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VARIATION IN TENSE-ASPECT-MODALITY IN LIBERIAN ENGLISH

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Variation in Tense-Aspect-Modality
in Liberian English

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Linguistics

by

John Victor Singler

1984
The dissertation of John Victor Singler is approved.

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University of California, Los Angeles
1984
DEDICATION

To my parents
and the memory
of my grandparents
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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Variation in Tense-Aspect-Modality
in Liberian English

by

John Victor Singler

Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics
University of California, Los Angeles, 1984

Professors Roger W. Andersen and Robert P. Stockwell, Co-Chairs

The thesis uses more than fifty hours of recorded speech as the basis for an examination of the tense-aspect-modality (TAM) system of Liberian English. The bulk of the corpus comprises data from non-native speakers and ranges from pidgin to Standard Liberian English.

The Liberian English TAM system, particularly as it obtains in the basilect (i.e. the variety least like Standard English), is analyzed with special reference to the prototypical creole TAM system as proposed by Bickerton (1975a). Additionally, the nature and impact of substratal input is considered, especially that from Kru languages. Further, the (post-)creole continuum model developed by DeCamp (1971) is used in this thesis to relate the Liberian basilect TAM system to the Liberian acrolect (Standard Liberian English) TAM system. Thus,
once the basilectal TAM system has been established, the differences between it and the acrolectal system are expressed as a sequence of semantic and morphosyntactic changes. While the Liberian data provide support for the continuum model, they also demonstrate the need for adjustments to it.

After outlining the concepts referred to above, Chapter 1 examines in some detail the history of Liberian English and then assesses--and argues for--the appropriateness of applying the prototypical creole system and the creole continuum model to a speech variety that is an extended pidgin rather than a creole.

Chapter 2 examines past states and events. In the treatment of past non-punctual verbs, a case is made for two geographically distinct basilects, one largely conforming to the creole prototype and the other quite different from it.

Chapter 3 considers completives, intensives, and perfects. The basilectal use of completive auxiliaries--particularly feni--to mark the preservation of temporal order is discussed as well as the role in the TAM system of the sentence-final particle o.

Finally, Chapter 4 examines futures and conditionals. Liberian English, like the creole prototype, treats the two as a single category, irrealis. The chapter also presents the ways in which the irrealis system changes along the continuum.
Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

Dog got to trust his boonga
before he swallow the bone.

--Liberian proverb

This study examines tense, aspect, and modality in Liberian English. Using more than fifty hours of recorded speech as a corpus, it also tests the ability of the "continuum model" to systematize the variation inherent in the data. The first chapter begins with an introduction to the three foci of the dissertation: the tense-aspect-modality system of creoles, particularly as characterized by Derek Bickerton; the model of the (post-)creole continuum; and Liberian English. Then the data on which this work is based are presented, followed by brief comments on aspects of Liberian English phonology relevant to the marking of tense-aspect-modality.

1.1 TENSE-ASPECT-MODALITY IN CREOLE LANGUAGES

In this section, Bickerton's description of tense-aspect-modality in creoles will be summarized. Then, the tense-aspect-modality systems of the Kru languages spoken in Liberia will be reviewed, with the focus on the way the tense-aspect-modality systems of these languages parallel the creole prototype.
1.1.1 The Creole Prototype

Bickerton (1975a) proposes a prototypical creole tense-aspect-modality (TAM) system. His system is based upon an examination of Sranan, Guyanese Creole English, Haitian Creole French, and Hawaiian Creole English; but, Bickerton argues, it is the creole TAM system, the system that emerges whenever the classical setting for creolization obtains. Bickerton (1981) sets out his criteria for what comprises the classical setting:

... I shall use the word creole to refer to languages which:
1) Arose out of a prior pidgin which had not existed for more than a generation.
2) Arose in a population where not more than 20 percent were native speakers of the dominant language and where the remaining 80 percent was composed of diverse language groups.

(1981:4)

In this system there are three basic oppositions: anterior/non-
anterior, punctual/non-punctual, and irrealis/realis. In each case, the first member of the opposition is marked by a preverbal AUX, the second by 0. According to Bickerton:

(a) the zero form marks simple past for action verbs and nonpast for state verbs.
(b) a marker of anterior aspect indicates past-before-past for action verbs and simple past for state verbs.
(c) a marker of irrealis aspect indicates "unreal time" (= futures, conditionals, subjunctives, etc.) for all verbs.
(d) a marker of nonpunctual aspect indicates durative or iterative aspect for action verbs, and is indifferent to the nonpast/past distinction; this marker cannot normally co-occur with state verbs.

(1975a:5-6)
Despite Bickerton's use of the term "aspect" in (b), (c), and (d), the anterior/non-anterior opposition is usually taken in the creole literature to refer to tense, the irrealis/realis opposition to modality, and the punctual/non-punctual opposition to aspect. In general, the conventional uses of these three terms will be followed here.¹

The wording of (a), (b), and (d) makes clear the centrality of the state/non-state distinction to the system. (In Bickerton (1975a), the opposition is expressed in terms of state verbs. Bickerton (1981) restates it as a distinction between "states and processes, including under the latter rubric verbs of experiencing as well as action verbs" (p. 154). In the present study, "events" rather than "processes" will be used.) With regard to aspect, states are inherently non-punctual. As such, the punctual/non-punctual distinction is meaningless for them, and ordinarily they are not overtly marked for their non-punctualness. For events, on the other hand, the punctual/non-punctual distinction is viable, and non-punctual events are so marked. With regard to tense, the difference between state and event is expressed in Table 1:

(Table 1 here)

¹ "Modality," as used here, is limited to futures and conditionals. (It is not clear what Bickerton has in mind by "subjunctives" in the case of creoles.) Shepherd's 1981 study of Antiguan Creole focusses on modality in the broader sense of the word.
TABLE 1
Tense-Marking for States and Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>state verbs</th>
<th>event verbs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>non-past</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>ANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past-before-past</td>
<td>ANT</td>
</tr>
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ANT = Anterior AUX

*In Bickerton's system, non-past events would always display some other marking, either non-punctual or irrealis (or both).

In the system described by Bickerton, any two—or all three—of the preverbal AUX's may co-occur but only in the order anterior, irrealis, non-punctual.

A further point about the prototypical creole TAM system is that it is aspect-prominent rather than tense-prominent.² That is, aspect is held to be more central to the system; the position of the non-punctual AUX nearest to the verb is a manifestation of this. Also, aspect markers—rather than tense markers—show up on the surface more often in the languages that Bickerton has examined. Thus, in a table of 20 speakers from the Guyanese Creole basilect, Bickerton reports 732 occurrences of the non-punctual AUX but only 56 of the anterior

² The terms "aspect-prominent" and "tense-prominent" come from Salone (1979).

Though Bickerton does not discuss this in his 1975a article, he does in longer works, e.g. 1975b, 1977, and 1981.
AUX bin (plus 35 of the anterior-nonpunctual AUX bina) (1975b:25). In contrast to creoles, languages such as English and French are tense-prominent. That is, these languages focus more on the orientation of an event relative to the moment of speaking (tense) than on its "internal temporal constituency" (Comrie's definition of aspect (1976:3)).

Bickerton argues that the explanation for the cross-linguistic similarities in the creole TAM systems that he has observed, and hence the basis for the prototypical TAM system that he posits, lies in language universals. That is, regardless of the substratal languages that provided the input for the pidgin that a given creole developed from and regardless of the target language for that creole, the expansion through nativization, i.e. the process of creolization, relies critically on the bioprogram of the nativizing child-speakers, or, in other words, on language universals.4

Be that as it may, it is the case that the Niger-Congo languages spoken in Liberia—particularly Kru languages—possess TAM systems that bear a strong resemblance to the prototypical creole TAM system. (The same has been said of the TAM systems of the languages of the Kwa branch by Alleyne (1980) among others, the first to notice the strong parallels between a creole and a Kwa language being Sylvain (1936).)

3 "Basilect" is defined in 1.2 below.

4 The bioprogram explanation for the development of creoles is identified with Bickerton, particularly with Roots of Language. A parallel account of Creole origins, one that traces them ab ovo, is to be found in Cosgrove (1975).
The Kru languages are of special importance in the Liberian case since they can be said to have provided the principal source of substratal input to Liberian English during the period of its formation. At the same time, if the putative linguistic universals are truly universal, it is hardly surprising that natural languages would display characteristics that follow from these universals. In cases like this, i.e. where the substrate languages display the same characteristics as the prototypical creole system, it is difficult and not necessarily worthwhile to attempt to determine whether a given creole feature owes its origin more to the substrate than to language universals or vice versa.

1.1.2 The Kru TAM System

With regard to Kru languages, it is the semantic characteristics of a given language's TAM system much more than the system's syntactic manifestations that parallel the Bickerton prototype. This generalization applies to the entire Kru group of languages, as Marchese (1979b) makes clear.

To begin with, the state-event distinction is basic. For creoles Bickerton says that "the zero form marks simple past for action verbs and non-past for state verbs." For Kru languages Marchese uses the term "factative" to express this grouping. That is, the factative "always has two readings: a past punctiliar reading for action verbs and a present reading for stative verbs" (1979b:53). The term "factative" comes from Welmers (Welmers and Welmers 1968), Welmers
(1973)). He uses it originally with reference to the ụ suffix in the Kwa language Igbo. In most Eastern Kru languages, the factative is expressed by a low tone on the verb stem. In Western Kru languages and--Marchese argues--Proto-Kru, the factative is expressed by the bare verb stem (i.e. by Bickerton's "zero form"). Liberian Kru languages fall into this latter group.\(^5\)

The basic aspectual opposition in western Kru involves what Marchese calls the "incomplete." She defines it in this way: "The incomplete aspect . . . indicates an ongoing or durative action. It is also used in most Kru languages to express habitual or customary actions" (1979b:64-5). This definition is virtually identical to Bickerton's definition of non-punctual in the creole prototype.\(^6\) Moreover, just as state verbs in the creole prototype are ordinarily not marked for non-punctual, it is the case that state verbs in Kru are not marked for incomplete. Also, Marchese notes:

---

\(^5\) When references are made to properties of Liberian Kru languages, the languages in question are Klao, Bassa, Grebo, Dewoin, and Krahm. They are all Western Kru languages. The first four languages are spoken along the coast and--the first three in particular--can be hypothesized to have provided the major substratal input into Liberian English. All the languages except Dewoin are represented in the corpus as first languages of speakers included there. Not necessarily included in generalizations about Liberian Kru languages is Kuwaa (Belleh), a Kru isolate spoken by 5000 speakers in Lofa County. Its impact on Liberian English has been minimal at best.

\(^6\) Marchese points out that the collapsing of durative-ongoing with habitual-iterative into a single category, common in Kru languages, is by no means found everywhere in Niger-Congo. Welmers illustrates cases of the separate marking of the two with sentences from the Kwa languages Yoruba and Igbo and from the Liberian Mande language Kpelle (1973:345-6).
It must be noted that the incomplete aspect in Kru is not a present tense. It may, for example, co-occur with past tenses, indicating ongoing or habitual actions in the past. (1979b:65)

As Marchese's comment indicates, Kru languages do have past tenses. The anterior tense—expressing past for states and past-before-past for events—has no Kru analogue. While the factative unity of "a past punctiliar reading for action verbs and a present reading for stative verbs" is basic, past tenses that apply equally to states and events are also a part of the system, as examples of the Klao verb suffix -aka 'yesterday' illustrate:

Klao

1a. tɔ kɔ wli.
   have money
   'Toe has money.'

2a. tɔ dǐ kɔ-nà.
   eat rice-DEF
   'Toe ate the rice.'

1b. tɔ kɔ-aka wli.
   'Yesterday Toe had money.'

2b. tɔ dǐ-aka kɔ-nà.
   'Toe ate the rice yesterday.'

Past-tense suffixes are optional rather than obligatory. (At the same time, to make a state verb past there must be some overt indication of past time, either a suffix or a temporal adverb.)
With regard to irrealis, the creole prototype collapses futures and the consequent clause of conditionals into a single category. Kru languages do that as well. While there is more than one irrealis marker, the basis for choosing between them is not conditional versus future. Rather, in a case like Klaó, the selection is immediate irrealis (the AUX ḫī) versus general irrealis (the AUX mű).

In summary, Kru languages are like the creole prototype in observing a state-event distinction, in having a single major aspectual opposition, in being aspect-prominent rather than tense-prominent, and in collapsing conditionals and futures into the single category of irrealis. They differ from the creole prototype in using past tenses rather than an anterior one.

1.2 THE CREOLE CONTINUUM

In several countries, most often in the Caribbean, English-based creoles and English co-exist, the latter serving as the official language of the government. In such cases English is ordinarily the language of those who control economic, political, and social power.7 For that reason its acquisition is considered advantageous. As an examination of the TAM system of the creole prototype (outlined in 1.1.1 above) makes clear, English-based creoles differ profoundly from English. Moreover, in Jamaica, Guyana, and various other countries where both an English-based creole and English are spoken, there are

7 By English-based creole, I mean one whose lexicon is primarily English in origin. No further claim about the creole—about, for example, its syntax—is intended.
in addition to these two speech varieties any number of varieties that  
fall somewhere in between; that is, there are varieties that display a  
mixture of creole features and standard English features. Moreover,  
the distribution of creole and standard features is non-random. To  
begin with, a given speaker uses only a subset of available creole and  
standard forms.\footnote{Bickerton (1975b:196ff.) distinguishes between productive and  
receptive competence. The present work concentrates on productive  
competence.} Moreover, the case has been made that implicational  
relations exist. According to Day (1974:38), the notion of a  
linguistic continuum goes back to Reinecke's work in the 1930's on  
English-based speech varieties in Hawaii.\footnote{However, its widespread use  
as a formal construct and the linking of the notion of the continuum  
with implicational statements are due principally to DeCamp's 1971  
article, "Toward a generative analysis of a post-creole speech  
continuum." DeCamp presents six linguistic "rules" from Jamaican}  

With regard to receptive competence, Bickerton states:

\ldots most native Guyanese speakers, whatever their  
productive capacity, can process receptively virtually any  
variety within the continuum.

(1975b:196)

While the gist of the statement applies in Liberia as well, it must  
be tempered. A case of a basilectal speaker not understanding  
acrolectal forms is the exchange between Painter and Richard  
presented as example (39) in Chapter 3. The reverse--where  
acrolectal speakers do not understand basilectal forms--can be  
illustrated with the ambiguous dE \ldots we (< that \ldots with)  
construction presented in (a):

a. dE ma sesta we dE gE.

\text{Meaning One: 'That girl is my sister.'}
\text{Meaning Two: 'That's my sister with that (other) girl.'}
speech, three lexical, two phonological, and one morphosyntactic. Each involves the replacement of a creole feature by a standard one. Speakers were coded as to which of these rules they displayed. The results are presented in Table 2. For purposes of exposition, the actual table used in DeCamp (1971:355) has been replaced by a reformulation that appears in Rickford (1979:49).

(Table 2 here)

Rickford describes Table 2 thus:

a plus anywhere in the scale implies plusses below and to the right of it; a minus anywhere implies minusses above and to the left. More concretely, we can predict from the horizontal ordering of the decreolizing rules that any idiolect which has rule e will also have rule f, but if it lacks e, will also lack a and b which precede it in the series.

(1979:49)

The first reading is the basilectal reading (at least in Monrovia and western Liberia); the second reading is the acrolectal reading. Some acrolectal speakers, asked for possible readings of the sentence, give only the second one and state that they are unaware of the first. (The basilectal/acrolectal gap in this regard does not hold in the Cape Mount region. The construction's use spans a large part of the continuum there. The construction is apparently a calque from Vai; this would explain its greater currency in Cape Mount, the homeland of the Vai.)

The observation that speakers of Liberian English do not necessarily have receptive competence for all varieties of Liberian English is bolstered by Breitborde's statement with regard to New Krutown, a Monrovia neighborhood. Using the terminology of Hancock (1974), Breitborde identifies the speech of New Krutown residents as being "Non-Native Vernacular Liberian English," i.e. mesolectal Liberian English. He then notes that "residents sometimes reported situations where they had difficulty in understanding their pidgin-speaking relatives" (1977a:152-3).

* Reinecke, with characteristic modesty, refused to take credit for his innovation. Responding to Day's statement, he said:
TABLE 2

The Jamaican Continuum: An Implicational Order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speakers' Idiolects</th>
<th>RULES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(vi)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vii)</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key to rules
a: /d/-* /d-3/  d: nanny → granny
b: /t-3*/ /t-0/ e: no ben → didn't
c: pikni → child f: nyan → eat

DeCamp—in his 1971 article and subsequently—uses features from all components of the grammar. Other linguists, adopting and refining DeCamp’s model, have not. Rather, as Rickford notes: "the more usual practice now is to scale closely related items in a single area of the grammar (like the set of personal pronouns), or related environments of a single rule" (1979:52-3). The reason is simple: when this is done, the results make a stronger case for the viability of the model. The greater utility of the continuum model in narrow domains suggests that the continuum of change from most creole-like to most standard is not inexorable, not uniform, and not applicable everywhere in the

If I was indeed the first to use the term, I wish to disclaim all originality. The application of the word, which was well established in the social sciences, was suggested to me about 1934-35 by sociologist Prof. Romanzo Adams of the University of Hawaii.

(The Carrier Pidgin, Sept. 1981:9)
grammar at an even pace. Thus, the success of the continuum model in smaller domains makes two statements about deacreolization (since that is what the continuum is mapping): that there is an implicational regularity to deacreolization and that it applies to subsystems of a grammar rather than to the whole grammar at once.

Bickerton and Bailey, in particular, make use of the model proposed by DeCamp. It is Bickerton's 1975b study of tense-aspect in Guyanese that represents the fullest application of the continuum model. That work, in turn, is in many ways the model for the present work. As such, certain of the assumptions that underlie both Bickerton (1975b) and the present work should be made clear. To begin with, it accepts "The Vernacular Principle" of Labov:

> that the style which is most regular in its structure and in its relation to the evolution of language is the vernacular, in which the minimum attention is paid to speech.

(1972b:112)

Phrased another way, "the most systematic style, and therefore the most crucial for the development of linguistic theory, is the vernacular or unmonitored style" (Akers 1981:4; italics in the original). Moreover, for the framework being utilized in Bickerton's work and here, "the fundamental unit of analysis is the individual" rather than the speech community as a whole (Akers 1981:5).

Bickerton prefers to replace the term "post-creole continuum" with "creole continuum." In his work he uses terminology developed by Stewart (1965): that is, the continuum extends from basilect to acrolect, with the mesolect intervening between the two. The present
work follows Bickerton and Rickford (1979) in their use of these terms. That is,

... the term *acrolect* will be used to refer to the standard language pole of the continuum, *basilect* to the furthest-from-standard pole of the continuum, and *mesolect* to intermediate varieties.\(^{10}\)  

_Bickerton calls his 1975b work _Dynamics of a creole system_. How is Bickerton's use of terms like "dynamics" and "variation" reconciled with the static TAM system that his 1975a article proposes? The answer is that the TAM system is an idealization and, more importantly, that it represents the basilectal extreme. Thus, in the Guyanese case, the Standard English TAM system is the acrolect and, with some adjustment owing to historical change, the Guyanese instantiation of the creole prototype outlined in 1.1.1 is the basilect. What Bickerton does in his 1975b work is to show how systems that are intermediate between the two arrange themselves on a continuum. That is, he details the changes that take place in TAM systems in this shift from basilect to acrolect and identifies the principles that underlie these changes. Where relevant, specifics from his account are cited in this and subsequent chapters.\(^{11}\)

\(^{10}\) As Rickford's definitions make explicit, the basilect and acrolect refer--strictly speaking--to extremes, with the mesolect everything that falls between. In practice, the present work (like most others using this terminology) is somewhat more relaxed and will use "acrolect" and--especially--"basilect" to refer to the ranges rather than the poles at either end.

\(^{11}\) Sankoff, in a review of Bickerton (1975b), points up several problems with his treatment of the data:
1.3 LIBERIAN ENGLISH

In the section that follows, the Liberian linguistic situation is presented, with a brief introduction to the Niger-Congo languages spoken in Liberia, followed by a more detailed history of Liberian English and by a discussion of its contemporary status. It will then be possible to address the question of the validity of trying to apply a model of a creole prototype and the concept of the creole continuum to a speech variety that may or may not be a creole.

In Bickerton's book the data are often treated in an irregular, even cavalier fashion. The issue here is not the broader theoretical debate about variability. Rather, the methodological questions involved are somewhat more prosaic, having to do with the accountability of a description (or of a theory) to the data on which it is based. An examination of his tables and figures shows that many of them contain discrepancies, a weakness which may be due to some combination of faulty editing, printing errors and careless proofreading.

(1977:296)

She adds:

The kinds of discrepancies and omissions I have noted here are too pervasive not to be disquieting, yet somehow they detract very little from the value and power of the work. . . . For in its bold statements of general hypotheses, the book has many strengths that far surpass its weaknesses.

(1977:298)

Sankoff notes further, however:
1.3.1 Liberia's Niger-Congo Languages

With the exception of Liberian English, the languages indigenous to Liberia come from three branches of Niger-Congo: Kru, Mande, and West Atlantic.\textsuperscript{12} These languages, and their relation to one another and to the rest of Niger-Congo, is shown in Figure 1.

(Figure 1 here)

Greenberg (1963) places Kru within the Kwa branch; however, subsequent studies of the classification of Kru have all removed it from Kwa.\textsuperscript{13} Each of the four major Kru languages (Kla, Bassa, Grebo, and Krahn) is better thought of as a dialect cluster--or perhaps as a cover term for a group of languages. The most extreme case by far is Grebo. Ingemann and Duistsman (1977) report on their dialect study of Grebo.

By Swadesh's criterion that speech varieties must display a cognate

Most of the detailed criticism I have given here has been based on a view of accountability to data which is at variance with Bickerton's. His analysis was based on the quarter of a million word corpus (approximately thirty hours of recorded speech) described in Appendices 1 and 2, yet it is clear that his approach involved using these data selectively and illustratively, rather than checking each of his general hypotheses exhaustively, against all of his recorded data.

(1977:298-9)

\textsuperscript{12} I have not included as Liberian languages either the Kwa language Fante or the West Atlantic language Fula. Fante speakers have come to Liberia from their homes in Ghana to engage in fishing. A large-scale Fulani emigration from Guinea, especially in the mid-1970's, is responsible for the current Fulani population in Liberia.

Welmers argues that the oldest division within Niger-Congo is the separation of Mande from the rest of Niger-Congo (1973:17). Greenberg concurs and suggests that the second oldest division is the separation of West Atlantic from the others (1963:39n).
Figure 1: Liberia's Niger-Congo Languages

Branches of Niger-Kordofanian
   Niger-Congo
   Kordofanian

   Branches of Niger-Congo
      Mande
      West Atlantic
      Adamawa Eastern
      Benue-Congo
      Kwa
      Gur
      Kru

   Liberian Mande Languages
      Western
         Northern
            Vai
            Māniyakā
         Southwestern
            Mende
            Bandi
            Loma
            Kpelle
      Eastern
         Gio
         Mano

   Liberian Kru Languages
      Western
         Grebo
         Klaa
         Krahn
         Bassa
         Dewoin
      Isolate
         Kuwa (Belleh)

   Liberian West Atlantic Languages
      Southern
         Kisi
         Gola
rate of 81 percent or better to be considered dialects of the same language, there are eleven Grebo languages. Three of these are dialect clusters, one with nine dialects (Ingemann and Duitsman 1977:124-5). Indeed, the mutual intelligibility of all dialects within any one of Liberia's four major Kru "languages" cannot be assumed.

A map of the distribution of Liberian linguistic/ethnic groups—excluding the Settlers—is given in Figure 2. It should be noted that Figure 2 represents a considerable oversimplification of actual distribution of Liberian ethnic and linguistic groups. The map suggests that such groups form discrete geographic units. In fact, this is rarely so. The pattern throughout Liberia is one of ethnic and linguistic mix. A given region is likely to have two or three principal ethnic groups and languages rather than one.

(Figure 2 here)

12 Greenberg states: "The affiliation of Kru . . . to the Kwa group is to be considered tentative" (1963:39n). Vogler (1974) suggests a link for Kru with Mande and Voltaic languages, and Bennett and Sterk (1977) suggest that Kru and Gur (Voltaic) form a subgroup within Niger-Kordofanian. Welmers (1977) does not link Kru to any other branch of Niger-Kordofanian but does separate it from Kwa. While those linguists who study Kru languages have not reached agreement as to the precise place of Kru within Niger-Congo, they do seem agreed in placing it apart from Kwa. As Marchese (1979a) states:

Pour le moment, le problème de la classification reste irrésolu, mais il est fortement probable que les langues kru constituent une branche indépendante à l'intérieur de la famille Niger-Kordofanienne ou si cette autonomie ne leur est pas entièrement reconnue, il semble alors qu'il faille plutôt les apprênter à certaines langues non-kwa.

(1979a:1-2)
Figure 2: The Distribution of Liberia's Niger-Congo Languages

1 = KISI
2 = MENDE
3 = MĀNIYAKĀ
4 = DEWOIN
5 = Mixed (Monrovia area)

The more established "Liberian Mandingoes" and the more numerous twentieth-century Mandingo emigrants from Guinea are treated as speaking a single language, Māniyakā, in the present discussion. There are large communities of the latter group along the interior border from the Bandi region across to the Krahn region. Also, there are Klaō fishing communities ("Krutowns") all along the coast.

adapted from von Gnielinski (1972:39)
The Settlers are the descendants of nineteenth-century immigrants from the New World; their communities are on and near the coast. Numerically, Mande speakers form the largest group in Liberia, with Kru not far behind. Thus, the 1962 Liberian census lists 512,523 members of Mande ethnic groups, 387,089 members of Kru ethnic groups, and 82,209 members of West Atlantic ethnic groups; the figure of 23,478 with "no tribal affiliation" presumably refers to Settlers. (These figures are taken from Liebenow (1969:32).) While the Mande population is larger than the Kru population, it is the Kru languages that have played the predominant role in the development of Liberian English. There are two reasons for this. One is the Kru custom, dating from the late eighteenth century, of working on ships that plied the West African coast. This factor is discussed in 1.3.3.2 below. The second factor involves geography. Even if all the Kru had stayed at home, they would still have been expected to dominate the development of Liberian English. Like the European-based speech varieties of other West African countries, Liberian English developed on the coast, and the coast "belongs" to the Kru. Of the languages shown in Figure 2 as being spoken on the Liberian coast, only Vai is not a Kru language.\(^{14}\)

\(^{14}\) Within the Vai-speaking area, the only major town on the coast is Robertsport, and much of Robertsport's coast is taken up by the Krutown and Bassa Community neighborhoods.
1.3.2 The History of Liberian English: Introduction

(Maps containing the place names referred to in this section are given in Figures 3 and 4.)

(Figures 3 and 4 here)

The modern state of Liberia dates from 1822, the year of the first settlement within its territory by blacks from the United States. The colonists spoke a variety of English, but so, too, did some of the people whom they met upon their arrival. A history of Liberian English goes back much further than 1822. The one to be presented here is divided into the events before and after that year. The first part looks at the events that led to the development of the variety of English that the Settlers encountered upon their arrival. Specifically, the development of first a Pidgin Portuguese and then a Pidgin English along the west coast of Africa is considered. The founding of Sierra Leone and the development of Sierra Leonean Krio are presented in some detail, because of their significance for the development of a Liberian English and also because a comparison of language developments in the two countries is instructive. Finally, the role of the Kru in the establishment of a coastal pidgin in the pre-Settler era is outlined.

As for Liberia's history in the post-1822 era, first the circumstances that led to the colonization of Liberia and the character of the colonists are presented, followed by a history of relations between Settlers and members of the indigenous ethnic groups—with special attention being paid throughout to the linguistic consequences.

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Figure 3: West Africa: The Grain and Upper Guinea Coasts
Figure 4: The Grain Coast
1.3.3 The History of Liberian English: 1460-1822

1.3.3.1 Pidgin Portuguese

To begin with, in West Africa prior to the visits of Portuguese navigators, the coast was seen as the end of the world, not the beginning. The political and economic centers of the western half of West Africa were the empires of the Sahel. Trade routes extended from them to the kola-rich rain forests of what is now Liberia. If a trade language developed along these routes, its target language would presumably have been the language of the traders, Bambara-Malinke-Dyula (BMD). (The word dyula itself means 'merchant, trader' in BMD.) Though the commodities involved have changed, trade between the western Sahel and Liberia has continued to the present, and BMD traders continue to man it. Still, with the coming of the Portuguese and other European navigators and traders, the focus of West African commerce shifted to the coast.

A Pidgin Portuguese came into use perhaps as early as the late fifteenth century. Subsequently—in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century—Pidgin Portuguese was supplanted by Pidgin English in West Africa. Certain social aspects of these two speech varieties are especially relevant to the present work. The most important of these is the "domestication" of each. The principal study of the social circumstances attending the use of these two varieties in the

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15 Naro (1978) argues that the Pidgin Portuguese spoken in West Africa had actually originated among Africans in Portugal and then been carried to West Africa. Goodman (1982) presents evidence that argues against Naro's claim.
period from 1550 to 1800 is Tonkin (1971a). It should be noted that Tonkin eschews the distinction between "pidgin" and "creole," arguing that it is "irrelevant" (1971a:192). In discussing the way in which the Portuguese created a maritime empire, she comments:

The Portuguese established fortified factories, and they often expected to spend their lives abroad. Consequently we find them not only 'alternately fighting, trading and fornicating with the local inhabitants', (Boxer 1961:35), but also settling down and raising families. The Portuguese settlements, with their half-caste populations, and equally déraciné natives, were presumably the nurturing places of pidginised Portuguese, which often survived long after the decline of Portuguese power.

(1971a:177)

In West Africa, the Portuguese colonized the Cape Verde islands from the 1460's onward. According to Tonkin:

... Santiago ('St. Jago' in English accounts) became an entrepôt for the mainland and for metropolitan trade. Slaves were brought from the mainland, and with the years Caboverdians made their way across to set up as independent traders, reaching as far as Sierra Leone.

(1971a:212-3)

Rodney (1970) cites a contemporary source who placed the population of Santiago and the neighboring island Fogo at "1,608 whites, 400 freed slaves, and 13,700 slaves," the slaves being used primarily in agriculture (1970:72). The picture that emerges is of trading posts comprised at first of Portuguese men and African women and their children. Such communities were the centers from which Pidgin Portuguese spread. It was used by middlemen and interpreters all along the coast, many of them being "Black Portuguese" from these settlements. Tonkin states:

... although the necessities of trade gave some vocabulary items to Pidgin, it developed as a language amongst the resident traders and their half African families.

(1971a:218)
Tonkin comments further:

In West Africa, . . . pidgins could often be called 'father-tongues': they must have survived in co-existence with the vernacular language, which was spoken with mothers' kin.

(1971a:192)

Tonkin's comments are reinforced by those of Rodney, who notes that "numerically, mulattoes came to outstrip their white fathers" (1970:202). This obtained, Rodney says,

. . . not only by natural increase, but because the flow of metropolitan Portuguese to . . . [Africa] was not heavy during the seventeenth century.

(1970:202)

Moreover, Rodney states:

While the Afro-Portuguese community right until the end of the eighteenth century comprised a few whites and many blacks, the mulattoes gave it leadership and character. Some lançados [renegade traders] and their descendants completely accepted African customs, down to the details of tribal tattoos; but generally racial admixture was matched by cultural hybridization. Most mulattoes clung to certain peculiarities of language, dress, and religion to identify themselves outwardly as a community with a different heritage and a different social purpose from the mass of the Africans. The language was 'Creole Portuguese', which was useful both as a link with the Portuguese patrimony and because of its function in matters of trade. The Afro-Portuguese acted as interpreters, and carried out all the tasks of middlemen in coastal trade, from acting as pilots on the rivers to serving as commercial advisers to the local ruling class.

(1970:203)

1.3.3.2 Pidgin English

How Pidgin English came to supplant Pidgin Portuguese is a matter of conjecture. Tonkin constructs a plausible scenario in which the two
co-existed, Pidgin English finally prevailing after Portuguese
fortunes had waned and England had established itself as the pre-
eminent commercial power along the coast. (The sway of European
languages—in whatever variety—can be assumed to have been strongest
in the environs of European forts and trading-posts, e.g. the Gold
Coast.) Hancock (1972) provides a different explanation. After
discussing the role of the Portuguese lancados and their presence in
Cape Verde and elsewhere, he states:

Although no documentation has yet come to light indicating
that the situation of the British sailors was similar during
the early 1600's, i.e. that there were English-speaking
equivalents of the Lansados, it would be most surprising if
it were not so; members of the buccaneering communities not
anxious to return to British waters, press-ganged criminals
and ordinary citizens, traders, British-born Blacks and
sailors simply attracted to African life, could all have
contributed to such communities.16

(1972:7; italics in the original)

However appealing Hancock's theory may be, it has—as he
acknowledges—no documentation.

The discussion thus far has been in reference to the West African
coast in general. Evidence will now be considered that is specific to
the area that subsequently became Liberia. Capes at either end of
modern Liberia were landmarks to early navigators. At the
northeastern end is Cape Mount. (As its name implies, its most
prominent feature is a high hill near the end of the cape.) At the
southwestern end is Cape Palmas. The region between comprised part or

16 Hancock cites evidence from Priestley (1969) that establishes that
English communities of this sort were to be found in West Africa in
the eighteenth century. The question is whether they existed in
the seventeenth century as well.
all (depending on the writer) of the Grain Coast, also called the Malagueta Coast because of the grains of malagueta pepper exported from this region. According to Tonkin:

The Grain Coast seems never to have had either important trade forts/entrepôts or substantial slave trade but was always served by callers offshore and in the eighteenth century by "little ships" from, for example, the Gold Coast. (p.c.)

The region, Tonkin suggests, "was primarily important as a provisioner--of water, firewood and above all rice" (p.c.).

Travellers' accounts of the region, published in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, provide piecemeal information as to the linguistic aspects of trade along the Grain Coast. Villault (1670), describing his 1666 and 1667 journeys to the region, catalogues the settlements he visited along the Grain Coast. Among his comments are

Whatever perils the travellers may have encountered, Hair (1974) makes clear that a new set of perils awaits the contemporary scholar who would use these sources. Jean Barbot's widely cited account of the Guinea Coast (including contemporary Liberia) was published in English in 1732. Hair, looking closely at the description of Sierra Leone in Barbot's volume, finds it to be a mixture of a work by Olfert Dapper (published in 1668 in Dutch) and Barbot's own firsthand observations from a 1678 voyage. Dapper himself had borrowed from Pierre Davity (published in French in 1643, 1660). The chain goes back further:

Most of the information on Sierra Leone in Davity/Dapper which is attributed to du Jarric [(1608-1614)] came from Almada [written in the 1590's, published in 1733]. Thus, information in Dapper (1668) which he usually quotes without dating, sometimes as if it were contemporary, was in fact collected as much as a century earlier (1560s-1580s).

(1974:39)

Much of Barbot's account, then, describes the region as it was 150 years previous to the date of publication of his work.
the following:

Of Cap de Monte (Cape Mount): "The inhabitants are generally handsome, good natured, tractible, and speak a kind of corrupt Portugais." [With reference to one of the king's daughters-in-law:] "... she answered me in French, Monsieur je vous remercie, and told me afterwards in Portugais, that her Husbands Father had lived always amongst the French, when they were in those parts." (p. 65-66)

Of Cap Miserado (Cape Mesurado): "They all of them spake Portugais." (p. 73)

Of Rio Sestos (River Cess): "The people are generally well proportioned, and bearing every one of them the name of some Saint or other..." (pp. 83-84)

Of Rio Sanguin: "... the Kings Brother, who having been three years in Holland, spake very good Dutch." (p. 88)

Of Grand Sestre (Grand Cess), "called formerly by the French Paris": "... that little language they speak intelligibly is French: They call not Pepper Sextos with the Portugais, nor Grain with the Hollander, but Malaguette with us, and if a Vessel at any time comes in, they cry out as loud as they can, Malaguette tout plein, tout plein, tant a terre de Malaguette, which is French they learned from us, and nothing else." (pp. 101-102; italics in the original throughout)

The accounts on which I have relied--those of Villaut, Snoek/Bosman, and Smith--are, as far as I know, all considered to be first-hand accounts. While the original version of Villaut was written in French and of Snoek/Bosman in Dutch, the editions available to me were translations into English by contemporaries of the authors. As van Dantzig (1974) makes clear with reference to Snoek/Bosman, working with a translation rather than with the original presents problems of its own.

18 Villaut says that the people of the Cap de Monte region did not live on the coast; the king, who lived three days' journey from the sea, came to the coast upon the arrival of the ship that Villaut was on.

19 Davis (1976) questions the applicability of Villaut's account to Grand Cess (Grand Sestre), suggesting that Villaut has confused Rio Sestos and Grand Sestre.
While no European language seems to have predominated in the region at the time of Villault's visits there, the English had emerged as the leading traders in the region. Speaking of this portion of the West African coast, Villault says:

... the English, who by means of seven or eight houses, doe carry away as it were the whole profits of the place. (1670:88; italics in the original)

(It is not clear the extent of the coast to which Villault's statement is meant to apply. Of the settlements referred to on the Grain Coast, Villault notes an English settlement near Cap Miserado and recently abandoned English settlements near Rio Sestos and Rio Sanguin.) With reference to a slightly later period, John Snoek describes a stop in Boffoe (Bafu), near Sanguin:

Here a Negro came on Board, who called himself James ... he spoke a confused sort of Language, being a mixed Jargon of English and Portuguese. (Bosman 1705:484; italics in the original)

(Snoek's 1702 account, "A Description of the Tooth and Grain Coast," appears as a chapter in Bosman (1705).) Also, William Smith describes an encounter in 1726 at Cetta Crue (Settra Kru):

... we anchor'd before the Town in Sixteen Fathom Water. We had scarce lain there an Hour before a Canoe came off to us, and we ask'd one of the Fellows, who spoke a little English, if they had any Goats, Hogs, or Hens ashoar? And he answer'd us after his Way, that they had too much Goats, too much Hogs and Hens. (1744:107; italics in the original)

The comments from Snoek and Smith suggest the existence of at least some speakers of Pidgin English along the Grain Coast. Presumably, during the eighteenth century, the increased slave trade and--with
it—the increased use of the Grain Coast as a source of wood, water, and rice led to a greater pidgin presence in the region. Immediately adjacent to the Grain Coast, in the Galinhas region (the corner of modern Sierra Leone closest to Cape Mount and Liberia), the English were prominent. According to Jones:

In the Galinhas country slaves were sold by white men, mulattoes and Africans: Galinhas thus marked the point of overlap between the Sierra Leone region, where white and mulatto traders played a dominant role in the export trade, and the Grain and Ivory Coasts (Curtin's "Windward Coast"), where trade was exclusively in African (or occasionally mulatto) hands.

(1983:27)

Speaking of the Mano River (the modern boundary between Liberia and Sierra Leone), Jones states:

In the early 1750s the export trade of the Galinhas country seems to have been dominated by people on the Mano River. . . . These included Jemmy Corker (the mulatto son or grandson of a former Sherbro Agent of the Royal African Company), Jemmy Cole (an African or, conceivably, a mulatto) and Thomas Brian, an Englishman.

(1983:28)

Jones reports further that:

By the early 1820s about fifteen white men—"the drags of France, Spain and America", as a British officer called them—lived simply at Galinhas. The majority were in fact British or American and were known simply as Tom or Bill in order to conceal their real names.

(1983:42)

28 Curtin estimates that 9,566,000 million slaves were imported into the New World in the period from 1451-1870. He estimates that more than 60 percent of that number were imported during the eighteenth century (1969:268).
Increased commercial activity both along and adjacent to the Grain Coast undoubtedly aided in bringing pidgin--by this time, Pidgin English--to this stretch of land; so, too, did the rise, sometime late in the eighteenth century, of the "Kru sailors." However Pidgin English had come into being and however it had come to predominate along the West African coast, in the eighteenth century its uses had expanded.

The volume of trade was increasing, and therefore the need for skilled local labour--to maintain the forts, handle the slaves for export, and man the sloops, shallopns and yachts that were used extensively for trading away from the main bases.

(Tonkin 1971a:231)

In this situation, Klao speakers took to working for Europeans, serving as ships' crews, as middlemen and interpreters, and in a variety of functions.21 In the nineteenth century, such was the range of their functions and travels that Tonkin comments of the Kru sailors:

21 I hesitate to use the term "ethnic group" to refer to Klao speakers of earlier eras. The circumstances that led to the development of a sense of ethnicity among the Klao are discussed in McEvoy (1977), Breitborde (1977a, 1977b), and Tonkin (1978, 1984). In their own language, the Klao call themselves "Klao." and their language "klao-win." In English--both in Liberia and in most of the scholarly literature--the people and their language are called "Kru." I have called the people "Klao" to avoid the ambiguity that exists in the literature between references to them alone and references to all of the sailors from the region regardless of ethnic affiliation or first language. (The term "Krumen" is discussed in 1.3.3.3 below.) Similarly, I have called the language "Klao" to avoid the ambiguity that exists between this one language (or dialect cluster) and the entire language group. This use of "Klao" for the language and "Kru" for the language group was a solution agreed to by participants in the First International Symposium on Kru Languages held in Abidjan in 1979.
They must have been important diffusers and standardizers of Pidgin English, for their employers included slavers, traders, explorers, and the English Navy, and they worked for them even as far as South Africa. African pidgin-speakers such as these became the main agents of language transmission. . . .

(1971b:143)

What has been suggested thus far has been that first Pidgin Portuguese and then Pidgin English developed along the West African coast, that each had not simply a commercial foundation but also a domestic one, and that the rise of the Kru sailors had the effect of "standardizing" the Pidgin English of West Africa. While the standardization of pidgin--at least that accomplished by Kru sailors--may not have antedated the founding of Freetown and Monrovia, it is still the case that an English-based speech variety was present along the West African coast considerably before either of these settlements came into being.

1.3.3.3 The Role of Freetown

At the end of the eighteenth century, the British established the Sierra Leone Colony. Those who settled there were from three groups: the "Black Poor" of London, the Nova Scotian blacks, and Maroons from Jamaica. The Black Poor had come first; they were 400 people who had arrived on the Sierra Leone peninsula in 1787. Most of them died within a year, and only fifty or so were on hand when the Nova Scotians arrived in 1792. These new arrivals were
... ex-slaves from the United States who had fought for the British during the American War for Independence and had been relocated in Nova Scotia after the termination of hostilities. In Nova Scotia they had found the climate unsuitable and the land grants promised them largely unattainable ...

(Spitzer 1974:10)

Over 1100 of them in sixteen vessels arrived in Freetown in 1792. Finally,

[t]hey were all joined in 1800 by more than five hundred Maroons--slaves who had revolted against their masters in Jamaica, run off to live an independent existence in the hills for a number of years, and finally been defeated and forcibly removed to Nova Scotia by the British.. But there they, too, brooded over the cold climate and broken promises of land grants until ...

(arrangements were made) to transport and settle them in Freetown. 

(Spitzer 1974:10)

In 1807 the British Parliament enacted legislation that made it illegal for British subjects to trade in slaves. Another bill that was enacted that same year designated Freetown "the seat of a Vice-Admiralty Court where recaptured slaves could be adjudicated" (Fyfe 1962:98). The first of the captured slave ships was brought to Sierra Leone in 1808. By 1811, 1000 of the recaptured slaves, called Liberated Africans, had been landed there; by 1830, over 30,000 (Fyfe 1962:114,183). The melding of the Liberated Africans with the Nova Scotians and the Maroons gave rise to the ethnic group known as the Creoles of Sierra Leone.

The scholarly literature on Krio, the language of the Creoles, has contained an ongoing debate as to the origins of the language. A popular--and oft-repeated--hypothesis is that expressed in Berry and Ross: "The basis of Krio is, no doubt, the Jamaican dialect of the
Maroons" (1962:4, quoted in Hancock (1981:248)). Hancock (1981) argues against that explanation, arguing that such an account incorrectly ignores both the Pidgin (or Creole) English that already existed along the West African coast prior to the founding of Freetown and the creolization that occurred with the arrival of thousands of Liberated Africans. While an English-based pidgin/creole was spoken in the Sierra Leone region before the arrival of the Settlers and while the Maroons were probably speakers of a pidgin/creole speech variety, surely the most important phase of the development of Krio was the creolization (or re-creolization) that occurred with the wave upon wave of Liberated Africans who washed ashore in Freetown. For, even with a high mortality rate (a consequence, in part, of the unsanitary conditions aboard slave ships), the Liberated Africans utterly overwhelmed the previous Settlers numerically. Thus, whatever the character of English-based speech in Freetown prior to 1808, the influx of Liberated Africans that began then must have made early nineteenth-century Freetown the "classical" site for creolization (see Bickerton's definition, presented in 1.1.1 above).

In the classification of the elements of Freetown's population, it is not clear where the Nova Scotians and the Maroons belong. (The surviving "Black Poor" were so few in number that their contribution to the creolization process had to have been negligible.) Some of them must have been native speakers, either of English or of an English-based creole. (The distinction between English and an English-based creole would have had limited meaning to those who spoke
neither, i.e. to the arriving Liberated Africans.) Whatever the prevailing type of English in Freetown and however few Nova Scotians or Maroons spoke some form of English as a first language, it would still be the case that the Nova Scotians and Maroons as a whole would be more proficient in English—or English creole—than the newly arrived Liberated Africans.

In fact, if Bickerton's criteria are valid, the status of the Nova Scotians and Maroons ought not to be particularly important. The Liberated Africans by themselves formed more than 80 percent of the population, and the creolization significant for the development of Krio would have been that which occurred in Freetown in the speech of this large group rather than which might have occurred earlier in the New World and then come to Freetown in the speech of a proportionately quite small number of Nova Scotians or Maroons.

The histories of the groups who settled in Monrovia and those who settled in Freetown display many similarities. But it is parallels rather than intersections that characterize their history. For the most part, the two developed independently of each other. There are two reasons why the founding of Sierra Leone is relevant to a discussion of the history of Liberian English. One, to be taken up below, is that a comparison of Sierra Leonean Krio to Liberian English is instructive, particularly as to reasons why the evolutions of two linguistic communities with so many factors in common should yield significantly different results.
The second involves the Kru. The Nova Scotians had arrived in Freetown in 1792; the Kru were there a year later (Fyfe 1962:78). A quarter of a century after that,

... there were over 500 Kru in Freetown in 1819 and another 200 working at the timber factories up the river. A few were also settled on the beach south of Cape Sierra Leone where they lived by fishing.

(Fyfe 1962:135)

The Kru came to Freetown so as to be taken on there by European ships heading down the coast. But with Freetown, they also began a pattern of settling in cities along the West African coast, working as stevedores, plantation workers, and stewards. As the "Krumen's" range of occupations expanded, so did the diversity of their ethnic backgrounds. The original "Kru sailors," discussed in 1.3.3.2, were drawn from Klao-speaking communities. However, Martin reports that, in the nineteenth century, the growing "Kru" labor force was

... recruited from among the Kru [Klao] and Glebo of Grand Cess, the Glebo living in the towns around Cape Palmas, the Bapo [speakers of a language now called "Kroumen"], Glebo and other peoples in and near Tabou now in the Ivory Coast and, by the turn of the century, from Kru [Klao] of Sasstown. Later, Nyambo peoples, Sabo [Krahm] and others from the near and far interior as well as Gola and Vai from western Liberia began to engage in migrant labor and were also called Krooboys.²²

(1982:1)

²² The Krumen travelled far from home. They crossed the Atlantic to work in the West Indies and on de Lesseps's attempt to build the Panama Canal (Martin 1982:4; Kuhn 1975). Within Africa they worked as far south as South Africa and inland up the Congo and Ubangi Rivers to Bangui, the capital of Ubangi-Shari (Central African Republic) (William Samarim, p.c.).

In the mid-nineteenth century, Liberia extended east to the San Pedro River, but such was the value of Kru sailors to the Europeans that French shippers--anxious to have access to "les kroumen" without having to go through Liberian officials--prevailed upon the
Martin states that, by the end of the nineteenth century, the largest group of Krumen worked in Nigeria. By the end of the First World War, the Gold Coast had replaced Nigeria as the primary venue of Kru labor. There continued to be sizable communities in Lagos (and Freetown).

A pattern that emerged in the eighteenth century prevailed almost to the present day. An individual Krumen would grow up in a monolingual Klaò (or Grebo or Kroumen) village. At the age of fifteen or so, he would join a work group (under the leadership of a headman). The group would then work on a ship or would go elsewhere in West Africa—to work as stevedores, to work on plantations, or to do some other type of manual labor. 22 (From an examination of Kru labor in the Gold Coast, the picture emerges of the Kru doing the jobs that the local people considered beneath them.) Then, after a few years, the group would return home. Each man would give part of his earnings to his parents and his elders (and would often use part of the remainder to pay a dowry for a wife). After a few years at home, a Krumen would enlist in a work group again and repeat the procedure. This would continue until he was forty-five or fifty; then he would return home and wait to receive his share of the earnings of younger men when they returned home.

22 Though this pattern of group labor seems to have been prevalent, it was possible to be a "Krumen" without being a part of a work gang.

French government to seize the land between the Cavalla and the San Pedro River.
1.3.3.4 Pidgin in Nineteenth-Century Liberia

As suggested above, a variety of Pidgin English existed before the Settlers arrived. Early reports from an official of the American Colonization Society (ACS), the organization supervising the colony, give an idea of how extensive use of Pidgin English was. Moreover, early Settler newspapers contain brief examples of the pidgin. The comments come from Jehudi Ashmun, and a caveat in assessing them is in order. Ashmun was the ACS agent who ran the Liberian colony from 1822 to 1828; it was very much to the advantage of Ashmun and the ACS for him to emphasize the extensive use of a form of English, in recruiting both missionaries and colonists. According to Ashmun:

A . . . facility which few pagan tribes [elsewhere] offer to the American Missionary, is to be found in the circumstance, that every head man around us, and hundreds of their people speak, and can be made to understand our language without an interpreter.

(quoted in Gurley 1835: Appendix, p. 30)

At another time, Ashmun wrote that "very many in all the maritime tribes, speak a corruption of the English language" (African Repository, Nov. 1827:263).

Illustrations of the pidgin--as spoken in the 1830's--appear in the Settlers' newspaper, the Liberian Herald. In 1834 King Jo Harris, a Bassa chief, is quoted as saying:

I savey: you man for governor, tell governor, him send one punch rum for dash we (meaning kings) top, tell him send two punch, one for me King Jo Harris, me one, and tother for dash all country gentlemen.

(Liberia Herald, quoted in African Repository, 1834, 10:123-124; parenthetical assistance in the original)
Another example of the pidgin, taken from an 1836 issue of the Herald, is the following monologue attributed to "Ynamby, a Mandingo who destroyed a De town belonging to King Softly":

... now pose war done, what I go do for git money? I can git slave for work my farm? I can git plenty oomon (women)? Pose no war, I must put kinjar (a kind of wicker basket) my back all same slave. I get plenty oomon: ebery time I send all my friend, I say here you wife...  

(Liberia Herald, April 15, 1836; parenthetical assistance in the original)

1.3.4 The History of Liberian English: 1822 Onward

1.3.4.1 The American Colonization Society

In the United States in the early nineteenth century, the opinion that blacks would never be granted the full privileges of citizenship or equality with whites led to the founding of the American Colonization Society (ACS) in 1816. Its purpose was to find a home in Africa for freed American blacks, a place where they could enjoy the blessings of liberty at the same time they would implant Christianity and Western civilization on African soil. Bringing this vision to reality required great financial resources. Much of the money for the scheme came from Southern slaveowners who felt that the presence of freed blacks in the United States threatened the status quo.

Agents of the ACS and a U.S. naval lieutenant negotiated with the local chiefs of the Cape Mesurado region, and in 1822 the ACS and American blacks established the settlement that ultimately came to be

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*24 Much of the discussion in this section is taken from Singler (1976, 1977a).*
known as Monrovia (in honor of American President James Monroe, a friend of the ACS). In the first two decades, 4571 American blacks immigrated to Liberia. However, the ACS was unsuccessful in winning widespread support among freed blacks. American abolitionists, noting the support of Southern slaveholders for the ACS, campaigned vigorously among blacks to convince them that the colonization scheme was nothing more than a ruse by slaveowners to rid themselves and the country of those blacks who might speak out against the institution of slavery. American blacks, who had long been told that they ought to be grateful for their rescue from the depredations of Africa, were ill-disposed towards the colonization scheme from the outset. Moreover, the mortality rate among those who did immigrate was, in Shick's words, "shockingly high" (1980:27). Although 4571 had immigrated to Liberia in the period up to 1843, the 1843 Liberian census lists only 2388 residents (Shick 1980:24).

The ACS's ideal Settler would have come from the class of freed blacks who were self-sufficient, ambitious, and had some Western education. But the abolitionists' campaign against Liberia and the reports of alarming conditions there had the greatest impact on those whom the ACS most wished to attract. At the same time, while the slaveowners were particularly alarmed by the growing number of free blacks, they were also distressed by the burgeoning black population in general. They feared that the presence of too many blacks endangered the slave system. Accordingly, many of the owners included in their wills provision for the manumission of their slaves on condition that the slaves would go to Liberia.

41
The educational level of most of those who arrived was extremely low. Not one of the colonists who arrived in the first few years had had even a "plain English education" (Family Visitory, quoted in African Repository, Oct. 1825:236). A colonist's comment in 1854 showed that the pattern had changed little if any: with regard to the American emigrants, he states:

Men of means . . . [are] exceptions . . . to the common rule, that is the no money, no A.B.C. men, that come directly from the plantation &c. &c.  
(Liberia Herald, Aug. 2, 1854)

The background of the Settlers gives support to Hancock's characterization of their speech as a "vestigial creole" (1971b:518). They came primarily from the Middle Atlantic states and the South, and most were presumably speakers of basilectal and lower mesolectal varieties of (nineteenth century) Black English.

Schools were set up in Liberia for Settler children, but the shortage of trained teachers and textbooks was chronic. Newly arrived Settlers were entitled to a six-month settling-in allowance. (It was felt that strenuous labor during the acclimation period made one susceptible to "the African fever.") Once the ACS had paid out these allowances and had taken care of basic expenses, there was little money left for education.

This discussion of the Settlers has focused on the overwhelming majority of them. This is not to say that there were no educated settlers at all. There was, indeed, a Settler intelligentsia, however small.\textsuperscript{25} They were the ones who made statements like the one below,
taken from Alexander Crummell's 1860 Independence Day Oration in Harper, a settlement in the Cape Palmas region:

Here, on this coast . . . is an organized community, republican in form and name; a people possessed of Christian institutions and civilized habits, with this one marked peculiarity, that is, that in color, race, and origin, they are identical with the masses around them; and yet speak the refined and cultivated English language. . . .

[In an oration two years earlier, I] . . . pointed out among other providential events the fact, that the exile of our fathers from their African homes to America, had given us, their children, at least one item of compensation, namely the possession of the Anglo-Saxon tongue; that this language put us in a position which none other on the globe could give us; and that it was impossible to estimate too highly, the prerogatives and the elevation the Almighty has bestowed upon us, in our having as our own, the speech of Chaucer and Shakespeare, of Milton and Wordsworth, or Bacon and Burke, of Franklin and Webster. . . .

(Crummell 1862:9)

It was also the activity of the Settler intelligentsia that prompted statements like the one below, which appeared in the U.S. in an 1836 number of the pro-ACS Southern Literary Messenger:

25 The most prominent members would have been John Russwurm, Alexander Crummell, and Edward Wilmot Blyden. Russwurm was the second black to graduate from an American college, graduating from Bowdoin in May, 1826 (two weeks after another black had graduated from Amherst). Among Russwurm's schoolmates at the tiny Maine college were Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and future U.S. President Franklin Pierce, all of whom graduated a year before Russwurm. Crummell, a graduate of Queens College, Cambridge, lived in Liberia in the 1850's and 1860's before returning to the U.S. Blyden was a largely self-taught scholar who became westernized nineteenth century Africa's leading intellectual.

26 At the same time, the abolitionists were circulating reports such as one that appeared in 1839 that claimed that, for every indigenous African who had been converted to Christianity,

. . . five Americans have pulled off their clothes and gone naked; and there is not a child now growing up in the Colony who would not prefer speaking Hebo [Grebo?] or Bassa to
We are perfectly serious in speaking of Liberian Literature. Yes—in Liberia, . . . where thirteen years and a half ago, the tangled and pathless forest frowned in a silence unbroken save by the roar of wild beast, . . . in Liberia, the English language is now spoken; the English spirit is breathed; English Literature exists; and with it, exist those comforts, virtues, and pleasures, which the existence of Literature necessarily implies. Plantations—farm houses—villages, built of brick, stone, and wood, . . . schools in which hundreds are inducted into the pleasant pathway of knowledge—and (the most expressive sign of all) a NEWSPAPER, filled with instructive and entertaining matter. . . .

(quoted in African Repository, 1836, 12:118)

The Methodist Church founded the College of West Africa (a secondary school) in 1839. The first college, Liberia College, was founded in 1862: the entrance examination the first year consisted of tests in Greek, Latin, and mathematics. In its first forty years, it graduated a total of ten students. The Liberia College students in particular and the Western-educated in general can be seen as the elite among speakers of English in Liberia. Moreover, the original and ongoing ties with the U.S. established American Standard English as the primary target of accrolectal speakers.

1.3.4.2 The Congoes

Just as the British navy took recaptured slaves to Freetown, the American navy took them to Monrovia. However, the numbers involved were much smaller. According to Shick:27

common English. . . .

(Louis Sheridan, quoted in African Repository, 1839, 15:36)

27 The discussion that follows of Congoes (recaptured Africans) and of
From 1820 to 1843, two hundred eighty-seven recaptured Africans were sent to Liberia by the U.S. Navy. This number . . . represented only 6 percent of the immigrants for the period. (1980:66)

In 1846, a slave ship containing 756 slaves from the Cabinda region was captured and brought to Monrovia. Then, in 1860, nine ships containing 4700 slaves were captured and brought there. Integrating these recaptured slaves, known as Congoes (because this had been the point of origin of an early group), presented an "immediate problem of extraordinary dimensions," according to Shick (1980:67). There were the simple logistic problems of how to feed and house such a large number and the more complex question of how to regulate their entry into Settler society. The Settlers' way of dealing with the Congoes—-in 1860 but also before that—was to assign responsibility for individual Congoes. At first, Congoes were apprenticed to individual Settlers. Then, when the number of Congoes became too great, some of them were assigned to commercial firms (such as a sawmill) and some to missions. Congo communities evolved up the Saint Paul River from Monrovia. Eventually, the Congoes,

. . . having lost contact with their original homes . . . became very closely assimilated into the cultural milieu of the Liberian settlers. (Akpan 1973:227)

From a linguistic point of view, the impact of the Congoes on Liberia seems considerably less than that of the Liberated Africans on Sierra Leone. The dispersal of the Congoes over a large region no

their integration into Settler society is taken principally from Shick (1980:66-72).
doubt contributed to this; however, the most important difference is surely the difference in the numbers involved. In Sierra Leone there was no ongoing large-scale emigration from the New World. It had happened in 1792 (with the Nova Scotians) and in 1800 (with the Maroons), but it was not for the most part a continuing process. In Liberia, on the other hand, emigration from the New World continued for a fifty-year period from 1820 to 1870 and, to a lesser extent, even after that. According to Murda:

Immigration rose steadily from its beginning until the outbreak of the American Civil War, sharply dropped off during the years of the conflict, and though receiving a brief reprieve in the first few post-bellum years, declined gradually until its termination in the first decade of this century.

(1975:i)

Where the Liberated Africans quickly came to represent 90 percent and more of the composition of Sierra Leone Creole society, if the Congoes ever constituted a majority of Liberian Settler-Congo society, it was as a temporary phenomenon in the 1860's. Thus, in Liberia, a linguistically stable element predominated; the impetus for far-reaching creolization was not present. From a social point of view (as opposed to a linguistic one), the Liberian case is similar to that of Sierra Leone in that, in both cases, the recaptured slaves and the New World emigrants merged into a single ethnic group. As Liebenow notes, "... today it is difficult to differentiate a Congo from other America-Liberians" (1969:27). ("Congo" today is often applied to all Settlers, regardless of their origins. It is mildly pejorative, yet it is surely the most common designation of the
Settler group in everyday speech.)

Another difference between the Settlers of Liberia and the Creoles of Sierra Leone is that the latter's settlements were largely concentrated in a relatively small area. In contrast, the Liberian Settlers spread out along the coast, their settlements extending from Cape Mount in the northwest to Cape Palmas in the southwest.

1.3.4.3 Settlers and Non-Settlers

In the ACS vision of Liberia, every emigrant from the U.S. was, in the words of Henry Clay, "a missionary, carrying with him credentials in the holy cause of civilization, religion, and free institutions" (African Repository, Sept. 1829:208). In fact, enmity and even armed conflict between Settlers and indigenous Africans were not uncommon. The fighting ranged in magnitude from raid to battle. On a few occasions in the Cape Palmas region, an appearance by an American gunboat saved the day for the Settlers. Much of the opposition in the nineteenth century to the Settlers focussed on their attempts to

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28 For a counterbalance to Hancock's rather unfortunate remarks on Congoes (1974:225-6), the reader is referred to Liebenow (1969) and, especially, to Shick (1980).

Singler (1981a:181-4) discusses the names that Settlers and non-Settlers call themselves and each other by.

29 The Maryland State Colonization Society was originally responsible for the settlement in the Cape Palmas region. The Cape Palmas settlement retained a separate identity from its founding in the 1830's through its establishment as the independent nation of Maryland in Africa in 1853 to its defeat in a war with the Grebo in 1856 and its subsequent rescue by and amalgamation into the Republic of Liberia in 1857.

47
regulate trade (and, sometimes, on their attempts to suppress entirely trade with slavers). Subsequently, the issue was the broader one of resistance to Settler claims to political control. The particulars are not relevant to a discussion of the history of Liberian English. What is relevant is that in the nineteenth century the Settlers attempted to establish communities that were Western enclaves, a world apart from the peoples who surrounded them, and the fact that to some extent they succeeded.

