A Comparison of the Structural Composition of the Auxiliary in Standard American English and in Jamaican Creole

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Linguists generally agree that Jamaican Creole (JC), like other Caribbean English Creoles (CECs), is lexically related to English but differs markedly from it in terms of phonology and syntax. There is, however, less agreement regarding the ordering of auxiliary elements in the JC verb phrase. Drawing on studies that either treat individual auxiliary elements and compare them across Creoles or address Creole auxiliary constructions without including the passive, as well as on observations of patterns in the speech of native JC speakers, this paper explores the structural similarities and differences between the elements in the fixed American English (AE) auxiliary and the flexible JC auxiliary – including the passive – that is proposed. The analysis should prove useful to North American teachers of JC-speaking students.

> The area which has posed the most difficult challenge to analyses of the CEC verb complex involves the ordering of auxiliary elements.
> Winford, 1993, p. 87

> The JC verb does not change to reflect a change in the time referred to and so the English verb with its multiple possible endings becomes a trial.
> Pollard, 2002, p. 7

INTRODUCTION

For many years Jamaican Creole (JC), the vernacular in Jamaica, which is also called patois/*pætwæ*, was considered broken English. Today it is recognized in linguistic circles as a language, as one of the Caribbean English Creoles (CEC). However, many Jamaicans still associate JC with backwardness and illiteracy, and may never regard it as a language. The negative association persists, partly because JC does not have a nationally accepted orthographic system.[1] Despite this lack, linguists have studied various aspects of JC, with their analyses revealing that JC is lexically related to English but differs markedly in terms of phonology and syntax. One difference between English and Creole on which researchers agree is the structural composition of the auxiliary. However, as the first epigraph implies,

there is less agreement among researchers regarding the ordering of auxiliary elements in the JC verb phrase.

Although researchers have not reached a consensus, their findings and speculations allow for increasingly exact descriptions of the order of JC auxiliary elements. Studies treat individual verb forms or auxiliary elements (e.g. Cassidy, 1961; Christie, 1991; Gibson, 1986; LaCharité & Wellington, 1994;), compare auxiliary elements across Creoles (e.g. Bickerton; 1980; Craig, 1999; Holm, et al., 2000; Mufwene, 1984; Youseff 2003), or address Creole auxiliary structure without including the passive (e.g. Alleyne, 1980; Bailey, 1966; Patrick, 1999; Winford, 1993 & 2001). This paper draws on the findings of those studies and on observations of patterns in the speech of native speakers to propose a flexible JC auxiliary that includes the passive. The paper explores the structural similarities and differences between this flexible JC auxiliary and the fixed American English (AE) auxiliary. Since readers know the English auxiliary structure, only an overview of it is provided. The detailed treatment of the JC auxiliary that follows that overview should prove useful to North American teachers of JC-speaking students.

Since, as Devonish (2003) says, "the jury is still out on what writing system or systems will be used for writing the English-lexicon Creoles of the Caribbean" (p. 56), in this presentation of the structure and composition of the JC auxiliary, JC words are spelled phonetically, using AE phonemes (but without enclosure in slashes – / /). These phonetically-spelled JC words are italicized; however, examples from other sources are included as they have been recorded. The primary verb that is used for exemplification is "to eat" (AE), *ɪt* (JC). This popular anglicized Creole form (*ɪt*) is used instead of *njæm*, which is considered extremely vulgar.

Auxiliary Elements (AUX) in Standard American English

This section provides an overview of the ordering of auxiliary elements in the AE verb phrase. This overview is meant to facilitate comparison with the position, meaning, and other characteristics of JC auxiliary elements in the illustrations that follow it.

AE AUX Phrase Structure

The auxiliary in English can be represented by the following phrase structure rule:

(1) AUX → Tense   (Modal)   (Perfect)   (Progressive)   (Passive)
{Nonpast}or{Past} ({Modal} + ø) ({Have}+{EN}) ({BE$_2$}+ {ING}) ({BE$_3$}+{EN})

This rule (1) gives the auxiliary elements (modal, perfect, etc.) that normally precede the verb and the form (ø, -en, etc.) that a following element takes depending on the auxiliary chosen. The only obligatory element is tense, which is placed at the beginning of the rule to indicate that the first element in the verb phrase is inflected for the tense.

AE Tense Marker

The tense is either past or nonpast and is not directly related to time. The nonpast relates to something that is true in the present but may not be true at a particular moment. The past, on the other hand, refers to an action that is complete in the present or was complete before the moment of speaking. In English, the past is recognized by the inflection (-ed) on (regular) verbs. It is usually considered that if the verb is inflected, a tense is indicated. In most traditional grammars, the perfect and progressive – comprising inflected verbs – are referred to as tenses. However, the perfect and progressive are now referred to as aspects (indicating an action's duration, recurrence, or completion), necessitating the distinction between past and nonpast. The present perfect, for example, is considered nonpast and is taken to refer to an action that is not necessarily completed or that may still be relevant. The past perfect (= past) refers to an action that was completed recently, that is, prior to another event in the past (and, perhaps, still relevant then).

AE Modals/ The Future

English is said to have a periphrastic future. Usually the combination of words indicating the future includes a modal, either *will, shall, may, can*, or *must*. Usually only one modal can be chosen, and when this happens the element following the modal is uninflected. As an example, if the tense (Tns) is {nonpast}, and the modal is {will}, the combinations in (2) are possible.

(2)   will <u>eat</u>ø   will <u>have</u>ø eaten   will <u>be</u>ø eating

In (2), the underlined element follows the modal, and is unchanged. The zero form is indicated by ø. If the tense is past, the first element will again bear the marker. Therefore *would* (the past of *will*) appears in the modal position, yielding (3).

