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VARIATION IN PAST TENSE MARKING IN
BEQUIA CREOLE: APPARENT TIME
CHANGE AND DIALECT LEVELLING

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Abstract

Research in the Caribbean often links global phenomena (e.g. increased tourism) to changes in lifestyles and mindsets taking place in this part of the world (Curtis, 2009). I examine the direction, intensity, and motivations of language changes among adolescents in three communities in Bequia (St. Vincent and the Grenadines) considering the socio-economic transformations affecting the island.

Data for this study was obtained using a combination of sociolinguistic interviews and conversations between Bequia adolescents and their grandparents recorded in the course of several fieldwork trips. Three villages in Bequia were considered, Hamilton, Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant, characterised by different patterns of settlement and socio-economic development. I investigate variation between: (i) creole verb stems vs. Standard English verb inflections (e.g. I *go* yesterday vs. I *went* yesterday), and (ii) verb stems and verb inflections vs. creole preverbal markers (e.g. I *bin* play yesterday). A variety of grammatical, discourse-specific, functional, and cognitive constraints are tested to determine which factors condition the variable patterns across different communities and age groups, and how linguistically similar/different these communities are.

Results of the quantitative multivariate analysis of variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs show dialect levelling (Kerswill, 2003) among adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm and a transmission of the system (Labov, 2007) from the older generation to the younger in Mount Pleasant. In addition, adolescents in Paget Farm have recycled (Dubois and Horvath, 1999) a stigmatised creole form, preverbal *bin*, and are using it significantly more than any other group on the island.

The study points to several important conclusions. Firstly, it emphasises the necessity for a multidisciplinary perspective in accounting for the factors which condition language change, especially in such a diverse and fast developing setting as the present-day Caribbean. Secondly, it supports the research on language and globalisation emphasising the relationship between the local and the global (e.g. Meyerhoff and Niedzielski, 2003). Finally, the study attempts to determine the nature of variation in creole languages as e.g. a creole continuum or co-existing systems, and establish replicable methods for measuring linguistic similarities/differences between communities.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is of my own composition, and that it contains no material previously submitted for any other degree of professional qualification. The work reported in this thesis has been executed by myself except where due acknowledgment is made in the text.

Agata Daleszynska

August 2011

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List of Abbreviations

AAE	African American English
AAVE	African American Vernacular English
BahCE	Bahamian Creole English
BC	Barbadian Creole
BeqCE	Bequia Creole English
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CEC	Caribbean English creole
CXC	Caribbean Examinations Council
ET	Exemplar Theory
GC	Guyanese Creole
GE	General English
Hab	habitual aspect
Ham	Hamilton
HP	Historical Present
JamCE	Jamaican Creole English
MP	Mount Pleasant
NP	noun phrase
NSVE	Nova Scotia Vernacular English
Perf.	perfective aspect
PF	Paget Farm
StE	standard English
SVC	serial verb construction
SVG	St Vincent and the Grenadines
TC	Trinidadian Creole
TMA	tense mood aspect
VP	verb phrase
-ed	inflected form of the verb
Ø	bare form of the verb

Introduction

This dissertation examines language variation and change among adolescents in Bequia (St Vincent and the Grenadines) during a period of socio-economic and cultural transitions. Recent research in anthropology, sociology, and economics has portrayed the Caribbean as a rapidly developing region, heavily impacted by globalisation in the past decade (Duval, 2004; Curtis, 2009). Bequia has also been subject to globalising processes, which has become apparent in various ways. For example, the general standard of living has significantly improved over the recent years and the number of tourists has been gradually increasing, especially since an airport was built on the island (St Vincent and the Grenadines Tourist Statistics, 2009).

I analyse the language of adolescents in Bequia and investigate whether the patterns of language variation in this age group are subject to change compared to the older generation of speakers. In this fast developing socio-economic landscape, Bequia adolescents today are more than ever exposed to Standard English (Trudgill and Hannah, 2002) which infiltrates the local community through contact with tourists, popular media and Bequians' increased mobility. This sudden raise in language contact, combined with growing consumerism and a general change in the socio-economic landscape of Bequia makes this study particularly timely. A need for this analysis is reinforced by a general lack of studies investigating language changes in progress and their direction across creole varieties in the Anglophone Caribbean (Aceto and Williams, 2003).

Bequia, similarly to other Caribbean islands investigated previously (e.g. Rickford, 1986; Winford, 1992; Blake, 1997; Patrick, 1999; Hackert, 2004), is characterised by a high rate of linguistic variation. Previous studies in Bequia also illustrated the degree of linguistic differences between grammars in three villages on the island – Mount Pleasant, Hamilton, and Paget Farm, characterised by different settlement and development patterns. I compare the previous accounts of variation within copula deletion, negation, and existential constructions in Bequia (Walker and Meyerhoff, 2006; Meyerhoff and Walker, 2007; Walker and Sidnell,

2011) with an analysis of variables of past temporal reference system in Bequia: bare verbs vs. inflected verbs, and preverbal markers (*bin, did*). I test which linguistic factors determine the patterns of language variation and change and whether these are homogenous across different age groups and communities. Through this analysis I aim to determine the nature of variability within past temporal reference by testing whether this variation is more likely to be as separate co-existing grammars (Labov, 1998) across the communities or the creole continuum model (DeCamp, 1971; Patrick, 1999).

Next to linguistic constraints, I also aim to demonstrate the role of discourse-specific factors in the interpretation of variable patterns in Bequia. I investigate the way speakers organise linguistic variants across different sections of a narrative and to what extent discourse strategies such as foregrounding and backgrounding influence the distribution of forms. I also account for several cognitive and functional effects such as priming, and the presence/absence of a temporal marker. I test whether these categories can point to differences between the systems across the Bequia communities and investigate the extent to which these constraints correlate with grammatical factors. I argue that variation in Bequia is embedded in a rich and complex system where discourse and grammar are inextricably linked.

Further, I aim to interpret the variable patterns in Bequia by considering the current socio-economic context of the island. I analyse the relationship between local place ideologies and global socio-economic changes. I determine whether these ideologies influence the intensity and direction of language change among adolescents in Bequia. I apply the linguistic marketplace concept (Bourdieu, 1977) which usually assumes that the values of symbolic resources are dictated externally by the dominant class or group. However, I demonstrate that in Bequia the values are assigned to linguistic forms through the social meanings of those forms which are locally negotiated. I argue that this process is triggered by recent socio-economic transformations (e.g. economic development) and show that global processes can shape local linguistic markets. Therefore, the current study adds a further insight into research on language change in a globalisation context.

The study points to several conclusions. Firstly, it emphasises the necessity for a multidisciplinary perspective in providing the most extensive account of

factors which condition language change, especially in such a diverse and fast developing setting as the present-day Caribbean. Secondly, the project adds to variationist research which focuses on developing quantitative techniques for drawing comparisons between different speech communities (e.g. Meyerhoff, 2009a; Nagy and Irwin, 2010). Finally, it supports the existing studies on language and globalisation by investigating the local consequences of global transformations. It demonstrates that globalising processes can reinforce local ideologies, which is particularly important for the linguistic research in the Caribbean, the region heavily impacted by globalising processes (Curtis, 2009).

Chapter 1 Theoretical aspects and research questions

1.1 Introduction

In the current chapter I lay down the theoretical aspects of this dissertation. I discuss the background and locus of the study as well as the main research questions I aim to answer. Since the study combines several linguistic disciplines, such as variationist sociolinguistics and creolistics, it is important to address earlier studies in these fields which inform the current project. In general, three main issues are investigated in this dissertation:

(i) The nature of linguistic variation in a creole speech community

First, I focus on different approaches towards analysing variation within creole systems, especially across the Anglophone Caribbean. I discuss the creole continuum model (DeCamp, 1971), and compare it to frameworks that propose modelling variation in terms of co-existing grammars (as defined by Labov, 1998). I concentrate especially on tense, mood, and aspect systems (from here onwards – TMA), one of the most highly variable elements of a creole grammar, and discuss problems with establishing an envelope of variation for variables beyond the level of phonology.

(ii) Language change across two generations of speakers in Bequia

Secondly, I explain why language among adolescents in Bequia might be subject to change. I suggest dialect levelling (e.g. Kerswill, 2003) could be one possible outcome of this change. I also explain the motivations for considering variationist methodology as an appropriate framework for analysing language contact and change. I discuss the techniques which I apply in comparing the degree of change across different communities, and point to some challenges of such a comparative analysis.

(iii) Social stratification of creole-speaking communities and the social meaning of linguistic variables

Finally, I discuss previous studies which showed variation in creole languages as socially stratified. I characterise the social categories which were considered as significant for patterns of variation in previous research across the Anglophone Caribbean, and how they correlate with the distribution of linguistic forms across different social groups. I also address the studies which highlight linguistic variables as resources for identity construction through the social meanings attached to them. I support the approaches which consider variation as socially functional. This assumes that linguistic variables are a resource which speakers use to position themselves in various social contexts, for example to align with some individuals or dissociate from others. However, I will also point out several methodological problems with eliciting the social meanings of linguistic variants.

1.2 Introducing the approaches to analysing variation in creole languages

One of the goals of the early analyses of creole languages was to discover those linguistic elements which reflect the African linguistic heritage of creoles (Patrick, 1999: 5) and comparing them to the linguistic systems of their lexifiers. In this process the idea of a creole continuum was introduced which assumes that linguistic forms within a creole system can be ordered on a continuum ranging from those closest to a standard form of a lexifier (the acrolect), to those furthest from the lexifier language, and therefore most “creole-like” (the basilect), with the linguistic “middle” referred to as the mesolect (DeCamp, 1971). Aiming to establish the most vernacular, that is the most “creole-like” features of a system, creole studies focused predominantly on basilects. It has been frequently underlined however, that there is a great deal of inter- and intra-speaker variability across creole speaking communities and that speakers’ linguistic choices can be linguistically, but also socially correlated (Rickford, 1987; Winford, 1992; Patrick, 1999; Hackert, 2004).

BeqCE is also characterised by a high rate of variability. An analysis of variation within the copula (Walker and Meyerhoff, 2006) and negation patterns (Walker and Sidnell, 2011) revealed that despite an overall high fluctuation of

forms, two different systems can be established – a more creole-like one, operating in Paget Farm and Hamilton, and a more English-like system, identified in Mount Pleasant. One of the goals of this study is to test this claim empirically by establishing whether the variable system of past temporal reference on Bequia is better modeled as two separate but co-existing grammars or one system in a form of a continuum scale. Both models are discussed in the following sections.

1.2.1 The creole continuum model – non-discreteness and unidimensionality

As I mentioned above, classification of creoles into basilects, mesolects and acrolects encouraged modelling synchronic variability in creole languages as a creole continuum, where linguistic forms are organised into separate “lects”, ranging from those most divergent from a standard, to those classified as the most standard ones (DeCamp, 1971; Bickerton, 1973). According to DeCamp (1971), the creole continuum model assumes that speakers’ linguistic repertoires should be considered as seamless wholes as the rate of intra-speaker variability is so great that it is not possible to establish clear boundaries between discrete systems based on social and/or linguistic factors. As DeCamp puts it: “Each speaker represents not a single point but a span on the continuum, for he is usually able to adjust his speech upward or downward for some distance on it” (DeCamp, 1971: 82; Winford, 1997: 257).

In addition to this non-discreteness (Rickford, 1987; Patrick, 1999), another characteristic feature assigned to a creole continuum is its linearity, which assumes that linguistic forms (and language users) can be linearly ordered along one linguistic dimension and that they can be assigned to one linguistic system. To put it in Bickerton’s words, the unidimensional nature of a creole continuum assumes that “there is a single series of sequent changes in any continuum (...) which serve to link a basilect to its acrolect...and which enable us to place any given speech act as its appropriate point on the continuum” (Bickerton, 1980: 123; Winford, 1997: 259). Non-discreteness of a creole continuum, its linearity and unidimensionality have been subject to criticism by creolists, but especially by sociolinguists analysing

variation as an inherent and fundamental property of a linguistic system (cf. Labov, 1971; Patrick, 1999; Rickford, 1987).

There is no doubt that the rates of intra-speaker variability among creole speakers are exceptionally high and that individuals can switch between different 'lects' according to a social domain. However, assigning this extreme variability to a single linguistic system is, arguably, problematic and methodologically challenging. This issue is addressed by G. Sankoff who asks:

"How, for example, can one write a synchronic grammar which includes a large set of closely related varieties, so closely related that they co-occur in the speech of even single individuals, so closely related that it is almost impossible, to make discrete divisions among them, and yet so divergent that the polar varieties may scarcely be intelligible, so divergent that no one individual spans all?" (Sankoff, 1979 as cited in Winford, 1997: 258)

Indeed, the creole continuum model assumes a high inter- and intra-speaker variability within one linguistic system. In the current study I follow a definition of a system forwarded by Labov (1971; 1994) who claims that a linguistic system can be recognised based on a strict co-occurrence of a set of rules governing the distribution of variants. These rules can be determined quantitatively and compared across potentially different (discrete) systems. To determine whether in Bequia we are dealing with two different grammars or one highly variable system I first establish the rules which constrain the distribution of the variables analysed here, and examine whether they indeed fall into two discrete systems correlated with different villages on the island. I discuss the methodology of such an analysis in Chapter 3. Patrick's (1999) analysis of variation across several phonetic, phonological and morpho-syntactic variables demonstrated that the high rates of intra-speaker variability and discreteness are not mutually exclusive. That is, despite their extreme style-shifting patterns in creole speech communities, individuals can still be grouped into discrete cohorts according to the patterns of variable use usually based on quantitative calculations. This raises an important question, namely, on what basis should classification of speakers into a creole continuum or co-existing systems be made – quantitative patterns (frequency rates, or hierarchy of constraints?), and/or shared evaluations of language use. I return to

this discussion in due course.

Next to (non)-discreteness, I also test whether the system(s) in Bequia can be classified as unidimensional. First, I test whether there is a gradual transition between a basilect, a mesolect, and an acrolect. What is the range of intra-speaker variability and what consequences does it have for classifying the nature of the system. Secondly, I examine the social dimensions of variation in Bequia. Patrick (1999) concluded that variability among the speech community in Veeton, Jamaica cannot be narrowed down to the standard/creole dimension only as there are further, more fine-grained social categories which correlate with the distribution of forms, such as urban/rural, or old/young. Considering these categories, Patrick argues for a non-unidimensional character of the system in JamCE. I test whether the same can be established for BeqCE.

1.2.2 Co-existing grammars

An alternative approach to tackling variability within creole-speaking communities deals with assigning variable linguistic forms to separate but co-existing systems. This suggests that variation in the continuum cannot be accounted for by a single set of rules, be it grammatical or social. The idea of co-existing grammars is advocated by e.g. Winford (1984), Bailey (1971), Devonish (1989), Edwards (1980), and Labov (1998) for African American Vernacular English. In the current study I follow Labov's (1998) definition of co-existing systems and the methods that allow for their recognition. Labov's definition of a system implies co-occurrence of rules operating upon a set of linguistic forms. It is assumed that two systems can co-exist, with each of them comprising in itself a complete and coherent grammar, which are not however completely independent. Labov demonstrated the application of this model in the analysis of African American Vernacular English tense and aspect. He concludes that AAVE consists of two different systemic components: the General English (GE) component and the African American component (ibid. 118), which indicates that AAVE speakers have access to the same grammatical machinery as GE speakers but can also construct structures that are unavailable to GE speakers. Therefore, the African American component is considered a subset of GE, which is

different to recognising them as two distinct languages. According to Labov assigning each variant to a separate language or dialect is: (on the one hand) “attractive in that it reduces many different kinds of variation to a single kind: the choice of system A or system B at a given point in utterance. But at the same time, it removes the variation from any further linguistic analysis based on system-internal relations. All variation would then be a form of *code-switching* (original emphasis), where the system is assumed to be intact, and the analytical problems are reduced to finding the set of possible choice points for switching” (Labov, 1998: 138)

Further, Labov (ibid. 139) enlists four conditions according to which co-existing systems could be determined:

- (i) Segregation of variants – speakers are able to segregate the variants of either system according to the context of a topic.
- (ii) Heterogeneity of constraints – variables in these different systems are constrained by a different set of factors
- (iii) Absence of phonological conditioning – a variant alternates with another variant (or a zero) without any evidence of phonological conditioning
- (iv) Strict co-occurrence of rules – one rule never applies without the other. Therefore, the presence of multiple co-occurring features that can be attributed to one system, and not to another, might suggest the presence of co-existing systems (cf. Walker and Sidnell, 2011)

Based on the above definition of co-existing systems, I test whether variation in Bequia can be considered in terms of co-existing systems and whether the system referred to as “a more creole-like” will be more independent from the “General English” (to use Labov’s term) component than the “more English-like” one. In other words, I test whether the systems in Hamilton and Paget Farm, hypothesised as more creole-like, are indeed more divergent from General English, and can fall into a discrete separate system (or systems). On the other hand, I test the same for Mount Pleasant and examine whether variation in this community is different from that operating in Hamilton and/or Paget Farm and whether it is more strongly related to General English than in the other communities. The co-existing systems model was tested by Walker and Sidnell on Bequia (2011) for variation within

negation patterns (cf. Section 2.5.3). They concluded that the sharp differences in rates of inflection between several variants of negation, and the differences in constraints which correlate with their distribution across the communities warrant modelling variation in Bequia as separate co-existing systems rather than one variable system in a form of a creole continuum. I discuss both approaches in Chapter 7 of this study and demonstrate that they are not mutually exclusive. Rather, both approaches are put forward to grasp the high rates of inter- and intra-speaker variability in creole languages and there is potential for complementarity when the advantages and the drawbacks of both models are considered.

One of the challenges of classifying forms into separate system deals with establishing on what grounds should be based and where can we draw a line where one system starts and the other one ends. For example, if bare verbs and inflected verbs share the same grammatical function, e.g. they mark past temporal reference in the preterite tense, should we assume that bare verbs realise the preterite tense in system A, while verb inflections have a similar function in system B? I suggest that in order to answer this question we need to consider not only the frequency rates of variants across potentially different systems, but also the constraints which they distribution is sensitive to, established through quantitative analysis. Throughout this thesis I will evaluate whether these methods indeed help us establish whether establishing the boundaries of separate systems is indeed possible.

In establishing whether a speaker is using these forms variably, rather than code-switching between them (in which case the two forms would belong to two entirely different systems), one would first have to decide whether the forms in questions are indeed “alternative ways of saying the same thing” (cf. Labov and Weiner, 1983: 6). Establishing the variable context is inevitably related to the issue of form-function asymmetry which is especially relevant to non-phonological variables. The form-function asymmetry is understood here as a potential disagreement between two (or more) functions assigned to different linguistic forms. This is illustrated in Figure 1.1. One of the major prerequisites for the quantitative analysis of variation is that variants of a sociolinguistic variable are semantically (functionally) equivalent, and that they are indeed alternative ways of saying the same thing. I discuss this issue in the following section.

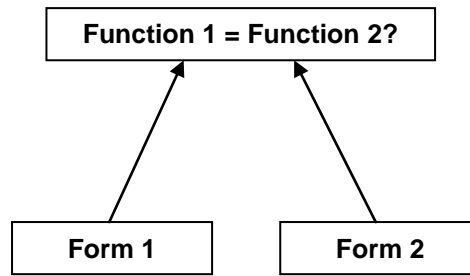


Figure 1.1 A model of the form-function asymmetry

1.2.3 The form-function asymmetry

In studies of linguistic variation, syntactic and morpho-syntactic variables received considerably less attention than phonetic and phonological ones. The main reason for this is often related to the problems with assigning the above-mentioned “sameness of meaning” to two separate syntactic or morphosyntactic forms. According to Romaine, “within this context it is easy to see why phonological variables were the safest point for quantitative analysis” (1984: 411). It seems that the controversy regarding the extension of the variable concept to morphosyntax stems from different understandings of what “meaning” actually implies. Indeed, identifying the criteria by which two forms can be classified as two ways of saying the same thing should be the starting point in an analysis of variation above the level of phonology. Romaine (1984: 429) proposes three approaches according to which such variation can be accounted for. In terms of establishing the relationship between form and meaning which can serve as a point of comparison between two different potential variants of the same variable, one can consider:

- 1) The logical structure of utterances (i.e. truth value) and surface syntactic form (cf. Keenan, 1975; Bartsch and Vennemann, 1972)
- 2) Perceptual processing and syntactic process (cf. Bever and Langendoen, 1972; Lightfoot, 1979)
- 3) Conversational organisation/interaction and syntactic structure (cf. Sankoff and Brown, 1976).

In the current study I will be concerned only with the third point. That is, in

establishing the relationship between form and meaning across different variables I will consider not only the grammatical function of a given form (e.g. a representation of the Preterite Tense), but also its role in discourse. Therefore, variants (of one variable) must be seen as related in terms of their common function in grammar (e.g. across tense and aspect) and discourse (e.g. Lavandera, 1978; Dines, 1980; Walker, 2010). I argue that these two criteria are inter-related and that it is possible to establish the grammatical function of forms through a careful analysis of their “behaviour” in discourse (following e.g. Sankoff and Brown, 1976 or Hopper and Thompson, 1980).

I do not claim however that variants will always show a *full* functional overlap that is two morphosyntactic variants might never be considered as two fully corresponding ways of saying the same thing. However, after D. Sankoff (1988) I argue that subtle distinctions in referential value of linguistic variants can be neutralised in discourse, and the very contexts in which differences between these forms are neutralised need to be established. According to Schwenter and Torres Cacoulos (2008) who apply this approach in establishing the variable context in their analysis of variation within Present Perfect and the Preterite in Mexican and Peninsular Spanish: “although contexts can almost always be found in which different forms have different meanings, there are alternations in which the full accompaniment of meaning distinctions is not pertinent either for the speaker or the interlocutor” (Schwenter and Torres Cacoulos, 2008: 10). This goes in line with D. Sankoff’s (1988: 153) proposal which assumes that although there might always be some differences between (potentially synonymous) forms, there is no reason to expect these differences to be pertinent every time one of the variant forms is used and that these differences can be levelled out in particular discourse contexts. Therefore, considering the discourse context in which given variants co-occur provides an objective (and reliable) way of coding for semantic distinctions (cf. Kapatsinski, 2009).

The problem of the form-function asymmetry is especially relevant to the linguistic context of a creole continuum considering the high rate of variation between forms across different ‘lects’. Creole TMA systems provide an especially complex case for identifying the functional similarities of forms mainly due to a

wide range of variants which often signal temporal and aspectual distinctions in nuanced and specific ways. Therefore, the challenge with co-existing systems within the area of TMA deals with identifying “equivalent” variants across these potentially different systems. For example, it should be determined whether the grammatical function of inflected verbs in expressing past temporal reference, classified as an acrolectal or a standard feature overlaps with that of bare verbs or preverbal markers which are representative of the other ends of the continuum. It is therefore important to establish a pool of variable past temporal forms serving a similar grammatical (e.g. aspectual or temporal) function which can then be tested for their belonging to different co-existing systems according to the criteria discussed above.

However, grouping forms according to their role in discourse should not be the sole criterion for assigning forms to separate systems. Indeed, such an a priori classification was characteristic of the early creole continuum model, where linguistic forms were classified into lects based on their distribution across creole grammars. Instead, quantitative sociolinguistics assumes that classification of linguistic forms into different systems can be empirically tested. It involves the comparisons of constraint rankings, that is, the order of factors which are hypothesised to condition the occurrence of a linguistic form according to their significance (Tagliamonte, 2004). This methodology is in line with the criteria useful for establishing the differences between two co-existing system suggested by Labov outlined above (Section 1.2.2), and especially the “heterogeneity of constraints” condition. This methodology is also followed in the current study. It allows for drawing comparisons between different grammars (systems) across individuals (Rickford and McNair-Knox, 1994) and communities (Meyerhoff, 2009a; Nagy and Irwin, 2010).

In the current study linguistic forms were initially grouped according to their grammatical functions established through previous examinations of creole TMA systems (e.g. Winford, 1993; Spears, 1990), as well as detailed observations and comparisons of linguistic forms in context. The purpose of this analysis is not only to characterise the nature of the system of past temporal reference in Bequia, but also to determine whether this system is subject to apparent time change. In the

next section I discuss the different types of language changes possibly taking place in the TMA of BeqCE.

1.3 Potential outcomes of language change

So far few studies have addressed the issue of language change in CECs. Whereas previous research concentrated on the nature of variation and the social stratification of creole varieties, especially in the Anglophone Caribbean (see Section 1.4 below), to my knowledge there are no studies which examine in detail the issue of change in creole-speaking communities, especially in the current period of socio-economic transitions in the region (Curtis, 2009; Duval, 2004). Age is included as one of the social variables which correlates with patterns of language variation in Veeton, Jamaica (Patrick, 1999) and Nassau, the Bahamas (Hackert, 2004). Patrick (1999: 290) includes speakers under 18 and over 45 years old, while in Hackert's (2004: 205) study young speakers are between 25-40 and older are 45+. In both contexts younger speakers show a preference for the inflected form of a verb over a bare verb. In addition, utilisation of preverbal markers seems to reduce with age. Youssef (2001) also provides an account of age-grading (cf. Sankoff, 2006; Chapter 2) in the use of tense and aspect markers (including preverbal markers) in Tobago suggesting that these forms are highly correlated with education level and the social context of language use.

The above-mentioned studies have provided a valuable insight into the possible cross-generational pattern of language use although a more detailed interpretation of age-related variation is needed. In the current project I aim to fill this gap by conducting an apparent time analysis of language change across two generations of speakers in three different communities on the island. Research investigating linguistic transformations among creole speakers is particularly timely. This is related to the recent socio-economic changes in Bequia, an outcome of larger globalising processes. I hypothesise that increase of consumer culture (Curtis, 2009), easier access to the popular media and the influx of tourists on the island, have an indirect effect on adolescents' linguistic practices. The impact of these processes on the lifestyles of Bequians today is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2. In this changing socio-economic landscape young people in Bequia have greater

contact with Standard English (Trudgill and Hannah, 2002). This is additionally reinforced by the education system which promotes Standard English as the language of schooling (cf. Migge et al. 2010). I hypothesise that easier access to global resources might also affect speakers' orientation towards the local norms and trigger renegotiation of identities (cf. Dubois and Horvath, 1999). The goal of this study is to investigate the linguistic consequences of this process.

One potential outcome of language contact is dialect levelling, discussed as a "decrease in the number of variants of a particular phonological, morphological, or lexical unit in a given dialect area" (Kerwill, 2004: 671). The process of dialect levelling has been subject to extensive research in the UK and other settings (e.g. Preston, 1996; Britain, 1997; 2002; Watt and Milroy, 1999; Kerwill and Williams, 2000; Haug-Hilton, 2010). Even though dialect levelling usually implies linguistic convergence, it does not indicate that communities lose their linguistic distinctiveness (e.g. Schilling-Estes, 2002). Nevertheless, levelling assumes eradication of local forms towards a more homogenous (although not necessarily standard) language use. The above (and other) studies on levelling have demonstrated that the process usually goes in line with social and economic changes, as well as speakers' attitudes and identity negotiation. Britain (2010) considers processes such as increasing urbanisation and counterurbanisation as well as growing migration to be related to linguistic levelling suggesting that the larger socio-economic context of language change in a community should not be overlooked.

I implied above that globalisation has provided fertile ground for such socio-economic and linguistic changes in Bequia. I hypothesise that as a result of these extra-linguistic transformations, variation among adolescents in the three communities in Bequia might have been levelled out. That is, the cross-village differences reported for older speakers by Meyerhoff and Walker in previous research (2006; 2007) have reduced and the system among adolescents are more uniform. This homogenisation should not only affect the frequency rates of linguistic forms but also the constraints which this variation is sensitive to. I also consider other outcomes such as reallocation (a process where local variants are refunctionalised and obtain new social or linguistic functions; Britain and Trudgill,

1999; Britain, 2002).

Apart from levelling, reallocation and simplification, two additional processes of change will be considered: transmission and diffusion (Labov, 2007). Labov (2007: 3) classifies the former as “the ability of children to replicate faithfully the form of the older generation’s language, in all of its structural detail”. In Bequia we could classify a change as transmission if the constraints established for variation among the older generation of Bequians are replicated among adolescents. If this is indeed the case I determine which factors motivate this process. Diffusion on the other hand assumes imperfect replication of variation patterns across groups of adults, following the wave model of change. As a result of diffusion some constraints which condition variation are restructured, while others are lost.