Settler contacts with non-Settlers were largely confined to two areas. The first of these involved trade. Many of the Settlers set themselves up as traders, bought commodities from the indigenous peoples (including rice and camwood), and sold them to ships. (Clearly this placed the Settlers in competition with the existing trading communities of the region. Settler efforts to restrict all trade along the Liberian coast to Settler ports alone (through the passage and attempted enforcement of the Port of Entry Act) further aggravated the tension.)

The second area of contact between Settlers and non-Settlers involved the wardship system (also practiced in Sierra Leone), whereby children from the indigenous ethnic groups were entrusted to colonial families. In return for the performance of household duties, the children lived in Settler households and learned the English language and Western ways. The system dates to the very beginning of the colony: Holsoe states that by 1825 there were at least sixty Dey (Dewoin-speaking) children living with colonial families (1971:342).
Ideally, the wards attended school with the Settler children and were treated by their guardians as a part of the family. Usually, however, the situation was more like that which Boatman, one of the speakers in the present corpus, describes to Richard (his interviewer): 30

BOATMAN: dì tan de sÈn mi tu doz pipo, de kên sÈn di sku; de sÈn dÈ chedren.
RICHARD: hu di pipo?
BOATMAN: doz labiriÈn pipo. de sÈn dÈ chedren. wi en di hawz wòken. onli natan, de kòl yu, "kôn lÈn yu lÈsÈn," sòn tan, wÈn yu tò tu, tri wòd, de se, "go tu be." de kên tish mi.

BOATMAN: When they [my parents] entrusted me to those people, they didn't send me to school. They sent their children.
RICHARD: Who did that?
BOATMAN: The Settlers. They sent their children, while we stayed in the house working. Only at night would they tell us, "Come study your lessons." Some times you'd say two or three words, and they'd say, "Go to bed." They didn't teach me.

59-10-21

Still, whatever the advantages and disadvantages of the arrangement, its popularity has continued to the present day.

Settler interaction with indigenous ethnic groups was generally restricted to the coast throughout the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Liberian government struggled

30 Boatman refers to the Settlers as Liberians (in contrast to his parents, who are non-Settlers). The notion that only the Settlers were Liberians was one of long standing. In the period since the 1980 military coup, some suggest that only non-Settlers are Liberians. Both attitudes reflect the extent to which the integration of Settlers and non-Settlers remains incomplete.

The numbers given after any data taken from the corpus have the following significance: the first number refers to the recording cited, and the second and third numbers refer to the page and line of the transcript where the data begin. Page numbers greater than 50 refer to the second side of a tape.
to exert effective political control over the interior regions. While Liberia had claimed extensive territory in the interior, these claims had not been supported by so much as an attempt to establish a presence in the area. Thus, Liberia was powerless to prevent the British and French from helping themselves to much of the region. Early in the 1900's, a Liberian Frontier Force was organized. The government's establishment of political control over a region came to mean forced labor and heavy taxation for the inhabitants. A handbook on Liberia prepared by the U.S. Army describes the Liberian Frontier Force thus:

... the armed forces stood apart from the great majority of the people, especially those in the interior. The government used them, with little or no restraint, to enforce its policies, collect taxes and stamp out unrest and it expected military detachments to live off the resources of the communities in which they operated. These practices resulted in overbearing conduct on the part of the armed forces and abuses of the civilian population. In consequence, most of the people viewed the military not as members of a protective public institution but as instruments of tyranny and oppression whose interests bore no relation to their own and over whom they had no control.

(1964:385)

According to Nimba Watchman, one of the speakers in the present corpus:31

31 The most onerous type of forced labor was the transporting of government officials and soldiers by hammock from town to town. Painter (in the corpus) describes it and his reaction to it:

so efi yu kEn tOk Enle sE, yu go tu di kOntri say, e puti On yu hEmO o. de kOl di yumE bien dEn, di lebra, puti On di hEmO. e be yu kEn speken di Enle sE, e se, "o, po-me a na. sevelay pEsOn kOmen." e puti On di hEmO dugu dugu dugu. dEn soja bihayn yo. de bi pOshen di hEmO o. we bi goen. da ten di, a te wOn de. wi a tri. a pu di hEmO ma he wOn de. a mu frOn bEndu, wi go kOnga. a kOn ba na. a se,
a se, da tan, efi yu onli tu fo yu peEn dEn hEn, wOn tu ti lebra, wOn tu bi fan. yo chenjen ish Oda.

'I'm telling you, in those days, if your parents only had two sons, one had to do forced labor, and the other had to farm. The two of you would take turns.'

Nimba Watchman 56-9-10

A picture of Liberian life in the interior earlier in this century emerges from the interviews with Nimba Watchman and others. Two avenues of escape were available. A byproduct of each of these for the person who chose it was the acquisition of a pidginized English. One of the ways to avoid this harassment by soldiers was to become a soldier. The rank and file of the Liberian Frontier Force (renamed the Liberian National Guard in 1962) comprised members of ethnic groups from the interior. As the soldier in the corpus (referred to as Gede Soldier), a Krahn man, puts it:

"no." Ewa sEns a kEn du e no mO egen. ma fada sE i bOn mi a nO puti On ma he. so di Oda pEsOn, a pu On ma he? dEs di ten a kOmen frOn bEndu, a kOn hya.

'If you just could speak English and you went to the interior, they would carry you in a hammock. They would call people, the common laborers, and put you in a hammock. All you had to do was be able to talk English, and they would say, "Oh! po-me a na. [a Vai sentence meaning "A white man has come."""] A civilized person has come." They would put you in the hammock, and you'd go. The soldiers would be there to harass us all the while we carried it. This thing, I did it one particular day. There were three of us who carried someone in a hammock one day from Bendu to Konga. When I got home, I said, "No." Ever since that day, I have never carried anyone in a hammock again. I wouldn't carry my own father, the very man who gave me life, in a hammock, so why should I carry someone else? It was this hammock-carrying that caused me to leave my home town and come here.'

Painter 58-14-17

51
dezh awa pipo, hu de fo des kOntri, wEn gOmE plawa kOn, di pipo sOfa, awa fada dEn. o, awa mOda dEn sOfa. dEs wE Yu si piEnE ti e kran pipo de ensay fo soja wOk tude. wEn di soja kOn fEs, no kran mE ensay, onli gio, mano, gbEre, vay, de 0 kOn. de di wOn bren di soja plawa. dEn, wEn de go fo gbEre, gbEre pipo; mano, mano; go fo gio, gio; kOn fo kran. na dEs wE di soja plawa kOn. . . . Én yu si? bikOz de de sOfa awa pipo.

'Our people, the ones who were here long ago, when the government first came here, the people suffered, our fathers really suffered. Oh, our mothers really suffered. That's why you see so many Krahn men in the military work today. When the soldiers came here originally, there weren't any Krahn soldiers, just Gio, Mano, Kpelle, Vai. They were the ones who came. They were the first soldiers here. When they had gone to the Kpelle area, a lot of Kpelle men enlisted. Then they went to the Mano area, and a lot of Mano men enlisted. The same with the Gio and then with the Krahn. Now that's how this business of men from the interior joining the military came about. . . . You see? Because they really used to harass our people.'

Gede Soldier 31-4-16

The language of the armed forces was and is a highly pidginized variety of English. As a popular saying has it: gOmE ge mi gOn, gOmE nwá ge mi Enle. (‘The government gave me a gun, but it didn't give me English.’) So strong is the identification of pidgin with the military, one type of basilectal English is sometimes referred to as Soldier English, as Hancock reports (1974:226).

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12 Hancock places Soldier English "in army and police barracks, where conscripted men of different linguistic backgrounds are brought together for extended periods of time" (1974:226). While pidgin is used by soldiers, there is no conscription in Liberia--except for the militia, which meets on the first Thursday of every third month and does not involve barracks. Prior to the coup and presumably after it as well, the police were more urban and more westernized than soldiers; in general, the police do not speak Soldier English.
A second way to escape harassment in the interior by soldiers was to leave home and move to the coast in search of work and the opportunity to become part--however marginally--of the cash economy. From the early 1930's onward, the principal user of unskilled labor from the interior was the Firestone Rubber Plantation in Harbel. At first, in the tradition established by the the Liberian government, Firestone got its employees through forced labor (Liebenow 1969:67). Once tappers came to regard the strenuous labor for next to no pay as preferable to forced labor for no pay at the whim of the Frontier Force, Firestone no longer needed to rely on coercion to obtain its laborers. After Firestone other, smaller plantations developed.\textsuperscript{33} The plantations involved an ethnically and linguistically mixed work force, and pidginized English was used. When workers returned home, they took the pidgin with them--though, as with the Kru sailors, return to the villages seems to have meant return to one's first language.\textsuperscript{34}

\textsuperscript{33} Working on a plantation did not liberate one completely from the whims of soldiers. Nimba Cook, describing an episode in which soldiers harassed the tappers at Firestone, says:

\begin{quote}
a. E! da fay-wa dE o.

'Eh! It was like a war!'
\end{quote}

\textit{Nimba Cook 64-14-4}

\textsuperscript{34} In 1951, an iron ore mine was opened in Bomi Hills. Subsequently, other mines opened elsewhere in the country, the largest being the LAMCO mine in the Nimba mountains along the Guinea border. Iron-ore mining is much less labor-intensive than rubber-tapping. The proportion of unskilled laborers in the total work force is much smaller, and the pressure for renewed pidginization accordingly reduced.
1.3.4.4 The Tubman-Tolbert Era

Liberia is divided into counties. At the time of independence in 1847, there were three: Montserrado (including Monrovia), Grand Bassa, and Sinoe. Maryland County was added in 1857. A fifth coastal county, Grand Cape Mount, was carved out of Montserrado in 1924. When the Liberian government extended into the interior, three provinces were set up. In 1964, the provinces were replaced by four counties: Lofa, Bong, Nimba, and Grand Gedeh. The map in Figure 5 shows the modern political divisions:

(Figure 5 here)

The capital of each of the coastal counties is a major Settler community. These communities were never purely Settler in composition. The presence of wards has already been noted. Even when the Settlers passed laws that restricted the ability of non-Settlers to live in their communities, Liberians from indigenous ethnic groups could and did live in their own nearby communities, some of which antedated the Settlers' arrival. Along the coast, then, the establishment of government prompted the development of communities with a certain degree of ethnic mix. The presence of pidgin increased as the occasions for its use increased. (The Settlers rarely learned—or rarely admitted to learning—local languages, remaining monolingual in English. Instead, the indigenous coastal people used pidgin in speaking with the Settlers. Robertsport, the capital of Grand Cape Mount, was something of an exception to this; many of the Settlers there learned Vai.)
Harbel and Cavalla are the sites of Firestone plantations. The remaining placenames are of capital cities, Monrovia for the nation and the others for individual counties.
There were some missionary groups in the nineteenth century who established schools among indigenous ethnic groups, most notably the Protestant Episcopal Church among the Grebo and Vai and the Methodist Church among the Klao and Grebo. (Most missionaries who came, even those with the intent of working among indigenous ethnic groups, were appropriated by the Settlers.) Thus, both through such schools and through the wardship system, education and the chance to use it thus became available to a limited degree and to limited numbers from the individual ethnic groups along the coast—so long as they were willing to accept the Settler status quo.

An increased if still incomplete integration of Settlers and indigenous ethnic groups, an expansion of the educational system, and a growing urbanization of the population all came about during the presidency of William V. S. Tubman (1944-1971). (Irreversible evidence as to just how incomplete the integration process had been came with the April 12, 1980, military coup; it shattered a century and a half of Settler hegemony.)

The most important event in Liberia's recent history is the coup, which was carried out by a group of enlisted men from various indigenous ethnic groups. Removing a Settler head of state does not mean that the sway of Settler attitudes over Liberian society has gone as well. Singler (1976, 1977a, 1977b) argues that the Settlers historically claimed that the right to rule was theirs in part as a consequence of their command of English and of literacy. A contempt for pidginized English and its speakers both followed from and reinforced that claim. One manifestation of the continued stigmatization of non-standard English is the extent to which, as the luster of the post-coup government has worn dull, jokes about the English of the wife of the head of state have spread. "What to does" and "coco-tastic" are the most widely known but hardly the only ones. Certainly, the language-related joke is not something new in Liberia; 3.1.4.2 makes passing reference to Jake Melton.
Tubman obtained the capital to increase the number of schools and the area which they covered. Still, now as much as in the early days of the Liberian colony, inadequate revenues force schools to operate without textbooks or properly trained teachers. The harsh assessment made by Delafosse in 1907 has not lost its force, particularly with regard to elementary school teachers:

Les écoles sont nombreuses, mais les leçons y sont fort intermittentes et les professeurs, ne sachant rien en général, ne peuvent pas apprendre grand chose à leurs élèves. J'ai connu des maîtres et des maîtresses d'école qui ne parvenaient à écrire une lettre que très difficilement et en faisant autant de fautes d'orthographe que des mots: que peuvent-ils bien enseigner à leurs élèves?

(1907:187)

Singler and Himmelmann's study (1982), discussed in 1.4.2 below, found that for the phenomenon that they studied (resumptive pronouns in relative clauses) the impact of going to school showed up only in the English of those who had gone as far as senior high school. That is, even those speakers with a junior high school education patterned with those who had had little schooling or none at all. What Delafosse's comment and Singler and Himmelmann's study suggest is that, while the Liberian schoolroom is a place where students acquire English, the variety acquired by those who stay only a few years may be quite far removed from Standard.

jokes, and Singler (1981a) lists seven of them. However, the current batch seem considerably less good-humored. The use of mesolectal Liberian English in radio advertising and in radio dramas notwithstanding, there is little evidence if any that signals a change in language attitudes or language use as a consequence of the change in personnel at the top.
As for the interior, the effort by the Tubman and Tolbert (1971-1980) governments to extend roads and Western education into the interior represented the first serious attempt to do this. Other than at a few mission-run schools, there had been virtually no opportunity to acquire Western education away from the coast. In the second half of the Tubman years and with aid from the United States, that changed. A road was built that extended along the perimeter of Lofa County (near the Guinean border), and schools were built along the road. Thus, in addition to the soldiers and the returning rubber tappers, a second, non-basilectal source of English was introduced to the interior.

In addition to the expansion of the educational system, the Tubman and Tolbert years also brought growing urbanization. This in turn has fostered the growing use of English--most prominently in Monrovia but also in the various county capitals and at the iron-ore mines. In Monrovia, there is still a strong tendency for people newly arrived in the city to settle in the enclave of their ethnic group, quarters like New Krutown, Vaitown, and Loma Community (née Buzie Quarter). But an ethnically diverse city like Monrovia soon develops areas which are not dominated by any one ethnic group. As expected, Liberian English is called on, and in households where the parents speak Liberian English to each other, children may grow up with Liberian English as a first language. (Even prior to the "domestication" of non-Settler Liberian English within Liberia, Kru Pidgin English may have been undergoing a similar phenomenon. Starting in the period between the
two world wars, some Krumen took their wives with them to the Gold Coast, and Kru Pidgin English may have come to be used domestically there, even among the speakers of the same dialect of Klao. The population of New Krutown is overwhelmingly Klao. (Kru is the Liberian English word for "Klao.") Breitborde's dissertation (1977a) examines the occasions when Klao speakers use Klao to one another and when they use English. Liberian English is often used in urban environments by speakers who have a first language (other than Liberian English) in common.

1.3.4.5 On the Definition of "Pidgin" and "Creole"

The finding that non-Settler Liberian English is emerging as a first language in some Monrovia households might once have been expected to portend changes for the speech variety, the idea being that creolization was imminent. But Liberian English is sufficiently similar in its history to Tok Pisin to make it clear that the findings of Sankoff and Laberge (1973) will apply here too, that in such a case expansion has preceded nativization.

The traditional notions of a pidgin as an auxiliary language with no native speakers and a creole as a nativized pidgin have come under fire in several quarters. In particular, the centrality of nativization for creolization has been questioned. The notion of

36 The Sierra Leonean government had made efforts from the beginning to get the Kru to settle in Freetown, and the Kru began taking their wives there as early as the 1840's and 1850's. However, the Freetown Kru tended to stay there; thus, their impact on the English of Liberia seems to have been reduced.
nativization, as it has been presented, seems to rely upon the assumption that every speaker has one—and only one—"first language," but Tonkin notes: "... in a multilingual setting, the concept of 'mother-tongue' may be irrelevant" (1971a:183). Along related lines, Gilman, tracing the history of the idea that a creole is different from a pidgin by virtue of the changes that occur once a pidgin becomes somebody's native language, points to Bloomfield (1933). Gilman then comments:

The concept of the speech-community and the native language are central to Bloomfield's view of language... The concept of the monolingual speech-community was developed in the context of the United States, which at that time was, in fact, trying to produce such a homogeneous community by assimilating the children of non-English-speaking people through the public schools. Bloomfield (1933, pp. 42-3) defines a speech-community [as] a group of people interacting by means of language. It is clear that he means a speech-community is a group of people interacting by means of a single language, for he speaks of the speech-community of all English-speaking people. In explaining the idea of the native language, Bloomfield says that a child learns the language spoken around him, and that the first language he learns is his native language. There is a clear assumption that, just as the speech-community interacts by means of a single language, the child normally hears a single language spoken around him, and this is the language he learns first, his native language. This picture is to a considerable extent valid for western Europe and North America, where many children grow up in monolingual households, and thus learn one language first, but it scarcely serves for most of the rest of the world, and certainly not for West Africa. (1979:273-4)

Gilman's solution is to change the definitions for pidgins and creoles. He introduces the notion of "language of reference." For an individual, the language of reference is
... the language of his ethnic group. ... In view of
the confusion between the language of ethnic reference and
the first-learned language, and of the fact that in
multilingual environments there is often no real first
language, it would be better to replace the traditional
distinction between creolized and pidginized languages as in
one case, the 'native language' of a group and in the other
case not. It would be better to recognize that Creoles,
such as that of Sierra Leone, are languages of ethnic
reference, while Pidgins, such as that of Cameroon, are not.
This would avoid useless speculation as to whether a few
individuals had Chinook Jargon or Cameroon Pidgin or some
other Pidgin as their sole language and whether or not this
meant that the language had been creolized.37
(1979:274; italics added)

Thus, using Gilman's terms, the English of Liberian Settlers would be
a "language of ethnic reference," while the English of Liberians from
other ethnic groups would not be.

37 The distinction that Gilman invokes between Sierra Leonean Krio and
Cameroonian Pidgin is not so straightforward. Rather being speech
varieties with separate histories, they are, according to Todd,
"closely related forms of the one language--namely C19th
[nineteenth century] Krio" (1979:289). Hancock implies a similar
relationship for Kru Pidgin English (the language of the Krumes) and
Krio, stating both that Kru Pidgin English "is most closely
related to Sierra Leone Krio..." and that "... some of the most
conservative and stable Krio has been spoken by Kru seamen for over
a century without having supplanted their native tongue" (1974:226;
1980:64). Since none of Hancock's articles provide illustrations of
Kru Pidgin English, the basis of his claims is not clear.
Singler (1981b)--and, indirectly, the present work as well as
Singler and Himmelmann (1982)--provide evidence that argues
strongly against the view that KPE is a variety of Krio. Indeed,
the scope of differences between Krio and every variety of Liberian
English makes it unlikely that an explanation similar to that
proposed by Todd for Krio and Cameroonian, i.e. "closely related
forms of the one language," can be found for Krio and Liberian
English. Certainly Kru sailors and Krio speakers came into contact
(1.3.3.3 describes their interaction) and certainly there are
linguistic ties between KPE and Krio, but these ties can only
account for a part of the story of the development of KPE or of any
A consequence of Gilman's changes in the definition of pidgin and creole is that they remove any claim of a difference linguistically between creoles and pidgins (it being understood that the pidgins in question are the stable, established pidgins of the type that Todd calls "extended pidgins" (1974:5)). If one accepts Gilman's definition or—at the least—rejects the idea that nativization is critical, can one then argue that the notion of a creole continuum and of a prototypical creole TAM system are relevant to a pidgin like (non-Settler) Liberian English? The case is easier to make for the creole continuum. DeCamp argues that a creole continuum will obtain where the creole is in contact with its target and where people have the opportunity for upward mobility. In such a case the "creoleness" of the basilect seems less critical. So long as there are

other variety of Liberian English.

While the subject of Gilman's article is Cameroonian Pidgin English, his description of the social setting and of the use of pidgin applies to Monrovia as well as to Douala.

... there are many Africans who, while they no longer live in their villages and have abandoned many traditional ways, have very little in common with the Europeans. In every African country there is a large urban population which has little direct contact with Europeans, and which has developed new African ways of living in response to a new urban situation. ... We must recognize the inadequacy of trying to interpret everything in Africa as either traditional or Western, and recognize the existence of a third alternative, created by the Africans themselves in response to the stimulus of contact with the Europeans. We shall call this new society neo-African. It is our view that Pidgin English arose as part of this neo-African society, and not as a result of the needs of Europeans who traded in Africa.

(1979:275)
superficially related varieties (here, where the lexicon of the basilectal variety is largely equivalent to or derived from the lexicon of the acrolectal variety) and the opportunity for upward mobility, the notion of continuum ought to be relevant. Thus, it seems legitimate to posit a Liberian continuum for non-Settler English as well as Settler.

The case of the creole TAM is perhaps more problematic. Bickerton has made specific claims about the creole prototype that seem to require an acceptance of the centrality of nativization. Bickerton argues that all "true" creoles are the way they are because, during the brief period of nativization, the child-learners of the pidgin had insufficient input from another language (substrate or superstrate) on which to base a grammatical system—the pidgin itself being communicatively inadequate—and therefore relied on the linguistic universals of the bioprogram. (It is because they are in the bioprogram that linguistic universals are universal.) According to Bickerton, once a pidgin has undergone nativization in this way, it is then a creole. (Bickerton imposes certain restrictions as to what

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3\[There are other proposals besides Gilman's that reject nativization as a fundamental concept. Hancock argues for stabilization:

I prefer not to acknowledge a distinction between pidgin and creole, and to consider stabilization more significant than nativization in creole language formation. . . . By stabilization I mean the establishment of linguistic conventions (including conventions of lexical progression) whose manifestations will be predictable for at least ninety percent of any speaker's performance.

(1980:64-5; italics in the original)---

63
languages can be considered to be "classical" creoles. These are the restrictions presented in 1.1.1 above. They have to do with the linguistic composition of the speech community in question and with the length of time required for nativization.) In the Liberian case, Liberian English has expanded and stabilized prior to nativization; in Bickerton's view, the bioprogram is being called on too late.33

Bickerton's characterization of the prototypical creole system is extremely insightful. He has captured much of what is common to creoles in this domain. However, his explanation of why this system appears in so many creoles requires a highly implausible view of the social setting in which creolization occurs. It seems to demand a strict monolingualism on the part of children growing up in a multilingual environment. It requires that mothers not speak to their infants in their own first languages. Settings such as plantations were linguistically diverse, but there were ordinarily groups of speakers of any one of the languages represented. There are historical reasons why Sierra Leonean Krio is not a representative creole (though it meets Bickerton's criteria); still, it is significant that "... Koelle (1854:v-vi) reported that over 200 languages were spoken in the streets of Freetown, while in 1924 "about sixty" were said still to be heard there (Luke 1925:33)" (Hancock 1981:248). Nineteen twenty-four was fully a century after the peak of

33 This discussion is with reference to non-Settler Liberian English. It is assumed that the English-based pidgin spoken along the Liberian coast had achieved at least partial stabilization prior to the Settlers' arrival.
the influx of Liberated Africans into Freetown. The question arises as to how long substrate languages persevered in other settings in which creolization occurred. In general in creole studies, the notion seems to have been accepted that the Africans brought into the New World were subject to a near-systematic dispersal, this so that slaves would not be able to communicate in a language incomprehensible to owners and so that they therefore would be less likely to succeed in revolting. This idea carries with it the linguistic consequence that, prior to creolization, slaves had no medium of communication other than a rudimentary pidgin. There is at least some doubt as to the accuracy of this scenario. While such a picture may have some basis as a description of slavery in the U.S., even as a description of the U.S. its accuracy seems limited. Holloway (1984) shows that slave owners in South Carolina and elsewhere displayed an awareness of particular African ethnic groups and regions and developed strong ideas about the suitability of Africans of a particular background for performing particular labors. According to Holloway:

South Carolina planters did not blindly purchase Africans to work on their plantation. When they purchased Africans, it was with a knowledge . . . of their African background and familiarity with the kinds of agricultural knowledge and skills that suited the needs of the American plantation.

(1984:16)

Slave merchants took these factors into account. According to Holloway, they

. . . took great care in their advertisement to see that potential buyers knew the African region and geographic point of origination of the slaves being sold. . . Many of the advertisements refer to . . . African ethnic origins.

(1984:12)
In South Carolina, Africans from the Senegambia were frequently put to work as house servants and artisans, while Igbos and Efiks from the Bight of Biafra and Angolas and Congos from Central America were assigned to the fields. (Africans from other regions were categorized in similar ways.) This kind of specialization by ethnic group showed up elsewhere as well. Holloway presents information from Donnan (1935) showing that Louisianans had imported Fulani cattleherders from the Futa Jallon region (in modern Guinea) as part of a successful effort to expand the colony's cattle herd over a thirty-year period in the mid-eighteenth century. Concluding his study, Holloway states that:

... there was no selective policy of separating Africans from the same nations as commonly believed, but rather there was a selective policy for Africans from specific nations... to perform specific tasks.\(^4\)\(^5\)

(1984:40)

On large agricultural enterprises such as cotton and sugar plantations, then, the bulk of the slaves would have been field hands. Many, if not most, of them would most likely have been drawn from particular groups with a reputation for being well-suited to this type of labor.

\(^{45}\) Another notion, long unquestioned, about slavery—particularly in the United States—was that family life for slaves was all but nonexistent. Addressing this, Genovese states:

What the sources show—both the plantation diaries and record books and letters of the masters and also the reports of runaway slaves and ex-slaves—is that the average plantation slave lived in a family setting, developed strong family ties, and held the nuclear family as the proper social norm.

(1981:49)
The linguistic consequences of this would be that, while the pidgin that developed in a planation setting might well have been unstable and idiosyncratic, it would not have arisen in a setting of utter linguistic chaos. Communication among adults and between adults and children would not have depended exclusively on the pidgin. Although plantation workers probably would not have been able to communicate with all other plantation workers, they would ordinarily have been able to communicate with some of the other workers. (Social grouping among workers would have followed from the possession by a subgroup of a common language.) If workers' first languages fell into disuse, it ordinarily occurred as or after the pidgin/creole supplanted it, not before.

Creoles and extended pidgins, regardless of whether or not one uses a definition like Gilman's, ordinarily have had different histories, as Bickerton (1981) points out. Creoles usually have resulted from a large-scale migration, voluntary or involuntary. There has been a separation of speakers from their speech community. In the case of extended pidgins, there has been no large-scale migration and no separation. If a difference does obtain between creoles and extended pidgins, the differences in their history could explain why. Specifically, the differences in their history could explain why creoles would have less recourse to substratal input. Nonetheless, a difference between creoles and extended pidgins in this regard would surely be one of degree. Other languages do not disappear from a creolizing situation so that the creole can take over; they disappear
only after the creole has already taken over. Thus, in the period of creole formation, substratal input would still be present, but the separation of speakers from their speech community might reduce its prominence—when compared with the formation of an extended pidgin, where there would be ongoing influence from the language of the speaker's speech community.

What this discussion has been meant to suggest is that Bickerton's stipulation of a classical setting for creolization both requires one to accept a most unlikely scenario for creolization and creates an either-or distinction (in determining whether or not to expect a language to have the prototypical creole TAM system) where a gradient might better capture the reality. The evidence from other West African pidgins and, especially, from Tok Pisin argues for the rejection of the centrality of nativization in the expansion of fledgeling pidgins and the recognition of the fundamental commonality of creoles with extended pidgins. Given this commonality, it becomes appropriate to test the extent to which Bickerton's creole prototype applies to Liberian tense-aspect-modality. The claim being made here, then, is that Bickerton's bioprogram scenario is not supported by the historical realities of plantation societies. The removal of the bioprogram explanation as a foundation for creolization renders unnecessary the insistence of a dichotomy between creoles and extended pidgins. At the same time, a number of facts that characterize the development of creoles, particularly in the New World—more rapid stabilization, greater heterogeneity of substratal input, and the
like—may result in these creoles' generally coming closer to Bickerton's creole TAM prototype than do extended pidgins. The difference, however, ought to be one of degrees, not one of absolutes.

1.3.4.6 A Liberian English Continuum

Even if one accepts that it is reasonable to attempt to apply the notion of the continuum to Liberian English, the question remains as to whether or not the various strands of Liberian English can be woven into a continuum of the sort presented in 1.2. Facts from the history of Liberian English suggest that, if the continuum is to be attempted, certain modifications will be necessary. To begin with, the Settler basilect seems distinct. That is, basilectal Settler speech is unique to Settlers. On the other hand, the acrolectal speech of Settlers is in most ways equivalent to the acrolectal speech of non-Settlers. (That acrolect will be referred to as Standard Liberian English.) Additionally, linguistic evidence presented in subsequent chapters makes the case for two basilects among non-Settlers. The strongest evidence for such a hypothesis, introduced in Chapter 2, involves the treatment of past non-punctuals; further support comes from the selection of irrealis AUX's, discussed in Chapter 4. This evidence is entirely consistent with Liberian social history. The course of that history has created a geographic basis for the differences between basilects. One basilect includes speakers from the Liberian coast, speakers from Grand Gedeh County in the Liberian interior, and the Kru speakers who seem to have learned their Liberian English outside
Liberia. The second basilect comprises speakers from Lofa, Nimba, and Bong Counties (the remaining interior counties). The second basilect is the speech of soldiers and rubber tappers. The population of Lofa, Nimba, and Bong is overwhelmingly Mande-speaking; that of Grand Gedeh is overwhelmingly Kru-speaking. This division by speakers' first language feeds the basic division that is being argued for. In 1.3.4.3, enlistment in the military and work tapping rubber were presented as ways to escape government harassment in the interior of the country. These two careers, taken together, can be seen as providing the setting for the second basilect. The military has traditionally been dominated by first-language Mande speakers. (A long-standing Liberian stereotype of the armed forces is that officers are Loma and enlisted men Kpelle.) Similarly, as evidence presented by Wilson (1971) attests, first-language Mande speakers have always comprised the bulk of the rubber tappers at the Firestone plantation in Harbel and at neighboring plantations. It is argued, then, that Liberian English has three basilects rather than one; still, each of the three basilects seems part of a continuum with Standard Liberian

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4 Wilson (1971) presents employment figures—by ethnic group—from a time when Firestone's labor force was 30,000. The four ethnic groups with the largest representation are all Mande-speaking: Kpelle, Buzzie (Loma), Gio, and Mano. Together, they make up 57 percent of the labor force. In fact, their presence at the Harbel was probably considerably greater. Wilson's figures do not distinguish between the plantation at Harbel and a smaller Firestone plantation at Cavalla, near Harper. The labor force of the latter drew primarily from the Grebo and the Krahm. (With regard to the Harbel plantation, Wilson's figures indicate that the remainder of the tappers were primarily Bassa (Kru), Kissi (West Atlantic), Bandi (Mande), and Mende (Mande).)
English. That is, it seems intuitively possible to use the continuum model to arrange a series of linguistic systems from basilect to acrolect using any one of these three varieties as basilect and Standard Liberian English as acrolect. Because of the heavy decreolization that Settler English has undergone, the basilectal range of this variety is presumably much closer to the acrolect than are the basilectal ranges of the other two. The four varieties of Liberian English proposed above (the three basilects and Standard Liberian English) are the extremes of the continuum: everything in the middle is "simply" Liberian English.  

1.4 THE DATA

1.4.1 How the Data Were Collected

The data set comprises roughly 50 hours of recorded speech. Most of it consists of sociolinguistic interviews. I conducted most of them, but sometimes one of the six Liberians assisting me did so. Roughly ten percent of the total data set was recorded in 1978. The rest was recorded in 1980-81, in the shadow of the April 12, 1980, military coup. I had returned to Liberia in March, 1980, under the aegis of

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\(^2\) Hancock (1971a) posits four varieties of Liberian English; while the boundaries being drawn here are somewhat different, the present schema can be said to confirm his characterization for the most part. (This is so even though the particulars of his description of a given variety are not always supported in the present work.) Subsequent to Hancock (1971a), Hancock and Kobbah (1975) posit the inclusion of a fifth variety, Kepama, which they state is spoken in the Cape Palmas region of Liberia. While their Kepama does include some genuine regional features, for the most part it seems to be simply a mesolectal (rather than basilectal) variety of Liberian English, one spoken in cities all along the Liberian coast.
Michigan State University to prepare an introduction to Liberian English for use by incoming Peace Corps Volunteers (subsequently printed as Singler (1981a)). Since Peace Corps training offered little of an introduction to Liberian culture, it had been decided that the text I was to prepare ought also to provide an introduction to contemporary Liberian life. Interviewing as broad as possible a cross-section of English-speaking Liberians provided the foundation for the cultural introduction; it also formed a basis for the present test of tense-aspect-modality along the continuum. I told those whom I interviewed of my efforts to prepare a description of Liberian life for new Peace Corps Volunteers; I did not call attention to my special interest in language. (As it turned out, elderly interviewees did not seem all that interested in the exact reasons for the interview. They simply assumed that the wisdom that their experience in life had given them made them the obvious subjects for interviews, regardless of the topic.) The Liberians who assisted me in carrying out the interviewing selected those whom they interviewed. (I had expressed a special interest in interviews with those who spoke (Liberian) English but who had never gone to Western schools.) As a rule, they interviewed people whom they knew well—relatives, housemates, or neighbors. How well I knew the people I interviewed varied—from people I had known for ten years to people I had never met before.\(^3\)

\(^3\) Each of those whom I had not met before fell into the category of "friend of a friend."

Three interviews have not been included. Two involved high school graduates whose speech was so inordinately slow (when compared to
In discussing the data-gathering techniques used in his study of Hawaiian Pidgin and Creole English, Bickerton says:

One way in which the interviews differed from those in earlier surveys is that they were relatively unstructured. Interviewers were provided with a list of topics (childhood pastimes, plantation conditions, etc.) but were carefully told that this was only a fallback device, and that the main purpose of the interview was to find out what the interviewee was interested in, and then give him his head, on the principle that people will speak naturally if they are given some degree of autonomy with regard to what they talk about.

(Bickerton and Odo 1976:30-1)

Bickerton's approach underlay the collection of data in the Liberian case as well; however, interviewees were told at the outset that there were one or—in some cases—two topics that they would not be asked about. Speakers from Mande-speaking groups were reassured that no questions would be asked about traditional secret associations such as their normal rate) as to be utterly unnatural. The third, one of the interviews with William, was inadvertently left untranscribed; even without this particular interview, he is well-represented in the corpus.

In describing the collection of data for his study of Hawaiian Pidgin and Creole English, Bickerton says:

The interviews were carried out by both local and haole interviewers. One might, a priori, expect considerable differences between the two sets of interviews. In fact, . . . there is no sharp distinction, and while overall the local interviewers may have achieved slightly better results, the interview situation itself, and the personality of the interviewer, were equally if not more critical variables.

(Bickerton and Odo 1976:30)

Evidence from Singler and Himmelmann reveals similar results. As noted in the discussion of that work in 1.4.2, the data used in that study are the same as those used in the present work. One of the factor groups tested was the circumstances of the recording, specifically whether I had conducted the interview, had been
the Poro and Sande. There is the ongoing fear that expatriate researchers have come to steal the secrets of the societies." (The apprehension is not totally without foundation: cf., e.g., Cole et al. (1971).) Interviewees were also told that they would be asked no questions about gombo plawa, i.e. politics. In some ways, this might seem to have posed a serious limitation on the interviews. The coup, the most momentous political event of an interviewee's lifetime, had occurred—in the case of some interviews—less than a month before. How the coup could have happened (in a country too small for there to be secrets or surprises), how it did happen, and what its impact would be—this is what people were talking about. It was a time of great excitement, and excitement is the stuff of good interviews. But it was also a time of utter paranoia, and paranoia is not. The point of the agreement to stay away from politics was to reassure interviewees that they need not worry that they were about to be asked compromising questions and that they need never worry about what they had said on the tape or who might hear it. Besides, speakers always had the option to talk politics—but never the obligation. As it turned out, interviewees often made comments that were either directly or present as a participant in a conversation involving at least two—and usually three or more—other people, or had not been present at all. For the linguistic phenomenon under consideration in Singler and Himmelmann, no statistical significance was found for this group of factors.

** While such societies are much stronger and more central in Mande-speaking groups, Kru-speaking groups also have secret organizations of various types. In the event, questions about such matters were asked of no one.
indirectly political. (In comparing the present to the past—a favorite theme of interviewees—the introduction of politics into the discussion was unavoidable.) Some interviewees did go into their coup-related experiences. But whether the coup and its effects were brought up or left out, finding a topic that interested and engaged the interviewee was rarely a problem.

1.4.2 A Related Study

The corpus for the present work also provided the data for Singler and Himmelman (1982), a study of substratal influence on Liberian English with particular reference to resumptive pronouns in relative clauses. (The only difference is that data from Settlers were not included in that study.) Since the focus of the study was on a binary linguistic phenomenon (whether or not a resumptive pronoun was present), it was possible to use David Sankoff's VARBRUL2 program and to compute probabilities. Among factor groups analyzed were several involving the backgrounds of the speakers, and the findings of that study have been used in organizing speakers in the present study. To begin with, for that study, the most important factor to emerge was whether or not someone spoke Kru Pidgin English (KPE). (Those classified as speaking KPE were those who had learned English away from Liberia—in the Kru enclaves of Ghana. Singler and Himmelman present evidence that the language spoken in these enclaves, like the language spoken by Kru sailors on board ships, is a form of Liberian English.) Additionally, while the amount of Western education that a speaker had was
statistically significant, the age at which a speaker had begun to acquire Liberian English was considerably more so. (Speakers were divided according to whether they had begun to acquire Liberian English before or after the age of twelve. Amount of education was divided into three groups according to highest grade entered: 0-3, 4-9, and 10 or higher.) Finally, speaker's first language was also statistically significant. This is, for non-KPE speakers, it mattered whether the speaker's language was Mande as opposed to Kru. (Note that, for the phenomenon that Singler and Himmelmann look at, first-language Kru speakers who are not part of the KPE group pattern much more strongly with first-language Mande speakers than they do with KPE speakers—even in cases where they and the KPE speakers have the same first language.)

1.4.3 The Speakers and their Names

As Singler and Himmelmann's study suggests, four facts about the background of a speaker are particularly significant in determining that speaker's range along the continuum: age at which the acquisition of English began (child or adult), amount of Western schooling, first language (Kru or Mande), and geographic background (coastal Liberia, interior Liberia, or Ghana).45 Extensive Western education and early acquisition of English serve to neutralize ethnic

45 Those speakers who grew up along the "Kru Coast" and then acquired English when they went in Kru workgangs to Ghana have been labeled "Ghana." All other speakers have been designated on the basis of where in Liberia they grew up.
or regional differences between speakers. Consequently, for speakers
who began the acquisition of English as adults and who had little or
no Western education, first language and geographic background are
more important than they are for speakers who were child-learners of
English and/or who have had some Western education.

The speakers in the corpus have all been assigned pseudonyms. The
pseudonyms assigned to speakers are intended to convey information
about them, particularly with regard to three of the four items about
their backgrounds outlined above. Amount of Western education is not
encoded in a speaker's pseudonym, but a speaker's age at acquisition
of English and—where significant—a speaker's ethnic and regional
background are. (All four factors are referred to explicitly
throughout this study.) The primacy of age of acquisition rather than
amount of Western education is in keeping with the findings of Singler
and Himmelmann. Accordingly, speakers have been divided as to whether
they are adult-learners or child-learners of Liberian English.

Adult-learners have been given occupational names as their
pseudonyms, e.g. Boatman, Carpenter. (In fact, the real English
surnames of two of the speakers are derived from their occupations.)
Usually, the occupational name represents that speaker's present or
former occupation. (The exceptions are noted in Appendix A.) Child-
learners, on the other hand, have been assigned first names or
nicknames as their pseudonyms, e.g. Euclid, Bold Dollar. The only
exception to this dichotomy is Shorty, the adult-learner with more
than ten years of Western education. The extensive amount of
education that he has received causes him to pattern more with child-
learners than adult-learners.

Within the group of child-learners, there are four cases where a
single speaker was recorded under two sets of circumstances. In each
case, the speaker has been given two variants of a name:
Augustus/Gus, Charles/Charlie, Richard/Dick, and William/Willlie. The
formal variant has been applied to the more formal recording
situation. Except where attention is called to the fact that, for
example, Augustus/Gus is a single individual, Augustus and Gus are
treated as if they were two different speakers.\textsuperscript{46}

In addition to the pseudonym, five labels have been used. The four
Settler speakers in the corpus have "Settler" in front of their
pseudonyms, e.g. Settler Slim. Similarly, the three Kru Pidgin

\textsuperscript{46} I recorded Augustus/Gus on two different occasions. The first
(Augustus) occurred two days after I had moved into an apartment in
his father's house. The second (Gus) occurred six weeks later,
after we had spent time together virtually every day. The
difference in Augustus/Gus's speech between the two interviews with
regard to copula use is the subject of Singler (1980).

The other three cases involve a different type of separation into
formal and informal. For them, the designation "formal" refers to
interviews, both those that I conducted with them and--in the case
of Richard and William--those that they conducted. (Since those
they interviewed occupied an extremely basilectal range, there
might be some question about this. In the case of Richard, it
seems appropriate. Example (39) in Chapter 3 shows that his
interviewing style displays a formality of speech. William, on the
other hand, does display a greater shift in style. For these three
speakers (Charlie, Dick, and Willie), the informal designation is
applied to recordings of role-playing that they participated in.
Ordinarily, the role-play involved commercial transactions where
both craftsman (carpenter, cobbler, tailor) and customer were
Monrovians. The role-playing was done to provide me with
background for the introduction to Liberian English (and Liberian
life) that I was preparing for the Peace Corps (Singler 1981a):
English speakers—because they acquired KPE in the Kru enclaves of Ghana—have "Ghana" in front of theirs, e.g. Ghana Steward. Finally, for adult-learners of Liberian English from the interior counties, their home county—Lofa, Nimba, Gede—has been added to their names, e.g. Lofa Tapper, Nimba Watchman, Gede Childminder. (Speakers from Bong have been included with those from Lofa.) Lofa and Nimba speakers all have Mande first languages, and Gede speakers all have Kru ones. The use of the labels Lofa, Nimba, Gede, and Ghana has been with adult learners only. This reflects the fact, noted above, that regional and ethnic differences are much more significant for adult-learners than for child-learners.

The information expressed through the pseudonyms is schematized in Table 3 below:

(Table 3 here)

such transactions and the bartering that is basic to them are part of survival in Monrovia. The focus of the role-play was on the dynamics of such exchanges. Willie and Charlie were extremely adept at them. Also, when more characters were needed for a given scene, Charlie would invent them. As a result, a few scenes feature protracted "dialogues between" Charlie.

Are data of this sort valid? The speech involved is obviously part of each speaker's productive competence, a part that a sociolinguistic interview might not succeed in eliciting. With a few brief exceptions, the speakers do not seem to be adopting a register or style outside their normal range. While the style differs from what these speakers use in the interview settings, it is, for the most part, the street style of the savvy Monrovian, the "Rocktown Boy." In that Willie and, especially, Charlie fit that characterization, their use of a "street style" in simulations of "street events" seems wholly appropriate.
TABLE 3

Speaker's Pseudonyms and Their Meaning

Pseudonyms That Are Occupational Names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>1st Lg</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Age at Acquisition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lofa</td>
<td>Mande</td>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Lofa Tapper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba</td>
<td>Mande</td>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh</td>
<td>Kru</td>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Gedeh Soldier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Kru</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>M/K</td>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Painter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pseudonyms That Are Not Occupational Names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>1st Lg</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Age at Acquisition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Settler</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Coast</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Settler Slim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>M/K</td>
<td>C/I</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Shorty, an adult learner with extensive Western education, is an exception to this schema)

(Greater detail about the speakers and about the settings of the recordings is contained in Appendix A. Excerpts from three transcripts are presented in Appendix B.)

1.4.4 The Orthography

Todd, in her 1982 study of Cameroonian, adopts the orthography used by Fyle and Jones (1980) in their Krio dictionary. For the most part, the present work also uses Fyle and Jones's system.

Fyle and Jones use a seven-vowel system: i, e, e, u, o, z, a. In the present work, e has been used in place of e, and o has been used
in place of ə. Moreover, since ə does show up in Liberian English (most often in grammatical elements such as AUX's), it has been added to the inventory.

A nasalized vowel has been written as Vn, e.g.

written     pronounced

 ten     [tə]     'time, town'
 fon     [fɔ]     'phone'

(While pre-vocalic and inter-vocalic nasal consonants are pronounced, post-vocalic nasal consonants ordinarily are not.) ny represents a palatal nasal consonant, and nk stands for [ŋk].

As for oral consonants, ch represents a voiceless alveo-palatal affricate and j its voiced counterpart. (For many speakers, these sounds have much less affrication than they do in American or British English.) sh represents a voiceless alveo-palatal fricative.

Negative auxiliaries are marked with a high-tone mark, e.g. kən 'can't' and dən 'didn't.' Singler (1981c) argues that high pitch is one of the identifying characteristics of verbal negation in Liberian English. Other words in a sentence besides negative auxiliaries display high pitch as well. Negative auxiliaries have been marked for pitch in the present study in order to aid the reader in understanding the Liberian English examples, particularly in cases like kən/kən and nə/nə, where the only phonetic difference between two auxiliaries is one of pitch.
1.5 LIBERIAN ENGLISH PHONOLOGY

In this section are presented aspects of Liberian English phonology that have direct bearing on the TAM system. Perhaps the most dramatic aspect of Liberian English phonology is the extent to which it deletes or, failing that, weakens consonants that occur word-medially and word-finally. Word-initial consonants, including consonant clusters, are generally preserved; but non-initial, non-intervocalic consonants are so frequently altered—either by weakening or deletion—that their identity and even their existence at all on an underlying level are in doubt. This is especially true for word-final consonants.

For verbs, however, the progressive form (V-en) provides a window to the phonological shape of the stem. This is so because the progressive form places consonants that are ordinarily word-final in a word-medial intervocalic position. Here, the stem-final consonants are not subject to deletion. Thus, even though kr0e 'cross' is ordinarily pronounced [kr0], the progressive form is [kr0sen], establishing the underlying form of the stem as /kr0s/.

The progressive form is especially helpful with regard to word-final sonorants. In the case of nasals, there is a language-wide rule:

3. \[ \text{VN} \# \rightarrow \text{\~N} \# \]

This rule's operation is so widespread that it might seem better characterized as a diachronic rule than a synchronic one. However, the progressive forms of the verbs in (4) illustrate that the rule in (3) is synchronic and that contemporary Liberian English does have word-final nasal consonants underlyingly.

82
4. stem stem progressive

/kOm/ [kɔm] [kOmen] 'come'
/spEn/ [spEn] [spEnen] 'spend'
/seŋ/ [səŋ] [seŋken] 'sing'

(When ŋ occurs intervocally, k is inserted after it.)

With regard to r, the evidence from the progressive form argues that Liberian English is genuinely r-less: that is, word-final r's never show up and must be assumed to no longer be a part of the phonological shape of the word, e.g.

5. stem stem progressive

/Enta/ [Enta] [Entaen] 'enter'
/stE/ [stE] [stEen] 'stir'

In contrast, word-final l-'s—which are generally so invisible as to prompt the claim that Liberian English is l-less as well as r-less—do appear in the progressive, e.g.

6. stem stem progressive

/kel/ [kel] [kelen] 'kill'
/sEl/ [sEl] [sElen] 'sell'

Two questions may be asked about the use of the progressive form as a way to establish the underlying form of verbs. Since an absence of inflection is generally agreed to be a characteristic of pidgins and creoles, can an inflected form provide any insights, particularly about basilectal phonology? The answer is that the progressive form is the first inflected form to appear in the decreolization process. Every speaker in the corpus uses progressive forms at least occasionally. (At the same time, the set of speakers from the
Liberian interior who use the progressive form least often is roughly the same as the set who add an epenthetic vowel, most often -i, to consonant-final verbs, e.g. hEpi 'help,' sp0li 'spoil, break.') The second question is whether or not it is productive to assume that all speakers have the same underlying forms for verbs, especially in a study whose focus is variation. In fact, in the matter of stem-final consonants, variation in underlying forms—as manifested by the form of the stem as it appears in the progressive—is remarkably limited.

Apart from the synchronic rule (or rules) governing consonant deletion, there is a Syllable-Structure Condition (SSC) that limits final consonant clusters. Specifically, the SSC prohibits clusters where the second, i.e. final, consonant is a stop. As such, it makes impossible the addition of a non-syllabic past-tense morpheme to a regular consonant-final verb, as (7) illustrates:

7. | stem form: | inflected past form: |
   | [wOk] | [＊w0kt] 'work' |
   | [rish] | [＊risht] 'reach' |

To return to the surface realization of stem forms, in addition to the deletion of word-final consonants, non-initial consonants are subject to a variety of optional processes, two of which bear upon the tense-aspect system and will be described here. The stronger of these (in that it effects the most sweeping neutralization) is a rule that changes a consonant to a glottal stop. Segments are most likely to undergo this rule in word-final position. Also, voiceless stops seem to be the segments most likely to undergo the rule. The rule does
apply—if less frequently—in other environments than word-finally and to other consonants than voiceless stops. A weakness of the present study is that glottal stops were not consistently marked in the transcription of the tapes (and do not appear in excerpts quoted from them). The only place in the present study where it might be critical whether or not a final consonant becomes a glottal stop (as opposed to undergoing deletion) involves the forms of hay, discussed in 3.3.5.2. There the glottal stops have been transcribed.

Another optional weakening process changes d'and, less frequently, t to l. This occurs intervocically and at the beginning of grammatical words, e.g.

8. hEle 'headache'
   0litO 'auditor'
   le definite article
   10 aspectual AUX

This discussion of phonology has treated Liberian English as if its speakers all had the same phonological system. This is not the case. However, of the topics introduced here, the most important for the discussion of tense-aspect-modality are the use of the progressive form to identify the phonological shape of the verb stem and the SSC that blocks the addition of the non-syllabic past-tense morpheme to regular consonant-final verbs. Both of these apply to all—or almost all—speakers.
1.6 THE ORDER OF PRESENTATION

In Chapter 2 all past states and events in the data are analyzed, and the basic marking of tense and aspect in Liberian English is examined. The marking of completive, intensive, and perfect is considered in Chapter 3. Finally, irrealis in Liberian English is examined in Chapter 4. In each chapter, Liberian English is compared with the creole prototype, and the relevance and role of the continuum are considered. (The markers to be discussed in Chapters 2 through 4 are listed in Appendix C.)
Chapter II

PAST STATES AND EVENTS

In 1.1, the prototypical creole and Kru tense-aspect-modality systems were presented. The present chapter looks at the marking of past states and events, while Chapter 3 examines the AUX's that mark completive, intensive, and perfect. (Following Smith (1983), the term "event" is intended to encompass achievements, activities, and accomplishments, i.e. all non-stative verbs.) There is some overlap between this and the next chapter in that completive AUX's often, and perfect AUX's almost always, refer to past states and events in Liberian English. However, the orientation of the two chapters is different: this chapter looks at all past verbs and only at past verbs, while the next chapter looks at all and only those verbs marked by hav, fen, na, or don, whether the verbs refer to past states or events or not.

With reference to the ways in which languages measure time, Bickerton states the following:

Indo-European languages, plus others elsewhere, measure time from a single fixed point of reference, that occupied by the speaker (i.e. 'now'). Anything which occurs before this point is marked as +past. However, this is far from being the only possible way of measuring time. Time can be measured without reference to 'now' or the speaker: the
states and actions that form the subject of discourse can themselves serve as reference points, and their positions in time RELATIVE TO ONE ANOTHER, rather than relative to a single fixed point, can determine the way in which they will be marked for tense.

(1979:311; capitalization in the original)

What Bickerton is describing as an alternative to the Indo-European system is, in fact, the creole system. It is the Liberian English system as well—at least for many speakers. In Liberian English, it is the case that unmarked statives are ordinarily assumed to refer to the present and unmarked events ordinarily assumed to refer to the past. (Thus, Liberian English displays the "factative" unity observed by Welmers (1973) for Igbo and many other African languages.) Particularly for statives, however, ordinarily means "in the absence of contextual information to the contrary." Two examples from the corpus illustrate this. Just prior to uttering the sentence in (1), Ghana Steward has brought his life history up to the present and has been talking about his life in Monrovia. Thus, when he says the sentence in (1), it can be assumed that the wish he is expressing—to return to his home village—is a current one.

1. a wOn tu go hon.
   'I want to go home.'

Ghana Steward 53-15-23

In contrast, Nimba Watchman utters the sentence in (2) while telling a story of how he obtained a goat to present to his patron. Within that context, the hearer can assume that the state involved has past rather than current reference.
2. a wOn du dEn gu tu hat satesfa.

'I wanted to do good for them so that my heart would be satisfied.'

Nimba Watchman 56-53-24

(Certainly examples like (1) are more frequent that examples like (2).)

Traugott (1975) distinguishes between tense and temporal sequencing. Applying Traugott's definitions, it is possible to see that the Indo-European system described by Bickerton is tense-oriented, while the creole system is sequencing-oriented. According to Traugott: 47

Temporal sequencing, also called serial ordering or serialization, involves the relations of two events, A and B, as overlapping, preceding, or following each other. . . . [S]equencing and tense should not be confused since tense involves speaker deixis, while sequencing involves the anchoring of events with respect to each other, but not necessarily to the speaker.

(1975:208)

Sequencing is a pivotal concept in Liberian English, but—from the perspective of Bickerton's description of tense-aspect-modality in creole languages—Liberian English seems to have things "backwards." That is, in Bickerton's description, preservation of sequencing is not overtly marked, while disruption of sequencing is. Section 2.1 shows that Liberian English does not generally mark disruptions in sequencing; moreover, Chapter 3 shows that, in the basilect, the principal function of completive AUX's is to mark the preservation of temporal order, of sequencing.

47 Traugott's terminology is used by Gibson (1982) to recast Bickerton's (1975b) treatment of the Guyanese Creole AUX bin.

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The organization of this chapter is the following: 2.1 tests the applicability of the [± ANTerior] opposition to Liberian English. 2.2 looks at past punctual verbs and the acquisition of Standard Past morphology for them. The rest of the chapter is devoted to non-punctual past forms; the extent to which Liberian English is aspect-prominent rather than tense-prominent becomes evident here. This chapter is limited to realis forms; past irrealis forms are treated in 4.5.1.48

2.1 THE SEARCH FOR THE ANTERIOR

The quotation from Bickerton (1979) presented above, the one that contrasts the Indo-European tense system with the creole one, continues with the following sentence in reference to the creole system: "Such a system would replace the ± past distinction by one which we may call ± anterior" (1979:311). (Bickerton's use of "anterior" with regard to creoles is spelled out in 1.1.1.) If this distinction is to show up in Liberian English, it will show up in the more basilectal range of the corpus. Thus, the examination of the data with regard to the anterior has been confined to a portion of the total set of speakers. Specifically, it has been limited to adult-

48 In the present chapter, past negation--except where referred to explicitly--has not been included. As Singler (1981c) points out, a NEG AUX in Liberian English--particularly in the mesolect--can be reduced to a nasalized, high-pitched copy of the final vowel of the preceding word. A consequence of this extreme reduction, and even of partial reduction, is the neutralization of tense-marked NEG AUX's. In addition to past negation, past copulas have also not been included.
learners and to child-learners with little or no Western education (third grade or less). Clearly, not all of these individuals are basilectal speakers, but all basilectal speakers are in this group.

There are five AUX's in Liberian English that express temporal sequencing: hav, dOn, na, feni, and we. Since anteriority entails temporal sequencing, if Liberian English has an anterior marker, it must be one of these. And, as noted, if Liberia has an anterior marker, it is most likely to occur in basilectal speech. From these considerations, hav, dOn, and na can quickly be set aside. If for no other reason, they can be dismissed because they occur so rarely in the basilect. Moreover, as Chapter 3 makes clear, the use of hav in Liberian English shows little difference from the use have in Standard English. dOn is a feature characteristic of the speech of Settlers and does not ordinarily occur in the speech of non-Settlers. There are only 18 tokens of na (and the variant nOn) among basilectal speakers, and of these only 2 are [+ ANT]. Unlike these three AUX's (hav, don, and na), feni is more widely used in the basilect, but it is argued below (in 3.3.2) that its function in the basilect is to preserve temporal order; as such, verbs marked by feni are at odds with the notion of [+ ANT] inasmuch as verbs which are [+ ANT] tend to be those which disrupt that order. As Bickerton (1977) says with reference to the Hawaiian Creole English anterior marker bin:

... it is usually where there is some actual reversal in the flow of the narrative that bin is found with nonstatives.

(1977:159)

(All four of these AUX's are discussed at length in Chapter 3.)
If hav, dOn, and na are not widely used in the basilect and if feni marks the preservation rather than disruption of temporal order, the only possible candidate for the status of ANT AUX that remains is we (< was)."9 Its use is illustrated in (3) and (4):

3. na wi we kOn tu GbEshlo.

'Then we came to Gbehsehlo.'

Nimba Cook 65-56-11

4. so di Oda mE, hi we gE sonkana mE so az tu 0 tri 0 y0, y0 se dan On e, stre y0 rish en marovia, bo no ka.

'So this other man, he had some kind of mat that when two or three of you sat down on it you were suddenly in Monrovia, but it wasn't a car.'

Welldigger 11-55-17

For now, we V forms will be treated in isolation from we V-en forms. The relation of the former to the latter is discussed in 2.3.5 below.

Something of the extent of distribution of we V forms can be seen in Table 4. The table lists we V forms as a percentage of the total number of past states and events for a given speaker. (Copulas and negative clauses are not included.)

(Table 4 here)

Table 4 shows that most speakers use we V rarely, if at all. Of the 33 speakers in the table, nearly three-fourths of them (24) use we V 3.2 percent of the time or less. Nine do not use it at all. Its relative infrequency need not weaken the possibility that we in we V

"9 The vowel in this AUX, while ordinarily [ə], is subject to a fair range of realizations. Less basilectal speakers tend to distinguish between we 'was' and we 'were,' but the distinction between the two forms is often quite subtle. (In general, where the vowel quality is in doubt, I have transcribed it as ə.)
### TABLE 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>(wa)</th>
<th>(V)</th>
<th>(n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>120</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Diamond Miner</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
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<td>245</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Surveyor</td>
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<td>7.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>275</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td></td>
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<td>98</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Nimba Gardener</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>5.8</td>
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<td>594</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
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<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Weldigger</td>
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<td>94</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>601</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>152</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
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<td>89</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.8</td>
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<td>Shorty</td>
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<td>551</td>
<td>0.7</td>
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<td>Friar Tuck</td>
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<td>135</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>111</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Gedeh Marketwoman</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(n = \text{number of all past verbs}\)
\(n \geq 50\)

Constructions is an ANT AUX: \([+\text{ANT}]\) verbs are a relatively small subset of all past clauses. \(wa\) is the only AUX in Liberian English.
that could possibly be called an anterior AUX, but is that, in fact, what it is? In order to answer this question, some preliminary remarks must be made with regard to stativity. These are presented in 2.1.1; the question of whether or not we marks anteriority is returned to in 2.1.2.

2.1.1 A Consideration of Stativity

The notion "anterior tense" refers to past for statives and past-before-past for events, while the notion "past tense" refers to past for statives and events alike. In other words, the notions of past and anterior converge with regard to statives but diverge with regard to events. For Bickerton (1975b), stativity is a semantic notion:

... the stative--non-stative distinction in Guyanese Creole is a semantic one entirely: that is to say, it is not the case that specific lexical items are marked unambiguously [+stative] or [-stative], rather that these categories apply to propositions irrespective of their lexical content. For instance, in the next two examples, though the surface verb is identical in each, the first sentence contains a stative proposition and the second a non-stative one:

a. tu an tu mek fo.
   'Two and two make four.'

   b. dem mek i stap.
   'They made him stop.'

   (1975b:30)

In discussing Bickerton's concept of stativity and the two sentences with mek cited above, Nichols states:
Bickerton's reluctance to posit two verbs *mek* rests on a tacit appeal to the unity of the lexical item as a phonological form. But clearly, the first example shows a non-literal specialization of *mek* which would traditionally be described as a lexicalization or a lexical derivation, and which removes the verb so used to the separate lexical class of copulas. 

(1976:993)

Regardless of the felicity or infelicity of Bickerton's definition, there is a problematic class of verbs. Bickerton points out that statives are inherently non-punctual:

To ask whether a stative is [+punctual] or [-punctual] makes no kind of sense, since states have by definition an extended duration. 

(1975b:46)

It is because there is no punctual/non-punctual opposition for states, Bickerton argues, that they are never overtly marked for non-punctualness. The Standard English analogue to this is the fact that statives cannot occur in the progressive. (This phenomenon forms the basis for one of the tests for stativity used by Lakoff (1966). There are problems with this test, but those are not relevant here. The test and the problems with it are discussed in 2.3.4.) However, one class of Standard English verbs that seem to fit Bickerton's definition of stativity does take progressive marking, a class that includes *stay, stand, sit, keep, and remain*, e.g.

American English

5. He was staying there while she was on vacation.

6. I was standing in the garden when suddenly the earth began to tremble; "Welcome to L.A.," I thought to myself.
The Liberian equivalents of these sentences would also display non-punctual marking.

For Lakoff, stativity is a syntactic notion. He defines it on the basis of a series of syntactic tests, each of which statives fail. According to Lakoff, the grammatical distinction between stative and non-stative

... partially reflects a semantic distinction. In an overwhelming number of cases, STATIVE verbs and adjectives have the semantic property, NON-ACTIVITY, and NON-STATIVE verbs and adjectives have the semantic property, ACTIVITY. (1966:I-12; capitalization in the original)

Thus, for Lakoff the syntactic property of stativity correlates with the semantic property of non-activity; there are, in addition, a few syntactically non-stative, semantically non-active verbs: these are the problematic verbs noted above, stay, stand, and the others. For Lakoff, then, these verbs are not statives; for Bickerton, they are. In the following places in his works, Bickerton labels verbs of this type as statives: stand (1975b:59), Hawaiian Pidgin stei 'stay' (Bickerton and Odo (1976:210)), and Hawaiian Pidgin kip 'keep' (ibid.:210).