(3)   would <u>eat</u>ø   would <u>have</u>ø eaten   would <u>be</u>ø eating

Interestingly, in the Southern United States a double modal is present in speech, reflecting Creole patterns as will be demonstrated later in the paper. It is not uncommon to hear people in a southern dialect region say "I *may can* do that" or "I *might will* see you." However, in formal standard AE usage, only one modal is allowed.

The AE Perfect

If the third element – the perfect – is chosen, the verb phrase includes a form of "have" and the following element has the "-en" inflection. This means that the verb or "BE" will be in the past participial form as outlined in (4).

(4)   **Tns → Nonpast**   **Tns → Past**
         <u>have</u> eat<u>en</u>   <u>had</u> eat<u>en</u>
         <u>has</u> b<u>een</u> eating   <u>had</u> b<u>een</u> eating

The AE Progressive

       If the progressive is chosen, the verb phrase includes a form of BE_2 and the following element takes the –ING ending or present participial form:

(5)   **Tns → Nonpast**   **Tns → Past**
         <u>is</u> eat<u>ing</u>   <u>was</u> eat<u>ing</u>
         will <u>be</u> eat<u>ing</u>   would <u>be</u> eat<u>ing</u>

The AE Passive

       The passive necessitates a third form of BE and the past participial form of the following element – the verb:

(6)   **Tns → Nonpast**   **Tns → Past**
  Active: X has eaten Y   X had eaten Y
  Passive:Y has <u>been</u> eat<u>en</u> by X   Y had <u>been</u> eat<u>en</u> by X

  Active: X will have been eating Y   X would have been eating Y
  Passive:Y will have been <u>being</u>   Y would have been <u>being</u> eat<u>en</u>
      by X   eat<u>en</u> by X

Agreement in AE and in JC

       Examples (1) through (6) in the foregoing section display various forms of the same AE verb in different verb phrases. If all of these examples had included complete sentences, they would have also revealed that, with regard to agreement (of person and number), and with the exception of the copula, the AE verb is inflected in the present for the third person singular only. The situation is somewhat different in JC: the JC third person singular pronoun is peculiar; there is a distinction between the second person singular and plural; and the verb is never inflected for person or tense, always having the same morphological form.[2]

       Table 1 depicts the similarities and differences in agreement of subjects (represented by personal pronouns) and verbs (represented by AE "eat" and JC *ɪt*). The copula is included to demonstrate an exception in AE agreement and to show its three variants in JC. As will be seen later, JC speakers can choose from among these variants, but the variant chosen is unchanged notwithstanding the subject's number or person.[3]

Table 1. <u>AE and JC Personal Pronouns and Their Agreement with "Eat"/ɪt and the Copula</u>

	AE			JC		
	Personal Pronoun	Eat	Copula	Personal Pronoun	ɪt	Copula
1ˢᵗ person singular	I	eat	am	*mɪ*	*ɪt*	*æ/dɛ/dæ*
2ⁿᵈ person singular	You	eat	are	*jʊ*	*ɪt*	*æ/dɛ/dæ*
3ʳᵈ person singular	He/she/it	eat**s**	is	*ɪm* or *ihn/ʃɪ/ɪ*	*ɪt*	*æ/dɛ/dæ*
1ˢᵗ person plural	We	eat	are	*wɪ*	*ɪt*	*æ/dɛ/dæ*
2ⁿᵈ person plural	You	eat	are	*ʊnʊ*	*ɪt*	*æ/dɛ/dæ*
3ʳᵈ person plural	They	eat	are	*dɛm*	*ɪt*	*æ/dɛ/dæ*

Auxiliary Elements (AUX) in Jamaican Creole
JC AUX Phrase Structure

The uninflected verb is one of the striking features of the JC AUX. Another interesting aspect is the interchangeableness of some elements. This feature informs some disagreements about the JC AUX. Winford (1993) notes that Bailey (1966) and Alleyne (1980) were among the first linguists to propose Creole verb phrase models, reflecting examples (7) and (8) respectively.

(7)   (Modal₁)   (Modal₂)   (Tense) (Aspect)   (Verb)

(8)   (Modal)   { Past / Future }   { Reflective / Habitual / Progressive }   V.

Both models have been refuted because they are believed to yield ungrammatical JC sequences. Additionally, Bailey's model (7) requires unwieldy transformations to account for exceptions (Winford, 1993, pp. 88-91). Building on their research, Winford (1993) proposes that JC does not allow the sequence "Tense + Modal + Aspect" when the progressive is involved. In his view, the sequence "Tense + Modal + Progressive" that Bickerton (1980) proposed as the Creole prototype would yield a case such as example (9).

(9)   *Jan   ben   mos   a   iit*   (Winford, 1993, p. 114).
                T   M   A
        "John was certain to be eating."

Winford (1993) considers (9) ungrammatical; however, as will be seen in the discussion of JC modals, that sequence arises from the interchangeable nature of the JC tense marker.

   Considering such interchangeability, and drawing on the rule that Winford (1993) has derived for Guyanese Creole (pp. 105-111), and abstracting from Tables A1, A2, and A3 (in the Appendix), this paper proposes that the relative order of the AUX structure in JC is as follows.

(10)

AUX → (Tense)   (Modal)   (Progressive)   (Completive)   (Passive).