All of these possible outcomes of change assume a comparison of frequency rates and structural constraints which variable forms are sensitive to, *between* the two generations and *across* the three communities in Bequia. In this study this is achieved through the application of comparative variationist methodology (Tagliamonte, 2004). Research on language contact and change has demonstrated that the variable rule analysis can be successfully applied for establishing comparisons between different communities and predicting the direction of language change (e.g. Tagliamonte, 2004; Meyerhoff, 2009a; Buchstaller and D’Arcy; Walker and Torres Cacoullos, 2009; 2009Nagy and Irwin, 2010;). This has been achieved through the comparison of constraint hierarchies (which factors are selected as significant and in which order), as well as constraint rankings (the order and significance of factors within each predictor). A question can be asked, how close do the constraint rankings have to be in order for the variable patterns to be classified as similar or different? I draw from Nagy and Irwin (2010) (who followed several other studies investigating types of contact between different varieties, such as Meyerhoff, 2009a, Buchstaller and D’Arcy, 2009), and adhere to several steps in establishing the relationship between variable patterns in the Bequia communities:

- 1) Comparison of the factor groups which are selected as significant in each community
- 2) Comparison of the hierarchy and weightings of factors within the predictors selected as significant

- 3) Calculation of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient based on factor weight values which will allow for establishing how "close" the variable patterns between different predictors are

I hypothesise that the application of these steps will point to similarities/differences of the variable patterns across the age groups and between the villages, although it will not determine the causality of these relationships. To determine the motivations of any of the outcomes of change discussed above (or its lack), I consider several social criteria which I suggest will help in interpreting language variation and change in Bequia. In the following section I outline some of the studies which have considered variation as inextricably linked to the social phenomena, and discuss which social factors played the most significant role for patterns of language use among creole speaking communities.

1.4 Variation in creoles and the social factors

Since creoles are classified as contact languages (Holm, 2000), the social aspects and the sociolinguistic context in which they emerged are fundamental to their development. Similarly, research on synchronic variation in creoles has shown that utilisation of forms classified into different positions on a continuum is highly related to social stratification. Therefore, in trying to account for variation in creoles, whether for example through the concept of a continuum or co-existing systems, one cannot underestimate the social underpinnings behind language choices.

Further, studies focusing on the social dimension of language use in the Caribbean have often pointed to community-specific factors as particularly significant for language choices, often contradicting the patterns of social stratification found in studies conducted in larger, urban settings in North America or Europe. For example, Rickford's (1986) study of variation in Guyana challenged the traditional view of the social class concept applied in sociolinguistic studies (e.g. Labov, 1972) by showing that patterns of linguistic variation are highly correlated with speakers' association with a sugar plantation through which two social groups were crystallised: Estate Class and Non-Estate Class. This finding challenged the traditional preconceived classification of speakers into social classes based on

economic index calculation.

In addition, studies in the Caribbean context questioned the role of gender for patterns of linguistic variation. The issue of gender and linguistic practice among creole communities has been addressed by Escure (1991; 2001) in the context of Belize, Hackert for the Bahamas (2004) and Meyerhoff for Bequia (2009b). Again, these studies show that the “classic” patterns of variation and gender are likely to be reversed in the context of the Caribbean, or that gender does not have to be a factor determining linguistic variation at all. For example, Meyerhoff (2009b) points to place as a factor which trumps gender in an analysis of variation, even though ethnographic observations clearly point to gender as a socially salient category. (I further examine the social categories considered in the analysis of language variation and change in Bequia in Chapter 2).

In addition to social class and gender, studies conducted in the Caribbean, e.g. in Jamaica, Guyana or Trinidad, have shown a dichotomy between urban vs. rural locations as particularly important for patterns of language variation (e.g. Patrick, 1999). Others have attempted to apply the category of social class (usually defined according to community-specific norms) and investigated its correlation with style. For example, Young (1973) tests the production of several phonological and morphosyntactic variables across different styles and speakers’ occupations in Belize. Results showed that some of the variables, such as the alternation between interdental [θ, ð] vs. dental [t, d], are not subject to social stratification as the rate of the standard variants [θ, ð] is equally low for all occupation groups. Other variables however (for example variable nasalisation as in [kō] vs. [kom] or the variation between past reference bare verbs and verb inflections, (also analysed in the current study), show a clear shift across different occupation groups (Young, 1973). A similar finding was obtained by Winford (1992) in Trinidad where the patterns of tense marking in Trinidadian Creole are tested across different social classes and speech styles (casual vs. formal). Again, results lead Winford to believe that the use of different past tense markers is conditioned by a correlation between the effect of social class and style, but also by grammatical factors, such as grammatical verb type.

To summarise, the above studies show strong evidence for discrete systems (lects) in contact with each other, each of them being associated with its own norms of usage, both social and grammatical. Further, results of these studies provide invaluable information regarding social stratification of variables in the creole context. It has also been hypothesised that a variable type (e.g. phonological vs. syntactic) can influence the patterns of language variation and change. I discuss this issue below.

1.4.1 The variable type and social stratification

The studies by Patrick (1999), Winford (1992) and Young (1973) showed that the distribution of tense marking across creole varieties in the Caribbean is heavily constrained by grammatical and social factors frequently overlapping across different creole varieties. Further, results of these studies indicate that some variables are more likely to be correlated with social stratification than others (e.g. phonetic vs. morphosyntactic as in Young's (1973) study).

Sociolinguistic research suggested that grammatical variables are less sensitive to the sociolinguistic monitor - a "mechanism" responsible for tracking and storing social information from speech production (Labov et al. 2006, 2008a; but see Meyerhoff and Walker, 2007). This is possibly due to the complexity of such variables which combine the linguistic structure with semantic information (e.g. Smith et al. 2007). Past temporal reference provides an ideal context for testing this claim since it incorporates a variety of forms, some of which are clearly located in the area of syntax (e.g. preverbal *bin*), and others which are subject to morpho-phonological constraints (bare verbs vs. inflected verbs)¹.

Apart from establishing the correlations between social categories and the

¹ I would like to point out that even though preverbal *bin* and *-ed* vs. \emptyset variation are a part of past temporal reference, in the current dissertation they are considered as different discrete variables, rather than as variants of the same variable. There are several reasons behind this but the main one again concerns establishing the variable context, that is the specific environment in discourse in which two (or more) forms represent the same semantic meaning (cf. Section 1.2.3). A detailed discussion of these forms, their uses and meaning, as well the relationship between them is continued in Chapter 3.

distribution of forms, I am also interested in investigating whether the variables analysed here carry social meanings. If so, which meanings are assigned to these variables? Are they distributed uniformly across different communities on the island, and can they be interpreted in the same way across the communities? Studies of linguistic variation have shown that the patterns of language variation can be interpreted by investigating the social meanings carried by linguistic forms, which often reflect local social orders (e.g. Labov, 1963; Milroy, 1980; Eckert, 2000). My motivation to consider the social meanings of variation as an important factor for the interpretation of patterns of language variation and change in Bequia has been inspired by studies which consider variation as socially functional. This is further discussed in the following section.

1.5 Linguistic variation and social meaning

As sociolinguistic studies have demonstrated, variation can serve a functional role. This means that through their choice of linguistic variants speakers signal their relationship towards an interlocutor (e.g. Giles, 1973; Bell, 1984), express their orientation towards the local and the non-local norms (e.g. Dubois and Horvath, 1999; Hazen, 2002), or express their stance towards local social orders, such as group membership (e.g. Eckert, 2000; Kiesling, 2004; Mendoza-Denton, 2008). With the growing amount of interdisciplinary linguistic research (especially influenced by sociology and anthropology) it has become apparent that the “traditional” social variables frequently applied in sociolinguistics, such as gender, ethnicity or social class need to be reinscribed and a more local approach to socially stratified variation is needed. This recent methodological shift is especially advocated by Eckert and her associates also for language variation research. Eckert (2008) argues for turning sociolinguistic attention from analysing correlations (patterns of variation across communities) to investigating language use across situated stances in day-to-day activities with the consideration of the social meanings of variants. These situated practices in turn are used next to other socially meaningful categories and non-linguistic practices, such as ways of wearing makeup and dressing (e.g. Mendoza-Denton, 2008) or “cruising” around town, as was shown by Eckert (2000) among Jocks and Burnouts in Detroit. The combination of these social and linguistic

practices work together in creating styles, which serve as a resource for constructing a social persona (Eckert, 2008).

In the current study I hypothesise a strong correlation between social categories, such as place (that is a community a speaker comes from in Bequia) and the distribution of linguistic variables. However, establishing correlations does not help us to understand why speakers make the linguistic choices they do. In Bequia, the cross-community linguistic and social differences are overtly commented upon by inhabitants, suggesting strong ideologies about place which guide Bequians in their attitudes, practices, and perhaps also linguistic choices. I investigate whether these ideologies influence the development of social meanings of linguistic variants and whether these meanings are homogenous across the villages.

As I discussed above, research applying variationist methodologies in the context of CECs remains scarce. I discussed several studies which showed strong correlations between language use and the major social categories such as social class (Rickford, 1986; Patrick, 1999). However, neither of these studies explored in detail the issue of variation as a meaningful resource for negotiating identities. Creole-speaking communities provide an especially fruitful environment for such an analysis. The issue of identity has always been present within research focusing on language in the post-colonial context, especially in the Caribbean (e.g. LePage and Tabouret-Keller, 1985; Patrick, 2004; Garrett, 2007; Sidnell, 2008), although the role of variable forms in identity construction among creole speakers is yet to be investigated. The current study aims to fill this gap by examining what lies beneath the correlations between social categories and language use in Bequia. I investigate whether speakers indeed use variation as a resource for identity construction and what role the aforementioned place ideologies have in this process. I also concentrate on determining what the social meanings of the variables investigated here are. Previous studies applied several techniques to determine which meanings are attached to specific linguistic forms. These are discussed in the following section.

1.5.1 Social meanings and where they come from

Recent research has shown that linguistic variables, apart from being highly correlated with social categories (gender, age, or ethnicity), can take on more specific meanings and become a resource for locally recognised styles.

Interpretation of meanings on the local level depends on the shared ideology of the community in which it is being invoked. In this view, meanings are constructed in very local context but against a background of wider meaningful oppositions (Eckert, 2000). For example, a contrast between a velar nasal and an alveolar nasal – /ŋ/ vs. /n/ – has been widely associated with standard vs. non-standard speech, however it has been demonstrated that other, more specific meanings can be indexed by this variable in interaction and through speakers' meta-linguistic perceptions (Campbell- Kibler, 2007; 2009).

The general meanings of linguistic variables have usually been assigned to some general social distinctions, such as “standard vs. non-standard”, or “local vs. non-local” For example, Johnstone and Kiesling (2008) and Johnstone (2010) showed an indexical relationship between local identity and several linguistic forms in Pittsburgh, such as the second person plural pronoun “yinz” and /aw/ monophthongisation. These forms are not only recognised as distinctive characteristic features of the Western Pennsylvania dialect, but Western Pennsylvanians themselves consider it a “typical” regional feature and a marker of local Pittsburghese identity (Johnstone and Kiesling, 2008: 5).

Likewise, in Zhang's (2005; 2008) studies, the linguistic variables are subject to local commentaries. In the case of rhoticisation (Zhang, 2008) the social meaning was established on the basis of pre-existing ideas which speakers assigned to regional linguistic forms through their association with a social group or a character type. Speakers in Zhang's study often pointed to the “oily”, or “smooth” properties of this linguistic feature which, when combined with other characteristics of an authentic Beijinger, was associated with a persona of a “Beijing Smooth Operator” – a salient local male character type (Zhang, 2008: 205).

Studies have shown that the social meaning of variation does not only have to be linked to dialects in a particular geographical setting, but can be generally

associated with broader social categories such as ethnicity and gender. For example, Mendoza-Denton showed how a phonetic feature of /ɪ/ raising, which is a salient feature of Chicano English, is used to construct a gang identity by girls in a Los Angeles high school. Similarly, Rahman (2007) focused also on rhoticity as a typically white feature, as opposed to non-rhoticity associated with African American Vernacular English. Rahman demonstrated that African American comedians use rhotic sounds while mocking the speech of white middle-class Americans and in doing so they associate the feature with “corniness, pomposity and stupidity” (Eckert, 2002). Again, the mocking indicates some level of awareness for speakers, since they are available to directly associate it with a social category.

To summarise, research on the social meaning of variation has usually drawn from a variety of sources to establish which meanings should be attached to linguistic variants. First of all, a correlation between the production of linguistic variants and wider preconceived social categories is essential for determining the general meanings of variables, such as “standard” vs. “non-standard”, or their association with some pre-defined social groups (speech communities), for example on the basis of speakers’ ethnicity or locality. Secondly, ethnographic techniques are a crucial method for establishing what the local meanings of these variables could be. This is usually established through observations of communities and individuals, as well as the metadiscourse surrounding a given linguistic feature. Indeed, in all of the studies discussed above, speakers were able to point to or comment on specific forms and use it as a resource for constructing meanings (for example, Pittsburghers talked about saying “dahntahn” instead of “downtown”). While speakers’ metalinguistic knowledge is usually too narrow to exactly pinpoint a specific linguistic form, they may do this through mockery (as in Rahman’s, 2007 study), direct association with potential users of this form and their characteristics (Zhang, 2008), or utilisation of ethnic linguistic features to mark their membership in a particular group as opposed to others (as shown in Mendoza-Denton, 2008).

Similarly, variables which have been examined as carriers of social meanings, but which are not linked to a particular dialect, region or ethnic group (such as the variation between -ing and -in’, or released /t/), are also considered as socially salient. This is reflected in style shifting patterns: in a more careful

articulation, speakers are more likely to produce a velar nasal (Campbell-Kibler, 2007), and release intervocalic and final /t/ (Podesva, 2006). Finally, recent research has also demonstrated that social meanings can be elicited through experimental methods of speech perception. Modification of (ing) or a pitch in an experiment has revealed speakers' attitudes towards these variables which have pointed to their social meanings (Campbell-Kibler, 2007, 2009; Drager et al., 2010).

As I discussed above, one of the goals of this study is to establish which meanings can be attached to the linguistic forms analysed here. However, the methods utilised for establishing meanings applied in the studies discussed above cannot be neatly incorporated in the current work for numerous reasons. This points to several limitations of these methodologies which become apparent when different types of variables are analysed in very different socio-cultural settings. I discuss these problems in the section below.

1.5.2 Analysis of the social meaning of variation – some methodological problems

First, all of the variables discussed above which have been analysed as socially meaningful are phonetic or phonological. Indeed, the studies which sparked the recent interest on variation and social meaning in sociolinguistics are rarely non-phonological. There could be several reasons behind this. First of all, the aforementioned issue of the form-function asymmetry makes it difficult to decide whether two variants are indeed “two ways of saying the same thing” (Labov and Weiner, 1983: 6). Therefore, if we assume that two forms carry different social meanings, it might not be immediately clear whether these meanings vary because of the social work a particular form is involved in across a community of speakers, or because of its relationship with the referential meanings of a given form. It is also possible that both scenarios are at work. For example, Strycharz (2011) showed that the social meanings of a honorific suffix *-haru* in Osaka Japanese changed across different generations and gender groups, but this shift was inextricably linked to the referential meaning carried by this particular feature. Disentangling this relationship might be methodologically problematic, an issue which does not concern phonetic and phonological variables.

To my knowledge, so far there have been few studies analysing the social meanings of morphosyntactic or syntactic variables as resources for identity construction (with the exceptions of e.g. Eckert, 2000, Moore, 2004; Snell, 2010). This is quite surprising considering a wide array of sociolinguistic studies which showed correlations between social categories (often locally defined), and patterns of language variation and change involving morphosyntactic and syntactic variables (e.g. Meyerhoff, 2003; Cheshire, 2003, 2005; Tagliamonte, 1998; Rickford et al. 1995; Walker and Torres Cacoullos, 2009). For example, in an analysis of negative concord among Jocks and Burnouts in a Detroit high school, Eckert (2000) showed that the form is indeed subject to social stratification among these groups, however, the variable is in addition socially salient, being classified as “a global resource in English in its stereotypes counter-standardness” and is associated with “lack of education and alienation from legitimate institutions” (Eckert, 2008: 460). This, and a number of other studies have demonstrated that variables above the level of phonology are also socially meaningful and, as phonological variables, could be potentially used by speakers for constructing a social persona, or as a reflection of local social orders.

I investigate whether the same can be claimed regarding the variables analysed here, although previous studies investigating language variation in Bequia suggested that individual linguistic forms are usually not subject to metadiscourse, or mockery among speakers in Bequia (Meyerhoff and Walker, 2006). I also examine whether the forms are geographically linked to particular villages which could point to locally relevant social meanings (similarly to the way it was demonstrated by Johnstone and Kiesling (2008) in Pittsburgh). This assumes that an insight into speakers’ understanding of locality is necessary in explaining the correlation between place and language variation. This relationship is explored through ethnographic observations and speakers’ commentaries and attitudes related to characteristics of those who utilise these forms.

1.6 Conclusion and research questions

In this chapter I have discussed the three different issues this dissertation focuses on: (i) the nature of variability in creole languages, (ii) the type of language change and the methodologies applied in tracing it, and (iii) the social stratification of creole speaking communities, and the relationship between the social meanings of linguistic variables, identity construction, and patterns of language variation and change.

Throughout this chapter I have discussed two possible ways of modelling variability within creole languages, which are tested in the current study: the creole continuum model, and the co-existing grammars approach. I highlighted the challenges related to each model, for example non-discreteness and unidimensionality of the creole continuum model, and the problem of establishing boundaries between two separate co-existing systems. By investigating the patterns of variation for two different variables (bare verbs vs. inflected verbs and preverbal markers vs. bare verbs/inflected verbs) across three different villages in Bequia I aim to determine which model is more accurate in accounting for linguistic variability in such a complex sociolinguistic setting.

Secondly, I aim to determine whether language in Bequia has undergone change across two generations of speakers. In this chapter I have discussed the possible nature of this change and the methodology I follow in order to determine whether a system has been e.g. levelled out or transmitted. The TMA variables are especially interesting for such an analysis due to the issue of form-function asymmetry, and their potential unavailability to the sociolinguistic monitor (Labov, 2008a).

In addition, I highlighted the timeliness of this analysis considering the - economic transmission the Caribbean region is experiencing. This study adds to the current research on language change and globalisation (Meyerhoff and Niedzielski, 2003; Buchstaller and D'Arcy, 2009; Johnstone, 2010) and importantly, it fills a conspicuous research gap by combing the areas of scholarship within language variation and change, creolistics and globalisation.

I have also stressed out that assigning the classic sociolinguistic variables (such as gender, or social class) to variation in the creole context has been problematic. I concluded that studies which considered social stratification in the Caribbean have often pointed to community specific social factors as responsible for variation patterns. Such an analysis encourages an investigation of the social meanings of linguistic variables, their role as a resource for identity construction, and a potential relationship with patterns of language variation and change. The motivations and techniques for analysing the social meanings were outlined above. I have also discussed that the application of the strategies for establishing social meanings could be potentially difficult in the context where linguistic variables (i) are not socially salient, or stereotypical, and are not the subject of speakers' metadiscourse, as evidenced through mockery or any other commentary, (ii) and which are above the level of phonology, suggesting a function-form asymmetry and their little availability to the sociolinguistic monitor (Labov, 1993).

Based on the discussion and the background information presented in this chapter I will now outline some specific research questions which I aim to pursue in the course of this dissertation, each of them related to one of the three issues discussed above. In the subsequent section I outline the content of each chapter of this dissertation.

The nature of variability in Bequia

- 1) Can variation in Bequia be assigned to the model of co-existing systems, which assumes variation in Bequia will fall into two separate but partially overlapping grammars - a more creole-like, operating in Hamilton and Paget Farm, and a more English-like, distinguishable in Mount Pleasant, or is the creole continuum more accurate in modelling variation within past temporal reference in Bequia?
- 2) What is the role of discourse constraints for the patterns of variation between bare verbs vs. inflected verbs, and variable use of preverbal markers vs. inflected verbs /bare verbs?

Nature of language change in Bequia

- 3) Can we identify change in progress in any of these communities?
- 4) If there is a change, what type of change is it (levelling, reallocation, transmission etc.)?

Social stratification and the social meaning of the variables

- 5) Which social factors correlate with patterns of language variation and change in the three villages in Bequia?
- 6) Are any of these variables used for individual or group identity moves and if so, are they homogenous across the island?
- 7) What is the relationship between language variation as a resource for identity construction and the globalising processing affecting adolescents in Bequia?

1.7 Outline of chapters

The next chapter (Chapter 2) discusses the socio-historical and linguistic background of Bequia. I analyse each of the villages, taking into consideration their settlement patterns, demographics, and socio-cultural norms, which I support with ethnographic information collected during fieldwork. Further, I also discuss the results and implications of previous studies focusing on linguistic variation in Bequia and their conclusions relevant to the current project. Finally, I characterise each of the social categories hypothesised as influential for the patterns of language variation and change on the island, such as place and adolescence.

Chapter 3 discusses the dependent variables used in the current study and the grammatical constraints which I hypothesise determine the pattern of variation across the villages. The chapter also focuses on the methodologies employed in the current study, in particular variationist sociolinguistic techniques. I investigate the “three waves” of analysing variation (Eckert, 2005) and advocate a balanced approach between quantitative and qualitative sociolinguistic methodologies. I also introduce the data used in the current study, discuss the specifics of the fieldwork

conducted in Bequia, and characterise the various techniques applied in data collection and analysis.

In Chapter 4 first, I empirically determine whether grouping individuals into different speech communities is linguistically justified by comparing the intra- and inter-speaker rates of verb inflection across the three communities and age groups. Next, I conduct the multivariate analysis of variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs looking at the effect of aspect and morphological class and compare the results across the communities and between speakers in the two age groups. Finally, I determine whether the patterns of use of past temporal reference among Bequia adolescents are subject to change, and if so what the nature of this change is.

Chapter 5 aims to investigate whether the results obtained in Chapter 4 are reinforced when discourse constraints are analysed. I first characterise the discourse-organisational, functional, and cognitive factors and then conduct a quantitative analysis in order to determine whether they can shed more light on the patterns on variation across the communities and between generations. I also discuss the relationship between discourse and grammar, which I hypothesise, is fundamental to interpreting the patterns of language variation in Bequia.

Chapter 6 concentrates on a typically creole feature - preverbal markers *bin* and *did* (e.g. Winford, 1993). First, I focus on the distribution of these forms across the Bequia communities and examine whether the frequency rates add to the discussion of the nature of the variable linguistic system in Bequia. Secondly, I determine the grammatical and discourse function of preverbal markers by comparing it to that of bare verbs and inflected verbs. I establish the variable context for the quantitative analysis of these forms and determine whether preverbal markers are used more in some communities than others.

In Chapter 7 I look into the social aspects of variation in Bequia. In particular, I am concerned with place as a social category. I argue that place should be considered not simply as a geographical category but a complex social one. I discuss the strong place ideologies developed by Bequians, which cover both the community they come from, and the other villages on the island. I demonstrate that these ideologies have a strong influence on the ways speakers position themselves

in the social realm. Next, I focus on the global processes which are affecting Bequia today, such as increased consumerism, increased mobility and access to the popular media. I discuss the effect of each of those processes and examine the relationship between globalisation, locality and language variation and change in each of the Bequia communities. Finally, I summarise the results of the quantitative analyses with an account of the social factors in a concluding discussion of the nature of the highly variable linguistic system in Bequia.

In Chapter 8 I summarise the main findings and answer the research questions outlined earlier in this chapter. I also highlight the general contributions of this study to the field of sociolinguistics, discuss some of its limitations as well as directions for future research.

Chapter 2 The history and social stratification of Bequia

2.1 Introduction

The socio-historical context is often emphasised as fundamental in the development of creole languages, and the colonisation of the Caribbean was an especially significant time for increased language contact and creolisation (Chaudenson, 2001; Baker et al. 1999). In this time of economic and political turmoil a series of events and processes took place, which are generally considered as influential for the emergence and development of creoles in this part of the world. These include colonisation of new territories, wars between the European empires for their dominance in the region, and the Atlantic slave trade. All of these events have also affected the settlement and the linguistic development of Bequia, an island of St Vincent and the Grenadines where the data analysed in the current study was collected. In this chapter I focus on the historical and social factors which influenced the settlement patterns on the island, and which have indirectly shaped and continue shaping the current socio-cultural and linguistic situation on Bequia.

Before I provide a brief historical sketch of the island's settlement, I characterise the geography, demography and the general facts regarding living in Bequia which should help to better understand not only the occupations and mentalities of the local people, but should also be useful for an understanding of my position as a researcher among the local community, and the circumstances in which fieldwork and data collection were conducted. The latter are discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation. Next, I describe the socio-historical development of the island, from the first European settlement to the present day. The historical sketch will provide a background for a discussion of three different communities analysed in the current study: Mount Pleasant, Hamilton, and Paget Farm. The villages diverge on many different levels: historical, ethnic, socio-economic, religious, and linguistic, and these differences are hypothesised to be indirectly reflected in the patterns of linguistic variation on the island. An analysis of the linguistic differences between these communities is a focus of Section 2.5, where I

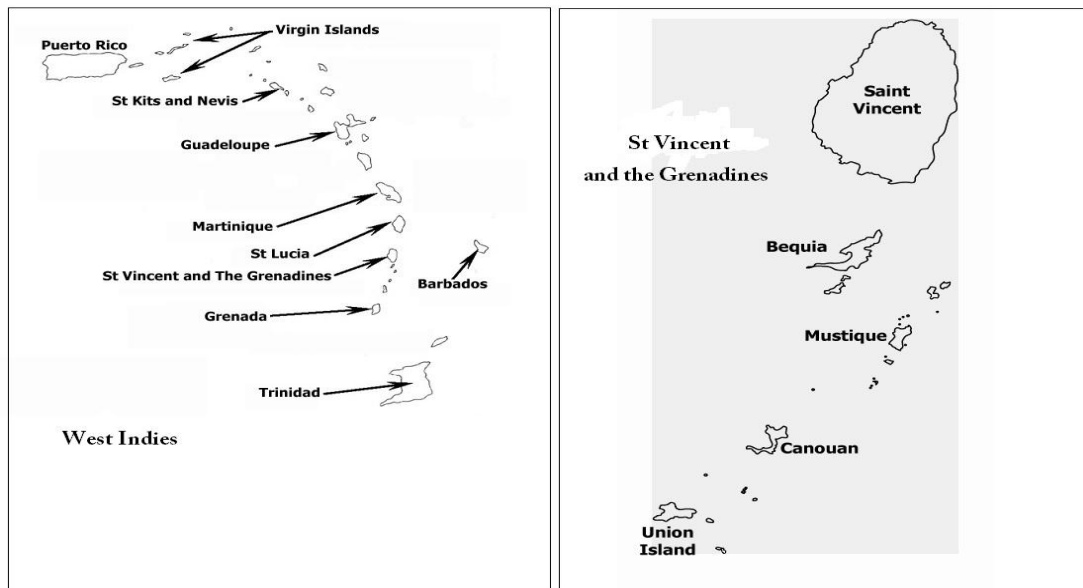
discuss the results of previous studies by Meyerhoff and Walker showing how these inspired the current one. I also concentrate on the social factors which I hypothesise determine the patterns of language variation and change in Bequia today, such as adolescence, place, and the phenomena influenced by globalisation. I provide the background literature behind each of the social categories analysed here and discuss my motivations for considering them as influential for language change in Bequia.

2.2 Bequia – background information

There is a saying among people in Bequia that if you visit “sweet Bequia” once, you will most certainly come back again. It is not clear whether it is the undeniable beauty of the tropical landscape, the Caribbean climate, friendliness of the local community, or all of these combined that make Bequia a truly unique place. Yet, despite its apparent serenity, Bequia is an astonishingly diverse place, an island of contrasts, which perhaps remain unnoticed to a casual observer. In subsequent sections I discuss a variety of dimensions on which these contrasts can be drawn. They are also fundamentally embedded in the distinctions between individual communities in Bequia and are necessary for an understanding of the current sociolinguistic situation on the island. Apart from guides and brochures for tourists visiting the region, there are few written records which focus specifically on Bequia, especially compared to the neighbouring St Vincent. While the historical section is largely based on the research conducted by Meyerhoff and Walker (in prep.), the characteristics of the island and various accounts of everyday reality in Bequia are mainly an outcome of my own observations and fieldwork experiences.

2.2.1 Location

Bequia is a part of St Vincent and the Grenadines (from now onwards SVG), and is the second largest island in the chain after St Vincent (locally referred to as the mainland). SVG is situated to the west from Barbados, north from Grenada and south from St Lucia (Map 1). It is home to 120 000 inhabitants with Kingstown as the capital. SVG is a part of the Commonwealth of Nations and CARICOM (Caribbean Community). Bequia is seven square miles (eighteen square kilometres) and it is the second largest island of the country after St Vincent with a steady population of 5000 people.