The question of whether to use Bickerton's or Lakoff's definition of stative and whether or not to count ste and similar verbs in Liberian English as statives has the following consequence for the discussion of anteriority: if ste, for example, is treated as a stative, then the occurrence of we ste in a sentence like (7) counts as [+ ANT]:

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7. di tan a kOn frOn owasa na, wi we ste owa de tu bEndaja.

'Then when I came back from Sierra Leone, we stayed over there at Bendaja.'

Builder 51-9-16

On the other hand, if it is not considered to be a stative, then it must be considered [+ PAST, - ANT]. For now, for the sake of argument, verbs like this will be counted as statives and, therefore, as [+ ANT].

2.1.2 We As a Marker of Anteriority

Even when verbs like ste are counted as statives, it remains clear that we does not mark [+ ANT] in Liberian English. Table 5 illustrates this fact: it includes all speakers with five or more occurrences of we V.

(Table 5 here)

Table 5 makes clear that, for 10 of the 13 speakers, we V does not mark anteriority in even a simple majority of cases. Table 6 makes even clearer the fact that we is not an ANT AUX. It compares [+ ANT] events with [+ PAST, - ANT] events. (Since [+ PAST] statives are redundantly [+ ANT], they can be said to have no direct bearing on a discussion of [+ PAST] versus [+ ANT].)

(Table 6 here)

For no speaker is it the case that we-marked events are [+ ANT] more than half the time. For 4 speakers, no we-marked event is [+ ANT]. When all the speakers in Table 6 are taken together, the putative [+ ANT] marker actually is used to mark [+ ANT] events only 14.6 percent of the time.
### TABLE 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>+ANT Stat</th>
<th>+ANT Event</th>
<th>[+ANT] as % of n</th>
<th>-ANT Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>19</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 6

Events Marked by we V

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>[+ANT] % of n</th>
<th>[+PAST] % of n</th>
<th>[-ANT] % of n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
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<td>Brickmaker</td>
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<td>62</td>
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<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
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<td>Chauffeur</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

As a general statement about the Liberian English basilect, it is
true that simple past events often take no overt syntactic marking. This is true even of [+ ANT] events, a fact illustrated by examples from Ghana Steward (not a wa-user) and Nimba Watchman and Nimba Cook (both wa-users). Ghana Steward's example is this: Ghana Steward has worked in Accra and then moved to Kumasi and worked there. At this point in his narrative, he is preparing to leave Kumasi. During his account of his life in Accra, he has mentioned a "girl friend," Mna.

Now he says:

8. GHANA STEWARD: dEn mi tu, a kO ma gE frEn. a se, "jo." i se, "yEs." bik0z wEn a liv tu akra, a go tu kumasi, a gE nOda wayf egen.
EUCLID: o. was aba di fEs wOn?
GHANA STEWARD: di fOs wOn, a liv i.
EUCLID: yu liv i?
GHANA STEWARD: a liv i en akra. dEn a rish kumasi wOn tan, nOda wOn kO n na.

GHANA STEWARD: Then me too, I called my girl friend. I said, "Jo." And she said, "Yes." Because when I had left Accra and gone to Kumasi, I had gotten a different wife.
EUCLID: Oh. What happened to the first one?
GHANA STEWARD: The first one, I had left her.
EUCLID: You had left her?
GHANA STEWARD: I had left her in Accra. Then, when I got to Kumasi, right away I married a different woman.

Nimba Watchman says the following:

---

\[^{52}\] de in this sentence is not an AUX but a focus particle. See also Chapter 3, fn. 76.

---

99
9. a dön no ma on mōda de bōm mi i da, rō dra jōs la dra-boni.

'I didn't know that the very woman who had given birth to me had died until I became as thin/dry as a dried fish.'

Nimba Watchman 61-6-26

(Worry causes weight loss. Even though he was unaware of the death of his mother, that event caused Nimba Watchman to worry and, therefore, to lose weight. dra means both 'thin' and 'dry.' It was only when Nimba Watchman was extremely thin--'dry as a dried fish'--that he discovered (through dreams) the cause of his weight loss, i.e. that his mother had died.)

Nimba Cook is describing the murder of a soldier that has occurred at Firestone.

10. i rish, i si di ples de fayten, i rish dE, i se, "o!"
En shi rōnen, i kōm en di kēn.

'She reached the spot and saw signs that they had fought there. When she got there, she said, "Oh!" She ran to the camp.'

Nimba Cook 64-12-26

It is both clear and crucial in Nimba Cook's story that the woman in question did not see fighting (it had occurred the night before); she only saw evidence that a fight had taken place.

These three examples have been presented as a way of reinforcing the point that Liberian English has no ANT marker and no [+ ANT] opposition. If we does not mark anteriority, what does it mark? That question is addressed in 2.3.3 below.

The discussion thus far of past states and events has established that Liberian English has no ANT AUX and does not, in fact, mark
antiority. The remainder of the chapter considers what categories do obtain for past states and events; its organization reflects the aspect-prominence fundamental to the Liberian TAM system: past punctual verbs are treated separately from past non-punctual verbs. The former are discussed in 2.2, and the latter in 2.3.

2.2 PAST PUNCTUAL VERBS AND STANDARD PAST MARKING

Bickerton defines [+ PUNCTual] thus: "[+ punctual] would imply a single action, [- punctual] an extended or repeated one" (1975b:46). Because statives are inherently non-punctual, the [+ PUNCT] distinction has relevance only for non-statives. In the Guyanese basilect, forms that are [+ PUNCT] (if they are also [- IRRealis] and [- ANT]) bear no marking. Less basilectally, the Standard English marking of past, i.e. the suffix -ed, shows up first on [+ PUNCT] forms. From one end of the continuum to the other, then, two options exist for marking past punctual forms: the zero form and the -ed form. That same pattern shows up in Liberian English as well. To establish this, the data of speakers with more than 25 past punctual verbs were examined. For a speaker with more than 100 past punctual verbs, only 100 were counted. (Ordinarily, counting was begun at the beginning of the second half of the interview or conversation. If

---

51 The claim that Liberian English parallels the Guyanese basilect in this regard is demonstrated in 2.3.7 below. As Table 31 in that section illustrates, among speakers with 3 years or less of Western education, the rate of inflection of strong verbs is 33.2 percent (280/843) when the verb is [+ PUNCT] but less than one-tenth of that (3.2 percent, 14/443) when the verb is [- PUNCT].
that half contained fewer than 100 past punctual verbs, then the first half was used as well. Thus, there was a consistent basis for selecting the 100 past punctual verbs.) Except where noted in 2.2.2, it is this data set that has been used throughout section 2.2 ("Past Punctual"), and references to the "Set of 100" refer to it. Bickerton's definition of [± PUNCT] as referring to "a single action" is adjusted in 2.3. For now, however, it is in use: that is, all the forms in the sample refer to a single action. What the sample shows is that, for 48 of the 59 speakers examined, 90 percent or more of all past punctual events are represented by either the zero form or by V-ed. (For all 59 speakers, at least 80 percent of all past punctual verbs are represented in this way.)\(^2\) The relative percentages for speakers have little if any significance. For example, there is no correlation between these percentages and place on the continuum; there are both acrolectal and basilectal sources for exceptions to the principle that past punctual forms are represented by V or V-ed. Apart from some incidental cases, all the exceptions fall into one of three groups:

a. forms marked by hav, feni, dOn, or na.

b. we V forms.

c. V-en forms.

\(^2\) I have followed Bickerton in referring to forms marked with Standard English past marking as V-ed forms. Since the only variant of the suffix that shows up with any regularity in Liberian English is the syllabic form, -E, e.g. statiE, 'started,' the form should, strictly speaking, be represented by V-E.
The first two types of exceptions are discussed elsewhere, the four AUX's of (a) in Chapter 3, see V in 2.3.3 below. The third type of exception consists of V-en forms. V-en is usually a marker of non-punctual aspect. Its use to mark past punctual is a basilectal phenomenon found particularly in the speech of those whose first language is a Mande language. In all, 12 speakers in this sample show some use of V-en to mark past punctual. They are listed in Table 7.

(Table 7 here)

**TABLE 7**

V-en as a Past Punctual Marker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>V-en</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Lofa Diamond Miner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tapper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Soldier</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rally Time</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Gardener</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = number of past punctual verbs examined
"Set of 100" used

Of the 8 Mande speakers who sometimes use V-en for past punctual verbs, 7 are the Mande speakers most consistently identified with the lower basilect: Lofa Tapper, Lofa Tailor, Lofa Diamond Miner, Lofa
Overseer, Nimba Cook, Nimba Watchman, and Painter.\textsuperscript{53} The four Kru speakers are also highly basilectal: Ghana Steward, Carpenter, Rally Time, and Gedel Soldier.

Of the 45 occurrences of past punctual \textit{V-en} under consideration, roughly two-thirds involve \textit{goen} or \textit{kOmen}, e.g.

11. \textit{tan a kOmen frOn hya wé nati-feti. a jOs kOmen frOn hya, dEn a goen tu di nOmba twEni.}

'The time I left here was 1950. I just left here and went to Camp Number Twenty (in Firestone).'

Lofa Tailor 63-1-9

A "punctual journey" sounds like something of an oxymoron. One explanation for the use of the \textit{-en} form, then, is that these speakers are conforming in a literal way to Bickerton's definition of [+ PUNCT] as referring to a single action. By this explanation, the forms in (11)--referring as they do to a ten days' walk--would be [- PUNCT] for these speakers. But this explanation fails to account for all of the data, for there are other actions that occur in an instant, and these too can be marked with \textit{-en}:

\textsuperscript{53} Lofa Overseer also has 1 and Lofa Tapper 2 \textit{wé V-en} past punctual forms, and Nimba Watchman has 1 \textit{sO V-en} form. \textit{sO} is a copula, most often used in equational constructions, e.g.

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{a. i sO wi odEn br0da.}

'He was our older brother.'

Nimba Watchman 56-7-16
\end{enumerate}
Two factors seem more likely explanations for the high rate of kOmen and goen. One is the frequency of these verbs in general, particularly in the basilect. Among Nimba Cook's 100 past punctual verbs, 42 are some form of go or kOm (19 go, 17 kOm, 6 goen). The second factor, no doubt related to the first, is that--as one moves from basilect to acrolect--the first V-en forms to be acquired are goen and kOmen. In the speech of Lofa Diamond Miner, for example, of the 27 V-en forms that show up as main verbs (regardless of tense or aspect), 14 are goen (12) or kOmen (2). For Ghana Steward, of 176 V-en forms, 142 (80.7%) are either goen (46), kOmen (40), or wOken 'working' (56). The fact that Ghana Steward uses wOken with modals and in infinitive phrases suggests that it might be the uninflected form of the verb for him. (In addition to the 56 tokens of wOken, Ghana Steward does have 3 tokens of w0k.) Regardless of the status of wOken in the speech of Ghana Steward, the point remains that goen and kOmen are prominent in basilectal speech and that the status of -en as an independent, meaning-bearing unit, particularly when it appears as part of goen and kOmen, is in doubt for these speakers.

Another phenomenon, also characteristic of the basilect, is the addition of a paragogic vowel, most often -i, to a consonant-final
verb stem, e.g. *dravi*, 'drive,' and *t0ki*, 'talk.' Except that it is most often attached to verbs and therefore does indicate syntactic category, the vowel contains no grammatical information: *t0ki*, for example, is a variant of *t0k*. In the data cited in Table 7, the following speakers display *V-i* forms: 

(Table 8 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>V-i</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Overseer</td>
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<td>Lofa Diamond Miner</td>
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<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Soldier</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = number of past punctual verbs examined
("Set of 100" used)

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$^5$ The term "*V-i*" is meant to include all forms to which paragogic vowels have been appended.

Because the present discussion is of past punctual verbs, Table 8 is with reference to past punctual verbs. The *-i* can be added to the stem in all environments, including occasions where an AUX co-occurs with the stem. Sometimes *-i* is added to an inflected strong verb: Nimba Watchman uses both *tuki* and *teki* as past punctual forms of 'take,' and Painter uses both *k0ri* and *keshi* as past punctual forms of 'catch.'
These eight speakers are all among those who sometimes use $V$-$en$ to mark past punctual. Even more strongly than the use of $-$en with past punctual verbs, the use of $V$-$i$ forms seems to be a Mande phenomenon. The Liberian National Guard and its predecessor, the Liberian Frontier Force, have historically been dominated by speakers of Mande languages. Gedeh Soldier's speech displays various features that he shares with Mande speakers rather than with his fellow Kru speakers; he is the only non-Mande speaker in Table 8.

The high level of $wa$ $V$ use, the use of $V$-$en$ for past punctuals, and the adding of a final vowel to consonant-final verb stems are all phenomena that occur more frequently in the Mande basilect. However, while $wa$ $V$ shows up (though infrequently) among a fairly wide range of speakers, the other two features seem strictly limited to the basilect.

The phonological processes by which Liberian English has made English words its own have in many cases obliterated the basis for the Standard English distinction between $V$ and $V$-$ed$. The most obvious is the Syllable Structure Condition (discussed in 1.5) that prohibits word-final CC sequences where the second segment is a stop. This blocks additions of the non-syllabic past-tense morpheme ($-d/-t$) to C-final stems. Though not categorical, a powerful tendency in the language to avoid syllable-final stops makes unlikely the past-marking of vowel-final stems as well. Some strong verbs are also affected: mek (and others like it), where inflection consists only of a change in the final consonant; and gev, 'give,' since /I/ and /e/ are
neutralized. Because a rule of the language raises /E/ to [e] before a voiced stop (even if the stop is not realized on the surface), se 'say' is similar to mek in that inflection hinges on a final consonant.

The discussion of the inflection of past punctual verbs is organized in the following manner: Section 2.2.1 looks at the environment where inflection is least likely; that is, it examines the frequency and distribution of inflection in weak non-syllabic cases, i.e. where the inflection is -d or -t. It considers first those cases where the stem is C-final (and where, therefore, addition of a suffix would create a violation of the relevant Syllable Structure Condition) and then considers the case where the stem is V-final. Next, 2.2.2 examines in detail the cases where inflection is most likely, i.e. strong verbs. Finally, 2.2.3 looks at weak syllabic cases, i.e. where the verb is regular and where the past-tense suffix is -E.

---

55 In the discussion of inflection that follows, certain verbs have not been counted: 10s 'lose'; swE 'insist'; gbE 'obtain; have.' 10s is the uninflected form at the basilectal end of the continuum. (More acrolectally, it is replaced by luz.) While many speakers use gbE and gbO in ways that parallel American English 'get' and 'got,' others seem to be invariant in using gbO, still others invariant in using gbE, and others still use various central vowels in place of E and O. se has been counted only when it was not introducing a direct quote. hav-inflection has not been counted. (For a discussion of the inflection of the AUX hav, see 3.3.5.2.)
2.2.1 Inflection: Weak Non-Syllabic

Among Settlers and those with extensive education, "violations" of the Syllable Structure Condition referred to earlier do occur but only rarely. In the "Set of 100," there are 9 examples of the non-syllabic past morpheme added to a consonant-final stem. These are listed in Table 9.

(Table 9 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>keld</td>
<td>'killed'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin</td>
<td>keld</td>
<td>'killed'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Carolina</td>
<td>kelt</td>
<td>'killed'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Albert</td>
<td>belt</td>
<td>'built'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon</td>
<td>sent</td>
<td>'sent'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>spent</td>
<td>'spent'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>tókt</td>
<td>'talked'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Set of 100" used

Eight of these 9 exceptions to the SSC occur when the final consonant is a sonorant; this suggests that the first weakening of the SSC is to permit stop-final clusters in final position if the first segment is a sonorant, particularly a liquid.

---

56 For Settler Carolina, the past suffix shows up as [-t] not only after /l/ but also post-vocally, e.g. dæyt, 'died." Though I have not verified this, I am of the impression that final devoicing shows up with much greater frequency in the speech of Settler women than in that of Settler men.
In the speech sample being considered, these 9 tokens add up to fewer than 1 percent of possible sites; that is, of all the consonant-final stems that could take a non-syllabic past morpheme, fewer than 1 percent have. The rate of past-tense marking of vowel-final stems is somewhat higher, yet it still falls below 5 percent: 16 of the 326 past punctual vowel-final stems in the same sample are inflected, a rate of 4.4 percent. (It is presumably a coincidence that, just as keld/kelt, 'killed,' accounted for most of the cases of inflection of weak C-final stems, dayd/dayt, 'died,' accounts for most (9/16) of the cases involving V-final stems.)

2.2.2 Inflection: Strong

Inflection for past in weak non-syllabic instances approaches categorical non-occurrence. Strong verbs provide a striking contrast in this regard, as Table 10 makes clear. Table 10 shows this. The "Years" in Table 10 refer to amount of Western schooling; the table also shows that acquisition of strong-verb inflection seems to be something that Liberians learn in school.⁷

(Table 10 here)

Of the speakers in the 4-9 range, the top 9 speakers have either attended junior high school or were attending it at the time their speech was recorded; of the bottom 5, only Lizard has gone as far as

---

⁷ Instances of goOn where it is clearly [- PERFECT] have been counted as inflected forms of go. There are four of these in this sample: 2 by Nimba Vendor and 1 each by Chauffeur and Charles. Further discussion of goOn is found in Chapter 3, fn. 102.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inflected</th>
<th>n</th>
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<td><strong>&gt;10 Years</strong></td>
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<td>Comfort</td>
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<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
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<td>Ananse</td>
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<td><strong>0-3 Years</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

"Set of 100" used

sixth grade. For non-Settlers at least, there is a strong correlation between junior high school and near-categorical use of strong verbs. Of the 19 non-Settlers in the sample with a seventh-grade education or better, all 19 have a rate of strong-verb inflection of 85 percent or better. Of the 36 with less Western education than this, only one (Boatman) does. (Though Settler Carolina constitutes something of an exception, the rate of inflection for Settlers, regardless of level of education, is generally comparable to the rate for non-Settlers with a junior high school education.)

At least two of the figures in Table 10 may be distorted. Lofa Tailor is listed as having inflected 15 of 36 strong verbs (41.7%).
This is a much higher rate of inflection than is shown by his colleagues Lofa Tapper (9/50, 18.0%), Lofa Overseer (2/13, 15.4%), and Lofa Diamond Miner (3/35, 8.6%). Lofa Tailor inflects go 13 out of 16 times. This high rate of inflection (81.3%) is suspect. While it is the case that Lofa Tailor uses go (rather than wEn) in non-punctual environments and uses it with AUX's, e.g. we go, 'will go,' he uses wEn in an infinitival construction:

13. na di mi dEn, de kO1E tu wEn tugEda, de se, "wa wi kEn du bifO wi keli da mE dE?"

'Then the animals, they gathered [lit. "collected to go"] together, and they said, "What can we do in order to kill that man?'"

Lofa Tailor 63-51-7

When the go tokens are removed from Lofa Tailor's sample, the figure that remains (2/20, 10%) is comparable to the results for Lofa Tapper, Lofa Overseer, and Lofa Diamond Miner. Gedeh Childminder presents a similar but less dramatic case. In past punctual environments she uses brO, 'brought,' 3 times and bren not at all. But she also uses brO with the habitual marker kEn:

14. En da fam a me tu putu, ef a rEdi tu go, da ka kEn kE mi, di ka kEn brO mi ba.

'As for the farm I planted near Putu, when I'm ready to go there, it's a car that takes me there and a car that brings me back.'

Gedeh Childminder 32-4-1

2.2.2.1 Lexical Diffusion
The question arises as to what factors favor or impede use of the Standard English past-tense marking on past punctual verbs. One hypothesis involves lexical diffusion, specifically that verbs vary as to the likelihood of showing inflection, with the most frequently occurring verbs being the most likely to be inflected. To examine this, the data set was expanded to include up to 25 tokens of go, kóm, tek, and te (< tell). (The same method of counting was used as was used for the principal data set for this section. Only the first 25 tokens of each of these four verbs was used. Additionally, the remaining strong verbs from among the first 100 past punctual verbs were also counted.)

Those speakers were isolated who had 5 or more tokens in at least four of the five columns (with one column each for the four common verbs and a fifth column for all other strong verbs).

In cases where the first 100 past punctual verbs included more than 25 tokens of one of the four common strong verbs, only the first 25 were included in the adjusted data set. These are the only cases where tokens found in the "Set of 100" are not also found in the new data set. The speakers and verbs to which this comment applies are Lofa Tapper, go; Aesop, go; Benson T, go; Roberts T, go; Sailor, kóm; and Charlie, te.

The selection of these four verbs was arrived at in the following way. The speech of all adult-learners of English and of child-learners with no Western education was examined to see which strong verbs showed past inflection by the greatest number of speakers. Six verbs stood out: kóm, go, te, bren, liv, and tek. The entire corpus was then examined for past punctual examples of these verbs. (As noted, for a given speaker only the first 25 tokens of a particular verb were counted.) For the purpose of comparing verbs, 5 was set as the minimum number of tokens. The number of speakers with 5 or more past punctual tokens of bren and liv proved to be too small to permit easy comparison with the other verbs. (In those cases where a speaker had fewer than 5 tokens of bren or liv in the first 100 past punctual verbs but had subsequent tokens of bren or liv, the first 5 tokens of bren or liv have been included in the "Other Strong Verb" column.)

114
The raw frequencies for these speakers are given in Table 11.

(Table 11 here)

**TABLE 11**

Inflection of Common Strong Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>go</th>
<th>kO m</th>
<th>tE</th>
<th>tek</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<td>+/n</td>
<td>+/n</td>
<td>+/n</td>
<td>+/n</td>
<td>+/n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>&gt;7 Years</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>25/25</td>
<td>25/25</td>
<td>19/19</td>
<td>12/12</td>
<td>14/14</td>
<td>95/95</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucia</td>
<td>17/17</td>
<td>9/9</td>
<td>9/9</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>14/14</td>
<td>52/52</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>17/17</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>17/18</td>
<td>67/68</td>
<td>98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>15/15</td>
<td>15/15</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>7/8</td>
<td>55/56</td>
<td>98.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8/8</td>
<td>25/25</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>55/56</td>
<td>98.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>21/21</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>16/16</td>
<td>90/92</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tubman T</td>
<td>24/25</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>7/7</td>
<td>19/19</td>
<td>66/68</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>25/25</td>
<td>19/20</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>12/12</td>
<td>21/23</td>
<td>78/81</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>25/25</td>
<td>11/11</td>
<td>18/18</td>
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<td>24/25</td>
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<td>100/108</td>
<td>92.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>9/13</td>
<td>1/1</td>
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<td>13/14</td>
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<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

0-6 Years

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>go</th>
<th>kO m</th>
<th>tE</th>
<th>tek</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+/n</td>
<td>+/n</td>
<td>+/n</td>
<td>+/n</td>
<td>+/n</td>
<td>+/n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Aesop</td>
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<td>21/25</td>
<td>6/10</td>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>10/22</td>
<td>64/91</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>9/10</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>0/2</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>24/35</td>
<td>68.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>23/25</td>
<td>15/25</td>
<td>4/10</td>
<td>5/7</td>
<td>8/14</td>
<td>55/81</td>
<td>67.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4/7</td>
<td>12/19</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>4/10</td>
<td>29/57</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>0/8</td>
<td>0/5</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>19/40</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>25/25</td>
<td>7/25</td>
<td>8/16</td>
<td>0/19</td>
<td>1/21</td>
<td>41/106</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>2/25</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>4/8</td>
<td>11/17</td>
<td>25/68</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
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<td>Pastor</td>
<td>8/25</td>
<td>7/25</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>0/6</td>
<td>7/19</td>
<td>26/79</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>11/14</td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>0/1</td>
<td>0/5</td>
<td>13/50</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rally Time</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>5/14</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>0/8</td>
<td>9/35</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Gh. Steward</td>
<td>0/25</td>
<td>3/25</td>
<td>11/18</td>
<td>0/18</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>16/97</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ge. Soldier</td>
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<td>0/9</td>
<td>1/16</td>
<td>8/82</td>
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<td>0/20</td>
<td>0/24</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>0/13</td>
<td>0/8</td>
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<td>0/25</td>
<td>0/15</td>
<td>0/115</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the data set used here largely overlaps with that used in Table 10, it is not surprising that the same split occurs between those with a junior high school education and those without. (Settler Slim--because he is a Settler--has been grouped with those having more Western education.) The split is illustrated in Table 12, where the overall frequencies for each verb for the group with more Western education (the first 12 speakers of Table 11 are contrasted with those for the group with less or no education).

(Table 12 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&gt;7 years</th>
<th></th>
<th>0-6 years</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ / n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>+ / n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tE</td>
<td>164/164</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>68/151</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>247/248</td>
<td>99.6</td>
<td>113/311</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kOme</td>
<td>205/214</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td>99/296</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>185/207</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>54/196</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tek</td>
<td>109/115</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>24/151</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though some of the frequencies are so close to one another as to preclude strong claims, almost the same order for the five categories shows up for both groups. Of the four common strong verbs, tE is the verb most likely to be inflected, and tek the least likely. For the more acrolectal group of speakers, all four verbs have a higher rate of inflection than does the category "other strong verbs," though the difference between tek and "other strong" is very small. For the more
basilectal group, the rate of tek-inflection is considerably lower than that for the "other strong" category. If the tendency shown by each group to a fixed pattern of acquisition is to be considered indicative of a general pattern of acquisition of inflection, it should extend to individual speakers. Table 13 tests this. (Where a speaker has fewer than 5 tokens, no frequency is listed.)

(Table 13 here)

That is, if all the individuals are behaving like the group as a whole, every figure in Table 13 will be greater than (or equal to) the figure to its right. In the more acrolectal group, inflection is so near to being absolute that tests like that of Table 13 can say very little. The table provides weak evidence that total acquisition of the inflection of the "other strong" verbs tends to trail the total acquisition of the inflection of the common strong verbs. Nothing more can be said. The wide range of frequencies for the basilectal group provides a greater opportunity to test the order of acquisition of these verbs. However, except for the trivial case of Painter, there is no speaker whatsoever in the lower group for whom the comparative frequencies of inflection parallel the comparative frequencies of inflection of the group as a whole. This suggests that--if there is a fixed order for the acquisition of strong-past inflection--it does not extend to these four verbs and that probably

---

99 Categorical inflection of all the verbs under consideration does not mean categorical inflection of all non-Liberian Standard English strong verbs: as noted in fn. 55, the study removed the following verbs from the strong verb category: swE, gev, se, mek, hav, and 10s/luz.
### TABLE 13

**Frequency of Strong Verb Inflection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>tE%</th>
<th>go%</th>
<th>kOm%</th>
<th>tek%</th>
<th>Other%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;7 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YGC</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benson T</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>tE%</th>
<th>go%</th>
<th>kOm%</th>
<th>Other%</th>
<th>tek%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-6 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>84</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>90</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>40</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
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<td>63</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>85</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
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<td>37</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>44</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
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<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

such an order does not exist.

#### 2.2.2.2 Temporal Clauses
Bickerton (1975b) presents evidence that, for Guyanese, inflection of past punctual verbs is less likely to occur in temporal clauses. By temporal clause, Bickerton means clauses like the introductory one in the following Liberian sentence:

15. wEn ma brOda kOn, dEn i sEn f0 mi.

'When my brother came, he sent word for me to come.'
Rally Time 54-8-9

The speakers in Table 11 were examined in this regard. The frequencies for temporal clauses are compared to those for non-temporal clauses in Table 14.

(Table 14 here)

For 10 speakers (indicated by "x") the difference between the two clause types is greater than 10 percent. These speakers were examined in more detail. The evidence, presented in Table 15, is largely conflicting. The rate of inflection for those verbs that appeared in temporal clauses was compared with the rate for the same verbs in non-temporal clauses.

(Table 15 here)

The small cell-size in Table 15 restricts the force of the conclusions that can be drawn from it. It is the case, however, that, for some speakers and some verbs, the rate of inflection is higher in temporal clauses, e.g. Builder inflects 3 of 4 tokens of kOn in temporal clauses but only 4 of 21 (19.0%) elsewhere. In general, while there is a tendency to inflect strong verbs more frequently in non-temporal clauses than in temporal ones, it is not nearly so strong as that
TABLE 14

Strong Verbs: Temporal vs. Non-Temporal Clauses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Temporal</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-Temporal</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>+ / n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>+ / n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;7 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>13/13</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>82/82</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8/8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>44/44</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>24/24</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>88/89</td>
<td>98.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>Augustus</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>61/62</td>
<td>98.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YGC</td>
<td>14/14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>41/42</td>
<td>97.6</td>
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<td>84/86</td>
<td>97.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>9/10</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>57/58</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>15/15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>62/65</td>
<td>95.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>29/29</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>71/75</td>
<td>94.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>85.0</td>
<td>83/88</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>38/43</td>
<td>88.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-6 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>14/19</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>50/72</td>
<td>69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>16.7</td>
<td>23/29</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Chauffeur</td>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>51/72</td>
<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Bettee</td>
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reported by Bickerton. There are, however, three speakers--Ghana Steward, Rally Time, and Sailor--for whom non-inflection of temporal clauses is categorical. Relly Time and Sailor were "Kru sailors." They have not been designated as such, i.e. "Ghana" has not been placed in front of their names, because they began the acquisition of

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Ghana Steward

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English before they began the Kru work pattern. Still, their speech displays a number of the characteristics of Kru Pidgin English. It could well be that non-inflection of past punctual strong verbs in temporal clauses is such a characteristic.

2.2.3 Inflection: Weak Syllabic

The discussion of the inflection of past punctual verbs has considered first weak verbs that take a non-syllabic ending and then strong verbs. Remaining are verbs that take the syllabic ending, -E, e.g. disayd-E 'decided' and trit-E 'treated.' In the Guyanese case, Bickerton (1975b) states the following:

... we can state with some confidence that for all but a small minority of speakers (three out of a possible twenty-five) V+syl pasts are acquired before strong pasts.

(1975b:143)

Also writing about Guyanese, Edwards (1975) disagrees with Bickerton's assessment:

As far as my informants are concerned, Bickerton is clearly wrong. They seem to be more familiar with the strong past forms.

(1975:251)

In the Liberian case, inflection of weak syllabic forms definitely lags behind inflection of strong verbs. An examination of the "Set of 100"--with Table 10's division by educational level--reveals that
weak-syllabic verb inflection is less frequent than strong-verb inflection for every group. The results are displayed in Table 16.

(Table 16 here)

Weak-syllabic verbs occur often in Liberian English, but the most common of these verbs are rarely punctual. wOn 'want' is a stative, and stat 'start' most often marks ongoing action. (2.3.6.2 examines stat as a quasi-AUX.) Because of the relative scarcity of past punctual weak syllabic verbs, all speakers from Table 10 who have weak-syllabic past punctual tokens—even if only one—have been considered in Table 16. Earlier, the argument was made that Table 10 shows that strong-verb acquisition correlates with a junior high school education. Table 16 makes the point that weak-syllabic inflection correlates with a higher degree of education. When the first group of speakers (senior high school) is compared with the second (junior high school and Lizard) with regard to strong-verb inflection, there is virtually no difference (.2%) between the two. But when the two groups are compared with regard to weak-syllabic inflection, the difference is well over 40 percent (88.9% vs. 44.1%).

** In two cases, speakers add an -E ending to verbs that do not take it in Standard English: YGC uses hetE 'hit' and Benson T uses gEtE 'got.'
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2.2.4 Past Punctual Verbs: Summary

The study of the marking of past punctual verbs shows the usual form to be \( V \) or \( V\text{-ed} \). The exceptions—less than 10 percent of the total—involve either an AUX (\( \text{hay}, \text{feni}, \text{na}, \text{d0n}, \text{we}, \) or \( \text{ez} \)) or the \( V\text{-en} \) form. The use of \( V\text{-en} \) with past punctual verbs is largely confined to the Mande-speaking part of the lower basilect, as is the addition of a paragogic vowel to some consonant-final stems.

With regard to the inflection of past punctual verbs: the inflection of weak non-syllabic forms is highly infrequent if the verb stem is vowel-final and even more rare if the stem is consonant-final. On the other hand, inflection of strong verbs is near-categorical for speakers who have gone as far in school as junior high. The rate of inflection of strong verbs by speakers with less education varies—from 0 to 93 percent. Four common strong verbs were considered with regard to comparative frequency of inflection: the order that emerges both for the more acrolectal range of speakers and the more basilectal one is \( \text{tE}, \text{go}, \text{k0m}, \) and \( \text{tek} \). In the more basilectal group (though not in the more acrolectal group), \( \text{tek} \) inflects with even less frequency than less common strong verbs.
While arranging the verbs according to frequency of inflection yields very nearly the same order for the two groups of speakers, within the acrolectal group of speakers the near-categorical rate of strong-verb inflection makes difficult the extraction of any generalization about the order of acquisition of the inflected form. In the case of the basilectal speakers, a wide range of inflection frequencies provided a better test of an order of acquisition of inflection for the common strong verbs. In fact, the order of the group showed up as the order of no individual within the basilectal group. The possibility that strong-verb inflection is less frequent in temporal clauses than elsewhere was considered; this seems to hold for some speakers, perhaps the Kru Pidgin English subset, but does not emerge as a major factor for Liberian English as a whole. Finally, evidence is presented that inflection of weak syllabic past punctual verbs is a part of Liberian English but that acquisition of inflection of this type lags behind acquisition of strong-verb inflection. In this way, the Liberian evidence corroborates Edwards’s claim rather than Bickerton’s with regard to the order of acquisition, i.e. strong inflection occurs before weak syllabic inflection.
2.3 PAST NON-PUNCTUAL

The discussion of past non-punctual forms will focus on forms that bear some type of marking. Other than statives (and certain related classes of exceptions), non-punctual verbs are always marked by a pre-verbal AUX in Bickerton's creole prototype. In the Liberian English basilect, however, 0-marked non-punctual forms occur with some frequency.

This is not to say that the marking of non-punctuality is random. A recurring strategy, popular in procedural texts and the description of iterative chains of events, is to mark the first clause, the last clause, or both. Clauses internal to the passage are then left unmarked. An example of marking only the first clause is given in (16). Gede Soldier is responding to a question about the long journeys that he used to take when he was in the Frontier Force.

16. wEn wi de go, dEn wi gê awa lo, wi rish f0 tan. (fr0n tan tu tan da tan no ro. pip0 têki k0las tu klin ro.) dEn wEn yu rish f0 tan, yu se, "0 ray, a wO n p0ta." yu gê yu lo, yu go, yu tê di chi, "a wO n wO n p0ta tu kE mi f0 nEs tan." fr0n hya, j0s tu se gb0mu, yu go gb0mu, i kE yu, yu rish f0 tan, yu se, "0 ray, tan chi. a bek p0ta. ge mi p0ta. des mE mO go ba." dEn da mE pu di kenja dan, En i go ba. dEs di we wi travo, En?

'When we'd go, then we had our load to carry, and we'd reach a town. (Those days when you went from town to town, there wasn't a road. People would just use a machete to keep the path clear.) So, when you'd get to a town, you would say, "All right, I want a porter."
You'd take the load that you had, you'd go, and you'd tell the chief, "I want a porter to carry my things to the next town." From here to, say, Gbohmu, the porter would go with you to Gbohmu. When you got there, then you'd say to the chief there, "All right, town chief. I want a porter; give me one. This man needs to go back to his village." Then the porter would take the wicker basket with your things in it off of his back and return. That's how we used to travel, you see?'

Gedeh Soldier 31-52-7

The very first clause bears the non-punctual AUX de; no subsequent clause in the passage is marked. (There is a summarizing clause, but it too shows no marking.)

An example where both the introductory and final clause are marked comes from Gedeh Childminder. In a discussion of the past, Gedeh Childminder mentions that people used to have to take the rice they had grown to Cape Palmas in order to sell it to get money with which to pay their taxes.

17. JVS: bO a no e fa tu kepama.
GEDEH CHILDMINDER: o!
JVS: tu w0, yu ha tu w0 de tan?
GEDEH CHILDMINDER: tu w0, yu g0 tu w0. yu we ste en di ro fay de, ses de so yu rish kepama tu go sE di ras. sE da ras na, si da eti sEn, En yu kOn tu pe di h0 tEsE. da di we dEn kEn du fE tan.

JVS: But I know that it's far from here to Cape Palmas.
GEDEH CHILDMINDER: Oh, yes!
JVS: You used to have to walk to get there?
GEDEH CHILDMINDER: You had to walk. You would stay on the road five or six days in order to get to Cape Palmas and sell that rice. You'd sell the rice, get your eighty cents for it, and come home to pay the hut tax. That's what people used to do in the old days.

32-56-7

After answering the question asked of her, Gedeh Childminder begins a description of the trip. She marks the first clause with we and the
summary with kEn, both markers of non-punctual aspect. All the clauses internal to the passage are unmarked. This 0-marking of chains of clauses lends support to Givón's interpretation of Bickerton's creole tense-aspect system. Givón argues that the 0 form is used to mark "events in [the] natural sequence of [their] occurrence"; as such, the use of the 0-form extends to non-punctual sequences such as those presented in (16) and (17) (1982:119).

Two other remarks are in order prior to a discussion of the specifics of the marking of past non-punctual in Liberian English. Both involve refinements of Bickerton's basic aspectual system—at least in its application to Liberian English—and neither invalidates the oppositions that Bickerton proposes. The primary aspectual opposition involves punctual versus non-punctual where punctual is "a single action" and non-punctual an "extended or repeated" one. Non-punctual is further divided into habitual/iterative ("repeated" actions) and durative/continuative ("extended" ones). The first point to be made is that some types of iteration behave like punctual events. Events that occur an unspecified number of times are like events that occur habitually: they are non-punctual. On the other hand, events that are specific in their occurrence, including specific as to the number of times they are repeated, group syntactically with [+ PUNCT] verbs. That is, they do not bear overt aspectual marking. In (18), Settler Albert says of his grandmother:
18. ma grEnmOda mEric sEwEn tan.

'My grandmother was married seven times.'
Settler Albert 60-69-28

In (19), Calvin describes the Harper hangings of 1979: in a highly publicized case, seven men were executed on the same day for their role in a murder.

19. dEn EftawEd, EriwOn a dEn wEn O, de put e ro ran ran dE nEk.

'Then after that, everyone of them went up, and people put a rope around them, around their necks.'
Calvin 27-55-19

In (18), a single person does the action in question a specified number of times; in (19), a specified number of people each do the action (or have it done to them) a single time. In both types of cases, Liberian speakers consistently treat the event the same way that they treat punctual ones.

The second point involves the notion that durative/continuative entails an "extended" action. This suggests that speakers only mark a single action as non-punctual when it goes on longer than usual. It is certainly the case that a prolonged action frequently takes non-punctual marking in Liberian English, but it is also the case that speakers sometimes opt for non-punctual, specifically durative/continuative, marking for events even when their duration has not been extended. A sentence from Bettee can illustrate the phenomenon:
20a. wa a wa iten di ras, dEn ma ma se, "gE rEdi na tu go chEch."

'While I was eating the rice, then my mother said, "Get ready to go to church."'

Bettee 55-59-19

Had Bettee's mother made her comment to Bettee after Bettee had eaten the rice, the sentence most likely would have been the following:

20b. a it di ras, En dEn ma ma se, "gE rEdi na tu go chEch."

'I ate the rice, and then my mother said, "Get ready to go to church."'

The difference between the two sentences is not in the duration of Bettee's eating rice. The difference between the two is that the first one--to use Comrie's phrase--makes reference to the "internal temporal constituency" of the event while the second does not. Thus, while an "extended" event can take non-punctual marking in Liberian English, it is also the case that a given "non-extended" event can be non-punctual or punctual, depending on how the speaker chooses to express it (and on such notions as "narrative" vs. "orientation," as these terms are used in Labov (1972a) and elsewhere).

The organization of the discussion of past non-punctual is as follows: first there will be a description of the basic system (2.3.1 and 2.3.2). This description will sketch the basilect, as represented by Gede and Ghana speakers, and then will show how the system changes along the continuum. Then a case will be made for a second, largely autonomous basilect, represented by long-time residents of the Firestone rubber plantation (2.3.3). The relation of this basilect to
the continuum as a whole will be considered. (The first basilect and systems that evolve from it along the continuum are considered the "primary" Liberian continuum, by virtue of their greater geographic range.) Statives enter into the discussion of non-punctual marking in Liberian English, particularly for the second basilect. For that reason, a section on statives then follows (2.3.4). (Throughout the discussion of past non-punctual, statives are included. That is, the data to be discussed include AUX-marked and V-en forms of verbs. When statives are so marked, they are included.) Then, the integration of the two basilects--to form a single mesolect--is considered (2.3.5). Three topics somewhat less central to past non-punctual are presented next (2.3.6): the use of reduplication to mark aspect, the development of stat 'start' as a quasi-AUX, and the role of conditionals in the expression of non-punctuality. The way past non-punctuals are marked in conditionals is different from the way they are marked in other sentences. For that reason, the marking of conditionals--both antecedents and consequents--has been excluded from the general discussion (and related quantification); it is discussed as a part of the section on conditionals (2.3.6.3). Finally, past non-punctual non-stative verbs that have not been marked for aspect, i.e. that bear neither an AUX nor an -en suffix, are examined with reference to the extent to which they show Standard Past marking.
2.3.1 The Primary Basilect: Gede and Ghana

The "primary" basilect, the one that extends along the Liberian coast and also includes speakers from Grand Gede County in the interior and the "Ghana Kru," will be illustrated primarily by the examination of data from the Gede and Ghana speakers.¹ The focus will be on the speech of these two groups because, within this basilect, their speech seems the most basilectal. A striking characteristic of the speech of the Gede basilect and of the Kru Pidgin English basilect (the "Ghana" speakers) is the overwhelming extent to which it is aspect-oriented and, conversely, the degree to which tense-marking is all but absent. A discussion of aspect-marking for Gede and Ghana speakers will make both points. Additionally, an examination of these speakers' treatment of past copulas will reinforce the second point, i.e. the virtual absence of tense-marking.

With regard to aspect, past non-punctual forms and non-past non-punctual forms are marked identically. At the basilectal extreme, de is the single non-punctual marker, used to mark both habitual/iterative and durative/continuative. Examples from Gede Gold Miner illustrate both types, iterative in (21) and continuative

¹ Subsequently, I refer to this basilect as the "Ghana/Gede" basilect, and I argue for the existence of a second basilect, which I refer to as the "Lofa" basilect. In both cases names of portions of the whole (Ghana/Gede and Lofa) are being used to stand for the whole. These names are artificial and, because they refer to parts rather than the whole, not altogether satisfactory. The Lofa basilect is roughly equivalent to "Soldier English," but this term is a stigmatized one. Additionally, the relation of the speech of the "Ghana Kru" (Kru Pidgin English) to that of the Grand Gede speakers and to that of speakers along the coast is left in abeyance.
21. **wi de kO pam nO, wi de brok kEnE, wi de kë f0 sano, mek Oy, biho wi de pe tas.**

'We would cut palm nuts, break the palm kernels, take them to Sinoe, make oil, and then we'd pay our taxes.'

_Gedej Gold Miner 28-64-17_

22. dEn ma peken, wOn, tu, tri, dE, i dë tra f0 buk, go f0 suku.

'Then my son, the third one there, he was trying to get an education, going to school.'

_Gedej Gold Miner 28-7-27_

Gedej Gold Miner uses _de_ 29 times; it is the only non-punctual marker that shows up on past forms in his data. With regard to copulas, the tripartite copula system of the Liberian English basilect is that found throughout West Africa: _de_ for locatives, _bi_ for equationals, and _0_ for attributives. In Gedej Gold Miner's speech there are 23 past copulas: 6 locatives, 9 equationals, and 8 attributives. Not

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62 "Habitual/iterative" will be referred to as "iterative" and "durative/continuative" as "continuative."

63 Gedej Gold Miner does use _wë V_ once—but in a way quite different from other speakers:

a. JVS: so _dë twE yiaz na yu ben meken fam?_
GEDEH GOLD MINER: _a wë mek fam._

JVS: So that's twelve years now that you've been farming?
GEDEH GOLD MINER: I've been farming. (??)

28-8-20

The interview takes place during farming season; Gedej Gold Miner has already said that he has planted his crops for the year. The most likely explanation for his use of the _wë V_ construction is that Gedej Gold Miner is attempting to replicate a construction (ben _V-en_) that is not part of his productive competence.
one is marked for tense. All 6 locatives use de, 7 of the 9 equationals use bi (the other two using de bi and ə), and all 8 attributives are ə.

Gedeh Gold Miner is the only speaker in the corpus whose marking of past non-punctual is entirely restricted to de. An examination of aspect in all situations—and not just for past verbs—is necessary to establish the way in which the system changes along the continuum. The present evidence suggests that, very early, V-en comes to mark continuative. The speech of Ghana Steward reflects this second stage: he uses de and V-en to mark past non-punctuals. (As noted in 2.2, however, Ghana Steward sometimes uses V-en to mark punctual forms as well. This is particularly true of k0men, goen and w0ken.)

The distinction between iterative (a "repeated" action) and continuative (an "extended" one), once introduced, remains a part of the continuum. A point should be made about the relation of the two to each other. In characterizing non-basilectal speech, Bickerton (1975b) divides non-punctual forms into [+ CONTinuative] and [- CONT]. Implicit in a binary opposition of this sort is the assertion that a given form must be one or the other. In fact, iterative and continuative very often overlap. A sentence from Bettee illustrates this:

23a. a t0 de di wumE b0n ə, ná nowen e ná hE b0n ə bik0z a di kayn a trimEn wa shi yuzu gev mi.

'I thought that she was my own mother; I didn't realize that she couldn't be my mother—because of the kind of treatment that she used to give me.'

Bettee 55-2-22

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Bettee uses the iterative construction yustu V, but she could have easily used the continuative construction w V-en:

23b. . . . bikOz a di kayn a trimEn wa shi wa geven mi.
   ' . . . because of the kind of treatment that she was giving me.'

To return to Ghana Steward: he uses de 16 times and V-en 37 times. (Of the V-en forms, 25 involve woken 'working'; in the latter cases, non-punctuality is usually, but not always, clear.) With regard to copulas, his performance largely parallels Gedeh Gold Miner's; he usually observes the three-way distinction, de/bi/0. Out of 61 past copulas, wa has replaced the usual (non-past) form in only 6 cases (2 locative, 3 equational, and 1 attributive).

After the introduction of -en and the creation of a de/-en opposition, the next change in the transition from basilect toacrolect seems to be the replacement of de by kEn, e.g.

6A Ghana Steward also uses ez V-en once and bi V twice. In a virtuoso passage, he shows the non-punctual strategies at his command: de V, V-en, and bi V, as well as stat V and reduplication.

a. "En hin wOn, he sta tu t0 t0, hi tOn owa wOn tan, dEn hi bi t0; weda wi n0 hir1 hu tDken tu hen b0 hin wOn hi de t0."

"He was by himself, and he started talking and talking; he turned around once, then he was talking. Although we didn't hear who was talking to him, as for him, he was talking."

Ghana Steward 52-63-7
24. en da tan, ma odEn tan, ma fada dEn, i kEn pe h0 tES E eti sEn.

'Back then in the old days, my father's generation used to pay a hut tax of eighty cents a year.'
Gedeh Childminder 32-55-2

Gedeh Childminder illustrates this stage of the continuum. Her speech includes 27 tokens of kEn V and 18 of V-en but none of de V. (It also includes 2 tokens of yustu V and 2 of we V, one of which is part of (17), presented above.) With regard to copulas, the locative/equational/attributive distinction of the basilect disappears in the mesolect. All non-past copulas are 0-marked. The mesolect does, however, distinguish between non-past and past copulas, with 0 marking past copulas. Gedeh Childminder has lost the basilect's three-way distinction but has not yet acquired the past/non-past distinction of the mesolect. Of 30 past copulas in her speech sample, 29 are 0; the thirtieth, an equational copula, is we. (Further into the mesolect, Aesop has 52 past copulas. Of these 1 is 0, 1 is ez, and 50 are we.)

The basilectal treatment of past non-punctual forms and of past copulas has been outlined in some detail in order to make the following point: like creole languages in general and like the other English-based pidgins and creoles of West Africa in particular, Liberian English is overwhelmingly aspect-oriented. The treatment of past non-punctuals described thus far shows that the basilect makes no reference to tense, past non-punctual and non-past non-punctual being all one. Indeed, at the basilectal extreme, Liberian English "out-
aspects" its West African neighbors in that, while these other varieties have don and bin, the Liberian English basilect comes close to not marking tense at all.

2.3.2 The Mesolect

Subsequent changes along the continuum involve the introduction of a past/non-past distinction for non-punctual forms. Non-past non-punctual forms continue to be V-en, but past ones are now wo V-en. Still more acrolectally, the past/non-past distinction becomes a part of iterative marking, too, with kEn the non-past iterative and yustu (< used to) the past.\textsuperscript{65} The evolution and expansion of the marking of past and non-past verbs can be expressed by the following schema (modeled on Bickerton (1975b:112)). (In (25), the caveat regarding the overlapping of iterative and continuative needs to be kept in mind, however.)

\textsuperscript{66} yustu is frequently pronounced [nyustu].
25. 

STAGE 1

[-PUNCT] → de

STAGE 2

[-PUNCT] → [-PUNCT][±CONT]
[-PUNCT][+CONT] → -en
[-PUNCT][-CONT] → de

STAGE 3

def → kEn

STAGE 4

[-PUNCT][+CONT] → [-PUNCT][+CONT][±PAST]
[-PUNCT][+CONT][-PAST] → -en
[-PUNCT][+CONT][+PAST] → wa -en

STAGE 5

[-PUNCT][-CONT] → [-PUNCT][-CONT][±PAST]
[-PUNCT][-CONT][-PAST] → kEn
[-PUNCT][-CONT][+PAST] → yustu

Gedeh Gold Miner's treatment of (past) non-punctuals is accounted for by the rule in Stage 1, Ghana Steward's by the rules in Stages 1 and 2, and Gedeh Childminder's by those in Stages 1-3.

This schema reflects the order in which changes appear in the continuum, and it apparently reflects the order in which new forms are acquired. The changes are not, however, absolute. Acquisition of, for example, the rule in (26) does not mean that speakers who have this rule will use only kEn to mark iteratives and will never use de:

26. def → kEn

Rather, speakers will vary. As a general rule, there appear to be four stages in the acquisition of a rule like (26) (or of any of the post-Stage 1 rules):

categorical non-application of the rule
heavy (>80%) non-application of the rule
heavy (>80%) application of the rule
categorical application of the rule

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This schema of stages is consistent with Charles-James Bailey's Principle 17 and its attendant S-curve:

A given change begins quite gradually; after reaching a certain point (say, twenty percent), it picks up momentum and proceeds at a much faster rate; and finally tails off slowly before reaching completion. The result is an S-curve: the statistical differences among isolects in the middle relative times of the change will be greater than the statistical differences among the early and late isolects. (1973:77)

Thus, to the extent that there is a stage between heavy non-application and heavy application of a rule, it seems to be comparatively short-lived. That is, the usual rate of application of a rule seems to be between 0-20 percent or 80-100 percent. Moreover, there is no reason why every progressive acquisition of a rule need occur at the same pace. Some syntactic environments, for example, may be particularly resistant to the operation of the rule. Thus, the schema in (25) shows when new forms appear on the continuum but not necessarily when old forms disappear. The relevance of this general statement to the present data involves kEn and -en. -en seems to be acquired before kEn--at least in Kru Pidgin English, if not everywhere. However, kEn is more ephemeral than -en; once acquired, it then disappears much more rapidly. The evidence that acquisition of -en precedes acquisition of kEn comes from speakers who use de and -en but not kEn. There are three such speakers, given in Table 17. Of these, the evidence from Ghana Steward is by far the strongest. The number of de-users who use kEn but not -en may be small, but there are no speakers at all who use de and kEn but not -en.

(Table 17 here)
TABLE 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>de V</th>
<th>V-en</th>
<th>kEn V</th>
<th>we V-en</th>
<th>yustu V</th>
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<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

An examination of non-past non-punctuals would help to resolve the present issue. For now, the available evidence, particularly that provided by Ghana Steward, will be taken as indicative of the general tendency in Liberian English for -en-acquisition to precede kEn-acquisition.

The argument has been presented that acquisition of -en precedes acquisition of kEn. The evidence that loss of kEn precedes loss of -en comes from speakers who use we -en and yustu as well as -en but not kEn. There are eleven such speakers; there are no speakers who use we -en and yustu but not -en. Thus, if the proposed order of acquisitions and losses of past non-punctual forms and oppositions in Liberian English is correct, any table that would represent it needs to reflect the fact that kEn, acquired after -en, is lost before it. This is done in Table 18. A quarter of the way down down the table, the order of the columns is changed. Listed in Table 18 are all speakers with a total or 5 or more tokens of the five forms under discussion. For speakers with more than 50 such tokens, only the first 50 have been counted. (A counting technique comparable to that
outlined in 2.2 for selecting the first 100 past punctual verbs has been used."

(Table 18 here)

The inversion of columns in Table 18 has as its primary asset the accommodation of the Ghana speakers. Perhaps the rule-systems of Ghana speech and, for example, Gede speech differ in this regard. Further investigation of this point with additional speakers is needed before the aptness of Table 18, as formulated here, can be confirmed or disconfirmed.

Two groups of speakers have been omitted from Table 18, speakers in the proposed second basilect (discussed in 2.3.3) and a second set, to be discussed directly. The continuum model accounts for that variation which is linked to proximity to the target language. Because amount of Western education correlates (or can be expected to correlate) with that, the continuum model can treat education-induced variation. Such social notions as modernity ought also to be represented readily. (The comments of Gilman (1979), cited in 1.3.4.5, are relevant here.) Thus, Gede Gold Miner is the most basilectal of speakers in Table 18, while his strongly modernity-oriented daughter, Gede Marketwoman, is at the acrolectal end—for this table, at least—even though she has no more Western education than her father. On the other hand, features of group solidarity might not lend themselves so readily to representation on the continuum. It is also not clear how completely geography can fit. Bickerton (1975b) argues that rural Guyanese speech is more basilectal
TABLE 18

Distribution of Past Non-Punctual Forms

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>de V</th>
<th>V-en</th>
<th>kEn V</th>
<th>we V-en</th>
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<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

143
than urban Guyanese speech. In the present work, it has been assumed that speech from the interior of Liberia is more basilectal than--"Kru sailors" aside--speech from the coast. It is not clear that this gap exists all the way along the continuum. Liberians can acquire Liberian Standard English--and a university education--without ever having lived within 100 miles of the coast. On the other hand, certain mesolectal innovations seem tied to the coast, particularly to Monrovia. Speakers from the interior whose speech fits into the upper mesolect and the acrolect bypass such innovations. How is the continuum model to represent these differences?

\( \text{do} (< \text{does}) \) is a case in point. The schema in (25) contains the Stage 3 rule that changes de to \( \text{kEn} \) and the Stage 5 rule that introduces \( \text{yustu} \) in place of \( \text{kEn} \) in past environments. The \( \text{de/kEn/yustu} \) sequence for iterative past non-punctuals obtains throughout much of the country but not in Monrovia or its environs. (In this case the "environs" extend to Robertsport to the northwest and, presumably, to Buchanan to the southeast.) In this region, the following additional rule must be inserted after Stage 4:

27. \( \text{kEn} \rightarrow \text{do} \)

The equivalence of \( \text{kEn} \) and \( \text{do} \) is illustrated (in a non-past environment) in (28). In this passage the first and last sentences are identical except that \( \text{kEn} \) has replaced \( \text{do} \).

28. "e ná Erìde wumE \text{do} \text{krE}. sOne de e yu fi la tu \text{krE}, yu \text{krE}, bò e yu dón fi lâ, yu dón \text{krE}. e ná Erìde wumE \text{kEn} \text{krE}."

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"It's not everyday that a woman has sex. Some days, if you feel like screwing, you screw, but if you don't feel like it, you don't. It's not everyday that a woman has sex."

Bettee 55-53-28

(do is used only in the affirmative. The negation of both do and kEn is the high-tone NEG AUX kEn (discussed in 4.3.).) The "Monrovia" version of Table 18, for speakers who use do to mark past iteratives, is given below. (Because Charles uses do and is in Table 19, Charlie--his less formal doppelgänger--has been placed here as well.)

(Table 19 here)

Only speakers who use do (and Charlie) have been included. (In addition to these speakers, Benson T, a lifelong resident of Sinoe County, uses do once.) Thus, Table 19 "looks" better than it might, had it included all eligible speakers, eligibility being determined by

---

66 do is the Liberian counterpart of Guyanese doz. With reference to doz, Bickerton says the following:

Doz was presumably adopted by at least some African speakers prior to the start of Indian immigration from Guyana in the mid-nineteenth century. Its apparent absence from Sranan and the African pidgins and creoles suggests that it was a purely Caribbean innovation... Doz has long been established in Barbados (Collymore 1965) and was presumably spread from there to Trinidad, where its use is widespread (Solomon 1966). Until recently it had not been attested in any other anglo-creole; there is no mention of it in the extensive literature on Jamaican Creole, for instance. However, there was also no mention of it in the almost equally extensive literature on Gullah until Cunningham (1970), though its frequency in the Sea Islands is noted in that work and confirmed in more recent fieldwork by John Rickford and William Stewart (personal communications); also, according to Rickford (personal communication), Karl Reisman has recently discovered several occurrences in his data from Antigua. It therefore seems possible that doz is much more widespread than had been supposed, and has either been missed or ignored by previous analysts.

(1975b:62)
TABLE 19

Past Non-Punctual Forms in the Monrovia Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>de V</th>
<th>kEn V</th>
<th>V-en</th>
<th>dO V</th>
<th>wə V-en</th>
<th>yustu V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rally Time</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friar Tuck</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martha</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bettee</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

length of residence or the like.

Strictly speaking, the notion of the continuum would require the combinability of Tables 18 and 19. Their separation into two reflects the differences in rule systems that obtain within Liberian English, between a system which includes the five stages of the schema in (25) and an alternative system that requires insertion of an additional intermediate stage.

There is no reason why the presence of dO in Liberian English need invalidate Bickerton’s hypothesis of a Caribbean origin for it and doz. dO could easily be—and probably is—an AUX brought by the Settlers from the New World to Liberia. (As for Barbados, 346 Barbadians immigrated to Liberia in 1865 under the auspices of the American Colonization Society.) dO is a part of Settler speech, as Settler Slim’s comment about a sick friend illustrates:

a. Én yu si ha hi dO wok?

'Don’t you see how he walks?'

Settler Slim 48-2-6

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An additional point with regard to the schema in (25) involves the 
[± CONT] distinction. The introduction of this opposition shows up 
early on, in Stage 2. For most speakers, once this opposition has 
been introduced, [+ CONT] forms show up with far greater frequency 
than do [- CONT] ones. The explanation for this is not necessarily 
that semantically [+ CONT] forms are more frequent. There are at 
least two other factors that could play a part in explaining this 
difference. It was noted in 2.3.1 that the line between continuative 
and iterative is often quite indistinct. There could well be a 
tendency to use we V-en in these ambiguous cases. The opposite choice 
seems to be the one made by speakers in the Monrovia mesolect. 
Evidence for this claims comes from Table 19; note the generally 
higher rate of yustu use among the speakers in this table. (Settlers, 
too, have a high rate of yustu use.) There is another factor that 
would also serve to explain the comparatively low rate of [- CONT] 
forms. It was noted above that iterative chains of events and also 
procedural texts (with their implied iteration) frequently limit overt 
marking of non-punctualness to introductory or summarizing clauses. 
(This split between the introductory clause and the subsequent 
narrative when iteration is involved also obtains in Standard English, 
with used to often marking an introductory clause and would then 
marking subsequent clauses (Roger Andersen, p.c.).)

Also with regard to the schema in (25) and to Tables 18 and 19: 
these address the major ways of marking past non-punctual along the 
continuum, but there is an alternative [- CONT] marker, we (< will).
It is used infrequently as a habitual marker over much of the continuum. This wide range parallels we's domination of irrealis along the continuum. That is, we is acquired basilectally and remains the primary irrealis marker—even in conditionals—to or near the acrolectal extreme. (This is discussed in Chapter 4.) There seem to be two sources in Standard English for the Liberian use of we in past non-punctuals. One is the use of we as a habitual marker (in non-past environments). A illustration of Liberian usage in this regard in the past is found in this sentence from Example (17), repeated below:

17. yu we ste en di ro fay de, ses de so yu rish kepama tu go sE di ras.

'You would stay on the road five or six days in order to get to Cape Palmas and sell that rice.

Gedeh Childminder 32-56-7

The other Standard English source is would, the past habitual marker that operates in tandem with used to. (29) illustrates this:

29. de se a di wOn yustu 1a fayten besne o. En a we tek ma le br0da tu go KE hi On di ro f0 hen tu go fayt en 0.

'They said that I was the one who used to fight all the time. And I even would take my little brother out on the road to force him to get into fights.'

Gus 2-51-24

It is sometimes suggested that the use of will (in Standard English) to mark habitual events is correlated with the event's infrequency; as such, a will-marked habitual verb is, by virtue of the greater infrequency of the event, more irrealis-like. Whether or not this characterization is accurate for Standard English, it does not hold for Liberian English. (30) illustrates the point.
30. fEs-fEs tan de we ke yumë bien tu nu krutan la hE. En wEs pan de we ke dE la hE.

'They used to kill people in New Krutown all the time. And West Point, they would kill them there all the time too.'