Because the verb is always uninflected and some elements can occupy more than one position, the situation is more complex than this proposed structure demonstrates. The arrows indicating interchangeable positions/elements only hint at this complexity that is treated in the remainder of the paper.[4]

JC Tense Marker

   Tense is included in the JC AUX as the first element, but in parentheses because, unlike in AE, in JC it can also be the second or third element (when there is a combination of modals). The clear indicator of the past tense in JC occurs whenever the verb is preceded by any of the variants *ben*, *den*, *wen*, or *en*, or by *dɪd*. Referring specifically to "[b]en/wen," Winford (2001) calls the past marker (*ben*, *den*, *wen*, *en*, or *dɪd*) the Relative Past auxiliary. Its prototypical use is to "locate some situation as occurring prior to the reference point under focus in the discourse" (p. 162). Since *ben*, *den*, *wen*, *en*, or *dɪd* are in fact tense markers – the Relative Past – and since the verb is always unchanged, as mentioned previously, the JC AUX is quite complex.

The combination (*ben ɪt, dɪd ɪt*, etc.) could correspond to either "ate" or "had eaten" in English, indicating the lack of distinction between the past and the traditional pluperfect (Christie, 2003, pp. 30-31; Holm et al, 2000, p. 157). Additionally, the tense is not indicated when the verb is used alone. Consider, for example, *ɪt*, which appears as the JC equivalent of "eat" or "eats" in Table 1. When used without a context, that verb could mean "eats," or "usually eats," or "ate," or "has eaten." In other words, when no context is specified, JC *ɪt* could be referring to the present, to present habitual action, or to action that occurred in the past (Christie, 2003, p. 31; Holm et al, 2000, p. 135; Winford, 2001, pp. 158-161). Since "unmarked past verbs are identical in form to verbs in non-past clauses" (Patrick, 1999, p. 223), usually when the verb (such as *ɪt*) is to be understood as past ("ate"), the JC speaker uses an adverb or some other phrase to indicate the past time of the action:

(11) a. *jɛsɪdɛ mɪ ɪt dɪ brɛd.*
          "Yesterday, I ate the bread."

      b. *mɪ ɪt dɪ brɛd ovæ dɛ.*
          "I ate the bread (when I was) over there."

When none of the past markers or adverbs is used, a modal may indicate tense. Because modals may be used alone or in combination with a regular past marker (in variable positions), the tense can appear on elements other than the first – as is outlined in the next section.

JC Modals/ The Future
Linguists such as Bailey (1966), Christie (1991), Gibson, (1986), Mufwene (1984), and Winford (1993, 2001) have not reached a consensus about what modals are in Caribbean English Creole (CEC) or in JC. However, their research findings, as well as current JC expressions that are included in Tables A1 and A2, indicate that modals may or may not be marked for tense. Moreover, unlike in formal English where only one modal can be selected, in JC some modals can be used in combination and "several kinds of ordering are possible" (Winford, 1993, p. 99). Basic examples are *wɪ ɪt* (will eat) and *wʊdæ ɪt* (would eat), involving single modals and indicating nonpast and past respectively (because *wʊdæ* is interpreted as past). However, combinations such as those that follow in (12) involve more than one modal, and the first modal does not always indicate the tense.

(12) a. *mɪ maɪt kjan dwit.*
          "I may be able to do it."

    b.   *ihn mʌs kudæ ɪt.*

"Certainly, he could have eaten."   ("He had to have been able to eat.")

    a.   *Jan... wi mos kom tumara.*   (Winford, 1993, p. 88)
        "John will certainly come tomorrow."

    In (12a), *maɪt* ("may") is nonpast, and the expression in which it is used relates to possibility, which is nonpast. Therefore, the tense is marked on the first modal. However, in (12b), *mʌs* ("must") is nonpast, but the expression is really related to the past as indicated in the second element and in the English glossing. There, the tense is marked on the second modal.
    Other combinations of modals include expressions such as those in (13a-c).

(13)   a.   *dat-de biebi wuda mos hafi priti.*
        "That baby would have to be pretty."   (Bailey, 1966, p. 68)

    b.   *ihn wɪ kjɑn ɪt.*
        "He will be able to eat."

    c.   *ihn maɪt wɪ kjɑn ɪt.*
        "He may be able to eat."

The *wɪ* in (13c) indicates action at some future point. Winford (2001) describes the Future in CEC as being dual – predictive and prospective. The latter is "conveyed by a combination of a progressive … plus *go*" and the former is conveyed by *wɪ* ("will") in JC (p. 165). The "prototypical use [of the predictive] is to make predictions about the future" (p. 165), and the prospective conveys the "sense of an immediate or prospective future" (p. 167). The prospective usually indicates definite intent at some time later.
    The modals "shall" and "must" require an explanation. "Shall" is rendered in various ways in JC, depending on whether the source of intention is internal or external. Any of the four variants (*o, æ gʌ, dɛ gʌ, gwen*) can be used if, for example, a mother is telling a child that he or she must eat something (at some point after their conversation). However, if speakers intend to do something (despite clear challenges or opposition), they would use any of the first three variants, as well as stress the first syllable.
    There are three variants corresponding to "must." These are *mʌs, fɪ,* and *hæfɪ*. All can be used to express obligation or compulsion (against one's wishes); however, an expression such as *fɪ ɪt* ("must eat") that is included in Table A1 would require a strong stress to indicate compulsion in the absence of context clues such as are present in (14).