Map 2.1 Location of St Vincent and the Grenadines (Source: Google Maps)

2.2.2 Bequia communities

There are several major communities on the island (Mount Pleasant, Hamilton, Paget Farm, La Pompe, Friendship, Lower Bay, Spring, Industry, Belmont), however it is Port Elizabeth, commonly referred to as “the harbour” which concentrates the main leisure and official businesses and offices on the island, including the customs office, the post office, supermarkets, restaurants, and other retail services. As the name suggests, the harbour is also popular among sailors who anchor their yachts, catamarans, and sail boats in the Admiralty Bay in the close proximity of Port Elizabeth’s shore (Map 2.2). Even though Port Elizabeth is the busiest place in Bequia where the main business and tourist facilities are concentrated, many tourists and visitors choose other areas as their accommodation for temporary stays, or build villas for long-term residence in quieter, less populated areas, such as Spring, Industry, Belmont, and Lower Bay. There are few visitors’ houses located in densely populated villages without a beach front, such as Hamilton, or Paget Farm. The biggest tourist resorts are located around the main harbour, but also in Spring, and in Friendship.

Transportation across the island is fairly easy, mainly due to the fact that many Bequians commute to work, not only to Port Elizabeth but also to other locations around the island, usually for labour work on construction sites. Bequians

who do not own their own car usually travel by mini vans. To realise how small an island Bequia is, it is fair to say that it takes about fifteen minutes to drive from Paget Farm, the south most point of the island, to Port Elizabeth, and no more than twenty minutes from Paget Farm to Industry at the north point of the island. The two ends of the island are linked by the Belmont Road and the distance between them is approximately six and a half miles (ten and a half kilometres).



Map 2.2 Bequia (Source: Google Maps)

2.2.3 Contact between the villages

Among the older generations, visiting other villages for social reasons is fairly uncommon, with the exception of seasonal and holiday events, such as Christmas “light-up” parties or the Queen Show². Many older interviewees living in the

² Each year before Christmas the communities in Bequia participate in the light-up competition. The community which decorates the entry to their village in the most creative way, wins a prize. The “lighting-up” is a part of an all night festivity which gathers up Bequians from all other communities. The Queen Show is a local beauty pageant, a part of the annual Easter celebrations, where girls in Bequia compete for the Miss Bequia title.

villages analysed in the current study, that is Hamilton, Paget Farm, and Mount Pleasant, admit that they hardly ever visit other communities, with the exception of Port Elizabeth. Therefore, despite the small size of the island, contact between older inhabitants is less frequent than it could be assumed. This is slightly different among the younger generation of Bequians, who are more mobile and frequently commute to other villages for work. As far as adolescents are concerned, daily travelling to the harbour area is inevitable since the two high schools on the island are located in Port Elizabeth. Observations of adolescents and their networks in a high school setting suggest that they spend time and maintain contacts with peers from all Bequia communities, and not just from the one they come from. Therefore, the school setting provides an opportunity for network mixing and language contact. The school environment has been generally demonstrated as significant for patterns of language variation and change and crucial for adolescents' social practices (e.g. Eckert, 2000; Moore, 2004; Lawson, 2009; Bakht, 2010). Outside the school, adolescents prefer to spend their free time in the community they come from, although it is common for young people to visit other villages, and especially the main harbour for nights out, and other special events and social gatherings.

2.2.4 Contact with St Vincent

As I mentioned above, Bequians refer to St Vincent as the "mainland" and to Kingstown, the capital of SVG, as "town", which suggests they recognise its urban character. Travelling to St Vincent is very common for all Bequians, since the capital offers services unavailable on Bequia, such as hospitals and clinics, colleges, a variety of shops etc. Many Bequians have family and friends living in St Vincent, so the contact between Vincentians and Bequians is inevitable. The contact is even more frequent today since the modern ferries were imported to Bequia. The short one hour trips are scheduled regularly several times a day providing a fast and easy means of transport between Kingstown and Port Elizabeth, highly appreciated by Bequians. During interviews, older Bequians frequently mentioned how inconvenient travelling to St Vincent used to be in the past compared to the present day. Not only was it time consuming, but also quite dangerous. The channel between Bequia and St Vincent has a reputation for being particularly rough, and narratives of often life threatening sailboat trips are common among interviewees.

2.2.5 Tourism

Nowadays, tourism in Bequia has become one of the major driving forces of the island's economy. The tropical Caribbean climate, several sandy beaches and the balance between well-developed tourists infrastructure and a traditional Caribbean community make Bequia a particularly attractive tourist destination. Bequia is indeed unique among the neighbouring islands. Since it is much smaller, it cannot be compared to the neighbouring St Vincent. Also, while St Vincent might be an attractive tourist destination for its volcanic landscape and jungle flora, it is less frequently chosen as a summer resort, since the beach sand is in many places dark as a residue of volcanic ash, making it less appealing than the sandy coral reef areas in other parts of the region.

Bequia is also different from privately owned Mustique, a popular tourist destination among the "rich and famous". Indeed, many celebrities and wealthy businessmen own mansions and villas on the island, and since it is private, the size of a local community is rather small, although there is a steady group of people who reside there and work (in fact, the locals must be locally employed to be granted residence there). While the other Grenadine islands also offer equally attractive tropical landscapes and sandy beaches, they are much smaller with less access to regular services (shops, entertainment etc.) and with fewer opportunities to witness traditional Caribbean activities. It is also fair to say that compared to many Caribbean islands, Bequia is not tourist dominated. It is popular predominantly among sailors and divers, and the former each year gather for the annual Bequia Easter Regatta, a racing competition attracting sailors from all over the world. Every now and then big cruise ships anchor in Port Elizabeth and tourists spend from a few hours to a few days on the island. Overall, Bequia is more popular among older visitors, captivated by its tranquillity, maybe because of the limited amount of entertainment providing resorts and scarcity of social events (compared to bigger islands, such as Barbados).

Tourists, as well as seasonal and full time residents, come mainly from the United States, and Great Britain, however visitors from other European countries and Canada are also frequent. SVG does not have an international airport, which might be why the number of tourists is still relatively low compared to more

“commercial” islands (although such an airport is currently under construction in Kingstown). There are smaller airports located on several Grenadine islands, and Bequia is no exception. The airport was built in 1992 and operates frequent flights to Barbados or Grenada making it easier for international visitors to reach Bequia. Interviewees, especially those of older age, frequently underline the influence that the construction of an airport has had on the increase of tourism. Indeed, the statistics show that since 1992 the total number of tourists visiting the country by Air has almost doubled (Table 2.1). Even though this number includes all SVG islands, we can assume that this increase has affected Bequia as well.

In addition, as the number of tourists entering the country by air increases, the number of Excursionists (visitors who enter the island for one day only) decreases. There are also fewer tourists who come to SVG on cruise ships, which suggests that overall, there has been an increasing tendency for tourists to stay in the country for longer periods of time. This is especially evident in Bequia, compared to the neighbouring islands.

Year	Air		Sea		TOTAL
	Tourists	Excursionists	Yachts	Cruise ships	
1991	51,629	29,413	4,659	87,591	173,292
1995	60,206	31,154	41,396	85,258	218,014
1999	68,293	17,468	47,743	89,621	223,125
2003	78,535	13,696	64,965	64,965	241,526
2005	95,505	8,928	69,391	69,391	258,434
2007	89,637	6,799	42,277	42,277	283,268
2008	84,101	5,781	43,277	43,277	249,868

Table 2.1A number of tourists arriving in SVG by Air and Sea between 1991-2008 (Meyerhoff and Walker, in prep.; St Vincent and the Grenadines Tourism Statistics, 2009)

Table 2.2 shows the number of Same Day visitors by country of origin and the point of entry (as of April 2011³). This information is perhaps indicative of the fact that Bequia is not particularly popular among holiday makers from large cruise ships who come off shore for several hours only before they cruise to the neighbouring islands. This suggests that people visiting Bequia stay there for at least a few days, with a vast majority staying for several weeks, if not months.

³ April is arguably the busiest month for tourism in Bequia due to the annual Bequia Easter Regatta.

Country	St Vincent	Mustique	Canouan	Union Island	Bequia	TOTAL
USA	11	0	5	27	0	43
Canada	1	0	2	17	0	20
Europe	7	0	28	118	3	156
Caribbean	103	4	10	17	2	136
South America	1	0	0	0	0	1
Other	1	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	124	4	45	179	5	357

Table 2.2A number of same day visitors by point of entry in April 2011 (St Vincent and the Grenadines Tourism Statistics, 2009)

Most Bequians realise the importance of tourism for the development of the island's economy, and do not mind this increase of visitors on the island. A change in these attitudes became apparent during the interviews when informants were asked about outsiders' rights to buying properties on the island. Many Bequians oppose the fact that foreign visitors are allowed to buy land on the island, which local people simply cannot afford. As a result Bequians fear that in the future Bequia will become privately owned, just like the neighbouring Mustique, and foreigners will take over the land which should belong to the local community. According to Bequians, the SVG government is very much to blame for this situation.

Even though it is difficult to predict an influence that contact with tourists might have on language in Bequia, there is no doubt that this contact has increased and that Bequians today, and especially the youth, are more than ever exposed to non-creole varieties. This is supported by other socio-economic and cultural changes in the Caribbean which increase the generation gap between younger and older Bequians and which are discussed in detail in Section 2.6 of this chapter. In the following section on the other hand I provide a historical sketch of the island's settlement and development from a diachronic perspective.

2.3 The historical sketch of Bequia's settlement and development

The name Bequia supposedly derives from a Carib word *becouya* - "an island of the clouds", although some claim it derived from French *béquille* which means "crutch" reflecting the island's shape. Before the European colonisation Bequia and the neighbouring St Vincent were populated by the Caribs who were reluctant to give up the land to the French, the second European empire to explore the region after

the Spanish. According to historical records, the Caribs gave refuge to, and lived alongside the African slaves who escaped plantation work. These two groups intermarried giving rise to an ethnic group called the Black Caribs, or Garifuna (Taylor, 1951; Gonzalez, 1988; Ravindranath, 2009). After multiple efforts of resistance against the colonisers, the Black Caribs were eventually forced to leave and the majority of them were resettled to the area of today's Belize (Escure, 1983).

Not long after the French colonisation, the British arrived, also claiming rights to the Grenadines territories. The conflict between the two European colonising powers ended in 1763 under the Treaty of Paris, which recognised these lands as British. Soon the plans to make Bequia a prolific sugar, indigo, coffee, and cotton plantation fell through, mainly due to the lack of fresh water resource on the island. Nevertheless, several estates were established and the lands on Bequia were divided among the British settlers. Just like in the neighbouring St Vincent the plantations in Bequia were worked by African slaves, although the ratio of slaves to free residents was much lower in Bequia (approximately 30%) than in St Vincent (approximately 90%) (Abrahams, 1983; Meyerhoff and Walker, in prep.). It is not clear whether slaves were brought to the Grenadines directly from Africa, or from larger slave trade hubs of the Caribbean, such as Barbados. According to Parkvall (2000: 118-120), between 1627 and 1750 the majority of slaves brought to the southeast of the Caribbean, and especially to Barbados were from the Lower Guinea region of Africa (Ivory Coast, Gold Coast, Slave Coast and Biafra) where the languages of the African language family Kru were predominantly spoken.

After the abolition of slavery there was a sudden decline of sugar trade, and people of the Grenadines struggled additionally due to the damages caused by the eruption of La Soufriere in 1812, a still active volcano of St Vincent. As a result, many Europeans as well as local people left the region or died which caused a significant decrease of the population. In mid 19th century a new group of Europeans arrived in Bequia whose family names were documented as important owners of large land portions on the island: Wallace, Ollivierre, Hazell, Macintosh, Peters, Lloyd, Jokins, Simmons, Gooding (Meyerhoff and Walker, in prep.). Today, there is a large number of Bequians with these family names which suggests they could be descendents of this second wave of European land owners (for example,

Ollivierre is an especially frequent surname in Paget Farm and Gooding in Mount Pleasant). Additionally, Price (1988: 36) reports that around 1858-1859 there was an influx of “poor whites from Barbados” into the Grenadines, and some of them settled in Dorsetshire Hill in St Vincent and Mount Pleasant in Bequia.

The Ollivierres and the Wallaces owned the southern lands of Bequia, the Friendship Estate and the Southside, which turned out to be crucial areas for the development of fishing and whaling. The most frequent type of whale caught in this area is a humpback whale, and Bequians today are allowed to catch up to four whales per season by the International Whaling Commission. The whaling industry contributed to the development of the southern villages in Bequia attracting a number of islanders involved in whaling, regular fishing and boat building. Boat building, next to whaling has become one of the trademarks of Bequia. The popularity of sailing and boat building becomes apparent during the annual Easter Regatta, in which many Bequians participate with their self-built vessels.

This brief historical sketch of the settlement and development of Bequia suggests that nowadays the communities in Bequia are highly diversified in terms of ethnicities, occupations, and traditional activities. In the following section I characterise each of these communities and point to the differences between them, which are considered crucial for the patterns of language variation between two generations of Bequians.

2.4 The villages

As I explained above, there are few sources which document the settlement and development of Bequia and its communities. One of the few studies based on fieldwork and ethnographic observations of the island and its inhabitants is that of Price (1988) which discusses the economy and the “class system” of Bequia. While the study offers a rather radical view of the social stratification of the island, it provides a useful description of a social and cultural profile of Bequia, and a useful account of the author’s fieldwork experiences. I draw from Price’s observations and compare them to my own fieldwork experiences in the hope of providing the most accurate and objective picture of the communities discussed.

2.4.1 Mount Pleasant

As discussed in the section above, Mount Pleasant was settled by Scottish and English people in the mid 19th century. Today, this European ancestry is a strong part of Mount Pleasanters' identity. Inhabitants of this village frequently underline their British roots and sometimes even refer to themselves as "Scottish" or "English". Mount Pleasant forms a close-knit community with strong local and family networks. It stretches along a hill, which can be accessed in a vehicle via one road only. Houses in Mount Pleasant are located on larger plots of land than in the other villages, which gives an impression of the village as open and scarcely populated (Image 2.1).



Image 2.1 Mount Pleasant (Source: Daleszynska, 2009a)

The houses are larger and almost exclusively made of concrete, with large gardens where Mount Pleasanters plant both fruit-bearing and decorative plants.

Even though there is no homogenous racial division across the villages, people in Mount Pleasant have overall a lighter skin tone to people in the other Bequia villages, which is recognised and commented upon by all inhabitants of the island. A detailed analysis of the attitudes towards the Bequia villages expressed by the members of each community is conducted in Chapter 7. It is hypothesised that these attitudes are a strong component of a place identity on the island, which has been built upon the differences between the villages. As outlined in Chapter 1, one of the questions I aim to answer in this study is whether and how these salient place identities tap into patterns of language variation and change. Mount Pleasant is frequently considered by Bequians from the other villages as "different". The European ancestry leads them to perceive Mount Pleasanters as foreign and not genuinely local. Bequians in the other villages frequently refer to people in Mount

Pleasant as “foreign”, “white”, “red”, or “Bajan”, which suggests they realise the historical connection of this community with Barbados. The older inhabitants of Bequia still remember the hostile reception of blacks in Mount Pleasant, and the time when Afro-Bequians were pelted with stones when approaching Mount Pleasant. The younger generations however widely disregard these past hostilities and, although Mount Pleasant is still considered by many as a predominantly white village, the relationship between Mount Pleasant and the other villages is overall friendly. This refers especially to children and adolescents who spend time with each other on an everyday basis at school.

Mount Pleasant is also recognised as the most affluent village on the island. Many of its inhabitants own a business or are employed in the private sector in the main harbour. For example, one family, which I befriended during the fieldwork, runs a boutique in Port Elizabeth and owns several holiday villas for rent. Another family owns their own taxi services, and yet another runs a restaurant and a shop on the Mount Pleasant hill. Other occupations followed by Mount Pleasanters, included boat building, carpentry, and providing Internet services. Until recently, Mount Pleasant was the only community where children were sent to overseas schools and universities. Today, it is increasingly common for young people in Hamilton and Paget Farm to be educated overseas, especially in Barbados and Trinidad (where the University of the West Indies has its campuses). Additionally, in expressing their opinions towards Mount Pleasant, Bequians almost always point to language. Mount Pleasanters are considered as the “best speaking” and their language is frequently referred to as “proper” and as more correct than the “local dialect”. The issue of whether this ideology is reflected in the actual patterns of distribution of past temporal reference forms is explored in the course of this dissertation.

Through fieldwork observations it also became apparent that Mount Pleasanters have many relatives living abroad, especially Canada, England and the United States and although this is common for all inhabitants of Bequia, it was more frequent for Mount Pleasanters than the other two villages investigated. As it was mentioned above, the family networks in Mount Pleasant are extremely tight and so it is common that the relatives from overseas visit Bequia on a regular basis, and

that Mount Pleasanters make frequent trips abroad as well (which also confirms their affluence).

Another feature which distinguishes inhabitants of Mount Pleasant from people in other communities is their church affiliation. Mount Pleasanters belong predominantly to the Seventh Day Adventist church (SDA) and the majority strictly follow the church's doctrine. This involves observing the Sabbath from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset, during which they abstain from work and secular forms of recreation, such as non-religious social events, or watching television (Knight, 1999). On Friday evening people usually gather for worship and a service. Many Mount Pleasanters also follow the kosher diet advocated by the church, which involves abstinence from pork and shellfish. Abstinence from alcohol and other stimulants is also common. Adventist ethics are also sustained, such as abstinence from sexual intercourse before marriage, or conservatism in dress and behaviour. Even though the degree to which these rules are followed among Mount Pleasant adolescents vary, it is fair to suggest that the Adventist discourse might to some extent shape or influence Mount Pleasant adolescents' subjectivities providing yet another dimension according to which this village might be considered as different to the other communities.

2.4.2 Hamilton

In the historical overview of the island, Hamilton was described as a former plantation, which could be why today the majority of people in this community are of African descent. According to Price (1988: 29), "Hamilton initially sprang up as an ex-slave settlement from the estate at Reform and grew, along with Port Elizabeth, after the exodus from Union, Spring and Industry estates in the north". Hamilton is densely populated and the predominantly concrete houses are "layered" along the road which winds up the hill to Hamilton Fort, a small area where several French and English cannons are mounted. At weekends it is popular for children and adolescents of Hamilton to spend time on a small Hamilton beach, or play football and cricket on a local pitch. Adults usually spend their free time relaxing on their front porches or sitting under an almond tree drinking, playing dominoes and socialising.



Image 2.2 Hamilton (Source: Daleszynska, 2009b; Meyerhoff, 2005)

The high density of households in this settlement, and the absence of a beach-front means this village is infrequently visited by tourists. The households usually are home to large families, often including extended family members of several generations living together.

A few families from Hamilton that I became acquainted with during the course of my fieldwork own individual businesses, usually providing services to incoming tourists (such as delivering petrol, food and other goods to yachts and catamarans anchoring in Port Elizabeth). Younger men in Hamilton are usually employed in the tourism sector working in resorts, bars and restaurants. Some of them run water taxis for additional income, while others work as labourers (usually building houses for incoming tourists) and work as skilled servicemen. Fishing is still a popular occupation among older men in Hamilton. Older women from Hamilton are often employed in tourist resorts as housekeepers or in the kitchen, or stay at home taking care of the younger generations and their households. Some of the younger females I was acquainted with worked in the main harbour in offices or retail services such as supermarkets, other small shops as well as bars and restaurants. Some younger girls are students in colleges of St Vincent and a few study at the University of the West Indies in Barbados and Trinidad. Many inhabitants of Hamilton have relatives living or working abroad, with many employed on large cruise-ships. It is also frequent for Hamilton people to leave Bequia for work in an off-season period, that is throughout summer and autumn on the northern hemisphere.

Throughout my stay in Bequia it was revealed to me that there exists an

ongoing conflict between young people (especially men) in Hamilton and Paget Farm. Inhabitants of the latter community often pointed to Hamilton as the most violent and rowdy village in Bequia while the same is thought of Paget Farm in the Hamilton area. During the interviews with young men from Hamilton stories describing fights and verbal conflicts with male inhabitants of Paget Farm were common. The causes of this conflict seem to be several. Some mention a competition for girls between the male cohorts of these communities. Other common causes deal with apparent attitude of Hamilton people as “better”, “cooler”, or more “real”. On the other hand, Hamilton people usually perceive the Paget Farm community as troublesome, “rough”, rowdy and violent. Even though these attitudes are not initially noticeable, they become apparent during local social events, especially sports events in which the two villages compete. For example, an event where incidents and fights are common is the annual Bequia basketball tournament.

Arguably, Hamilton is also a village in which the effect of recent social and economic changes is the most apparent. The older interviewees frequently report on the poor living conditions they grew up in, and their daily struggles to feed and provide for their children. Nowadays, however, many younger inhabitants of Hamilton, usually in their 20s and 30s do not seem to have such problems. On the contrary, many households in Hamilton give an impression of being well off. And, although for many this might indeed be simply an impression, there is no doubt that the economic situation of many inhabitants of Hamilton has improved recently. This is perhaps related to the growing tourism industry where many people from Hamilton find employment.

Additionally, acquiring and presenting goods is a direct effect of the improved economic situation and is considered as status display. Owning a jeep and wearing urban labels promoted by hip hop and rap artists (e.g. Nike, New York Yankees flat bill cap, G-Unit, Coogi, Ecko Unltd, etc.) is fashionable and desirable among men in Hamilton and assigns them a high social status and popularity. Interestingly, even though such commodities might project a persona of a wealthy, independent, “cool”, fashionable professional, the majority of such men still live with their families and extended families in one household and work average-paid jobs. This eagerness to acquire and display material goods might be correlated with

the fascination of young males in Hamilton (but also, although seemingly less strongly, across other communities) with hip hop and rap cultures of the United States where goods possession is often explicitly manifested (the so called “bling-bling” culture: Rose, 1994; Collins, 2004). This fascination also extends to hip-hop symbols and slang. For example, both girls and boys from Hamilton often refer to their community as “Westside” after the American rap culture (Hess, 2009) and demonstrate their village membership by showing the popular Westside sign hand gesture on many occasions. The influence of hip-hop culture is further discussed in Section 2.6.

While the inhabitants of Mount Pleasant are predominantly of the Adventist faith, in Hamilton religious affiliations vary. There are two churches in Hamilton, an Anglican and a Catholic one. Interviews conducted with older inhabitants of Hamilton suggest that the older generation is quite a traditional one, with many people believing in the supernatural and in local folk tales (e.g. Jumbee, Jack O’Lantern, Obeah). On the other hand, the younger generations frequently expressed their disbelief in such phenomena.

Overall, fieldwork observations, combined with attitudes elicited from sociolinguistic interviews suggest that Hamilton is indeed frequently compared to Paget Farm, although many Bequians point to Hamilton as the village which is overall safer and friendlier than Paget Farm which could stem from the distance which separates Southside from many other villages on the island. Linguistically, although both villages are reported as “dialect speaking”, Paget Farm is usually chosen as the community where language is most divergent from the English taught at school. It is worth therefore to characterise Paget Farm in order to demonstrate the elements which make it different to the two communities discussed above.

2.4.3 Paget Farm

Paget Farm is located on the far end of Bequia, along the windward coast. It is in close proximity to another village – La Pompe and these two are referred to as the Southside, although Bequians usually use it to refer to Paget Farm alone. Similarly

to Mount Pleasant and Hamilton, Paget Farm is located on a hill, however the main concrete road reaches the village only as far as the Airport.



Image 2.3 Paget Farm (Source: Daleszynska, 2009c)

Inhabitants of Paget Farm are predominantly of Afro-Caribbean ethnicity, although there is a large group of people with lighter skin tones, and of Carib-Indian ancestry. Paget Farm is the largest village in Bequia, which developed out of the employment opportunities provided by whaling and fishing industries. Although Paget Farm can be easily accessed by public van transportation or a taxi, it is not a popular destination of either tourists or Bequians from the other communities. Paget Farm is very densely populated, most of the houses are concrete, however there is still a small number of wooden houses. The younger interviewees frequently commented on the close proximity of houses indicating that privacy is frequently violated and neighbours are often involved in domestic incidents or other private issues.

The marine business remains the main occupation for many inhabitants of the village. There is a large fishery in Paget Farm which is a major provider of fish for tourist resorts and restaurants. Many Southsiders claim their ancestors were directly involved in whaling and boat building since Ollivierre and Wallace (see Section 2.3) initiated the whaling tradition on the island. In Paget Farm and the neighbouring La Pompe the legends of great whale hunters are more vivid than in the other communities. Paget Farm is also undoubtedly the most traditional village of Bequia and is considered as such by all Bequians. Additionally to whaling many Southside families participate in an annual event of farine making. This process involves making flour out of cassava roots which are peeled, grated, beaten,

strained, pressed and finally fried in a large copper fire place (Image 2.4). Cassava flour making is an activity in which the whole family participates and the customs of processing it have not changed for generations. The tools and machinery used in farine making are primitive and hand made but informants frequently indicated that this is a crucial part of this tradition.



Image 2.4 A Paget Farm family making farine (Source: Daleszynska, 2009d)

Even though Paget Farm is positively considered as the most traditional community on the island, it is at the same time negatively perceived as conservative, “backwards”, and poor. Indeed, Paget Farm is visibly less economically developed than the other two villages described. On average, fewer people own cars, the households are smaller and the inhabitants work predominantly in labouring jobs. The occupations filled by the family members of adolescents from Paget Farm involved in the study included housekeeping in a tourist resort in Mustique, and operating a minivan. Paget Farm also has a reputation among other Bequians for being rowdy and violent. Some of these commentaries might be related to the above-mentioned conflict between Paget Farm and Hamilton. In the interviews, however, Paget Farm adolescents often confirmed the high frequency of conflicts and violent incidents in their community and provided numerous examples of such events. Interestingly, such negative attitudes towards Paget Farm often also included language. When characterising Paget Farm inhabitants of the other villages in Bequia often pointed to Southside as the “worst” speaking village on the island, and described the language spoken there as “wrong”, “broken”, or “different”.

Perhaps due to the fact that the village is located furthest from the main

harbour, and that tourists visit it less frequently than the other communities, people in Paget Farm have less contact with the outsiders, unless they are directly involved with tourists through their occupations. An interesting example of an apparent hostility of Paget Farm men towards a visitor is reported in Price (1988: 34-35) who provides his account of an early encounter with Paget Farm fishermen in 1980. Initially Price suggests that “continued dependence on traditional work activities in the residual forms of production by Paget lower classes is reflected in their perception of ‘community’ with regards to outsiders. Paget people are renowned throughout Bequia as being hostile to all non-Paget people, especially to tourists and foreign journalists and writers”. The author then recalls his encounter with a group of Paget Farm fishermen who cursed him and ordered him to leave the village. While such hostile attitudes might be a case of the past, it might have been precisely the reason why visiting Paget Farm became less popular among tourists. As I mentioned above, Paget people also do not travel to the main areas of Bequia as much as people in the other villages. This is because the area is self sufficient, with its own shops, a primary school, a police station, a medical unit, and even clothing boutiques.

Similarly to Hamilton, Paget Farm is diverse when it comes to religious faith. There are several churches in the village - a Catholic one, an Anglican and a Baptist. Interviewees, even the younger ones often admitted they believe in the supernatural, especially the local legends about Jumbee and Obeah. Several girls who participated in the project strongly believed in spell casting and voodoo and found them responsible for unfortunate events. The local folktales and beliefs reinforce the status of this village as the most traditional one.

The picture which emerges from the description of the villages analysed in the current study is that of a significant divergence between them. Despite the small size of Bequia the differences between these communities are salient among Bequians and comprise strong elements of local identities. Members of each community can locate an exact spot where one village starts and where it ends (although they not always agreed in their opinions where these boundaries were), in this way mapping perceived geographical boundaries between the communities. It seems that place is strictly policed in Bequia to the extent that it is considered the

most salient feature differentiating Bequia speakers. The ongoing research in Bequia has been aimed at investigating whether these perceived linguistic boundaries are reflected in patterns of linguistic variation. In the sections below I discuss the outcomes of several studies which investigate language variation among older speakers in Bequia.