Nimba Vendor 16-15-4

The adverbial expression la hE (< like hell) in (30) emphasizes the frequency of the event's occurrence. Regardless of the character of we's use, it remains a secondary marker in the system.\(^67\)

2.3.3 A Second Basilect?

In this section a case is made for a second basilect. The first issue in this regard is whether or not social and geographical conditions might give rise to a speech variety (or part thereof) divergent from the basic continuum. The case for geographical diversity has already

\(^67\) No mention has been made in this section of we V. It is discussed in 2.3.3. Of the speakers listed in Tables 18 and 19, the following have past non-punctual, non-stative uses of we V:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Benson T</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Chef</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sailor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A variety of other non-punctual markers and combinations of markers show up as well, e.g. Porter's de yustu. Those that a speaker has used more than once are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bi V-en</td>
<td>Painter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi V</td>
<td>Painter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kud V</td>
<td>Shorty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ez V</td>
<td>Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wud V</td>
<td>Settler Albert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ez V-en</td>
<td>Solomon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shorty's use of kud (< could) to mark past irrealis is discussed in
been made in a restricted way with regard to do, but calling for a separate basilect requires more. The history of Liberian English sketched in Chapter 1 argued that Liberian English had arisen along the coast and that "Kru sailors" had played a major role in its development. Additionally, the history identified two principal impetuses for the spread of Liberian English into the interior, the development of the Liberian Frontier Force and the establishment of the Firestone rubber plantation in Harbel, and it suggested the recurrence of pidginization as part of both phenomena. The Firestone plantation is near the coast, located between traditional Kpelle (Mande) and Bassa (Kru) homelands. While the Bassa would have been well represented at Firestone, the bulk of the labor force came from the Mande groups of the interior, from the regions that are now Lofa, Nimba, and Bong Counties. Similarly, the Liberian Frontier Force has always been primarily Mande in composition. What these facts suggest is a repidginization of Liberian English among a new group of speakers, a group whose substrate was largely Mande. That these speakers did not speak English already before they got to Firestone is abundantly clear from their own testimony:

4.5.1. As Pastor's use of ez V (< is V) makes clear, the use of inflected forms of bi ('be') with uninflected main verbs is not confined to wo V.
31. di f0e tan wi goen marovia, di tan wi no hia Engəli sE, we wo t0 f0 100ma.

'We when went to Monrovia for the first time, when we didn't even speak English, we were speaking Loma.'

Lofa Overseer 62-52-17

In such a setting, then, the development of a second basilect is wholly plausible. The principal source of evidence in the data for the existence of a second basilect is the speech of four retired Firestone tappers: Lofa Tapper, Lofa Tailor, Lofa Overseer, and Lofa Diamond Miner. These four are different from the other adult-learners from Lofa and Nimba. Where all the others have settled on the coast and obtained government jobs (as a cook, as a watchman, and the like), these four went to Firestone, worked there for several years, and then returned to a traditional lifestyle in their home town of Borkeza. **(*)

Central to the notion of a second basilect in Liberian English is the AUX wo. In 2.1, it was shown that wo V does not express anteriority; the question of what wo V does express was left in abeyance. To establish the meaning of wo in wo V constructions, all tokens of wo V have been examined (and not just those of the basilectal speakers who use it 5 or more times (as in Tables 5 and 6 above) or who use it more than a certain percentage of the time). The discussion of [± ANT] in 2.1 focussed on the basilect (because it was

**(*) Nimba Vendor and Nimba Gardener, both Monrovia residents, did not have government jobs at the time of their interviews, but they were trying to obtain them. Lofa Musician was also recorded in his home village, but Lofa Musician is young and much more modern in his outlook than are the old men of Borkeza. Besides, his village (actually in Bong rather than Lofa) is near the campus of Cuttington University College; as a musician and maker of musical instruments, he interacts with a wide range of people.
felt that such an opposition was most likely to be in evidence there). However, we V "survives" well into the mesolect. Except for Shorty, Martha, and Gus, no mesolectal speaker uses we V more than once or twice, but there is a pattern with regard to the construction's use there, a pattern that is discussed in 2.3.5.

Table 4 in 2.1 lists we V forms as a percentage of all past verbs for all those who learned English as adults (and for those who learned English as children but have no Western education). The top fourteen speakers—that is, the fourteen with the highest rate of we V use—are repeated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>we V</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Overseer</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Diamond Miner</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyor</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tapper</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Gardener</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brickmaker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1598</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welldigger</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Vendor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Chef</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of these fourteen speakers, ten are Mande. The four exceptions are Surveyor, Farmer, Brickmaker, and Ghana Chef. Of the top five positions in the table, four are held by Borkeza's Firestone pensioners.
Repeating the top part of Table 4 makes the point that relatively high wa V use is a Mande phenomenon. But it is not only with regard to frequency that Kru and Mande speakers differ. They also differ as to their use of wa. Table 20 spells out the use of wa V among basilectal speakers. wa V constructions were classified according to whether they were punctual or non-punctual. Statives were classed with non-punctual. Because of the high number of wa V tokens in his sample, Nimba Cook was separated from other Mande speakers.

(Table 20 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-PUNCT</th>
<th>-PUNCT</th>
<th>COMBINED</th>
<th>+PUNCT</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>+PUNCT</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>+STAT</td>
<td>-STAT</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kru</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Mande</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The speech of Fisherman has been omitted from these calculations; his two first languages are Klaa, a Kru language, and Vai, a Mande language. Additionally, the data of Shorty and Nimba Vendor, both of whom have four or more years of education, have not been included. For the present discussion these speakers—along with child-learners Bettee and Friar Tuck—are treated as part of the mesolect.

In the corpus there are 15 tokens, 10 of them Nimba Cook's, where it is not possible to decide whether the verb is punctual or non-punctual. Verbs like stee are counted as stative in Table 20.
Nimba Cook is like the Kru speakers in having a high rate of punctual
*we V* tokens (well over 40 percent in each case). There is no obvious
reason why the distribution of Nimba Cook's tokens should pattern with
those of Kru speakers, nor is there a clear explanation for the
function of *we V* constructions for the Kru speakers or Nimba Cook.
The rest of the discussion of *we* will focus on the use of *we V* by the
Mande basilect, specifically the basilect of Lofa and Nimba speakers.
(Because the discussion focusses primarily on the four Borkeza old
men, the basilect is referred to as the "Lofa basilect." Nimba Cook's
data are discussed again in 2.3.5.)

The evidence suggests that, for the Lofa basilect, *we V* marks past
non-punctual. "Non-punctual" in this basilect means exactly that and
not, as it generally does, non-stative non-punctual. That [+ PAST] is
a component of *we V* 's meaning is clear: *we* only occurs in past
contexts. What remains to be demonstrated is that, for the Lofa
basilect, [- PUNCT] is also a part of *we* 's meaning. Even before that
is done, the statement that this basilect marks tense puts it in vivid
contrast with the Ghana/Gedeh basilect. A comparison of copula
marking shows that this difference exists there as well. Table 21
illustrates the difference. The three Gedeh and Ghana speakers
already referred to in this regard (Gedeh Gold Miner, Ghana Steward,
and Gedeh Childminder) inflect past copulas at a rate that is one-
tenth of the rate of the Borkeza speakers.⁷¹

⁷¹ In a few cases, the copula is *we bi* or *we de*. These cases have
been counted as indicating tense.
(Table 21 here)

TABLE 21

The Use of we To Mark Past Copulas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>+ / n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ghana/Gedeh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Gold Miner</td>
<td>0/23</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>6/61</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Childminder</td>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7/114</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Diamond Miner</td>
<td>7/14</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Overseer</td>
<td>9/15</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tapper</td>
<td>21/34</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
<td>28/34</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65/97</td>
<td>67.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To return to the question of the non-punctual character of we: we shows up in [-PUNCT] environments 6 out of every 7 times it appears. Is that a good enough rate to sustain the claim that we does indeed mark [-PUNCT]? The basilect in question appears to be the result of a recent (twentieth century) case of repidginition. While the speech in question is far more regular than the Hawaiian Pidgin English reported by Bickerton (in Bickerton and Odo (1976)), it is not necessarily as fixed as one of the long-standing varieties. In such a case, one looks for strong tendencies rather than requiring categorical correspondences. If viewed in this light, a rate of better than 85 percent can be seen as rather strong evidence for the impending stabilization, if not existing stabilization, of the form-
meaning relationship being claimed. Moreover, the distribution of past non-punctual forms for the four Borkeza speakers makes it clear that we is the predominant one for all four of them.

(Table 22 here)

**TABLE 22**

Past Non-Punctual Forms: Borkeza Speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>De V</th>
<th>V-en</th>
<th>kEn V</th>
<th>we V</th>
<th>wǝ V</th>
<th>V-en</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Diamond Miner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Overseer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tapper</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

we V-en is discussed in 2.3.5. As for other forms, the question arises as to what their relationship is to we V. To begin with, in the discussion of past punctual, it was pointed out that the occasional use of V-en to mark past punctual forms was primarily a Mande phenomenon. A question that arises is whether or not the -en suffix is to be thought of as conveying some additional semantic information, so that V-en is semantically distinct from V. The fact that Lofa Tailor uses V-en in the past only in punctual situations suggests a semantic role, but the fact that the V-en form occurs so rarely, even with punctual forms, argues otherwise. What seems more likely is that—at the basilectal extreme—the V-en form is, like the V-i form referred to in Table 9, a variant of the stem form. At some point on the continuum, speakers from the Liberian basilect acquire a
[- PUNCT] meaning for -en. At that point, we V-en supplants we V as the marker of past punctual. (The change is not quite that neat. It is presented in 2.3.5--after the discussion of statives in 2.3.4.) For now, V-en forms will be set aside (since Table 22, like Tables 18 and 19, is concerned with non-zero forms and V-en appears to be, for all practical purposes, a 0-form for the Lofa basilect). An examination of non-past forms shows the presence of both de and kEn as non-punctual markers (though kEn also functions as an irrealis marker, cf. Chapter 4), e.g.

32. "ma mama se a kEn go fo Eniwe. a nó de gE tan tu go."

"My mother says I can't go anywhere. I don't have the chance to go."

Lofa Tapper 62-4-20

33. afa yu livi dE tu kOmi na, di midi de kEn divayd e tri tan. de kEn livi sOn faston, de livi sOn tu prEsedEn, de ge yu sOn.

'After you leave there [retire] to come home, they divide the money three ways. Some remains at Firestone, some goes to the President, and they give you some.'

Lofa Overseer 62-52-5

One could posit the following set of stages for the Lofa basilect's past non-punctual system:

((34) here)

The schema in (34) would account for the use of de and kEn by Lofa Overseer and Lofa Tailor, but its motivation is questionable. To begin with, a look at the de and kEn forms in question show that some of them occur to mark iteration within iterative chains. That is, in
34. STAGE 1
[-PUNCT] → de

STAGE 2
de → kEn

STAGE 3
[-PUNCT] → [-PUNCT][+/-PAST]
[-PUNCT][-PAST] → kEn
[-PUNCT][+PAST] → we

the introduction to 2.3, (16) and (17) showed the Ghana/Gedeh tendency to mark the beginnings and/or ends of iterative chains of events without marking intervening clauses. This same tendency characterizes the Lofa basilect. However, when an event within an iterative chain is itself iterative, it is marked for iteration—and not necessarily for tense. Thus, Lofa Overseer describes trips to Monrovia before there were roads. In his description of nights spent en route—expressed as an instantiation of an iterative chain of events—he speaks of harassment from the town goats through the night:

35. de wOn tu fay we yu fO keshen, bik0z wia ro, de wOn tu i. wi de dravi dEn.

'They [the goats] wanted to fight with you in the pavilion, because of the food in our packs, which they wanted to eat. We would keep on driving them away.'

Lofa Overseer 62-52-21

Not all the tokens of de and kEn in Table 22 can be explained in this way. For the remainder, at least two explanations suggest themselves; moreover, these explanations support each other. One is that the use of de and kEn in a past context represent "borrowings" from the other basilect. The other basilect, because of its association with the coast, seems to have greater social standing. The second explanation
involves the fact that the Lofa basilect, while reasonably stable, is not entirely so. As a result, "borrowings" from elsewhere—either from other speech systems or from elsewhere in the Lofa basilect tense-aspect system itself—will show up sporadically.

This discussion of de and kën represents the discussion of a handful of tokens. The preponderance of we V forms in Table 22 suggests that, rather than the three-stage schema presented in (34), the past non-punctual system of the speakers in question is better accounted for by the rule in (36).

36. [+PAST][-PUNCT] $\rightarrow$ we

To continue the examination of the development of the Lofa basilect along the continuum, it is necessary to look at the status of statives in that basilect. The following section does that, but it also looks at the status of statives in Liberian English as a whole. That is, it considers not only the points about statives that are needed to relate the Lofa basilect to the rest of the continuum but also considers other points about statives, particularly with reference to the ways in which stativity and non-punctual marking interact in Liberian English as general. 2.3.5 then returns to a focus on the Lofa basilect and considers how that basilect is integrated into the primary continuum.
2.3.4 Stativity and Non-Punctual Marking

The previous discussion of stativity in 2.1.1 distinguished between Lakoff's syntactic definition of this concept and Bickerton's semantic one. Lakoff's basis for assigning stativity to a verb in Standard English is the verb's inability to appear in certain grammatical constructions, including imperatives, progressives, and pseudo-clefts. As noted in 2.1.1., the differences between Lakoff's and Bickerton's definitions produce disagreement as to the status of *stay, stand, and similar verbs*. To Lakoff, they are not statives; to Bickerton, they are. For reasons internal to the discussion of anteriority above, the verbs in question were treated as statives. In the present section, the statives that pass the syntactic tests will be considered first (*have, no, etc.*), and then the *ste* group will be considered separately.

Sag (1973) and Smith (1983) point out the shortcomings of Lakoff's "progressive test" as a measure of stativity. They do this by presenting a number of sentences in which one of Lakoff's stative verbs appears in the progressive. Sag posits an implicational scale as to the types of progressive environments (progress, futurate, and habitual) that a given stative can occur in. He acknowledges that there are some statives unable to occur in any of them; this last group includes *have*. Similarly, though she does not comment on this fact, none of Smith's progressive stative sentences involve statives of possession, i.e. *have* and related verbs. This is noted here because statives of possession appear freely with non-punctual marking in Liberian English, e.g.
37. ma frEn a we haven, de kO hen [adi mEfi].

'The friend I had, his name was [Audie Murphy].'

Friar Tuck 57-19-24

38. de we gEti bofi.

'They had a soccer field.'

Lofa Overseer 62-53-17

The use of the form we haven is a mesolectal phenomenon, as a list of the speakers who use it indicates: 72

(Table 23 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friar Tuck</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananse</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benson T</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Marketwoman</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four of the speakers fall into the 4-9 year range of education, and Shorty has even more education than that (but is an adult-learner). The remaining two, Gedeh Marketwoman and Friar Tuck, show up in the upper mesolect in their treatment of past non-punctual forms, for example (Gedeh Marketwoman is listed in Table 18, Friar Tuck in Table 19).

72 Ananse also has two past stative uses of haven.
we gE and we hav occur more basilectally; Table 24 shows the distribution of these two forms.71

(Table 24 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>we gE</th>
<th>we hav</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Overseer</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martha</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welldigger</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Soldier</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Diamond Miner</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Gardener</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Vendor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

71 Nimba Cook also has one token of de gE. This discussion of we gE (and we hav) is limited to instances where they are used as statives. An example of a non-stative use of we gE is provided in (a).

a. O di meshan bO jOs tremlen On di bEnsh. na di luk O tu mi, de se a m0 t0 f0s. so a we gEt 0.

'All the mission boys were trembling on the bench. They looked at me and said that I should be the one to speak for them. So I got up.'

Carpenter 33-16-14

The data contain four such tokens, one each from Nimba Cook, Nimba Watchman, Lofa Overseer, and Carpenter.
Of these speakers, only Martha and Nimba Vendor have more than three years of education and—in both cases—just barely.

It is tempting to posit the following progression on the continuum:

\[ \text{we } \text{gE} \rightarrow \text{we } \text{hav} \rightarrow \text{we haven} \]

There is a case to be made for the first step, but the evidence at hand argues strongly against the second. Of the 13 speakers who use \text{we } \text{gE} or \text{we } \text{hav}, all but two are Mande speakers. (One of the two is Gedeh Soldier; the Mande domination of the Liberian military and Soldier English has been noted). On the other hand, of the 7 speakers who use \text{we haven}, all but Shorty are Kru speakers (and of the 6 Kru speakers, all but Friar Tuck are from one of the three eastern counties, removed from Mande influence). The evidence suggests that, rather than a single span of the continuum along which the non-punctual marking of \text{ge/hav} changes as it perseveres, there are two separate, fairly extensive pockets of it.

Of the various types of statives (\text{kte} excluded), the statives of possession are the most likely to show non-punctual marking. In the Ghana/Gedeh basilect, cognitive verbs occasionally are marked, by \text{de} or \text{kEn} or even by reduplication, as these examples illustrate:

39. \text{akta wi de si di pipo, weten tri En f0 mOn tan, dEn we f0g0 aba di pipo.}

'After we saw the people, three or four months later we had forgotten about them.'

Pastor 21-9-9
40. wEn di pipo kOn, dEn di pipo se dan en di tebo, de ten
ten ten ten ten ten ten te de se, "oke!"

'When the people came, then they sat down at the table
and thought and thought and thought. Then they said,
"OK!"

Ghana Steward 52-7-16

In the mesolect, apart from verbs of possession, the past stative that
takes non-punctual marking with the greatest frequency is wOn 'want.'
In the lower mesolect, it appears as wÉ wOn, as in (41); but generally
mesolectal speakers add the -É ("-ed") ending, as in (42).

41. di we a 10v di ples, a wÉ wOn tu ste dÉ.

'Because of the way I loved the place, I wanted to stay
there.'

Builder 51-16-13

42. so chia wÉ wOne tu ples trek, yu no, hi wÉ wOne tu.

'So Chia wanted to play a trick, you know, he wanted
to.'

Gus 2-65-22

With regard to the ste group of verbs, they frequently bear non-
punctual marking (as they do in other varieties of English). This is
particularly true in the mesolect. Also, of the statives marked by wÉ
only wÉ gÉ occurs more often than wÉ ste.

A final comment on the overt marking of past statives for non-
punctualness is that, like speakers of Standard English, speakers in
the upper range of the Liberian continuum use yustu with statives,
e.g.
43. wi yustu hav wOn k10 hya en tan, de kOl e "zEfə."

'We used to have a kind of cloth here in town that was called "Zephyr."'

Settler Slim 49-15-9

For statives not overtly marked as being non-punctual, the frequency of Standard Past marking is comparable to that for past punctuals. (The rest of this discussion of statives includes the stẹ group of verbs.) Table 25 compares the rates of inflection of strong verbs, past stative versus past punctual. (The past punctual data come from Table 10.) Only speakers have been included who have 5 or more tokens of the stative verbs that take strong inflection.

(Table 25 here)

Note that, for the Ghana speakers and Gedeh Gold Miner, past statives are rarely inflected. The absence of tense from the Ghana/Gedeh basilect is virtually complete.

In the case of past punctuals, the rate of weak syllabic inflection was comparable to the rate of strong inflection for speakers with more than a junior high school education but not for speakers with less education: for the latter, the rate of inflection for weak syllabic verbs was much lower than for strong verbs. In the case of statives, the same seems to be true, as Table 26 illustrates. With a single exception, all the weak syllabic tokens in the table are instances of wOn 'want.'

(Table 26 here)
TABLE 25
Strong Inflection: Stative Vs. Punctual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Past Stative</th>
<th>Past Punctual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>&gt;10 Years</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YGC</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4-9 Years</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tubman T</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0-3 Years</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tapper</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Chef</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Soldier</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Gold Miner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Past Stative</th>
<th>Past Punctual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Settlers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Slim</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The strong-verb past stative data come from Table 25. Because of the small number of weak syllabic tokens, all speakers in Table 25 have been included in Table 26. The gap between weak syllabic and strong
TABLE 26

Past Stative Inflection: Weak Syl vs. Strong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Weak Syl</th>
<th></th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>+ n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>6 6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>5 5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>5 6</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>13 13</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>31 32</td>
<td>96.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YGC</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9 9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5 5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>6 7</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>6 6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>25 26</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>62 64</td>
<td>96.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 4-9 Years      |          |    |        |    |
| Tubman T       | 2 3     | 66.7 | 16 17 | 94.1 |
| Charles        | 15 16   | 93.8 | 24 25 | 96.0 |
| Augustus       | 3 5     | 60.0 | 11 11 | 100.0 |
| Gus            | 5 7     | 71.4 | 13 15 | 86.7 |
| Assop          | 0 2     | 0.0  | 6 8    | 75.0 |
| **Total**      | 25 33   | 75.8 | 70 76 | 92.1 |

| 0-3 Years      |          |    |        |    |
| Chauffeur      | 0 0     | --  | 6 8    | 75.0 |
| Builder        | 0 11    | 0.0 | 2 11   | 18.2 |
| Pastor         | 0 9     | 0.0 | 1 11   | 9.1 |
| Sailor         | 0 0     | --  | 4 6    | 66.7 |
| Nimba Watchman | 0 8     | 0.0 | 3 50   | 6.0 |
| Lofa Tapper    | 0 0     | --  | 0 10   | 0.0 |
| Ghana Chef     | 0 7     | 0.0 | 0 6    | 0.0 |
| Ghana Steward  | 0 11    | 0.0 | 0 11   | 0.0 |
| Gedeh Soldier  | 0 1     | 0.0 | 3 15   | 20.0 |
| Gedeh Gold Miner | 0 2   | 0.0 | 0 10   | 10.0 |
| Nimba Cook     | 0 3     | 0.0 | 1 39   | 2.6 |
| Painter        | 0 1     | 0.0 | 2 18   | 11.1 |
| **Total**      | 0 53    | 0.0 | 22 195 | 11.3 |

| Settlers       |          |    |        |    |
| Settler Slim   | 1 5     | 20.0 | 9 10  | 90.0 |

verbs for speakers in the educational range from 4-9 years is not nearly so sharp in this case: there is only a 16.3 percent difference for past statives; in comparison, Table 18 shows a 51.8 percent
difference between weak syllabic and strong verbs for past punctuals for speakers in this educational range. However, for the group of speakers with little or no Western education, the absence of inflection for weak-syllabic past statives is categorical.

2.3.5 Integrating the Basilects

The discussion of statives and of their ability to display non-punctual marking is relevant to the Lofa basilect and to a demonstration of how its treatment of past non-punctual meshes with that of the primary continuum. In the Lofa case, if the initial stage for marking past non-punctual consists of the following rule:

44.

\[
\text{STAGE 1} \\
(+\text{PAST})[-\text{PUNCT}] \rightarrow \text{we}\]

then the next stage seems to require the following set of rules:

45.

\[
\text{STAGE 2} \\
(+\text{PAST})[-\text{PUNCT}] \rightarrow (+\text{PAST})[-\text{PUNCT}][\pm\text{STAT}] \\
(+\text{PAST})[-\text{PUNCT}][+\text{STAT}] \rightarrow \text{we} \\
(+\text{PAST})[-\text{PUNCT}][-\text{STAT}] \rightarrow \text{we -en}
\]

That is, the form \text{we V} continues to show up on statives after it has been supplanted by \text{we V-en} on other non-punctual forms. For non-statives, two further stages remain:

46.

\[
\text{STAGE 3} \\
(+\text{PAST})[-\text{PUNCT}][-\text{STAT}] \rightarrow \\
[-\text{PUNCT}][-\text{STAT}][\pm\text{CONT}] \\
(+\text{PAST})[-\text{PUNCT}][-\text{STAT}][+\text{CONT}] \rightarrow \text{we -en} \\
(+\text{PAST})[-\text{PUNCT}][-\text{STAT}][-\text{CONT}] \rightarrow \text{we yustu}
\]

\[
\text{STAGE 4} \\
\text{we yustu} \rightarrow \text{yustu}
\]
The speakers whose forms correspond to these stages are given in Table 27.74

(Table 27 here)

TABLE 27
Past Non-Punctual Forms: The Lofa Basilect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[-STAT]</th>
<th>[+STAT]</th>
<th>we V</th>
<th>we V</th>
<th>we V-en</th>
<th>we yustu V</th>
<th>yustu V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tapper</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Diamond Miner</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Overseer</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brickmaker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyor</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Gardener</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first four speakers (the four Borkeza elders) have not yet begun to acquire Stage 3. Brickmaker has acquired Stage 3 rules variably, and Surveyor and Nimba Gardener have done the same for Stage 4 rules. Presumably, once Stage 3 has been acquired, Stage 4 quickly follows. (47) illustrates the use of we yustu:

47. di mE wayf, hi wa yustu se ten bad.

'The man's wife used to say bad things to me.'
Nimba Gardener 15-65-7

74 Surveyor has 1 V-en token, and Nimba Gardener has 1 V-en and 3 kEn V tokens. Presumably, rather than being a part of this system, these forms represent influence from the other basilectal system.
With the advent of yustu, we is absent from past non-punctual marking for the first time. We yustu seems to be an intermediate stop on the way to yustu's acquisition. Once Stage 4 has been reached, the treatment of past non-punctual (non-stative) forms is identical for the two basilects: they join to form a single continuum.

A comparison of the two basilects—as represented by the rule schemata presented in (25) and (44-46)—reveals fundamental differences. For Ghana/Gedeh, a state-event distinction is basic, obtaining everywhere along the continuum. Non-punctual marking, undifferentiated at the basilectal extreme, splits early into [+ CONT] and [- CONT] and then later into [+ PAST] and [- PAST] as well. In contrast, for the Lofa basilect, it is the [± PAST] distinction that is basic. The state/event opposition is not basic; instead it arises along the continuum, followed less acrolectally by the [± CONT] distinction. The case presented here for a second basilect and for the way in which the two basilects join is somewhat tentative. A more extensive analysis of Firestone speakers is needed. Nonetheless, the scenario presented here provides a basis for explaining the disparity between groups of speakers, the Ghana/Gedeh group and the Lofa group, each of whose speech is clearly basilectal, i.e. distant from the target, yet clearly different from the other. Two problems with the analysis remain to be presented. The more readily confronted of the two involves the two speakers who have yet to be incorporated into any of the tables that map speakers' use of past non-punctual forms. That is, everyone with 5 or more past non-punctual tokens appears in Table
18, Table 19, or Table 27—except for Nimba Cook and Nimba Watchman. Past non-punctual tokens for these two speakers are given in Table 28.

(Table 28 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>[-STAT]</th>
<th>[+STAT]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>de V</td>
<td>kEn V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Cook</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Watchman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first three columns are a part of the primary Liberian system, the fourth and fifth are from the Lofa system, and the sixth shows up in both. Both men are basilectal speakers, but to which basilect do they belong? The "Lofa basilect" is really the speech of Firestone tappers and of soldiers. Nimba Watchman himself calls the variety "Firestone English." Speaking of the way a soldier spoke English (at a time when Nimba Watchman did not), Nimba Watchman says:

48. da faston Enle i so sabi.

'It was Firestone English that he spoke so well.'

Nimba Watchman 56-6-16

Firestone/Soldier English was presumably the pidgin that spread to Lofa and to Nimba (rather than just to Lofa, as the focus on the four Borkeza elders might have implied). The explanation for Nimba Watchman and Nimba Cook seems to be that they are between systems. The Borkeza men returned to the interior from Firestone, but Nimba
Cook and Nimba Watchman have elected to remain on the coast. Rather than advancing headlong towards the acrolect, these speakers seem to be moving more laterally and changing basilects. The motivation for the change, apart from the very fact of their residence on the coast among speakers of that variety, could well be the social difference between the two basilects, the Firestone/Soldier basilect having lower social status. As such, the incompatibility of their data with each of the tables proposed as representing the continuum (18, 19, 27) can be shown to have an explanation.

A more serious problem involves the presence of Surveyor and Brickmaker in the Lofa-Nimba group: they are from Maryland County, far from Lofa or Nimba. It is true that both Surveyor and Brickmaker worked as rubber tappers for Firestone, but they worked not at the big Firestone plantation in Harbel but at a smaller one, the Cavalla plantation in Maryland County. The Cavalla labor force was predominantly drawn from interior Kru groups--Krahn, Bush Grebo, and the like, and the composition of the work force there seems to have been not at all like that at Harbel. For the past non-punctual at least, Surveyor and Brickmaker seem to be speaking like people from Lofa or Nimba rather than like people from along the coast. Why they are doing so is a mystery. Maybe there is something about rubber trees.

An additional question needs to be raised about the second basilect. The speakers in Table 27 fit into a continuum that begins with the Lofa basilect; as noted, it is a continuum for which the
marking of tense is part of the past punctual system from the outset, i.e. from the basilectal extreme. There are only seven speakers in Table 27, but in 2.3.3 it was noted that wo V persists into the mesolect. It must be asked where all these other speakers (listed as part of Tables 18 and 19) fit in. Additionally, Mande speakers from Cape Mount, Chauffeur and Builder, were noted in Table 4 and subsequently as using wo V 19 and 13 times respectively, yet both of them have been placed in Table 19, rather than in Table 27. Both for the mesolectal speakers (defined on the basis of having four or more years of Western education) and for the Cape Mount speakers, the explanation is the same. For the primary continuum, the occasional stative V-en and wo V-en form was included in Tables 18 and 19. While these forms (and the non-punctual marking of statives) do occur with greater frequency than in, e.g., Guyanese Creole or Standard English, the past non-punctual system described in 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 is basically one that excludes statives. In contrast, the Lofa basilect includes statives in its past non-punctual system; that is, overt non-punctual marking of statives is a part of the Lofa basilect. For both the Cape Mount speakers and the mesolectal speakers, it is the case that most occurrences of wo V are statives (42/65, 64.6%). The mesolectal speakers who use wo V are listed in Table 29.

(Table 29 here)

The table shows that the mesolectal use of wo V involves few tokens (27) spread among many speakers (14). This raises questions about the history of wo V. Is it simply a Lofa (and Nimba) innovation, caused
TABLE 29

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martha</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Carolina</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willie</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lizard</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberts T</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benson T</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

perhaps by expanding (through overgeneralization) the use of an existing form, or does the way in which we V is used in the Lofa basilect represent the oldest stage in the history of the form, with the narrowing of domain to (+ STAT) in the mesolect and on the coast being the innovation? Though he subsequently qualifies and refines the claim (1980, 1981), Bickerton (1975b) argues that the continuum is a historical document, the basilect representing the oldest stage and progressively less basilectal systems representing the step-by-step development of the language. If that statement is meant to apply in the Liberian case, then the question that arises, given a single mesolect but dual basilects, is which of the basilects is the mirror of Liberian diachrony.
2.3.6 Past Non-Punctual: Alternative Strategies

The AUX's and suffixes presented in 2.3.1-2.3.5 present the backbone of the past non-punctual system for Liberian English. In addition to these morphemes, there are other strategies as well for indicating that verbs are past and non-punctual. Three such strategies will be considered in the present section. None of them are tied to one basilect or the other. Rather, the first of the strategies to be considered, reduplication of the verb, is characteristic of both basilects, and the second strategy, the use of stat 'start' as a non-punctual AUX, seems to be largely mesolectal in distribution. In the case of this second phenomenon, the discussion will be largely confined to evidence that this development is taking place—or has already taken place. Finally, the third strategy, one involving the use of conditionals to express habit and iteration, does obtain in both basilects but seems at the same time to be more prevalent in the mesolect.

2.3.6.1 Reduplication

Reduplication is frequently noted as being a characteristic of pidgins and creoles. This generalization applies to Liberian English. Adjectives and adverbs are made intensive by reduplication, as Painter's response to a question about the hut tax illustrates:
49. e sm0-sm0, di f0s-f0s tan, wi o-o pipo dEn, de tEl e, wi hia o bik0z da tan wi nErwa gro o.

'It came in very gradually, and, as for the very beginning of it, what I will tell you I know because the elders (the old-old people) talked about it, and I heard them--because when it first started I hadn't grown up yet.'

Painter 58-60-21

Reduplication also has a distributive function, e.g.

50. s0ntan w0n h0 wi pe fetin-fetin dala.

'Sometimes we would pay fifteen dollars per hut.'

Painter 58-61-10

That is, the notion of "each" is frequently expressed by reduplication, either of an NP, as in (50), or an entire sentence, as in (51).

51. wEn shi waz b0sten di p0m kEno, Eni p0m kEno shi b0s, e we j0n en di wE. Eni p0m kEno shi b0s, e we j0n en di wE.

'When she was breaking the palm kernels, each time she would break one, it would fall into the well.'

Aesop 29-16-14

A third use of reduplication is to express iteration. This can involve either reduplication of the verb, the verb phrase, or the entire sentence. The following excerpt from Gedeh Childminder's description of how people used to make salt gives examples both of sentence-reduplication and verb-reduplication.
52. En di wata drap en di pEn, wata drap en di pEn. sun di wata drap na, en di kOntri p0, e drap, di wata plEni, dEn yu sEt e en di faya, di ten b0 b0 b0 b0 b0 na, 0 di wata dra, dEn yu me s0.

'And the water keeps dripping into the pan. As soon as a lot of water has dripped into the clay pot, it has dripped and there’s a lot of it, then you set the pot on the fire. You set it on the fire, and it boils and boils and boils. When all the water is dry, what is left is salt.'

Gedeh Childminder 32-63-1

For Krio, Givón identifies iterative non-punctuals as being expressed by verb-reduplication (while dE expresses "habitual" and "continuous") (1982:153). The dichotomy proposed by Givón for Krio does not apply to Liberian English. One type of proof that it does not involves instances in which the same event first is marked by a non-punctual AUX and then expressed by reduplication, e.g.

53. dEn kEn bit dE ten. tu bit e, tu bit e, bit e, bit dE ten, tek di ten en di bui tu bit e.

'They would pound that thing [a piece of bark] repeatedly, take it out of the forest and pound it.'

Gedeh Childminder 32-61-27

Besides expressing iteration, reduplication frequently is used to emphasize duration as well, e.g.

54. dEn de tek di tapo En kOwa ma he. wi ste dE ste dE ste dE en di nay tEn okl0.

'Then they took a tarpaulin and covered my head with it. We stayed hidden all the way until ten at night.' (Lit. 'We stay there stay there stay there in the night ten o'clock.')

Builder 51-2-26

Use of reduplication to signal iteration is tied to the continuum; that is, it occurs with the greatest frequency in the basilect. But
it is also a stylistic feature. The amount of its use varies dramatically from speaker to speaker, even when speakers occupy roughly equivalent ranges of the continuum, and it varies according to the type of speech involved. For example, virtually all Liberian speakers—regardless of their range along the continuum—use reduplication in telling folktales. The acrolectal speaker Bold Dollar illustrates this last point:

55. so di pres wEn tu sEndarila. de state dEnsEn. de wEn dEnsEn dEnsEn. de dEns Onte e wEn Omos menay.

'So the prince went to Cendarila. Once they started dancing, they danced on and on until it was almost midnight.'

Bold Dollar 39-62-14

Table 30 lists the speakers who use verb (and sentence) reduplication ten times or more.

(Table 30 here)

| TABLE 30 |

Principal Users of Reduplication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor     31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder    24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop      24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananse     23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Childminder 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Gold Miner 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter    12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = number of reduplicated V's, VP's, and S's

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Pastor and Builder tend to be a part of the upper basilectal range. Apart from them, the only speakers in Table 30 whose speech is not clearly basilectal are Aesop and Ananse: their data consist entirely of folktales.

2.3.6.2 STAT as an AUX

There is evidence that \textit{stat} 'start' is evolving—or has already evolved—into a non-punctual AUX, particularly one that expresses a durative/continuative meaning. Preliminary investigation suggests that this is largely—though not entirely—a mesolectal phenomenon.

The strongest evidence that the use of \textit{stat} is no longer a simple expression of the onset of a durative event comes from reduplicated forms. \textit{stat} can appear with reduplicated forms, as in (56).

56. dEn de sta, Én yu no, drenken. drenken. wEn de sta dren dren dren dren dren dren, dEn di, Én yu no, wan gê dE ayz, de sta drOn na. wa de sta drOnken, En di opEn di do En tek di soja dEn En pO dEn ensay di bo.

'Then they started, you know, drinking. And drinking. When they drank and drank and drank, then the, you know, wine affected them, they started getting drunk. When they were drunk, then they opened the door, grabbed the soldiers, and put them inside the boat.'

Pastor 21-5-26

In fact, \textit{stat} itself can be a part of the reduplication, as the phrase \textit{sta chOpen sta chOpen} ('start chopping, start chopping') in the next example illustrates.

57. a wEn fO k01as. a sta chaOpen, ray tu di ples dE. wi chaOp chaOp chaOp chaOp chaOp, a k0 di ples Onte de ten wE rayt Onda di bush. so a wEn, a stEp On di ten, a dên no. a sta chaOpen sta chaOpen. dEn di mesi tu wa bihayn mi. a sta chaOpen. a step On di ten. a ôn no, a wE ste chaOpen.
'I went to get my machete. I came back and started cutting the weeds, right over there. We cut and cut and cut. I kept cutting until I was right by the thing [the missing purse]. I even stepped on it, but I didn't realize it. I just kept cutting the weeds. Then the white woman came over to where I was. I kept cutting the weeds. I had stepped on the thing, but I hadn't realized it, and I was still cutting.'

Gus 2-9-10

2.3.6.3 Conditionals as Expressions of Non-Punctual Meaning

Marchese (1984) notes the extreme frequency with which conditionals occur in procedural texts in Kru languages. (Her study--while focussing on the eastern Kru language Godie--also examines three western Kru languages, Tepo Kroumen (part of the Grebo complex), Nyabwa, and Wobe (both part of the Krahn-Guere complex).) An illustration of this same point in Liberian English is Shorty's account of how to get the meat of a freshly killed duck to turn into worms. This is accomplished, Shorty says, by putting lime juice on the meat.

58. wÉn yú wOn di wata, yu put e On di dOs, yu tek 0 di bi-bi fÉdaz, dón yEs kOt e En liv e Onda di wata. di smO-smO he da kÉn bi Onda wÉn yu tek aw di bi-bi fÉdà--e yu pu di wu, yu së faya On e. dÉn yu bOn di smO-smO he On e. wÉn yu bOn di he, yEs kOt e en e dra pÉn. dón pu wata On e. dÉn di frÉs pa, sÓm e di frÉs, yu tek e aw. yu pu di laym jus On e. wÉn yu pu e laym jus on e, it cheni tu wOm. des wa a to yu. ef yu tra e, e we wÓk aw.
'When you warm the water, you put it on the duck. You then remove the big feathers. Don't just cut it up and leave it in water. The down that remains after you have removed the big feathers—if you take wood, you build a fire. Then you burn off the down. Once you have burned off the down, just cut the duck in a dry pan. Don't put water on it. Then the duck flesh, some of the flesh, you cut it off and you put lime juice on it. When you put the lime juice on it, it will change to worms. That's what I told you. If you try it, it will work.'

Shorty 41-1-12

Shorty's description involves the use of conditionals in a non-past procedural text. An excerpt from Gedeh Childminder's description of how the "old people" used to make soap, given in (59), shows that procedural texts in the past, i.e. of procedures no longer enacted, show the same behavior as non-past ones.

59. En di we dEn kEn me so, dEn gO sOnkana ten, sOnkana tri en di bui, di ten kEn fO . . . e yu go tu di buis, di ten fO En yu go dE tu fayn e. sun yu fayn e na, En yu breng e. yu brok e, yu brok e, yu brok e, yu brok e. yu put e On di 10, yu brok e.

'And the way they used to make soap, they had some kind of thing, some kind of tree in the forest, something that would fall off the tree. . . If you go to the forest, this thing has fallen from the tree and you go there to find it. As soon as you find it, then you bring it [to town]. You pound it repeatedly. You just put it on a rock and keep pounding it.'

Gedeh Childminder 32-51-1

In addition to habitual sequences such as procedural texts, conditionals also show up in narratives as a way of expressing iteration. Augustus's account of the day he gave schnappes to his monkey illustrates this point:

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60. dE patekula de a ge di m0ke di snap, wEn e si sm0 le b0, e kEn bans On di le b0 he. [laughs] e w0 j0s trowen doz le chedren dEn dan. o! dE di sen de wOn d0 k0n fr0n On dE say, wOnE tu ke di m0ke, b0 di m0ke sma. bik0z dE de, e wa n0 tay. én yu si? so, Enitasyn, wEn e j0n fr0n 0 di tr1, e we n0k, yu no, he di d0 he. wEn e he di d0 he, di d0 we du lak des: [imitates a snarling dog] we he l0n ti. dEn di m0ke we bans, En e sma. e kEn bi hya, wEn e bans, e kEn bi 0 di we dan dE.

'On the day that I gave the monkey schnappes, whenever it saw a little boy, it would jump on to the little boy's head. [laughs] It was just knocking down those little children. Oh! That was the same day that a dog came from over there and tried to kill the monkey, but the monkey was smart. Because that day, the monkey was not tied up. You see? So, when it jumped from the tree, it would hit the dog's head. When it hit the dog's head, the dog would do like this: [imitates a snarling dog]--the dog with his long teeth. Then the monkey would jump on to the dog's head, and the monkey was smart. It would be here, and then when it jumped it would be way over there.'

Augustus 1-58-14

In Table 19 Augustus shows up as marking past non-punctual forms with past morphology (we V-en and yustu V) most of the time (37/48, 77.1%).

In the past conditionals of (60), however, there is no past marking. In fact, Augustus uses we (< will) in three of the conditionals in the passage. The Standard English equivalent of Augustus's account would use would rather than will. In Liberian English, however, wud (< would) is rare in any context. (4.2.2.2 discusses the reasons why this is so.) The absence of past marking in the conditionals that express iteration and the use of we in this type of conditional (even when it describes past iteration) are not at all idiosyncratic; rather, Augustus's speech reflects the usual pattern for Liberian conditionals when they express iteration.
2.3.7 The -ED Suffix and Past Non-Punctual Verbs

The discussion of past non-punctual forms has focussed on forms marked by an AUX, by the -en suffix, or both. For the primary continuum (that is, excluding the Lofa basilect), the pattern is that non-punctual marking is present at the basilectal extreme—and continues throughout—while past marking is acquired somewhat later. However, as noted at the beginning of 2.3, there are also non-punctual forms that lack non-punctual marking. The present section looks at this last group of forms to see the extent to which they have acquired Standard Past marking, i.e. the -ed suffix. If a form shows no AUX and no -en suffix, how likely is it to show Standard English -ed? To begin with, the data make clear that speakers vary as to the extent to which they permit non-punctual forms to occur without non-punctual marking. Such forms occur with the greatest frequency in the basilect. (16) and (17) above were presented as instances where the initial and/or final clause of a chain of iterative events shows non-punctual marking while the intermediate clauses do not. The primary source of the forms to be considered comes from these iterative chains of events, e.g. (16) and (17), and from procedural texts, e.g. how people used to make soap. The present corpus is skewed in that, of the speakers with four or more years of education, all but two (Sheba and Solomon) are less than 30 years of age. Interviews and conversations with younger speakers were rarely about the old days. In contrast, this was a favorite topic of elderly speakers. Thus, the genuine correlation between place on the continuum and extent to which
past non-punctual forms appear without non-punctual marking is exaggerated in the present corpus by differences in the data that were collected.

Of the forms that do show up, evidence is overwhelming that acquisition of Standard Past marking for non-punctual forms lags far behind acquisition for punctual forms. Table 31 makes that clear. Strong verbs were divided according to whether they were past non-punctual or past punctual. The non-punctual forms were drawn from the entire corpus, while the punctual forms were taken from the "Set of 100." (The right half of Table 31 is taken from Table 10.) The table is restricted to speakers with five or more past non-punctual forms.

(Table 31 here)

At the acrolectal end of the continuum, the all but categorical marking of past punctual forms gives way to intermittent marking on past non-punctual forms. At the basilectal end, use of the Standard Past -ed is virtually non-existant for non-punctual forms. What the figures in Table 31 suggest is that, for the beginning of its acquisition in the basilect through to the acrolect, the -ed suffix in Liberian English is a marker not only of pastness but also of punctualness. (Bickerton has made the same observation with respect to Guyanese.) Thus, much of the upper part of the Liberian English continuum--extending well into the mesolect--has the same devices for marking past forms as Standard English: V-ed, we V-ing, and used to/would. (The only gap is the virtual absence of wud (< would) from Liberian English.) However, the congruence of the Liberian forms with
TABLE 31

The Inflection of Strong Verbs, [± PUNCT]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>[- PUNCT]</th>
<th></th>
<th>[+ PUNCT]</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ / n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>+ / n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>52</td>
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<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-9 Years</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tubman T</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-3 Years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boatman</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>Friar Tuck</td>
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<td>Builder</td>
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<td>Gedeh Childminder</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
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Settlers

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<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
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</table>

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their underlying semantic features is either different from Standard English—or truer. In Standard English, the use of -ed with non-punctual forms is common enough; for the Liberian English acrolect and upper mesolect, it is not. A verb like atEn 'attend' illustrates the difference. All three of the sentences given below are grammatical in Standard English. Of (62a) and (62b), (62a) seems the more likely.

Standard English

61. He attended a "Death to the Klan" brunch on the West Side yesterday.

62a. She attended high school in Nokomis for several years, and then she transferred to Witt.

62b. She was attending high school in Nokomis for several years, and then she transferred to Witt.

There would be equivalent sentences in acrolectal and upper mesolectal Liberian English for all three; however, while sentences like (62b), i.e. sentences that refer to attending school, are common in Liberia, sentences like (62a) are not. The verb in (61) is [+ PUNCT]; the verb in (62b) is [- PUNCT]. Thus, while it was noted in the introduction to 2.3 that, in Liberian English as in Standard English, pragmatic factors can influence the speaker's decision to assign continuative or punctual marking to a given event, the fact remains that, at all levels of Liberian English (and not just at the basilectal end of the continuum), the [+/- PUNCT] distinction remains in effect to an extent not found in Standard English.
2.4 CONCLUSION

This examination of states and events in Liberian English has found no evidence of the category [± ANTERIOR]. Indeed, for the speakers whose range comprises the "primary basilect," there are few manifestations of tense of any kind, whether past or anterior. It is aspect rather than tense that is central: a punctual/non-punctual distinction is basic. The primary basilect, both by the critical role that it assigns to aspect and by its observance of an underlying state/event distinction, conforms to Bickerton's creole prototype (at the same time that it parallels the Kru TAM system). In contrast to the primary basilect is the second basilect, comprised of Mande speakers from the interior (Firestone/Soldier English, called here the "Lofa basilect"). While this basilect shares with the primary basilect the assignment of a central role to aspect, it differs from it by marking tense as well for non-punctual verbs. Additionally, the second basilect does not display the underlying state/event distinction; rather, statives can show non-punctual marking.

These two basilects converge in the mesolect. For each basilect it is possible to construct a rule schema that maps the sequence of changes from basilect to mesolect (and it would be equally possible to extend such a schema to map the further changes that relate mesolect to acrolect). The case that has been made in this chapter for dual basilects has been constructed on the basis of linguistic evidence. Corroborating socio-historical evidence suggests that the non-linguistic basis for differentiating the two basilects is largely
geographic. In the Guyanese case Bickerton maps geographic and ethnic differences directly onto a single continuum, but in the Liberian case the data support the alternative strategy of positing separate basilects. Inasmuch as one can plot a path--by progressive alterations of the basilectal rule system--that reaches from basilect to acrolect, the continuum model remains appropriate: the dual-basilect scheme represents an adjustment of it, not an abandonment.

As has been noted in this chapter, the creole prototype is more accurately considered a system of temporal sequencing than of tense. Already the absence of anteriority marking has been noted. Chapter 3--"Compleitive, Intensive, and Perfect"--examines further differences between Liberian English and the creole prototype with regard to anteriority.
Chapter III

COMPLETIVE, INTENSIVE, AND PERFECT

Labov et al. (1968) conclude their discussion of Black English done by stating that in the case of this AUX "the meanings of perfective, intensive, and 'relevance to the present,' normally converge" (p. 266). They illustrate this with the sentence given in (1):

Black English

1. We done told you that already.

Though the terminology will be adjusted somewhat, the present chapter examines those AUX's in Liberian English that express one or more of the three "meanings" to which Labov et al. refer, i.e. perfective, intensive, and perfect. (In the course of the chapter reasons why these notions group together will be considered as well.) These are the AUX's doh, na, feni, hav (hav/haz/had/ha), and ben. These AUX's will first be introduced, with special attention paid to their origins. Their semantic content will be examined, followed by a discussion of their place on the continuum and then by a look at inflection of the verb stem in conjunction with these AUX's. Finally, at the end of the chapter, the sentence-final particle o will be considered, and arguments will be presented for its inclusion in the

75 Except where differentiating them is crucial, hav, haz, had, and ha will be referred to jointly as hav.

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3.1 THE AUXILIARIES

3.1.1 HAV and BEN

Both hav and ben come directly from English. Evidence presented subsequently in this chapter shows that the use of these two markers is roughly identical to their use in Standard English and also that their distribution in contemporary Liberian English is linked--directly and indirectly--to the Settlers and to Western education. While caution must be exercised in using written evidence to draw conclusions about spoken language, letters that early Settlers wrote to people in the U.S. suggest that they had come to Liberia already using hav and ben. The following excerpt from an 1839 letter illustrates this:

2. You said in your letter that you think some young Fellow have bin trying to make me think well of him but there is not a Native that i have see that i think that i could make myself hapy with. (Wiley 1980:47)

Thus, Liberian English ben--illustrated in (3)--is much more like its American English counterpart than it is like the bin of Krio (4), Cameroonian (5), or Guyanese (6).

3. a ben duen hElova 1a 0 ten, bob.

'I've been doing a helluva lot of things, Jack.'
Settler Slim 48-59-18
Krio

4. Wetin biy mek yu let f0 plant di rEs?
   'What made you late in your rice-planting?'
   (Opala 1980:55)

Cameroonian

5. I sei, "A, mi a no biy sabi o."
   'He said, "Oh, I didn't realize it."'
   (Todd 1982:132)

Guyanese

6. a mi biy se da.
   'I said that.'
   (Bickerton 1975b:41)

3.1.2 NA

Liberian English also has an AUX na, illustrated in (7):

7. "he ma na day, En wi pua, wi én gÉ no fu."
   '"His mother is dead, and we're poor; we don't have any food."'
   Charles 6-8-21

Singler (1982) considers three hypotheses as to the origin of na:
that it is a direct borrowing from Dewoin, a Kru language spoken near
Monrovia; that it comes from the homophonous na 'now'; and that it
comes from done, a form found elsewhere in West Africa (and
hypothesized by Bickerton to have developed there). Singler (1982)
argues for the third hypothesis and proposes the following scenario
for the evolution of na from done:
1. The change from $A$ to the vowel $O$ is to be found in all West African pidgins and creoles.

2. The sequence $VN$ everywhere becomes $V$ in Liberian English. Thus, $dOn$ became $d\ddot{o}$. (However, in the orthographic system used in the present work, $d\ddot{o}$ is written $dOn$.)

3. Kru languages, specifically Klao and Grebo, do not permit voiced oral stops to co-occur with nasalized vowels. Thus, Kru influence led to the change from $dOn$ [d\ddot{o}] to $nOn$ [n\ddot{o}]. (The form $nOn$ [n\ddot{o}] continues to occur in Liberia's three easternmost counties, Maryland (as noted by Hancock and Kobbah (1975)), Grand Gedeh, and Sinoe.)

4. Liberian English does not generally contrast [NV] with [N\ddot{V}]. Moreover, in grammatical items, $O$ and $a$ are often neutralized. The evolution from $nO$ to $na$ follows from this. That $na$ and not $nO$ is the usual pronunciation may be explained by the prior existence in the language of $na$ 'now' (i.e. by an instance of folk etymology).

3.1.3 DON

dOn is apparently the historical source of $na$. At the same time, it is a feature of contemporary Liberian English, though one with limited distribution. The distribution that does obtain reflects the two sources for $dOn$ in presentday Liberian English.

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One is Black English *don*, which the Settlers brought with them. The other is *don* as used in Sierra Leone and Nigeria, which Liberians who have lived in one of these two countries brought back with them to Liberia. (In contrast, *don* is not a feature of Ghanaian English (Charles Asante, p.c.), and Liberians who have lived in Ghana do not show *don* in their speech.) With very few exceptions, the distribution of *don* in the corpus is entirely restricted to those who have lived in Sierra Leone or Nigeria (or who are Settlers). This fact supports this "souvenir" explanation for *don*’s contemporary presence among non-Settlers. Since there are other features of Krio and Nigerian Pidgin as well that are not a part of Liberian English, it is curious that *don* alone should be incorporated into the Liberian English of those who have returned to Liberia from Sierra Leone or Nigeria. The answer perhaps lies in the fact that *don* does exist in Liberian English, if only in Settler English, and—as such—is not marked [~ LIBERIAN].

3.1.4 FENI

3.1.4.1 The Origin of FENI

As suggested above, *hay* and *ben* came full-blown into Liberian English from English, and *na* represents a phonological evolution from *don*. A scenario for how *don* came to be an AUX is presented in Bickerton (1975b). There, in a discussion of Guyanese Creole, Bickerton suggests that "... *don* initiated as an innovation in Africa, possibly as a calque on a form in some as-yet undetermined indigenous language..." (p. 54). Originally, Bickerton argues, *don* occurred
post-clausally. Later, its place in the sentence varied between pre-verbal and post-clausal positions. Finally, it became pre-verbal categorically. (Dialects vary as to how far they have progressed in this development: among the Guyanese Creole of speakers of African ancestry pre-verbal don use is virtually categorical; among the Guyanese Creole of speakers of Indian ancestry, insertion remains variably pre-verbal/post-clausal. For Liberian users of don, it is categorically pre-verbal.)

There is another Liberian English marker, fen i, illustrated in (8):

8. wëna go bren di mé na, a we Esplen e fës, bikOz a ké di mé tu di chif. wëna a fen i Esplen e, dEn wi we tOn ran, di Es di mé egen.

'When they go summon the man, I will explain my version of the story first, because I was the one who had lodged the complaint against the man with the chief. Once I have explained my version, then we will turn to the man, and they will ask the man for his version.'

Nimba Gardener 15-15-4

Singler (1983) argues that the history of fen i is strongly parallel to the development of don proposed by Bickerton. In the case of fen i, Mande languages provide possible sources for a calque. In particular, two Northern Mande speech varieties, Māniyakä and Bambara, have related constructions. Both are part of the Bambara-Malinke-Dyula (BMD) dialect cluster. in Māniyakä, constructions involving bë 'to

76 Bambara is primarily spoken in Mali and Guinea, Māniyakä in Guinea and--especially in the twentieth century--Liberia. Speakers of BMD dialects have manned the trade routes of the western half of West Africa for centuries. Dwyer (1975) shows a number of lexical items that have entered Southwestern and Eastern Mande as well as Kru languages from Northern Mande. Modern examples of BMD influence on Liberian English range from lexical items such as dokafé 'used clothes that are for sale,' from Bambara don a kan! fife! ('Try it
finish' are used to express the notion of 'already,' as in (9).

Māniyakā

9a. Aï na taa-la lakOli '1a.
    they PAST go-PROG? school to
    'They went to school.'

9b. Aï we taa lakOli '1a.
    COMPL
    'They went to school.'

9c. Aï we bā taa-la lakOli '1a.
    COMPL finish
    'They already went to school.' (Literally: 'They finished going to school. ')
    (examples adapted from Cutler 1981:62, 64, 70)

(Cutler calls we a "completive or narrative past tense." )

on! Look at it!) to formatives such as de:

Bambara

a1. n tûn t'â doN ko n wolo-ba de ban-na.
    I ANT NEG-it know say my birth-mother FOC die-past.
    'I didn't know that the very woman who had given birth
    to me had died.'

a2. a dôn no ma on mOda de bOn mi i da.
    'I didn't know that the very woman who had given birth
    to me had died.'
    Nimba Watchman 61-6-26

77 A similar construction obtains in Loma (Lorma). There Dwyer (1981) states: "The meaning of already is expressed by the verb wôólâû, the adverb sâa 'now' and the present progressive" (1981:95). (a) illustrates this.
Its use suggests that the events being discussed are in some manner (space, time, or experience) further removed from the present than does the use of the simple past tense.

(1981:64))

Bambara has a slightly different construction. There kà ban is tacked on to the end of a sentence. (kà marks an infinitive.) This is illustrated by the sentences in (10).

Bambara

10a. N y'à ye.
    I PAST-her see
    'I saw her.'

10b. N y'à ye kà ban.
    INF finish
    'I have already seen her.' (Literally: 'I saw her and finished.')

To return to Liberian English fenî: it seems to be the case that fenî, like dOn, entered the language as a post-clausal marker. (As such, it would closely parallel the Bambara word order for ban sentences.) It still occurs post-clausally for some speakers, e.g.

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Loma

a. Gë wàbblâà sàâ pélè-wù Bálé-zù.
   I now house-in sweep-PresProg
   'I already swept the house.'

Dwyer (1981:95)

The Loma lexical verb 'to finish' is wóló. Asked if wòbblâà might have developed from wóló plus a (a being the perfect marker), Dwyer (p.c.) comments that such a derivation/evolution is a plausible one for Loma.
11. wEn de lod awa she, i feni, dEn wi go tu di sem ples.

'When they finished loading our ship, then we would return to the same place.' (Literally: 'When they load our ship, it finishes, then we will return to the same place.')

Ghana Steward 52-61-18

12. afta yu sk rash di ras feni, wEn Eni gras en e, yu tra tu h0l e aw.

'Once you have planted the rice, then you weed the field.'

Boatman 59-5-14

It is possible that an example like (12), where feni is the final element of the clause whose verb it affects, represents an evolution from sentences like (11), where feni is in a clause of its own. In the event, insertion of feni is categorically post-clausal in other neighboring pidgins, such as Français Populaire Ivoirien (13) and Nigerian Pidgin (14):

Français Populaire Ivoirien

13. Il mangé fini.
   'He has eaten.'

(Yero Sylla, p.c.)

Nigerian Pidgin English

14. i don chop finish.
   'He has eaten.'

(Ore Yusuf, p.c.)

However, in the present corpus of Liberian English, with the exception of five speakers, pre-verbal insertion of feni is categorical.
3.1.4.2 The AUX-hood of Feni

The discussion thus far has assumed that hav, ben, dOn, na, and feni are AUX's. The first three are argued to have come from other speech varieties, varieties in which their status as AUX is firmly established. As for na, the analysis presented here has assumed that it has evolved from dOn, itself an AUX. The remaining marker, feni, merits further discussion. Variants of finish/finir do show up elsewhere as AUX's—in Ile-de-France Creole (Laycock 1970) and in Neo-Melanesian (Corne 1981) and in François Populaire Ivoirien and Nigerian Pidgin, as illustrated in (13) and (14). However, feni—at least as a pre-verbal AUX—is a Liberian innovation. (That is, it did not come to Liberia as a pre-verbal marker from somewhere else. Ile-de-France Creole fin is pre-verbal, but that presumably represents an independent development.) And while substratal antecedents for feni can be adduced, there is also the superstrate finish V-ing construction, illustrated in (15a):

Standard English

15a. I finished writing a letter to Marie yesterday.

In the Standard English case, finish is not an AUX; rather, it is a main verb. In Liberian English, feni V-en (the Liberian equivalent of finish V-ing) occurs more frequently than feni V. Why should feni not be viewed as a main verb in Liberian English constructions as well? The rest of the present section will be devoted to the presentation of evidence for the AUX-hood of feni.
Part of the problem at hand is how one determines whether or not a particular form is an AUX. Spears identifies "the six criteria most often mentioned in transformational analyses as underlying the distinction between auxiliaries and main verbs . . ." in English (1982:857). However, several of these are inapplicable to Liberian English. For example, do support and tag formation are not properties of Liberian English. (The only tag is EnE/En.) Other criteria are largely limited to acrolectal speech: subject-AUX inversion in questions and negative contraction. (In 4.3.2 evidence is presented that wón, 'won't,' is more acrolectal than we ná, 'will not.') The remaining two criteria are reduction and the inability of AUX's to occur in gerundive and infinitival clauses. Spears states with regard to reduction: "Some auxiliaries have reduced forms which are contracted onto the preceding word" and illustrates this with î'îl (1982:858-859). The strength of the Liberian pull towards canonical CV syllable structure militates against reduction and contraction of this sort. In Standard English this type of reduction starts at the beginning of the AUX; in Liberian English reduction starts at the end.ÔÔ fenî is subject to the loss of final segments: while most often pronounced [fenî], it is also pronounced [fÔ] and [fi].

Of the six criteria cited by Spears, the remaining one--and the only one that translates freely into Liberian English--is the prohibition on the occurrence of AUX's in gerundive and infinitival

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ÔÔ There are processes in Liberian English that weaken--and sometimes delete--an AUX-initial d, but there are no processes of this sort that affect an initial f.
clauses. This criterion holds for other AUX's and appears to hold for the AUX *feni* as well. To be sure, the main verb *feni* can occur in such clauses, but the AUX cannot. Additional evidence for the AUX- hood of *feni* will be introduced that also makes the case for a distinction between the main verb *feni* and the AUX. To begin with, it will be argued that the use of the *feni* V-en construction, where *feni* is an AUX, represents the imitation of the Standard English form without entailing the parallel Standard English meaning. That is, Liberian English *feni* V-en constructions do not mean the same thing as their Standard English counterparts. This can be illustrated by comparing Standard English (15a) with its Liberian English equivalent:

15b. a *feni* rayten w0n lEta tu mari yEstEdE.

The Standard English sentence given in (15a) carries the implication that the letter was begun prior to yesterday. The equivalent Liberian English sentence usually contains no such implication. In fact, the usual reading for (15b) is that the writing of the letter both began and ended yesterday. In a case like (15b), the presence of the -en suffix on the verb does not imply the marking of imperfectivity (non-punctuality); it seems to carry no semantic information whatsoever.

To be sure, there do exist in the corpus sentences parallel to Standard English (15a) in both form and meaning. For example, in a story told by Lofa Musician,

16. hi se, "dEn. . . . a *feni* leven en di w0."

'He said, "Damn. . . . My life has ended in the war."

(Literally: 'I finished living in the war.')

Lofa Musician 42-7-25

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However, such cases are relatively rare. Rather, it will be argued that, while the main-verb use of feni (as in (16)) focusses on the endpoint of a situation, the AUX use of feni refers to the complete event. That is, the specific focus on the endpoint has been bleached out of feni.