(14)   a.   yu fi tikya dem.
             "You must be cautious of them."   (Bailey, 1966, p. 37)

       b.   mi miin se yu fi go.
            "I mean that you must go."   (Bailey, 1966, p. 38)

Additionally, *mʌs* and *hæfɪ* can be combined for emphasis. Winford (1993) notes that this combination is possible because *hæfɪ* corresponds to "have to" in English and operates like a regular verb (p. 93). However, *fɪ* is problematic since it is also the infinitive marker as well as it can mean "supposed to." Another modal having similar properties is *nid* ("need"). It is not included in Tables A1, A2, and A3, but it is a very common JC modal (Cassidy, 1961, p. 61).
        One significant difference between the AE AUX and the JC AUX is that the past marker can precede the <u>modal</u> in JC as shown in (15).

(15)

$$ihn \quad \begin{Bmatrix} ben \\ den \\ wen \\ en \\ dɪd \end{Bmatrix} \quad \underline{kudæ} \; ɪt.$$

                "He could have eaten" or "He used to be able to eat (a lot)."

Stress and context determine the exact meaning of the JC expressions in (15) and in (16), where the past marker follows the modal.

(16)   *ihn kudæ ben ɪt.*
                "He used to be able to eat (a lot)" or "He could have eaten."

These examples indicate the fluid nature of the past/tense auxiliary element in JC. Fluidity in the JC AUX is also evident in its approximation of the AE perfect.

The JC Completive
        As Tables A1, A2, and A3 indicate, JC does not have a perfect auxiliary equivalent to AE. To account for JC expression of a completed action, linguists describe a completive aspect marker that is expressed using *dʌn* (Winford, 2001; Mufwene, 1984; Patrick, 1999). The completive *dʌn* conveys the sense of the English verb "to finish," and precedes or follows the uninflected verb. Usually when *dʌn* is used with the past marker, the action is in the distant past. Generally, the context in which the completive is used helps

the hearer to determine if the reference is to the past or to before the immediate past, which could then approximate AE (present and past) perfect. Examples include (17a-c).

(17)   a. *mɪ dʌn ɪt / mɪ ɪt dʌn.*
           "I have finished eating."

        b. *mɪ en dʌn ɪt fraŋ 8 ʌklɑk.*
           "I had finished eating at 8 o'clock."

        c. mɪ wUdæ ɪt dʌn (/*dʌn ɪt*) *wɛn ju kʌm*
           "I would have finished eating when you arrive."

Some linguists include the word "already" in the gloss whenever *dʌn* is in the JC auxiliary construction. It has been omitted in (17a-c), but it is to be understood in the gloss. Mufwene (1984) demonstrates that the use of the completive can appear ambiguous, that is, indicating that an action is complete or the subject intends to have nothing more to do with an action. This means that (17a) could mean "I have finished eating" or "I have (already) eaten all that I planned to eat." Youssef (2003) also provides a useful outline of controversy regarding the use, interpretation and categorization of *dʌn*. For the purposes of this paper, (17a) and (17c) serve to indicate that the completive can be pre- or post-verbal. When used with the "get passive" (to be discussed later), the completive appears to be polyvalent. It can precede the tense, follow a modal, or precede or follow the passive or verb. Therefore, the completive can occupy several positions in the JC AUX.

The JC Progressive

In both the past and nonpast, the JC progressive involves the use of *æ* or *dɛ* (with all persons) in combination with the uninflected verb. In the nonpast, there is a third possible progressive marker – *dæ*, which is not normally used in the past. The past progressive is signaled by what appears to be one of the variants that mark the past; however, the vowel is normally lax in the past progressive marker. Instead of *ben*, for example, *bɛn* is used:

(18)
$$\left. \begin{array}{c} b\varepsilon n \\ d\varepsilon n \\ w\varepsilon n \\ \varepsilon n \\ dɪd \end{array} \right\} \quad \text{followed by} \quad \left\{ \begin{array}{c} æ \\ d\varepsilon \end{array} \right\}$$

Christie (2003) states that the progressive "can co-occur with the past tense indicator, as in *Jo en a swim* 'John was (/had been) swimming'" (p. 31). However, JC usually requires a past marker having a lax vowel to express the past progressive as long as the construction is not split. Moreover, with regard to the past progressive, it is not a question of whether there can or cannot be a marker: The past marker is required. In some descriptions, the past marker is attached to the progressive marker as shown in (19). **⁵**

(19)   a.   Jan ena fait mek im kluoz tier-aaf.
        (Bailey, 1966, p. 34)
            "John was fighting; that's why his clothes are torn."

        b.   di gyal-dem ena laaf.
                (Bailey, 1966, p. 40)
            "The girls were laughing."

Two minor points remain regarding the JC past and progressive. First, in the preceding discussion of the progressive element, the upper mesolectal form *ɪtn* or *itn* ("eating") has been omitted. This form applies only to some verbs, and, in the author's experience, is rarely used outside of Kingston. Devonish's (2003) inclusion of *taakin* ("talking") in his comments about the continuum in the West Indies (p. 50) reflects continued consideration of the form. However, the marker *æ* is more prevalent in JC, and, like the other forms, does not affect the morphology of the following element.**⁶** Second, the symmetry in Tables A1, A2, and A3 – at the points that correspond to traditional AE categories such as present progressive and present perfect progressive, future progressive and future perfect progressive, and the past progressive and past perfect progressive – reinforces the notion that in JC context is crucial to an understanding of time reference. Context is also crucial to determining voice in JC.

The JC Passive

In the proposed JC AUX, the passive is the final element. However, it has already been mentioned that the completive may follow the passive verb form. A word on the existence of the JC passive is appropriate at this point.

Because all JC verbs have one form, it might appear that JC does not have a passive. The reality, however, is that although the verb is not inflected to distinguish between the passive and the (active) verb in the surface structure, many expressions indicate that the passive does exist in JC. Another possible counterargument to the existence of a JC passive is that whenever the agent and object are explicit, JC uses the active. In other words, the JC verb phrase never includes the "by the agent" phrase that is common in the American English passive. Hence JC would render the AE expressions in (20) by the statements in (21).**⁷**

(20)   a.   "The vegetables were eaten by the children."

        b.   "The fish will have been being eaten by the children."

