. The past/imperfective marker *tabata*, while probably deriving historically from a combination of *ta* and one or more other particles, is best analyzed synchronically as a single particle.

7. The a which frequently precedes *ta* in PL (cf. Friedman & Patish 1983:120) is not operating as an independent particle, and its presence or absence has no demonstrable effect on meaning. Pre-verbal *ta* can also be preceded by the temporal marker *ba*, which is more likely to be a particle. However, in such instances, *ba* affects the entire combination *ta + V*, which would not be the case if *ta* were also a particle.

8. Maurer (1988:274-5) cites [unpublished] work by Marta Dijkhoff which claims that *por* and similar PP verbs are part of AUX/INFL. Maurer disagrees with this analysis, citing cases like *tabata por una* ‘he was able to come’ where the ‘tense’ marker *tabata* precedes *por*. It may be that the use of *tabata* (and also *ta*) is theory-neutral with respect to the status of *por*, since *ta* cannot occur before *por*; *tabata*, while presumably also derived from *estar*, has more clearly become a tense marker before *por*. *Tabata* (and also *ta*) is not present in focused constructions, thus a part of INFL and potentially combinable with other INFL occupants, including *por*. This is additional evidence that *ta* may be different from other PP elements which have been analyzed as ‘particles’ in AUX. In PL, the *ba* that frequently combines with preceding *ta* in past-tense constructions also shows evidence of being a particle in INFL, capable of attaching to other elements of the sentence, and in particular, to being placed in clause-final position (Schwegler MSA, MSB).


10. Continental Portuguese employs a progressive construction based on *estar + a + INFL* (e.g. *estar a falar* (*she is speaking*)), which appears even more closely related to creole combinations with *esta a falar* (*she is speaking*), which have frequently been postulated as a source (Meganney 1986:181-2; Maurer 1987; Holm 1988) and which have frequently been postulated as a source (Meganney 1986:181-2; Maurer 1987; Holm 1988) and which has grammatically been postulated as a source (Meganney 1986:181-2; Maurer 1987; Holm 1988) and which has grammatically been postulated as a source (Meganney 1986:181-2; Maurer 1987; Holm 1988) and which has grammatically been postulated as a source (Meganney 1986:181-2; Maurer 1987; Holm 1988) and which has grammatically been postulated as a source (Meganney 1986:181-2; Maurer 1987; Holm 1988) and which has grammatically been postulated as a source (Meganney 1986:181-2; Maurer 1987; Holm 1988). However, the Portuguese configuration is evidently a 19th century development (which has not generally been transmitted to Brazil), for which there is no evidence in any variety of Portuguese for the time period in which most creoles are assumed to have come into existence (Lipski 1987a).

11. Cf. Lipski (1985a) for many examples of loss of final syllables in vestigial and isolated Spanish dialects.

12. Roberts (1985) suggests that languages with ‘rich’ verbal inflection do not have AGR at all, but rather a slot equipped with the appropriate affixes, generated under INFL. Languages with depleted verbal inflection, such as modern English, govern verbs in situ, by means of INFL. Whereas the claim that languages with rich agreement have no AGR seems counterintuitive, the data from the claim that languages with rich agreement have no AGR seems counterintuitive, the data from the claim that languages with rich agreement have no AGR seems counterintuitive, the data from the claim that languages with rich agreement have no AGR seems counterintuitive, the data from the claim that languages with rich agreement have no AGR seems counterintuitive, the data from the claim that languages with rich agreement have no AGR seems counterintuitive.


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