There are two types of evidence in the data that support this claim. The first involves cases where an event is virtually instantaneous and, consequently, not ordinarily dissectable into temporal units. Settler Peken's description of nafu (< knock foot), a game for girls, provides a case in point. The game involves a stamping-dance. The champion and the challenger face each other. At a given point in the dance sequence, the champion stamps her foot. The challenger must stamp with the opposite foot. If the challenger does not stamp with the correct foot, she has lost the game, and the champion moves on to a new challenger. If, however, the challenger stamps with the correct foot, she has "caught" the champion. After that,

17. dEn . . . de we ple wOn m0 taym . . . tu see wEda di gE we ste kEsh di wOn hu feni kEshen hE.

'Then . . . they will play again . . . to see whether the old champion can defeat the one who has caught her.'

Settler Peken 4-13-15

To translate the final clause as "the one who finished catching her" is wrong. It is the entire event, not simply its endpoint, that is being referred to.
Another such example involves the verb kel 'to kill' and occurs in the conversation with Patience and Comfort. In an elaboration of a joke she has told earlier—-a kind of malapropism known in Liberia as Jake Melton stories—Patience reports Jake as saying:

18. ". . . hya hen dE na, de feni kelem hen f0 ran-pEn kOreshen."

'". . . Just look at him [Tolbert]. They killed him because of his 'round-pan' [rampant] corruption."

Patience 37-4-9

The second type of data that establishes that feni marks the complete event is that which parallels the sentence in (15a), i.e. sentences where temporal adverbs, adverbial phrases, or clauses are employed. An example of this is given in (19). In such a case, the context dictates the "complete situation" (rather than the "endpoint") gloss.

19. a feni chenjen ma wes sens a ken hya.
'I have changed my ways completely since I came here.'

Comfort 37-12-8

The semantic alteration (and bleaching) of feni, so that it now refers to a complete situation (rather than simply to the endpoint of that situation), supports the claim that feni has emerged as an AUX. Phonological evidence (in the form of the reduction of feni) further bolsters this claim. If feni—like dOn, na, háv, and ben—is an AUX, it now becomes appropriate to ask what semantic information these AUX's convey.

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3.2 THE SEMANTICS OF THESE AUX'S

3.2.1 Perfective/Compleitive

Comrie (1976) distinguishes between aspectual oppositions, on the one hand, and the forms that express aspect, on the other. He states that the absence of [+ X] marking does not imply the meaning [- X]. He notes, for example:

In some languages . . . the use of . . . specifically progressive forms is optional, i.e. the nonprogressive form does not exclude progressive meaning. (1976:33)

In the discussion of perfective/completeive that follows, the focus is specifically on perfective/completeive forms. This approach follows the general trend in literature on pidgins and creoles, where the terms "perfective" and "completeive" are ordinarily applied to forms, rather than to, say, semantic features or feature values. 79

It is also the case that creole literature tends to use the terms "perfective" and "completeive" virtually interchangeably. The AUX done/dOn/don is a case in point. For Krio, Fyle and Jones (1980) call it a "perfective"; for Bahamian, Holm (1980) labels it "completeive." As noted above, Labov et al. (1968) call Black English done "perfective" while Bickerton calls it "completeive." (Bickerton's analysis of Black English done and Bickerton's use of the term "perfective" are both discussed below.) Moreover, those who do not use the term "completeive" for done/dOn/don still tend to describe

79 Taylor (1971) and Winford (1975) are exceptions: they use completeive to describe Q-marked forms. An additional exception is Muysken, whose 1981 analysis of creole tense-modality-aspect is discussed with regard to perfective/completeive in fn. 81.
"perfective" in terms of completion.\textsuperscript{80} Thus, in Cunningham's work on Sea Island Creole, she states: "The perfective, par excellence, done, may render any action or state as being complete"\textsuperscript{81} (1970:68).

Definitions for the terms perfective and completive are presented below, and the relations between the two concepts are discussed. It will be argued that, despite the disparateness of their definitions, the two concepts are equally valid—or nearly so—in describing AUX's like don, fen, and na. The fact that creolists seem not to distinguish between completive and perfective will be seen as a reflection of the extent to which the two notions overlap when it comes to the forms that occur in creole tense-aspect systems. (The seeming interchangeability of "perfective" and "completive" is not confined to the work of creolists. Friedrich (1974) cites an analysis

\textsuperscript{80} Schneider (1966) calls Cameroonian Pidgin don a "perfect" but defines it by saying that it "marks the action as completed" (p. 71).

\textsuperscript{81} The only clear exception to the tendency to link perfective and completive is Muysken (1981). His analysis uses Woisetschläger's (1976) theory of aspect, in which "nine aspectual categories are distinguished with the aid of six binary features" (Muysken 1981:191). In it, perfective and completive are separate categories with distinct feature values. Muysken then proceeds to assign markedness values to each aspectual category. (The basis for the assignment of these values is arguable, but that is not relevant here.) Unlike Bickerton's system—where non-punctual is the unmarked aspect—Muysken's system has two unmarked aspects, imperfective (which he says "corresponds roughly" to non-punctual) and perfective. (Note that imperfective and perfective represent separate categories rather than oppositions within a single category.) Muysken then argues that creoles vary as to which of the unmarked aspectual categories is/are basic to their systems. Muysken makes no distinction between aspectual oppositions and aspectual forms. (For Comrie, as noted in the text, this distinction is crucial.) As such, Muysken's analysis is not the same as those cited here from elsewhere in the literature or as

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of Homeric Greek by Lyons (1968) which posits [+ COMPLETIVE] as the basic aspectual opposition and which then equates [+ COMPLETIVE] with "perfective" (p. 27.).

Perfectivity, using Comrie's definition,

... presents the totality of the situation without reference to its internal temporal constituency: the whole of the situation is present as a single unanalysable whole, with beginning, middle, and end rolled into one; no attempt is made to divide this situation into ... various individual phases. ... (1976:3)

Elsewhere he states that "perfectivity involves lack of explicit reference to the internal temporal constituency of a situation" (p. 21). The completive, as the name implies, presents a situation as being complete. If perfective marks an unanalyzed situation (unanalyzed with regard to internal temporal constituency) and the

that presented below for Liberian English. Moreover, Muysken's use of "completive," when applied to data, seems quirky. For Seychellois Creole, he labels n as the completive marker. It is a reduction of fin. Corne (1981) labels fin a completive and describes in and n as variants of it (pp. 103, 106). (Corne's article is on Ile-de-France Creole; he states that "for the purposes of this paper, the Indian Ocean Creole French dialects of Mauritius, Rodrigues, and Seychelles may be considered as a single language" (p. 103)). One of the examples Muysken gives of n is given below. Muysken calls ti "past," a "definite future," tultɛ an adverb, and pe "nonpunctual."

Seychellois Creole

a. zə ti a n tultɛ pe məze.

'John would always have been eating.' (1980:195)

Corne gives further examples of n, including the following:
completive marks a complete situation, why do the two—with their seemingly different emphases—generally overlap in practice? An unanalyzed situation is necessarily a discrete entity; so too is a complete one. While distinguishing between "completed" and "complete," Comrie sheds further light on why perfective and completive are bound so intimately:

A very frequent characterisation of perfectivity is that it indicates a completed action. One should note that the word at issue in this definition is 'completed,' not 'complete': despite the formal similarity between the two words, there is an important semantic distinction which turns out to be crucial in discussing aspect. The perfective does indeed denote a complete situation, with beginning, middle, and

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Ile-de-France Creole (Seychellois)

b. ler u ava n repar u loto . . .

'When you (will) have repaired your car . . .'

(1980:106)

c. mò ti a n bez li.

'I would have hit him.'

(1980:106)

(According to Corne, ava, va, and a mark the future.)

In Sao Tomense, Muysken labels ka as an incompletive marker. (He states that the completive is not overtly marked.) He presents two examples of its use, given below:

Sao Tomense

d. e ka bi fla. . .

he FUT speak

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end. The use of 'completed,' however, puts too much emphasis on the termination of the situation, whereas the use of the perfective puts no more emphasis, necessarily, on the end of a situation than on any other part of the situation, rather all parts of the situation are presented as a single whole.

(1976:18)

At the same time, Comrie acknowledges:

A perfective form often indicates the completion of a situation when it is explicitly contrasted with an imperfective form: since the imperfective indicates a situation in progress, and since the perfective indicates a situation which has an end, the only new semantic element introduced by the perfective is that of the termination of the situation . . . .

(1976:19)

Given the fact that perfective and completive—despite differences in their definitions—seem virtually identical in distribution (and seem interchangeable in creole studies), questions arise as to whether it

'He will have spoken.'

(1980:194)

e. no 'tava ka mola 'petu do mali.
   we PAST live near the sea

'We used to live near the sea.'

(1980:194)

The theory that underlies Muysken's analysis seems to assume a universality of aspectual oppositions; thus, for those languages that mark completive and/or incompletive, the opposition between completive and incompletive is equivalent cross-linguistically. If the labelling of (d) and (e) as incompletive is dubious (compare (d) "incompletive" with (b) "completive"), the labelling of (a) as completive is even more so.

This discussion of Muysken's article has been meant to establish the following points. Because he deals with aspectual categories as well as aspectual forms, his analysis is necessarily different both in its premises and its conclusions from that to be presented here. It could be that Muysken's failing to make this distinction limits
is possible to separate them and, if so, to determine which term better describes a given AUX in Liberian English. One way to answer both questions is by looking to see if examples can be found of situations that are either perfective but not completive or completive but not perfective. The discussion in 3.1.4.2 of the AUX-hood of *feni* establishes that the use of *-en* in *feni* V-*en* constructions does not signal imperfectivity. Other examples will have to be found. The corpus contains only two. In describing how to make a trap to catch a "bush cow" (water buffalo), Gedeh Childminder says,

20. yô go en di bui, dik sôn ho. dEn *feni* dik da ho, dik da ho, den yu pu sôn dEt owá e.

'You (pl.) go into the bush and dig a hole. Once you have dug and dug and dug, then you cover it.'

Gedeh Childminder 32-64-9

In this example, *feni* is completive without being perfective in that the action is viewed as consisting of several parts, the repetition of the verb expressing the iteration involved.\(^\text{82}\) Similarly, when

the validity of his analysis, a validity already called into question by the contradictory nature of the evidence he presents from various creoles.

(Bickerton (1981) disagrees with Muysken's analysis on somewhat different grounds. In part, Bickerton's criticism is a creolist's version of the dozens: he impugns the parentage of several of the languages that Muysken cites. With reference to the languages used by Muysken and cited in the present footnote, Bickerton notes the discrepancies between Muysken's account of Sao Tomense and the accounts of the language by others who have worked on it.)

\(^\text{82}\) Strictly speaking, the co-occurrence of *feni* (or of *dOn* or *na*) with imperfective marking need not invalidate its eligibility for the label "perfective" inasmuch as Comrie does note the occurrence, "albeit rarely," of perfective progressive forms in Spanish and other languages (p. 23).
Carpenter is describing an incident from his youth, he reports a speech that he made to the missionary who headed the school that he was attending:

21. "... en di nayt, O yO dO on duen di ha-ha w0k, fO sli na, yO m0 st0di lEson."

"... At night, after we have done all that strenuous labor, we feel like sleeping but we have to study."
Carpenter 33-19-21

The use of dOn as a main verb is highly infrequent except with reference to cooking.\(^3\) Thus, it can be assumed that dOn is here an AUX and that -en marks imperfectivity. For na no comparable example is to be found in the corpus. However, William--in a discussion about na--stated that each of the following sentences was grammatical and that, moreover, na bi V-en constructions were used frequently in Monrovia at least.\(^8\)

\(^3\) dOn does occur as a main verb in a non-culinary context in Settler speech, as the following example (taken from 3.5.2) illustrates:

74. En dE wa asr EbkO dOn dOn.

'And that's what our rector went and did.'
Settler Carolina 20-13-6

\(^8\) There is one occurrence each of na feni V and feni dOn V in the corpus.

a. re dia se, "1Ep0, ... e yu h0ngr, me En yu we ná se dan hya f0 10n tu t0k; dEn yu na feni i mi."

'The red deer said, "Leopard, ... if you had been really hungry, you and I wouldn't be sitting down here for a chat; you would have eaten me all up by now."
Porter 33-66-2

b. de se, "hu! yu meken kwets, yu, yu leto b0 meken kwet,"

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22. *shi na bi selen Oy.*

'She used to be selling palm oil.'

23. *a na bi traven des ten a la.*

'I used to try this thing a lot.'

If William's claim about *na bi* is correct, then *na* is like *feni,* more accurately characterized as a completive than as a perfective marker.

The evidence about which term, "completive" or "perfective," better describes any one of the three markers under consideration is in short supply. What evidence there is for making a distinction does favor the notion of "completive," and that is the term that will be used subsequently. Still, the overwhelming weight of the evidence is that the AUX's in question mark both completive and perfective; consequently, the use of "completive" in describing Liberian English should be thought of as a shorthand for "completive-perfective."

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b0 wEn a tek hem, hi se dan, a kOt 0 ma kwets fOs, he ha wOn mashen, a ha wOn, we tu we gE tu sown a, we *feni dOn so* e, dEn a jan et 0.

'They said, "Hu! You making quilts, you, a little boy making quilts," but when I'd take him and he'd sit down, I would cut all my quilts first and he would have one sewing machine and I'd have one, and the two of us would get to sewing and we'd sew every last bit of it, and then I'd join it up.'

_settler Carolina 20-56-3_

One explanation is that *na/dOn* is perfective and *feni* completive. A more likely explanation is that one AUX (*na/dOn*) marks completive and the other (*feni*) intensive.
3.2.2 Intensive

The notion of "intensity" might seem somewhat out of place in a discussion of tense, temporal sequencing, and aspect. Tense and temporal sequencing are both time-oriented; so, too, is aspect: according to Comrie, "aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation" (1976:3-4). In contrast to these three concepts, intensity would seem to be independent of time. The comments of Labov et al. in discussing the use of Black English done in sentences like (1) reflect this:

The meaning of done, like so many elements of the central grammatical system, is inevitably disjunctive. It has a perfective meaning, and with it there is usually associated an intensive meaning. But there are occasions when the intensive sense occurs without a perfective sense, and then done is seen as perfectly appropriate. That is equally the case when a non-intensive perfective situation occurs.

(1968:266)

Bickerton (1975b) disagrees with Labov et al. He argues that for Guyanese Creole don as well as Black English done, there is an underlying semantic unity, and it is expressed by the feature (and feature value) [+ COMPLETION]. Thus, rather than saying that done sometimes is perfective and sometimes intensive, Bickerton says that the sense of done in all cases can be expressed by paraphrases involving 'complete,' 'completed,' or 'completely.' Labov et al. give the sentence (24a) as an example of the perfective non-intensive use of done and the sentence (25a) as an example of its intensive non-perfective use.

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Black English

24a. You don't have it, 'cause you done used it in your younger age.

(Labov et al. 1968:265)

25a. I forgot my hat! I done forgot my hat! I done forgot it!

(1968:266)

Along the lines suggested by Bickerton, (24a) can be paraphrased by (24b) and (25a) by (25b).

Paraphrase of (24a)

24b. You don't have it because you used it up completely in your younger age.

Paraphrase of (25a)

25b. I forgot my hat! I completely forgot my hat! I completely forgot it!

Nichols disagrees sharply with Bickerton on this point. She states that his

... argument is implicitly based on assumed universals of metaphor; the fallacy lies in B's failure to consider grammaticalization, in his confusion of semantic information (as it pertains to grammatical categories) with lexioco-semantic information, and in his rhetorical identification completely = [+Completive] = [+Perfect].

(1976:993)

Bickerton's characterization of the semantics may fall wide of the mark, but he seems to be correct in his assertion that the primarily completive use of done in, for example, (24a) and the primarily intensive use of done in, for example, (25a), show a fundamental unity. Rickford argues that the AUX done/don is best characterized as an "emphatic perfect" marker (to appear:90). Using the definition of perfect offered by Comrie (1976), Rickford states:
whether we are dealing with processes (non-statives) conceived of as having been completed in the past, or with states (statives) initiated in the past, don might be seen as an emphatic indicator of the "continuing present relevance of a past situation" (Comrie, 52).

(to appear:90; italics in the original)

The link between emphasis and a particular verb tense has been noted elsewhere as well. Reid and Gildin (1979) argue for a link in literary French between the passé simple and "High Focus," on the one hand, and the imparfait and "Low Focus," on the other.

Rickford's characterization of Guyanese don as marking "emphatic perfect" needs some adjustment in order to apply to the relevant AUX's in Liberian English. This is so because the AUX's in question--when used "intensively"--are not always [+ PERFECT]. They are, however, always [+ COMPLETIVE]. (The relations of [+ COMPLETIVE] to [+ PERFECT] and of intensive to each of them are discussed in 3.2.4.)

The Liberian English "intensive" AUX's--the one parallel to Black English done and Guyanese don--are feni and dOn, e.g.

26. de se kOpugai wOn tan, di mE feni klin di mE he.

'They called the corporal, and he came immediately and shaved off all the man's hair.'

Nimba Cook 65-10-7

27. di pOsEn wa kO di rop, a feni flash di pipi On he fes.

'The person who cut the rope, I urinated all over his face.'

Builder 51-63-12

28. o, tens dOn ben vëri chip en sano.

'Oh, things used to be really cheap in Sinoe.'

Settler Carolina 20-15-16

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29. a se, "ma brôda, wi kôn fron marovia, mi En kundô, bô kundô 10s, i dôn 10s en ma fes."

'I said, "My brother, Kundoh and I came from Monrovia, but Kundoh disappeared; I have completely lost sight of him."'

Builder 51-1-20

The status of na/nôn with regard to intensiveness is somewhat problematic. Thus far nôn has been considered a regonal variant of na, one that has not undergone the vowel change that represents the final step in the evolution from dôn to na. It could be that nôn is also more dôn-like than na semantically as well in that it sometimes functions as an intensive while na apparently does not. The examples given in (30) and (31) illustrate this:

30. wôn yia, ma sesta to me se, "di cheken dizîk kôm en o. yu mô ke yu cheken en pu dên awt." a se, "a, sesta, a gan tra En liv ma cheken. go we hêp." so sekmês kôm. e ke di pîpo cheken, ke di pîpo cheken, bô de ñ trôbo mayn. a se, "En-hên, ên may nôn ste?!

'One year, my sister told me, "The chicken disease is coming. You should kill your chickens and get rid of them." I said, "Ah, sister, I'm going to see if I can't hold on to my chickens. God will help." So the sickness came. It went on and on, killing everybody's chickens, but it didn't bother mine. I said, "En-henh! Didn't mine live?!"

Settler Carolina 20-15-20

31. o, a nôn fôgeten di pasta nem.

'Oh! I've forgotten the pastor's name!'

Calvin 27-17-25

(Settler Carolina lives in Sine County, and Calvin lives in Maryland County.) There are no cases in the corpus where na is clearly emphatic or intensive in thrust. Perhaps na has become strictly

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completive, while feni is both completive and intensive. Work with consultants comparing na and feni yielded mixed results with regard to whether or not the two markers differ semantically or pragmatically. When William accepted both the na and feni variants of a sentence, he said that there was no difference in the meanings of the two sentences. However, in a different session, two other consultants—Henry Salifu and Walter Wiles—differed from William in this regard. That is, given both the na and feni variants of a sentence, they consistently ascribed interpretations to the feni variant that made the verb more marked in some way. (32) and (33) show their interpretations of na and feni sentences.

32a. a na te j0n hi m0 ná brenk e tu mi.

'I told John not to be rude to me.' (Lit.: 'I told John he must not bring it to me."

32b. a feni te j0n hi m0 ná brenk e tu mi.

'I told John not to be rude to me.'

In both cases the speaker is reporting that he or she has warned John not to be rude to the speaker. The feni sentence carries with it the additional implication that, because the speaker has conveyed the information in no uncertain terms, there is no way that John didn't get the message.

William's reasons for rejecting certain sentences with na in them are discussed in Singler (1982); the basis ordinarily involves co-occurrence restrictions. There was no evidence that it ever involved intensiveness. Also William did accept na bi V-en sentences (as discussed in 3.2.1), but he rejected feni bi V-en and feni ben V-en sentences categorically.

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33a. da mE na kOn o.

'That man has come.'

33b. da mE feni kOn o.

'That man has come.'

In (33a) the man's arrival was expected. In (33b) it was not and may be the cause of consternation.

Sentences like (32a-b) and (33a-b) are so close to each other in meaning that the reliability of the purported distinctions is somewhat suspect. As an AUX, feni can definitely carry an intensive force; moreover, feni the AUX has spawned feni the intensifying adverb (cf. Singler 1983). These facts of themselves make no statement about whether or not na can be intensive. At the same time, that Salifu and Wiles—when asked to provide a difference—selected a difference in intensiveness probably amounts to more than simple co-incidence.

3.2.3 Perfect

The third component under discussion in this chapter is the concept of perfect.** That which is called "perfect" displays a myriad of uses.

** While the terms "perfective" and "perfect" refer to separate entities, they are sometimes interchanged in the literature. That may be what Schneider has done in referring to don as a "perfect auxiliary" (cf. fn. 80 in this chapter). What Bickerton (1975b) calls "perfective" is what most others call "perfect" (and what is being called "perfect" in the present work). That he uses "perfective" where others use "perfect" is made clear by his feature chart for the English tense-aspect system:

For the realis section of that system, there are effectively three . . . parameters—(± PAST),
(± CONTINUATIVE),
(± PERFECTIVE)—the eight possible combinations of which
According to Comrie, these uses converge in expressing "a relation between two time-points, on the one hand the time of the state resulting from a prior situation, and on the other the time of that prior situation" (1976:52). Rather than concentrating on the uses of the perfect, McCoard (1976) argues that there is a core meaning at the heart of the notion of "perfect." Throughout his dissertation, McCoard repeatedly differentiates between the meaning of the perfect and its uses, between the semantic information inherent in the perfect and the pragmatic applications of that information.

Descriptions of verb systems and how they work have traditionally been based on a rather loose terminology which tends to confuse the meaning of a form with the possible uses of that form.

(1976:ix)

exhaust the English realis set:

- P - C - P f  walk
+ P - C - P f  walked
- P  + C - P f  is walking
+ P  + C - P f  was walking
- P  - C  + P f  has walked
+ P  - C  + P f  had walked
- P  + C  + P f  has been walking
+ P  + C  + P f  had been walking

(p. 45)

In Bickerton's feature chart, [+ PERFECTIVE] refers to all and only those verbs with a have AUX. In the present work, those forms would be considered to be "perfect" forms (and to be [+ PERFECT]); the forms that would be considered as being [+ PERFECTIVE] would be walked, has walked, and had walked. (The last two forms, then, are both [+ PERFECT] and [+ PERFECTIVE].)

McCoard's criticisms are aimed, at least in part, at the "current relevance" (CR) analysis of the perfect. (His alternative, the "extended now" analysis, is discussed in the text.) However, Anderson (1982) argues that "the best CR-theorists distinguish
... there is frequent confusion between basic structural signals provided by a particular verb-form selection, and the contextual elaborations which are inferentially placed upon the signals.

(1976:1; italics in the original)

Two points critical to McCoad's efforts to arrive at the meaning of the perfect are the perfect's time-related orientation and the role of the speaker's subjectivity in selecting it rather than the preterit.** These two elements are fundamental and intertwined.

To McCoad,

... the sole function of auxiliary (perfect) have is to mark a temporal sequence relation of anteriority between the time of an event and some temporal reference point."**

(1976:10)

The perfect is

clearly between USES and MEANING ..." (p. 259n; capitalization in the original). Anderson argues subsequently (pp. 259-260n) that, while McCoad argues against the CR analysis and for his own "extended now" analysis, the difference between the two analyses is not substantial. Be that as it may, the "extended now" analysis contains insights that bear on the Liberian English data, and that analysis has been employed here for that reason. (On the other hand, at the end of this chapter, the Liberian English sentence-final particle o is presented, a marker whose range encompasses but extends beyond the more narrowly defined perfect that fits McCoad's "extended now." It is not possible to predict how McCoad would analyze that form or even if he would consider it to be a perfect marker at all.)

** The discussion that follows in this section confines itself to the opposition between present perfect and preterit. McCoad's conclusions extend to the past perfect and future perfect as well.

** McCoad's use of anteriority is not the same as Bickerton's [+ ANTERIOR]. For Bickerton the latter feature value, in the case of events, is limited to past-before-past. Thus, a sentence like (a) is anterior in McCoad's sense--since it occurs prior to the temporal reference point (here, the moment of speaking)--but is
... the marker of prior events which are nevertheless included within the overall period of the present, the "extended now," while the preterit marks events assigned to a past which is concluded and separate from the extended present.

(1976:123)

There is

... a basic semantic opposition between the preterit as marker of past events which are identified as "then"-time separate from the period of the present, and the perfect as marker of past events which are identified with "now"-time, the "extended now" continuous with the moment of communication or "coding."

(1976:7-8)

In an opposition like realis/irrealis, the speaker's hands are tied--by the situation being described. Irrealis situations require irrealis marking. (There are, of course, exceptions to this.) But personal choice lies at the heart of the perfect/preterit opposition: To McCoard, "... the key is whether or not the speaker chooses to include a prior event within the compass of his 'extended present'" (p. 36; italics mine). Elsewhere, McCoard comments on "the essential subjectivity of the speaker's conceptualization of time periods which is at the root of the perfect/preterit choice" (p. 42).

Mordechay's comments (1984) on McCoard are helpful in seeing just what components make up the meaning of the perfect (specifically within McCoard's "extended now" framework). According to Mordechay,

[- ANT] to Bickerton:

a. "mesta sosOnso, yuo soNa haz prEnetE ma d0ta."

"'Mister Whatever, your son has impregnated my daughter.'"

Settler Peken 5-2-3

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"extended now" is a sort of present tense, a "now" but not quite. The "extended now" includes a reference to a prior (to now) time point or period, hence "extended".

(1984:103)

To Mordechay, "extended now" "encompasses three ideas simultaneously: sequentiaity . . ., unity . . ., [and] preference" (1984:103). The last of these is the notion of choice or subjectivity referred to above. The other two form the basis of McCoard's time-oriented definition of the perfect: "One time point/period is anterior to another, . . . (but) there is one overall and inseparable period, continuous with the reference time" (Mordechay 1984:103; italics in the original).

McCoard's dissertation focusses on English; its title makes this clear: Tense Choice and Pragmatic Inferences: A Study of Preterit/Perfect Oppositions in English. Nonetheless, this analysis of the perfect seems to fit Liberian English hav and ben well. As suggested earlier, Liberian English hav and ben seem closely linked to English, not simply in form but also in meaning. Admittedly, statements about close semantic links between pidginized, creolized, or decreolized varieties and their superstrate languages are dangerous; in the present case, Dayton (1983) argues for difference between have in White American English and Black English. Nonetheless, the bulk of the evidence at hand suggests that--when hav or ben is used as an AUX in Liberian English--it marks the "perfect."

In the corpus, each of the 132 tokens of ben (including 52 hav ben
tokens) as an AUX is recognizably [+ PERFECT] (as well as either
[- PUNCTUAL] or [+ PASSIVE]. In the case of hav, out of 449 tokens
(again including the 52 hav ben tokens) there are only 10 that are not
immediately recognizable as being parallel to the Standard English use
of the perfect. (The claim being made here is that, with the 10
exceptions noted, hav, haz, had, and ha mark the perfect. No claim is
being made as to whether or not hav or has correspond to present
prefect or had to past perfect. This question is taken up below in
3.3.5.2.)

Of the 10 exceptions, 4 are cases where the predicted verb form
would be the present; in each of these cases, the main verb is
stative, e.g.

34. wE, mesta [ke], so 10n yu ha bi e pat aw as, yu kEn tek
pat en di progrEn tu.

'Well, Mister [K], as long as you are a part of our
group, you can take part in the program too.'
Lizard 47-67-24

A present stative and a present perfect stative are alike in that they
describe a state that began in the past and continues to the present.
The present perfect stative places greater emphasis on the period
prior to the moment of speaking (the reference time), while the
present stative places emphasis on the moment of speaking itself.
Sentences like (34) differ from what would be expected in where they
place emphasis.

As for the remaining 6 cases, the predicted verb form would be the
simple past (preterit). For these, no generalization emerges. In the
event, the number of perfect forms whose meaning is not obviously "perfect" is small enough (10/449, 2.2%) that it does not alter the generalizations expressed earlier, namely that Liberian English hav and ben correspond to Standard English forms and that the "extended now" analysis captures their basic meaning.

3.2.4 Overlapping Meanings

The discussion thus far has presented dOn, na, and feni as completive markers, dOn and feni (but probably not na) as intensive markers, and hav and ben as perfect markers. At the same time, from the beginning of the chapter the overlap in meaning of these three types of marking has been noticed. The questions that must now be answered are of the following type: Are the completive markers perfects as well? Are the perfect markers completives as well? In some cases, the answers to these questions emerge as implicational statements. For example, it is the case for the corpus that every intensive dOn or feni (or nOn) is also completive. It is not the case, however, that every intensive AUX is also [+ PERFECT]. Some are, e.g. (29), repeated below, but others are not, e.g. (28), also repeated below.

29. a se, "ma brOda, wi kOn fron marovia, mi En kund0, bo kund0 10s, i dOn 10s en ma fes."

'I said, "My brother, Kundoh and I came from Monrovia, but Kundoh disappeared; I have completely lost sight of him."

Builder 51-1-20
28. o, tens dOn ben vEri chip en sano.

'Oh, things used to be really cheap in Since.'
Settler Carolina 20-15-16

For perfects, when ben or hav ben is an AUX marking the verb, the event so marked is imperfective and [- COMPLETIVE]. However, when hav alone signals [+ PERFECT] (as opposed to ben or hav ben) and when the action in question is telic, the verb is usually [+ COMPLETIVE] as well. McCoard argues against the notion that completion should form part of the definition of perfect, even for telic events. He offers (35) as an example of a sentence where a perfect-marked telic verb is not complete; in this case, the "persuading" has not taken and is hence incomplete.

American English

35. I have persuaded him once already, but he may have lost heart and need another talking-to.

(McCoard 1976:150)

While McCoard's objection does show that hav-marked telic verbs are not automatically [+ COMPLETIVE], the generalization remains that most of them are.

96 A full discussion of the uses of ben is presented in 3.3.5.3. When ben is a main verb with a meaning of 'to go (or come) but not to remain,' it is possible for it to be [+ COMPLETIVE], e.g.

a. a ben tu rom.

'I've been to Rome before.'

Solomon 24-12-24

223
The reverse question is whether or not completive verbs are [+ PERFECT]. They are not automatically so. This issue—with the added consideration of the role that the continuum plays in shaping the answer—is examined in some detail in 3.3.2.

A question related to the interaction of completive and perfect is that of whether or not the AUX’s in this chapter can all co-occur with all verbs in the language. Specifically, Corne (1981) says that "with state 'Verbals' fin does not occur, since a state has by definition already been attained" (p. 113). He illustrates his remark with the sentence give in (36a).

Ile-de-France Creole

36a. lerua i bet.

'The king is stupid.' (Corne 1981:113)

Presumably (36b) would be ungrammatical:

Ile-de-France Creole

36b. *lerua i fin bet.

However, the Liberian equivalent of (36b), given in (36c), is grammatical.

36c. di ken feni stupe.

'The king is utterly stupid.'

Liberian English distinguishes between adjectives and stative verbs. That is, unlike many pidgins and creoles and unlike most Liberian Niger-Congo languages, Liberian English does have the category ADJ. Thus, in a case like (36c), feni is, strictly speaking, an
intensifying ADV rather than an AUX. In any event, feni--and d0n and
na/g0n--can all mark state verbs, as (37) and (38) illustrate.91

37. En de na ste l0n, so hi ken tu EsplEn tu di frEn dEn.
   'And they were at it a long time, so he came to explain
   why to his friends.'
   Charles 17-76-5

38. a feni leven tu gbanga.
   'I remained in Gbarnga.'
   Shorty 40-26-26

Thus, the kind of limitation invoked by Corne for co-occurrence
restrictions between completive markers and stative verbs does not
hold in the Liberian case.

3.3 THESE AUX'S AND THE CONTINUUM

A number of factors--some related to the continuum, some not--affect
the distribution of the AUX's under discussion in this chapter.
Geography, speaker's first language, and amount of Western education
figure prominently. For example, the four Borkeza speakers, the heart
of the Lofa basilect (discussed in 2.3.3), use these AUX's only
rarely. (Lofa Overseer does use ben frequently, but as a main verb,
not as an AUX. His use of ben is discussed in 3.3.5.3.) Also,
coastal Kru speakers with little or no Western education rarely use
any of these AUX's. Only 4 out of the 12 speakers who fit this
description use these markers a total of 5 or more times: Sailor with

91 liv can mean either 'to remain' or 'to depart.' Context establishes
that, in the case of (38), the former meaning is intended.
7, Brickmaker with 6, Carpenter and Ghana Steward with 5. (All five of Ghana Steward’s tokens are of clause-final *féní.*) In contrast, all 4 of the *interior* Kru speakers, i.e. the Gedeh speakers, with a comparable amount of Western schooling use these markers at least that often: Gedeh Gold Miner, 18; Gedeh Childminder, 15; Gedeh Marketwoman, 8; and Gedeh Soldier, 5.

Individual AUX’s are restricted as well. Specifically, only Settlers and speakers who have lived in Sierra Leone or Nigeria use *dón.* 92 *na/nón* is restricted to the Liberian coast plus the easternmost interior county, Grand Gedeh. (*nón* is restricted to Liberia’s three easternmost counties, Grand Gedeh in the interior and Sinoe and Maryland on the coast.) In the rest of the interior, no speaker uses *na*, regardless of the amount of Western education. Moreover, those who have moved from the interior to the coast show no evidence of having acquired this AUX after arriving on the coast.93

In the case of *hen,* geography plays a role, but it is amount of Western education that is prime. Among those with the most Western education (10 or more years), *hen* accounts for 296 tokens, *ben* (without *hen*) for 16, and *féní/dón/na* for 23. (The relation of *ben* to *hen* is discussed below.) Geography also plays a part in the discussion of *hen* inasmuch as *hen* use is frequent in Robertsport, even among those with little or no Western schooling. This generalization

92 Only two tokens contradict this: one by Boatman, who lives in a Settler town near the Sierra Leone border, and one by Pastor, who lives in Greenville, another Settler town.

93 There is a single exceptional token: Lofa Tapper uses *na* once.
extends to at least some of those who moved to Robertsport from the Liberian interior, e.g. Lofa Shopkeeper and Lofa Laborer.

With these various factors at work and with the differences in meaning among those AUX's, does it make sense to speak of them holding places on the continuum? To begin with, amount of Western education has been linked to the continuum throughout the present work. Thus, a continuum model would reflect those phenomena that are sensitive to amount of Western education. Geography and speaker's first language, on the other hand, are not so obviously linked to the continuum. na is a case in point. If there is a geographical correlation with the continuum, it is that coastal speech tends to be more acrolectal than does interior—for speakers with comparable amounts of education and comparable ages at the time of acquisition of English. As a general rule, either of the latter two factors is considerably more important than geography. In the case of na, however, geography is the primary defining criterion. At the same time, the speech of those who do use na makes it clear that na's place on the continuum is more basilectal than that of hav. The best indication of this is the following passage from Richard's interview with Painter:

39. RICHARD: b0 hav yu Ewa lev en marovia bifo?
PAINTER: mm?
RICHARD: hav yu lev en marovia bifo?
PAINTER: marovia?
RICHARD: yE.
PAINTER: mi?
RICHARD: yE, yu na lev dE bifo?
PAINTER: mm-mm.
RICHARD: But have you ever lived in Monrovia before?
PAINTER: Hm?
RICHARD: Have you lived in Monrovia before?
PAINTER: Monrovia?
RICHARD: Yeah.
PAINTER: Me?
RICHARD: Yeah, have you lived there before?
PAINTER: No.

Richard, a university student, uses the more acrolectal have and Standard English Subject-AUX inversion to ask a question of the firmly basilectal Painter. Painter doesn't understand. Richard repeats the question, again with have and again with Subject-AUX inversion. Painter still doesn't understand. Then Richard replaces have with na (making Subject-AUX inversion impossible), and Painter understands the question. By using na, Richard is making his speech more basilectal.

The point of this discussion of na is to show that there is something of a continuum underlying the distribution of completive/intensive/perfect AUX's in Liberian English even though the weight of such factors as geography and speaker's first language undermines the notion of a straightforward series of lects that range from least acrolectal to most acrolectal.

In the following sections, several topics will be discussed that relate these AUX's to the continuum: the distribution of post-clausal feni, the uses of feni in basilect and mesolecct, the uses of don and na, the relation of don and na to feni, the distribution of have and ben and the relationship of these two AUX's to each other, and the distribution of the forms of have.
3.3.1 Post-Clausal Feni

The evolution of *feni* as a pre-verbal AUX is discussed above (and in greater detail in Singler (1983)). The shift in position from post-clausal to pre-verbal is all but complete: only five speakers use *feni* post-clausally at all, those listed in Table 32:

(Translation 32 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Clausal</th>
<th>Pre-Verbal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rally Time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boatman</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ghana Steward and Rally Time are "Kru sailors"; post-clausal *feni* may continue to hold in Kru Pidgin. As noted earlier, cognates of *feni* in other West African pidgins and creoles are categorically post-clausal; Kru Pidgin speakers have had the most contact of any Liberians with these other speech varieties. The other three speakers are all long-time residents of Robertsport. Thus, the speakers can be said to fit into two pockets of the basilect.
3.3.2 The Uses of Feni

_feni_ has the greatest range of use of any of the AUX's. It seems to be the first AUX speakers use as they enter the continuum. (That is, it is used more basilectally than any of the other AUX's under consideration in this chapter.) At the same time, it continues to be used—if infrequently—by speakers at the acrolectal extreme as well. As for speakers who use _feni_ at least 5 times, two pockets emerge, as Table 33 makes clear.

(Table 33 here)

**TABLE 33**

**Speakers Who Use _feni_ Frequently**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Gold Miner</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Childminder</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Lofa Shopkeeper</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Vendor</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(n ≥ 5)
Nine of the 15 speakers are basilectal speakers, who use other AUX's infrequently, if at all. Moreover, it is argued below that, with regard to the use of fen̆, Aesop patterns with the basilect. Other than Shorty, the remaining speakers--Augustus/Gus and Charles/Charlie--are hip young Monrovians, what Liberians would call "Rocktown Boys." Singler (1983) argues that the expansion of fen̆ into the ADV category is primarily a Monrovia phenomenon. It could be that, both in the case of fen̆'s becoming an ADV as well as an AUX and in fen̆'s becoming a [+ PERFECT] marker in the mesolect (a claim argued for subsequently in the present section), Monrovia is the site of innovation: in the case of sliding fen̆ into a second category (that of AUX), the innovation seems independent of Standard English, but in the case of fen̆ being used to mark [+ PERFECT], the move makes the Liberian English tense-aspect system more like that of Standard English.

With regard to the use of fen̆, the evidence argues for a difference in focus between basilect and mesolect. The primary use of fen̆ in the basilect is illustrated in (40) and (41).

40.  wEn yu go, yu brO di bui. yu fen̆ brO i, yu kO di ste.

'When you go, you clear the undergrowth on the farmsite. Once you have cleared the undergrowth, then you cut down the trees.'

Painter 58-27-21

---

94 However, Gedeh Gold Miner and Gedeh Childminder do use na/pOn. For a discussion of Gedeh Childminder's use of fen̆ and na/pOn, see 3.3.3.
41. de bro, wi *feni tapi* na, we goen aftanun aba tu oklok o.

'The next morning came, and we went and tapped rubber, and we were returning home about two in the afternoon.'

Nimba Cook 64-10-2

As in the case of (40) and (41), *feni* shows up in procedural texts and in sequential narratives, whether hypothetical or real. Its use imposes—or reinforces—a temporal ordering, an ordering with relation both to the preceding clause and the following clause. There are two variants of this. In the simpler case, the use of *feni* signals that the order of clauses parallels the actual temporal ordering of the events described, e.g.

42. *di mE es go dE, ge di cheken tu e meri wumE, di wumE *feni ku* di cheken, hi elon i da cheken.

'The man goes there, gives the chicken to a married woman, the woman cooks the chicken, and the man alone eats it.'

Gedeh Childminder 32-30-4

The use of *feni* makes explicit both the order of *ge* ('give') vis-a-vis *ku* ('cook') and of *ku* vis-a-vis i ('eat').

In a second variant, the *feni*-marked clause repeats the event of the previous clause, e.g. as in (40) above and in (43), given below:

43. *dEn wi me faya. dEn wi pu e faya. yu *feni pu* faya na, bôn na, dEn yu mek Oy.*

'Then we make a fire. Then we put it in the fire. When you have put it in the fire and burned it, then you make the oil.'

Gedeh Gold Miner 28-56-19

The use of subordinate recapitulative clauses is a common phenomenon in Kru narratives and procedural texts.95 Marchese (1978a, 1978b)
describes this phenomenon in Godie, an eastern Kru language spoken in the Ivory Coast. (Marchese's description applies to the western Kru languages with equal force.) Marchese (1978b) presents a passage from a Godie procedural text and translates it thus:

'And then you build a shelter. If you have built a shelter, then you and your wife, you will pull out the grass. If you have finished pulling out the grass, then the rice will sprout. If the rice has sprouted ...'

(1978b:71)

Marchese comments:

The antecedent of the condition repeats the preceding sentence and is always in the completive. The consequent, which gives the next step, may be incompletive or volitive.

(1978b:71)

The recapitulative use of **feni**--illustrated in (40) and (43)--occurs frequently in the Liberian English basilect. Its use can be linked to the substrate, specifically to the Kru substrate languages. At the same time, it should be noted that, while no comparable penchant for recapitulation has been observed in Mande languages, the recapitulative use of **feni** shows up frequently in the Liberian English of first-language Mande speakers as well.

The two basilectal uses of **feni**--both the simple $V_i$-**feni** $V_j$-$V_k$ and the recapitulative $V_i$-**feni** $V_i$-$V_j$ sequence--are alike in preserving the temporal order of the procedural text or narrative that they occur in. No such constraint governs the mesolect, as (44) illustrates:

---

95 It is not known whether recapitulative clauses are widely used in Mande languages as well. Childs does report their frequent use in Kisi, a West Atlantic language (p.c.).
"44. wa a tenken On, a had e, b0 a feni geven e tu di gE, di gE ray dan dE.

'What I thought was that I had it, but in fact I had already given it to the girl who lives right over there.'

Augustus 1-11-26

In (44), the use of feni disrupts the temporal order, making reference to a time prior to the time of the previous clause. The mesolectal use of feni is discussed below. What is under consideration now is the basilectal use, i.e. the way feni preserves temporal order with reference both to the clause it precedes and the clause it follows.

Tense-oriented languages like English have as their point of reference the moment of speech. Events and situations are marked for tense if they occur at a time other than the moment of speech. In Bickerton's prototypical creole, the point of reference is movable rather than fixed. In narratives in such a language, the point of reference moves with the narrative. (This characterization applies to many West African languages as well.) According to Givón, O-marked verbs in Bickerton's prototypical creole are "events in (their) natural sequence of occurrence" (1982:119). It is only when the orderly temporal progression of a narrative or procedural text is disrupted that tense is marked. In Bickerton's system, then, gev in Example (44) from the mesolect would have to be marked as [+ ANTERIOR] because it is out of sequence: the order of events is not identical to the order of the clauses. But the Liberian basilect's use of feni serves to preserve temporal sequencing, not disrupt it. As such, the Liberian basilect might seem to be at odds with Bickerton's creole

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prototype: it uses \textit{feni} where Bickerton's system predicts that there would be no marking. It will be suggested, however, that perhaps the Guyanese Creole basilect is quite similar to the Liberian basilect in this respect.

In Chapter 2, the point was made that [± ANT] is not central to the Liberian English tense-aspect system. At the same time, Liberian English has \textit{feni} and \textit{don} and \textit{na}. Compleitive markers like these are the serpent in Bickerton's Eden: "... once you turn a compleitive loose in a classic creole TMA system, the only consequence must be the chaotic remodeling of that system" (1981:94). Bickerton illustrates his point with Seychellois Creole, arguing that, when "two past events have to be explicitly ordered with respect to one another," the co-occurrence of the anterior AUX \textit{ti} and the compleitive AUX \textit{n} (< \textit{fin}) "encroaches on the domain" of the anterior AUX \textit{ti} (as used singly) (p. 92). This is the first step, according to Bickerton, in the restructuring of the entire TAM system. Once the compleitive marker begins to co-occur with other AUX's (irrealis, for example), the "[a]nterior is further eroded." (p. 93) This ability to co-occur with other AUX's is crucial.

Some creoles (Sranan, basilectal Guyanese Creole, Haitian Creole) have kept their compleitives under control either by keeping them out of Aux altogether or by allowing them in but not letting them combine with other auxiliaries. It is not coincidence that these creoles are ones which have kept the classic TMA system virtually intact. On the other hand, creoles that have let the compleitive have the run of the house--such as Seychelles Creole, Mauritian Creole, and Krio--have, in consequence, had to change their TMA systems to a point at which reconstruction of the original system becomes quite difficult, although not ... impossible. (1981:94)
While Liberian English *feni* has moved into AUX, it is not permitted to combine with other AUX's. Thus, the absence of the [+ANT] distinction from a central role in the Liberian English tense-aspect system cannot be blamed (at least not solely) on the incursion of completive forms.

Moreover, the evidence at hand suggests that the basillectal use of *feni* parallels the Guyanese Creole basillect's use of *don*. In discussing *don*, Bickerton states that:

> In the Bushlot sub-sample . . . the proportion of speech on rice-growing to speech on the "disturbances" is one of roughly three to two. However, of the twenty-six occurrences of *don* found in this sub-sample, no less than twenty-three take place in "rice-growing" texts, as against only three in "disturbances" texts. Moreover, the only other dense concentration of *don* tokens (31) is found in a further sub-sample of Berbician speakers (N = 7) who also described the process of rice-growing.

(1975b:39-40)

Procedural texts are like narratives, fundamentally sequential in organization. What Bickerton notes for Guyanese Creole is that *don* is used most often in procedural texts.

According to Bickerton, in the Guyanese Creole basillect, *don* "marks a past state of affairs . . . as being either a necessary preliminary to a succeeding state, or as persisting unchanged into the present" (pp. 41-42). All but one of the examples of *don*-use that Bickerton takes from actual speech are like the one given below:

Guyanese Creole

45. *wen dem don plau dem chip.*

'When they've finished ploughing, they harrow.'

(Bickerton 1975b:40)
That is, each of these examples consists of a temporal subordinate don-marked clause (beginning with wen or afta) followed by a main clause. Since each of these examples consists of a single sentence with two clauses, it is not possible to know the relation of the don-marked clause to the clause that immediately precedes it in the text and, therefore, not possible to establish with absolute certainty that the don-marked clause is ordered with respect to both the clause that precedes it and the clause that follows it. However, a longer passage from a folktale in Rickford (to appear) shows that don’s use in Guyanese Creole is frequently order-preserving in a way that is identical to feni’s use in Liberian English. (Rickford notes that a wen-clause is the site for don most of the time.) In this folk tale, told by a fourteen-year-old named Derek, there are four instances of don: each is in a wen-clause, and each is order-preserving. One of the four instances of don is given in (46):

Guyanese Creole

46. wel ii--wen di mongkii len om, wen ii don piil am, di reezo brok.

'Well he--when the monkey lent him [a razor], and he had finished peeling it [a coconut], the razor broke.'

(Rickford (to appear:94))

Additional support for the notion that Guyanese don marks the preservation of temporal order comes from the one example of actual speech in Bickerton’s discussion of don that consists of more than a two-clause sentence:
Guyanese Creole

47. mashop di plees, den wen di plees mashop don, yu tek aaf di aksn.

'Break up the ground, then when the ground is completely broken up, you take the oxen off it.'

(Bickerton 1975b:40)

This provides a Guyanese example of the recapitulative use of a completive-marked clause, a phenomenon previously noted as being common both in Kru languages and in Liberian English. If the description of the basilectal use of fen in Liberian English fits the basilectal use of don in Guyanese Creole (and the available evidence suggests that it does), then the Liberian and Guyanese basilects use a completive to reinforce temporal order with regard not only to the clause following the completive-marked clause but also the clause preceding it, as in (40-43) and (47). In Seychellois Creole, on the other hand, the range of functions of the completive marker n (a reduced form of fin) is clearly not restricted in that way, as the Seychellois Creole example quoted in Bickerton (1981:92) makes clear:

Seychellois Creole

48. leta mo ti atre da lasam, time I TNS enter in room,

i ti n fin maz so banan.
he TNS COMP finish eat his banana.

'When I entered the room, he had finished eating his banana.'

(Corne 1977:108)

To return to the Liberian English case: quantitative evidence has yet to be presented that establishes that the basilectal use of fen
serves to make temporal order explicit. The discussion that follows looks at the 15 speakers with 5 or more tokens of fení. For them fení-marked clauses were marked as being order-preserving (O-P) or non-order-preserving (N-O-P). A fení-marked clause was considered order-preserving when the linear order of clauses matched the temporal order of the events or situations described in the clauses, i.e. conformed to one of these two orders:

\[ V_1 \text{ fení } V_j \text{ fení } V_k \]

\[ V_1 \text{ fení } V_i \text{ fení } V_j \]

Note that three clauses (and not just two) are involved. Table 34 shows the results:

(Table 34 here)

The speakers above the line are posited as being basilectal, those below as mesolectal. The names of the speakers signal support for this division. That is, the naming system that has been used throughout assigns occupational names to those who acquired Liberian English as adults, other names (first names and nicknames) to those who acquired Liberian English as children. (Shorty, included in Table 34, has been classified with the child-learners throughout because of the extent of his Western schooling.) The correlation with names is this: those with occupational names (adult-learners of English) use fení as an order-preserving device at least half the time. Those with non-occupational names use fení in this way less than half the time. The one exception to the correlation is Aesop. Perhaps the explanation here is substratal influence on Aesop's speech from Krahn.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>O-P</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N-O-P</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>91</td>
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<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Gede Gold Miner</td>
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<td>Aesop</td>
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<td>Gus</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

O-P = Order-Preserving  
N-O-P = Non-Order-Preserving  

(Also, the level of Western education for Aesop is fourth grade, while all those below the dividing line have gone at least as far as eighth grade in school.)

For the speakers above the line in Table 34, *feni*’s usual site for occurrence is in procedural texts and narratives. However, it can occur in reported speech, e.g.

49. *hi se,* "1E e i da sm0 wOn, 1E de kOn tu tan. di wumE *feni* kuken."

'He said, "Let them eat this as a snack and head for town. The woman has cooked a meal for them."'

Nimba Cook 65-53-26

240
Also, as noted earlier in this chapter, *feni* can serve as an intensive marker, e.g.

50. ... de *feni* b0n hes tan 0; hes haws o, o!

'They had burned his entire village; his house, everything!'

Nimba Cook 64-63-4

For the basilectal speakers in Table 34, 63 tokens for *feni* are order-preserving; 18 are not. Of the 18 that are not, 6 come from reported speech (like (49)) and 6 from intensive uses (like (50)). When these two types are removed from the list of non-sequential uses of *feni*, the distribution of *feni* for the basilectal speakers is that given in Table 35:

(Table 35 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>O-P</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N-O-P</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Vendor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Shopkeeper</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Childminder</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Gold Miner</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Intensive Uses of *feni* and Reported Speech Removed from N-O-P Column)
Of the remaining 6 instances of the non-sequential use of *feni* in the basilect, three involve the use of *feni* in the initial clause of a sequence. (As such, they do not disrupt temporal order but cannot meet the definition used here for order-preserving, a definition that involves both the preceding clause and the following clause, simply because no clause precedes them.) Thus, for the basilectal speakers represented in Table 35, apart from the use of *feni* as an intensive marker or in reported speech, the use of *feni* signals disruption of temporal order only 3 times out of 66 uses.

In the mesolect, on the other hand, *feni* is often used to disrupt the linearity of temporal sequencing, either to insert an anterior event (as in (51)) or a co-occurring one (as in (52)):

51. na da nay wEn wi wE k0men, Efta wi *feni* pleyen di gem, wi wE k0men, we wE en di b0s, En di b0s had e EksidEn.

'Now that night when we were coming home, after we had played the soccer match, we were on our way, we were in the bus, and the bus had an accident.'

Augustus 1-53-5

52. tan fo dEn tu Eske, a we j0s tek 0 Eri wOn 0 dEn En hEnk0 dEn. dEn, ba dE tan, di sEkyurete ka *feni* geten dE.

'Before they would have a chance to escape, I would take up every one of them and handcuff them. By the time I finished, the police car would have arrived.'

Gus 2-3-3

Also, the "other" uses of *feni*—as an intensive marker and in reported speech—account for a much greater proportion of the distribution of *feni* in the mesolect. Whereas the order-preserving use of *feni* in procedural texts and narratives accounted for 77.8 percent (63/81) of
all uses of fení for the basilectal speakers in Table 34, it accounts for only 26.4 percent (14/53) for the mesolectal speakers. Why, then, do mesolectal speakers use fení? The answer seems to involve a shift of focus from the basilectal use of fení. In the basilect, fení preserves temporal order. It often happens—particularly when a recapitulative clause is involved—that the fení-marked clause is [+ PERFECT]. In the basilect, that seems incidental rather than central. In the mesolect, on the other hand, it is [+ PERFECT] that becomes central. It has already been noted that fení, when used to mark intensiveness, is not necessarily [+ PERFECT]. However, when the intensive cases are removed from consideration, almost every token of fení in the mesolect is [+ PERFECT]. The difference in focus for fení between basilect and mesolect is illustrated in Table 36. It consists of all uses of fení except intensive ones. Both order-preserving (O-P) (versus non-order-preserving (N-O-P)) and [+ PERFECT] (versus [- PERFECT]) are given.

(Table 36 here)

Table 37 gives the percentages for basilect and mesolect for the two distinctions, i.e. order-preserving/non-order-preserving and [+ PERFECT]/[- PERFECT].

(Table 37 here)

As the figures in Table 37 make clear, the basilectal focus on preserving order gives way to the mesolectal focus on [+ PERFECT]. Another way of expressing the relation of basilectal fení to mesolectal fení involves the three components of McCoard’s “extended
TABLE 36

Uses of feni

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>O-P</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>[+ PERF]</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Shopkeeper</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Childminder</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Vendor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Gold Miner</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Intensive uses of feni not included)

TABLE 37

Uses of feni: Basilect vs. Mesolect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0-P/total</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>[+ PERF]/total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basilect</td>
<td>62/74</td>
<td>83.78%</td>
<td>39/74</td>
<td>52.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesolect</td>
<td>14/45</td>
<td>31.11%</td>
<td>43/45</td>
<td>95.56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

now" definition of the perfect. As noted above (in 3.2.3.), Mordechay states that "extended now" "encompasses three ideas simultaneously: sequentiaity . . . unity . . . preference" (1984:103). In the Liberian basilect's use of feni, preservation of order prevails. Included within this is the establishment of a sequential relation
between the fení-marked clause and the clause that follows it. Then in the mesolect, the other two components of the perfect come to be attached as well to fení: unity—"there is one overall and inseparable period, continuous with the reference time"—and preference—the speaker chooses to link the fení-marked clause to the reference time. In the basilect, then, fení is [+ COMP] and partially Perfect, i.e. sequential. In the mesolect fení is wholly Perfect, marking sequentiality (with regard to the reference time), unity, and preference; whether or not a given occurrence of fení will preserve temporal order with regard to the clause that preceded fení is not a consideration in the mesolect. In the creole prototype, disruptions of temporal sequencing are overtly marked, while verbs in sequence go unmarked. Thus, the difference between the mesolectal and basilectal uses of fení in Liberian English is that the function of fení in the mesolect, because it is linked neither to the disruption nor the preservation of temporal sequencing, is merely tangential to the prototypical creole TAM system while the function of fení in the basilect, because it marks overtly the very phenomenon held to be implicit in 0-marking in the prototype, is in direct opposition to what that system predicts.

---

96 In procedural texts and narratives, the reference time is ordinarily not the moment of speech.
3.3.3 NA on the Continuum

Within the "na belt," i.e. Grand Gedeh and the coast, there is variation as to how often na gets used. Twenty-four speakers use na at least once. Geographically, they span the Liberian coast. Educationally, they range from no Western schooling to a college senior. However, the only speakers who use na more than once fall into one of two groups: Grand Gedeh residents and speakers with 4-9 years of Western education. Even within these two groups, only two speakers use na as often as 5 times. (In contrast, 15 speakers use fenii a minimum of 5 times each. In total, there are 57 na tokens, as opposed to 164 for fenii.)

Does na behave like fenii? The answer is clearer for the mesolect than for the basilect. Using the same metric for order-preserving, (i.e. counting only the sequences Vi-na Vj-Vk and Vi-na Vi-Vj as being order-preserving) and using the same criterion to divide speakers into basilect and mesolect yield the distribution in Table 38. (In Table 34, the basilect was all adults learners plus Aesop, and the mesolect was all child learners plus Shorty. Here, Ananse has joined Aesop and the adult learners in the basilect.)

(Table 38 here)

The distribution within the basilect is skewed. Almost half of the basilectal data (14/32) come from Ananse. Together, Ananse and Aesop comprise a group of Grand Gedeh fourth-graders, Aesop being a

87 In the discussion of na that follows, one of the tokens of na is not included because of the ambiguity of the sentence in which it occurs.
TABLE 38

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses of na</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O-P/total</td>
<td>[+ PERF]/total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basilect</td>
<td>19/32</td>
<td>9/32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59.38%</td>
<td>28.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mesolect</td>
<td>3/24</td>
<td>18/24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

composite of several students. Ananse has been isolated from the others both because he has a somewhat different background (having spent part of his childhood in Monrovia) and because his data differ repeatedly from those of the other students. In the discussion of fení, it was seen that the speakers who comprise Aesop use fení in the basilectal manner—as an order-preserving marker. Ananse uses na in precisely this way. For example, he is the only speaker in the corpus who uses na in recapitulative clauses, as in the second sentence in (53):

53. e ste ste na, déEn di pipo na kOn. sun di pipo na kOn bifik0 de se, "hu ke di chedren?"

'A long time passed, and then the people arrived. Once the people had arrived, then they asked, "Who killed the children?"

Ananse 29-1-18

Thirteen of his 14 sentences are like those outlined above for fení in the basilect, i.e. establishing a temporal order that involves both the preceding and the following clause. (The fourteenth is the final clause of a narrative. Because no clause follows it, it has not been counted as being order-preserving.) Ananse seems to stand alone in using na the way others in the basilect use fení. When he is removed from the sample, the figures in Table 39 emerge:

247
TABLE 39

Uses of na: Ananse Excluded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>O-P/total</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>[+ PERF]/total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>basilect</td>
<td>6/18</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>6/18</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mesolect</td>
<td>3/24</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>18/24</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The evidence is insufficient to establish what it is that na is used for in the basilect--apart, of course, from signalling completeness or completion. Gede Childminder, a frequent feni-user, uses feni inside narratives and procedural texts and na at their conclusion. (54) provides an example of how Gede Childminder uses na in a concluding clause: she has given a detailed description of how she allays her children's hunger by picking corn and giving it to them to roast.

54. yu te di kOn, yu ge tu di chedren, En di chedren stavros di kOn, de it e. En di höngri na st0.

'You take the corn and give it to the children to roast, and the children start roasting the corn. And the hunger disappears.'

Gede Childminder 32-10-7

However, there is no evidence that others make a similar distinction.

In the mesolect, though the figures are weaker than in the case of feni, na seems to behave the same way that feni does, i.e., it is [+ PERFECT] at the same time that it is [+ COMP].

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3.3.4 DON on the Continuum

With regard to DON: among Settler users of DON, it frequently disrupts the temporal order of clauses, e.g.

55. he, luk, d0ren ma m0da tan, lak des b0 k0n se dan hya, l0n tan shi dOn g0 e swesh E hen.

'Hey, look, when my mother was alive, if this boy had come and sat down here, long before now she would have taken a switch to him.'

Settler Albert 60-63-23

56. sOntan wEn di seknEs k0men hya, "di cheken seknEs k0men o," bif0 e rish tu yu yad, yu dOn kel Em 0 En put Em en di asbas.

'Sometimes when the disease is on its way, people will say, "The chicken sickness is coming!" Before it gets to your yard, you have already killed the chickens, dressed them, and put them in the ice box.'

Settler Carolina 20-55-12

However, DON can also occur in instances where temporal order is preserved:

57. "a ben trayen we mi En ma chedren, trayen we yu te, g0 biEs yu, yu dOn feni ha sku. so yu m0 st0di e gu tred."

"My children and I have been trying hard to help you until now, God bless you, you have finished high school. So you should find a good trade to study."

Settler Carolina 20-65-13

The unifying factor in the Settler use of DON is that—except when it is strongly intensive—it expresses [+ COMP] and [+ PERFECT]. This use of DON parallels the mesolectal use of feni and ne.
3.3.5 HAV

HAV is the predominant AUX of the completive/intensive/perfect group in Liberian English. Of the 826 tokens from this group, 449 (54.2%) involve some form of *HAV*. That it is so dominant is explained by the fact that upper mesolectal and acrolectal speakers use it and *ben* to mark an aspectual opposition that is apparently not made at all by most basilectal speakers. As discussed in 3.2.3, *HAV*’s use in Liberian English is analogous to its use in Standard English. In the discussion that follows of *HAV* and *ben*, the following topics will be considered with regard to the continuum: the distribution of *HAV*, the forms of *HAV* (i.e. *ha*, *HAV*, *haz*, and *had*), the uses of *ben*, and the relation of *HAV* to *ben*.