(21)   a.   *dɪ pɪknɪ dɛm ɪt dɪ vɛdʒɪtɛbl dɛm*
             "The children ate the vegetables."

        b.   *dɪ pɪknɪ dɛm wɪ æ ɪt dɪ fɪʃ.*
             "The children will be eating the fish."

If the agent were unspecified/unknown or avoided, the examples in (20) could, however, be rendered in the passive in JC as in (22).

(22)   a.   *dɪ vɛdʒɪtɛbl dɛm ɪt.*
              "The vegetables were eaten."

        b.   *dɪ fɪʃ æ ɪt./ dɪ fɪʃ æ gʌ æ ɪt.*
             "The fish will be being eaten."/ "The fish is going to be being eaten."

        Examples (21) and (22) suggest that the passive is not identified by the form of the verb but by the context. If hearers were not to recognize the passive in the last two constructions, they could add an object – in this case the subject of the active sentences in (21) – to test the sense of each. The results would be as follows.

(23)   a.   *"The vegetables ate/have eaten the children."

        b.   *"The fish will be (/is going to be) eating the children."

(23a) is impossible even in a Jamaican folktale; (23b) would be possible only if a whale or shark were concerned, and the speaker would name it to avoid appearing ridiculous. As LaCharité and Wellington (1994) explain, in JC passive constructions, "the logical object occurs in preverbal position and the logical subject is absent" (p. 266):

(24)   *dɪ wɪndæ brʌk*
        "The window is broken/ has been broken."

If the window in (24) is broken and there is no sense of an external agent – meaning the window broke itself – the JC speaker adds the equivalent of "by itself" or "just like that" (LaCharité and Wellington, 1994, p. 271; Winford, 1993, p. 135).

Often, the copula is omitted in JC. AE "He is tall" is rendered as *ihn taal*. Similarly, other forms of BE are either reduced or omitted (in both the active and passive). This absence is obvious in the passive examples in (25).

(25) a. *ʌnɪ drɔ tri taim æ jejr*
          "Honey is harvested three times per year."

     b. *ihn skul æ færɪn*
          "He/ She was educated abroad/ overseas."

     c. *dɪ rum æ klin*
          "The room is being cleaned."

     d. *au dæt dʊ?*
          "How is that done?"

Sometimes, the JC passive is marked by the use of "get":

(26) a. *tu mæn gɛt kɪl*
          "Two men have been killed."

     b. *tu tif gɛt kɛtʃ*
          "Two thieves have been caught."

Winford (1993) distinguishes the "get passives" from basic passives, rightly explaining that the former are often associated with "verbs expressing fortunate or unfortunate consequences" (p. 142).

All of the other examples of the passive, in (21) to (25), demonstrate a basic passive in JC. As Cassidy (1961) recognized, "these constructions are due … to the absence of an inflected participle, and the usual absence of the auxiliary *be* (or its equivalent)" in JC (p. 62). However, since the statements are "complete as they stand yet clearly not transitive, they must be … passive" (p. 61). The title of LaCharité and Wellington's (1994) article aptly summarizes the nature of the passive in JC: "phonetically empty but syntactically active."

Based on Table A3, and the unchanged morphological form of verbs in examples (21) to (25), the passive can look like an active construction. Moreover, when the passive includes the completive, the latter may precede or follow the former:

(27) *dɪ fɪʃ dʌn ɪt* or *dɪ fɪʃ ɪt dʌn*
     "The fish has been eaten."

Hence, whereas no "by the agent" phrase follows the JC verb, *dʌn* may do so. Unlike in the AE AUX, then, the JC passive is not necessarily the last auxiliary element. The JC passive and completive can combine, enabling the auxiliary completive to end the JC verb phrase.

Tree diagrams illustrating similarities and differences in the AUX in AE and JC

The phrase structure rules for American English and JC in examples (1) and (10) yield the tree diagrams in Figures 1 and 2 respectively. These figures summarize the similarities and differences that have been discussed regarding the AUX in AE and in JC.