2.5 Previous linguistic research in Bequia

Since the increase of interest in creole studies in the 1960s, there has been a limited body of research focusing on the Eastern Caribbean (Aceto and Williams, 2003). This is especially true of studies on naturally occurring data based on ethnographic, or semi-ethnographic fieldwork, or studies focusing on language variation and change. Some of the islands located in the southeast of the Caribbean which have received significant linguistic attention include: Trinidad (Winford, 1992; Winer, 1993), Tobago (Youssef and James, 1999), Barbados (Rickford, 1992; Blake, 1997; Cassidy, 1980; Hancock, 1980), and St Vincent (Prescod, 2004), however the majority of these offer a purely descriptive analysis of a creole linguistic system. Although the descriptive studies provide invaluable information as to the nature and features of these varieties enriching our knowledge about creoles in this part of the Caribbean, not much focus has been devoted to studies of language variation and change within these varieties (cf. Chapter 1). Some of these studies include research on Jamaican Creole (Patrick, 1999), Bahamian (Hackert, 2004), Bajan (Rickford, 1992; Blake, 1997), Guyanese (Rickford, 1986, 1987), Trinidadian (Winford, 1992), and the ongoing work in Bequia (Walker and Meyerhoff, 2007; Meyerhoff and Walker, 2006; Walker and Sidnell, 2011).

It is likely that language in Bequia is strongly related to that of the neighbouring St Vincent. Winford (1993) assigns the vernacular of St Vincent to the conservative creoles, yet less conservative than the Western creoles. This classification is based on the fact that the English-lexicon creoles of the Windward Islands developed rather recently, after they transferred from the French to the British reign in the late 18th century. Creoles on these islands possibly emerged through different contact situations from those which produced the conservative plantation creoles elsewhere in the Caribbean (Winford, 1993: 3). In St Vincent, French creole rapidly declined and was replaced by an English-lexicon creole.

The current project is inspired by Meyerhoff's, Walker's and Sidnell's ongoing research on language in Bequia, and especially by the work on language variation conducted by Walker and Meyerhoff. Data for their project was obtained from a group of older Bequians during fieldwork conducted between 2003 – 2005. It specifically targeted a group of elderly people who grew up on Bequia, and who acquired their vernacular before the tourist industry increased significantly on the island. Data was obtained from the three communities discussed above: Hamilton, Mount Pleasant and Paget Farm, but also La Pompe and Lower Bay. In the course of the research it became evident that in addition to their ethnic, historical, social, and economic differences, the villages also diverge linguistically. These observations were supported by speakers' frequent commentaries in which they claim/report that no two villages in Bequia sound the same. Meyerhoff and Walker have demonstrated that different language-internal constraints affect the distribution of the same variants across the three Bequia villages considered here. One of the objectives of their ongoing research has been to determine to what extent grammars in these villages are different for the distribution of several linguistic forms. This issue is also central to the current project (cf. Chapter 7). Meyerhoff and Walker have analysed a series of morpho-syntactic variables in order to investigate where the differences between the grammars in individual villages are located. Below I briefly summarise these analyses.

2.5.1 Language variation - the copula

In their (2006) paper, Walker and Meyerhoff analyse variation within the copula system in Bequia. More specifically, they examine the conditioning of zero copula across the villages and investigate (i) whether there is consistency of constraints for this variation across the villages, (ii) whether the results are comparable to patterns of copula deletion in AAVE, and (iii) whether variation within the copula can be a diagnostic of a creole continuum in Bequia. The results show robust differences between Hamilton and Mount Pleasant when it comes to the nature of the copula system across these villages. Walker and Meyerhoff analyse the behaviour of zero copula in Hamilton and Mount Pleasant following previous patterns of copula deletion which outline three different scenarios. According to these, zero copula can be (i) an extension of copula contraction ($is \rightarrow -'s \rightarrow \emptyset$) (Labov, 1969), (ii) simply

deleted, without the contraction process ($is \rightarrow \emptyset$) (Rickford et al., 1991), or (iii) precede the insertion of a copula, which is then deleted ($\emptyset \rightarrow is \rightarrow -'s$) (Romaine, 1982). Results from Hamilton show that the pattern of copula deletion follows that of scenario three where the copula is first inserted before it is contracted. In Mount Pleasant however, the pattern is close to model one, where the copula is first contracted and then deleted, which is parallel to the result found in AAVE. This confirms the initial observation that for this particular variable, the underlying system in both villages is different which points to a conclusion that several robust differences exist between the villages in the domain of morpho-syntax, and that higher rates of copula deletion with a following adjective provide evidence for a more creole-like grammar.

2.5.2 Urban sojourners in Bequia

A subsequent study of copula variation in Bequia (Meyerhoff and Walker, 2007) confirmed these underlying differences between the villages. The analysis additionally included data from Paget Farm. Variable rule analysis of the linguistic constraints determining the copula absence in each of these villages confirms that the grammar of Mount Pleasant for this variable shows a different grammatical pattern than Hamilton and Paget Farm, as in the two latter villages the following adjectives are treated more like verbal constituents. Consequently, Hamilton and Paget Farm look more similar for this variable than Mount Pleasant.

The study further examined the behaviour of individuals' grammars in each community and examines whether the collective community grammar is replicated in the grammars of individual speakers. The speakers considered are referred to as urban sojourners, and are distinguished from other Bequians in the sample by the fact that they had spent an extensive time away from Bequia. This indicates that these speakers have been exposed to StE to a greater extent than their "stay-at-home peers" (Meyerhoff and Walker, 2007: 354) and the degree to which this could affect their individual grammars is investigated. Rates of copula absence and the constraints which determine those rates were examined in the speech of urban sojourners from each community in order to make individual comparisons. Results showed the persistence of linguistic systems of urban sojourners, as the rates of

copula deletion with the following grammatical category are similar compared to their stay-at-home peers in the three villages.

One of the conclusions drawn from this study points to speakers' strong linguistic attachment to the vernacular grammar as time spent away from Bequia and contact with standard varieties showed little impact on individual grammars, despite the fact that the underlying frequencies of the investigated variants were lower. This could suggest an existence of strong local identities across Bequia, and more specifically strong ties to local community networks to a point where variation within each village might be an index of community identity on the island.

2.5.3 Language variation - Negation and the co-existing systems hypothesis

The question as to the degree of linguistic difference between the villages is recurring in the study of variability within the negation system in Bequia (Walker and Sidnell, 2011). Through investigation of high rates of inter- and intra-speaker variability in Bequia, the authors proposed the existence of "partially overlapping yet discrete coexistent systems localised in different communities on the island" (Walker and Sidnell, 2011: 2), a model discussed in Chapter 1.

Different variants of negation were identified in the study, which were classified in previous literature as occupying different positions on a continuum scale. Yet, again, the analysis of negation pointed to differences between the grammars of the communities investigated (Hamilton, Mount Pleasant, and Paget Farm). The authors concluded that two different grammars can be identified in Bequia, a more creole-like, and an English-like which they claimed are not distributed categorically across the villages. Rather, allocation patterns of linguistic forms and the constraints which determine their distribution might be indicative of different "lects". The co-occurrence of these constraints provides a strong evidence for co-existing systems on the island (Labov, 1998) reflected in the grammars of individual villages. The problems with classifying the variable forms into co-existing systems were spelled out in Section 1.2.2. The main challenge which comes with grouping the forms into co-existing systems deals with establishing the

boundaries of these systems. In this respect, the creole continuum model is more attractive since it assumes the transition between different 'lects' to be fluid without clear cut-off points. On the other hand, the creole continuum model becomes problematic in situations where, as Walker and Sidnell show, the calculation of frequency rates as well as social and linguistic constraints correlating with variation points to conspicuous differences between different communities or groups of speakers. Keeping in mind the conclusions reached by Walker and Sidnell (2011) for negation I examine whether variation within past temporal reference in BeqCE should be modelled as a continuum or co-existing systems, and point at several avenues for complementarity between both approaches.

2.5.4 Previous studies of variation in Bequia - conclusion

Overall, previous analyses of variation among the older generation of speakers examined the differences in the grammars of three communities on Bequia. It has been suggested that certain morpho-syntactic variants and the constraints of their occurrence might be diagnostic of separate systems: a more creole-like one and a more English-like one, which strongly correlate with membership in different communities on the island. Even though grammars in Hamilton and Paget Farm cannot be clearly classified as basilectal, the frequency of basilectal and mesolectal forms is higher in Hamilton and Paget Farm than in Mount Pleasant, where there is a higher frequency of features shared with StE. It seems then that the differences between the villages on a socio-historical level go in line with patterns of language variation among the older generation of speakers.

The question which I aim to answer is whether this is also reflected in the pattern of variation among adolescents. It was suggested above that the recent increase of tourism and easy access to the popular media have affected the lifestyles and attitudes of young Bequians towards non-local norms. The contact between Bequia creole and English is greater today than ever before which is again an effect of increased tourism, education standards and access to American and British television channels. In the next section I discuss in detail the recent socio-economic and cultural developments and their potential effects on language and variation in Bequia, taking into consideration the issues of globalisation and locality. Most of the

changes discussed here were also observed in other parts of the Caribbean (e.g. Slocum et al., 2003, Curtis, 2009) but were also reported by the older generation of Bequians during sociolinguistic interviews, and through my own fieldwork observations.

2.6 Recent social and economic developments in Bequia

Even though tradition is still an important aspect of Bequians' every-day lives, the rapid socio-economic transformations on the island are conspicuous even to casual observers. Increased tourism has provided employment opportunities and improved the financial situation of many Bequians. While the older generation experienced slow but gradual modernisation, such as installation of electricity and telephone network or the construction of roads, such changes have affected the younger generations of Bequians much faster. Today, almost every Bequian in their 20s and 30s has a mobile phone, a cable television and easy Internet access. Possession of electronics and access to global networks among adolescents depend predominantly on parental income, although Internet access is also available in schools and public Internet cafes.

While cable television network is now a norm in the majority of households, Internet access at home is also becoming increasingly popular. For example, Meyerhoff reported that during the fieldwork conducted between 2003-2005 not many adolescents were computer literate (personal communication). In 2009, the year in which the fieldwork for the current study was conducted, computer literacy was increasingly common. When I left Bequia approximately only a half of the young people I befriended had a regular access to the Internet, today however almost all of them use the Internet on the daily basis actively accessing social network platforms such as Facebook or MSN Messenger. It seems then that while the older generation lag behind the new social and electronic developments, young people not only stay up to date with the new trends but also actively participate in them (for example, laptops, iPhones, and Blackberries are becoming increasingly popular).

Another significant change reported by Bequians of both generations is the limited amount of housework for adolescents today which results in an increased

amount of free time usually spent on watching television, browsing the Internet or hanging out with peers in their community area. Table 2.3 shows an average number of hours spent in front of a TV and a computer by a few adolescents from several Bequia villages. The numbers suggest that almost half of their day is spent on TV watching and network browsing. In the interviews older Bequians frequently reported the hardship and struggles of their teenage lives and the daily duties assigned to them, such as goat herding, wood chopping, cleaning, babysitting, garden work etc. Today many of these activities are no longer undertaken.

Subject	Age	Television	Internet	Village
Leon	16	1	6	Hamilton
Vikki	15	3	4	Hamilton
Charlie	18	6	3	M. Pleasant
Nigel	18	4	4	M. Pleasant
Marcel	15	3	5	Paget Farm
Cassandra	16	3	4	Port Elizabeth
Maria	16	2	7	Port Elizabeth
Shanaya	15	2	5	La Pompe

Table 2.3 Self-reported average number of hours spent daily on watching TV or using the Internet by adolescents in Bequia

This easy and regular access to the media suggests that young people in Bequia today are exposed to English on an everyday basis, although again, this exposure might not be homogenous across the villages. On average, adolescents from Paget Farm were more engaged in daily household routines than the youth from the other communities who participated in this study. This is perhaps related to the fact that the households in Paget Farm are generally larger and denser and so taking care of children or helping in the kitchen are regular daily duties for many Southside girls (which was indeed frequently commented on during the interviews).

While portals such as Facebook and MSN Messenger allow for frequent computer mediated communication, YouTube is yet another extremely popular means of following the latest music trends, especially in dancehall, soca, hip-hop and rap. This goes in line with the conspicuous fascination of Bequia youth with the African American culture of the United States. Rap, hip-hop and r&b cultures seem much more appealing to young Bequians than any other popular sub-cultures. Additionally, the preference for certain artists and music genres seems to be inevitably ethnicity related. For example, adolescent girls in Bequia religiously listen

and are inspired by singers such as Rihanna or Beyonce, but show less liking for equally famous white singers such as Lady Gaga or Taylor Swift. While adolescents may be consuming white culture through soap operas and through other network television programs, the consumption of Black Entertainment Television and specifically of music videos featuring black hip-hop artists, is one of the favourite pastimes among Bequia adolescents. Fascination with African American culture also extends to fashion, and other elements of style (Eckert, 2000), such as gestures, and lexicon. Although this trend is apparent across the island, it is most notable in Hamilton. This fascination goes in line with fetishisation of material goods as a marker of status and wealth, a phenomenon which has been widely reported as a strong element of hip-hop and rap culture (Greene, 2008; Jeffries, 2011). An example of this style is illustrated in Image 2.5. The left image shows the “Westside” hand sign, which in hip hop culture represents rappers from the west coast of the United States (Hess, 2009). The right image shows Vybz Kartel, a popular Jamaican dancehall artist whose style inspires many young males in Bequia.



Image 2.5 Left - rapper The Game demonstrating the Westside hand sign; Right - Vybz Kartel, a popular dancehall artist (Source: Google Images)

There is no doubt then that young Bequians are influenced by external trends - subcultures, the popular media, which are inevitable outcomes of the growing economy and globalisation (Featherstone, 1994; Banks, 1997; Barker, 1999).

However, adolescents in Bequia do not blindly adopt the popular trends coming from the United States or Europe, but “select” the ones which are most

relevant to their own identities and socio-economic reality. Perhaps the appreciation of the ghetto culture stems from the association with poverty, daily struggles of African Americans, and a desire for high social status and wealth, which are common themes of hip-hop and rap lyrics. Additionally, appreciation of the local popular music such as dancehall, soca and reggae, remains very strong which suggests that the incoming musical and cultural trends are not in any way replacing the local ones. On the contrary, both are strongly present in young Bequians' everyday reality. This is particularly apparent in Paget Farm where adolescents are overtly fascinated by the music and fashion trends popular across the Caribbean, usually associated with dancehall artists and their style.

It is also not straightforward that the above-mentioned trends are only infiltrating the community from the outside. Since the opportunities for travelling became easier, many Bequians have been increasingly mobile, travelling especially to Canada and the United States, but also Great Britain. Very often these trips take place after graduation from high school, and involve seasonal work or visiting family. Some Bequians decide to reside overseas for work purposes, seasonally or for several years, and settle usually in the areas with large Caribbean diasporas such as Toronto, New York or Miami. It is possible that through these visits young Bequians are exposed to the Western culture and are influenced by it. As sociolinguistic research has shown, cultural orientation often correlates with the distribution of linguistic variants across individuals and communities (Labov, 1963; Hazen, 2002), and a positive orientation towards extra-local and larger cultural trends usually patterns with a lower distribution of vernacular forms. It is possible that exposure to pop-culture and tight networks with family members living abroad might contribute to the development of expanded cultural identities (Hazen, 2002) and a positive orientation to the non-local.

The pattern of transformations of local communities has been a focus of a study by Silverstein (1998) who concentrated on the vitality of local features under the influence of 'global' language communities. Just like the other subjects of recent developments, language in Bequia might also be in a process of transformation and negotiation. It would be tempting to hypothesise the disappearance of the vernacular features and crystallisation in favour of the incoming models. However,

the theory of the 'global' variety overtaking the local one on Bequia seems oversimplified and insufficient, especially considering Bequians' strong ideologies and attitudes towards their vernacular language. To explain that the categories of the global and the local are not simply polarities, I refer to the notion of glocalisation. This kind of "tandem operation" (Robertson, 1995 in Trudgill, 2004) results in active mixing of the incoming forms with the local ones. The new trends are incorporated in the linguistic, cultural and social reality while simultaneously the indigenous features are valorised and preserved, indicating the markedness of locality and distinctiveness (Meyerhoff and Niedzielski, 2003; Johnstone, 2010).

While Bequia creole is undeniably the language of everyday communication with very high local prestige, Standard English is still a variety which is desirable and overtly prestigious (Migge et al., 2011). However, the attitudes towards both varieties are not homogenous across the island. Determining which of the social factors, next to the linguistic ones, motivate these patterns and why is one of the major goals of this study.

2.7 Social categories

In the remaining sections of this chapter I discuss two social categories, age and place, which I hypothesise most strongly correlate with patterns of language variation and change in the three villages. Early studies of language variation showed that variation is not arbitrary, but is strongly correlated with linguistic and social constraints. Researchers analysing variation and change have used various methodological techniques to demonstrate the relationship between social categories and the distribution of linguistic features, the ways through which this relationship is established and how strongly it determines speakers' choice of linguistic variants. Researchers' focus has been shifting from a broad understanding of several social categories, such as gender, social class, or style, to more local categories based on practice rather than pre-determined characteristics. Theoretical and methodological changes towards the relationship between language variation and social structure have been labelled by Eckert as three waves of variation study (2005). A more detailed discussion of these different approaches and the methodological practices used in analyses of language variation are discussed in

Chapter 3.

The conclusions that can be drawn from fifty years of research combining analyses of language variation and change with local and extra-local social categories suggest that: (i) the patterns of correlation between social categories and variable forms might depend on various socio-cultural and geographical conditions, and (ii) one social category is rarely a sole social factor influencing patterns of language variation. More frequently, social categories interact having a combined effect on one another and on the distribution of linguistic forms among communities and individuals. In the sections below I discuss the potential influence of age and place on the patterns of language variation and change among two age groups in three Bequia villages, and my motivations for including them in the linguistic analysis.

2.7.1 Age

As sociolinguistic research continues to demonstrate, age is one of the most crucial categories in studies of language variation and change. Comparison of different age groups and individuals in one point in time, or over an extended period of time has proved to be a crucial methodological step for an analysis of synchronic, and in the long run, also diachronic language change. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that age often interacts with other social categories, such as gender (e.g. Dubois and Horvath, 1999; Eckert, 2000; Moore, 2004; Mendoza-Denton, 2008), social class (Labov, 1966; Macaulay, 1976), or a combination of these with speaker's participation in a community of practice (Kiesling, 1998; Corder and Meyerhoff, 2007; Lawson, 2009). In the current study two age groups are compared in an investigation of possible differences between two generations of speakers in Bequia. In addition, I hypothesise that an adolescent identity might be negotiated through patterns of language variation and change. I argue that this negotiation goes in line with the socio-economic and cultural transformations taking place in Bequia discussed in the sections above.

In general, sociolinguists have divided linguistic variables into those which do not change over time across a community of speakers – stable variables, and

those which undergo a change in progress (Labov, 1994). This has led to an important conclusion that variation does not always imply change (while change always implies variability). One interesting example of stable variability which involves a change in the use of variable forms across generations is age grading. This phenomenon, however, assumes that despite a change in use of linguistic features across different stages of individuals' lives, a community grammar as a whole remains stable, which suggests that consecutive generations of this community will display the same patterns on language use. Age grading is often discussed in sociolinguistics in contrast to an apparent time hypothesis according to which individuals' grammars remain stable across their lifespan (Sankoff, 2006). Apparent time forwards a set of methodologies used in data collection and analysis which are also followed in the current study. The theoretical application of the concept of an apparent time in Bequia (and its relation to age grading) is discussed in the following section.

2.7.1.1 Apparent time

Studies of language variation have predominantly applied two different methods of tracing and analysing changes in progress – real time and apparent time. While the former traces changes by making a series of observations of similar populations or individuals over time, the latter draws from observations of different age groups in one point in time (Bailey, 2004; Sankoff 2006). Apparent time has proven to be a particularly useful construct for analyses of changes in progress where a real time study is impossible.

Apparent time studies have been valuable in showing changes in progress in a community established on the basis of the differences between distributions of variable forms across different generations of speakers. Similarly, in the current study I compare different realisations of two variables of past temporal reference in three communities in Bequia and across two generations of speakers. Differences in the use of inflected verbs among adolescents in Bequia could suggest a change in progress towards a more standard system of past temporal reference. A generalisation regarding a change in progress is made under an assumption that grammars of individual speakers analysed in apparent time remain stable over their

lifespan (Sankoff, 2006; Sankoff and Blondeau, 2007). This implies that at the time of data collection, older Bequians from the three villages will demonstrate similar variability patterns as they did fifty years ago. However, sociolinguistic research has shown that individuals indeed can alter their linguistic repertoires across their lifespan (e.g. Fowler, 1986; Blondeau et al. 2003). Two questions emerge which undermine the applicability of apparent time construct for an analysis of a change in progress:

i) Does a change across individuals' lifespan among individuals suggest that apparent time is not an accurate concept for analysing a generational change in progress?

ii) In a situation where a sample from more age cohorts is unavailable and a real time study is not possible, how does one differentiate between a change in progress on a community level, and age grading?

In answering these questions, real time analyses proved to be invaluable. For example, Blondeau et al. (2003) compared the results obtained from individual speakers recorded in different times of their lives with variability among the same speakers only in two points in time that is comparing it with inferences which would be drawn if an apparent time study was conducted. Results showed that individuals indeed did alter their speech over time, but these changes were in the same direction as an overall change in the community. Therefore, it was confirmed that individual linguistic changes and communal changes usually go in line which validates the apparent time method in analysing a change in progress. It has been suggested, however, that while communal changes might indeed be reflected in an apparent time analysis, such a study might underestimate the actual speed of a linguistic change (Boberg, 2004; Sankoff, 2006).

Question two is perhaps more challenging as, in a situation where no real time data is available it might be methodologically very difficult to differentiate between age grading and a change in progress. However, according to Sankoff (2006) one should be careful when applying the concept of age grading which, she claims, should be reserved for situations where speakers are trying to adjust their language to the linguistic marketplace (Bourdieu, 1977; Sankoff and Laberge, 1978).

According to Sankoff, age grading is different to a general lifespan change as it does not imply a communal change (while a lifespan change usually does), and it is linked to specific sociolinguistic contexts. This issue has also been discussed by Chambers (1995) who refers to socially motivated age grading as a “sociolectal adjustment”. Similarly to Sankoff, Chambers (1995) suggests that a sudden change in the use of one variant vs. another usually occurs under specific socio-cultural conditions, such as entering a job market. This usually affects adolescents and young adults who are trying to tune into the local social orders around them. What is more, age-grading usually affects variables which are stigmatised and above the level of linguistic awareness.

A good example of such a case is Macaulay’s (1977) study of variation between a glottal stop and /t/ realisation in Glasgow. An analysis of 10 and 15 year old boys and their parents of three different social classes (Middle, Upper Working and Working) showed a high use of glottal stop among 10 and 15 year old sons of both groups of working class men. On the contrary, 15 year old middle class boys showed a sudden drop in their use of a glottal stop in favour of /t/. Macaulay claimed that negative social stigma attached to a glottal stop in Glasgow in the 70s which is considered a marker of working classes, might have prompted middle class adolescents to attune their speech to the linguistic norms characteristic of middle class speech. Therefore, age-grading is by no means a default case scenario for speech communities but affects those age groups which have “social reasons” for such linguistic adjustments, and those variables which are stigmatised and which carry specific social meanings easily interpreted by all members of a community. I return to these criteria in Chapter 7 where I discuss whether language change in Bequia can be characterised as age grading.

Undoubtedly, adolescence and young adulthood are the age groups which have attracted the most considerable attention among researchers analysing language variation change. These two age groups have been observed as the ones in which the highest rate of linguistic variation and change is observed, and therefore they have been established as focal stages for patterns of variation and change among individuals as well as communities. Adolescence is also a pivotal age group considered in the current study, and the reasons behind it are addressed in the

following section.

2.7.1.2 Age and identity - adolescence and social networks

According to Eckert (2000: 227), “the importance of adolescence for the study of sociolinguistic variation lies in its transitional status between childhood and adulthood, in which adult power and authority are appropriated into the peer social order”. This suggests that adolescents frequently find themselves in between the norms and patterns which they have been following throughout their childhood, which are usually in line with the norms imposed on them by the elders, and new social orders, a result of increased awareness which comes with new experiences. Research has shown that adolescents in such a transitional period frequently relocate themselves and start following social norms which are in opposition to the ones followed thus far, but which conform to peer group norms. For this reason adolescence has been also considered as the focal point for linguistic innovation and change (Kiesling, 1998; Bucholtz, 1999; Eckert, 2000; Moore, 2004; Mendoza-Denton, 2008; Bakht, 2009; Lawson, 2009).

Apparent time analyses have demonstrated that adolescents usually adopt the innovative variants early on, which means they are often identified as change leaders (e.g. Trudgill, 1984; Labov, 1994; Kerswill, 1996). Interpretations of this pattern have stressed community-specific conditions as responsible, however, the aforementioned transition from childhood to adulthood and the construction of identity that marks their separation from the elders have been hypothesised to play the most crucial role.

Studies considering age as a sociolinguistic variable often emphasise that age by itself has little explanatory value, but it needs to be considered in the context of its social significance. A good example of such an approach is Eckert’s study of a Detroit high school, which illustrates that speech patterns among adolescents are by no means homogenous and that they strongly correlate with other resources of identity construction, such as fashion, activities, orientations, which Eckert considers as stylistic practice (1989; 2000). Additionally, age quite naturally intersects with other social categories, such as gender, ethnicity, or social class.

Dubois and Horvath (1999) showed that an increased rate of TH-stopping in a Cajun speaking community in Louisiana is by no means limited to age, but correlates with other factors, such as open/closed social networks, and gender. Even though young males were identified as the leaders of this change, breaking down the community according to locally significant categories, especially the type of networks revealed that older males and females also strongly participate in this change.

Age is also considered as one of the primary factors in the current analysis of language change on Bequia. Adolescents in Bequia are not only in the transitional period between childhood and adulthood broadly observed for this age group across a variety of social and cultural settings, but are also vulnerable to external influences and patterns of social behaviour which have infiltrated the local norms through the global developments discussed above, such as contact with other varieties of English through increased tourism and the popular media, increased mobility, and influence of outside trends in fashion, music, and lifestyles. Faced with such powerful social forces Bequia adolescents might be prompted to renegotiate their local identities and this could be reflected in patterns of language variation and change. Adolescents in this study are contrasted with a group of older speakers, predominantly in their 70s and 80s who acquired their vernacular before an airport was built on the island, the event which marks an important landmark for the development of tourism on the island, and exposure to supra-local social and linguistic norms. Therefore, these two groups not only represent two different generations necessary in an apparent time analysis of language change, but also very different eras reflecting the past and the present reality in Bequia.

However, as I mentioned above, it is also important to examine the local socio-cultural patterns and norms as young Bequians' identities seem to be strongly embedded in a local cultural context. In the Western communities adolescents' linguistic practices were motivated by identity negotiation that marked their separation from the elders, which goes in line with everyday life changes, such as increased mobility, expanded social networks as a result of progressing into further stages of education, and general "loosening" of family networks in favour of peer group norms. In Bequia, a progression into adolescence is not usually marked by such drastic adjustments in every day routines and activities. Firstly, adolescents'

social networks remain stable considering the insular character of the community. Even though once they finish primary school many students have to commute to one of the two high schools located in the harbour, the majority of first year pupils already know each other through friends, neighbourhood or extended family. Furthermore, during the high school years mobility remains limited and only after graduation it becomes more common to travel to St Vincent or abroad for further education or work. Finally, family networks remain extremely strong across all communities on the island, and this continues to be true after finishing high school. Therefore, while there is no doubt that there might be internal motivations for adolescents to relocate themselves within the social realm, one has to be careful with assigning the same processes which drive social and linguistic innovations among adolescents in urban locations of the Western world to small, rural communities with strong local traditions and socio-cultural norms.

Eckert's research demonstrated that the affiliation of adolescents into Jocks, Burnouts or in-betweens is reflected through the social network matrix. Whereas Jocks' networks remained open, Burnouts' were more dense and multiplex (Milroy, 1987). In Bequia the analysis of the significance of social networks is complicated by the fact that Bequia is a small island where "everybody knows everyone". In spite of this, fieldwork observations suggest that the social networks matrix might not be uniform for adolescents across the different villages. Whereas in the Bequia High, which the participants of this study attended, the students seemed to spend time together regardless of their community affiliations, this could be different in the other high school in Bequia, heavily attended by pupils from Mt Pleasant.⁴ It was also observed that the networks of individual speakers from different communities might be correlated with their linguistic choices. For example, Nigel, an adolescent boy from Mt Pleasant shows much more open networks than other peers in his community. He spends a lot of time with people from Hamilton and the main harbour. Therefore, it is perhaps not coincidental that he stands out linguistically from the Mt Pleasant norm. This is further discussed in Chapter 7 where I examine the potential motivations for Nigel's linguistic choices. Despite the potential

⁴ This is due to the religious nature of the school which was established by the local Seventh Day Adventist church community.

significance of social networks among individuals in Bequia, the differences in social identities between adolescents in Bequia are most strongly related to the community they come from. It is subject to further research to establish to what extent the social networks of individuals and groups contribute to the adoption of certain styles, and eventually to the patterns of language variation. However, in this thesis the primary focus is on the social category of place. Since place as a sociolinguistic category has been considered mainly in terms of geography and, sometimes, a social landscape, it is necessary to define what I understand by place and on what terms it is used throughout this dissertation.