3.3.5.1 HAV and BEN on the Continuum

For the purpose of establishing the places of *HAV* and *ben* on the continuum, the figures for the two AUX’s have been combined. For most speakers, *HAV* predominates. (The relation of one to the other is considered in 3.3.5.4.) *HAV* and *ben*—coming as they do from Standard English—are used most often in the acrolect. That is, speakers in the acrolect use *HAV* and *ben* more often than speakers elsewhere on the continuum, and they use them more often than they use *feni*, *don*, or *na*. The 6 speakers who use *HAV* and *ben* most frequently all have 10 or more years of Western education:

(Table 40 here)
TABLE 40
Most Frequent Users of $\text{hay/ben}$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Peken</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And, though there are exceptions, speakers with 10 or more years of Western education ordinarily use $\text{hay}$ far more often than they use other markers:

(Table 41 here)

TABLE 41
AUX Choice: Speakers with Most Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$\text{hay/ben}$</th>
<th>$\text{feni}$</th>
<th>$\text{dOn}$</th>
<th>na</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Peken</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euclid</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YGC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willie</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

251
hay-use as a function of education extends into the next education group as well: when non-Settlers with 4-9 years of education are divided into 4-6 years versus 7-9 years, hay-use predominates in the 7-9 group—except for the "Rocktown Boys" (Augustus/Gus and Charles/Charlie): The Rocktown Boys were presented in 3.3.2 as being part of the Monrovia mesolect and high feni-users. (Patience, Comfort, and William—slightly more acrolectal Monrovia residents—are also feni-users, as Table 41 reveals.) The rest of those with 7-9 years of education, i.e. everyone except the "Rocktown Boys," are listed in Table 42 below:

(Table 42 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>hay/ben</th>
<th>feni</th>
<th>dOn</th>
<th>na</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheba</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tubman T</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benson T</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberts T</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Augustus, Gus, Charles, Charlie not included

In contrast, hay-use is relatively infrequent in the group with 4-6 years of Western schooling.

(Table 43 here)
TABLE 43

AUX Choice: 4-6 Years of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>hav/ben</th>
<th>feni</th>
<th>dOn</th>
<th>na</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lizard</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Vendor</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananse</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martha</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The strongest exception is Lizard, but that can be explained either by the fact that he has more education (sixth grade) than the others (all of whom are fourth graders) or by the fact that he is a resident of Robertsport. hay-use extends even into the basilect in Robertsport: Lofa Shopkeeper, Lofa Laborer, Chauffeur, and Boatman are all frequent hay-users.99

---

98 Nine of Lizard's 10 tokens hav/ben tokens in Table 42 are hav, while 4 of Nimba Vendor's 6 and both of Aesop's 2 are ben. Perhaps ben is acquired earlier on the continuum than hav.

99 A number of factors converge to make the speech of Robertsport residents less basilectal than the speech of people with comparable degrees of Western education who live elsewhere in Liberia. Robertsport, situated at the tip of the Cape Mount peninsula, has remained much smaller than any of the other county seats. This has meant that the Settler community has continued to comprise a larger percentage of the population than in the other Settler-established coastal county seats. Moreover, within the small, somewhat insular Robertsport community, the influence of the Episcopal Church's schools (founded in 1878) has been especially pervasive. For a long period of time, Robertsport enjoyed a national reputation as a center for Western education. Both the proportionately large Settler population and the long-standing influence of Western education would seem to have provided greater accessibility to the target language (or, at the least, to more acrolectal speech).
3.3.5.2 Forms of HAV

Four different forms of hav obtain in the corpus: hav, haz, had, and ha (the latter sometimes ending with a glottal stop). The first two correspond to Standard English present perfect AUX's, and the third to the Standard English past perfect AUX. Of speakers on the continuum, those in the acrolect are most likely to use one of these markers—not necessarily had—to mark past perfect; speakers in the basilect are least likely to do so. That is, a higher proportion of perfect-marked clauses in the acrolect correspond to Standard English past perfect than do perfect-marked clauses in the basilect. With the exception of Settler Carolina—who uses hav forms to mark past perfect only (8/8)—and Benson T (3/5), past perfect use is much less frequent than present perfect for all who use the hav forms. Whether or not all speakers make a present/past distinction is not clearly established by the data. There are certain distributional patterns with regard to particular forms of hav and the past-present distinction, but they do not seem strong enough to support any definitive statement. Presumably, the relation of the forms of hav to the past-present distinction for AUX's is part of a larger relation that also encompasses the past-present distinction for hav when it occurs as a main verb. Based simply on the AUX cases, it is clear that at least the Settlers make the past-present distinction and that they use Standard English morphology to do so, as Table 44 illustrates.100

100 For the ensuing discussion of haz, hav, had, and ha, forms were not counted when the following environment made it impossible to determine whether or not a consonant was present at the end of the
(Table 44 here)

TABLE 44

Forms of hav: Settler Speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>hav/haz</th>
<th>had</th>
<th>ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For non-native speakers, however, the evidence is less clear. When present perfect contexts are examined (and past perfect contexts excluded), it is clear that hav/haz predominate, as Table 45 illustrates.

(Table 45 here)

hav/haz accounts for almost 80 percent of the forms for speakers in each of the upper two educational groups and 55 percent for those in the lowest group.

(Table 46 here)

In the case of past perfect environments, ha predominates among those with the most Western education. It also predominates in the group with the least Western education, but there are too few tokens there to support a strong statement. In contrast, in the middle group hav/haz forms predominate, but there are too few tokens here as well.

AUX. For example, Comfort’s past token ha(d?) da 'had died' was discarded. The issue of the marking of person and number, i.e. hav versus haz, is sensitive to the continuum, more acrolectal speakers making the Standard English distinction. However, that issue is not relevant here.
### TABLE 45

**Present Perfect hav/haz: Non-Settlers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>hav/haz</th>
<th>had</th>
<th>ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Speakers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>111</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>hav/haz</th>
<th>had</th>
<th>ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-9 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheba</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lizard</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Speakers</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>hav/haz</th>
<th>had</th>
<th>ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Laborer</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boatman</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Shopkeeper</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Speakers</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 46

**Past Perfect hav/haz: Non-Settlers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>hav/haz</th>
<th>had</th>
<th>ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Speakers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>hav/haz</th>
<th>had</th>
<th>ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-6 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>hav/haz</th>
<th>had</th>
<th>ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two explanations exist for the prominence of ha as a past-perfect marker. One is simply that ha is the past-perfect marker. The second is that it is a phonological variant of haz, hav, and had but, because final stops are more susceptible to deletion than final fricatives, ha occurs more often as a variant of had than of haz or hav. It could be argued that the past-present distinction is more an acrolectal phenomenon. That is, speakers in the middle educational group (the mesolect) use hav in both present and past context because had is not part of their systems. In contrast, speakers who are more acrolectal do distinguish between hav/haz and had; for them, phonotactic considerations explain why had is realized so frequently on the surface as ha. In the event, an examination of all of the uses of hav—as AUX, as main verb, as quasi-modal (in haftu 'have to')—is needed before the question can be resolved.

3.3.5.3 The Meaning and Uses of BEN

The presence of ben in the Liberian English continuum has been linked to Standard English been. Used either as a copula or as an AUX (with the -en form of the verb), ben expresses [-PERFECTIVE] and [+ PERFECT].

Because the copula ben and the AUX ben are alike in expressing [+ PERFECT] and [-PERFECTIVE], they have been lumped together in the following discussion. That is, the discussion of ben that follows includes both ben as AUX and ben as copula.

This section deals with all uses of ben: that is, no distinction is made between ben and hav ben. The relationship of ben to hav ben is discussed in 3.3.5.4 below.)
The 10 speakers with 5 or more tokens of *ben* are listed in Table 47.

(Table 47 here)

**TABLE 47**

Speakers with 5 or More Tokens of *ben/hay ben*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>set</th>
<th>ben</th>
<th>set</th>
<th>ben</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Settler Albert</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Settler Slim</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Settler Carolina</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Overseer</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Settler Peken</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The list includes the four Settlers in the corpus and four speakers with 10 or more years of Western schooling. A ninth speaker in the table, Charles, also has extensive education. The tenth, Lofa Overseer, would seem to be near the opposite end of the continuum from the others. In fact, he uses *ben* quite differently from the other speakers on the list. For him, *ben* functions as a past form of *go*, e.g.

58. na de s0 keshen, di pipa de kEn bi ef e bi nan ok10, ses ok10 lâk da, de *ben* de tu ple.

'Now there was a pavilion there. Nine o'clock, six o'clock, any hour in the evening, people would go there to play.'

Lofa Overseer 62-53-16

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59. de f0s wi ben tu faston tu w0ken, wi gEt1 k0las tu w0k.
    'When we first went to Firestone, we did machete work.'
    Lofa Overseer 62-51-3

In these cases, there is no "extended now" involved, no [+ PERFECT].
This non-Perfect use of ben also shows up for Lofa Overseer in an
infinitive phrase:

60. so fr0n hya tu ben dan, s0ntan we kEn ste On di ro, we
    sli dE. we sli dE lEvEn de lak da so.
    'From here to go to the coast, we would sleep on the
    way. We would spend maybe eleven days on the way.'
    Lofa Overseer 62-52-23

Nine of Lofa Overseer's 11 tokens of ben (the infinitive has not been
counted) are like (58) and (59), i.e. instances where ben is
[- PERFECT]. Does Lofa Overseer's use of ben in this way represent
ben's general use in the basilect, or is it idiosyncratic? Examining
ben use among speakers with little or no Western education helps to
answer the question. (Not everyone with little or no Western
education belongs in the basilect, but everyone in the basilect has
little or no Western education.) At the same time, one of the
meanings of ben for virtually all ben-users is 'to go (or come)
somewhere and not remain,' e.g.

61. a ben en f1r1t1n 0.
    'I've even gone to Freetown.'
    Fisherman 11-9-5

This is in contrast with gOn, which means 'to go somewhere and to
remain,' e.g.192

192 gOn enters the continuum at the basilectal end not as a verb form;
rather, its sole use is to mark the passage of time in a
62. hi gOn tu ji-Es-e na.

'He now works at GSA.'

William 61-52-5

However, both ben as used in (61) and gOn as used in (62) are [+ PERFECT]. The question at hand--as to how widespread Lofo Overseer's use of ben is--is not a question of whether or not other speakers use ben with its sense of 'to go (or come).' Rather, the question is whether other speakers use it in a [- PERFECT] way. Nine of the speakers with little or no Western education (apart from Lofo Overseer) use ben with its sense of 'to go (or come)' a total of 18 times, but only twice is their use [- PERFECT]; in other words, only twice is there no sense of 'and not to remain.' That two other speakers (Lofo Tapper and Gedeh Soldier) use ben to convey [- PERFECT] narrative. As (a) and (b) illustrate, when gOn is used in this way, it is ordinarily repeated several times.

a. oke, a we sEkEn ku, di emOs e we di chif ku. gOn gOn gOn gOn emOs i sek. bifO de pu mi tu di pos.

'OK, I was the assistant cook, and Amos was chief cook. Years passed. Then Amos got sick. That's when they made me chief cook.'

Nimba Cook 65-79-24

b. O ray, prEsidEn, wEn i day, rileshEn Ofisa plawa, t0bO se e feni, puti EribOdi dan so gOn gOn gOn a sek.

'When Tubman died, the relation officer business [a combination welfare-domestic espionage program], Tolbert ended it, taking me and everyone else off the payroll. Then, several years later, I got sick.'

Gedeh Soldier 31-15-16

When gOn starts to be used as a verb, it is with reference to events that occurred in the past. Sometimes perfectness is
meaning suggests that Lofa Diamond Miner is not alone. The fact that
there are only two speakers in the corpus who do this suggests that it
is not widespread.

With the exception of Lofa Overseer, frequent use of ben (n ≥ 5) is
confined to the upper mesolect and acrolect, as the list of speakers
in Table 47 verifies. It should be noted, however, that a large
number of speakers across most, if not all, of the continuum use it at
least once or twice. Most of the occurrences of ben in the basilect
are as COP/main verb rather than as AUX; apart from that, its
distribution and its meaning are largely the same everywhere along the
continuum--except where Lofa Overseer is involved.

---

implied; sometimes it is not. The variable quality of the
perfectness is illustrated by pairs of sentences by the same
speakers. In the first sentence for each pair, the use of gOn
carries a perfect sense with it; in the second sentence it does
not.

c1. "hi gOn En s1E s0nwE Es."
    "'He has gone to sleep elsewhere.'"
    Nimba Vendor 16-56-7

c2. En shi gOn En to da papi, "a ná filen 0 ray."
    'And she went and told that old man, "I'm not feeling
    OK."'
    Nimba Vendor 16-56-9

d1. "di mE nO hya egen, i gOn we tu de gule we."

261
As an AUX, the presence of ben (plus the verb suffix -en) makes it explicit that the perfect-marked state or event began in the past but continues up to the reference time. The absence of ben (plus -en) does not imply punctuality or non-stativity; inversely, however, the presence of ben (plus -en) does imply either non-punctuality for events or stativity for situations.182 (3), repeated below, and the second use of ben in (63) illustrate this:

3. a ben doen hElova la o tens, bob.

'I've been doing a helluva lot of things, Jack.'

Settler Slim 43-59-18

"The man's no longer here; he has moved way to Goodrich."

Nimba Watchman 61-11-14

d2. wi gOn o di we tu kema.

'We went all the way to Cape Mount.'

Nimba Watchman 61-14-28

More acrolectally, the non-perfect use of gOn ceases. Finally, at the acrolectal end of the continuum, a form of ha comes to be used with gOn, e.g.

e. wi ste goen smO-smO, bO wi havEn gOn fa yE.

'While we're making some progress, we haven't really gone that far yet.'

Comfort 37-22-11

182 The assignment of non-punctual marking to stative verbs (discussed in 2.3.4) shows up occasionally in the perfect as well, e.g.
63. Ewa sens a ben beg inOf tu no masE, dE chÉch ben stÉnen dE.

'For as long as I can remember, that church has been standing there.'

Settler Albert 60-61-13

(The variable use of forms of hav in ben constructions is described below in 3.3.5.4.) Similarly, the use of the COP ben (as in the first use of ben in (63) and in (64)) expresses a stative meaning: that is, the perfect-marked state has continued up to the reference time.

64. En ve ki Es di mE se, "ha lOn haz yua wayf ben prEne?"

'And Vicki asked the man, "How long has your wife been pregnant?"

Richard 17-77-20

With the exception of (28) (repeated from above), where dOn is an intensive marker, there are no examples in the data of dOn, na, or feni co-occurring with the COP ben or the AUX ben (or with any other form of bi occurring in COP or AUX position).

a. en onli wOn wayf yu ben haven.

'And you've only been married once.'

Avogadro 43-3-24

b. a ha ben sien di get, bo a nÉwÉ nu ef yu jOn owa e, a min, a we goen tu be siz 0 diten f0 e wa.

'I had seen the gate before, but I hadn't realized that if you jumped over it, I mean, I would be seized or detained for a while.'

Shorty 39-28-9

194 The use of feni as an intensifier in sentences like (a) is not taken to be a counterexample:

a. a se di mE ho su we feni OrÉnj.
28. o, tens do on ben ve ri chip en sano.

'Oh, things used to be really cheap in Sinoe.'

Settler Carolina 20-15-16

In part the lack of co-occurrence is to be explained by the incompatibility of a completive marker with the uncompletedness implicit in ben.

The COP use of ben illustrated in (64) and the AUX use of ben serve to extend the actual perfect event or state, rather than a consequence thereof, to the reference time. On the other hand, in the case of the "go-and-not-remain" use of ben, it is the consequence rather than the event that provides the "extended now." The remaining use of ben—to mark the perfect passive—also is perfect in that the consequence forms the basis for the "extended now" (rather than the repetition or continuation of the perfect-marked event itself). The perfect passive is marked by using ben with the past participle of the main verb, e.g.,

105

'I say, the man's suit was stained orange from top to bottom.'

Comfort 37-72-3

feni is here taken to be an intensifying ADV, not an AUX.

105 As in Example (65), the main verb in a passive construction does not always show past participial marking.
65. de ste wash dEn, yu no, dE de paten yu frOn di ded bikOz de bîliv dE Es l0n Es de dûn kO yua he En wash yu, wEn di pEsEn haz ben bëri, hi we bòda yu.

'[And they will shave the heads of the relatives of the deceased, and even after doing that] they will still wash them, you know, in order to cut them off completely from the deceased because they believe that, if the relatives haven't been ritually shaved and cleansed, once the dead person has been buried, he will harass them.'

Settler Peken 4-4-11

The passive is outside the purview of this dissertation. Moreover, like other pidgins and creoles, Liberian English displays an overt passive construction only rarely (this despite the presence of a morphological passive in Klao and other Kru languages). There are only 8 hav ben passives in the corpus.

3.3.5.4 HAV BEN and BEN

Given the link between hav and the continuum, it is not surprising that the use of hav with ben is an acrolectal phenomenon. Since ben is already [+ PERFECT], hav adds no semantic information. It is only in Standard-like speech that hav ben occurs with any frequency. Table 48 illustrates this.\(^{166}\)

(Table 48 here)

\(^{166}\) Except that the perfect passive construction is always hav ben, no correlation obtains between the presence of hav and the various functions of ben.

265
TABLE 48

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ben</th>
<th>hav ben</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Speakers</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(30.4%)</td>
<td>(69.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-9 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Speakers</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(78.8%)</td>
<td>(21.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-3 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Overseer</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Speakers</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(87.5%)</td>
<td>(12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Peken</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Slim</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Carolina</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Settler Albert</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(61.1%)</td>
<td>(38.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.6 Distribution of AUX's

While the discussion thus far has attempted to establish links between the continuum and the distribution and functions of complective/intensive/perfect AUX's, questions remain regarding the overall picture. For example, if fenil, na, and dOn are roughly overlapping in meaning and use, then why is one used rather than another by a given speaker? In sorting out the three AUX's, the isolation of dOn is the easiest part of the task. It is an affective

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badge of membership in the Settler class. In part, Liberians associate it with small rural Settler communities (rather than with the urban Settler elite). The only other don-users, it will be remembered, are ones who seem to have brought it home with them from Sierra Leone or Nigeria. As to the choice between fenı and na, there are geographic and educational factors mentioned earlier: fenı shows up in almost everyone's speech, while na/nOn use is restricted to two groups, speakers from Grand Gedeh and speakers in the middle educational range, i.e. those having 4-9 years of Western schooling. The two pockets of high fenı-use were presented in 3.3.2 above--basilectal speakers and "Rocktown Boys," i.e. members of the Monrovia mesolect.

Listed in Table 49 is the distribution of completive/intensive/perfective AUX's for each speaker, the minimum number of tokens being 5.\textsuperscript{187}

(Table 49 here)

The table shows the widespread use of hav (and ben) in the mesolect and acrolect. Within the basilect, extensive use of completive/intensive/perfective AUX's is primarily concentrated among speakers from two regions, the Gedeh speakers (using fenı for the most part) and Robertsport residents. Chauffeur, Boatman, Lofa Shopkeeper, Lofa Laborer, Painter, Nimba Cook, and Builder all reside in Robertsport. For the first four of these speakers, hav is the

\textsuperscript{187} Of non-Settlers with more than one token of don: Builder spent part of his early adulthood in rural Sierra Leone, and Carpenter went as a "Kru" to Nigeria.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>dOn</th>
<th>na</th>
<th>feni</th>
<th>hay/ben</th>
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</thead>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gede Marketwoman</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lofa Musician</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

268
predominant AUX; for Painter and Nimba Cook, it is *feni* and for Builder, it is *dOn*. For basilectal speakers in general, *feni* seems to be the first of the AUX's in this group to be acquired. In Chapter 2, rule schemata were devised that plot the series of changes by which the aspect system of a basilect is converted to the aspect system of the acrolect. As Table 49 illustrates, the distribution of completeive/intensive/perfect markers does not provide a basis for a rule schema parallel to those found in Chapter 2.

3.4 NEGATION

The AUX's discussed in this chapter are restricted as to their ability to occur in negative clauses. *dOn* and *na* cannot co-occur with a negative marker: this is further evidence that *dOn* and *na* have made only limited inroads into the Liberian English tense-aspect system. Even Guyanese Creole—which Bickerton cites as a language that has kept *don* "under control"—permits *don* in negative constructions (Rickford, p.c.). The AUX *feni* also cannot co-occur with a negative marker. The distinction has been made throughout the discussion of
feni between cases where *feni* is a lexical item (parallel to its use in Standard English) that focusses on the endpoint of an event or situation and those cases where *feni* is an AUX that signals the completeness of an event or situation, not merely the endpoint. (This point is made in more detail in 3.1.4.2 above.) There are 4 instances in the corpus of *NEG* + *feni*; however, since it is simply the endpoint--and not the entire event--that is being negated, it is appropriate to think of these as cases where *feni* is the lexical item (with its focus on the endpoint) rather than the AUX (with its reference to the entire event). Example (66) illustrates this focus on the endpoint:

66. "yu se, 'ke.' a kOli yu, yu nó feni tuk aw, yu stO. 'ke.'"

''[You meant to say 'kitchen' but] all you said was 'ke.' I called to you, you didn't finish saying it, you stopped with 'ke.'''

Lofo Tailor 63-53-14

The neutralization of tense-aspect distinctions in the negative is a common enough phenomenon, occurring in Kru and Mande languages, e.g. Klao and Loma, as well as elsewhere.

Unlike the completives, the perfect AUX's, i.e. *hay* and *ben*, can occur in negative clauses. In this they parallel the behavior of Standard English *have* and *been*, as (67) and (68) illustrate.

67. a havën hia no nuz frO hen tu no wa tan hi kOmen.

'I haven't heard any news from him so I don't know when he's coming.'

Boatman 59-12-12
68. b0 a ná ben tu doples bif0, ha a we si e?

'But I've never been there before; how would I have seen it?'

Nimba Gardener 14-64-16

A complete study of the completive-perfect and negation in Liberian English would have to include nêwâ (< never): frequently it--independent of any inflection of the verb--signals the perfect, e.g.

69. frOn sens a kOn frOn wesepo, a nêwâ go bak dE egen.

'From the time I returned from Wesepo, I have never gone back there again.'

Rally Time 54-8-17

In summary, while [+ PERFECT] can co-occur with negation--expressed either by nêwâ or by the combination of hav/ben with a negative marker--it is otherwise the case that the notions under discussion in this chapter do not surface in negative contexts, the forms na, dOn, and fenî all being unable to co-occur with a negative marker.

3.5 INFLECTING THE VERB

In this section, the inflection of the main verb with completive/intensive/perfect AUX's will be considered, specifically the use of the past participle with hav forms and dOn and the use of the progressive form (V-en) with fenî. In the cases of hav and dOn, inflection of the main verb adds no new semantic information. "Pastness"--which the past participle may be said to express--is already an inherent feature of both hav and dOn. (Whether or not
"pastness" is the best characterization of the role of past participles and whether or not it is possible to identify a single, unitary role for past participles, it seems clear that the past participle adds nothing semantically to these constructions.) Unlike American English, there is no contraction or reduction of hav forms (except for the deletion of the final consonant) and, therfore, no neutralization of haz with ez ('z) or had with wud ('d). Also, there is apparently no fast-speech disappearance of the AUX. This is in contrast to American English, where have can disappear in a fast-speech reading of a sentence like (70):

American English

70. I('ve) seen it.

In a sentence like (70), the past participle is needed on semantic grounds, i.e. to preserve the notion of perfect in the sentence.\textsuperscript{108} But the parallel phenomenon is not found in Liberian English. The use of the past participle, then, is syntactic rather than semantic—in all cases. Variation in marking them is not be explained on semantic grounds. Rather, since the hav forms—but not don—are Standard English AUX's, use of the past participle with them can be hypothesized to be a measure of a speaker's acquisition of Standard English syntax. This issue is taken up in 3.5.1. don is discussed in 3.5.2.

\textsuperscript{108} The non-standard use of seen as a past-tense form in American English, while supported—and perhaps caused—by examples like (70), is a separate issue.
While it is argued that the past participle contributes no additional semantic information to hav and don constructions, the use of the progressive form of the main verb when feni is the AUX has the potential at least to convey distinct semantic information. That is, since feni marks completion (among other things) in Liberian English and since the -en suffix is generally a non-punctual marker, the possibility exists for a meaning difference between (71a) and (71b) in which the use of (71a) would imply non-punctuality, e.g. iteration, while (71b) would not.

71a. I feni tElen hen.
   'I told him (?repeatedly?).'

71b. a feni tEl hen.
   'I have told him.'

In 3.5.3 it will be argued that the basis for variation between feni Y and feni Y-en does not lie in any putative difference in meaning between the two but rather in individual speakers' placement on the continuum.

3.5.1 HAV and Past Particibles

The argument that past participles bring no additional semantic information to hav constructions was advanced above. Additionally, the hypothesis was introduced that more acrolectal speech favors the more use of the past participle. A second hypothesis will now be offered, namely that the morphophonemic shape of the past participle
determines the likelihood of its use. That is, just as in the case of past-tense forms (as discussed in 2.2 and 2.3.7), the following predictions can be made.

a. Irregular (strong) verbs are the most likely to show inflection.

b. Weak syllabic verbs, i.e. ones that take a syllabic past participial suffix, (-E), e.g. divayd 'divide,' are more likely to show inflection than weak vowel-final non-syllabic verbs (which take the suffix -d), e.g. egri 'agree.' (The terms "syllabic" and "non-syllabic" are with reference to the suffix that is added to the verb.)

c. Weak consonant-final non-syllabic verbs that--in Standard English--take a non-syllabic past participial suffix, -d/-t, will not be inflected. As noted in 1.5, a Syllable Structure Condition blocks syllable-final clusters where the final consonant is a stop, and adding the suffix in this case creates a violation of the SSC.

In the examination of the data that follows, the instances included are only those where the hav form was the sole AUX. That is, both MODAL + hav and hav ben constructions have been excluded. Additionally, cases where the main verb is invariant have been excluded. Main verbs were divided into the following four categories:

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\[ \text{gE} \] 'get' and \[ \text{me} \] 'make' were excluded from consideration, \[ \text{gE} \] both because of the range of vowels that characterize its use and because [g0] seems to be the invariant form for some users,\[ \text{mek} \]
weak consonant-final non-syllabic verbs, e.g. \texttt{dEns} 'dance';
weak vowel-final non-syllabic verbs, e.g. \texttt{pe} 'pay';
weak syllabic verbs, e.g. \texttt{wOn} 'want';
irregular verbs, e.g. \texttt{sti} 'steal.'

Additionally, speakers were divided according to amount of education, and Settlers were separated from the rest of the speakers. When these divisions are made, the chart in Table 50 obtains:

(Table 50 here)

Table 51 calculates frequencies of past participle use by educational group and morphophonemic shape of the stem.

(Table 51 here)

The two exceptions to the prediction that consonant-final stems cannot take a non-syllabic past participle both involve \texttt{l}-final stems. Richard inflects \texttt{ruol} 'rule,' and Lofa Musician inflects \texttt{kel} 'kel.' The ambiguous relation of \texttt{l} to \texttt{d} (discussed in 1.5 above) may account for these exceptions.

Tables 50 and 51 show that irregular verbs are the most likely to take the past participle and that regular verbs which inflect by adding a non-syllabic suffix are the least likely. Irregular cell size limits further conclusions, but the data for irregular verbs argue for a correlation between amount of education and frequency of past-participle marking for non-native speakers of Liberian English.

because it was not clear whether it is properly considered a regular verb with the paradigm \texttt{me/med} or an irregular verb with the paradigm \texttt{mek/med}. With regard to weak consonant-final non-syllabic verbs like \texttt{dEns} 'dance': when the following word was \texttt{d}-initial or \texttt{r}-initial, the token was thrown out.
### Table 50
Past Participle Marking with hav

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<td>[+SYL]</td>
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<td>2/5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>0/7</td>
<td>0/3</td>
<td>19/34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the column of regular verbs that take a syllabic past-participle ending (and with the caveat about irregular cell size repeated), the claim emerges that Settlers and non-native speakers
TABLE 51

hav Marking by Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>C-final</th>
<th>V-final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[-SYL]</td>
<td>[-SYL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+/-n %</td>
<td>+/-n %</td>
<td>+/-n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlers</td>
<td>0/8</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 Years</td>
<td>1/48</td>
<td>1/24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-9 Years</td>
<td>0/17</td>
<td>0/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-3 Years</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>0/7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

with the greatest amount of Western education mark the past participle, while non-native speakers with less Western education do not mark it. The five instances where the verb is not inflected by speakers in the highest education group all come from a single speaker, Shorty, the sole speaker in this subset whose acquisition of English began as an adult rather than as a child.

3.5.2 DON and Past Participles

Those Atlantic creoles that use some form of done place it before (or after) an uninflected verb, as the following sentence from Sea Island Creole illustrates.

Sea Island Creole

72. You see, you done do it.  
(Cunningham 1970:69)

On the other hand, contemporary Black English and White Southern English use the past participle with done, e.g.
Black English

73. We done told him bout these pipes already.  
(Baugh 1983:76)

Consistent with the pidgins and creoles spoken elsewhere in West Africa, the non-Settler don-users (those for whom don is a "souvenir" from Sierra Leone or Nigeria) never inflect the main verb in don constructions. In contrast, Settler speakers sometimes do, thereby patterning themselves with Black English speakers, e.g.  

74. En dE wa awa rEktO don don.  
'And that's what our rector went and did.'  
Settler Carolina 20-13-6

In the case of don constructions, as in the case of hav constructions, the shape of a given verb's past participle affects the frequency with which the participle is used. That is, irregular verbs take the past participle most of the time, regular verbs not at all. Settler speakers inflect irregular verbs in 8 out of 12 cases, but they do not inflect regular verbs in the corpus (0/9). (All 9 of these tokens involve non-syllabic past participles, 4 where the stem is vowel-final and 5 where it is consonant-final. Additionally, two forms involve invariant verbs.)

The general problems in determining whether or not gE 'get' has been inflected--the wide range of vowels employed in the word by some speakers and the invariant use of [gO] by others--does not apply to Settlers. Consequently, their use of forms of gE has been included in the discussion that follows.

With regard to irregular verbs, individual Settlers inflect them in don constructions with the following frequency:
3.5.3 V-EN with FENI

Feni-marked verbs vary as to whether or not they display the -en suffix. In the data base, 89 of the 153 feni-marked verbs (58.8%) are inflected. While -en is ordinarily an imperfective (nonpunctual) suffix, both the evidence at hand and that presented in 3.1.4.2 suggest that the use of -en with feni does not mark imperfective or, indeed, convey any semantic information at all. Rather, its use represents imitation of the Standard English 'finish V-ing' construction illustrated in (75).

Standard English

75. They finished doing their work.

While the form comes to look like Standard English, the usage remains Liberian; that is, feni remains a completive/perfective marker.

don Inflection: Irregular Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inflected</th>
<th>Non-Inflected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Settler Peken</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Slim</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Carolina</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Albert</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

don-use, it was suggested earlier, is a non-acrolectal Settler trait. Not surprisingly, then, the more acrolectal speakers have too few tokens of don with irregular verbs to support comment. It is Settler Albert and Settler Carolina—the elderly Settlers who have never lived outside the Settler villages of their birth—whose evidence is relevant here. That they usually use the past participle form of irregular verbs suggests a historical explanation for the inflection of the verb in sentences like (74) in the text: that is, the Settlers evidently brought don plus the inflected verb with them to Liberia from the United States.
Adding -en to feni V is something a Liberian learns in school. Table 52 shows this. In it, feni V occurrence is compared with feni V-en occurrence according to the amount of the speaker's Western education.

(Table 52 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>feni V</th>
<th>feni V-en</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 Years</td>
<td>0/22</td>
<td>22/22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-9 Years</td>
<td>7/67</td>
<td>60/67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-3 Years</td>
<td>66/77</td>
<td>11/77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Stage have not been included; there are only 2 feni tokens in their speech.)

As the polarity of the figures would suggest, there is little variation on this account within the speech of an individual. Of the speakers who do show variation, only 4 have more than a single exceptional token. They are the following:

(Table 53 here)

Nimba Vendor and Aesop are at the bottom of the group with 4-9 years of Western schooling. At the time they were recorded, they were in the fourth grade. Earlier, in the discussion of the basilectal and mesolecetal use of feni, they were grouped with the basilect in terms of how they use feni. Their variation with regard to feni V and feni V-en probably stands as testimony to the fact that they are beginning
TABLE 53

feni V vs. feni V-en (II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>feni V</th>
<th>feni V-en</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Vendor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

to employ the standard form even as they continue to use feni in a basilectal way. At any rate, the speech of those showing variation (Nimba Cook, Builder, Nimba Vendor, and Aesop) is the appropriate place to look to see if the corpus will provide any details as to the nature of the transition from feni V to feni V-en, details such as which grammatical environments favor one or the other. The most straightforward hypothesis is that nonpunctual events would be the most likely to display -en--since that is ordinarily what the presence of -en signals. The data of these four speakers reveal no such correlation. An example from Nimba Vendor, illustrates the lack of a correlation. It is one in which feni V, and not feni V-en, marks a clearly iterative action.

76. En he brOt e en tan. hi bi sElen e. yu si, wEn we wə sElen di pam Oy, afta da, de feni bay e frOnə ə 0, wə wOnE tu divay di mOni.

'And he brought it to town and was selling it. You see, when we were selling the palm oil, afterwards, once they had bought it all from us, we wanted to split the money.'

Nimba Vendor 16-6-6

281
Only Builder's speech shows any kind of regularity in choosing between fenî V and fenî V-en. For him, an event that actually occurred—-one that shows up, for example, in a narrative—-takes fenî V. In contrast, an event that is part of a procedural text or a hypothetical example takes fenî V-en. He is consistent: all 5 of his fenî V tokens involve actual events, while all 5 of his fenî V-en tokens involve procedural texts or hypothetical examples. However, there is no evidence that any other speaker makes this distinction. Thus, the data do not provide any generalizations as to which environments favor fenî V over fenî V-en or vice versa. They do make abundantly clear, however, that the amount of Western education speakers have ordinarily determines whether they will use fenî V or fenî V-en.

3.6 THE SENTENCE-FINAL PARTICLE o

The discussion of tense and aspect throughout this work has concentrated on the VP, specifically on AUX's, verbs, and verb suffixes. In the present section, however, the marker o is considered, a marker that ordinarily occurs sentence-finally, as in (77) and (78).

77. dEn ma ma we tE mi se, "yu mE bren lapa f0 yu o."

'Then my mother would say to me, "Your man has brought you some cloth."'

Bettee 55-2-8

282
78. JVS: b0 seti gE lak yu, wa du yu no ebaw fam?
COMFORT: a ná seti gE o.

JVS: But a city girl like you, what do you know about farming?
COMFORT: [Despite what you may think] I am not a city girl.

Evidence will be presented that sentence-final particles like o are an areal, hence substratal, phenomenon. Then an effort will be made to describe the uses of o.\textsuperscript{112} It will be argued that, to the extent that part or all of o's function is aspectual, the inclusion of o in the present work is appropriate. Finally, the place of o on the continuum will be considered.

\textsuperscript{112} Specifically excluded from the subsequent discussion of o are cases where it functions as a type of conjunction, either with a sense of "whatever" (as in (a) and (b)) or with a sense of "whether or not" (as in (c) and (d)).

a. staktən o, bia o, m0ki kEn drenk e.

'Gin, beer, any kind of liquor whatever, the monkey drinks it.'

\textit{Augustus 1-58-9}

b. tan rish na, diz pipo jab o, b10fen wi o, 0 wa o, di mEna de blo dE h0n, a se, si Erib0di skata en di bush.

'When the time came--whether these people were teasing us, showing off to us, or whatever--the minute they sounded the air-raid siren, you should have seen everybody scatter into the bush.'

\textit{Builder 51-14-19}

c. de 10vən o, e m0 10ven o, da di mE hu go mEri.
3.6.1 Substratal Sources

Sentence-final particles are to be found in most—if not all—Liberian languages. Whether they have the same function in every case and whether each of their functions is identical in every language are concerns that the discussion that follows does not address: the goal is merely to establish something of the range of such particles in Liberian languages. In Vai, for example, Welmers (1976) says that /wóá/ [wéé] is "adverbial in a sense but . . . may perhaps better be called [a] sentence-final particle." According to Welmers, wóá "expresses courtesy, concern, urgency, or warning . . ." (p. 140).

Other Mande languages spoken in Liberia also have sentence-final markers with similar functions, hò in Bandi and e in Kpelle and Mende (Cynthia Schmidt and David Dwyer, p.c.; Innes (1967)). For the

> 'Whether or not they are lovers, that's the man [the one who paid the dowry] whom she will marry.'

  Pastor 21-51-20

d. i kashi i chek, i nÉbá kashi i chek ọ, sun de go dE, i se dan On dí ro . . .

> 'Whether or not he actually cashed his check, as soon as they got there, they sat down on the road [and had no intention of returning].'

  Nimba Watchman 61-11-1

The conjunctive use of ọ is also an areal/substratal phenomenon. Welmers (p.c.) hypothesizes that it is originally a Mande phenomenon that spread to Kru and Kwa. (For a discussion of its use in Baule, see Timyan (1981).) It also shows up in Ghanaian English (Cobbina Swanzey and Tucker Childs, p.c.) and in Krio, as these examples from Turner illustrate. The first is an excerpt from a conversation; the second is a riddle.
Liberian West Atlantic language Kisi, the sentence-final marker is *ale*.\textsuperscript{113}

In Kru languages, a major sentence-final particle is o. It is found, for example, in Bassa, Klao, Kroumen (a language in the Grebo complex), and Wobe (a language in the Krahn-Guere complex). An example of its use in Bassa shows up in the corpus in Tubman T's tale about the notorious trickster "1Eksha bo" ('Lecture Boy'). 1Eksha bo has been slated for execution by drowning. He tricks a Bassa man into taking his place. When the Bassa man realizes what he has been tricked into,

Krio

a. Mr. O.: Lekwetin so? Ohmohle?
   Mr. F.: Bra, ohl miks--ohmohle o, laga o, wiski o.

   Mr. O.: Like what? Homemade booze?
   Mr. F.: All different kinds, my friend--homemade booze, lager, whisky.

   (1963:351)

b. Riddle: Wan tin di, ren sizin o, drai sizin o, ohl tehnh wehr rehd jazi ehn blak kot.
   Answer: Bangga.

   Riddle: 'There's something that--whether in rainy season or dry--always wears a red jersey and a black coat.'
   Answer: A palm nut.

   (The translations are mine, not Turner's.)

   (1963:93)
79. hi sta tōken na, he wə spikEn basa. "E se mo o." dE mī, "e's nā mī o." "E se mo o. E se mo o."

'The started talking now, and he was speaking Bassa. "E se mo o." That means, "it's not me!" "E se mo o. E se mo o."'

Tubman T 19-8-20

A similar example for Klao is to be found in Euclid's speech. In Kroumen, Thalmann (in progress) notes that "formules stereotypées" (greetings, thank-you, and the like)

... sont souvent suivies... de la particule dicto-modal (PD) marquant une sorte d'atténuation (que l'on trouve aussi après un ordre, un conseil, un enseignement)... Kroumen

80. nā wiō ḏ. your greeting PD

'Hello.'

(in progress:54)

Of the Kru and Mande languages encompassed within the present study, Wobe appears to have the most extensive system of sentence-final particles. It is not clear whether this is a fact about these languages or about the linguists analyzing them. That is, these sentence-final particles seem in many ways peripheral to the grammar of the languages in question. At the same time, they are heavily context-dependent—in a way that would make them especially unlikely to emerge in ordinary elicitation sessions. In Welmers's grammar of Vai, for example, the sentence-final particle wōē appears in those

2 Kpelle and Kisi also use o (Schmidt and Tucker Childs, p.c.). It is not clear whether o is native to these languages or was borrowed by them, either from Kru languages (especially Bassa) or from Liberian English.
three sentences that illustrate its use but nowhere else in the entire book, this despite the frequency with which wóé occurs in ordinary speech. (Two of the three sentences with wóé are formulae where the use of wóé is fixed rather than optional.) Similarly, in Innes's (1966) grammar of Grebo, he apparently makes no mention whatsoever of any sentence-final particle. However, in the texts given as appendices, the sentence-final particle o is present, e.g. p. 127, lns. 293-4. (The translation of the texts is not done morpheme-by-morpheme or even line-by-line, and it seems to be fairly free. Thus it is not possible to know how Innes would analyze o.)

To return to Wobe: Egner (1983) comments:

Les particules conversationnelles [PCV] sont d'une importance primordiale pour la communication verbale en face à face, c'est-à-dire dans l'interaction verbale. . . . Leur fonction est difficile à déterminer dans la mesure où elles n'entrent pas de rapport grammatical avec le reste de l'énoncé mais signalent plutôt des faits ayant trait à la situation de communication, par exemple l'attitude du locuteur face à son propre énoncé ou face à celui de l'interlocuteur.

(1983:231)

Egner identifies seven particles. Among these are the following:

-\textit{ba} donne de l'insistance à une affirmation notamment lorsque celle-ci vient d'être refusée.
81. A: Kei" bla 'wnE.  
    K. taper me-DECL  

    B: Kei" 'a bla nyw.  
    K. NEG taper gens  

    A: O bla 'wnE -ba.  
    il taper me-DECL -PCV  

    A: Kei m'a tapé.  
    B: Kei ne tape pas les gens.  
    A: Mais il m'a quand-même tapé!  

(1983:231)

'de est fondamentalement un élément atténuateur qui "rend plus poli" une réponse, une question ou une proposition. Il est souvent réduit à 'e.

82. A: -O -bla 'wn E-?  
    qui? qui-taper te(MASC) QUES  

    B: Kei" -bla 'wn 'e.  
    K. qui-taper m PCV  

    'Qui t'a tapé?'
    'Kei m'a tapé.'  

(1983:231)

'o est un élément atténuateur qui joue un grand rôle dans les salutations et les souhaits . . . . Il semble surtout servir à indiquer la bienveillance du locuteur et le fait qu"il n'y a rien" entre ce dernier et son interlocuteur, à tel point que son absence dans une salutation initiale notamment signale qu"il doit y avoir quelque chose" qui trouble la relation entre les interlocuteurs.

83. 'mO -je awn o.  
    moi qui-voir te(FÉM) PCV  

    'Bonjour!' (litt. c'est moi qui t'ai vu)
84. aô 'mv 'nylo' 'd0o o.
yous dormir sommeil beau PCV

'Bonne nuit!' (litt. dormez un beau sommeil)
(1983:232)

The role of o in Wobe greetings and leave-taking formulae is paralleled in Klao. That is, Klao speakers say that those who would omit the o in leave-taking formulae like (85) are either brusque to the point of rudeness or non-native speakers of the language.

Klao

85. mû mû-ni o.
I go-LOC

'I'm going.'

This discussion of sentence-final particles in Kru and Mande languages has been intended to illustrate something of the function and range of these particles. With regard to geography, sentence-final particles--particularly o--seem to be an areal phenomenon: the question remains as to how great the area is. Kwa languages as far east as Yoruba and Igbo have o, as the following pair of sentences from Yoruba illustrate:

Yoruba

86a. Mo rîi.

'I saw him.' (In answer to the question, 'Did you see him?')

86b. Mo rîi o.

'(You're saying that I didn't, but) I did see him! (Yusuf, p.c.)
3.6.2 O in West African Pidgins/Creoles

O also shows up in pidgins and creoles across West Africa. In the grammatical sketch that precedes their Krio-English dictionary, Fyle and Jones state that O expresses "finality of statement" (1980:xlviii). They do not elaborate further as to what "finality of statement" means, nor do they illustrate it. (They also do not give O as a dictionary entry.) Turner (1963) provides a word-by-word translation of Krio folklore and literature. He consistently translates sentence-final O as 'please' (as in (87) or 'indeed' (as in (88)).

Krio

87. i se, "Papa, Papa, Papa, Papa,
He says, "papa, Papa, Papa, Papa,

mi fut dOOn taia, O."
my feet are tired, please.

(Turner 1963:261)

88. Naim i se, "LOd, a masi!
Then he (Spider) says, "Lord, have mercy!"

LOd, a masi!
Lord, have mercy!

Dis boBo ya so gEt at, O.
This boy here indeed has heart (nerve), indeed.

(Turner 1963:266)

(Morpheme-by-morpheme glosses from Turner)

Marchese (p.c.) reports the use of O in Français Populaire Ivoirien as well, as illustrated in (89):
François Populaire Ivoirien

89. c'est fini o.

'That's all there is. (Implied: 'Too bad, you don't get any.')

(Marchese, p.c.)

In Nigerian Pidgin, o expresses "mild emphasis" (Yusuf, p.c.). An illustration of its use in Nigerian Pidgin is to be found in a passage from Achebe's (1972) *Girls at War*, quoted in Todd (1974).

Nigerian Pidgin

90. Police o! Tief-man o! Neighbours o! We done loss o!

(Todd 1974:94-95)

Finally, o shows up in Cameroonian Pidgin, as illustrated in (5), repeated below.

Cameroonian

5. I sei, "A, mi a no bin sabi o."

'He said, "Oh, I didn't realize it."'

(Todd 1982:132)

The presence of sentence-final particles and particularly of o is well established both in substratal languages and in the pidgins and creoles of West Africa. The place of o in Liberian English is firm as well: in the present corpus there are more than 800 instances of its use. The question that must next be addressed is what is its function.\(^{114}\) The answers that follow are necessarily tentative, in

\(^{114}\) Another sentence-final particle is ya, from English 'you hear?' Though its functions overlap somewhat with those of o (and though the two of them cannot co-occur), ya is much more constrained as to the range of permissible contexts for its use. Moreover, as the subsequent discussion will attempt to make clear, it cannot be claimed that ya marks aspect.
part because the range of situations in which ḥ occurs in Liberian English is so vast and in part because individual variation in the use of ḥ is so great. With phenomena like the marking of irrealis (presented in Chapter 4), it is necessary to ask why some form of marking is not present always in irrealis contexts (and Section 4.4.2 addresses that very question). But ḥ is not like that. Little if anything can be inferred from its absence. One must instead concentrate on those cases where it is present in an attempt to see if any commonality of meaning or function emerges.

Previous work on Liberian English (in the form of word lists) has identified ḥ as an "intensifier" (Merry n.d.).119 Wheeler states that ḥ is "used at the end of a statement for emphasis (where Americans would indicate emphasis by giving additional stress to the particular

There are 74 tokens of ya in the corpus. Of these, 7 represent expressions of sympathetic emotion, including 2 occurrences of the (frozen) apology/condolence formula, no ma ya, (< no mind). Except where noted, subsequent discussion is based on the remaining 67 tokens: the overwhelming majority of these express an assertive—even an agressive—stance by the speaker. This fact is reflected by the distribution of sentence types among ya-marked sentences. Of the 67 tokens, 23 are imperatives, 11 are hortative constructions that begin with leE ('let'), and 23 are first-person constructions (not including the hortatives). These three types are illustrated below:

a. shi se, "hm, wa yu lak tu du, du e ya."

'She said, "Hm, whatever you want to do, do it [and see if I care]."'

Aesop 29-13-2

b. "luk, leE mi tE yu ya, a we pe f0 Eriten en des ples hya ..."
word)" (1979:10). D'Azevedo (1971) makes a similar statement. Indeed, the present data provide numerous examples that support their assessment.\textsuperscript{116} Nimba Cook, for example, describes an episode when soldiers came from Monrovia to Firestone to avenge a comrade's death;

91. E! da fay-wa dE g.

'Eh! It was like a war!' Nimba Cook 64-14-4

Similarly, when Bettee's father has committed an extremely embarrassing faux pas, she tells him that he should tell his wife about it.

"Look, let me tell you, I will pay for everything in this place ..." Patience 37-2-24

c. di mE se, "... yu fulis mE, yu kOn t0ken aba da yu kOntri besne!" a se, "hm. papa, a feni ya. lE mi go. ..."

'The man said, "... You foolish man, [this is the city and] you are talking about country things!" I said, "Hm! Papa, I have nothing more to say to you. [I'm wasting my time here so] let me go."' Nimba Watchman 56-55-28

(The last example also illustrates that Liberian English has the indignant come V-ing construction described for Black English by Spears (1982).)

The tokens found in the corpus make it clear that the use of ya--at least in its usual aggressive function--is sensitive to social status; the speaker uses it in addressing a peer or an inferior, never a superior. The point of the aggression seems to
92. hi se, "he! yu ma de pEpE o."

'He said, "Hey! Your mother's like pepper [and she'd never let me hear the end of it]."

Bettee 54-14-7

It is clear that the "intensive/emphatic" characterization fits many instances of the use of o, but there is also a range of "polite" uses of o, particularly with imperative and hortative constructions, e.g. 117

93. so Eri nay, hi se, "yo koM o so wi we pre o."

'So every night he would say, "Won't you (pl.) please come here and pray with me?"

Pastor 21-63-26

be an attempt by the speaker to assert his or her status and thereby to terminate discussion (others yielding to the speaker). An example from a group discussion illustrates this point. At Richard's interview of Painter, others are present, including Builder. Painter makes mention of the Doe government's abolition of the hut tax (a much-despised policy of previous governments); this prompts a warning by a young man present that new forms of taxation will prove more insidious still. Builder—a strong Doe partisan and, by virtue of his age, higher in status than the young man—tries to cut the discussion short by saying,

d. des wOn, e o ray ya.

"This one [the abolition of the hut tax] is all right, hear?"

Builder 58-58-23

(Ending the sentence with o rather than ya would simply have expressed vigorous support for the Doe policy; it would not have been an attempt to curtail the discussion.)

The use of ya as a signal of assertiveness/agression is utterly at odds with the cordiality—or, failing that, civility—that
94. wen yu go vese dEn, se, "wE, ba, LE se dan o. hya ma b0to hya."

'When you go to visit them, they say, "Please have a seat, my friend. Here's the bottle; help yourself."'

Friar Tuck 57-53-8

The uses in (93) and (94) parallel the role of "attenuation" noted for o in Kroumen and Wobe. Moreover, the uses of Liberian English o outlined thus far coincide with Turner's glosses of Krio o as 'indeed' (intensive) and 'please' (polite). However, the number of polite/attenuating tokens is quite small. At the same time, there is a wealth of tokens in the corpus for which neither the "intensive" nor the "polite" characterization fits, e.g.

ordinarily underlies sociolinguistic interviews. While the particle does show up in group discussions (as illustrated above), the usual pattern of sociolinguistic interviews—with their avoidance of acrimony between interviewer and interviewee—largely precludes the necessary climate for the use of ya. The use of ya in reported speech within narratives does not affect the social dynamics of the interview. Indeed, the primary occurrence of ya in the corpus is in reported speech within narratives (34/67). A second major use is in commercial transactions, particularly where bargaining is involved (24/67). It will be remembered that the bulk of Charlie's, Willie's, and Dick's speech came in the role-playing of such transactions. Charlie—as carloader, carpenter, and cloth vendor's customer—uses ya 17 times, and his cohorts use it 3 times. (In contrast, Charles—the same speaker in more formal contexts—uses ya 3 times; William and Richard do not use it at all.) That the frequent use of ya in imaginary commercial transactions does reflect its use in actual ones is demonstrated by its use in the two real—though exceedingly brief—commercial exchanges contained in the corpus. The interview of Settler Carolina takes place in the front room of her home; she sells "shortbread" and a few other items. At one point in the interview, a customer approaches, inspects the bread, and says
95a. JVS: bO yua pa dédn wOn tu no wa yu wën goen tu skuo? 
GUS: no, b0 a wën tu sku o. 
JVS: But didn't your father want to know why you weren't going to school? 
GUS: Oh, but I went to school.  
3-4-15

96a. EUCLID: so wën yus brOda kEn na, he kE yu tu fritan? 
RALLY TIME: no, hi nó kE mi en fritan o. 
EUCLID: So when your brother came, did he take you with him back to Freetown? 
RALLY TIME: Oh, no, he didn't take me to Freetown.  
54-8-26

97. so de divayd e se, "tude da wumE de o."

'So they [the preacher] divided it [the prayer-sessions], saying, "Today is a women's prayer day."
Pastor 21-64-9

e. ma, ____, yu m0 stɔ di b0nen On di bre ya.
'Ma, stop burning the bread, hear?'  
20-2-23

Settler Carolina—who only the week before has buried the last of her sisters and brothers—replies

f. hm, ma man w0re, e ga b0n ya.
'Hm, my mind was worried, and the bread got burned.'  
20-2-25

In other words, the customer is saying, "Look, don't expect me to buy burnt bread," and Settler Carolina (who is wearing what Liberians call "full mourning") answers, "Can't you see I'm bereaved? Don't bother me." In a second transaction between Settler Carolina and a customer, ya crops up again.

Merry states that o is "added ... as an intensifier, to indicate knowledge, good will, consent, approval and agreement" (n.d.:n.p.).

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3.6.3 The Semantics of Sentence-Final Particles

While the discussion of sentence-final particles thus far has been confined to West Africa, particles with similar position and function show up elsewhere in the world as well, notably the Mandarin sentence-final particle le, as analyzed by Li et al. (1982). Many of the observations of Li et al. about le seem to apply, either wholly or partially, to Liberian English o. For that reason, their analysis will be presented in some detail. According to Li et al.,

While o is ordinarily sentence-final, it also occurs elsewhere, most frequently after a sentence-initial NP. Usually, its occurrence there serves to emphasize the NP, e.g.

a. be bo o, di gE bit hem.

'A big guy, and still the girl beat him up.'

Gus 2-52-26

Less frequently, the use of o after an initial NP marks that NP as a topic, e.g.

b. hi se, 'en dE reva dE o, Enitan yu pu Enido dE, hi kEn da En bi ded, yu kEn go dE En si O yua pipo En kOm bE.'

'He said, "As for the river, anytime you drown anybody there, the person will die and will be able to see all the people who died before and then the person is able to come back here."'

Tubman T 19-9-5

o can also occur after ye ('yes') to signal emphatic agreement, e.g.
The basic communicative function of le is to signal a 'Currently Relevant State' (=CRS). That is, le claims that a state of affairs has special current relevance to some particular Reference Time. The Mandarin le, then, can be easily seen as an exponent of the Perfect aspect, the basic discourse function of the Perfect being, . . . to relate some state of affairs to the "current" time, i.e., in the unmarked case, the conversational setting in which the speaker and hearer are participating as interlocutors.

(1982:22; italics in the original)

Drawing on Friedrich's (1974) division of aspectual systems into three "basic aspect categories," of which perfect (and stative) form one, they argue that the reason why the marking of current relevance is

c. JVS: bo e sawn lak dE wumE dOz mO wOk dEn mE.
GEDEH MARKETWOMAN: ye g, wumE go mO wOken en awa kOntri.

JVS: But it sounds like women do more work than men do.
GEDEH MARKETWOMAN: That's right! A woman has to do far more work in Liberia than a man does.

30-12-10

There are other cases in which the use of g is hardly polite. When Settler Slim's ex-wife comes from America so that she can take their son away from Settler Slim, he tells her and her new husband,

a. "y0 kE hen. dön ke hen g."

"Go ahead and take him, but make damned sure he doesn't die there."

Settler Slim 48-53-26

In another case where politeness seems hardly to be in evidence, someone is picking a fight with Nimba Gardener and says to him,
. . . a function important enough to be considered one of three cardinal aspect points and to be marked explicitly in so many languages . . . is simply that it is the speech situation which is of most immediate concern to the participants in it. It is often important to signal that a proposition bears upon the immediate speech situation because the knowledge that it does may determine what the participants do next. In other words, in a broad sense, the Perfect aspect says that some event, state, or comment is relevant to the "here and now" of the speech situation. 

(1982:22; italics in the original)

Defining "Currently Relevant State," Li et al. say that

. . . the unmarked 'current' time is the speech situation; however, if another Reference Time besides the speech situation is being referred to in the conversation, then by extension the statement signalled by the sentence with the le is claimed to be relevant to that particular Reference Time. 

(1982:23)

As for relevance, it

. . . is a notion that is very much a matter of the context in which the le sentence occurs; le claims that some state of affairs signalled by the sentence is "relevant" for the speaker and the hearer, and the speaker assumes that the hearer can figure out from the context in just what ways it is relevant. 

(1982:24)

With regard to state, Li et al. say that "le always treats an event signalled by the sentence as a state of affairs and claims that that state is currently relevant to some time" (1982:25).

b. "b0 e yu kën fay, a we bi yu o."

"'If you won't fight me, then I'll just beat you up.'"

Nimba Gardener 15-18-6

The use of o in the two examples above is meant to threaten, not to attenuate. In such cases, o is intensive rather than polite, and it is hostility that is being emphasized. Context is invariably such that misinterpretation is unlikely.
One way in which the characterization of perfect aspect of Li et al. differs from traditional accounts is that in the latter the perfect-marked clause is something that necessarily obtains prior to the reference time while for Li et al. future states and states resulting from future events can be "currently relevant." They give the following example:

... if someone wants to see you next month, but you know that you will be in Japan at that time, you say

Mandarin

99. (xià-ge yuè) wǒ jiù zài Rìběn le
(next-CL month) I then at Japan CRS

'(Next month) I'll be in Japan.'

... the state of your being in Japan will be current with respect to the time being discussed; here it is "next month."

(1982:23)

Their extension of the notion "perfect" to unrealized situations proves useful for languages other than Mandarin. Mordechay observes the same phenomenon in Batak, German, Yiddish, and Hebrew (1984:113). At least one Kru language--Godie--has been analyzed as having a perfect marker that can relate irrealis (as well as realis) situations to the reference time (Marchese (1978b)). Moreover, the Klao verb suffix -ka (which Singler (1979b) terms "non-present") seems to fit this pattern too.\(^{118}\)

\(^{118}\) It is possible to construct situations in American English in which the present perfect is used to mark situations that occur after the reference time. Imagine the following scenario: The President and Vice President are running for re-election. Election day is less than two weeks away. One of the TV networks
Li et al. identify five ways in which le signals "Currently Relevant State":

... a sentence with le can convey CRS if the state of affairs it represents:
A. is a changed state
B. corrects a wrong assumption
C. reports "progress so far"
D. determines what will happen next
E. is the speaker's total contribution to the conversation at that point.

(1982:28)

Two of these five—(B) and (D)—represent ways in which le is frequently used. Examples (95a) and (96a) are illustrations of correcting a wrong assumption. (95a) is repeated below,

95a. JVS: b0 yua pa dèdn wOn tu no wa yu wën goen tu skuo? GUS: no, b0 a wën tu skuo 0.

JVS: But didn't your father want to know why you weren't going to school?
GUS: Oh, but I went to school.

3-4-15

Prior to the exchange in (95a), Gus has described a fight that had resulted in a one-month suspension from school for him, commutable only if his parents went to see the principal. Gus has said that he leads off its nightly news program with the revelation that both the President and the Vice President have been implicated in heroin trafficking. The Vice President watches the report in his own office, then rushes to the Oval Office, bursts in, and says, "Mr. President, we have just lost the election."

There is one example in the corpus of this type, i.e. where the perfect—specifically, hay—is used to mark the inevitable. With regard to the use of the perfect to mark subsequent situations, the crucial difference between languages like American English, on the one hand, and languages like Mandarin and Godie, on the other, lies in frequency of occurrence and range of uses. In languages of the former kind, the use of the perfect in this way is possible but somewhat exceptional; in the latter, the use of the perfect in this way is common.
knew that his father would be so angry about Gus's behavior that he would refuse to go; for that reason Gus had said nothing to his father about the episode. Based on that information, the hearer assumes that Gus had spent a month out of school, and the hearer then asks Gus the question in (95a). Gus's full answer is the following:

95b. no, b0 a wEn tu sku g. no, a wEn tu sku. a masE r0n ma di. a beg. a rot a 1Eta tu ma prEnsipo En a masE wEn de, a wə beken En 0.

Oh, but I went to school. Oh, no, I went to school myself and took care of it. I pleaded with the principal. I wrote a letter to him, and I went there myself and was pleading with him and everything.

Gus 3-4-17

(96a) is repeated below.

96a. EUCLID: so wEn yuə brOda kEn na, hi kE yu tu fritan?
RALLY TIME: no, hi nó kE mi en fritan 0.

EUCLID: So when your brother came, did he take you with him back to Freetown?
RALLY TIME: Oh, no, he didn't take me to Freetown.

54-8-26

In this case, Rally Time has said that he had been a child when his father died and that, at that time, an old man had volunteered to take care of him until such time as Rally Time's brother who lived in Freetown came to get him. After Rally Time states that his brother had subsequently returned to Liberia from Freetown, Euclid asks whether or not Rally Time's brother had taken him to Freetown. Rally Time's full answer is given in (96b).
96b. no, he nó kE mi en fritan q. hi nó go ba dE egen.

'No, he didn't take me to Freetown. He didn't return to Freetown at all.'

Rally Time 54-9-1

While it is usually the case that the assumption to be corrected has developed within the conversation, it can also be the case that the assumption involved is part of general knowledge. For example, in Liberia when someone sprains a finger, then the automatic response of bystanders is to "haul" it, i.e. to yank it in a way that promotes speedy recovery. Gus, in describing karate school, says the following:

100. En sOntan yu wOn go pOsh sOnten En yu fenga hEpEn tu spren, yu no. En e hOten yu. de dön se de we hOl e ə.

'And sometimes when you are punching something, your finger sprains, you know, and it's hurting you. They don't say that they will "haul" it.'

Gus 2-68-14

In other words, people in a karate school respond in a way that is contrary to what would be assumed by the listener. According to Gus:

101. de dO jOs pu e bEndej rawn e. wEn de pu di bEndej rawn e, de se yu mO go nOk di wO.

'They just put a bandage around it. When they've done that, they say that you must go pound the wall.'

Gus 2-68-19

As for the "determines what happens next" phenomenon that Li et al. describe, it occurs frequently in Liberian English as well, as (97) and (98) illustrate. (97) is repeated below.

303
97. so de divayd e se, "tude da wumE de o."

'So they (the preacher) divided it (the prayer-sessions), saying, "Today is a women's prayer day."

Pastor 21-64-9

The point of the preacher's segregating the men's prayer day from the women's was so that he could more readily seduce the churchwomen. Implicit in his announcement that "today is a women's prayer day" is an injunction to the men to make themselves scarce.

(98) is similar; it is here repeated:

98. ... nobadi néwá le komplen tu ma stEpm0da se, "hya wa [bEtî] du tu mi o."

'. ... Nobody ever made a formal complaint to my stepmother, saying, "Here is what [Bettee] did to me."

Bettee 55-4-23

In this case, implicit in the accusation, "Here is what Bettee did to me," is the question, "What action are you going to take in response?"

As noted above, it is difficult to obtain information on the function of o and similar sentence-final particles in West African languages both because it is difficult to characterize their functions and because linguists working on these languages have tended to mention them only in passing if at all. Nonetheless, it is possible to see both in the Bassa example (79) and the Yoruba (86)--both repeated below--that o is being used in these cases to "correct a wrong assumption."
79. hi sta tōken na, he wē spikEn basa. "E se mo o." dē mi, "'s nā mi o." "E se mo o. E se mo o."