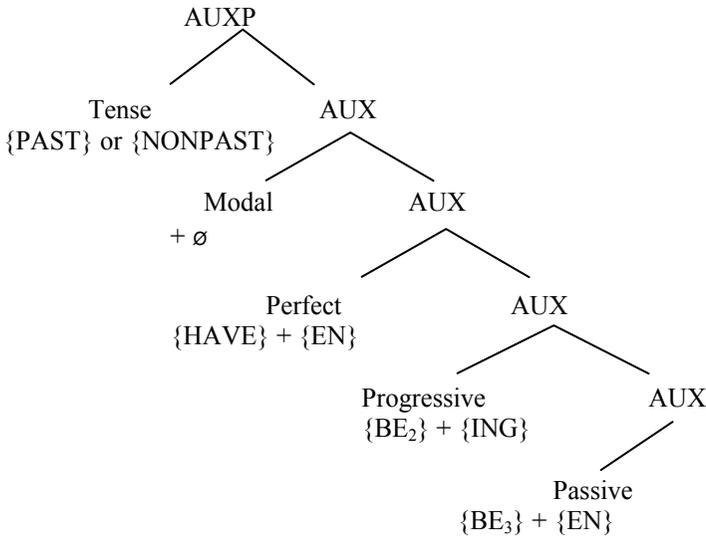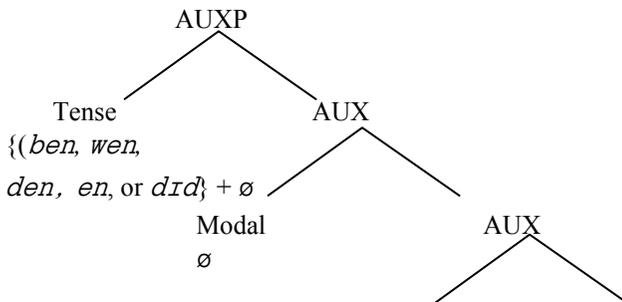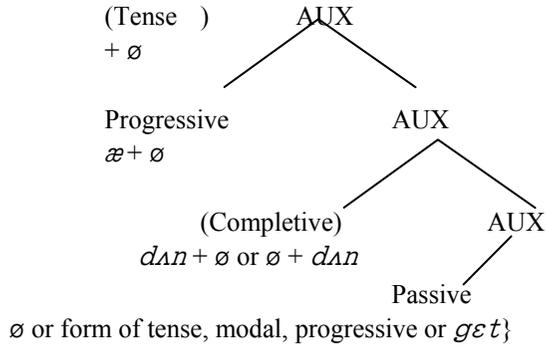Figure 1. <u>Tree Diagram Depicting American English Auxiliary Ordering</u>

```
                        AUXP
                       /    \
                      /      \
              Tense           AUX
       {PAST} or {NONPAST}   /   \
                            /     \
                       Modal       AUX
                        + ø        /  \
                                  /    \
                             Perfect    AUX
                          {HAVE} + {EN}  /  \
                                        /    \
                                 Progressive  AUX
                                 {BE₂} + {ING}  \
                                                 \
                                              Passive
                                            {BE₃} + {EN}
```

Figure 2. <u>Tree Diagram Depicting Jamaican Creole Auxiliary Ordering</u>

```
                    AUXP
                   /    \
                  /      \
           Tense          AUX
      {(ben, wen,        /   \
   den, en, or dɪd} + ø /     \
                   Modal       AUX
                     ø        /   \
                             /     \
```

(Tense   )   AUX
+ ø

Progressive   AUX
æ + ø

(Completive)   AUX
dʌn + ø or ø + *dʌn*

Passive

ø or form of tense, modal, progressive or *gɛt*}

In Fig. 2, the second tense and the completive are in parentheses to indicate that they do not have to occur in the marked positions. It is also to be remembered that in JC choosing one element does not affect the "form" of the following to the same extent as a change that occurs in AE.

CONCLUSION

Similarities and Differences in the AUX in AE and in JC

This paper proposed the JC auxiliary structure (including the passive) and considered it in light of the American English auxiliary phrase. It determined that the fixed AE auxiliary ordering of "Tense   (Modal)   (Perfect)   (Progressive)   (Passive)" bears only some resemblance to the flexible JC auxiliary structure of "(Tense)   (Modal)   (Progressive)   (Completive)   (Passive)". The AUX in AE and in JC converge and diverge as summarized below.

First, the tense is marked on the first element in the AE AUX construction and not on other elements as can happen in JC. When modals are combined, as JC allows, the JC tense marker may be the second or third auxiliary element. Second, formal standard AE usage allows only one modal, which appears as the second element in the AE AUX. By contrast, modals in combination – preceded or followed by past markers – are not uncommon in JC. Similar combinations are evident in informal speech in parts of the Southern United States, but these usually involve only double modals.

Third, verb forms vary in AE and are often inflected for tense, so that the infinitive, the third person singular in the present, the one-word past, and past and present participles are easily distinguished. Conversely, the JC verb is not inflected for time. Variants such as *ben, den, wen, or en*, or *dɪd* operate as tense markers and usually precede the verb to indicate a past action. Since the JC verb is not inflected, the context often determines the duration or completion of a past action. Fourth, instead of a perfect auxiliary element as obtains in AE, JC uses a completive (*dʌn)* to indicate an action that is complete or was or will be completed before another action. Having a flexible

position similar to some uses of "already" that it approximates, *dʌn* may appear at several points in the JC AUX.

Fifth, whereas forms of "Be" and a present participle indicate the AE progressive aspect, æ, *dɛ*, or dæ mark the JC progressive. However, whereas æ and *dɛ* are used in both the nonpast and past, dæ is normally used in the nonpast only. The present progressive in both AE and JC requires two verb forms. However, the JC past progressive requires three verb forms, unlike the AE past progressive that involves only two verb forms. The first of the three elements in the JC past progressive is selected from variants of the regular past markers. When speakers in the island's capital use the upper mesolectal form – the single occurrence of inflection in some JC verbs – the present progressive involves one verb form, such as *ɪtn* or *itn* ("eating"). This rare verb form is not used in the JC past progressive.

Sixth, the passive is the final element in the AE auxiliary construction and in the proposed JC AUX. However, in JC if the completive is used, the completive can appear as the final element in the structure. Additionally, the JC passive can look like an active construction. Because of the unchanged morphological form of JC verbs, the JC passive is said to have a "null inflectional morpheme" whereas the AE passive has "phonetic content" (LaCharité and Wellington, 1994, pp. 276-277). Copula absence is a feature of JC but not of AE. Therefore, in addition to the uninflected verb, in JC passive constructions, forms of "be" are often omitted or reduced. Further, if an agent is known and the JC speaker has no reason to avoid disclosure, the speaker uses an active instead of a passive construction. This means that the "by the agent" phrase that is an important part of the AE passive construction is never used in the JC passive. Only the variable completive (*dʌn*) follows the JC passive.