2.7.2 Place

The relationship between place and language is fundamental in sociolinguistics, nevertheless, sociolinguists have often considered place as a geographic, rather than a social dimension. Several recent studies investigating place have emphasised the social aspect of this category, as well as its role in the negotiation of identity and patterns of linguistic variation (Becker, 2009; Britain, 2009; Johnstone and Kiesling, 2008; Johnstone, 2010). For example, Becker (2009) portrays place as a crucial element in identity construction on the Lower East Side of New York, and Johnstone (2004; 2010) explores the relationship between local orientations and bigger external globalising forces.

In defining place, I follow a tri-dimensional model of spatiality put forward by Britain (2004: 604; 2009), where space is constructed on three different levels: geographical, social and perceived. While space refers to a general expanse in which these dimensions operate, place assigns them to specific locales and contexts. Thus, most generally, place can be defined as a geographic locale where one exists and co-exists and to which one is in some way, positively or negatively, oriented.

Undoubtedly, geography plays a crucial role in the formation of place. Physical features of a locale, whether it is an urban or a rural environment, type of isolation (Montgomery, 2000: 44), and demographic features shape the ways humans experience place and develop their ways of thinking about the world around them. Physical factors might also constrain the degree of contact between

communities (Schilling-Estes, 2002; Kerswill et al. 2008), or the strength of ties linking them (Milroy, 1987). This seems to be undoubtedly relevant to the context of Bequia. Despite the small size of the island, different geographical features of the communities (the isolation of Paget Farm from the other villages, the “inaccessibility” of Mount Pleasant, and the proximity of Hamilton to the main harbour) might condition the degree of contact between members of these communities, as well as their everyday experiences (commuting to the harbour, density of households).

Although geographical properties are fundamental to place, the above examples suggest that place naturally combines the physical and the social. It becomes a setting where an organised community exists and co-exists, interacts and engages in social relationships which shape their orientation towards each other. Linguistically, speakers recognising themselves as engaging in a particular place, remain in constant contact with each other, becoming a part of a speech community (Hymes, 1972; Labov, 1972; Scherre, 2006). According to Britain (2009), social space is particularly important as it shows how various manipulations of place, such as settlement, shape the future characteristics of a community. This is particularly important in the context of language variation and change in Bequia where different settlement and demography patterns of individual villages could have contributed to the development of strong local ideologies. Settlement induces a common set of routines (Giddens, 1984), experiences and memories through which place becomes a reality embedded in a particular geographical locality.

Geographical location and shared experiences combined stimulate the emergence of a common set of perceptions towards a particular place and those who populate it, and at the same time to those who do not. Through the lens of these attitudes and perceptions, speakers create evaluations of their own linguistic practices and those of outsiders. In the process of authentication (Bucholtz, 2003), speakers determine what is authentic and what is not, what is local, real, familiar and “ours”. Some linguistic forms undergo this evaluation process more strongly than others and become symbolic markers of locality (e.g. Becker, 2009; Johnstone and Kiesling, 2008).

The co-dependency of the geographical, social, and perceived dimensions of place confirms previous observations that place is as much ideological as it is physical (Eckert, 2004; Johnstone, 2004). Further, I argue that place and geographical location do not exist in a one-to-one relationship, but are embedded in a complex web of human practices, orientations and interactions. I hypothesise that different geographical, social and perceived levels of place in Bequia have contributed to the emergence of strong ideologies of speakers towards each of the communities on the island.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed three issues important for further analysis: (i) the socio-historical background of Bequia and the impact of the major recent socio-economic developments on the island, (ii) previous linguistic studies which investigated patterns of language variation across the Bequia communities, and (iii) two social categories hypothesised as highly significant for the interpretation of language variation and change in Bequia – age and place. As many sociolinguistic studies demonstrated, a local sociolinguistic and cultural context of a community may be crucial for an interpretation of sociolinguistic patterns (Dubois and Horvath, 1999; Eckert, 2000; Hazen, 2002; Mendoza-Denton, 2008). The same is proposed here. The social and cultural characteristics of the Bequia community, recent socio-economic developments, and especially the differences between the villages operating on multiple levels, are regarded as critical for our understanding of linguistic variability and change on the island.

It is also important to understand how the broadly understood social categories applied in the current study, such as age and place, fit into the sociolinguistic context of Bequia, as the correlations between these categories, and the distribution of linguistic forms can only be interpreted through the local perspective. The diverse sociolinguistic background of Bequia influenced the types of methodologies applied in the current study, but also presented several challenges for fieldwork and data collection. The details of the data collection process, as well as the discussion of the methodologies this research follows are the topic of Chapter 3.

Chapter 3 The variables and the methods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the variables analysed in the current study and the methodological frameworks employed in their analysis. It is divided into two parts: theory-oriented and data-oriented.

Part One discusses the linguistic forms which are central to the current analysis. I characterise bare verbs, inflected verbs and preverbal markers *bin/did* and explain why these forms are interesting for an apparent time analysis of language variation and change in Bequia. I also spell out some challenges with establishing the variable context for the quantitative analysis of these forms. The main problem concerns the use of these variants across a variety of temporal and aspectual contexts. I account for this polyfunctionality by including several categories of tense and aspect as independent variables in the analysis. In the data coding process it was decided which temporal and/or aspectual category each token of a bare verb, an inflected verb or *bin/did* extracted from the data can be assigned to considering the discourse context in which they occurred. The grammatical independent variables (such as morphological class, tense, aspect) are discussed in Part One of this chapter while the discourse constraints are characterised and analysed in Chapter 5.

Next, I discuss the theory and motivations behind employing quantitative sociolinguistic methods in an analysis of language variation and change in this study. I briefly outline the history and development of this method, which has been loosely categorised into three waves (Eckert, 2005). The debate among sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists as to the balance between the qualitative and the quantitative analysis of variation has recently been at the centre of sociolinguistic attention and some of its main arguments will be brought into particular focus. Even though the main goal of the current study is to explore the underpinnings of the variable system of Bequia creole through the use of quantitative methods, I also

discuss the qualitative aspect of data analysis, such as exploring the relationship between language and speakers' identities.

Part Two of this chapter deals with the process of data collection, management and analysis employed in the current study. I outline the techniques used in data collection during fieldwork I completed between January and June 2009. I discuss the challenges of conducting fieldwork in Bequia and the different ways these were tackled. I address the step by step process of entering the community and data collection. Finally, I discuss the outcomes of the fieldwork, concentrating especially on the sample used for the current analysis, transcription of the data, coding and, last but not least, specifics of the quantitative statistical analysis and the features of the statistical package used.

3.2 The variationist method

Methodological challenges of classifying the nature of creole languages (cf. Chapter 1) encouraged research on synchronic variation in the Caribbean communities (Rickford, 1986; Patrick, 1999; Hackert, 2004; Walker and Meyerhoff, 2006; Meyerhoff and Walker, 2007). These studies benefit from data based on naturally occurring speech in social contexts which allows for: (i) investigating the actual distribution of linguistic forms across the communities, (ii) identifying variation across communities and individuals, and (iii) tracing linguistic trends and potential linguistic changes in apparent time.

A fundamental idea behind these studies is that they consider variation to be an inherent property of a linguistic system (Weinreich et al., 1968). What is more, variation is hypothesised not to be 'free' or random, but to be correlated with various linguistic and social factors. Consequently, by following this assumption I hypothesise that variation in the grammar of BeqCE is not due to chance, but that there are some internally organised linguistic and social mechanisms behind it. The variationist methodology is highly dependent on quantitative statistical analyses and is especially suited for identifying language change in progress. In the current study, quantitative methods are not only employed to test the predictions about the nature of the data, but will be used as a tool for establishing the variable patterns

and discovering significant correlations which might not be available with qualitative analytic techniques (Guy, 1993).

Such an outlook on variation was popularised by the work of Labov, (1966, 1972) and followed by his students and associates (Wolfram, 1969; Rickford, 1987; Sankoff, 1980; Poplack, 1980; Guy, 1980). The framework has been supported by the quantitative methodology developed by Cedergren and Sankoff (1974) which through employment of multivariate statistics helps to quantitatively determine the effect of various linguistic and extra-linguistic conditions on the choice of individual variants. One of the crucial steps in an analysis of variation is defining the variable context based on the principle of accountability, which includes reporting all the occurrences and non-occurrences of variants. In other words, defining a linguistic variable involves formulating “a closed set to which the axioms of probability theory apply” (Labov, 2008b: 3). An inevitable part of this process is establishing a set of forms classified as two ways of saying the same thing (Labov and Weiner, 1983: 6; cf. Chapter 1) and excluding tokens where it is impossible to distinguish between variants, such as neutralisation contexts. The conditions potentially determining the occurrence of linguistic variants are coded as independent variables (also known as factor groups or predictors). Determining and interpreting this conditioning is central to variationist analysis. In this study, factor groups were established mainly on the basis of previous analyses of variation within past temporal reference, research on CECs and detailed observations of the Bequia data. A discussion of the variables considered in this study is presented in the following sections.

3.3 Dependent variables: Bare verbs and inflected verbs

One of the reasons why bare verbs (Example 3.1) and inflected verbs (3.2) are of particular interest for the current analysis is their high frequency in the expression of past temporal reference in BeqCE (the frequency patterns are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4).

3.1 (PF; 9; 164)⁵

[009] That is how we grow up. I grow up from the dust down there, me mother and father was poor, and we grow in that way. We eat whatever we can afford. We go to school, and when we go to school and come back, nothing to eat.

3.2 (MP; James; 129)

[James] Yeah a time I had a fever and I went out park and it had a tree called...and I had, I...my auntie pick these of the leaf and squeeze the thing out of the stem and made me taste it. It was a bit bitter but it help me the next day.

In addition, analysis of variation between these forms provides an ideal context for testing whether the nature of variation within past temporal reference in BeqCE are better modelled as co-existing systems or a creole continuum. Because bare verbs are classified as a vernacular creole form and inflected verbs are shared with StE, the distribution of these forms, and the underlying constraints which determine their distribution across the Bequia communities could provide a diagnostic for identifying the differences between the villages, and their classification into either of the hypothesised co-existing systems: a more creole like one (where we would expect bare verbs to be the dominant form), and a more English-like one (with a potentially higher frequency of inflected forms). Furthermore, because bare verbs are generally considered as a local form, while inflected verbs as a part of the overtly “prestigious” English language, we can assume that both variants are socially loaded. I investigate whether Bequians use these variables as a resource for individual and community specific social moves, and interpret their motivations for using these particular forms as an element in social practice.

It has been suggested that the most common reading of unmarked verbs in past temporal reference is the Preterite. However, in the majority of Caribbean varieties nowadays the variation between the unmarked verb and the inflected verb in this context is ubiquitous (Winford, 1993; Patrick, 1999). Despite the fact that bare

⁵ The example convention used in this study includes speaker community (Ham., PF., or MP.), speaker ID (a number in case of older speakers, and a pseudonym for adolescents), and a text line where a given example was found (for the files transcribed with ELAN, a recording time is provided instead).

verbs usually represent the Preterite tense (or Simple Past), this form has been recognised in the creole literature as polyvalent, with wide panoply of readings across tense and aspect (Mufwene, 1984; Sankoff, 1990; Poplack and Tagliamonte, 1996; Poplack and Tagliamonte, 2001). In fact, they have been classified as a default form (Poplack and Tagliamonte, 1996; Schwenter and Torres Cacoullous, 2008) within a creole temporal system. However, even a preliminary observation of the Bequia data suggests that inflected verbs also cover a range of aspectual and temporal contexts (for example they can be used in Anterior tense, as well as habitual and perfective aspect). Therefore, in the quantitative analysis of variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs only the contexts where both forms occur interchangeably are considered.

By suggesting that in BeqCE bare verbs and inflected verbs are assigned predominantly to the preterite tense, the category which is also commonly applied in StE and other varieties of English, I am not implying that BeqCE and StE share one grammar (and the comparison of the two systems is not in the scope of this study). However, in establishing the function and meaning of the categories representing past temporal reference in Bequia, using the standard terminology is useful.

In the current study the preterite is defined as a temporal category which includes situations understood to have taken place prior to speech time (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 85; Reichenbach, 1947). In StE the preterite is realised mainly through morphological marking of a verb. Historically, English verbs are divided into weak, which form the past tense by the presence of the *-ed* suffix, and strong, where the vowel mutation classifies the verb as past. Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 85) identify three main uses of the preterite: past time (3.3), modal remoteness (3.4), and backshift (3.5).

3.3 She always **took** her dog with her.

3.4 If he **took** the later plane tonight he wouldn't have to rush.

3.5 Kim said I **took** things too seriously.

In the current section we will be concerned with the use of the preterite in past time, shown in (3.3). Whereas in English the preterite is often expressed inflectionally, rather than by means of an auxiliary, in BeqCE, as in other CECs, the preterite reading of a VP is expressed through inflected verbs and bare verbs, but other strategies are also in use, such as preverbal markers (cf. Section 3.4 of this chapter and Chapter 6).

Whereas situations assigned to the preterite (such as the one in Example 3.3) are assumed to have taken place prior to speech time (Reichenbach, 1947), no requirements exist as to the duration of an eventuality. Therefore, a verb in the preterite might represent a single occurrence or a serial state (Dahl, 1985). Such distinctions will become important when the aspectual categories are considered.

3.4 Dependent variables: preverbal markers *bin/did*

Analyses of creole languages quite frequently focus on linguistic forms as direct representations of a given grammatical category (one form = one function). As a result, one might get an impression that, as far as creole languages are concerned, the relationship between a linguistic category and its semantic meaning is straightforward, unambiguous. This is especially applicable to forms which are unique to creole languages and set them off from their lexifiers, such as preverbal past tense markers *bin* (3.6) and *did* (3.7)

3.6 (PF; Clara; 145)

[Clara] Everybody in the house have a baby and when them been growing up you **bin see** when them pinning up the diaper, clean them, bathe them.

3.7 (PF; 010; 113)

[010] Yes me grandmother was, well she **did belong** to the Anglican-church, she all time go to church and thing.

Bin (spelled as “bin” to differentiate it from the copula and auxiliary *been*) occurs pre-verbally, usually preceding a verb stem. The form underlined in 3.6 differs in function from the preceding construction *been growing* where *been* is an auxiliary

marking imperfect aspect. *Bin* + verb stem is unemphatic which distinguishes it significantly from the preverbal emphatic BIN found in African American Vernacular English, even though a possible creole origin of this form in the AAVE system has been hypothesised (Rickford, 1999: 27).

Preverbal marker *bin* occupies an interesting position in creole studies. Undoubtedly, it has received extensive attention from creolists as a form assigned to the basilect. Some studies have classified it as the only creole past tense marker operating under specific grammatical conditions (Bickerton, 1975), while in other studies it was assigned a role of a relative tense marker (Winford, 1993) or a discourse marker (Pollard, 1989; Youssef and James, 1999).

It has been assumed that preverbal *did* is a mesolectal equivalent of *bin* on a continuum scale, and therefore the grammatical functions assigned to both forms are identical. According to Bickerton (1975), preverbal *did* is “simply slotted into” the place of *bin* in the mesolect. A diachronic link has been hypothesised between preverbal *did* in creole languages and dialects of English (see e.g. Tagliamonte and Jones, 2004). Although rare, unemphatic preverbal *did* (other than *do*-support) is still present in some English dialects (for example Somerset). The diachronic connection between preverbal *did* in English and creoles is based on the fact that the form was present in English dialects up until the early 18th century after which its use steadily declined (Ihalainen, 1982). Using quantitative methodology Tagliamonte and Jones tested the link between preverbal *did* in Somerset and in Samaná (a variety of English spoken by the descendants of African Americans in the Dominican Republic) and through the comparison of constraint rankings in both varieties they demonstrated that preverbal *did* in Samaná in many respects resembles the preverbal *did* found in Somerset.

In this study I analyse preverbal markers without making a priori assumptions as to the possible functions or readings these forms might represent. In Chapter 6 I examine whether the functions that have been assigned to these forms in other studies of CECs are mirrored in the system of past temporal reference in BeqCE, and whether *bin/did* are the only forms in the system which might express these functions. The goal of this examination is to establish the variable context for a

quantitative analysis of preverbal markers considering the principle of accountability (Labov, 1972). I investigate several factors which I hypothesise could shed more light on speakers' motivations for choosing a preverbal marker to express past temporal reference over other forms in the system.

First, some early studies classified preverbal *bin/did* as markers of anteriority, a temporal category where the deictic centre is located prior to the reference point which is past in relation to speech time (Reichenbach, 1947; Bickerton, 1975; Dahl, 1985). According to this definition, anteriority can be most generally interpreted as 'past-before-past'. Bickerton claims that preverbal *bin* as a marker of anteriority is inextricably linked to the aspectual category of stativity. Whenever preverbal *bin* precedes a stative verb it is a marker of the preterite. However, if followed by a non-stative verb, the tense is anterior. This model has been characterised as flawed by many creolists (e.g. Sankoff, 1990; Winford, 1993). Even Bickerton himself claims in his early analysis that "such an interpretation is at best doubtful" (1975: 36), since in his data the interpretation of preverbal *bin* as a marker of anterior situations is not categorical. This also seems likely for the Bequia data where, indeed, tokens of preverbal *bin* in anterior context can be found, but other readings of *bin* are possible. This is tested in Chapter 6.

Another factor hypothesised to constrain the use of preverbal markers is their role in discourse. Pollard (1989), Winford (1993) and Youssef and James (1999) distinguish between preverbal *bin* as a backgrounded discourse marker and the unmarked verb as a foregrounded discourse marker. Both types of discourse have been accounted for in the analysis and the categories themselves are discussed in Chapter 5.

Last but not least, the social meaning of preverbal markers needs to be considered. Even though the accounts of *bin* as socially stratified are scarce (cf. Youssef, 2001), the form has been characterised as stigmatised, associated with ruralness, conservative language, and older speakers (as reported by Patrick, 1999 for Jamaica). *Did* has also been associated with older conservative creole speakers but its urban character has been recognised (Patrick, 1999; Hackert, 2004). In Chapter 6 I examine the use of preverbal markers across different cohorts across the

Bequia communities and focus on the social meanings of these forms in Bequia in an attempt to interpret the patterns of distribution and utilisation.

So far, I have discussed the variants of past temporal reference analysed in the current study as dependent variables. In the following sections I characterise the grammatical factors included as independent variables in the current study, and my motivations for considering them as potential determinants of the patterns of variation and change in Bequia.

3.5 Independent variables: morphological class

According to Patrick: “the morphological category of the verb is the strongest and most significant of all linguistic factors in structuring the variation between inflection and non-marking” (1999: 226). However, little agreement has been reached as to the best way of classifying creole verbs according to their morphological class. This could impose certain problems for the comparability and replicability of successive studies (Winford, 1992). In the following section I touch upon the models of classification applied in previous accounts of CECs and AAVE, focusing on the ones which will be most useful for the morphological classification in the current study. For a detailed comparison of these models, see Hackert (2004: 139ff) or Poplack & Tagliamonte (2001: 117ff). Most generally verbs can be divided into strong and weak according to the inflection type. Both categories are discussed below.

3.5.1 Strong verbs

In today’s English the group of strong verbs constitutes a minority of all verbs. The group gradually decreased since Old English as a number of verbs changed class into weak verbs (Krygier, 1994). Along with the limited size of this verb class, however, comes their high token frequency in English as the most frequent verbs have retained their strong forms (Anderwald, 2009). The classification of verbs into strong and weak is important for disentangling the variation within past temporal reference in creole languages since early research on variation in creole language demonstrated that individual verb categories correlate with inflection at different rates. Nevertheless, decisions as to the sub-categorisation of the class of strong verbs

have varied among researchers. Bickerton (1975: 146), for example, divided strong verbs into: “those with vowel change only (*see/saw; throw/threw*)”, verbs “ending in a single consonant (*buy/bought; make/made*), and “forms ending in consonant clusters (*go/went; sleep/slept*)”. An expanded model is proposed by Winford (1992) after his reevaluation of the classification proposed by Fasold (1972). Winford distinguished three sub-categories of strong verbs: (i) doubly marked, *tell/told*, (ii) vowel change only (*know/knew*) and (iii) vowel change plus (*buy/bought*). In the current study, I follow a slightly simpler model, also applied by Patrick (1999) where both ‘vowel change only’, and ‘vowel change plus’ verbs are combined into one class of Irregular verbs, which also includes suppletive verbs such as *go*. The remaining strong verbs have been coded as semi-weak. The categorisation of strong verbs employed in the current study is illustrated in Table 3.1.

Morphological type	Description	Example
Semi-weak	Verbs which include a vowel change in the preterite and participle form and are subject to final /t,d/ deletion	<i>tell/told</i> <i>keep/kept</i>
Irregular	The stem form and the preterite differ by a vowel change (and sometimes also a consonant change) The preterite and the participle forms are different and do not derive from the verb root	<i>do/did</i> <i>know/knew, catch/caught,</i> <i>go/went</i>

Table 3.1 Classification of strong verbs according to Winford (1992) and Patrick (1999)

First, this classification has an important advantage as it accounts for the group of verbs with both ablaut and /t,d/ affixation, such as *kept* and *told* (coded here as semi-weak). Distinguishing semi-weak from other verbs has been an important step in the analysis of inflection across CECs and AAVE (Winford, 1992; Patrick, 1999; Tagliamonte and Poplack, 2001; Hackert, 2004) Since Guy and Boyd (1990), there has been a strong tendency in studies of /t,d/ deletion in varieties of English to focus not only on the deletion patterns in weak verbs but also in the semi-weak class of verbs where final /t,d/ is variably deleted in verbs such as *told'* or *kept*. This allows for examining the phonological conditioning across different grammatical

classes (Guy and Boyd, 1990). Patrick (1991; 1999) concluded that in CECs semi-weak and regular verbs can undergo two intersecting processes, the morphological and the phonological, although in this study only the former is considered (cf. Section 3.5.2).

There are two classes of strong verbs which have been excluded from the analysis: verbs which are identical in the stem, preterite and participle forms (*put/put/put*), as well as strong verbs with final consonant cluster reduction (*send/sent*) since the phonetic output in the stem form and in the Preterite was often too difficult to distinguish. Finally, since Winford's (1992) classification was also employed in the studies of variation by Patrick (1999) and Hackert (2004), following it here will provide an opportunity to compare the effect of morphological class on the variation within the past temporal reference in Bequia with its effect in Trinidad, the Bahamas and Jamaica.

3.5.2 Weak verbs and the /t,d/ deletion

In this section I focus on the class of weak verbs which form past tense through the addition of the dental suffix which surfaces as /t/ or /d/ depending on the voicing of the preceding segment. These are illustrated in the table below.

Morphological Class	Description	Example
Vowel-final regular	A weak verb with a stem form finishing with a vowel	<i>play/played</i> <i>die/died</i>
Consonant-final regular	A weak verb with a stem form finishing with a consonant	<i>kill/killed, turn/turned</i>
Syllabic regular	Stems ending in /t,d/ which have a segment /ɪd/ added to the stem form of a verb	<i>want/wanted,</i> <i>quote/quoted</i>

Table 3.2 Classification of weak verbs according to Winford (1992)

This time, I neatly follow Winford's (1992) categorisation, which recognises three sub-classes of weak verbs: vowel final regular, consonant-final regular and syllabic regular. The marking of weak verbs has received a lot of attention in studies of English, its regional varieties, as well as AAVE and CECs. Early studies of this variable show that the final apical stops /t,d/ are variably deleted according to a

variety of constraints. Studies across different varieties of English have shown that this process is common for speakers of English world-wide and that the linguistic and social constraints that govern it are often homogenous (Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram, 1969; Fasold, 1972; Bayley, 1994).

The ubiquity of studies of /t,d/ deletion in varieties of English and the uniformity of the variable rules applying to the process have made consonant cluster simplification “a showcase variable” for variationist sociolinguistics (Patrick, 1999: 122). The process of /t,d/ deletion has, to a lesser extent, also been investigated in CECs (Holm, 1988: 110; Alleyne, 1980: 48). An exception is of course Patrick’s (1991, 1999) extensive analysis of /t,d/ deletion in Jamaican Creole. According to Patrick, it is often erroneously assumed that creole languages have no final consonant clusters. On the contrary, he shows that in Jamaican mesolect speakers generally “do have underlying clusters upon which a process of variable deletion operates” (Patrick, 1999: 123).

In the current study I am not concerned with analysing the phonological process of /t,d/ deletion across different grammatical classes (such an analysis was conducted in Daleszynska, 2010). Nevertheless, I will monitor and compare the rate of inflection across the morphological classes of weak verbs. I propose that, as it was demonstrated for other CECs (e.g. Bickerton, 1975; Rickford, 1987; Patrick, 1999; Tagliamonte and Poplack, 2001) the rate of inflection will be the lowest in the consonant-final regular verb class again suggesting that this is motivated by two intersecting process – phonological, leading to word final /t,d/ deletion, and morphological – variable verb inflection (Patrick, 1999).

Coding for regular verbs was in some cases influenced by the phonological character of BeqCE. The same problem was addressed by Hackert (2004: 142). BeqCE, similarly to other Eastern Caribbean creoles is generally non-rhotic (Aceto, 2004: 484). However, variability within word-final rhoticity in BeqCE has been observed, which is often subject to stylistic constraints suggesting that classifying words such as *care* as vowel-final or consonant-final regular should be based on individual judgements. Therefore, words ending in *-r* (as in *hear*) will be generally classified as vowel final regular, unless the final *-r* is clearly audible.

Undoubtedly, morphological class is an important category to consider in the analysis of variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs. In the quantitative analysis (Chapter 4) I compare the rates of inflection in the five morphological classes outlined above across the Bequia communities and age groups which will serve as one diagnostic for establishing the similarities/ differences between these cohorts.

Next to morphological class I also consider several aspectual categories. Two types of aspectual distinctions are included: lexical and grammatical. In the sections below I discuss each of these categories, and their potential contribution to the patterns of variation in Bequia.

3.6 Aspect: lexical vs. grammatical

Aspect can be conveyed morphologically (through inflections, suffixes and periphrastic constructions) but it is also carried semantically (through inherent properties of verbs). These two dimensions are expressed through the categories of grammatical and lexical aspect. Boundedness, understood as a starting and an end point of a situation, is considered as a fundamental concept of aspect. Grammatical aspect illustrates the intrinsic bounding of an event (Sasse, 2006), and the grammatical aspectual classes, such as progressive suffixes or habitual, are usually marked morphologically, through preverbal markers and auxiliaries, or they remain unmarked. Lexical aspect (Aktionsart), on the other hand, deals with boundedness as embedded in the semantics of an expression. Lexical aspect not only includes the inherent property of a verb itself, but considers its argument frame (Sasse, 2006: 535). For this reason the surrounding discourse context was an important factor in coding for aspect.

In various analyses of creole TMA systems, both expressions of aspect are present. Researchers have been concerned with categories of grammatical aspect such as habituality (expressed in creoles e.g. through *used to*), or perfectivity (hypothesised as the primary function of the unmarked verb), as well as the inherent properties of verbs, and in particular stativity and punctuality (Bickerton, 1988; Sankoff, 1990; Spears, 1990; Winford, 1993). Other inherent aspectual

properties have also been considered, such as telicity and its correlation with narrative and discourse grounding (Gooden, 2008). All these accounts, although very insightful, are at the same time quite selective, i.e. they emphasise one aspectual category which is considered as particularly relevant for the TMA system of a given creole. As a result, it is rather difficult to draw conclusions as to the overall effect of aspect on the variable distribution of forms within past temporal reference next to other grammatical categories such as morphological class (but cf. Patrick, 1999; Hackert, 2004). It also complicates establishing the interplay between grammatical and lexical aspect which could be crucial for the effect of aspect on the variation patterns.