'The started talking now, and he was speaking Bassa. "E se mo o." That means, "It's not me!" "E se mo o. E se mo o."

Tubman T 19-8-20

Yoruba

86a. Mo rīi.

'I saw him.' (In answer to the question, 'Did you see him?')

86b. Mo rīi o.

'(You're saying that I didn't, but) I did see him.

(Yusuf, p.c.)

(The phenomenon of expressing "intensity" and "correcting a wrong assumption" simultaneously is discussed below.) The examples from Bassa and Yoruba suggest that the Liberian English (and general West African pidgin and creole) use of o---parallel in so many ways to Mandarin le---may be said to be in part a consequence of influence from the substrate.

Apart from the intensive and polite uses of o, not all instances of o in Liberian English fit into the "correcting a wrong assumption" and "determining what happens next" slots. Nevertheless, the remaining tokens can all be characterized as marking a "currently relevant state."

It may seem that the "currently relevant state" analysis permits virtually anything to qualify to be marked with an o, but for the Mandarin case Li et al. mention situations where the use of le occurs infrequently or not at all.

305
... le is never used when the speaker is simply asserting a general truth; ... general states or ongoing situations involving no change are generally not described with le. ... le is not found ... in a simple assertion of an event which happened in the past. ... le is very rare in expository and scientific writing and partially non-existent in news-reporting, speeches, lectures, and proclamations. ... Similarly, descriptive writing contains few, if any occurrences of le. ... (1982:25-26)

These characterizations apply to Liberian English as well. With the exception of reported speech, o never occurs in the written English of Liberia. (It also seems the case that o cannot occur in questions, though Nimba Watchman does present one counterexample.) Still, it must be acknowledged that constraints on o-assignment seem fairly weak, speakers having a wide choice as to what they can mark as being "currently relevant."

The discussion of the perfect at the beginning of this chapter follows McCoard in emphasizing the semantic features and feature values that define the perfect and, further, holding pragmatic considerations to be inferentially derived from the semantic features (rather than themselves being basic). That characterization seems apt for AUX's like hav and ben but not for sentence-final particles like o. In the latter case, their place seems to be not within a strictly semantic or a narrowly grammatical framework but within the realm of pragmatics. For o, context is everything—or nearly so. In the case of—for example—Kru and Kwa languages, there is a defined semantic system for expressing tense and aspect; in such cases, markers like o express more purely pragmatic information. Consider, for example, Egner's comment about "les particules conversationnelles" in Wobe:

306
Les particules conversationnelles (PCV) sont d'une importance primordiale pour la communication verbale en face à face, c'est-à-dire dans l'interaction verbale... Leur fonction est difficile à déterminer dans la mesure où elles n'entretiennent pas de rapport grammatical avec le reste de l'énoncé...

(1983:231)

Her comment suggests that "les particules conversationnelles" provide for a richness of pragmatic expression. However, in the case of pidgins and creoles--specifically in the case of Liberian English, where a semantically based perfect aspect marker is primarily a mesolectal and acrolectal phenomenon and not necessarily available for all speakers--the pragmatic marker o assumes the task, at least some of the time, of signalling the perfect. Sentences like (102), (103), and (104) illustrate this.

102. pipo se, "o! [stuwa] kOn o! [stuwa] kOn o! [stuwa] kOn o!"  
   'The townspeople said, "Oh! [Steward] has come! [Steward] has come!"'  
   Ghana Steward 53-8-6

103. "a dónt no wa ples de go o."  
   'I don't know where they have gone.'  
   Nimba Cook 65-3-8

104. "o, s0m ø di pipo lEf On di wata o."  
   'Oh, some people have drowned!''  
   Painter 58-66-4

Less basilectal speakers--whose speech displays more frequent use of pre-verbal completive and perfect AUX's--sometimes use them in conjunction with o, e.g.
105. di wumE ten na di chedren na da o.

'The woman thought that the children had died.'
Martha 13-77-14

106. JVS: bo yu néwá wEn tu dE say?
SETTLER CAROLINA: a néwá ben dE. a! a néwá ben dE o.

JVS: But you never went over there [to America]?
SETTLER CAROLINA: I've never been there. Ah! I've never been there.

20-6-13

The discussion of o thus far has identified three types of o-use:
to mark intensity, to express politeness, and to signal a "currently
relevant state." In their discussion of le, Li et al. comment that

it is quite obvious that the five ways in which le can
signal CRS . . . are not clearly distinct from one another.
Many of our example sentences could have illustrated more
than one of the uses.

(1982:39)

In the same way, there is an overlapping of functions in Liberian
English, encompassing not merely "currently relevant state" but also
intensity and politeness/attenuation. As noted above, the use of o to
signal politeness or attenuation is comparatively infrequent; still,
examples of its overlap with "currently relevant state" and with
intensity do obtain, as illustrated by (107) and (108) respectively.
Both examples involve the type of "currently relevant state" which
"determines what happens next."
107. de se, "wi kOn o so we En di pipo, so wi we pu
togEda."

'They [the first Settlers] said [to the Kru chiefs],
"We have come, friends, so that we and you can work
一起.

Pastor 21-5-19

108. di wumE se, "... so a bek yu, a ñ lak e o."

'The woman said, "... So, I beg you, I don't like it
[so please stop it at once]."

Aesop 29-63-27

In contrast to the limited occurrence of o as a
politeness/attenuation marker, it occurs frequently to mark
intensity. Wheeler provides clear cases of the overlap of these two
uses. As noted above, he states that o is "used at the end of a
statement for emphasis" (1979:10). He uses two examples to illustrate
o; in each case he provides a parenthetical elaboration of what the
use of o might accomplish in a given context.

109. "The teacher coming o!" (Better stop comparing
answers.)

110. "I don't go for it o!" (I don't like what you're
doing, i.e. keep your hands to yourself.)
(Wheeler 1979:10)

Thus, in each of Wheeler's illustrations, the o--while
intensive--carries with it a "what happens next" message. Why
intensive and perfect ("currently relevant state") should come
together is not clear. To be sure, this entire chapter has examined
subsets of the group completive-intensive-perfect, and the pairing of
intensive and perfect illustrated by (109) and (110) can be said to
represent one more of these. However, the complete-intensive interaction outlined above (in 3.2.2) involved the use of *feni* or *dOn* in sentences where the AUX could be paraphrased by 'complete,' 'completed,' or 'completely.' The ability to paraphrase the AUX in this way suggests a semantic link between intensive and completive, at least in these instances. In the case of ő, on the other hand, no such paraphrase is consistently available, nor is there evidence of a comparably obvious link between intensive and "currently relevant state."

3.6.4 The Relation of the Continuum to ő

Earlier in this chapter in the discussion of AUX's and their distribution along the continuum, it was noted that *feni* extended from very basilectal speech to reasonably acrolectal speech. The fact that its range spans much of the basilect puts Liberian English at further odds with Bickerton's characterization of the basilect as marking anterior, nonpunctual, and irrealis only. The present section has presented a different source for aspect marking, the sentence-final particle. The question that now arises is whether or not ő presents an even stronger opportunity to mark non-Bickertonian tense-aspect in the basilect.

It should be noted that sentence-final particles are especially susceptible to individual difference: current relevance, intensity, and politeness-attenuation are all subject to individual interpretation. At the same time, the use of ő seems to be a
characteristic of expressive speech. Though this defies quantification, it seems to be the case that good conversationalists use \( \circ \) a lot. Perhaps one thing that goes into certain speakers' being good conversationalists is their efforts to involve the hearer in the conversation through cues—like \( \circ \)—that the conversation is of relevance (and, therefore, of interest) to the listener. (Singier 1981a—following a suggestion by William Welmers—labels \( \circ \) a marker of "personal involvement.") A second, more mechanical problem in assessing \( \circ \) vis-a-vis the continuum is that the amount of data per speaker varies drastically. Nonetheless, when the 48 speakers with 30 or more minutes of recorded speech are considered, certain patterns emerge. Of the 10 child learners in this group with 10 or more years of Western schooling, only 4 (Comfort, William, Euclid, and Patience) have five or more tokens of \( \circ \), and no speaker has more than 17. In contrast, of the 25 speakers with little or no Western schooling, 17 have 5 or more tokens. Two speakers—Nimba Cook and Nimba Watchman—have more than 100 tokens each. (It should be noted, however, that the interviews with each are long, more than 100 minutes in each case.) The distribution of speakers above and below the cutoff point (of tokens) suggests that \( \circ \) does tend to correlate—generally rather than absolutely—with position near the basilical end of the continuum. Table 54 reflects this.

(Table 54 here)

That is, speakers at the more basilical end of the continuum tend to use \( \circ \) with greater frequency than do those at the acrolectal end. Two
TABLE 54

The Distribution of ə

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<tr>
<td>0-3 Years</td>
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<td>4-9 Years</td>
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<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>Gus</td>
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<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>Charlie</td>
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<td>Painter</td>
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<td>Charles</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>Nimba Vendor</td>
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<td>Bettee</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Aesop</td>
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<td>Settler Albert</td>
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<td>Lizard</td>
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<td>Settler Carolina</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Calvin</td>
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<td>Solomon</td>
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<td>Comfort</td>
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<td>Shorty</td>
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<td>Rally Time</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>William</td>
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<td>Chauffeur</td>
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<td>Euclid</td>
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<td>Surveyor</td>
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<td>Patience</td>
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<td>Lofa Laborer</td>
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<td>Willie</td>
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<td>Dick</td>
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<td>Settler Peken</td>
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<td>Boatman</td>
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</table>

(Speakers with 30 minutes or more of data)

explanations for this may be suggested. One is that--among mesolectal and acrolectal speakers, at least--the parameter of formality/informality may play a part in determining ə-use. The strongest evidence for this is found in the comparison of Augustus to Gus. They represent separate interviews with the same person, the first being considerably more formal than the second. Discussing
roughly the same topics in both interviews, Augustus uses o 3 times (in 60 minutes), and Gus uses it 54 times (in 90 minutes). If the analysis of the functions of o presented above is valid, then a second reason why o can be expected to be especially prevalent in the basilect is its role there as an AUX-surrogate. Where other speakers would use na or hav or feni, basilectal speakers--rather than not making this type of distinction (as Bickerton would suggest)--may be turning to o.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The present chapter has considered the convergence of the notions of completeive, intensive, and perfect in the Liberian English tense-aspect system. At the same time that the AUX's under consideration express one or more of these notions, they also are a part of Liberian English's system of marking temporal sequencing. (Sequentiality has been identified as a component of the notion perfect, but there is no implicit sequentiality in the notion completeive.) Thus, taken together, Chapters 2 and 3 show that the Liberian English basilect (at least the primary basilect) is like the creole prototype in marking temporal sequencing (rather than, strictly speaking, tense); however, where the role of [+ ANT] marking in the creole prototype is to signal disruptions of temporal sequence, these disruptions receive no marking at all in the Liberian basilect. Instead, it is the preservation of sequence that is indicated and reinforced in the Liberian basilect by the AUX feni.
At the same time, apart from the Gedeh use of *feni* and Robertsport residents' use of *hay*, the frequent use of completive/intensive/perfect markers is not characteristic of the basilect. Neither Kru speakers along the coast nor the Lofa basilect (as represented by the Borkeza rubber tappers) use any of the AUX's with any frequency. (The one seeming exception is Lofa Overseer, but his use of *ben* is ordinarily as a main verb—as a [-PERFECT] past-tense form of *go*—and not as an AUX at all.) However, an alternative way of expressing the notion perfect, one that does not rely on AUX's or inflection of the verb, is available to speakers. This is the sentence-final particle *o*, which can be used to signal a "currently relevant state."

Less basilectally, *feni* comes to mark the perfect. That is, unity (with the reference time) and preference are now joined with sequentiality, and the notion of perfect is thus expressed. Still more acrolectally, i.e. in the upper mesolect and the acrolect, the use of markers expressing the perfect is quite frequent, *hay* being the principal AUX used for this purpose.
Chapter IV

IRREALIS

The realis-irrealis opposition is considered in this chapter. There is no overt realis marker; thus, the focus of the chapter is on irrealis clauses and their marking.

Section 4.1 lays the ground rules for the present study. It defines irrealis, specifying which clauses are considered to be irrealis and which not. It then delineates which irrealis clauses have been focussed upon and which excluded in the present study. In addition to simple future and simple conditionals, Liberian English extends the use of irrealis in certain rhetorical devices. These are introduced in 4.1.2.2.

Mapping the marking of irrealis onto the continuum is done in Section 4.2. Two parallel irrealis continua exist. What is called "basic" is simple or unmarked irrealis; what is called "immediate" stresses the link between the irrealis event and the present. Negative irrealis is treated in Section 4.3. The rest of the chapter is given over to topics that explore irrealis further: other aspects of variation in irrealis marking, the interaction of irrealis with tense and aspect, and the irrealis marking of antecedent clauses.

Irrealis encompasses both future and conditional events. The fusion into a single category of future events and the consequent
clauses of conditionals is a widely attested creole phenomenon. In Liberian English, too, futures and the consequents of conditionals are not distinguished from one another.

Irrealis in Liberian English seems, at first glance, to offer but limited support for the notion of the continuum inasmuch as every speaker in the sample uses we (<will) at least once and most speakers, whether acrolectal or basilectal, mark most irrealis occurrences with we. Closer examination reveals, however, meaningful variation in assorted classes within irrealis and in certain ranges of the continuum. To delineate this variation, it is necessary first to establish the modus operandi of the present study.

4.1 ESTABLISHING THE NOTION OF IRREALIS

Implicit in this study is the assumption that it is possible from context alone to establish whether or not the verb in a given clause is irrealis. In a sentence like (1a),

Standard English

1a. He will go to Abidjan on Monday.

the clause is irrealis because the event has not yet been realized. While the presence of will is a possible consequence of the irrealis status of the clause, removing will does not alter the clause's irrealis character. (1b) is irrealis, too.

Standard English

1b. He goes to Abidjan on Monday.
In some instances, though, it is not possible to determine whether an event is irrealis or not. In such cases the clause in question has not been included.

Apart from these individual clauses whose realisness or irrealisness is indeterminate, there are certain types of clauses whose realisness is perhaps not well-defined. Generic constructions, for example, have their basis in realized events, e.g.

2. e yu prez wa cheken, e pupu en yu haws.

Praise a white chicken, and it defecates in your house.'

Liberian proverb

A passage like (3) illustrates another situation where realisness might seem questionable inasmuch as we is used repeatedly:

3. di tisha we te yu wa tu du, ivEn EspEshali wEn wi On awa mohEmadEn sku. di tisha we te y0, "jOm en di bush En ha e wu. bren da wu." En di tisha waf we as y0 tu br0 sOn wu. go En bren da, Eniten, bren wata. afta da, wE, de we te y0, "go ple."

'The teacher used to tell us what to do, especially in our Muslim school. The teacher would tell all of us, "Go to the forest and get some wood and bring it." And the teacher's wife would ask us to bring some wood, bring water, whatever. After that, well, they would tell all of us, "Go play."

Chauffeur 50-10-5

What (3) describes is habitual, the events having occurred again and again. Even if one cannot pinpoint the moment of occurrence of the chain of events described in (3), the events have occurred. As such, they are realis and outside the domain of an examination of irrealis. On the other hand, habitual-iterative events that have

119 Imperatives, while irrealis, have also been excluded.
not yet occurred are clearly irrealis and have not been excluded. (4)
provides an example of this: Lofa Tailor, long retired, is asked if
he remembers enough about his craft to be able to return to it.

4. iwEn sE tude, efia gE 0 dE, a we go tu f0k 0 ro, dEn a
go so. a Owez a we goen dE, Eriten wa a wOn tu so dE, a
we so dE.

'Even today, if I wanted to, I would go to the junction
[to use the sewing machine there], and I would sew. I
would go there all the time; and whatever I wanted to
sew there, I would sew.'

Lofa Tailor 63-5-6

4.1.1 Modality and Simple Irrealis

The mainstays of the Liberian English modal system are I=E (< let) and
m0 (< must). (The special status of kEn is treated elsewhere.) A
very gross generalization is that m0 is the primary modal for
basilect—except for speakers from Nimba—and I=E the primary modal for
the mesolect and for all speakers from Nimba.128 In the present study,
however, only simple irrealis has been considered. That is, cases
where some special assertion of modality was present have been
excluded—even though such clauses are implicitly irrealis. It is
worth noting that what is here called "simple irrealis" does more than

128 The prominence of I=E and m0 is illustrated in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I=E</th>
<th>m0</th>
<th>sh0</th>
<th>m2</th>
<th>mayt</th>
<th>mek</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no. of occurrences</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no. of speakers</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Two speakers—Lofa Shopkeeper and Shorty—are responsible for all
but six of the occurrences of m2. Preposed mek, a characteristic
of Krio and West African Pidgin English, occurs only in the speech
of Ghana Steward.)

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merely establish that an event has not yet been realized: it also makes the prediction that the event is likely to occur. (Alternatively--especially with first person subjects--it can signal the speaker's intention.) In cases where irrealis refers to conditionals or counterfactuals, the force of the irrealis is still to predict. In this case, what is predicted is the occurrence of some event (expressed in the consequent clause) once some other event has occurred. (Whether this other event is possible or not is irrelevant.) The distinction between predicting that an event will occur and merely asserting the possibility that it could occur becomes critical in the discussion of basilectal irrealis, presented in 4.2.1.

4.1.2 Types of Irrealis Constructions

Irrealis, as noted, marks both future events and conditionals. In Liberian English conditionals, the antecedent clause does not show overt irrealis marking; only the consequent clause does.\textsuperscript{121} An explanation for this difference between antecedent and consequent clauses will not be offered here; it will be noted, however, that this distinction between clauses in a conditional is common in creoles (and

\textsuperscript{121} Occasionally, antecedent clauses do bear overt irrealis marking. In the corpus there are 29 occurrences of \textit{we} in a non-past antecedent clause, 2 of \textit{wud}, and 2 of the immediate irrealis marker \textit{goen}. No speaker marks antecedent clauses in this way with any frequency: the only ones who mark irrealis overtly in antecedent clauses with a frequency of greater than 5 percent are Pastor (1/9, 11.1%), Settler Peken (1/15, 6.7%), Fisherman (1/16, 6.3%), Welldigger (1/17, 5.9%), and Nimba Cook (7/134, 5.2%). The marking of irrealis in the antecedent clause of past conditionals is discussed in 4.6.2.
is mentioned by Givón 1982:120) and in other languages as well, including English. Antecedent clauses will be discussed only briefly (in 4.6.). This should not be taken as meaning that the tense-modal-aspect marking of antecedents is without interest. Indeed, it appears to be the case that it is not only irrealis that goes unmarked in antecedent clauses; in Liberian English aspect and, for many speakers, tense are often not overtly marked in antecedent clauses. (While antecedent clauses can be marked for completive, intensive, and perfect, the status of a clause as an antecedent seems to disrupt other types of marking for aspect and tense; for this reason, antecedent clauses have been excluded from the consideration of aspect and tense in Chapter 2.)

4.1.2.1 Predictive and Hypothetical Conditionals

In American English, there is a distinction between predictive conditionals and hypothetical conditionals, e.g.

American English

5a. If he comes tomorrow, I will tell him.
5b. If he came tomorrow, I would tell him.

The difference between the two is a difference in the speaker's expectation of the likelihood of occurrence of the antecedent and--by extension--of the consequent. This difference is reflected in the marking both of the antecedent and the consequent: the predictive conditional uses non-past morphology in the antecedent and will in the consequent, while the hypothetical conditional uses past morphology in
the antecedent and would in the consequent. This distinction is all but non-existent in Liberian English. Past morphology shows up infrequently in the antecedent clauses of conditionals (more often in counterfactuals than in other conditionals), and wud (< would) shows up almost not at all: 7 times in non-past counterfactuals and only once in a conditional that is not also counterfactual. A distinction between predictive and hypothetical conditionals is not a characteristic of Liberian English.

At the same time, while the distinction between predictive and hypothetical conditionals has no basis in Liberian English speech, a distinction between counterfactuals and other conditionals does obtain. Conditionals have been considered to be counterfactuals if their antecedent clause posits something that was contrary to present or past reality. Thus, (6a) is a non-past counterfactual and (6b) a past counterfactual while (6c) is not a counterfactual at all.

American English

6a. If he were here, I'd ask him.
6b. If he had been here, I would have asked him.
6c. If he came tomorrow, I'd ask him.

"Hypothetical examples," longer than simple conditionals, are frequently used in Liberian speech. They usually are introduced by one or more of the following:

a) the antecedent clause of a conditional (frequently beginning with ef, less often with wEn), e.g. 122

122 The lower basilectal pronunciation of ef is [efi]; more mesolectally, ef is pronounced [e] pre-consonantally. No
7. e dE mi sE, mi En ma frEn dEn, wi mek plawa, de we kOme En de we arEs tu a a.

'Even if that were me, if my friends and I got into a fight, they [agents of the chief] would come and arrest us.'

Nimba Gardener 15-12-5

b) a special cue such as oke (< OK), la (< like), or di we (< the way), e.g.

8. oke, a kOmen tu gE mEri. sOntan di gE we la fO mi tu ste gu wOn yia we he bifO goen sOmwE.

'Imagine that I am about to get married. Maybe my wife would want me to stay at home a whole year before I could leave [and go work on a ship].'

Friar Tuck 57-14-25

c) the statement of an obvious physical fact (usually involving speaker and/or hearer), as in (9), or, conversely, a statement involving speaker or hearer that is patently other-than-the-real-world in truth value, as in (10).

9. dEn wi hya, En? Eskyuz mi, a slap yu, "Pua!"

'Then we're here, eh? Pardon me, but I slap you, "Pow!"'

Lofo Shopkeeper 47-72-8

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distinction has been made between ef- and wEn-conditionals. The semantic difference between them (and between either of them and conditionals that begin with no overt conjunction) is by no means straightforward in Liberian English. wEn is perhaps not found at the basilectal end of the continuum; some speakers in the corpus do not use it. Nimba Watchman, for example, has 43 ef-conditionals and 2 0-conditionals but no wEn-conditionals. Porter has 20 ef-conditionals, one 0-conditional, and no wEn-conditionals.
10. yu wOn, yu wOn fam rish we tu is hapa.

'You alone, your farm extends all the way to East Harper.'

Surveyor 26-52-18

With regard to irrealis marking, the preliminary phase--through which the speaker "sets up" the example--is not overtly marked for irrealis. In contrast, the conclusions to the example (i.e. the speaker's reason for introducing the example) usually are marked for irrealis, e.g.

11. (Antecedent) oke, we O a en di tan hya. e hapEn da a bi loven e ge. yu no vEri wEl da a Em loven tu hE. dEn yu go tu wOk . . . En aprosh hE, dEn shi egri.
(Consequent) a we ná akyuz yu, En a we ná akyuz hE . . . ef a no da yu En hE loven, a we onli tE hE, "yu ná en ma sEvEs egen a des momE . . . yu me go."

(Antecedent) 'OK, imagine that we're all living in town here. I have a lover, and you know very well that she is my lover. You make a pass at her, and she consents.'
(Consequent) 'If I find out that the two of you are having an affair, I won't reproach you and I won't reproach her. When I find out, I will just tell her, 'You are not in my service at this moment. You may go.'"

Shorty 40-56-11

In other words, a hypothetical example is a protracted conditional. Each has a setting in which a world other than the real one is constructed. Then in each case events and states in this other world are presented. The setting is not marked for irrealis, but what occurs once the setting is defined ordinarily does take irrealis marking. In the analysis of the data, antecedents of hypothetical examples have been treated like antecedents of conditionals; that is,
they have been removed from the discussion of irrealis marking. The consequent clauses of hypothetical examples, on the other hand, have been treated like the consequent clauses of conditionals and are included in the discussion.

4.1.2.2 Dilemma Tales and Hypothetical Dilemmas

Folktales provide an example of irrealis events that speakers conventionally treat as realis; that is, verbs in folktales are ordinarily not marked as being irrealis. A subclass that provides something of an exception to this generalization comprises dilemma tales. In the same way, the generalizations that obtain for hypothetical examples must allow for the special class of hypothetical dilemmas. In the paragraphs that follow, an example first of a dilemma tale and then of a hypothetical dilemma will be presented.

While the corpus for this study consists primarily of interviews, the data also comprise several folktales. Of these, several are what folklorists, e.g. Bascom (1975), call dilemma tales. An example of a dilemma tale told by LoFa Laborer is given in (12):

LIZARD: wOn a.
LOFA LABORER: yu onli fayn wOn a. wEn yu kOm O, yu go ba, yu nó fayn n0da m0 egen. yu tra O di tri plesEz, e fe dE. hu ez di patekula pOsEn da yu we ge da wOn a tu?
LOFA LABORER: You're going somewhere: you have your wife and your mother and your sister. You are on the water. The three of them, those three women that you have, you have your wife, your sister, and your mother. While you are on the water, an eyeball drops out of the face of each of the three women and falls into the water. You the man dive into the water, but you only find one eye.
LIZARD: One eye.
LOFA LABORER: You only find one eye. When you come up, you go back under the water but you don't find either of the remaining eyeballs. Each woman tries the eyeball on, and it fits her. Which one of them will you give it to?

Such a tale forms the basis for a debate, members of the audience espousing the various points of view and arguing for them.

From the perspective of tense-modality-aspect, such tales are like the other folktales, i.e. told as if the events had actually occurred, until the concluding question is posed. The nature of the question varies. In some cases, the debate centers on the actions contained in the tale and focusses on the merits of various participants, e.g.

13. dEn en des kes, hu we di stupediEs emOn di tu pEsEn?
   'Then in this case, who was the stupider of the two?'
   Shorty 40-1-13

14. emOn diz tu pEsEn, hu de ba?
   'Of these two people, who acted worse?'
   Benson T 19-4-2

In others, though, the concluding question is like that in (12) above: it asks what action should be taken. In cases like (12), the debate that follows is, like the question that launched it, expressed in irrealis terms.
According to Bascom, "... dilemma tales are very popular in the area of Liberia and Sierra Leone..." (1975:13). More than simply a popular amusement, though, dilemma tales form the model for a particular rhetorical device called here a hypothetical dilemma. It comprises a hypothetical example that ends with the type of question found at the end of dilemma tales.

Hypothetical dilemmas are used frequently in argumentation in Liberia. A family quarrel between Lofa Shopkeeper and Lofa Laborer, for example, consists of a chain of them, each constructed of a narrative that ends with a "what-would-you-do-in-this-case" question that the speakers's antagonist must answer.

One of the hypothetical dilemmas that Lofa Shopkeeper poses for Lofa Laborer is given in (15):

15. LOFA SHOPKEEPER: wi a hya, yu no da di haws ez fO mi. oke. yu no ma waf, EnE so?
LOFA LABORER: yE.
LOFA SHOPKEEPER: O rayt. yu En ma waf, yO kEn tOk tugEda. bO a gE di haws, a gE di wumE. mi En yu ná tOken tugEda. a dön lak yu En yu nO lak mi, En ma waf ste tu ma hawz. yu we kOm tu di wumE bIkOz yu En hE tOken tugEda?

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123 Bascom distinguishes between dilemma tales and riddles. The latter have a fixed solution, while the former do not. Their use of tense-modality-aspect is the same, and I have have not distinguished between them here.
LOFA SHOPKEEPER: We are here, and you know that the house is mine. OK. You know my wife, don't you?
LOFA LABORER: Yeah.
LOFA SHOPKEEPER: All right. You and my wife are friendly and chat together. But it's my house and my wife, and you and I don't get along. Are you going to come visit the woman even though she is my wife and she stays in my house?

In hypothetical dilemmas, everything leading up to the question serves to create the other world and is parallel to the antecedent in a conditional. Then, the question—when it is like the one in (15), a "what-would-you-do-now" question—begins the consideration of what would occur in that world; as such, it parallels the consequent clause of a conditional. Thus, everything leading up to the question has been isolated and classed with antecedents of conditionals; the question and everything that follows have been placed within the general body of irrealis.\textsuperscript{12a}

\textsuperscript{12a} A special subset within irrealis involves temporal adverbial clauses, specifically those that begin with te (< till) or bif0 (< before). Irrealis events in te clauses do not display irrealis marking. There are 17 uses of te in the corpus; none show irrealis marking. A case can be made that the most basilectal speakers do not use te. Apart from that, the distribution of tokens is fairly even along the continuum. The uses of bif0 are more varied. While it can be used as a subordinate conjunction, it can also be used to mean 'then' and precede an independent clause, e.g.

a. des ples wi nó no. bif0, di ro, e kOva lak sOntan.

'This area we didn't know. And now the road, it was thick [with soldiers].'

Nimba Cook 64-14-4

The free use of bif0 to correspond to 'then' is perhaps highly basilectal. However, a construction of the form 'es S bif0 S'—in which 'bif0 S' is the main clause—appears to occupy a somewhat
4.2 MARKING IRREALIS

4.2.1 Potentiality and irrealis

Potentiality is expressed for most Liberian English speakers by kEn. Moreover, for most speakers a distinction exists between kEn and other irrealis forms. While the latter contain the prediction that an event or state will happen, the former merely asserts the possibility that the event or state could come to pass.

Where this distinction exists, kEn has been treated like other modals such as mO and shud: that is, its implicit irrealisness has been acknowledged, but it has been removed from the present discussion of "purer" irrealis marking. For some basilectal speakers, however, the distinction between potential and simple irrealis is not always in effect. In such cases kEn functions as an irrealis marker: it is not confined to expressing mere potential but rather is used to make the prediction that an event or state is likely to occur. The same evolution for ken (rather than kEn) from a potential marker to an irrealis marker has occurred in Tok Pisin. Laycock, describing the coastal and lowlands variety of Tok Pisin, and Wurm, describing the highlands variety, both identify the sequence ken + i + V as being a future construction, but they differ as to type of future involved.

wider range along the continuum. (wEn, Onte, and OnIEs can be used in this type of construction in the same way as ef.)

b. ef a feni we ma ha sku bifO a we meri.

Once I have finished high school, I will get married.

Nimba Vendor 16-8-3

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(With reference to i, Wurm says that it is "usually referred to as the predicate marker" (1971:13).) Laycock translates ken + i as "be about to," e.g.

New Guinea Coastal and Lowland Pidgin (Tok Pisin)

16. wonem taim yupela ken i go?

'When will you go?'

(1970:xxxi)

According to Wurm:

Verb forms preceded by ken + i indicate actions which will definitely take place at a future time. This form is very commonly used in Highlands Pidgin . . .

(1971:48)

Wurm presents (17) as an illustration of the role of ken + i:

New Guinea Highland Pidgins (Tok Pisin)

17. botol i ken i bruk.

'The bottle will certainly break.'

(1971:48)

Potential clauses and "simple irrealis" ones are alike in that what they describe is unrealized. The difference between the two lies in the strength of the prediction that each makes as to the likelihood of the event's occurrence. To demonstrate that kEn is used by some speakers as "simple irrealis" in Liberian English, it is necessary to show that the events or the states so marked are thereby predicted to occur (and not merely asserted to be possible). To illustrate the "simple irrealis" use of kEn, three examples will be presented. They will be discussed in some detail in order to establish that the

125 If the i is removed, ken no longer signals the future.
assertion of the likelihood of occurrence of the kEn-marked events is much stronger than mere potentiality.

a. Lofa Overseer. In 1918, a German gunboat arrived in the Monrovia harbor. Its captain sent an ultimatum to the Liberian President: "Hand the British and French consuls over to us, or we shall bombard the city." Lofa Overseer describes the events in this way:

18. de kOn, de sEni lEta f0 sali ken, de se, "yu m0 dravi di pipo wi go f0 wia hon. efi sali ken i no seni dEn, fr0 hya tu bi tu ok10 wi kEn fway f0 des tan hya."

'They [the Germans] came, and they sent a letter to [President] Charlie King, saying, "You must expel the people so that we can take them with us to Germany. If, Charlie King, you don't send them to us by two o'clock, we will start shelling your town."

Lofa Overseer 62-53-4

The Germans were not merely introducing the idea of "fighting"; they were announcing their determination to do so. In fact— as Lofa Overseer points out subsequently in his narrative— when the Liberian government did not surrender the consuls, the Germans shelled the harbor, killing one person.

b. Nimba Cook. Nimba Cook is the leader of a dance troupe that is touring Cape Mount County. He has a mutiny on his hands: the principal drummer and a dancer want to quit. The drummer has apparently disappeared. Nimba Cook tells the dancer:
19. "na y0 tu y0 we token aba go plawa te. efi wi me m0ni, wi divayd e, y0, a kEn ge y0 bi-bi m0ni."

"You two have talked on and on about leaving. When we make money and split it up, I will pay you really well."

Nimba Cook 65-57-8

Nimba Cook has not simply raised the possibility that he will pay the two men well. Rather, he has promised them that he will do so.

c. Nimba Watchman. Ten days after the 1980 coup, the military government executed thirteen leaders from the Tolbert regime. Nimba Watchman, whose job is at a Cabinet Ministry in Monrovia, is talking about the various Cabinet Ministers for whom he has worked. He mentions one extremely unpopular Minister who was no longer in office at the time of the coup:

20. hEluba-hEluba man dE, he! efi [X] ste da chia dE, pip. kEn ke, no go-kOn.

'That was quite a man there, heh! If [X] had still been in his Cabinet position at the time of the coup, they would have executed him. There's no two ways about it.'

Nimba Watchman 61-55-7

no go-kOn (literally, 'no go-come') at the end of Nimba Watchman's passage underscores his certainty that X would have been executed.

These examples have been introduced to show that, for some basilectal speakers, the semantic range of kEn extends beyond potentiality to encompass simple irrealis as well. Occurrences of kEn are often ambiguous as to whether they express potentiality or simple irrealis. A fairly conservative tack has been taken in deciding whether or not to include individual tokens in the present study of
simple irrealis. The only tokens included—and discussed in 4.2.2.1 and elsewhere—are ones that fall unambiguously into the "simple irrealis" category. (The use of kEn as a habitual/iterative marker is not relevant here.) Thus, it could well be that the present assessment underestimates the range and frequency of kEn as an irrealis marker. Even with the present metric, at least eight speakers use kEn in this way: Nimba Watchman, Nimba Cook, Nimba Vendor, Lofa Diamond Miner, Lofa Overseer, Lofa Laborer, Lofa Shopkeeper, and Mrs. Shopkeeper.\footnote{The conversation in which Lofa Shopkeeper, Lofa Laborer, and Lizard participate takes place on the porch of the Lofa Boiling Center, the bar that Lofa Shopkeeper and his wife operate at the front of their home. Mrs. Shopkeeper attempts from time to time to enter the conversation; these forays are the source of her data. She wants to participate in the conversation, but the men do not permit her to.} (In addition to these eight speakers, a ninth—Nimba Gardener—has several ambiguous examples of the use of kEn but no unmistakably irrealis ones.) Of these eight speakers, however, Nimba Watchman is the only one for whom kEn is the principal irrealis marker. The kEn-users all are Mande speakers. Seven of the eight come from either Lofa or Nimba (more than a hundred miles from the coast), and the eighth—Mrs. Shopkeeper—is married to one of the seven. The distribution of ken will be discussed further in 4.2.2.1.
4.2.2 Basic Irrealis and the Continuum

The irrealis marker go--used in other West African pidgins and creoles and widely used in the Caribbean as well--is also used in the Liberian basilect. But while the distribution of kEn is essentially limited to Mande speakers from Lofa and Nimba, go is used by both Mande and Kru speakers from all over Liberia. At the same time, we is the principal irrealis marker on the continuum, extending from basilect to acrolect, as the following tables show.\(^\text{127}\)

(Table 55 here)

The "All Other Speakers" in Table 55 are those speakers who use we as their sole basic irrealis AUX in the corpus. They are listed in Table 56.

(Table 56 here)

Every speaker on the continuum uses we. There are only four speakers--Nimba Watchman, Lofa Tapper, Ghana Steward, and Carpenter--who do not use it in a majority of instances. (Carpenter is a "Krumans"; after beginning his acquisition of English in Liberia, he worked on ships and briefly in Nigeria.) It seems as if we has worked progressively down the continuum so that it is now acquired quite basilectally. At the same time, it has also retained its sway over the acrolectal end of the continuum. wud is virtually unused in

\(^{127}\) Neither Lofa Diamond Miner nor Lofa Overseer has five basic irrealis tokens; for that reason, they have not been included in Table 55.

In addition to the forms listed in Table 55, Nimba Watchman has one occurrence of we kEn v.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>kEn</th>
<th>go</th>
<th>we</th>
<th>wud</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Vendor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Shopkeeper</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>172</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Laborer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Shopkeeper</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tapper</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Soldier</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Chef</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Musician</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(All Other Speakers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euclid</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Slim</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YGC</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Pekan</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ n \geq 5 \text{ tokens of basic irrealis} \]

Irrealis constructions in Liberian English, accounting for only 29 of the 2116 tokens in Table 55 and 56. (Tables 55 and 56 do not include past irrealis constructions; they are considered in 4.5.2. Even there, however, wud occurs only 5 times out of 238 tokens.)

With one exception, the focus in this chapter has been on inter-speaker variation to the exclusion of intra-speaker variation. That
## Table 56

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speakers with invariant use of we</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charlie 149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willie 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lizard 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bettee 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Gardener 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyor 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friar Tuck 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bricklayer 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisherman 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananse 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort 27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$n \geq 5$

is, the data have not been examined with the end of determining which linguistic features favor an acrolectal or, alternatively, a basilectal marker in a given situation. That is, unlike in Chapter 2 where Standard English past-tense inflection was shown to be more likely for speakers' punctual forms than for their non-punctual forms, no links have been established here. The one exception involves non-past counterfactuals. (Past counterfactuals are discussed in 4.5.2.) The pattern that repeats itself from speaker to speaker is the tendency to mark non-past counterfactuals with the most acrolectal marker available to the speaker. That is, a speaker like Nimba Cook—who uses kEn, go, and we—will mark counterfactuals with we.
For most speakers, we is both their most acrolectal marker and their most frequently used marker. Thus, their use of we for counterfactuals is hardly remarkable. In contrast to them, though, is a speaker like Lofa Tapper, who uses go for his 12 non-counterfactual tokens and we for his 1 counterfactual token. In the entire corpus, of the 37 non-past counterfactual forms marked for irrealis, 31 are marked with the speaker's most acrolectal form. (Of the six exceptions, 4 involve V-en or goen V forms.)

The link between non-past counterfactuals and speakers' more acrolectal range is repeated for negative counterfactuals as well. Here there are but six tokens, but every one of them conforms to the generalization being made.

To return to a consideration of the position of speakers along the continuum: in the terminology of Washabaugh (1977), Liberian English speakers have by and large avoided the basilect without fully acquiring the acrolect. That is, if one thinks of the use of kEn or go as being basilectal, the undifferentiated use of we (undifferentiated between future and conditional) as mesolectal, and the differentiation of we from wud as acrolectal, the acquisition of the mesolectal form occurs very early on (very near the basilectal end

---

128 In the case of two speakers, there is variation as to the marking of counterfactual forms. In those cases the most acrolectal form is used exclusively for counterfactuals, and the next most acrolectal form is used both for counterfactuals and non-counterfactuals. This type of variation is consistent with the claims made about counterfactuals and the acrolectal end of a speaker's range; consequently, examples from these two speakers have been counted as illustrations of the point being made rather than as counterexamples to it.
of the continuum), but the acquisition of the acrolectal distinction between types of irrealis still occurs very late (near the acrolectal end of the continuum).

Two aspects of the irrealis system as represented by Tables 55 and 56 deserve comment. The first is the relation of kEn and go, and the second is the acquisition of wud.

4.2.2.1 KEN and GO

As noted above, the kEn-users are primarily Mande speakers from Lofa and Nimba. go-users, on the other hand, come from all over the country. (The only counties not represented in their number are Montserrado--the site of Monrovia--and Maryland. The latter's omission surely represents a gap in the data; perhaps the former's omission does too.) There are both Mande and Kru speakers in their number.

There are two likely hypotheses for the current distribution of kEn. One is that it represents an innovation in the Lofa-Nimba region, i.e. for speakers in the Lofa basilect. The other is that it is an old form that has now disappeared from the rest of the country.\textsuperscript{129} However plausible the innovation hypothesis may be,

\textsuperscript{129} A difference should be pointed out between the group of speakers linked to the Lofa basilect in the discussion of past punctual in 2.3 and the kEn-users discussed in the present section. Within the present group of speakers, the heart of the Lofa basilect outlined in 2.3 is the four retired tappers who had returned to Borkeza, their home in Lofa County. Of the Lofa/Nimba speakers remaining on the coast, only Nimba Gardener--who had been in Monrovia less than three years at the time of the recording--patterns with the Lofa basilect. (Nimba Cook and Nimba
evidence from Grade (1892) argues that the use of kEn as a future marker is long-standing. Grade's article, "Das Neger-Englisch an der westküste von Afrika," describes the speech of "die arbeitstäme der küsten neger" (1892:365). Presumably, what Grade is describing, then, is late nineteenth-century Kru Pidgin English. In a description of the tenses of "Neger-Englisch," Grade identifies go as the future AUX (1892:384). In a subsequent section on AUX's, however, he says that Standard English will and shall can be "replaced" by can, and he illustrates this point with the following example:

Neger-Englisch [Kru Pidgin English?]

21. him can die.

'He will die.'

(Grade 1892:384)

Grade's description of go as a marker of future tense but of can as the equivalent of will and shall seems contradictory. The most likely explanation is that go and can were in variation. Then, in the almost one hundred years that have elapsed since Grade's description,
kEn (can) has disappeared from the Liberian coast but has persevered in the Lofa and Nimba regions of the interior.

Separating kEn from go geographically, i.e. with regard to its contemporary distribution, might help to explain why some kEn-speakers show kEn/we variation and use go minimally or not at all. For the people of the Liberian interior, contact with any variety of Liberian English is overwhelmingly a twentieth-century phenomenon, beginning only with the government's attempts at the beginning of the century to assert control over the region in order to legitimize its claims to it. Then, from the early years of the century through to 1960, people in the interior had contact with Liberian English either because they were soldiers or tappers or because they had contact with them. The contact with a more acrolectal form of English was largely confined to contact with the coastal basilect. (That the coastal basilect is more acrolectal than the Lofa-Nimba one is argued in 2.3.5 and elsewhere in the present work.) In the 1960's, however, the government began extending social services to the interior. Motor roads extended into the interior counties. The American government built a chain of elementary schools along the major roads. The children who attended these schools were exposed to a variety of Liberian English more acrolectal than any that had formerly been widespread in the interior. Even if most communication between these children and their elders was conducted in their mother tongue, a form of more acrolectal English was present in the community, a form in which we and not go was the irrealis marker. This presence of a more acrolectal variety of
English (one in which we is used and not kEn or go) may account for the fact that there is variation between kEn and we as well as variation between kEn and go.

4.2.2.2 WUD

At the other end of the continuum from kEn is wud, whose use is infrequent even among the most acrolectal of speakers. Undoubtedly a major reason for this is that the operation of phonotactic principles in Liberian English serves to minimize if not virtually eliminate the basis for a salient distinction between we and wud. The push towards CV syllables is even stronger in grammatical words than in lexical ones. At the same time, this push is stronger on stops than on fricatives. Thus, the final segment in wud is a prime candidate for deletion.\footnote{The addition of a final vowel is a highly basilectal phenomenon; because its use is confined to the acrolect, wud is not likely to undergo such a process. The simplification of word-final -el to e (wel → we) is a historical fact. An illustration of it is this pun on Samuel K. Doe's name, popular immediately after the 1980 coup:

a. "samwE ke do."
   "no, samwE ke t0wO."

   ""Samuel K. Doe."
   '"No, Samuel killed Tolbert.""}

Moreover, the strong tendency towards assimilation of the vowel in we to the preceding rounded glide vitiates still further any contrast between we and wud.
When wud is used, it occurs most frequently in politeness formulas, e.g.

22. JVS: wE du yu w0n tu go?
CALVIN: a wud lak tu go tu marovia.

JVS: Where do you want to go?
CALVIN: I would like to go to Monrovia. Calvin 27-2-1

23. wE, a wud se wek en labiria tek s0ntan e tufo stEn, yu no, s0ntan ez dOn en e fESteveti we, En s0ntan ez dOn en e m0nEn we.

'Well, I would say that there are two aspects to wakes in Liberia. Sometimes it's festive, and sometimes it's mournful.'
Settler Peken 4-1-1

In the entire corpus, there are 28 occurrences of wud in non-past contexts. Of these, 22 indicate politeness or tentativeness: 9 are a wud se, 7 are a wud lak, and 4—all from Richard as interviewer—are wud yu k0mpE 'would you compare'. The distribution of wud use by speaker is given in Table 57. As the table makes clear, apart from Settler Slim the only speakers who use wud at all are those who have gone at least as far as junior high school.

(Table 57 here)

The distribution of wud suggests that it is first acquired in these politeness formulae. The formulae themselves are used with we across a still less acrolectal range, e.g.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness</th>
<th>Conditional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euclid</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sett. Slim</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sett. Peken</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YGC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. *a we lak yu i sOn.*

'I'd like you to eat some.'

Fisherman 11-9-2

Then, more acrolectally, *wud* replaces *we*, as in (22) and (23).

As the paucity of *wud* tokens attests, *wud* is not widely used even at the acrolectal extreme of the continuum. The Standard English distinction between predictive conditionals and hypothetical ones--by which *we* and *wud* mark a difference in the level of the speaker's expectation as to the likelihood of an event's occurrence--is not found in Liberian English.

### 4.2.3 Immediate Irrealis

*kEn*, *go*, *we*, and *wud* do not exhaust the list of irrealis markers. A second set comprises the AUX's *komen* and *goen* and the verb suffix *-En*, e.g.
25. sEns do pipo kOmen tu go na, a dón no wa rio w0k a go tek.

'Because those people are about to leave, I really don't know what other employment I will find.'

Nimba Vendor 16-2-16

26. a kEn se dan hya, de se, "de goen ple des so-so ples o."

'When I'm sitting down here, sometimes they come and say, "They're going to dance and sing at such and such a place."'

Rally Time 54-6-13

27. yu kOn tumoro m0nen, wi staten defrEn j0b owa dE.

'Come tomorrow morning; we're starting a different job over there.'

Bricklayer 25-60-27

Each of the three markers signals a greater immediacy, a greater link between the future and the present than is indicated by the "basic irrealis" AUX's. Having two future markers, one of them signalling immediacy, is a characteristic of many Liberian languages—including Klao (Singler 1979a:5), Kpelle (Thach 1981:82), and Loma (Dwyer 1981:85). All three sources label the phenomenon "immediate future." Klao uses a form of 'come' as its immediate future, Kpelle uses a form of 'go,' and Loma uses forms of both 'come' and 'go.'

kOmen. While it is the case that kOmen, goen, and V-en all mark immediate irrealis in Liberian English, their semantic ranges are not identical.\textsuperscript{122} kOmen marks incipient events. The link to the present

\textsuperscript{122} The discussion of kOmen as a marker of immediate irrealis focusses
of the irrealis event in this case is temporal: it is about to happen.

28. di tan a no masE, di smo-smo ten a de du e, a no, e bi hin a kOmen tu t0 na.

'From as far back as I can remember, all the little things that I used to do that I can still remember, that's what I'm about to tell you.'

Nimba Cook 64-1-6

29. "bo a kOmen seN duN jO5 na, me; se dan."

"But I'm gonna send them right now, man; sit down [and wait while I get them ready]."

Charles 7-56-6

30. a kOmen tu pu s0nkana stori we se.

'I'm about to tell you a tale that has singing in it.'

Welldigger 12-6-8

As examples (28) and (29) illustrate, it is not unusual for the temporal adverb na (< now) to co-occur with kOmen, a fact that underlines the closeness of the action in a kOmen-marked irrealis

on kOmen (tu) V constructions. Example (25) provides an example of this construction. In contrast, where the (only) verb of the clause is kOmen (the stem kOm plus the suffix -en), the immediate irrealis marking is taken to be the suffix -en. Example (34), presented below, provides an example of kOmen as V-en (rather than as an AUX):

34. "O ra. a kOmen dE. tE hi hi mO tra hi bEs, i fan e bele go f0 mi."

"All right. I will come there. Tell her she should try her best to find a billy goat to send to me."

Nimba Watchman 56-53-23

kOmen in Example (34) is like staten in Example (27). The distinction between AUX kOmen and main verb kOm + -en applies to AUX goen and main verb go + -en as well.
clause to the moment of speaking. The use of kOmen to mean 'about to' is near-categorical: in only 2 of 23 occurrences does it not carry this sense. (4.5.2 below addresses the role of (we) kOmen in past irrealis contexts.)

goen. The location of kOmen on the continuum is discussed below; only a restricted number of speakers use it. Others express this same notion of incipiency with goen. For example, when Lofa Musician is about to begin to play the "musical bow" (a type of mouthbow), he says:

> 31. a goen tu ple sOn myusek0 enstrumE tunay wesh de k0 myusek0 bo.

'I'm going to play a musical instrument tonight that is called a "musical bow."'

Lofo Musician 42-56-9

Quirk et al. note that be going to in Standard English is used for "future fulfillment of the present" (1972:87). They break this down into two types: "future of present intention" and "future of present cause" (1972:88). Liberian English goen carries the same type of force. (32) illustrates future of present intention:

> 32. "a goen tu sut en di pi."

"I'm going boar-hunting [on Monday]."

Lofo Tailor 63-54-20

Future of present cause refers to events or states that are "already 'on the way'" (1972:88). "On the way" describes goen, as (31) illustrates. The notion of future of present cause encompasses incipient events; thus, this use of goen overlaps with the use of kOmen.
It was noted above (in 4.1.1) that "simple irrealis"--when used
with a first-person subject--often expresses the speaker's intention
(as opposed to the more usual predictive function of simple irrealis).
Thus, in cases where goen is used with reference to the future of
present intention, the semantic difference between a goen V and a we V
is small.

In American English, going to seems to be undergoing both semantic
bleaching (from "future fulfilment of the present" to unmarked
irrealis) and phonological reduction (from going to to gonna and
beyond). Except in the case of conditionals (discussed presently) and
except for two fairly acrolectal speakers (Shorty and YGC), the uses
of goen in the corpus fit quite clearly in one--or both--of the
subcategories posited by Quirk et al. Table 58 displays this
distribution.

(Table 58 here)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>present cause</th>
<th>present intention</th>
<th>conditionals</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(When a token implied both present cause and present intention, it was
counted as present cause.)
Conditionals excepted, the data lend themselves readily to compartmentalization into subcategories of future fulfilment of the present. If goen V constructions so often fit into one of the categories specified by Quirk et al., this argues against the notion of semantic bleaching in the case of Liberian English goen. Likewise, apart from the dropping of tu, there is no evidence of phonological reduction.\textsuperscript{133} goen is always clearly disyllabic. Moreover, with regard to sheer numbers, the use of goen remains quite infrequent, 53 instances compared with 1992 instances of we. Thus, it seems safe to say that goen has not begun to supplant we or in any other way move into the realm of primary (as opposed to immediate) irrealis in Liberian English.\textsuperscript{134}

\textsuperscript{133} Perhaps it is wrong to speak of the dropping of tu. Instead, it may be more appropriate to speak of the insertion of tu in those cases where it appears. At any rate, tu occurs in 79 percent of all occurrences of goen. If am/is/are is not present, tu is present 67 percent (32/48) of the time; if am/is/are is present, tu occurs 97 percent (31/32) of the time.

\textsuperscript{134} Quirk et al. note further with regard to be going to that it "is not generally used in the main clause of conditional sentences"(1972:88). This tendency obtains in Liberian English as well—and extends to k\textipa{om}en, too. The two—goen V and k\textipa{om}en V—account for 4.2 percent of all non-conditionals (92/2170) but only 1.5 percent of all conditionals (10/687). (All 10 of the conditional tokens in question are of goen V.) Moreover, in the cases where goen V does appear in the consequent of a conditional clause, the description of the semantic functions of goen given above do not apply, as the following example illustrates:

a. fada his\textipa{e}, hi k\textipa{om}, hi goen \textipa{wok} fr\textipa{on} hya tu gr\textipa{en} s\textipa{es}.

'Even Father, if he came here, he would walk from here to Grand Cass.'

Brickmaker 25-6-2

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V-en. The use of the _en suffix as a habitual/iterative marker was discussed in 2.3. Additionally, it marks irrealis, as in (33) and (34).  

33. wi we sun bi haven en0da baftesm, bik0z wi opEnen rivavo tunay . . . En wi klo0en . . . On s0nde.

'We will soon be having another baptism, because we're going to open a revival tonight and we'll close it on Sunday.'

Settler Slim 49-19-23

34. "O ra. a k0men dE. tE hi hi m0 tra hi bEs, i fan e bele go f0 m1."

"All right. I will come there. Tell her she should try her best to find a billy goat to send to me."

Nimba Watchman 56-53-23

The description of the uses of _goen given above, i.e. to link the future to the present, apply to irrealis V-en forms as well. (33) expresses future of present cause, while (34) expresses future of present intention. The two forms, _goen V and V-en, overlap as to meaning; at the same time, there are differences in distribution when the main verb is go or k0m, as Table 59 indicates:

(Table 59 here)

That is, when go or k0m is the main verb, the V-en form gets used to express future fulfillment of the present, and the _goen V form does not. (The _en forms of go and k0m account for nearly two-thirds of the irrealis V-en forms in the corpus (104/159).)

In addition to the 159 V-en forms, there are also 22 we V-en forms, 32 we bi V-en forms, 4 go V-en forms, and 1 go bi V-en form. In these cases the preposed AUX has been assumed to mark irrealis and _en to mark aspect.

348
TABLE 59

Distribution of *goen go* vs. *go-en*, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>n</th>
<th>goen V</th>
<th>V-en</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kOn</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the immediate irrealis markers already noted, there is also the marker gOn, e.g.

35. a se, "a, sesta, a gOn tra En liv ma cheken."

'I said, "Ah, sister, I'm gonna try and leave my chickens alone."'

Settler Carolina 20-55-17

It is readily identified by Liberians as a feature of Settler speech and has a Black English Vernacular cognate. In the corpus, the three non-acrolectal Settlers all use it, Settler Slim and Settler Carolina three times each and Settler Albert once. However, so too do Lofa Musician and Nimba Watchman, using it once each. These exceptions notwithstanding, because the principal criterion for the use of gOn is membership in the Settler class (with location on the continuum secondary) and because it occurs infrequently in the corpus, gOn has been omitted from the discussion that follows of the placement of immediate irrealis markers on the continuum.
4.2.4 Immediate Irrealis and the Continuum

An element of the Standard English use of going to and V-ing is the inflected use of be to mark person-number agreement with the subject. In Liberian English this use of bi is a feature ofacrolectal speech. It occurs with goen and V-en. It does not occur with kOmen.\(^{136}\) (The Standard English target for goen V is be going to V, but there is no Standard English target for kOmen V.) Thus, along the continuum of immediate irrealis forms, one may speak of five forms: kOmen V, goen V, bi goen V, V-en, and bi V-en.

Table 60 maps the distribution of this type of irrealis:

(Table 60 here)

The story that this table tells is this: at the basilectal end of the continuum, speakers use V-en and, for incipient future, kOmen V. More mesolectally, goen V is acquired and then kOmen V drops out. Also in the mesolect, the variable use of bi with V-en and goen V is introduced. Only for the most acrolectal speakers, though, do bi forms outnumber 0 forms.

The synopsis just given is basically sound. There are, to be sure, some "misplaced" speakers, most prominently the basilectal Ghana Steward. The one problem with the table that cannot be attributed to idiosyncracies involves kOmen. The category of kOmen-users does include highly basilectal speakers: Nimba Watchman, Nimba Cook, Lofa Shopkeeper, Nimba Vendor--kEn-users all. But the category also

\(^{136}\) There is a single exception to this statement: that is, kOmen takes a form of bi once out of 22 occurrences.
TABLE 60

Immediate Irrealis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>kOmen</th>
<th>V-en</th>
<th>goen</th>
<th>bi</th>
<th>V-en</th>
<th>bi</th>
<th>goen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Shopkeeper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brickmaker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Slim</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YGC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n ≥ 5

bi stands for ez/Em/a
('is'/'am'/'are')

includes two upper mesolectic speakers, Charles and Bold Dollar.

Moreover, though the fact that she has insufficient output (fewer than 5 uses of immediate irrealis forms) caused her exclusion from Table 60, Patience, an acrolectic speaker, also uses kOmen. The distributional evidence suggests that there are two ranges for kOmen, a basilectal one and an upper mesolectic-acrolectic one. Arguing that there are two ranges for kOmen does not account for them. Indeed, the reasons for the split in distribution--or, more precisely, the recurrence of kOmen in the acrolect--remain undiscovered. At the same
time, it should be noted that there is a parallel between the split ranges of kOmen distribution and the split ranges of high feni use. (The latter is discussed in 3.3.2.) For feni, there is a basilectal group who use it frequently and an urban mesolectal group who also do so.

4.3 IRREALIS NEGATION

The following primary negative irrealis forms obtain in the corpus:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{nó kEn} & 3 & \text{we ná} & 224 \\
\text{nó go} & 34 & \text{wón} & 52 \\
\text{nó we} & 9 & \text{wún} & 2 \\
\end{array}
\]

kEn 47

In each case, nó represents [nó] and [nó]. we ná encompasses [wená]/[wenó]/[wenó] as well as [wenéwá] (< will never). (As noted in 1.4.4, negative markers in Liberian English always display a raised pitch. kEn and its negative counterpart kÉn are identical segmentally: only pitch distinguishes them (cf. Singler 1981c).)

If kÉn is removed from the data set, the progression along the continuum from basilect to acrolect is straightforward. At the basilectal end, nó is placed before the most basilectal irrealis marker, kEn. Then, along the continuum, nó is placed before progressively less basilectal irrealis markers: first nó go, then nó we. Next the basilectal order nó + IRR gives way to IRR + nó. This in turn gives way to single complex morphemes that express both negation and irrealis. (The arguments for considering wón more acrolectal than we ná are given below.) Between nó we and we ná,
there is a cutoff point: forms that fall to the basilctal side of this point are non-Standard, and those that fall to the acrolectal side are Standard.\(^{137}\)

4.3.1 KÉN

A discussion of KÉN requires first of all a demonstration that it does in fact mark irrealis negation. Two examples illustrate this.

a. Lofa Tailor. At the end of a folktale in which an imprudent son has been saved by his mother's timely warning, the son tells her:

36. "di ten yu tÉli `mi, wÉ, yu nó 1a, bO a kÉn du sO
   en egen."

   'The warning that you gave me, well, you were right; I
   will never do it again.'

   Lofa Tailor 63-55-8

b. Nimba Cook. A soldier has been murdered at the Firestone Plantation. Other soldiers have gone there to find the murderer and are harassing all the tappers. The soldiers arrest a suspect; Nimba Cook speculates:

37. se, "o. wEn di plawa fEni na, de kÉn trOwO wi egen."

   'I said, "Oh. When this case dies down, they
   won't/can't harass us anymore.'

   Nimba Cook 64-15-4

In order to argue that 'can't harass' is a suitable gloss in (37), one must ignore conditions in Liberia in the 1950's. Then, soldiers always had the power and the potential to harass people from the

\(^{137}\) Actually, the cutoff point is less abrupt than this inasmuch as we nà includes [wenÔ] and [wenô].
interior: it was not conditional, and it did not require provocation.

Presumably, the original basilectal pidgin irrealis negative form was nò kEn (not kÉn). Givón observes that negative elements tend to be more conservative in undergoing change than their affirmative counterparts (1979:121-124). This observation leads to the prediction that nò kEn would be more widely used than kÉn (in that the most basilectal range of the continuum would disappear more slowly for negative forms than affirmative ones). This prediction is not borne out. What is proposed here is that the presence in more acrolectal Liberian English of kÉn--throughout most of the continuum as both a negative potential and negative habitual-iterative marker--provided the source for its development as a negative irrealis marker in the basilect. That is, it was perceived to be a negative form morphologically related to kÉn and yet more acrolectal than, say, nò kEn. It is, after all, a Standard English form—that the meaning of the Standard English form is not negative irrealis is incidental. Indeed, as used here, kÉn is like the most acrolectal forms on the negation continuum in that a single morpheme expresses both irrealis and negation. For these reasons, then, nò kEn has given way to kÉn, and the predicted greater pervasiveness of nò kEn has been transferred to kÉn. It is certainly the case that kÉn has a wider geographic range than kÉn. Whereas kÉn was limited to Mande speakers and almost

---

10 Givón's statement is with reference to what he terms "expressive/elaborative" change, as opposed to "simplificatory" change (1979:121). The Liberian English change under discussion would be of the "expressive/elaborative" type.
entirely confined to Nimba and Lofa, kën is used by Mande and Kru speakers alike and shows up all over the country: 133

(Table 61 here)

TABLE 61

The Users of kën

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>kën</th>
<th>nó kën</th>
<th>nó go</th>
<th>nó we</th>
<th>we ná</th>
<th>wón</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Shopkeeper</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Diam. Miner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brickmaker</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Gardener</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rally Time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananse</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where, then, does kën belong on the continuum? The evidence at hand argues for placing it at the cutoff point suggested above between non-Standard and Standard forms. That is, among the principal negative irrealis forms, it is more acrolectal than non-Standard forms yet less acrolectal than Standard negative irrealis forms. Table 62 gives the results of that placement:

(Table 62 here)

133 kën-users Lofa Laborer and Nimba Vendor do not use kën as a negative irrealis marker; Mrs. Shopkeeper has no negative irrealis tokens. Nimba Watchman uses nó kën once; Painter uses nó kën once and nó kën once.
TABLE 62

Negative Irrealis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>nó</th>
<th>nó</th>
<th>nó</th>
<th>kēn</th>
<th>na</th>
<th>wón</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welldigger</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Shopkeeper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Gardener</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Laborer</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bettee</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Vendor</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willie</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lizard</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ n \geq 5 \]

The table reveals a sharp division, the speakers falling into two groups. In the more basilectal group, speakers use only nó IRR v. (There is but a single exceptional token, Nimba Watchman’s kēn.) In the more acrolectal group, speakers limit themselves to Standard English forms. (Again, there but a single exceptional token, this time Lofa Shopkeeper’s nó we.)
4.3.2 WÔN

The range for a given speaker is hypothesized to be a function of many variables, one of which is formality/informality. It is also this factor that is proposed as playing a major role in the differences in the corpus between Charlie and Charles, Dick and Richard, Willie and William, and Gus and Augustus, each pair of "speakers" being a single individual with the nicknamed "speaker" representing less formal data. In Standard English contractions are seen as an index of informality. In Liberian English this may sometimes be the case as well. (In the case of copulas, however, Singler (1980) argues that Liberian English is like Black English Vernacular (Labov (1969)): deletion rather than contraction corresponds to Standard English contraction.) In the case of we ná and wôn, it is the latter that is more acrolectal and--one could argue--more formal. If morphological simplicity is a feature of pidgins and creoles and if relative morphological complexity is a feature of the superstrate, then the fact that wôn is morphologically complex may contribute to its being more acrolectal than we ná.