Pedagogical Implications

The differences identified in the structural composition of the AUX in AE and in JC have implications for pedagogy. As the second epigraph says, and as Caribbean examiners, North American teachers, and researchers report, teachers are likely to notice auxiliary elements that are not consistent with American English in predominantly JC-speaking students' scripts (e.g. Caribbean Examinations, 1995 & 2001; Cassidy, 1961; Craig, 1999; Dyche, 1996; Nero, 2001; Pollard, 1999 & 2002; Pratt-Johnson, 1993). Consequently, educators often suggest using contrastive analysis in teaching English to JC speakers: for example, Pollard (1999) suggests engaging JC-speaking students in "[f]rank comparison and contrast" (p. 331), and Craig (1999) recommends that teachers explicitly introduce "variant characteristics of English structure" (p. 5) that learners need to acquire.

These suggestions seem useful, especially when considered in light of the close lexical relationship between English and Jamaican Creole that is mentioned in the introduction. Because of this lexical similarity between JC

and English, JC-speaking students' perceptive knowledge of English is very high. Most JC-speaking Jamaicans, therefore, comprehend English statements, including those with long auxiliary phrases. However, this relationship complicates matters for JC-speaking learners: "through high recognition, *the learner tends to get the illusion that he/she knows the lexifier already*" (Craig, 1999, p. 6, emphasis in original). This relationship conveys two related views: the idea that JC is broken English, and the JC speaker's belief that speaking JC means speaking English (Morris, 1999). Addressing JC-speakers' mistaken belief that they are speaking English, therefore, requires systematic combination of aural and visual practice. In other words, if instruction is to be effective, the teacher has to establish the relationship between oral, aural, and written AE expressions – what the teacher says, what the student hears, and what should actually appear in print. In this way, the teacher can help to make JC speakers conscious of the structure and meaning of the JC auxiliary and how it approaches or departs from the AE auxiliary.

Still, precisely because of the lexical overlap, teachers should not attempt to address problems until after they appear in students' speech or writing. Accordingly, students would have a context within which to better perceive explanations. Moreover, the kind of consciousness-raising in which teachers of JC-speaking students engage should extend to subverting language ideology. Consciousness-raising is not always easy, and may be particularly challenging when JC students are involved: English is the language of schooling for JC students, so they never achieve literacy in JC. Often, too, these students may be ashamed of that language because of the stigma attached to it and the corresponding prestige associated with English: Many Jamaicans "equate 'language' with English" (Pollard, 2002, p. 6). However, by reinforcing Jamaican Creole's legitimacy as a language, teachers may foster improvements in students' attitude and aptitude.

Reports of challenges faced by Creole speakers learning English tend to focus on the verb: Pollard (2002) notes that "more verbs are corrected in classroom scripts than anything else" (p. 7). Nero (2001) also reports that in one study "the overwhelming majority of morphosyntactic errors in the participants' writings were verb-related" and due to the "zero inflection on the verb in Creole" (193). While it may be true that problems arise because of the uninflected JC verb, this paper has shown that differences between the AUX in AE and in JC clearly extend beyond the verb to other characteristics of auxiliary elements. Therefore, advice to teachers and emphasis in teaching should shift from exclusive focus on the verb to consideration of the full auxiliary structure. Although more research on the JC AUX is still needed – especially to address the flexibility conveyed by the variable positioning of JC tense markers, modals, and the completive – and although it may be some time yet before researchers agree on the full JC auxiliary structure, this paper should contribute to North American teachers' working knowledge of the JC AUX – knowledge that is increasingly required for effectively instructing Caribbean Creole-speaking immigrants.[8]

NOTES

1. Various published texts that include Jamaican Creole expressions reflect varying spelling patterns. Some academics use the Cassidy & LePage (1980) system that has been available since 1967. That system is "difficult for laypersons and was never intended for general use anyway" (Christie, 2003, p. 62).

2. Readers who are familiar with African American vernacular English (AAVE) may detect some similarities here. They should note, however, that there are differences in the way the copula is used. See, for example, Mufwene, 1983; Holm, 2004; Rickford, 1999; Winford, 1997.

3. Alleyne (1980) records the forms "I," "im," and "hi" as falling along a continuum. However, most texts record the JC third person singular as being invariable, with *ɪm* being used for the English "he," "she," "it." *ʃɪ* is considered anglicized Creole. It is included with the other variants in this paper because of the author's recollection that children growing up in Porus in the 1970s and 1980s would be sharply corrected if they referred to the feminine using *ɪm*. Like many other Jamaicans, the author used and still uses *ɪ* to refer to inanimate objects and to animals. Additionally, JC speakers choose between *ɪm* and *ihn* to refer to the masculine third person singular. In the author's experience, *ihn* is often chosen over *ɪ* and seems to correspond most with English "he." Sometimes *ɪm* corresponds with "his" (the object pronoun), and at other times it is used for emphasis. When not used for emphasis at the start of a sentence, it is accompanied by the progressive (*æ*).

4. Heeding Youssef's (2003) suggestion that "sub-categorical specification is problematic because no single sub-categorical feature is an absolute requirement for any category" (p. 101), this paper does not subdivide "Modal." The author recognizes, however, that perhaps more arrows are needed to show the various positions that the elements, specifically the past marker and completive, can occupy.

5. The author believes that, generally, a different word (/form of the past marker) is involved and that one cannot argue for assimilation of the vowel sound despite examples such as *Ann en mʌs æ ɪt* (Ann was certainly eating) and *Ann mʌs ɛn æ ɪt* (Ann must have been eating). The tense marker is in a different place, and there is a shift from *en* to *ɛn* although both examples reflect the past progressive. This shift that occurs when the progressive marker is immediately preceded by a past marker requires further investigation.