In the sections below I discuss the aspectual categories (both lexical and grammatical) which have been included in the quantitative analysis and are hypothesised to be influential for the variation within past tense morphology. I agree with Gooden who states that “the application of clear diagnostics for the interpretation of (...) aspect (...) is important for the analysis of past time reference and will facilitate cross-linguistic comparisons” (2008: 315). Since the vast majority of verbs coded expressed perfective and habitual situations, only these two categories of grammatical aspect have been included in the analysis leaving other grammatical aspectual categories, such as continuous progressive and continuous non-progressive for future analysis. The predominance of perfective and habitual eventualities in the coded sample might be related to the nature of the data which included speakers’ stories from the past (favouring perfective situations) or reminiscences about how life used to be in the past compared to the present days (in which case habitual situations were more common).

3.6.1 Perfective

Comrie defines perfectivity as indicating “the view of a situation as a single whole, without distinction of the various separate phases that make up that situation” (1976: 16). Even though, the perfective might also function in future or present tenses (Comrie, 1976), here I am concerned solely with the past interpretation of the perfective and its representation in BeqCE:

3.8 (MP; James; 436)

[James] The biggest injury I ever had was a spring toe. I **stopped** my toe on a piece of iron and swe...swo...it was swollen big. And it **turned** blue. My foot was blue.

3.9 (PF; Tanya; 1024)

[Tanya] When the sea high, I **go** under sand all thing and my mommy **think** I been lost until she **see** my foot.

The examples show the perfective expressed through verb stems and verb inflections, which are the most common instantiations of this aspectual category in BeqCE, and possibly also in other CECs (Winford, 1992). The fact that both bare verbs and inflected verbs can be assigned to perfectivity in BeqCE supports including this aspectual category as a potential factor determining the variable distribution of these forms.

The role of perfective in past temporal reference is usually to indicate a single completed situation (or a series of situations). The embedded boundedness of a perfective situation also indicates that perfectivity is incompatible with the lexical aspectual category of stativity, categorised by the lack of endpoints, although stative verbs can have a perfective interpretation (Hackert, 2004: 67). An interpretation of a verb as perfective or habitual often depends heavily on the larger discourse contexts, therefore in this study, verbs were coded as perfective (or habitual) according to their reading in discourse.

3.6.2 Habituals

Imperfective is another aspectual category considered as a potential variable context in the analysis. While perfectivity is quite naturally assigned to past temporal reference, the imperfective can include past, present and future. Comrie (1976: 24) defines an imperfective as a situation “viewed from within” rather than “from the outside” and emphasises the lack of endpoints as its characteristic feature. Bearing this in mind, the opposition between perfective and imperfective might be

narrowed down to the momentary nature of an action versus its duration, or completion of an action against its non-completion.

Habituality is a sub-category of imperfective aspect, next to continuous (progressive and non-progressive) classes (Comrie 1976: 26-32). Previous studies suggest that habitual aspect is an important category for a distinction between bare verbs and inflected verbs (Hackert 2004). Despite the occurrence of overt aspectual habitual markers in BeqCE (such as *used to*), habituality can also be expressed through verb stems and inflected verbs (exemplified in 3.10 and 3.11).

3.10 (PF; 035; 30)

[Int.] So you don't use to play dominoes neither?

[035] (...) well, mostly when we **go** fishing and we **come** back home we **start** to take a little rum, **play** All Fools, or Domino.

3.11 (MP; Charlie; 342)

[Charlie] Once upon a time I was terrified of them (centipedes). I **hated** them. I used to flip them and then kill them.

The examples above show that perfective situations, a primary context for the utilisation of bare verbs and inflected verbs, are not the only environment where both variants occur interchangeably. Therefore, in the process of circumscribing the envelope of variation, bare verbs realising habituality have to be differentiated from those used in perfective contexts.

Comrie (1976: 73) defines a habitual situation as one which is "characteristic of an extended period of time; (...) not an incidental property of a moment but a characteristic feature of a whole period." This suggests that iterativity, although embedded in a habitual situation, is not a sufficient prerequisite to classify a situation as habitual. According to Smith (1997) a habitual situation must consist of interval sequences of occurrences and additionally, on their routine nature. This definition accounts for the interpretation of dynamic verbs as habitual. Even though each of the interval situations is dynamic, their overall semantic interpretation is habitual. This is illustrated in the example below:

3.12 (PF; Anka; 109)

[Anka] My mother used to love go party. If she cooking and somebody **call** she to go party she **leave** the pot and she **go** party. My mother used to just go, you like it or not she **gone**.

Example 3.12 illustrates a variety of strategies for expressing habituality in BeqCE. First, we see the habitual marker *used to* which is very common in the dataset, possibly due to its unambiguous past habitual interpretation. Secondly, the example confirms that the variation between verb stems and inflected verbs occurs in the habitual context. Both *call* and *leave* are used here to underline the routine nature of occurrences, but a similar habitual reading is also expressed through the inflected verb *gone*. This example shows again that discourse context is an important factor for interpreting bare verbs and inflected verbs as habitual.

The use of both forms in habitual context was also reported in Hackert's (2004) analysis of BahCE. Hackert's results showed that inflected verbs are strongly disfavoured in habitual context. She suggested this could be due to the possible interpretation, or a relationship that habituais have with generic sentences. I test this claim in the quantitative analysis of variation in Chapter 4 where I separate the verbs with perfective interpretation from the habitual ones in order to analyse which of these categories correlate with the use of inflections more strongly.

The categorization of verbs into lexical aspect follows Vendler (1957), Comrie (1976) and Smith (1997), and distinguishes between states, activities, accomplishments, and punctuals (which include semelfactive situations and achievements). Whereas accomplishments and achievements are telic denoting eventualities bounded by an intrinsic endpoint and lacking internal homogeneity, states and activities are atelic: they denote eventualities that lack an intrinsic temporal endpoint and share the property of homogeneity or internal consistency (Salaberry 1999; Sharma and Deo 2009). In addition semelfactive situations are those with no internal durativity (Comrie 1976).

3.7 Lexical aspect: stative vs. punctual

At this point the focus of the chapter moves from the grammatical representation of aspect to lexical aspect (Aktionsart), which takes into account the inherent meaning of verbs and the discourse context in which they occur. In the current study the classification follows previous studies by Vendler (1957), Comrie (1976), Mourelatos (1978), Dowty (1979), Smith (1997), Sharma and Deo (2010) although some categories of situations are collapsed. Similarly to Vendler (1957) and Smith (1997) I have coded verbs into states, activities, accomplishments, achievements, and semelfactive but, since it was often too difficult to distinguish between semelfactive situations and achievements, these were coded together into one category – punctuals. Therefore, from now on when referring to punctual situations, I have in mind both semelfactive situations and achievements.

Stative verbs (and state situations more generally) and punctuals were considered by Bickerton (1975) as two crucial constraints operating the variation within past temporal reference in CECs. By nature, punctual situations are dynamic, non-durative and instantenous (Comrie, 1976; Smith, 1997). An example of a semelfactive situation is provided in Example 3.13. The situations in question have very limited or no duration, they lack internal structure, do not last in time and take place momentarily. This very nature of semelfactive situations also implies that such verbs cannot be stative.

3.13 (PF; Chanelle; 359)

[Chanelle] When I been in the classroom, I been in front of she and she just pulling me hair all the time, so I **get** vex and I **lash** her and she **lash** me back.

The short narrative above provides a good example of aspectual diversity in context. The situations which set the background for the narrative, (being in the classroom, sitting in front of the other girl and having her hair pulled) are iterative situations, therefore cannot be punctual. The verbs marked in bold, however, indicate single moments occurring one after another. The example also illustrates the relationship between discourse context (especially the narrative structure) and the choice of aspectual categories. The first part of this short narrative could be classified as an orientation (Labov and Waletzky, 1967) encompassing the situations

which set up the background for the complicating action, where the semelfactive situations occur. The relationship between narrative structure and the distribution of variable forms will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

The decision to combine semelfactive situations with achievements was motivated by a very similar nature of these, namely, they are punctual, dynamic, and instantaneous. Coding verbs as semelfactive situations or as achievements is often challenging because the “no internal durativity” criterion is often ambiguous (all verbs have some inherent durativity, even such verbs as *blink*, often cited as the “classic” semelfactive situation). This complexity is exemplified below:

3.14 (Ham; 005; 525)

[005] My boy came to me in the kitchen and he say he pass the exam.

Both *came* and *say* are instantaneous although perhaps ‘came to me’ suggests some degree of duration and could be classified as an achievement. Often, however, it was difficult to decide whether a situation is “long enough” to be classified as an achievement or should be classified as semelfactive. The difference usually lies in the resultative nature of achievements which cannot be applied to semelfactive situations. For example, whereas *hit*, *jump*, *cough* are semelfactive, *realise*, *win*, *notice* are achievements (Levin, 2007). However, since both types of situations are punctual and non-durative, which makes them stand out from the other situation types, namely states, activities and accomplishments, a decision was made to code achievements and semelfactive under one category - punctual.

Secondly, let us consider the category of Stativity which is often taken into consideration within research on creole TMA systems after Bickerton’s (1975) study of Guyanese Creole, where stativity was considered as the primary feature responsible for the interpretation of several grammatical forms, such as verb stems, as well as preverbal *bin* and *did*. Comrie (1976: 49) proposed a three-fold definition of stativity by contrasting it with dynamic situations. First of all, stative situations include little change compared to dynamic ones. Secondly, the degree of continuity of a situation varies according to whether the situation is stative or dynamic. While in the case of dynamic situations continuity is subject to a new input of energy, stative situations will continue (unless something happens to change this state).

Finally, both situations differ according to the degree of effort: to remain stative, a situation requires usually little effort compared to a dynamic situation.

With this definition in mind one would think that the classification of verbs as stative or dynamic is straightforward. However, such categorisations have varied in the analyses of stativity across varieties of English (e.g. Clarke 1997; Torres Cacoulios, 2009; Walker, 2010). In creole studies, the inconsistencies of the decisions in coding for stativity are also apparent, which makes it difficult to facilitate conclusions as to the effect of stativity on tense marking. One of the recurring problems which has to be tackled in the account of stativity is whether we recognise a verb as stative on the basis of its lexical property, or rather, on the basis of the discourse environment in which it occurs. For example, Tagliamonte and Poplack (1993: 178) coded verbs as stative on the basis of their lexical form and on their ability to appear in the progressive. On the other hand, Smith (1997: 19) defines stativity as a situation type in which a verb correlates with adverbials and the general discourse context. In this view, sentences such as “Bill knew the truth” and “Bill suddenly knew the truth” differ according to stativity, with the former being clearly stative, while the latter implies a dynamic situation, according to Comrie’s criteria outlined above. These two approaches also distinguish between stative *verbs* (Quirk et al. 1985) and stative *situations* (Smith 1997). Since stativity of a verb differs according to the discourse context it occurs in, it is perhaps more useful to refer to contexts of stativity as situations. Similarly, in the current study the latter approach is followed, where verbs are identified as stative or dynamic based on the discourse context and temporal cues. This distinction is especially important in coding problematic verbs such as *have*, which are stative in situations where they denote possession, but the dynamic use is also possible. This difference is illustrated in the examples below:

3.15 (PF; 035; 147)

[035] Yeah, we **have** no secondary school in our days. Our people were poor, so we could not afford a secondary uh...

3.16 (Ham; 005; 1432)

[005] I had some people here from England. I **had** a dinner here for them, and I had some for them Canadians who been here for Easter. **Had** a dinner for my friends dem. And of- all them telling me the same thing, why I don't open a restaurant.

While in example 3.14 *have* can be interpreted as a stative situation, in example 3.15, the verb refers to the preparation of dinner or “giving out” a dinner and has therefore a dynamic interpretation. In order to code a verb representing a situation as stative or dynamic, attention should be paid to the inherent property of a verb but also “to the course of a conversation, the topic, and sometimes even ethnographic knowledge” (Patrick, 1999: 173).

A preliminary decision whether a verb could express a stative or dynamic situation was on the categorisation by Quirk et al. (1985) exemplified in Table 3.3. However, a final coding decision was verified based on discourse context.

Stative verb category	Examples
Cognition	<i>wonder, believe, know, understand</i>
Perception	<i>see, hear, feel, smell, taste</i>
Emotions	<i>hate, love, like, admire</i>
Relational verbs	<i>resemble, be, have, belong to</i>
Bodily sensation	<i>ache, hurt, burn</i>

Table 3.3 Classification of stative verbs (Quirk et al. 1985)

3.7.1 Accomplishments and activities

In this section I discuss the coding decisions for the two remaining situation types – accomplishments and activities. I also emphasise the complexity of distinguishing between accomplishments and achievements (coded here under punctuals), and discuss some of the strategies applied in this process. Accomplishments and activities most generally fall into telic and atelic eventualities. Whereas accomplishments (and achievements) are telic, namely, they denote eventualities bounded by an intrinsic endpoint and lacking internal homogeneity, states and

activities are atelic: they denote eventualities that lack an intrinsic temporal endpoint and share the property of homogeneity or internal consistency (Salaberry, 1999; Sharma and Deo, 2009).

Few studies have included situation aspect as understood by e.g. Vendler (1957) or Smith (1997) in analyses of CECs (with the notable exception of Andersen (1990) for Papiamentu, or Gooden (2008) for Belizean creole). A decision to code non-stative situations as accomplishments, achievements, semelfactive and activities, was motivated by previous studies of aspect within past temporal reference of creole languages which emphasised that the general classification of verbs into stative vs. non-stative eventualities does not suffice to grasp the fine aspectual distinctions influencing the use of tense marking (Hackert 2004; Gooden, 2008).

As it was mentioned above, most generally, a situation classified as an accomplishment or an achievement is telic which means it has an inherent end or a goal. On the contrary, atelic situations, such as activities, are open-ended and are classified as atelic (Vendler, 1957). And so, to quote Andersen (1990: 64), *he built a house* and *he found a diamond* are both telic although the former is an accomplishment, and the latter is an achievement. On the other hand, *he ran* and *the ball rolled* are atelic activities. Moreover, similarly to the aspectual categories discussed above, the role of discourse and temporal cues need to be emphasised in classifying situations as events or activities. Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to the entire verb phrase rather than the inherent meaning of the verb in isolation: *he ran* is different from *he ran a mile*.

However, coding verbs as accomplishments or punctuals (that is achievements + semelfactive) was often difficult. An example of an utterance which includes both an accomplishment and punctual situations is illustrated below:

3.16 (PF; 007; 1406)

[007] And when Saturday comes she **throw** some salt in it [milk] and she **shake** it and it **turn** to butter.

First, the verb *throw* has been coded as punctual since the situation it marks is instantaneous, with no internal duration. Next, *shake* and *turn* have both been coded as accomplishments. This is because both eventualities include a process and an outcome – the end point of ‘shaking’ is the milk turning into butter. And ‘turning’ has some internal duration but also a clear end point.

Coding verbs as accomplishments, or punctual is often challenging, mainly because the “no internal durativity” criterion is often ambiguous (all verbs have some inherent durativity, even such verbs as *blink*, often cited as the “classic” semelfactive situation). In classifying verbs as punctual, accomplishments or activities the “*in-for* test” is often useful (Verkuyl, 1972; Dowty, 1979; Levin and Rappaport, 1995; Hay et al., 1999). The test involves adding the *in* or *for* temporal adverbials denoting a span of time (for example *in two hours* or *for two hours*). Verbs with internal durability and a result state (accomplishments) should match with *in*-adverbials (Example 3.17), while activities (durative verbs with no end points) should combine with *for*-adverbials (Example 3.18). But if combined with achievements or semelfactive situations, such adverbials should sound almost ungrammatical since both situation types are characterised by their having no duration. So an achievement situation *reach the top*, although it involves situations which lead to its final point, indicates the very moment of *reaching* and cannot be a durative one. Example 3.19 illustrates this also for semelfactive situations. The sentence could be grammatical if understood not as a single punctual situations but a repeated action, e.g. *She blinked repeatedly for two minutes*).

3.17 She wrote a letter in two hours.

3.18 She talked to him for two hours.

3.19 * She blinked in/for two hours/minutes

According to Engelberg (2000) the preceding context can also determine the reading of a situation as punctual or as an accomplishment. For example:

3.20 She pressed the button and the bomb exploded in two minutes.

In this example a punctual verb is followed by an *in-* adverbial because of the preceding occurrences which imply that the duration of the event lasted from the

moment of pressing the button to the explosion. For this reason, a consideration of the discourse context and the semantics of the situation was a necessary prerequisite in the process of coding for accomplishments and punctual situations. Consider the following examples from the Bequia data:

3.21 (PF; 020; 538)

[020] And we **try** we best until...when we **get that boat out** of the water up on the beach.

In the above example the verb *try* was coded as an accomplishment since the situation has an inherent end point (the moment of *getting the boat out*), even though it can be attached to a *for*-temporal adverbial (e.g. for ten minutes). The whole situation can be also classified as durative which helps us to interpret the following verb, *get out*, as an achievement. Just like other achievement situations, such as *win a race* or *reach the top*, *get the boat out* is an instantaneous situation indicating the very moment the boat was taken out of the water. Let us now consider a different example:

3.22 (PF; 009; 484)

[009] Three months after he **go up** in the woods and LC **stick** him in he foot and he **had** tetanus, they **carry** him St Vincent and they **bring** him back dead.

In the above sentence, the verbs were coded as follows. First *go up* was coded as punctual (an achievement). This is because it denotes a single non-durative situation (in this context *go up* could be replaced with the verb *leave*). Similarly *stick* was also coded as a punctual verb. This is a clear case of an instantaneous single occurrence without internal durativity – a semelfactive situation. *Had* was coded as a state. According to Table 3.3, I classified *having tetanus* as a state of bodily sensation. The verb *carry* was coded as an activity, since it is dynamic and characterised by an internal duration. Finally, *bring back* was coded as an accomplishment – it is dynamic, durative and telic (it consists of a process and an outcome). As we can see, distinguishing between accomplishments and punctual verbs, especially achievements, is not easy and involves a close attention to the surrounding discourse context.

Distinguishing between activities, which are by nature atelic, and telic situations was less problematic but also quite challenging. Examples of activities are illustrated below.

3.23 (MP; 302; 554)

[302] (...) I got the stumble and when I fell I felt it **burn**. Well, I **rub** it, and come...I spent the two weeks and came home, two weeks after, it popped up on me.

Both verbs in the example above were coded as activities since they do not involve any specific goal. In addition, the possibility to attach the *for*-adverbial to these VPs helps to categorise these verbs as atelic. However, again deciding whether a situation can be characterised as consisting of a specific end point was to a large extent dictated by the semantics of an expression and by the surrounding discourse context.

The table below summarises the aspectual categories discussed above featuring as predictors in the quantitative analysis which follows in Chapter 4. The examples above showed that both bare verbs and inflected verbs can express the fine grained aspectual distinctions in past temporal reference of BeqCE. This confirms that there is no one-to-one relationship between a variant and an aspectual function but that aspectual categories could help us determine why speakers use one verb form over the other. Next, I have pointed to the complexity of the interplay of aspectual categories, both lexical and grammatical, which pose a challenge for the process of coding the data. But despite the difficulties related to coding for aspect, grammatical and lexical aspectual categories are considered as crucial for the patterns of variation across the Bequia communities, and similarly to morphological class, will be treated as one of the diagnostics in evaluating the similarities and differences between the cohorts of speakers. I have also implied that discourse constraints are not only helpful in establishing which aspectual category a given verb falls into, but more importantly that they are strongly correlated with patterns of verb inflectional variation in creole languages (cf. Hackert, 2004; Gooden, 2008).

Aspectual categories (Factors)	Aspect type (Factor group)	Example
perfective	<i>Grammatical aspect:</i>	Ivan [hurricane] bin come 2006. Yeah, it mash up down Hamilton deh. (PF; Chanelle; 972)
	Verbs expressing a situation which is completed and can be viewed as a single whole	
habitual	Verbs expressing situations which consist of interval sequences and are characterised by routine nature	Sometime they go upon the beach there and put their clothes on the beach and the stone, and bleach them and dry them. (MP; 301; 1548)
states	<i>Lexical aspect:</i>	Me never see she, I been too small, A. bin know she more, cause he been more big. (PF; Kiki; 00:52:12)
	Verbs expressing situations which are durative with no clear endpoints, coded as stative according to discourse context	
punctual (achievements + semelfactive)	Situations which are dynamic, non-durative, take place momentarily, coded according to discourse context	And he sit down 'pon she and hit she and she drop . Then he threw she in the gutter. (PF; Kiki; 00:34:10)
accomplishments	Telic situations which are durative and lead up to a well-defined terminal point, a property of an entire verb phrase	I know my mother bring me up with manners and behaviour for old and young. (Ham; 001; 15)
activities	Situation which are atelic, dynamic, durative and open-ended, a property of an entire verb phrase	She even self been tell me that she brother bring me up, what part they live up in SH. (Ham; 011; 1302)

Table 3.4 Summary of aspectual categories coded in this study

To complete the discussion of the linguistic constraints which I hypothesise the variable forms are sensitive to, in the next section I provide a list of “don’t count” cases (Blake, 1997; Hackert, 2004) – the structures which were excluded from the following quantitative analysis of variable forms within past temporal reference.

3.8 Don’t count cases

a) Copula structures

3.24 (LP; Ben; 283)

[Ben] When I **been** small I used to fight plenty but not since I big so.

3.25 (Ham; 005; 428)

[005] The water Ø hard, you know. It never used to lather with soap.

All the copula constructions (\emptyset , *been*, *be*), followed by adjectives, NPs, prepositional phrases, or adverbs, including passive constructions, have been excluded from the analysis. Variability within the copula has been shown to be determined by a specific set of constraints (e.g. Labov, 1972; Rickford, 1998; Walker and Meyerhoff, 2006) which implies that even though it falls into the past temporal reference system, it should be analysed as a separate variable.

b) Neutralisation contexts

Tokens of consonant final regular verbs finishing with /t,d/ before word-initial /t-, d-, ð-, θ-, ʃ-, dʒ-/ have been excluded since the presence or absence of word final /t,d/ in such contexts cannot be reliably detected.

c) Modal verbs and any other Irrealis clauses

3.26 (Ham; Vikki; 194)

[Vikki] Because something been round with the tire too and he couldnta make plenty trip, he coulda only make one trip and he going Hamilton.

As I have already explained, the current analysis is mostly concerned with tense and aspect of BeqCE, leaving the category of mood for future analysis. Therefore, all modal verbs and verbs preceded by modal auxiliaries have been excluded.

d) Present tense morphology in past temporal reference

3.27 (PF; 010; 258)

[Int.] So you want to tell me (...) you never use to make little date with you boyfriend to say "meet me here" and thing?

[010] Yes. He has to tell me, "meet me here and there", you see?

Verbs with present tense morphology used in the past time context were excluded from the analysis, since they do not represent a potential site for past inflection (cf. Hackert, 2004: 123) and don't fall into the variable context. As I discussed above, the envelope of variation for this study for the *-ed* vs. \emptyset alternation included verbs

representing (semantically) past temporal reference overtly marked through past tense morphology or unmarked. In addition, such contexts could represent the Historical Present which is not central to the current analysis.

e) Hesitations and False Starts

Tokens occurring in utterances where a speaker is hesitating or which are unfinished due to a false start were excluded, although they provide an interesting case of the very moment of “choosing” a verb form in context (especially when it comes to hesitation). Excluding hesitations and false starts was mainly motivated by an observation that speakers’ choice of a bare verb or an inflected verb in such cases is ambiguous.

f) Serial verbs in Serial Verb Constructions (SVC)

SVC, a characteristic feature of creole languages consists of verbs “lined in unbroken sequence, sharing core arguments, in the same tense, aspect or mood, agreeing in positive/negative polarity and with no intonational or grammatical marking of clause boundaries” (Winford, 1993: 212), as exemplified below.

3.28 (Ham; Vikki; 229)

[Vikki] Boy, a fight happen a time. The bottle pass me so, you see, me had to duck and hol’ ‘pon D. And run go outside. Man rushing all thing for the door.

Tense marking in SVCs is usually “controlled” by the matrix verb, but can be repeated on the serial verb (Holm, 1988). After Hackert (2004; 137) only the matrix verb in SVCs was coded.

3.9 The variables: conclusion

In the sections above I have specified the variables which are analysed in the current study and the motivations behind it. I established the variable context for the alternation between bare verbs and inflected verbs by pointing to the environments where both forms occur interchangeably: the perfective and the habitual, as well as states, punctual situations, accomplishments and activities. I have classified these aspectual categories as independent variables, and in Chapter 4 I will test their contribution to the variably inflected past reference next to morphological class.

I have also characterised preverbal markers *bin/did* and suggested that they occur variably with bare verbs and inflected verbs not just in the Anterior tense (the primary context assigned to *bin/did*) but also within the Preterite. I discuss this issue further in Chapter 6 by examining preverbal markers in the contexts where they alternate with *-ed* and \emptyset , and establish which factors determine speakers' choice of a preverbal marker vs. inflection or a bare verb.

I have demonstrated that circumscribing the variable context is an important but painstaking process in which a variety of linguistic and semantic factors need to be considered. This is especially applicable to the variables above the level of phonology, which are subject to the form-function asymmetry. I demonstrated the polyfunctionality of bare verbs and verb inflections in the context of past temporal reference of BeqCE, an issue even more perplexing in the case of preverbal markers (cf. Chapter 6).

However, circumscribing the variable context is only the first step executed in variationist methodology. Perhaps the biggest methodological challenge sociolinguists (and variationists in particular) have grappled with is related to assigning linguistic variables into social contexts. For over fifty years variationists have used a variety of methods to demonstrate that linguistic forms are an important resource for individuals in positioning themselves in the social realm. In the following sections I discuss some of the methods and explain their application in the current study.

3.10 Linguistic variation and social stratification

Sociolinguists usually divide independent variables into language-internal (dealing with linguistic aspects of variation, such as the ones discussed above) or external, representing social stratification or any other non-linguistic reality which could potentially influence speakers' choice of variants (Tagliamonte, 2006). However, application of social categories may evoke certain methodological problems. Recent studies of variation have underlined that reducing an analysis of variation to correlations between linguistic factors and pre-defined social categories might be limiting (cf. Bucholtz and Hall, 2008; Eckert, 2008). The influence of linguistic anthropology has prompted questions as to the consequences of a binary and

deterministic treatment of social categories (e.g. men vs. women, lower class vs. middle class) in studies of language variation and change and a need to consider micro-level phenomena relevant to speakers' experiences, practices and styles (Woolard, 2008). Eckert (2005) refers to this shift in sociolinguistics as the third wave, the label which has gained considerable popularity in variation studies. Some of the questions addressed by the third wave research will also be dealt with in the current study, however, before these are introduced, I shall first briefly summarise the methodologies of the first and the second waves which to a large extent are also applied here.

3.10.1 Three waves of sociolinguistics

The three waves of sociolinguistics refer to different treatment of the social aspect of linguistic variation (Eckert, 2005). The main focus of the first wave studies involved tracing correlations between linguistic variables and social categories, such as gender, social class or ethnicity (Labov, 1966; Wolfram, 1969; Trudgill, 1974). Labov's (1966) study of variation in New York City, and Trudgill's (1974) analysis of variation in Norwich can be considered to be the forerunners of first wave studies and of variationist sociolinguistics in general. Such studies mainly focused on large urban centres with clear patterns of social stratification, rather than small rural locales. First wave studies established correlations between social stratification and linguistic variation within speech communities, and pointed to social features characterising leaders of linguistic innovations. Further, such studies established the methodological standard for conducting sociolinguistic research designed to tackle the observer's paradox, such as the sociolinguistic interview and the "danger of death" question, both of which were intended to facilitate vernacular speech among informants (Labov, 1972). Finally, analyses of different levels of attention to speech revealed speakers' ability to identify variants considered as prestigious and introduced style as a variable significant for linguistic choices.

One of the major criticisms which the studies discussed above evoked concerned the classification and definition of the social categories such as gender, ethnicity or social class. Whereas establishing correlations between patterns of

language use and the social variables is important for obtaining a general picture of sociolinguistic stratification within a community, the relationship between the social and linguistic categories should not be considered as causative. For example, a correlation between occupation and the use of non-standard language might inform us that such a relationship exists, but it tells us little about its causes. In this study I consider correlations between social categories and patterns of variation as a benchmark for further interpretation. This was already implied in Chapter 2 where I suggested that e.g. place, an important social category for the current analysis, should be considered more as an ideology than just a geographical dimension. Therefore, interpreting the potential correlation between variable patterns of language use and a village membership should stem from Bequians' understanding of what it means to be from Mount Pleasant, Hamilton or Paget Farm. The local interpretations of social categories, usually based on ethnographic observations, is a methodological characteristic of the second wave studies.