Why wôn might be more acrolectal than we ná has been argued for; what remains is to demonstrate that such is, in fact, the case. General support for this claim comes from Table 62 above. That is, with reference to speakers with tokens in the final two columns, those speakers who use wôn tend to be more acrolectal a group than those who use we ná: they tend to appear more acrolectally on the other implicational scales in this and other chapters, and they comprise most of the speakers with ten or more years of Western schooling.
A look at Lizard's speech provides further evidence: his data come from a session at Lofa Shopkeeper and Mrs. Shopkeeper's bar, the Lofa Boiling Center. At the time the recorder is turned on, only Lizard, Lofa Shopkeeper, and I are present. Lofa Shopkeeper does not participate initially; the conversation is between Lizard and me. In that conversation Lizard has 3 occurrences of negative irrealis: he uses won each time. Then Lofa Laborer returns. The conversation shifts immediately from one between Lizard and me to one involving Lofa Laborer, Lizard, and Lofa Shopkeeper. (Other speakers join in later.) Throughout the rest of the session, Lizard uses we ná 13 times and won once. In other words, when he is speaking to an American stranger, Lizard uses won; when he is speaking to his intimates, he uses we ná. (Lizard's one use of won in talking with his cronies is in a counterfactual; as the discussion in 4.2.2 illustrates, counterfactuals tend to take the most acrolectal form in the speaker's repertoire.)

4.3.3 WÚN

It was shown in 4.2.2.2 that, for positive forms, politeness/tentativeness constructions using we appear in the mesolect, then give way more acrolectally to wud. It is only still more acrolectally that wud comes to be used for conditionals. The same holds true for negative forms. First (least acrolectally), the politeness/tentativeness markers appear with won (as in (38)); then won emerges in this capacity (39), and finally won comes to be used for conditionals (40).
38. a wón kOnseda dE Es e gu frÉn tu mi; hi e bÉ frÉn.

'I wouldn't consider him to be a good friend; he's a bad friend.'

Charles 8-52-8

39. JVS: du yu wOn tu ste en marovia wEn yu fenesh we skulen?
WILLIAM: a wún man tu go EniwÉ.

JVS: Do you want to stay in Monrovia when you finish your schooling?
WILLIAM: I wouldn't mind going anywhere.

17-6-11

40. ef yu go tu nenba, di tepiko pipo dÉ ste en nenba wún bi ebo tu tÉ yu so mOsh eba marovia.

'If you went to Nimba, the man in the street there wouldn't be able to tell you the latest news from Monrovia.'

Settler Peken 5-6-4

With regard to wud and wún and the continuum, the difference between them is that the progression for negative forms occurs even more acrolectally than that for positive forms, as the paucity of data in Table 63 indicates.

(Table 63 here)
TABLE 63

The Uses of wùn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness</th>
<th>Conditionals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wùn</td>
<td>wùn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Slim</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avogadro</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Peken</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.4 Negative Immediate Irrealis

The data involving the negative counterparts of kÔmen V, goen V, and V-en are too limited to allow any strong conclusions to be drawn from them. There are no tokens of NEG kÔmen V whatsoever. Of the 24 tokens of (bi) NEG goen V, a single speaker--Shorty--is responsible for 19 of them. (bi) NEG V-en is used by more speakers than NEG goen, but its distribution too is limited.

The infrequency of negative immediate irrealis forms reflects a tendency found elsewhere in Liberian English (e.g. completive/intensive/perfect forms), in other Liberian languages, and elsewhere, viz. fewer semantic distinctions obtain for negative forms than for their affirmative counterparts. As Givón notes:

It is widely observed that the number of tense-aspects in the affirmative paradigm is almost always larger but never smaller than in the negative.

(1979:72)
4.4 VARIATION OUTSIDE THE CONTINUUM

The data at hand provide confirmation for the concept of the continuum. Ranging speakers on an implicational scale illustrates the effectiveness of this model for expressing the steps along the continuum from kEn to wud. While the scale for immediate irrealis is more problematic, here too the notion of the continuum holds up. In this section, two phenomena are mentioned whose relation to the continuum is more complex. In the first, the relationship of basic irrealis to immediate irrealis, the relevance of the continuum is marginal at best. In the second, the occurrence of ₀-marked irrealis forms, the effect of the continuum is subtle. The link between placement on the continuum and this phenomenon cannot be reduced to a simple linear relationship; still, a correlation is there.

4.4.1 Basic versus Immediate Irrealis

Its problems notwithstanding, the immediate irrealis scale reflects a valid continuum, and its span does parallel that of the basic irrealis continuum from the least basilectal speakers to the most acrolectal ones. What does not show, though, is the variation in speakers as to how much of the time speakers use immediate irrealis rather than basic irrealis. A table like Table 60 can only account for what use there is of immediate irrealis forms; it cannot address the question of extent of a speaker's use of such forms. In fact, the variation is considerable. Settler Slim has 15 immediate irrealis forms out of his 31 tokens of marked irrealis (48.4%). Others who use immediate irrealis frequently are the following:
Roberts T  4/9  44.4%
Settler Albert  3/8  37.5%
Nimba Watchman  13/41  31.7%
Settler Carolina  3/11  27.3%

At the other extreme are the speakers whose output contains no immediate irrealis forms whatsoever:

Lizard  0/61
Pastor  0/49
Euclid  0/43
Avogadro  0/26
Settler Peken  0/16
Benson T  0/15
Gedeh Gold Miner  0/14
Lofa Tapper  0/13
Calvin  0/9
Mrs. Shopkeeper  0/6

It can be assumed, of course, that a speaker varies amount of immediate irrealis use with context, but that factor alone seems inadequate as an explanation of the extent of variation from speaker to speaker in the sample. Furthermore, variation in extent of immediate-irrealis use seems not to be a function of location on the continuum: high use of immediate irrealis characterizes the output of the highly basilectal Nimba Watchman, the upper mesolectal Roberts T, and speakers in between. Similarly, non-use of immediate irrealis characterizes not only Lofa Tapper and Gedeh Gold Miner but also Euclid, Avogadro, and Settler Peken, and various intermediate speakers. It is possible, then, to eliminate a speaker's position on the continuum as the cause of inter-speaker variation in amount of immediate irrealis use, and contextual variation seems to be only part of the explanation. It is not clear where the rest of the explanation lies.
4.4.2 The Zero-Marking of Irrealis Verbs

In an "early" (Bickertonian) pidgin, irrealis would be signalled by temporal adverbs and the like, not by marking the verb. This makes for the prediction that even in an older pidgin like Liberian English, 0-marking would be greatest in the basilect. If any of the speakers in the sample are more accurately considered Liberian English "learners" than Liberian English "speakers" and if such speakers are most likely to be found in the basilect, then this provides another force that favors greater 0-marking in the basilect. Nevertheless, there is also a tendency towards 0-marking in the acrolect inasmuch as the target language, Standard English, permits 0-marking of irrealis forms. (1b) is repeated here as an illustration of that fact:

Standard English

1b. He goes to Abidjan on Monday.

(The relative infrequency of such sentences in Standard English suggests that acrolectal 0-marking will be relatively infrequent too.)

Two other factors favor 0-marking of irrealis forms. The first involves substratal influence with specific reference to the verb *se*. In both Mande and Kru languages in the region, the verb for 'say' is a defective verb: it cannot be marked for tense, modality, or aspect nor for negation. (Synonymous verbs are not defective; in order to express tense, modality, aspect, or negation, one of them is used.) In fact, with reference to positive irrealis clauses, *se* is 0-marked 60.2 percent of the time in the corpus (71/118); in contrast, the rest of the verbs in the corpus are 0-marked only 12.3 percent of the time.
Since substratal influence is hypothesized to be greater more basilectally, it is assumed that the 0-marking of *se* will be at its strongest in the basilect.

The remaining force that produces 0-marked irrealis forms is phonological. The phonetic reduction of *we* has as its logical endpoint *we*-deletion. That is, what has been counted as *we* in the present study comprises forms whose phonetic realization ranges from *we* itself to a mere rounding of the final vowel of the preceding word. If the rounding is lost, a 0-marked form results. This phonologically motivated appearance of surface 0-marked forms seems strongest in the mesolect, particularly in Monrovia. (Though this has not been verified experimentally, it does seem to be the case that the rate of speech is faster in Monrovia than elsewhere in the country. 0-realization of irrealis as a consequence of the operation of fast-speech rules on *we* would be consistent with that.)

When all these factors are taken together, they predict that 0-marking will be strongest in the basilect yet also provide motivation for 0-marking elsewhere in the continuum.

Table 64 shows the speakers with the highest rate of 0-marking:

(Table 64 here)

Two of the speakers—Surveyor and Nimba Gardener—are present in Table 64 because of their extremely high rate of *se* use. (When *se* is excluded, the rate of 0-marking for each of these two speakers drops below 15 percent.) In the case of Ghana Steward, his primary irrealis
TABLE 64

High Rate of Zero-Marking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>se</th>
<th>other verbs</th>
<th>overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 marked</td>
<td>0 marked</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyor</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Coal Miner</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Diamond Miner</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Gardener</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

 marker is go, and he displays a tendency to avoid go go. Most of his occurrences not only of 0-marked forms but also of we-marked forms involve go as the main verb:

(Table 65 here)

TABLE 65

Ghana Steward: go vs. Other Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>main verb:</th>
<th>other verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>irrealis</td>
<td>go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>marker:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When verbs other than go are considered, Ghana Steward's rate of 0-marked forms drops to 23.7 percent (18/76). Two of the remaining speakers in Table 64--Farmer and Ghana Coal Miner--have so few marked
irrealis tokens that they have been omitted from the previous discussion in this chapter. (Farmer's 3 marked tokens are we; Ghana Coal Miner's are go.) Still, from the overall evidence it is clear that they are basilectal speakers. Indeed, all the speakers in the table come from the basilect—whether lower (Nimba Watchman and Nimba Diamond Miner) or upper (Carpenter). However, while everyone with a high rate of 0-marking is a basilectal speaker, not every basilectal speaker has a high rate of 0-marking. Though it is tilted toward the acrolectal end of the scale, the list of speakers with no 0-marked forms ranges from basilectal speakers like Mrs. Shopkeeper to acrolectal speakers like Patience.

(Table 66 here)

**TABLE 66**

Speakers with no 0-marked irrealis forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Euclid</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisherman</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa Musician</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberts T</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Shopkeeper</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedeh Marketwoman</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = number of irrealis clauses

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The implicational relationship that exists between 0-marking and the continuum is that output that displays a relatively high rate of 0-marking will be basillectal. The relationship is not reversible; basillectal output will not necessarily display a high rate of 0-marking.

Some speakers show both a general absence of 0-marking and a general absence of immediate irrealis forms. Euclid is the most striking example: he has 43 irrealis tokens; he uses we 42 times and wud once. With fewer tokens, Calvin does the same thing: 9 tokens, 8 uses of we, 1 of wud. Pastor and Fisherman are not far behind, Pastor with a 96.1 percent rate (49/51) of we-use and Fisherman with a 95.8 percent rate (23/24). The tables and implicational scales presented in this chapter make no statement as to whether speakers like Euclid are more or less acrolectal than Surveyor (with his 44.4 percent rate of 0-marking) or Roberts T (with his 44.4 percent rate of frequency of immediate irrealis forms). For now, the question remains unanswered.

4.5 THE INTERACTION OF IRREALIS WITH ASPECT AND TENSE

4.5.1 Past Irrealis

There are two primary environments in which past irrealis forms occur.

The first involves past counterfactuals, e.g.

41. ef a wa kOmen ke ma pa, e wa kOmen bi trObo. hi wa kOmen spoy di ho ten egen.

'If I had taken my father, there would have been trouble. He would have wrecked everything.'

Gus 3-4-20

The second involves future-in-the-past, e.g.

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42. hela se da i wa gOn dren ti en tala.

'Hitler said that he was going to drink tea in Tallah.'  
Eubilee 51-14-15

43. dEn shi to mi dE shi we ná bi ebo tu pu mi en sku.

'Then she told me that she would not be able to put me in school.'  
Bettee 55-1-8

Past counterfactuals can be either [+ ANTerior] or [- ANT]. All future-in-the-past constructions are [- ANT].148

Past irrealis marking in general will be surveyed; then, distinctions between future-in-the-past marking and counterfactual marking and between [+ ANT] counterfactuals and [- ANT] counterfactuals will be discussed.

For non-past irrealis, there is a distinction between primary irrealis (kEn, go, we, and wud) and immediate irrealis (kOmEn, goEn, and V-en). That distinction breaks down for past irrealis. For some speakers at least, immediate irrealis forms (with or without the past marking we) double as past irrealis markers. In 4.2.3 the observation by Quirk et al. as to the infrequency of be going to in conditionals in Standard English was shown to apply as well to the immediate

148 A sentence like the following can be ambiguous as to whether its irrealis clause is past or not:

a. hi se he n ten de we feneshe e.

'He said he didn't think they would finish it.'/'He said he doesn't think they will finish it.'  
Comfort 37-7-19

Only unambiguously past clauses have been considered to be future-in-the-past.
irrealis forms in Liberian English. At the same time, there were exceptions to this generalization, occurrences of *goen*, *komen*, and *ven* in conditionals, and these exceptions did not conform to the characterization of 'future fulfilment of the present.' To speak of the notion of immediate irrealis with regard to the past, one must adjust the reference point, moving it from the moment of speech to the moment of the event being discussed: in the case of (44), for example, the reference point is the night of the accident that Augustus is describing, specifically the moment when he decided not to remain at the dance.

44. b0 ef a kud liv na en dEnsEn h0, nobadi wo *goen tu* apEret On des ka.

'But if I had remained at the dance hall, there would have been no one on hand to fix the car.'

Augustus 1-55-8

In fact, however, there is no immediacy being signalled in (47). As such, this example illustrates a trend in past irrealis forms: that is, while the use of immediate irrealis forms (without the sense of future fulfilment of the present) is rare in conditionals in non-past environments, it occurs commonly in past irrealis conditional clauses. The justification for dividing non-past irrealis markers into basic (*kEn*, etc.) and immediate (*kOmen*, etc.) is the semantic distinction between the two groups. If for past irrealis forms this distinction fails to hold, then the justification for their separation disappears. The list of forms used in past irrealis clauses and the frequency of their occurrence are given in Table 67.

(Table 67 here)
TABLE 67

Markers of Past Irrealis

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kEn</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>kud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>kud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>kud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kOmen</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>kOmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goen</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-en</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>V-en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gOn</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>gOn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wud</td>
<td>hav</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(In addition there are 23 0-marked past irrealis clauses.)

Because of the relatively infrequent use in speech of past irrealis forms, the number of speakers with 5 or more tokens is small. The fifteen speakers within this group are presented in Table 68.

(Table 68 here)

As both tables make clear, we is the most commonly used irrealis marker in past constructions as well as non-past. Its use ranges from the basilect to upper mesolect. We gone, too, is frequently used—in the mesolect. At the same time, the wealth of forms used to mark past irrealis and the questionable legitimacy of keeping basic irrealis markers separate from immediate irrealis markers in past constructions restrict the insights that can be gleaned from Table 68. However, if forms are grouped together, as in Table 69, a sharply defined pattern does emerge.

(Table 69 here)

---

141 Euclid—whose non-past irrealis output was, with a single exception, invariantly we—has three past irrealis tokens: all of them are we.
TABLE 68

Distribution of Past Irrealis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>w</th>
<th>ø</th>
<th>w</th>
<th>w</th>
<th>ø</th>
<th>ø</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nimba Watchman  | 4 | 1 | 1 |
Ghana Steward   | 8 | 1 |
Pastor          | 2 | 5 |
Nimba Cook      | 6 | 4 |
Bettee          | 7 | 1 |
Aesop           | 3 | 1 | 1 |
Augustus        | 1 | 3 | 3 |
Builder         | 5 | 2 |
Tubman T        | 5 | 2 |
Chauffeur       | 2 | 1 | 2 |
Settler Slim    | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
Charlie         | 1 | 3 | 4 |
Shorty          | 7 | 5 | 24 | 11 | 1 |
Gus             | 2 | 16 | 2 | 1 |
Bold Dollar     | 7 | 12 | 1 |

n ≥ 5

It is necessary to justify the groupings in Table 69. Before that is done, however, two forms require comment: kOmen/wa kOmen and kud.

kOmen. The schizophrenic character of kOmen in non-past environments was diagnosed in 4.2.4: it is the most basilectal of immediate irrealis markers, yet it is used in the mesolect as well. With regard to past irrealis, the split is mostly resolved. Basilectal speakers (Nimba Watchman and Nimba Cook) use it by itself; mesolectal speakers (Aesop, Bettee, and Augustus) use it with wa. The
TABLE 69
Combining Groups of Past Irrealis Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>kEn, go</th>
<th>we, gone</th>
<th>we kOmen</th>
<th>wa V-en</th>
<th>kud</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bettee</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tubman T</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settler Slim</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

only speaker who uses both $kOmen$ and $we kOmen$ is the mesolectal Gus; consistent with his status in the mesolect, however, he uses $we kOmen$ much more often than $kOmen$ (16 to 2). Thus, this distribution supports the claim that, for past irrealis, $kOmen$ behaves like a non-Standard form (in the basilect) while $we kOmen$ behaves like a Standard form (in the mesolect).

$kud$. Only two speakers use $kud$ as a past irrealis marker, Shorty and Bold Dollar. Its use parallels that of $kEn$ as an irrealis marker in that here too a potentiality marker has been extended to mark irrealis.
45. a ha na disa ye tu mek b10s. ef E 0 a ha teken des tan tu mek b10s, a kudon mek 0 ma mayn tu go tu sku.

'I had not decided to make blocks. [I had decided to go to school.] If I'd known I was going to spend all this time making blocks, I wouldn't have made up my mind to go to school.'

Shorty 39-13-12

Again, tokens have been admitted only when they were clearly simple irrealis (and not simple potential). The past character of kud usage is underscored by its near absence from non-past irrealis environments. (It does show up twice in non-past environments in Shorty's speech.)

To return to Table 69: converting it to an implicational scale would be of questionable value. The various markers have been compressed into so few categories that its high index of scalability would be of limited value. Its reliability would be further undermined by the concentration of tokens (82.3%) in its middle two columns. With these limitations acknowledged, one can see what Table 69 reveals. It shows that there is a basic order along the continuum. The first two columns mark only irrealis with no reference to the past. The column further to the left (and more basilectal) consists

The possibility exists that this use of kud is idiosyncratic and somehow a consequence of Shorty's unique history, i.e. the fact that he was at once an adult-learner of English and--having enrolled in kindergarten at the age of fifteen--someone with more than ten years of Western schooling. (He was in the eleventh grade at the time he was recorded.) The likelihood that Shorty's kud-use use can be assigned to idiosyncrasy is weakened but not eliminated by the fact that Bold Dollar--in a conversation with Shorty--uses kud in this way once too.

As noted in Chapter 2, fn. 67, Shorty also marks some past non-punctual constructions with kud.

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of non-Standard forms (whether basic or immediate), and the column to the right consists of Standard forms. The third column comprises combinations of \( \omega + \text{Standard IRR} \) markers. Finally, the fourth column comprises single markers that express both irrealis and past.

This evolution parallels that found for the marking of negative irrealis clauses. There, the continuum went from sequences of discrete morphemes—first, \( \text{NEG} + \text{non-Standard IRR} \), then \( \text{NEG} + \text{Standard IRR} \)—to single (Standard) markers that expressed both. With past irrealis as with negative irrealis, morphological complexity coincides with the acrolectal end of the continuum. (Note that this is true even though one of the morphologically complex markers, \text{kud}, is used in a non-Standard way.)

4.5.1.1 Future-in-the-Past versus Past Counterfactuals

The basilectal data, though extremely limited in this regard, give no evidence of any consistent distinction between the marking of past counterfactuals and future-in-the-past clauses. Those speakers in Table 69 whose marking of past irrealis constructions involves the use of non-past irrealis marking (and whose marking of these constructions never contains any marking of past) are taken to be the most basilectal. When their speech is examined with regard to this distinction, the results are contradictory:

(Table 70 here)
TABLE 70

Counterfactuals vs. Future-in-the-Past: The Basilect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>kEn</th>
<th></th>
<th>we</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>go</td>
<td>goen</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>goen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kOuten</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana Steward</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nimba Watchman and Ghana Steward mark counterfactuals with their most basilectal form (kEn for Nimba Watchman, go for Ghana Steward), but Pastor uses the more acrolectal we (rather than the less acrolectal kOmen) for his counterfactuals. However, along the rest of the continuum—with speakers who mark the past in past irrealis constructions (either variably or categorically)—there is a greater tendency to mark the past in counterfactuals than in future-in-the-past clauses. This is so even though both past counterfactuals and future-in-the-past constructions are [+ IRR, + PAST]. (For the present all past counterfactuals, whether [+ ANT] or [- ANT], are being considered.) If one looks at speakers who mark the past overtly in past irrealis constructions but limits the examination to those speakers who have instances of both past counterfactual and future-in-the-past clauses, the following distribution obtains:

(Table 71 here)
### TABLE 71

**Counterfactuals vs. Future-in-the-Past: Sans Basilect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th></th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th></th>
<th>4</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ken</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>goen</td>
<td>komen</td>
<td>V-en</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>goen</td>
<td>kud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF F-i-P</td>
<td>CF F-i-P</td>
<td>CF F-i-P</td>
<td>CF F-i-P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesop</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totals: CF F-i-P</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These speakers use the same range of markers in past counterfactual and future-in-the-past constructions. In both instances, while they always mark irrealis, they mark past variably. However, they are more likely to mark the past in a counterfactual than in a future-in-the-past construction: it is marked with a frequency of 86.5 percent (45/52) in the former case, but with a frequency of only 60.0 percent (45/75) in the latter case. Thus, while there may be no clear distinction between the marking of the two types of construction in the basilect, there is in the mesolect.
4.5.1.2 [* ANT] versus [- ANT] Counterfactuals

What has been proposed thus far is a distinction (though not an absolute one) between the marking of past counterfactuals and future-in-the-past clauses in the mesolect. The possibility must be addressed that the dividing line has been drawn in the wrong place and that the true dividing line is between future-in-the-past clauses and non-anterior past counterfactuals, on the one hand, and anterior past counterfactuals, on the other. In other words, even though [* PAST] is the principal tense feature in Liberian English, there may be some validity as well to the notion of [* ANT], this latter distinction manifesting itself in irrealis clauses (with the semantic feature [+ ANT] favoring the overt marking of [+ PAST]). Because past counterfactuals occur infrequently, the evidence that can be brought to bear is limited. However, what evidence there is argues against the notion of a distinction between [+ ANT] and [- ANT] counterfactuals. In the entire corpus, there are 71 past counterfactuals with overt marking. Of these, 51 are [- ANT] and 20 [+ ANT]. Their distribution according to the four categories of Table 69 is given in Table 72:

(Table 72 here)

When the basilectal speakers are removed (basilectal again being defined as those who never mark past irrealis constructions with past markers), the distribution in Table 73 results:

(Table 73 here)
TABLE 72

Past Counterfactuals: [± ANT]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kE’n</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>kOmen</td>
<td>kud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>goen</td>
<td>goen</td>
<td>V-en</td>
<td>V-en</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[- ANT] 6 9 28 8
[+ ANT] 2 4 9 5

TABLE 73

Past Counterfactuals: No Basilect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kE’n</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>kOmen</td>
<td>kud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>goen</td>
<td>goen</td>
<td>V-en</td>
<td>V-en</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[- ANT] 1 2 28 8
[+ ANT] 1 1 9 5

The data in Table 73 show that the past is marked slightly more often for [- ANT] past counterfactuals than for [+ ANT] ones (92.3% to 87.5%). When consideration is directed towards the three speakers whose data contain both [+ ANT] and [- ANT] past counterfactuals (thereby paralleling the data used in the contrast of past counterfactuals in general with future-in-the-past constructions), the results once more fail to support any distinction in marking between [+ ANT] and [- ANT] counterfactuals:

(Table 74 here)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kEn</td>
<td></td>
<td>we</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>kOmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kOmen</td>
<td></td>
<td>V-en</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ANT</td>
<td></td>
<td>+ANT</td>
<td>-ANT</td>
<td>+ANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-ANT</td>
<td>+ANT</td>
<td>-ANT</td>
<td>+ANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totals:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ANT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ANT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[+ ANT] counterfactuals are overtly marked for past for these speakers 93.8 percent of the time (15/16), but [- ANT] counterfactuals are also marked at a near categorical rate—92.6 percent (25/27). In summary, something of a distinction exists between past counterfactuals and future-in-the-past constructions, the former showing past marking more frequently than the latter. Past counterfactuals can be [+ ANT], but the available evidence argues that there is no appreciable difference in the rates of past marking between [+ ANT] counterfactuals and [- ANT] ones. Thus, the fact that some past counterfactuals—but no future-in-the-past verbs—are [+ ANT] cannot explain the greater rate of past marking for past counterfactuals that for future-in-the-past constructions.
4.5.2 Irrealis and Completive/Perfect

The completive/perfect AUX's doN, na and feni tend not to co-occur with other AUX's. This includes irrealis AUX's: there are no examples in the corpus of doN or na co-occurring with an IRR AUX and only one of IRR + feni. Indeed, doN never occurs in the corpus in an irrealis context, even when no IRR AUX is present; na and feni do but only once each. The IRR + na token is given in (46a).

46a. ... ef yu don fes e en di we a lak e, deEn dE wOn dE defrEn, yu na bre kOntrE.

'. . . If you don’t fix it the way that I want it, then that’s a different story. You will have broken a contract.'

Willie 6-56-15

In this case, the insertion of an IRR AUX would render the sentence ungrammatical—unless na were deleted.

46b. *... yu we na bre kOntrE.
46c. *... yu na we bre kOntrE.
46d. *... yu go na bre kOntrE.
46e. *... yu na go bre kOntrE.
46f. . . . yu we bre kOntrE.

The one token of IRR + feni is given in (47a).

47a. yEs, mesta [shOpkipa], a yu Es mi e kwestyen: a ten a we, a, feni Ensa befO doz bO dEn sta krayen.

'Yes, Mister [Shopkeeper], are you asking me a question: I will try to answer it completely before the babies start crying again.'

Lofa Laborer 46-51-1

(In (47a), a is a hesitation pause.) As (47b) shows, deleting feni from (47a) changes the force of the sentence very slightly. The lusty crying of the babies had disrupted the conversation a few minutes
earlier, and the use of feni in (47a) signals the speaker's determination to give a complete answer before they start to cry again. Without feni, that resolve is less explicit.

47b. a ten a we Ensa bifo doz bO dEn sta krayen.

'I think I will answer before the babies start crying again.'

On the other hand, deleting we from (47a) changes the meaning dramatically by changing the unrealized into a fait accompli.

47c. a ten a feni Ensa bifo doz bO dEn sta krayen.

'I think I gave a complete answer before the babies started crying.'

The difference between (47b) and (47c) illustrates the reasons why—if irrealis and completive markers "clash"—it is the irrealis that is the more important of the two, and it is irrealis that prevails. As to why feni is able to co-occur with we when dOn and na are not: perhaps the explanation is that we feni has a model in the target while we dOn/dOn we and we na/na we do not. If one expands the definition of "target" to include Black English (and a case can definitely be made for doing so), there is still no model in the target for dOn, i.e. Black English does not permit will done or done will.

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4.6 ANTECEDENTS

4.6.1 Non-Past Antecedents

4.6.1.1 Non-Past Counterfactuals

The extremely infrequent use of *wud* and *wûn* in irrealis constructions was noted in 4.2.2.2 and 4.3.3. It was also noted there that these forms first showed up in counterfactuals. In the same way, using past morphology to mark the antecedent clauses of non-past hypothetical clauses (the way that Standard English does) is infrequent—though not so infrequent as the use of *wud* in the consequent clauses of such conditionals. In the case of *wud*, it is the form itself that must be acquired; in the case of past morphology, it is merely a new application for commonly used forms. This difference is underlined by the fact that it is *we* that shows up in the antecedents of non-past counterfactuals: 19 of the 22 past-marked counterfactual antecedents contain *we*, either as a copula, as in (48), or—less commonly—in conjunction with a *V-en* form, as in (49):

48. ef a *we* prEsedÈn ov des kôntri, yu wôn si wôn basa mÈ wôk di strit EFTA kresmas.

'If I were president of this country, you wouldn't see one Bassa man walking the streets after Christmas.'

Settler Albert 60-8-23

49. "yu ten e de *we* shuten do chedren, de wôn bi rônên ran hya?"

"Do you think if they were shooting those children, they wouldn't be running around here?"

Patience 37-71-8

(In the 3 cases out of 22 where *we* is not used, the verb is *hay*.)
4.6.1.2 Non-Past Non-Counterfactual Clauses

Apart from counterfactuals, past marking of non-past antecedents is rare. This parallels the fact that only one use of wud is to be found in a non-counterfactual conditional. Completive and perfect marking does show up (16 occurrences of hav and 18 of fen1), as in (50):

50. FISHERMAN: IE wi ste hya te di Oda pipo rEdi.
    JVS: oke. ez O rayt.
    FISHERMAN: wEn wi fen1 i, hia?

    FISHERMAN: Let's stay here until the other people are ready.
    JVS: OK. It's all right.
    FISHERMAN: [We'll do it] once we've eaten, OK?

(There are no occurrences of na in antecedent clauses.) Past marking, however, of non-past occurrences in antecedent clauses is—with a single exception—limited to the verbs ken (< came) and so (< saw). The past marking of these verbs may be more a fact about these verbs than about their users' acquisition of Standard morphology. For example, Settler Slim uses so in the antecedent of what is clearly a predictive rather than a hypothetical conditional. The mother of his eighteen-year-old son has been in the United States for the past fifteen years. She has announced her intention to return to Monrovia in order to see her child. Settler Slim reports that he told his son:

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51. "ef yu sO yua mOda, yu dón no hE. shi si yu, yu dón no hE. a wOn yu tu go En luk f0 yua ma, shi gOn kOn tu yu."

"When you see your mother, you won't recognize her. When she sees you, you won't recognize her [she won't recognize you?]. I want you to go [from Robertsport to Monrovia] and look for your ma. She's gonna come to look for you there."

Settler Slim 48-57-15

The use of ken (and perhaps sO) in antecedent clauses seems to be stigmatized: ken is used by the basilectal Nimba Watchman and Ghana Steward; moreover, when Charlie tries to display his mastery of excessively basilectal Liberian English by invoking various shibboleths, he says,

52. Enitan yu ken hya, yu mO Es f0 . . . mi.

'Ask for me anytime you come here.' Charlie 7-15-26

4.6.2 Antecedents of Past Counterfactuals

The antecedents of past counterfactuals—whether [+ ANT] or [- ANT]—vary as to whether or not they display past marking. [+ ANT] forms carry past marking more than half the time, e.g.

53. efi des wuman dE, i wO nó sek, 10n tan a wO nó hya.

'If that woman had remained in her job, if she hadn't been sick, I would have left here long ago.' Nimba Watchman 61-54-20

In contrast, [- ANT] forms carry past marking less than one-quarter of the time, e.g.
54. di we da a bOn ma chedren, wEn a li chedren des kOntrí, wEn a go kOntrí, dEn ha de we kO di chedren?

'My children were born here; if I left the children here and went back to my home, then what name would my children bear?'

Farmer 33-8-8

At first glance, the higher rate of past-marking for (+ ANT) forms seems like evidence for a [± ANT] distinction in Liberian English. There is, however, a more likely explanation. Copulas are stative, and past states are [+ ANT]. In the case of non-past antecedent clauses, it was seen that bi was the first verb to show past marking. The same is true here. Fourteen of the 21 cases of past marking of [+ ANT] antecedents involve the copula we. Thus, the greater rate of past-marking for [+ ANT] clauses is a function of the fact that the copula—the verb most likely to be marked for past—is, when past, [+ ANT].

144 Of course the use of past marking in the antecedent clause of a past counterfactual does not reflect Standard English. (Whether or not it reflects the spoken English that provides the target language for Liberian English is a different matter.) In Standard English, the antecedent of a past counterfactual takes past perfect marking:

Standard English

a. If I had known it was going to take me this long to write my dissertation, I would have written the great American screenplay instead.

Two sentences in the corpus—one by Willie and one by William—use perfect marking. One of these is given in (b):

b. ef a ha noen, a wón kOm O di we hya.

'If I had known, I wouldn't have come all the way here.'

Willie 7-52-24
The antecedents of past counterfactuals are unique among antecedent clauses in that—at least along part of the continuum—they are overtly marked for irrealis. Specifically, among students in the upper mesolect, (we) kOmen and (we) goen mark the antecedents of past counterfactuals:

55. wEn di wuman ná kOmen tu sho di ras 0, di mÉ wé ná goen tu kOnd dan.
   'If the woman hadn't displayed the rice, the man wouldn't have come down from the tree.'
   Aesop 29-66-14

56. shi wé ná e ledi tu bi trOs. ef ivEn shi we goen tu gÉ mÉri tu dÉ mÉ, am shu de wÉ goen tu dayvos.
   'She wasn't a woman to be trusted. Even if she had married that man, I'm sure they would have ended up getting a divorce.'
   Bold Dollar 40-25-27

Klao and perhaps other Liberian languages mark both clauses of a counterfactual (whether past or not), e.g.

Klao

57. wi jē ná tū-g,
   money if-AUX water be-CF,

mē pō-g mē-d' slā.
I build-CF my house.

'If water were money, I'd build my house.'
(Singler 1979b:15)

However, the fact that this kind of marking is limited to the upper mesolect (specifically to Aesop, Shorty, Gus, and Bold Dollar) argues against its being a manifestation of substratal influence. Marking of the antecedents of past counterfactuals shows up in non-Standard American English, e.g.
Non-Standard American English

58. If you woulda told me that yesterday, I woulda done something about it.

Sentences like (58) probably should be seen not as the source of the Liberian English sentences like (55) and (56) but as parallels to them, perhaps with parallel motivation.

4.7 SUMMARY

This examination of irrealis in Liberian English has revealed the presence of parallel systems for affirmative forms for almost the entire length of the continuum. At the basilectal extreme, basic irrealis is not distinct from immediate irrealis; however, a distinction between the two soon emerges and spans the rest of the continuum. From basilect to acrolect, we is the principal irrealis marker for virtually every speaker. The basilectal use of kEn as a basic irrealis marker and the mesolectal use of we in what would in the target language be hypothetical conditionals both illustrate the point made in Bickerton (1975b) that the target-language form is acquired earlier, i.e. more basilectally, than the target-language meaning. In addition to the basic irrealis continuum, there is a more specialized continuum whose forms mark immediate irrealis. Though there are speakers whose output contains no examples of this latter type of irrealis, they are dispersed across the continuum, and no generalization about them emerges.
Two other areas of irrealis display kindred foundations for their continua. In the case of negative irrealis forms, the continuum begins at the basilect with distinct NEG and IRR morphemes, first in the non-Standard $\text{no} + \text{IRR}$ order, then--more acrolectally--in the Standard $\text{we} + \text{na}$ order. Most acrolectally, negative irrealis is expressed by a morphologically complex form (one whose constituents are non-linear). Similarly, for past irrealis forms, only irrealis is marked in the basilect. More mesolectally, agglutinations of past and irrealis are found. More acrolectally, morphologically complex forms emerge. For both negative irrealis and past irrealis, then, morphological complexity marks the acrolect.
Chapter V

CONCLUSION

The introductory chapter of the present study raised objections to the scenario presented by Bickerton (1981) of the social setting in which creole languages arise. A more plausible description, it was argued, would give recognition to the role of speakers' first languages (i.e. the substrate) and to the perseverance of these languages in, for example, plantation settings. The presences of these languages and--critically for Bickerton's bioprogram hypothesis--their use in communication not only between adult and adult but also between parent and child would furnish child-learners of the creolizing pidgin with the basis for linguistic principles that were at least partially language-specific.

Adjusting the picture of the social setting of creolization has as a necessary consequence a de-emphasis of the role that nativization plays in creole formation. When nativization is no longer the defining factor in creolization, it no longer is necessary to maintain the artificial distinction between creoles and extended pidgins. This is not to say that the two types of speech variety are identical. In the usual case for extended pidgins, there have been no massive displacements of populations and no permanent separations of speakers from their speech communities. As a result, the presence of
substratal input continues indefinitely. The degree of homogeneity of substratal input stands as a further critical factor in determining the extent of substratal influence on the developing creole or extended pidgin. (In particular, Singier and Himmelmann (1982) argue for this.) It has generally been the case that input into extended pidgins has been more homogeneous than input into creoles; as a result, substratal influence would be expected to be more extensive in the former than in the latter. Thus, both the continued strength of substratal input in the extended pidgin situation and the greater degree of homogeneity of substratal input in that situation favor greater substratal influence there than in a creole. However, the differences between extended pidgins and creoles are not "yes/no" differences. Instead, they tend to be "more/less." Such factors thus contribute to the establishment of a gradient, a gradient that encompasses both extended pidgins and creoles and that reflects, among other things, the strength of substratal influence.

While it has been argued here that creoles and extended pidgins are appropriately grouped together and while criteria have been proposed that would help to account for the degrees of difference between individual speech varieties, it must still be acknowledged that the complex history of West African extended pidgins complicates the claim that such speech varieties and creoles--despite linguistic similarities--have distinct histories. (The linguistic similarities are unquestionable; it is the claim of different social histories that is debatable in the West African case.) For Bickerton these varieties
are repidginized creoles (1975a:3). He holds that Cameroonian, for example, is a descendant of Sierra Leonean Krio (an opinion with which Todd (1979) concurs) and that similarities between Cameroonian and Sierra Leonean Krio follow from direct ties and not from any abstract unity between extended pidgins and creoles.

While it may hold that Sierra Leonean Krio forms the basis for Cameroonian and for Nigerian Pidgin English, it does not seem to be the case that it also forms the basis for Liberian English. As Welmers says with regard to Krio:

> In the nineteenth century, it was transported by its native speakers to Cameroon, Nigeria, and some other points along the West African coast (though not, as has been alleged, Liberia) . . .

(1973:13)

There was clearly contact between Krio speakers and Liberians, particularly "Krumen," but that contact seems not to have occurred at the right time nor to a sufficient extent to justify the claim that Liberian English, too, is a repidginized creole. (Equally, the presence in Liberia of a small group of Settlers seems not to have provided the basis for anything approaching the creolization of non-Settler varieties. Throughout the present chapter, the term Liberian English is taken to mean "non-Settler Liberian English.")

The above discussion as well as that in Chapter 1 has meant to show that it is appropriate to consider extended pidgins and creoles as largely a single type of speech variety—certainly much more so than Bickerton would allow—and also to consider Liberian English as an extended pidgin (rather than "closet Krio"). Furthermore, if extended
pidgins and creoles do group together, it becomes appropriate to test
the ability of "creole" concepts to apply to an extended pidgin like
Liberian English.

The present study has used Bickerton's prototypical creole tense-
aspect-modality (TAM) system as the basis for plotting and assessing
the Liberian system. The ways in which the Liberian TAM system
parallels the prototypical creole system and the ways in which it
departs from it are both of interest. At the same time, the strong
parallels between the TAM system of Kru languages (the primary
substratal source) and the creole prototype limit the strength of the
evidence that can be taken from Liberian English as to the weight of
the substrate compared with other possible sources.

The most dramatic case of substratal influence involves the
sentence-final particle o. In Chapter 3 it was shown that this
particle is found all along the African coast from the Kru languages
of Liberia to the Kwa languages of Nigeria—and perhaps further. It
is also found in all the pidgins and creoles of West Africa. One of
the principal functions of o, it was argued, is to mark [+ PERFECT].
In the Niger-Congo languages along the African coast, the role of a
sentence-final particle might well be either to augment or to
reinforce the marking of tense as expressed within the VP. In a
pidgin, however, such a marker might arise instead in the absence of
VP-internal marking. Thus, even though the feature [PERFECT] is not
found in Bickerton's creole prototype, it shows up—its positive value
represented by the particle o—across the Liberian English continuum

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and in other West African pidgins and creoles, including Français Populaire Ivoirien.

When the study of tense-aspect is limited to the VP, then the largest difference between Liberian English and the creole prototype is probably the utter absence of any marking of anteriority in the Liberian English system. Chapter 2 argued that Liberian English—quite apart from Settler English—has two basilects. One of them, called the "Lofo" basilect in the present work, demonstrates the feature [PAST] rather than [ANTERIOR]. The other basilect is the "primary" basilect, and it obtains all along the Liberian coast, in the Grand Gedeh (Kru-language-speaking) region of the interior, and among the "Ghana" speakers. In this basilect neither past nor anterior is marked. Bickerton's description of the nature of tense in the creole system and, specifically, of anterior suggests that, using the terminology of Traugott (1975), what creoles mark is temporal sequencing rather than tense. In such a framework, the primary significance of anteriority is as a signal of the disruption of temporal sequencing. In Liberian English, however, to the extent to which a verb is overtly marked for temporal sequencing, it is by AUX's (particularly feni) that signal the preservation of the sequence, not its disruption.

It is true that marking preservation rather than disruption of temporal sequencing still entails a sensitivity to temporal sequencing. A case could then be made that Liberian English differs from the creole prototype not by lacking the feature [ANTERIOR] but by
getting the overt/∅ pairing "backwards," i.e. by marking overtly the feature value [−ANT] and by using 0-marking to mark the feature value [+ANT]. While this claim has some merit to it, its validity is constrained by the limited domain of feni (and similar AUX's) in the Liberian basilect. With regard to the basilect, feni shows up among speakers in Grand Gedeh (in the northeastern corner of the interior) and first-language Mande-speakers in Robertsport (at the southwestern end of the coast). Among speakers of Kru living along the coast and among those who acquired Liberian English in Ghana, there is virtually no marking of tense or of temporal sequencing, virtually no use of feni or of any parallel AUX. There is--or was--a notion that verbs in pidgins and creoles do not show tense (or, using Traugott's terminology, temporal sequencing), it being signalled instead by an adverbial time-marker or some other contextual cue. Bickerton calls this idea "a hardy perennial in pidgin and creole studies" (1975b:50). However inappropriate the "tense through context" analysis may be for creoles and extended pidgins elsewhere, it seems that for much of Liberian English's coastal basilect, that is exactly what obtains. (The heavily context-dependent nature of the sentence-final particle 0 precludes its being invoked as an exception to this claim.)

Apart from the absence of tense/sequencing, an absence characteristic of much of the primary basilect, that basilect conforms closely to the creole prototype. It preserves the state/event distinction, treats future clauses and consequent clauses of conditionals as a single entity (irrealis), and assigns prominence to
aspect. In contrast to this basilect is the "Lofa" basilect, the Firestone/Soldier English of Lofa, Bong, and Nimba Counties in the Liberian interior. The Lofa basilect is like the primary basilect in its use of the single feature irrealis to encompass future clauses and the consequent clauses of conditionals (differing only from the primary basilect in the AUX it uses to mark irrealis). However, in the Lofa basilect, the state/event distinction is a shaky one, and tense as well as aspect is prominent. Within the creole prototype, the state/event distinction has the following consequences:

1. Because states are inherently non-punctual, the [+ PUNCTUAL] opposition has no significance for them, and they are not overtly marked (as [- PUNCTUAL]; only non-punctual events bear [- PUNCTUAL] marking.

2. While past-before-past is [+ ANTERIOR] for events, simple past is [+ ANTERIOR] for states.

In the Lofa basilect, past states often show non-punctual marking. (Non-past states were outside the purview of the present study.) While further study (with a broader data base) of the Lofa basilect is needed, it seems possible that the Lofa basilect simply separates punctual from non-punctual, marking the latter even when the verb's non-punctuality is innate. Further, as noted, the Lofa basilect does not mark anteriority. Rather, it marks past for non-punctuals, whether states or events.

These two basilects, the primary one and the Lofa one, are each part of a continuum. A series of changes in each tense-aspect system
causes it to arrive at a common mesolect and, subsequently, acrolect. In the case of the primary basilect, the state/event distinction has been identified as being basic. A distinction between habitual/iterative, on the one hand, and durative/continuative, on the other, is acquired early; and a distinction between non-past non-punctual and past non-punctual is acquired subsequently. For the Lofa basilect, on the other hand, it is the past/non-past distinction for non-punctuals that is basic. That state/event distinction is acquired early, and the distinction between habitual/iterative and durative/continuative comes later.

This claim of separate basilects represents a departure from the continuum model formulated by DeCamp. (In addition to the primary basilect and the Lofa basilect, there is also a Settler basilect in Liberian English.) The basis for the separate basilects is geography. For Guyanese, Bickerton apparently succeeds in handling both geography (specifically, the urban/rural distinction) and ethnic differences within a single continuum. In the Liberian case, the history is such that separate continua are both plausible and appropriate. The establishment of pidgin on the coast had antedated by a century its spread into the interior. Furthermore, the circumstances in which the spread occurred suggest that repidginization took place along the way.

The determination as to whether geographical and ethnic factors belong on a simple continuum or on a continuum with multiple basilects seems to rest with such factors as degree of contact between regions and between ethnic groups. In the Liberian case, contact was quite
restricted between the coast and the "hinterland" (the Liberian
government's old name for the country's interior). Roads did not
reach all nine of Liberia's counties until 1968. In a context of
limited contact, the development of separate basilects is not at all
surprising.

Chapter 2 argued that positing separate basilects represented a
refinement of the continuum model, not an abandonment of it. To the
extent that such an alteration presents problems for the continuum
theory, these problems seem to lie less with the establishment of
separate starting-points than with the nature of the convergence that
occurs more acrolectally. According to DeCamp, a necessary
precondition for the continuum is the introduction of the opportunity
for upward mobility:

... the formerly rigid social stratification must have
partially (not completely) broken down. That is, there must
be sufficient social mobility to motivate large numbers of
croile speakers to modify their speech in the direction of
the standard, and there must be a sufficient program of
education and other acculturative activities to exert effect
pressures from the standard language on the creole.
(1971:351; italics in the original)

In the Liberian case, the opportunity for upward mobility began in the
Tubman years and has increased since then. The spread of Western
education has created a comparatively unified mesolect and acrolect.
The problem that arises in the Liberian instance involves mobility
away from the Lofa basilect. Does a move away from the interior
basilect proceed directly to the Liberian mesolect/acrolect, or must
it first involve replacement of the interior basilect by the socially
less stigmatized coastal basilect? The problem for the mobile speaker of the Lofa basilect is that linguistically the two basilects differ fundamentally. In Chapter 2 a set of rule changes that reached from the Lofa basilect to the "pan-Liberian" mesolect was proposed, but can this set of rule changes account for the speech of the basilectal speaker from Lofa or Nimba who—being quite literally mobile—has left his home and settled in a coastal city? As with so many issues raised in the present work, the question requires further study.
Appendix A

THE DATA SET: SPEAKERS AND RECORDINGS

The circumstances in which individual recordings were made are summarized in Table 75.

(Table 75 here)

Notes

For Avogadro, Bold Dollar, Euclid, Richard, and William, the recording numbers listed by their names do not include the instances where they were the interviewers.

The pairs Augustus/Gus, Charles/Charlie, William/Willie, and Richard/Dick are in each case a single speaker. Chapter 1, fn. 46 discusses these speakers.

Aesop is a composite. It comprises fourth graders at the Catholic Mission school in Zleh Town, Grand Gedeh. Folktales constitute these data. Ananse was a fourth grader at the same school and was recorded at the same time. His data are significantly different from those of his classmates; for that reason, he has been separated from them. The fact that Ananse had lived in Monrovia may account for the difference between his speech and that of his classmates. Additionally, Lofa Diamond Miner is a composite of two Borkeza men, both former rubber tappers, who were recorded together.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Sit</th>
<th>Int</th>
<th>Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>JVS</td>
<td>New Krutown, Monrovia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gus</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>JVS</td>
<td>New Krutown, Monrovia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Settler Peken</td>
<td>4,5</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>JVS</td>
<td>Monrovia; Suakoko, Bong</td>
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<td>5-9,17-8</td>
<td>I,F,M</td>
<td>JVS</td>
<td>Monrovia</td>
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<td>Charlie</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Monrovia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>6-9,17-8</td>
<td>I,M</td>
<td>JVS</td>
<td>Monrovia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willie</td>
<td>6,7</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Monrovia</td>
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<td>Richard</td>
<td>9, 17-8</td>
<td>I,M</td>
<td>JVS</td>
<td>Monrovia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dick</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>Fisherman</td>
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<td>JVS</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>JVS</td>
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<td>Ghana Coal Miner</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>JVS</td>
<td>Barclayville, KC, Maryland</td>
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<td>Brickmaker</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>JVS</td>
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<td>Surveyor</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>JVS</td>
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<td>Calvin</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>JVS</td>
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<td>Gedeh Soldier</td>
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<td>JVS</td>
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<td>Gedeh Childminder</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Farmer</td>
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<td>Porter</td>
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<td>7,34,35</td>
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<td>JVS</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>I,F</td>
<td>JVS</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Patience</td>
<td>37,38</td>
<td>M,I</td>
<td>JVS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shorty</td>
<td>38-41</td>
<td>I,F,C</td>
<td>JVS</td>
<td>Zorzor, Lofa</td>
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<td>Bold Dollar</td>
<td>38-41</td>
<td>I,F,C</td>
<td>JVS</td>
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<td>YGC</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>F,C</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>I,F</td>
<td>JVS</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Robertsport, Cape Mount</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>48,49</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>Chauffeur</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>Builder</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td>Bettee</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>Nimba Watchman</td>
<td>56,61</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Monrovia</td>
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<td>Friar Tuck</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>Painter</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>Boatman</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Fortsville, Grand Bassa</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Borkeza, Lofa</td>
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<td>Lofa Overseer</td>
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<td>I</td>
<td>Borkeza, Lofa</td>
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<td>Lofa Diamond Miner</td>
<td>62,63</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Borkeza, Lofa</td>
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<td>Lofa Tailor</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Borkeza, Lofa</td>
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<td>Nimba Cook</td>
<td>64,65</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Robertsport, Cape Mount</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Situation:**
- C = Conversation
- F = Folktale
- I = Interview
- M = Multi-party Interview
- R = Role-playing

**Other Interviewers:**
- AVO = Avogadro
- BD = Bold Dollar
- EUC = Euclid
- PTR = Peter Toe Roberts
- RIC = Richard
- WM = William

**KC** = Kru Coast Territory

Tapes 4-8 and 38 were prepared as background for Singler (1981a). They include brief monologues and discussions of specific topics (by Bold Dollar, Charles, Patience, Richard, Settler Pekan, Shorty, and William) and role-playing (by Charlie, Dick, Willie, and--briefly--Avogadro).

Porter, wishing to be interviewed but unavailable when Peter Toe Roberts was talking to Carpenter and Farmer, borrowed the tape recorder and tape and interviewed himself.
In Table 75, individual interviews, multi-party interviews, and conversations are coded separately. In the first two, roles are clearly defined: the interviewer is eliciting information from one interviewee (coded "I") or more than one (coded "H"). In a conversation (coded "C"), there is less delineation of roles and less structure. At the same time, the distinction between interview and conversation is sometimes a subtle one. (Even when the interaction was clearly an interview, with an obvious interviewer and interviewee, other people were quite often present and would sometimes become involved.) Also, the nature of the interactions sometimes changed. Tapes 39 and 40 illustrate this. An interview with Shorty shifted to his telling folktales. Bold Dollar arrived, and he and Shorty took turns telling tales. This evolved into a conversation about marital infidelity. YGC arrived during the conversation, participated, and then illustrated his point of view with a series of folktales.

Some interviews were actually monologues. Nimba Cook, asked a single question about his background, takes almost two hours to give his answer. (He spoke for one hour one night and almost an hour the next night.) On the other hand, some interviews were exchanges (cf. Baugh (1983)). In cases where the interviewee and I were not well acquainted, he or she would sometimes start asking me questions, usually questions quite similar to the ones that I had been asking. For example, the multi-party interview with William and Charles (at which Richard was also present) occurred at a time when I did not yet know either of the interviewees well. After I had gotten each of them
to tell me about fights that they had been in, William asked me if I had ever been in a fight, and I told him and the others about the time I flattened Bob Ritter at the tenth-grade picnic.

For interviews my goal was to heed Rickford's exhortation to "accept the need to have about one hour of recorded interaction per individual speaker" (1977:172). This frequently proved unattainable. The interview with Better ended abruptly when the police came to her door (with regard to a matter unrelated to the interview). That with Gedeh Marketwoman ended with equal abruptness when a roar from the town center signalled that sasswood (a type of poison) had been administered to her aunt in a trial by ordeal. (By surviving the ordeal, her aunt established her innocence of the charges that had been brought against her.)

The backgrounds of the speakers are given in Table 76.

(Table 76 here)

Home County:
GB = Grand Bassa
GCM = Grand Cape Mount
GG = Grand Gedeh
KC = Kru Coast Territory, Maryland County
MONT = Montserrado County
SS = Sasso Town Territory, Sinoe County

Notes

In Table 76, the first occupation listed is the one the speaker was engaged in at the time of the recording. Occupations linked by "&" were being engaged in simultaneously.

The "highest grade" refers to the highest grade entered. It is with reference to the American/Liberian educational system. Chauffeur and Painter attended Quranic schools briefly.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>First Lg.</th>
<th>Home County</th>
<th>Highest Grade</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Augustus/Gus</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Klao</td>
<td>MONT</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Settler Peken</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>MONT</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles/Charlie</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Bassa</td>
<td>GB</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Messenger</td>
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<tr>
<td>William/Willie</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Loma</td>
<td>Lofa</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Messenger</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard/Dick</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Vai</td>
<td>GCM</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Revenue Agent</td>
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<td>Fisherman</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Vai/Klao</td>
<td>GCM</td>
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Ages are often approximate rather than exact.

In Liberia assignment of a first language to a speaker is often arbitrary.

The term "home county" ordinarily refers to the county where the speaker grew up. Usually, but not always, this is the county of the speaker's birth. Speakers who spent significant portions of their childhood in more than one county are the following:

- **Charles/Charlie:** Grand Bassa, Montserrado, Nimba
- **William/Willie:** Lofa, Montserrado
- **Roberts T.:** Sine, Bong
- **Tubman T.:** Sine, Montserrado
- **Amanse:** Grand Gedeh, Montserrado
- **YGC:** Lofa, Maryland
- **Builder:** Grand Cape Mount, Montserrado

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Appendix 3

EXCERPTS FROM THE TRANSCRIPTS

In this passage, Lofa Tapper describes his first trip to the coast:

da tayn dE,
that time there,
sali ken we bi di plÉsiÉn fO marovia.
Charlie King was be. the president for Monrovia.
wÉni a go dE,
when I go there,
bisay dÉn e fOs wOn:
beside then the first one:
sta tu du di mÉrikÉn pipo wOk.
start to do the Merican people work.
a go fO omÉ bakle, hin wumÉ mami kopa,
I go for oldman Barclay, his woman Mammie Cooper,
dÉn wi go fO hinyan fan, bruswe.
then we go for his farm, Brewererville.
di wO wa wi we du,
the work what we was do,
dÉn de pe wi fO dE mÓni,
then they pay we for the money,
da tÉri dala fO wOn mun.
that three dollar for one moon.
wi du da, a ste dE,
we do that, I stay there,
a mu dE, a kOn tu di marovia sÉ.
I move there, I come to the Monrovia self.
wi go tu di bare.
we go to the barracks.
ma Onko nen F.K.
my uncle name F.K.

hi bi di soya,
he be the soldier,

das ten a we ste we hen.
that's thing I was stay with him.

dEn wi mu dE tu go fo gran basa.
then we move there to go for Grand Bassa.

'At that time, Charlie King was the President in Monrovia. When I went there [to the coast], the first job I started on was working for America-Liberians. I worked for Oldman Barclay's woman, Mammie Cooper. We went to his farm in Brewersville. The work that we did, when they paid us, it was three dollars a month. We did it for a while, and then I moved from there and went to Monrovia. We went to the barracks. My uncle, F.K., was a soldier, and that's why I was staying with him. Then we moved from there and went to Grand Bassa.'
Ghana Steward describes the day he was hired to work on a ship:

di she kOm frOn dEma, kopEengEn.
the ship come from Denmark, Copenhagen.

wEn di she kOm, wi rish dE,
when the ship come, we reach there,

awa tan ken, wi go tu dOkta.
our time came, we go to doctor.

a pas dOkta.
I pass doctor.

bifO a wOn tu go On di she na,
before I want to go on the ship now,

a pu ma stuwa wOk, dE wadre.
I put my steward work, that white-drill.

way shO pEn.
white short pants.

a pu tishO.
I put t-shirt:

doz pipo pu di debra. [laughs]
those people put the laborer.

(EUCLID: de pu di debra ten On.)
(t  
they put the laborer thing on.)

de pu debra ten On.
they put laborer thing on.

dEn wi rish On di she, en takoradi.
then we reach on the ship, in Takoradi.

En wEn wi ri dE, wi 0,
and when we reach there, we all,

de pu we di gru.
they put we the group.

de pu wi 0 layn.
they put we all line.

dEn, wEn de pu wi layn, dEn a stEn dE.
them, when they put we line, then I stand there.

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a luk di pipo bikini a nēbā go tu di ship.
I look the people because I never go to the ship.

a stEn dē.
I stand there.

wEn di chif stuwa k0m, hi luk Eribadi,
when the chief steward come, he look everybody,

hi luk 0 mi.
he look up me.

di kEpten kOn, hi luk 0 mi.
the captain come, he look up me.

chif mE kOn, hi luk 0 mi.
chief man come, he look up mi.

a bi deфрEn f0 di 0 dez pipo.
I be different for the all these people.

i se, "o, wa, ha des b0y,
he say, "oh, what, how this boy,

des nyOn b0y, i bi deфрEn f0 di pipo?"
this young boy, he be different for the people?"

'The ship came from Denmark, from Copenhagen. When the ship came, we went there. Our time came, and we went to the doctor. I passed the inspection. When we went to the ship--before when I had decided to go on the ship, I had put on my steward's uniform, my white dress uniform. White short pants and a white t-shirt. All the other people wore common laborers' clothing. [laughs] (EUCLID: They wore laborers' things.) They wore laborers' things. Then we went on board the ship in Takoradi. And when we got there, they lined us all up. Then, when they lined us up, then I stood there. I looked at all the people because I had never gone on a ship before. I stood there. When the chief steward came, he looked at everybody, and he looked at me. The captain came, and he looked at me. The chief man came, and he looked at me. I was different from all the others. He said, "Oh, why, why is this young boy different from the other people?"'

52-53-1

[A "t-shirt" in Liberian English is dressier than it is in American English. What Americans call a "t-shirt," Liberians call a sengle (< singlet). The "t-shirt" to which Ghana Steward refers is of better quality than a sengle, more like a pullover.]
Settler Carolina is talking about her ward, a recent trade-school

graduate:

hi se dE wOn mE prOmEs hem wOk,
he say that one man promise him work,

En hi wE weton On di mE
and he was waiting on the man

so hi kud tray tu gE so m w0k tu do,
so he could try to get some work to do,

En dE wE hi d0n go n na,
and there where he done gone now,

ga b1Es hem.
God bless him.

hi ha d0n gE de w0k,
he have/had done get this work,

b0 de ha’n, yu no,
but they hadn’t, you know,

de ha hem dE w0ken,
they have/had him there working,

b0 de ha’n geven hez kOmeshan.
but they hadn’t given his commission.

so, dez e.
so, that’s it.

luk lak hi d0n gEt e naw
look like he done get it now

bik0 wEn ma pipo kOm,
because when my people come,

de se hi we w0ken b0 hi ha’n gE hez m0ni.
they say he was working but he hadn’t get his money.

di m0ni, luk la e ha’n, Op tu gE he m0ni.
the money, look like it hadn’t up to get his money.

e me kOz hem,
it make cause him,

hi de’sn, k0n dan hya wEn de bren ma sesta.
he didn’t come down here when they bring my sister.
'He said that a man had promised him work and he was waiting on the man so that he could try to get some work to do, and that's where he has gone now, God bless him. He had got this work but they hadn't, you know, they had him there working, but they hadn't given him his pay. So, that's it. He probably has it by now because when my people came [for the burial of Carolina's sister] they said he was working but he hadn't received his money. The money, it looked like it wasn't time yet for him to get it. That's why he didn't come here when they brought my sister's body.'

20-65-26

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Appendix C
AUXILIARIES AND VERB SUFFIXES

Listed below are the auxiliaries and verb suffixes discussed in the body of the present work.

Chapter 2: 'Past States and Events'

V-ed past/past punctual
de V non-punctual
V-en continuative
kEn V iterative
do V iterative
we V-en past continuative
yustu V past iterative
we V past non-punctual
we yustu V past iterative

Chapter 3: 'Completives, Intensives, and Perfects'

feni V
na/nOn V
hav/haz/had/ha V

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Chapter 4: 'Irrealis'

Basic Irrealis:  Immediate Irrealis:

kEn V  k0men V
go V  goen V
we V  (bi) V-en
wud V  gOn V

Past Irrealis: All the Basic and Immediate Irrealis forms plus the following:

wud V  we k0men V
wud hav V  we goen V
kud V  we V-en
kud hav V  we gOn V

Negative Irrealis:

nó kEn V  kén V
nó go V  wón V
nó we V  wún V

we nó V/we nó V/we ná V
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