6. It is to be noted that among the past and progressive markers, *ben*, *bɛn*, *den*, *dɛn*, *dɛ*, and *dæ* tend to be associated with deep rural and northern parishes such as Trelawny, St. Elizabeth, and St. James; æ and *dɪd* with Manchester and; *dɪd* with Kingston. Patrick (1999, pp. 195-198), addresses this stigma although, like

Devonish (2003, pp. 52-53), Winford (1997, pp. 241-242), and other linguists, he seems to be unaware that similar forms are used in Manchester and in Kingston.

7. It is to be noted that in JC, singular nouns and generic plurals are of the same form. For example, *pɪknɪ* is either child or children. Specified plural nouns are indicated by the singular followed by *dɛm*.

8. The author would like to thank the many Jamaicans who graciously commented on JC expressions, and Rudolph Troike and the AWP reviewers for their insightful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

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Appendix
Verb Phrase Structure Tables

Tables A1, A2, and A3 present possible combinations of elements in JC verb phrases. Table A1 involves the auxiliary elements for AE while Table A2 bears potential JC auxiliary elements. The X in Tables A1 and A2 relates to JC elements only, as the AE combinations are included only for reference because the point of departure is English.

Table A1. <u>Auxiliary Elements in the Nonpast (Active)</u>

AE	JC	Modal	Perfect	Progressive	Verb
eats	ɪt				X
is eating	æ / dɛ / dæ ɪt			X	X
has eaten	(dʌn) ɪt/ ɪt (dʌn)		(?)		X
will eat	wɪ ɪt	X			X
has been eating	æ / dɛ / dæ ɪt			X	X
will be eating	wɪ { æ / dɛ / dæ } ɪt	X		X	X
will have eaten	wɪ (dʌn) ɪt (dʌn)	X	(?)		X
will have been eating	wɪ { æ / dɛ / dæ } ɪt	X		X	X

can eat	*kjɑn ɪt*					
may eat	*mje* *ɪt* *maɪt*					
must eat	*mʌs* *fɪ* ⎫ *ɪt* *hæfɪ* ⎭					
shall eat	*o* *æ gʌ* *dɛ gʌ* ⎫ *ɪt* *gwen*					

Table A2. <u>Auxiliary Elements in the Past (Active)</u>

AE	JC	Past	Modal	Progressive	Completive	Verb
ate	_____ *ɪt* *ben* *den* *wen* ⎫ *ɪt* *en* *dɪd*	X				X X
was eating	*bɛn* *dɛn* *wɛn* ⎫ ⎧ *æ* ⎫ *ɪt* *ɛn* *dɛ* *dɪd*	X	X			X
had eaten	*ben* *den* *wen* ⎫ (*dʌn*) *ɪt* (*dʌn*) *en*	X			(X)	X

	dɪd					
would eat	*wʊdæ ɪt*		X			X
had been eating	{ *bɛn / dɛn / wɛn / ɛn / dɪd* } { *æ / dɛ* } *ɪt*	X		X		X
would be eating	*wʊdæ* { *æ / dɛ* } *ɪt*		X	X		X
would have eaten	*wʊdæ* { *dɪd / en* } *(dʌn) ɪt*	(X)	X		(X)	X
	{ *ben / den / wen / en / dɪd* } *wʊdæ (dʌn) ɪt*	X	X		(X)	X
would have been eating	*wʊd ɛn æ ɪt* / *wʊdæ dɪd æ ɪt*	X	X	X		X
could eat	*kʊdæ ɪt*					
ight eat	*maɪtæ ɪt*					
had to eat	{ *ben / den / wen / en / dɪd* } *hæfɪ ɪt*					
should eat	*ʃʊdæ ɪt*					

In Tables A1 and A2, *dʌn* is put in phrases twice if it can be used in either position. It is, however, never used in both positions simultaneously. The parentheses indicate that *dʌn* may or may not be used in the phrase.

Table A3. <u>The Passive</u>

AE	JC
Nonpast	Nonpast
(The fish) is eaten	*(dɪ fɪʃ) ɪt*
… is being eaten	*… æ ɪt*
… has been eaten	*… ɪt/ (dʌn) ɪt / ɪt (dʌn)*
… will be eaten	*… æ gʌ ɪt*
… has been eaten	*… ɪt/ (dʌn) ɪt / ɪt (dʌn)*
… will be being eaten	*… wɪ æ ɪt/ æ gʌ æ ɪt*
… will have been eaten	*… wɪ (dʌn) ɪt (dʌn)/ æ gʌ (dʌn) ɪt (dʌn)*
… will have been being eaten	*… wɪ æ ɪt / æ gʌ æ ɪt*
Past	Past
(The fish) was eaten	*(dɪ fɪʃ) en ɪt*
… was being eaten	*… en æ ɪt*
… had been eaten	*… en (dʌn) ɪt (dʌn)*
… could be eaten	*… kʊdæ ɪt*
… had been eaten	*… en (dʌn) ɪt (dʌn)*
… could be being eaten	*… kʊdæ æ ɪt*
… could have been eaten	*… kʊdæ en (dʌn) ɪt (dʌn)*
… could have been being eaten	*… kʊdæ en æ ɪt* *… en kʊdæ æ ɪt*

In Table A3, "will" is used as the modal in the nonpast, and "could" in the past in AE. In JC, only one form is used from variants such as *ben, den, wen, en*, and *dɪd*, or *o, æ gʌ, dɛ gʌ, gwen*.