Indeed, within the second wave the focus shifted towards local dynamics and the exploration of locally salient social categories which highlighted the significant relationship between linguistic practices of a speech community and various micro-level phenomena significant to a community (Mendoza-Denton, 2008). Eckert defines Labov's (1963) analysis of variation in Martha's Vineyard as a "classic" second wave study. It showed that Vineyarders' orientations towards the changes on the island, related to the influx of tourism were reflected through their linguistic practices. Labov's (1963) study precedes the analyses classified as the first wave, which shows that the waves are not chronological but refer more to the methodologies applied in data collection and interpretation. Studies in the second wave shifted the methodology closer towards ethnography suggesting that locally meaningful social categories can become apparent through ethnographic observations. This approach is also followed in the current research. Using ethnographic observations I investigate the local understanding of the social categories (e.g. place), and consider speakers' local practices as crucial for interpreting the patterns of variation.

In the third wave the social categories are not pre-defined but are an outcome of speakers' acts of identity (Le Page and Tabouret Keller, 1985) through

which individuals negotiate their position in the social realm. In this process speakers use the resources through which this positioning can be achieved. Language is one such important resource, together with other stylistic elements such as fashion, daily activities or gestures. Variants which are socially meaningful are used by speakers to make particular identity moves. The methods used in eliciting social meanings were discussed in Section 1.5.1. Several theories have been put forward which discuss the semiotic processes through which meanings are generated and acquired, (Ochs, 1992; Silverstein, 2003) and how this connects to the larger process of language variation and change (Eckert, 2008). In this study I am not concerned with the details of the process of indexicality, although I aim to demonstrate that speakers in Bequia indeed make particular identity moves which are linked to the social meanings of linguistic forms.

These three waves of sociolinguistic trends show that the focus in variation studies has shifted from analysing correlations and linguistic patterns on an abstract level to more fine-grained categories linked to major social categories. The development of sociolinguistic theory goes in line with changes in methods of data collection. These have seen an increased influence of ethnographic techniques going beyond the “classic” sociolinguistic interview and aimed at highlighting the sociolinguistically significant information which may not be reflected in the individual’s speech but could be valuable for data interpretation. Many recent studies apply both ethnographic techniques, sociolinguistic interviews and spontaneous speech data in the hope of obtaining the most reliable dataset encompassing fine grained social orders and community-specific micro-level practices.

A similar approach has been employed in this study. I use quantitative methodology to explore the hypothesised change in progress among the younger generation of speakers in Bequia and the social and linguistic motivations behind it. I examine the relationship between local social meanings, place ideologies and global socio-economic processes to interpret the patterns of language variation and change among speakers in the three Bequia communities. In this process I combine ethnographic techniques (such as participant observation), and information obtained from sociolinguistic interviews with the quantitative analysis of variation.

This complementary perspective aims to explore in detail the complexities of language variation and change in Bequia and the motivations behind it.

Part 2: The data

3.11 Objectives and challenges of fieldwork

The main fieldwork objective was to collect a large volume of recorded speech of a group of adolescent speakers from three Bequia villages: Hamilton, Mount Pleasant and Paget Farm in order to obtain a sample which could then be compared with the corpus of older Bequians collected by Meyerhoff, Walker and Sidnell, between 2003-2005 (referred to as Database 1). The choice of the villages was based on apparent socio-economic, ethnic and demographic differences between them as well as the existing data from Database 1. The motivation behind obtaining data from Bequia adolescents was to compare the two age groups in apparent time and investigate potential change in progress. The fieldwork took place for twenty weeks between January 2009 and June 2009 which was a sufficient amount of time for data collection, partial data transcription and some participant observation enabling me to report the details of life on the island, speakers' behaviours, interactions, attitudes, and daily practices.

Unsurprisingly, the most challenging part of the fieldwork dealt with tackling my position as a researcher, an outsider and a non-native speaker. Bequia is a very small island with a vibrant local community and with a relatively high rate of tourism. It is very common for tourists, especially sailors (locally called "yachties") and holidaymakers to briefly visit Bequia rarely settling among the local community (cf. Chapter 2). The hospitality businesses in Bequia are set up for tourists and it is very uncommon to see the local people spending time in the waterfront restaurants or even on the beach. There is a group of foreigners living permanently on Bequia or owning holiday houses, however these people, usually of older age, prefer to stay away from the busy parts of the island and build their impressive villas in more secluded areas such as Spring, Industry or Lower Bay (see Chapter 2, Map 2.2). I quickly realised that local people may perceive me, a white, young European girl as a tourist. During my fieldwork I put extensive effort into changing this outsider

position. Undeniably, volunteer teaching at the Bequia High (pseudonym) enabled me to get acquainted with the teenagers and helped me to tackle my position as a perceived tourist.

With that, however, came another problem. I was concerned that my position as “a teacher” might prompt students to sound more standard, targeting the norms of the curriculum of the education system in the Caribbean. This meant that I had to encourage the students to perceive me not strictly as a teacher, but more as a peer, and in this way try to reduce any potential power difference between us. This was achieved thanks to little age difference between myself and the students. In many ways, the status of being an outsider helped: the students were eager to befriend someone from outside the island and often found spending time with me to be exciting and new compared to socialising within their local networks, which encouraged some of them to open up in my presence. The position of a fieldwork researcher as a confidant has proven successful in other research investigating language and adolescence, especially in the school setting (Eckert, 1989; Mendoza-Denton, 2008; Lawson, 2009). In my case, it was especially beneficial, since I was both a person from outside of the educational establishment and from the community in general⁶.

To initiate the networks with the students of Bequia High I spent time with them during school breaks, socialising and letting them get to know me. I took advantage of the fact that I was not formally employed as a teacher. This allowed me to speak to the students about everything, from current trends in music and fashion (especially hip-hop, r&b and dancehall), to private issues which they would eventually share with me. I frequently used informal speech and teenage slang as an in-group code, increasing familiarity between us. Eventually, I started picking up

⁶ This is important in the cultural context of Bequia. Young Bequians often complained that gossiping is one of the “favourite activities” of the local community. They were frequently apprehensive that any piece of information they shared might quickly spread as an unfavourable rumour across the island. This is locally referred to as *kómes* (or *kommés*; Alsopp, 2003), an expression originating from the patois of Trinidad and Tobago meaning “to cause confusion”, “to create a disturbance” (Alsopp, 2003: 334). In Bequia it is also used for gossiping and talking insultingly about someone (e.g. “*Too much komes doz going on here*”). Considering this, a befriended person from outside of the community had an even better chance of becoming a confidant for local adolescents.

slang expressions characteristic of BeqCE and would use them during my conversations and interviews with the teenagers.

This is related to another challenge, namely, my status as a non-native speaker. Before the fieldwork commenced I spent an extensive amount of time listening to the recordings of Database 1 trying to get acquainted with the vernacular. Nevertheless, it was difficult for me to initially understand the local dialect used by the teenagers between themselves, both in the school and outside of it. On top of the phonetic and grammatical features of BeqCE, the vernacular of Bequia teenagers includes a rich slang which is apparently hard to understand even to older people on the island. After a month of casual conversations and hours of interacting with students in the school I became comfortable with the variety, and acquired it enough to understand it and sometimes use it in my own speech.

3.11.1 Ethical considerations

There are several ways in which the ethical regulations protecting human subjects during data collection were secured in this study. First, I contacted the principal of the Bequia High to seek advice on the procedures of obtaining clearance to work with high school pupils. I was informed that no legal procedures are necessary although I was required to provide a cover letter from the University of Edinburgh and a reference from my supervisor confirming the purpose of my stay in Bequia. In return, I was provided with an official letter from the Bequia High which confirmed my position as a researcher and a volunteering teacher in the school. In addition, I issued a research agreement form which was to be signed by both a subject and his/her parent or a caregiver confirming the students' participation in the project and allowing me to conduct the recordings within the school and outside of it (for example, on the beach or in my apartment). For subjects who were over eighteen a verbal consent was issued. Naturally, all participants included in this study were given an arbitrary pseudonym.

The participants were informed about the general purpose of the research. They were notified that the project involves investigating the everyday lives of young people in Bequia and in particular the changes in their lifestyles compared to

the older generation of Bequians. While all of this is true, I did not reveal that I am interested in language as one resource through which this change is implemented. Nevertheless, I was therefore positively surprised when language was mentioned as one of the areas where the cross-generational change can be observed. The research purpose as defined above would immediately prompt sharp reactions from the informants who engaged in a discussion of whether such changes have taken place or not. In addition to formulating the research question in a way that is interesting and discussion provoking, I have also followed several other data collection techniques which helped me to tackle the observer's paradox and obtain interesting linguistic and extra-linguistic data. These are discussed in Section 3.13.

3.12 Entering the community

Before the fieldwork trip, I had contacted Ms W., a teacher in the Bequia High, who had been involved in the collection of Database 1 and who kindly agreed to introduce me to the school principal. She had also mentioned the purpose and the plan of my field trip to other teachers in the school so that my arrival was anticipated. Additionally, I had also contacted the members of the Bequia Mission, an informal charity organisation which provides help to the poorest inhabitants of the island. I was given a contact for Mr. B. L. who offered to help me during my first days in Bequia. He not only offered temporary accommodation, but helped me to find my own apartment and introduced me to Samantha, a girl of my age, who opened the door to the social networks of young people on the island. By introducing me to her peers and family she also provided an extremely important link with the community of Mount Pleasant.

I spent the first two months of the field trip auditing the classes and spending time with the students, listening to interactions and letting the students get familiar with me. Straight away my presence was subject to mixed reactions. Some students were curious, they would approach me, ask me where I was from and what my role in the school was. Others, especially older girls, would be rather resentful; they would make comments about my presence in the school, very often race-related. This initial phase of the field trip was without a doubt the most difficult one. I put extensive effort to getting to know the students by spending as

much time with them as I could at lunch breaks, sitting outside the school with the girls in between their lessons, chatting about music, boyfriends, school and other topics. It not only helped us to get acquainted with each other but also provided an insight into their lives on the island. I found out how they spend their free time and what their hobbies are. Most importantly, however, it was the time where I got familiar with their vernacular and learned how to understand the teenage slang. After almost two months of auditing and observing, I was finally assigned a role as a library skills teacher. I was given quite a lot of freedom in organising the classes. I focused on basic skills such as reading and writing, which many teenagers still have problems with, or teaching useful computer skills. I continued to teach until the Easter break of 2009.

3.12.1 Expanding networks

In the second phase of the fieldwork I worked on expanding the networks established in the school. I spent time with students on the beach, chatting and playing games, watching the local cricket tournament (a weekly 'must' for the majority of Bequians), as well as socialising with my older friends in local bars, at "full moon" gatherings and "cook ups" and participating in traditional activities, such as farine making and whale cutting. Also, in expanding networks, my basketball skills were very helpful. I have played basketball for many years and once I noticed how important this sport is for the Bequia youth I figured it could provide an excellent opportunity for me to integrate with the younger community. After two months in Bequia I began to spend each afternoon playing basketball on the local basketball court and hanging out with the players. This approach was undeniably fun but physically challenging! I had to prove to the "ballers" that I - a white European female had sufficient skills to make the game worthwhile. In the end, the experience resulted in a few great friendships, new networks, and thorough reduction of the observer's paradox. Encouraged by this experience I went even further, and after arranging with the principal of the Bequia High and the PE teacher, I set up the school's first ever girls' basketball team. We practiced twice a week and spent time together on other occasions. The benefits of this were multifarious. First of all, I got to spend a lot of time with the girls which resulted in

obtaining invaluable linguistic and extra-linguistic data. Secondly, it helped me to secure my position in the community. I was no longer perceived as a tourist but a teacher and a coach. Bequians overtly expressed their appreciation of the effort I put in coaching the basketball team. They would frequently stop me on the way to a shop, and ask me about the team. Finally, in May, I managed to lead the girls into the final of the SVG national high school basketball tournament. Even though we lost in the final, this little personal and team success gave me plenty of satisfaction and, more importantly, opened the door for me to come back to the school and the community at any time in the future.

Even though the coaching phase enabled me to get acquainted with boys and girls from all three villages in question, obtaining equally stratified data was still problematic. This is partially related to the differences between the villages which were discussed in Chapter 2. First of all, I found there were relatively few adolescents in Mount Pleasant. As I mentioned previously, many Mount Pleasanters can afford to educate their children abroad at high schools in St Vincent or even overseas universities where they live during the academic year. In addition, Mount Pleasant is the least populated community in Bequia with comparably much smaller community of adolescents to the other villages. Some of the older Mount Pleasanters had moved abroad, to Barbados, Canada, England and are raising their children there. Therefore the five adolescents which I recorded during my fieldwork was a good number for this community.

Collecting data from Hamilton and Paget Farm was to a certain extent constrained by the conflict between these two communities. Hamilton is located in the close proximity to the main Harbour where I lived and so it was easy to meet young people from this village on the basketball court, playing football and hanging out around the school area. On the other hand, young people from Paget Farm were reluctant to socialise around Port Elizabeth. One reason for this was the aforementioned conflict between the boys from Hamilton and Paget Farm which led them to literally stay away from each other. Secondly, many teenagers from Paget Farm, especially the girls, reported that their parents could be very strict and required them to come home straight after school. Third, as it was discussed in Chapter 2, Paget Farm is a fairly self-sufficient area with its own shops and sports

facilities, which reduces the need of its inhabitants to commute to the main harbour. Fortunately, the majority of the girls who became members of the basketball team were from Paget Farm which helped me to open up the networks in this community. It was more problematic, however, to record young men from Paget Farm for the reasons outlined above so the data from Paget Farm remains slightly unbalanced for sex coming predominantly from adolescent girls.

Apart from establishing networks through the school and basketball, I recruited informants using the classic “friend of a friend” method (Milroy, 1987). In each of the villages, there was a person who I had a particularly strong relationship with and who assisted me during fieldwork by helping me to expand my networks, and arrange interviews. The assistants also participated in data transcription and conducted a few of the interviews with their peers, in this way maximally reducing the observer’s paradox.

3.13 Data collection techniques: the sociolinguistic interview and freestyle recordings

I used several techniques to collect the linguistic data. First, I collected the files recorded without my presence which I call “freestyle”. Individuals were given a lapel portable microphone to carry with them for a few hours during their interaction with peers. Only the speech of the person with a microphone would be considered for analysis. This data is valuable because, arguably, it reflects the most naturally occurring language. Many a time the informants reported that they forgot about the microphone, which could mean that the recording indeed reflects their natural way of interacting. The methodology, however, was far from perfect. The quality is often questionable, especially when recordings were made during school breaks, due to a noisy background. The conversations between informants are usually short and many lack clarity. And finally, because the topic could not be controlled, such data provide few tokens of the variants of past temporal reference which I focus on.

Another type of data I recorded were group interactions made in my presence. Often, during informal meetings with the students I would ask them for

consent to turn on the microphone. This type of recording provided not only valuable linguistic data, but let me observe the students in group interaction. I could take account of the topics of their conversations, the way they interact, their gestures, turn taking, and their conversational practices among peers of the same and different sex. The drawback of this method includes the overall lower quality of recordings (overlapping speech and background noises) and again, few tokens of past temporal reference.

Finally, I collected a set of sociolinguistic interviews with young people of various age (13-25) from several Bequia villages (apart from Mount Pleasant, Hamilton, and Paget Farm I also recorded adolescents from Port Elizabeth, La Pompe, and Level which I plan to investigate in future research). The interviews were usually 1-2 hours long and took place in the classroom, on my porch after school, or sometimes in a neutral quiet place such as the beach, a restaurant in Mount Pleasant, or an informant's yard. Most of the interviews were conducted in pairs, for various reasons. First of all, I wanted to increase the familiarity effect (Cukor-Avila and Bailey, 1995) by making the interviewees feel more comfortable around their friend. Secondly, the interviewees would often get involved in a natural conversation between each other, usually commenting on some of the questions, bantering, or reminding themselves of stories related to an interview question. It also revealed the attitudes of young Bequians towards the villages. Often, when students from different villages were interviewed the interaction would turn into bantering about the local affairs which reflected speakers' stereotypical views of the communities.

An interview consisted of three parts. The first set of questions asked about living in Bequia, reminiscing, comparing the past to the present days, informants' attitudes towards living in Bequia and their village. The second stage involved asking about their personal experiences, for example, the worst injury they had, the best memory from school, or the naughtiest thing they had ever done. Finally, in the end I would ask them about their opinions, e.g. what they thought about foreigners buying land on the island, whether they think the villages and language in Bequia differ, or what they thought about the increasing number of tourists in Bequia. The questions were constructed that way so they can not only provide linguistic

information, especially tokens of past temporal reference, but also offer interesting extra-linguistic information, which could be valuable in interpreting some the linguistic practices.

The questions also included the classic “danger of death” question, although during fieldwork it occurred to me that this type of question should be moderated according to community-specific norms. For example, the majority of older people in Bequia recorded in Database 1 still remembered the hurricane Janet, which hit the island in 1955, and the interview questions related to it resulted in narratives of extensive lengths and emotional load. For the younger generation, however, such a question bears little relevance. Frankly, many of the younger participants have not experienced a danger of death situation. For these subjects other questions proved to be more effective, such as those which evoked memories from a party they enjoyed most or descriptions of memories from their childhood. The effectiveness of questions of personal relevance was also successful for younger children (Labov, 2002).

Finally, all the observations, impressions and anything I felt provided valuable information about the community, was written down in the form of field-notes and a researcher’s diary.

3.14 Data: sampling, coding, transcription

From a methodological point of view, working on two datasets and several speech communities is challenging, not to say time consuming. A sufficient number of tokens need to be extracted from both datasets and each community, preferably with equal stratification between the sexes, which then need to be coded and analysed statistically. Details of the sample from Database 1 used in the current study are illustrated in Table 3.5. What can be noticed about Table 3.5 is a slight discrepancy between the ages of individual speakers. The majority of speakers in Hamilton are in their 80s with one speaker being 62. In Mount Pleasant, most speakers are in their 70s although speaker 101 is 42. In Paget Farm, the sample is rather balanced as almost all speakers are in their 70s with one discrepancy between a speaker who is 69 and another one who is 84.

Village	Speaker code	Age	Sex	Tokens
Hamilton	1	87	F	240
	5	62	F	132
	6	81	F	125
	11	81	M	282
	12	78	M	61
Total	5			840
Mount Pleasant	101	42	F	130
	107	70	F	105
	108	65	F	111
	301	71	M	270
	302	80	M	127
	303	72	M	146
	304	70	M	50
Total	7			939
Paget Farm	7	73	M	198
	9	75	F	202
	10	75	F	267
	20	69	M	147
	35	84	M	115
Total	5			929
Database 1 Total	17	9M 8F		2708

Table 3.5 Database 1: older speakers (Meyerhoff, Walker, Sidnell 2003-2005)

These discrepancies might have consequences for intra- and inter-speaker variability. Large differences between speakers of various ages in each village might raise questions about the potential similarities between individual repertoires as constituents of a community grammar (Guy, 1980). Using quantitative methods I aim to determine whether the frequencies of variants examined here are homogenous across individuals in each community, and whether any individuals significantly diverge from the community norm. I discuss this issue in detail in Chapter 4.

The main goal of collecting Database 1 was to record speakers who had acquired their vernacular before the tourist boom and before the popular media (such as the Internet, cable TV) became ubiquitous on the island. For this reason we have to assume that all the speakers who represent the older generation, both those

in their 70s as well as those in their 40s meet these criteria and that during the acquisition process their vernaculars were less subject to influence from English than adolescents are today.

Table 3.6 summarises the sample of the data collected during my 2009 fieldwork. The sample was not reduced to interviews only and includes tokens extracted from other recording types. Due to a small number of tokens extracted from freestyle and group recordings I did not code this data separately to the interviews, although I paid attention to any significant discrepancies in the use of past temporal reference across the different types of recordings and report them in the further analysis where appropriate. While in Database 1 a speaker ID is a number, in Database 2 each adolescent was assigned a pseudonym.

Village	Speaker code	Age	Sex	Tokens
Hamilton	Nestor	16	M	27
	Leon	16	M	36
	Maya	15	F	157
	Chris	23	M	89
	Shamina	15	F	71
	Vikki	15	F	134
Total	6			514
Mount Pleasant	Charlie	17	M	89
	James	14	M	94
	Nigel	18	M	108
	Samantha	25	F	119
	Alexandra	19	F	47
Total	5			457
Paget Farm	Anka	16	F	41
	Celia	16	F	279
	Tanya	16	F	40
	Chanelle	16	F	78
	Clara	17	F	61
	Kiki	15	F	104
	Leyton	19	M	184
Total	7			787
Database 2 Total	18	11F 7M		1758

Table 3.6 Database 2: younger speakers (Daleszynska, 2009)

As it was mentioned before, one speaker from each community helped with data collection and transcriptions (Vikki – Ham; Samantha – MP ; Celia – PF). This technique was most successful for Samantha, a popular girl on the island who, together with her parents runs a private business in Bequia. She comes from a respected and wealthy family and was helpful in not only encouraging her peers and family to participate in my project but also interviewed a few informants from Mount Pleasant herself, and her in-group status was incredibly important in light of the perceived differences between the communities. On the other hand, Vikki's and Celia's research assistance in data collection was initially less successful. Possibly because of their young age, or because of the overt prestige of Standard English, initial interviews conducted by the girls resulted in perfectly standard speech from both the interviewer and the interviewee. Naturally, the presence of the microphone suggested to the participants that "proper" speech is required. Eventually, however, after I encouraged them to use their local dialect, they managed to record a set of successful interviews.

Nonetheless, the same girls, especially Vikki and Celia, were incredibly helpful during the process of data transcription. Because the girls were not fully computer literate, I chose to type the data which I then reviewed with an assistant. On several occasions, I left the microphone on during these transcribing sessions as it occurred to me that very often, while listening to their peers being interviewed, my assistants would provide their own commentaries and narratives, frequently very emotional ones resulting in a similar effect as the "danger of death" question. While in Bequia, the data was transcribed with the Microsoft Word software, after I came back from fieldwork I was introduced to the transcribing software ELAN (Sloetjes, 2006), a time-aligned annotation system, where the rest of my data was transcribed.

Tokens of past temporal reference were then extracted from the transcribed file and coded for a variety of factors, some of which were discussed earlier in this chapter. The data was coded in Microsoft Excel, so that it could be easily incorporated into one of the programs used for statistical analyses, which I discuss in the following section.

3.15 Multivariate analysis with Rbrul

The current project follows the tradition of sociolinguistics in employing multivariate analysis as a quantitative tool within research on language variation and change. Initially designed to test the applicability of variable rules today VARBRUL remains a primary statistical method for analysing variation (Cedergren and Sankoff, 1974; Tagliamonte, 2006).

A VARBRUL program conducts a multivariate analysis to evaluate the effect of pre-coded independent factors (independent variables) on a binary 'choice' between two variants (the dependent variable) in order to test the null hypothesis (namely, that the variation between those variants is random). In the current study, I use a statistical package Rbrul, a text-based interface of the R software environment (Johnson, 2009). The main functions of Rbrul are similar to the older multivariate statistical package GoldVarb X (Sankoff et al., 2005). Both programs perform multiple regression which relates the log odds for the dependent variable in each cell of the dataset to a transformed sum of effects (Sigley, 2003). The goal of multiple regression is to test the overall probability of a rule's application in order to estimate which factors (predictors) significantly influence the occurrence of one variant against other(s). The programme conducts a stepwise regression where individual factor groups are added/removed in order to find the model with the best (most significant) "fit". The effects are reported as factor weights between 0 and 1 (although Rbrul reports both factor weights and log odds which can be unbounded positive or negative value; Johnson, 2009: 361). A value of .50 is neutral, values below .50 are interpreted as a disfavoured effect, while those above .50 indicate that a variant is favoured.

Data is imported in Rbrul through comma or tab-delimited spreadsheets, which makes it possible to import it directly from Microsoft Excel where the data was coded. One advantage of Rbrul is that it does not require single character coding and can handle "knockouts" - invariably distributed tokens in the multivariate analysis. But perhaps the most useful feature of Rbrul is that of mixed effects modelling (Johnson, 2009; Baayen, 2008) which allows for handling variability within unbalanced factors. Modelling unbalanced categories as random

effects (such as individual speakers or words) is especially suitable if we are not interested in the actual realised values of factors within these categories, but we want to incorporate such nested predictors (Johnson, 2011) in the model. I discuss the motivations for using mixed models in the analysis of variation in Bequia in more detail in Section 4.2.1.

In this study the statistical analysis of variation conducted with Rbrul involves (i) determining the contribution each factor group makes to the model, (ii) determining which factors within these factor groups favour, and which ones disfavour, the application value, and (iii) identifying significant interactions and collinearity between the factor groups which may potentially affect the statistical results obtained. These steps will be undertaken in the analysis of variation within past temporal reference within BeqCE and they will be further discussed when the results for each variable are presented .

3.16 Conclusion

In this chapter I have first discussed the dependent variables analysed in the current study, and the linguistic constraints which are hypothesised to influence their distribution. I outlined the motivations for including these variables in the analysis and have pointed to several challenges faced during the data coding process. Next, I sketched out the methodological approaches used in the analysis of language variation and change in Bequia. I initially outlined the development of methodologies and theoretical concepts within variationist sociolinguistics which Eckert (2005) classified as three loosely defined waves. I underlined that in order to interpret the patterns of variation in Bequia I will consider not only the correlations between the locally relevant social categories and patterns of language variation and change, but I will try to interpret these correlations by investigating the social meanings of linguistic variants as a resource which speakers across the Bequia communities use in identity construction.

Next, I discussed my fieldwork experiences and the step by step process of data collection, from entering the community to the different techniques which I applied to reduce the observer's paradox and obtain quality linguistic and extra-

linguistic data. I also characterised the nature of the sample, including the cohort of older speakers collected by Meyerhoff, Walker and Sidnell (2003-2005) as well as the sample of adolescents participating in my 2009 fieldwork. The chapter concluded with a description of the statistical techniques used to determine the correlations between the dependent and independent variables. The results of this analysis are discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 Past Marking by Verb Inflection – grammatical factors

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I characterised the variables analysed in this study, defined the factors hypothesised to determine the patterns of their distribution and utilisation, and explained some of the decisions made in the process of coding the data. In this chapter I focus on one of these variables, past marking by verb inflection, referred to by Patrick (1999: 223) as a “typically mesolectal mechanism”. Variation between \emptyset and *-ed* has been recognised as one of the most frequent strategies for expressing past temporal reference across CECs (Winford, 1992; Patrick, 1999; Poplack and Tagliamonte, 2001; Hackert, 2004), with high rates of intra- and inter-speaker variability. This is also true of BeqCE where, despite fluctuations across different villages and individuals, variable past marking by verb inflection constitutes the most frequent resource for expressing past temporal reference. In this chapter I will look into the patterns of this variation across individuals and communities on Bequia, at the same time trying to establish which of the factors discussed in Chapter 3 influence the distribution and utilisation of inflected verbs.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. First, I focus on stratifying the sample of speakers included in this study. So far, throughout this dissertation I have accounted for three different loosely defined speech communities based on speakers’ village affiliations. Even though such a classification seems like it is solely based on geographical criteria, “place” is considered here a social category reaching beyond geographic characteristics (cf. Chapter 2 for more details of the importance of place in Bequia). Speakers are grouped into local communities according to the village they come from forming a cohort of individuals sharing a common orientation towards external norms, and joined by a similar social, economic, historical and cultural background. This set of shared features, warrants considering such locally bound groups as a potential speech community. However, such an a

priori classification might seem questionable without an empirical analysis of their linguistic practices. Using quantitative methods, I tackle this issue in Section 4.2.

Next, I examine the effect of several grammatical categories on the distribution of bare verbs and inflected verbs: morphological class of a verb, lexical aspect, and grammatical aspect. Finally, using several methods of quantification I establish the relationship between the systems within generations and across them.

The ultimate goal of this chapter is to: (i) examine intra-speaker variability and its influence on sample stratification, (ii) establish the similarities/differences between the systems in individual communities for past marking by verb inflection, (iii) determine whether there is a change in progress (and if so, in what direction) among the younger group of speakers.

4.2 Speech community: encompassing variation in the group and the individual

Problems with defining a speech community have always been central to (socio)linguistic theory. Even though a variety of contributions problematising the concept have been made, little consensus has been reached as to what constitutes a speech community and, more importantly, where its boundaries lie. Two criteria have been frequently applied in an attempt to define a speech community: (i) shared linguistic norms between a group of speakers, and (ii) shared attitudes and evaluation of those norms. While some definitions have assigned more weight to the former (e.g. Labov, 1972; Guy, 1980; Patrick, 2004) or the latter (Gumperz, 1962, 1982; Hymes, 1972), it has been agreed that the two cannot be separated. Evaluating the different approaches towards a speech community is beyond the scope of the current study, however the definition of the concept by Labov (1972; 1994) and his followers (e.g. Guy, 1980) has been the most influential for the present analysis. According to Labov (1972: 120):

“The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behaviour, and by the

uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage.”

A preliminary classification of speakers into social groupings is necessary as a starting point for further empirical analysis of their “participation in a set of shared norms”. Such groupings could be based on several socio-cultural criteria working together, such as locality, age, cultural norms, or shared practices and mutual engagement in an endeavour (in which case the concept of a community of practice could prove more useful; Lave and Wenger, 1991; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Meyerhoff, 2004).

In the current study speakers have been grouped into three different communities according to their village affiliation. This decision was motivated by several factors. First of all, ethnographic observations made during fieldwork pointed to very strong local identities and demonstrated that speakers share evaluations and attitudes regarding their own village and the two others. Secondly, even though members of these three communities have no problems identifying themselves as Bequians when compared to inhabitants of any other neighbouring island, and frequently admit that being a Bequian is indeed their national identity, they also claim that their heritage and roots are strongly linked to the village they come from. Their place identities constitute a set of shared experiences, cultural practices, and attitudes towards various aspects of the world around them (the different levels on which the contrasts between these communities can be drawn were discussed in Chapter 2). Therefore, there is a good reason to assume that these strongly locally rooted place identities will be reflected in patterns of language variation on a community level. Finally, a decision to analyse speakers in the three villages as speech communities was based on previous analyses of language variation across them (e.g. Meyerhoff and Walker, 2007; Meyerhoff, 2009b), which revealed that place frequently emerges as a significant predictor of the variable use of linguistic forms.

Even though these are strong arguments, which would warrant considering the three villages as different speech communities, I do not limit my analysis to such preassumed groupings, but test empirically whether the

hypothesised linguistic uniformity is mirrored in patterns of language variation. In this view, I follow Labov's (1972) definition of a speech community according to which the constituency of a speech community must be discovered through the research process and established through evidence of shared linguistic norms.

Another issue which encourages an empirical investigation of different speech communities in Bequia stems from the highly variable nature of creole languages which have been referred to as continua mainly due to a wide spectrum of forms ranging from a basilect to Standard English, all of which may be included in individual grammars of creole speakers (cf. Chapter 1). Assuming that the high variability within individual grammars is also characteristic of Bequians' linguistic norms, a question needs asking, whether it is possible to group speakers into different speech communities, and whether contrasts between these communities can be drawn.

4.2.1 Rates of verb inflection across Bequia villages and individuals

Table 4.1 presents the rate of verb inflections in raw numbers across the two generations of speakers in Hamilton, Paget Farm, and Mount Pleasant. The same frequencies are presented in Figure 4.1 where the rates of inflection are calculated in percentages. Inflected verbs (black bars) are contrasted with bare verbs (white bars) showing the rate of inflection calculated on the basis of raw token numbers outlined in Table 4.1.

Variant	Ham. O		Ham. Y		PF O		PF Y		MP O		MP Y		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
-ed	136	19	87	18	244	28	144	20	414	45	251	55	1276
∅	576	81	391	82	635	72	566	80	506	55	203	45	2877
Total	712	100	478	100	879	100	710	100	920	100	454	100	4153

Table 4.1 Distribution of bare verbs and inflected verbs across both generations of speakers in the three villages, in raw numbers and percentages (O = Older; Y = younger)

Even a brief examination of the figure points to several observations. First, there seems to be a clear split between Mount Pleasant and the other villages with the

former showing higher rates of inflection (almost half the total number of tokens are inflected among the older group of speakers and more than a half among the youth). Secondly, older speakers in Paget Farm display a higher rate of verb inflections than the elders in Hamilton. Finally, observations can be made as to the rates of inflection between generations in each village. In Hamilton, there seems to be an astonishing uniformity of verb inflection rates between the two generations with less than one fifth of all verbs being inflected. In Paget Farm, we observe a slight decline in the use of verb inflections, but for both generations bare verbs are clearly the preferred form. However, in Mount Pleasant, young speakers stand out from their peers in the other villages in their preference for inflected verbs, which they choose in over half of the tokens included in the data set.

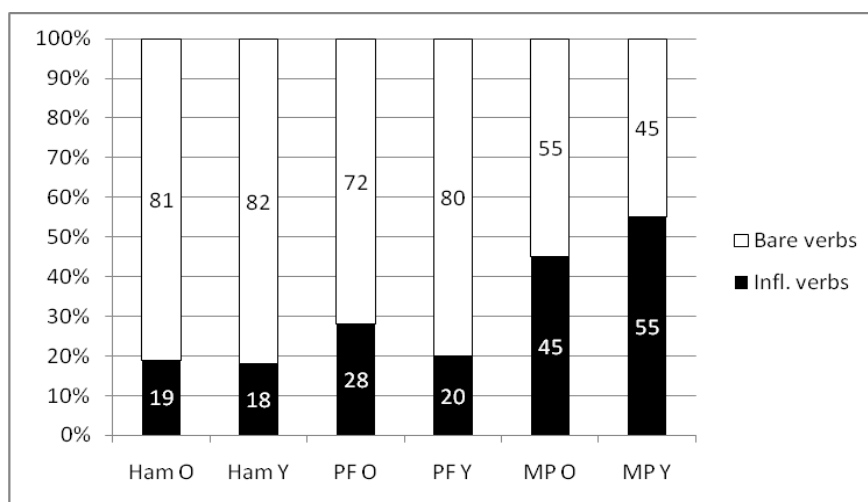


Figure 4.1 Distribution of bare verbs and inflected verbs across two generations of speakers in the three villages, in percentages (O = older; Y = younger)

Despite these overt patterns of variability across the communities and age groups, one cannot deny that intra-speaker variability might play an important role for the shaping of these patterns. For this reason, I have examined individual inflection rates for the most frequently occurring verbs used by each individual in the sample. Next, these were compared to the rates of inflection across different morphological classes included in the study used by each individual.

While the issue of frequency for language variation and change is not a primary concern of the current study (cf. Bybee, 2007), the potential importance of

this effect needs to be spelled out. Recently there have been a vast number of studies examining frequency effects in variable linguistic processes, usually influenced by the theoretical claims of usage-based theories, such as Exemplar Theory (ET; Lacerda, 1995; Pierrehumbert, 2001; Bybee, 2002). A hypothesis drawn from ET would assume that speakers have lexically-specific treatments of words based on exemplars stored in speakers' memory through previous exposure to these words. A consequence of such an effect would be reflected in an exceptionally high/low inflection rate in frequently occurring words. In studies of sound change it was early suggested that high-frequency words are influenced by sound change earlier and to a greater extent than low token frequency words (Schuchardt, 1885). However, it was also noted that the effect can be reversed, and that high-frequency words can be most resilient to change (e.g. Bybee, 2002). The effects of word frequency have been often taken into consideration in an analysis of phonetic and phonological changes (especially as tests of ET), but less frequently for morphological and syntactic variation and change (but see e.g. King et al., 2004; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy, 2007; Erker and Guy, 2010).

In studies of variation in CECs the most frequently occurring verbs have also been accounted for together with other "exceptional" verbs, and their significance for rates of inflection has been demonstrated (Patrick, 1999: 232; Hackert, 2004: 142). In previous studies, several exceptional verbs have been identified: *go*, *have*, *do*, *send*, *say* in JamCE (Patrick, 1999), and *go*, *have*, *do*, *get* and *make* in BahCE (Hackert, 2004). In the current study frequent verbs were established based on their frequency relative to other verbs uttered by an individual in the course of an interview (a similar method was used in e.g. Dinkin, 2008). Since sample size varies per each individual, evaluations were made based on a total percentage of verbs per speaker sample, so that frequencies can be proportional to individual sample size. A verb was considered as frequently occurring if it constitutes more than 5% of the total number of verbs extracted from the speech of each individual included in the data. This approach is different to the one followed by Patrick (1992; 1999) and Hackert (2004). Patrick's decision to separate *go*, *have*, *do* and *say* was motivated by their overall commonality in English, and the fact that these are "among the first acquired by both native and non-native speakers" (Patrick, 1992: 385). Other verbs, such as

get and *make* were classified as frequent by Hackert (2004: 141). For example, *get* was labelled as exceptional based on its high frequency and syntactic multi-functionality (which next to its basic meaning is also used in stative/possessive contexts and passives).

Investigation of the frequencies of individual verbs showed that overall, the three most frequently used verbs in the Bequia dataset are *come*, *go* and *have*. While the latter two have already been classified in previous studies as some of the most frequent words in the English lexicon, the high frequency of *come* might be related to the nature of the interviews from which the tokens were extracted, in which narratives of personal experiences and stories of past events prevail (*come* also features as frequent in Poplack and Tagliamonte, 2001). Although verbs *go* and *have* were consistently found to be the most frequently occurring ones for all speakers included in the sample, *come* was common for the majority, but not all of the individuals examined. For the speakers who did not use *come* frequently the rate of other common verbs was considered, these included e.g. *get*, *see*, and *start*. For each of the selected verbs, that is *come*, *go*, *have*, and a few others classified as frequent instead of *come* for 12 (out of 35) individuals, rates of inflection were established in percentages. These were compared to individual rates of inflection per each of the morphological classes coded in the current study: irregular verbs (e.g. *buy/bought*, *see/saw*), semi-weak (e.g. *tell/told*, *leave/left*), syllabic regular verbs (*want/wanted*, *pelt/pelted*), vowel-final regular (*die/died*, *play/played*) and consonant-final regular verbs (*pass/passed*, *kill/killed*). A detailed discussion of each of these categories features in Chapter 3.

Next, speakers were classified into one of the three groups, High, Mid, and Low, based on the combined rates of inflection for both exceptional verbs and morphological classes. The results are presented in Table 4.2 which shows the number of inflected tokens per total number of verbs within each category in raw tokens and percentages.

Category	Low O		Low Y		Mid O		Mid Y		High O		High Y		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
<i>Come</i>	13(109)	12	8(88)	9	15(42)	35	8(39)	20	43(77)	56	16(33)	48	103(388)
<i>Go</i>	43(169)	25	29(100)	29	43(74)	58	28(52)	54	65(92)	70	40(47)	85	248(534)
<i>Have</i>	120(161)	74	24(34)	70	56(112)	50	19(30)	63	61(64)	95	24(28)	86	304(429)
Irregular	30(396)	7	41(270)	15	38(140)	27	57(138)	41	68(175)	39	73(112)	65	307(1231)
Semi-weak	19(101)	19	6(60)	10	4(19)	21	13(36)	36	17(31)	55	15(21)	71	74(268)
Syllabic	6(51)	12	5(51)	10	9(20)	45	15(33)	45	16(39)	41	12(22)	54	63(216)
V-final	21(166)	12	6(102)	6	10(51)	19	2(31)	6	24(58)	41	20(32)	62	83(440)
C-final	6(195)	3	2(159)	1	2(47)	4	10(104)	10	11(76)	14	22(66)	33	53(647)
Total	258(1348)	19	121(864)	14	177(505)	35	152(463)	33	305(612)	50	222(361)	61	1235(4153)

Table 4.2 Frequency of past marking by verb inflection per total number of verbs (in brackets) across two generations of Low, Mid and High inflection users (in raw number and percentages)

The three groups, High, Mid, and Low (younger and older speakers were classified separately so that comparisons between rates of inflection across peer groups can be made) were established based on the following criteria:

- **High** - individuals for whom the rates of inflection are larger than the rates for the Mid group by at least 1.5 times across the majority of categories (except for *have* which shows an overall very high rate of inflection)
- **Mid** - individuals for whom the rates of inflection are larger by at least 1.5 times across the majority of categories than the rates for the Low group (except for *have*)
- **Low** - a group which includes speakers for whom inflection rates are lower by at least 1.5 times than the rates for the other groups of speakers (again, excluding *have*)

An observation of the number of tokens of *have*, *come*, and *go* suggests that these are indeed frequent within the data set. Nevertheless, the rates of inflection for each of these verbs vary across individual groups of speakers. For example, the proportion of inflection for *come* and *go* is far from categorical for all groups of speakers.

Similarly, the rates of inflection for *have* also vary significantly across the sample, from 50% use among Mid older speakers to 95% among High older speakers. The overall high frequency of occurrence of these verbs and the heavily fluctuating rates of inflection they are subject to present a problem as to how to treat these verbs in the quantitative analysis of variation. On the one hand, omitting them from the analysis could mean overlooking important information about the data. On the other, including these tokens could distort the overall results, for example, by applying more significance to other factor groups these verbs fall into, such as the class of irregular verbs, or Stativity.

Previous research suggested that *have* might have an effect on the category of Stativity, although this is not the case in BeqCE, at least for the group of Low inflection users (cf. Appendix 1). In the current study, excluding *have* offers a neater, and a significantly better model, with limited interactions, but with similar factor weighting compared to the model in which *have* is included (results of the quantitative analysis and the discussion of the effect of *have*, *go* and *come* on

modelling variation are presented in Appendix 1). Therefore, *have* will be consistently excluded from quantitative analyses.

Similarly, according to previous claims morphological class predictor is highly influenced by inflection and frequency rates of individual lexemes, I tested whether *come* and *go*, the two most frequent verbs in the data set after *have*, significantly alter the model, and especially whether they affect the class of irregular verbs to which both of these verb belong (cf. Appendix 1). As far as morphological class is concerned, the analysis showed that excluding these lexemes does not severely alter the model, and so a decision was made to keep both verbs in the data set under several conditions, based on the factor weightings of these verbs: (i) *go* will be included as a separate factor within morphological class, and (ii) *come* will be combined with the class of Irregular verbs.

The problem of high inter-lexeme variability can to some extent be taken care of through the use of mixed-effects models where the category of a word can be modeled as a random predictor. Mixed models make a distinction between two types of factors that can affect a response: fixed effects (predictors with a fairly small number of possible factors, which are usually replicable in a further study), and random effects (factors drawn from larger populations, unlikely to be replicable, such as individual speakers or words) (Johnson, 2009: 365; Baayen, 2008: 241). While fixed-effects factors are modelled by means of contrasts, random effects are modelled as random variables with a mean of zero and unknown variance (Baayen, 2008: 242). In the current analysis, the individual word factor group consists of unbalanced tokens which are not exhaustively sampled across the dataset. As I already discussed, some words represent very high or low rates of inflection. This individual variability should be controlled in the testing of fixed effects. Therefore, including the word class as a random effect provides a good opportunity to embrace and model this variation while at the same time removing the individual level of variance from the outcome in testing for the effect of other independent variables. Moreover, I will also demonstrate that leaving out the category of lexical item all together can lead to an overestimation of the significance of some factors and diminishing of the significance of others. An accurate modelling of variability is especially important considering that the results of quantitative analyses will serve

as one of the diagnostics for classifying the systems as similar or different and for identifying changes in progress and reallocation or levelling of systems.

I shall now return to the issue of a speech community and establish whether individual villages correspond to grouping speakers into Low, Mid and High inflection users.

4.2.2 Bequia villages as different speech communities?

Table 4.3 groups the members of the three speaker cohorts formed on the basis of individual inflection rates including the community they come from.

Low Older - Speaker ID	Village	Mid Older - Speaker ID	Village	High Older - Speaker ID	Village
001	Ham	301	MP	101	MP
006	Ham	304	MP	107	MP
010	PF	007	PF	108	MP
012	Ham			302	MP
009	PF			303	MP
011	Ham				
035	PF				
020	PF				
005	Ham				
Low Younger - Speaker ID	Village	Mid Younger - Speaker ID	Village	High Younger - Speaker ID	Village
Chanelle	PF	Celia	PF	Charlie	MP
Clara	PF	Chris	Ham	Samantha	MP
Kiki	PF	Nigel	MP	James	MP
Shamina	Ham			Alexandra	MP
Maya	Ham				
Anka	PF				
Leyton	PF				
Tanya	PF				
Vikki	Ham				
Nestor	Ham				
Leon	Ham				

Table 4.3 Classification of individual speakers into High, Mid and Low groups according to their village affiliation

In Section 4.2.1 I established that, based on the overall rates of inflection, individuals in Bequia can be grouped into three cohorts: Low, Mid and High claiming that this classification will correspond to speakers' village affiliations: speakers with higher rates of inflection will come from Mount Pleasant, while those using bare verbs more often will be from Hamilton and Paget Farm. The table confirms that the analysis of individual inflection rates largely overlaps with the stratification of speakers according to their village affiliation. While speakers in the Low inflection group come solely from Hamilton and Paget Farm, speakers in the High inflection group are from Mount Pleasant. This pattern is coherent across the generations.

However, stratification of speakers into different groups according to the rates of inflection revealed also a group of speakers who are placed in-between the two extreme ones, the Low and the High. Two male speakers from Mount Pleasant, 301 and 304, stand out from the other members of the Mount Pleasant community in their much lower use of verb inflections, which is why they have been classified into the in-between Mid group. On the other hand, speaker 007 in the Mid group is a male from Paget Farm who uses verb inflections significantly more frequently than his peers in the Paget Farm community.

Among the younger in-between group, each of the speakers comes from a different community: Celia and Chris use verb inflections more frequently than adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm, while Nigel lags behind the other Mount Pleasant adolescents. The importance of in-betweens as a group which does not represent some "imaginary middle", but which through their choice of stylistic elements also participates in identity construction, was emphasised by Eckert (2000: 59). Modelling the group of speakers who do not follow the community norms offers a more textured analysis of the ways speakers employ linguistic variables to signal their social affiliations (cf. Walker et al., 2009). An interpretation of such practices needs to be offered through a closer look at in-betweens' stylistic practices, networks, and attitudes towards the community they come from. Throughout the rest of this dissertation the linguistic practices of the in-betweens will be carefully monitored and an evaluation of their symbolic behaviours will be offered in Chapter 7.

Although individuals in Paget Farm and Hamilton demonstrated very similar rates of inflection, the two communities will be kept separate in the quantitative analysis. Two arguments motivate this decision. First, the perception of speakers in these villages towards each other does not in any way suggest a shared identity between these communities (a factor considered as important for a classification of a speech community). On the contrary, in Chapter 2 I discussed many levels on which these villages diverge and the hostile attitudes many inhabitants of these villages display towards each other. Secondly, variationist research has shown that the rates of distribution do not always go in line with shared patterns of language use, and that seemingly similar rates of inflection might mask underlying differences between systems (e.g. Meyerhoff and Walker, 2007). In the following sections I discuss the results of the distributional and then multivariate analysis for the three villages. From now on, rather than following the Low, Mid and High groupings of speakers, I will classify speakers according to the community they come from.

4.3 Distribution of inflected verbs across morphological classes

Table 4.4 shows the rates of verb inflection in raw numbers for each of the morphological classes considered in the study. This calculation includes the decisions reached in the analysis of exceptional verbs featuring in Appendix 1: *have* is excluded from the analysis, *go* is considered separately, and *come* is combined with other irregular verbs. The in-between group of speakers is not considered at this point. While *go* consistently shows the highest inflection rate across all the communities, the class of consonant-final regular verbs is represented by the lowest number of inflected verbs. This can also be observed in Figure 4.2, which shows the proportion of inflected verbs across the morphological classes in percentages. Overall, there is a high rate of variability across the communities in terms of the hierarchy of inflection within morphological classes.

Category	Ham O		Ham Y		PF O		PF Y		MP O		MP Y		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Go	25(93)	27	15(52)	28	26(97)	27	14(51)	27	71(98)	72	40(47)	85	299(437)
Irregular	21(265)	8	21(172)	12	21(237)	9	24(162)	15	105(244)	43	83(130)	64	275(1210)
Semi-weak	8(57)	14	2(24)	8	11(44)	25	4(36)	11	17(31)	55	15(21)	71	57(213)
Syllabic	1(18)	5	1(18)	5	5(33)	15	2(30)	6	16(39)	41	12(22)	54	37(160)
V-final	11(95)	11	1(45)	2	10(89)	11	5(56)	9	26(60)	43	20(32)	62	133(377)
C-final	1(99)	1	2(67)	3	5(107)	4	0(92)	0	11(77)	14	22(66)	33	41(508)
Total	67(627)	10	42(378)	11	78(607)	13	49(427)	11	246(549)	45	192(318)	60	674(2906)

Table 4.4 Frequency of past marking by verb inflection per total number of verbs (in brackets) across two generations of speakers in Hamilton, Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant excluding in-betweens (in raw number and percentages)

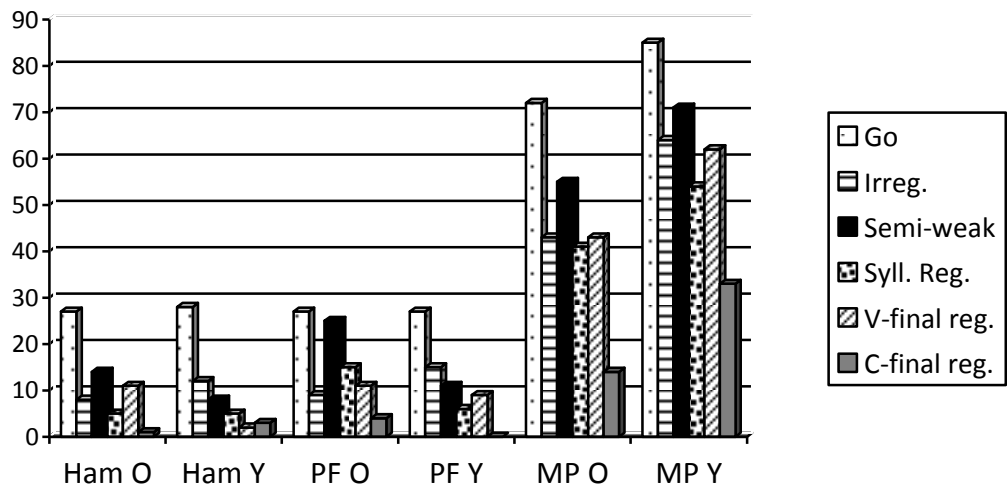


Figure 4.2 Distribution of inflected verbs within morphological classes in two age groups across the three villages (in percentages, according to the values shown in Table 4.4)

First, let us have a closer look at the class of irregular verbs. In this category several morphological types of inflection have been counted: vowel change only (*give/gave*), vowel change plus (*catch/caught*), and the exceptional verb *come* (cf. Chapter 3). In total, they account for 1210 tokens. What can be observed is that the rate of inflection within the irregular verb class is not homogenous across the Bequia communities. Especially in Mount Pleasant irregular verbs clearly display higher rates of inflection for both generations of speakers. We can also observe a difference between the older generation of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm and adolescents in these communities in terms of frequency of inflection for the class of irregular verbs. Whereas among the older speakers in these two villages semi-weak verbs display the highest rate of inflection, adolescents inflect irregular verbs most frequently compared to the other verb classes. Does this shift in frequency rates for the class of irregular verbs indicate reallocation of the system of past marking by verb inflection across the two generations? An answer to this question will be investigated when the results of multivariate analyses for morphological class, across both generations of speakers are compared.

Following previous studies on CECs which looked at inflection rates across different morphological classes, a decision was made to separate irregular verbs from semi-weak verbs. In the current study, the class of semi-weak verbs includes

forms characterised by vowel change, as well as /t,d/ affixation (e.g. *tell/told*, *keep/kept*, *leave/left*). In all communities apart from the older group of people in Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant, irregular verbs and semi-weak verbs display the highest rates of inflection morphological class. Hackert (2004: 147) decided to collapse semi-weak verbs and irregular verbs after establishing that this decision is justified statistically (according to the calculation of χ^2 per cell value). Here, before a decision is made to combine the two classes, we need to first establish whether the factor group of morphological class makes a significant contribution at all to the process of past marking by verb inflection in the individual communities, and whether inflection correlates with these two categories in a similar manner.

The class of regular verbs includes three different categories: vowel- and consonant-final verbs (*play/played*, *ask/asked*), and stems ending in apical stops /t,d/ which take the syllabic suffix /ɪd/ (e.g. *want/wanted*). The distribution of *-ed* within the latter, the syllabic regular verb class, varies considerably across the communities and age groups. Only in two communities, older speakers in Hamilton, and adolescents in Paget Farm, are syllabic regular verbs inflected with higher frequency than the class of vowel-final regular verbs, although an overall low frequency of verbs falling into this verb class across the communities makes these observations dubious. Nevertheless, this result is in line with Patrick's (1999: 235) account, where a total rate of inflection within the syllabic regular verb class in JamCE is 46% which is slightly lower than the category of vowel-final regular verbs (49%). On the other hand, in Hackert's analysis (2004: 146), vowel final regular verbs are generally less frequently inflected (16%) than syllabic regular verbs (26%). In light of these divergent accounts, fluctuating rates of verb inflection between the syllabic regular and the vowel-final regular classes in BeqCE is not surprising.

4.4 Inflection across other CECs

In creole studies a lot of attention has been devoted to drawing comparisons between different creole varieties, for example by pointing out the linguistic elements shared by individual creole systems, and hypothesising the historical relationships between them. The TMA system is often regarded as the area where

creoles show most similarities and where they most drastically diverge from their lexifiers. Research focusing on inflection of verbs in past temporal reference has shown this process to be highly variable across different CECs as the rates of variation between \emptyset and *-ed* usually fluctuate in different creole varieties across the continuum. Several studies in which data was stratified according to rates of inflection across morphological classes distinguished discrete “lects” which differ for cohorts of speakers within a creole variety. Even the most surface-level analyses, such as a percentage illustration of the distribution of a given form point to such differences. In Table 4.5, data from four different CECs is compared (after Patrick, 1999: 245), including the three Bequia communities, (for the purpose of this analysis the data from the two generations was combined).

The table includes data from Jamaica (Patrick, 1999), Trinidad (Winford, 1992), Guyana (Bickerton, 1975), and Barbados (Blake, 1997). However, such a comparison is quite challenging due to potential differences in coding techniques, decisions, and categories considered. Except for Bickerton’s (1975) analysis, all of the remaining studies follow the variationist framework, which to a large extent guarantees replicability and comparability of coding decisions and results. A detailed discussion of the above studies and the coding categories they applied is provided by Patrick (1999: 244-246) and will not be considered further here. Importantly, each of the varieties analysed, apart from Blake’s (1997) analysis of Barbadian, offers a more fine-grained stratification of speakers according to their rates of inflection (Low, Mid, High in JamCE; Lower, Upper working and Lower middle in TC, and lower and upper mesolectal in GC).

Examination of numerical data from each of the creole varieties investigated shows that two varieties, Trinidadian Upper working, and Barbadian, show a striking similarity to the Bequia villages. This is clearly illustrated in Figure 4.3. While the pattern of frequency of verb inflection among speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm strongly resembles that of the four speakers in Barbados, data from Mount Pleasant patterns very closely to speakers representing the Upper Working strata in Trinidad.

Variety	Irregular	Semi-weak	Syllabic reg.	V-final reg.	C-final reg.	Total
BQ Ham. N	9% 42(437)	12% 10(81)	5% 2(36)	8% 12(140)	1% 2(166)	8% 68(860)
BQ Paget Farm N	11% 45(374)	19% 15(80)	11% 7(63)	10% 15(145)	2% 5(199)	10% 87(861)
BQ M. Pleasant N	50% 188(374)	61% 32(52)	46% 28(61)	50% 46(92)	23% 33(143)	45% 327(722)
JamCE Low N	9% 290	10% 48	25% 57	21% 48	1.50% 138	10% 581
JamCE Mid N	29% 161	74% 31	51% 59	31% 35	21% 115	34% 401
JamCE High N	72% 173	76% 21	74% 35	87% 52	38% 127	63% 408
TC Lower working N	33% 430	35% 80	16% 99	35% 51	8% 201	25% 861
TC Upper working N	60% 539	56% 115	52% 120	49% 77	23% 241	49% 1092
TC Lower middle N	85% 238	89% 44	81% 74	72% 32	64% 109	79% 497
GC Lower mes. N	n/a	n/a	n/a	44% 94	4% 273	14% 367
GC Upper mes. N	35% 526	35% 55	60% 102	37% 46	24% 263	35% 992
BC white & black N	16% 490	16% 240	11% 75	15% 101	3% 441	11% 1347

Table 4.5 Comparison of the frequency rates of inflected verbs across morphological classes in BeqCE and other CECs

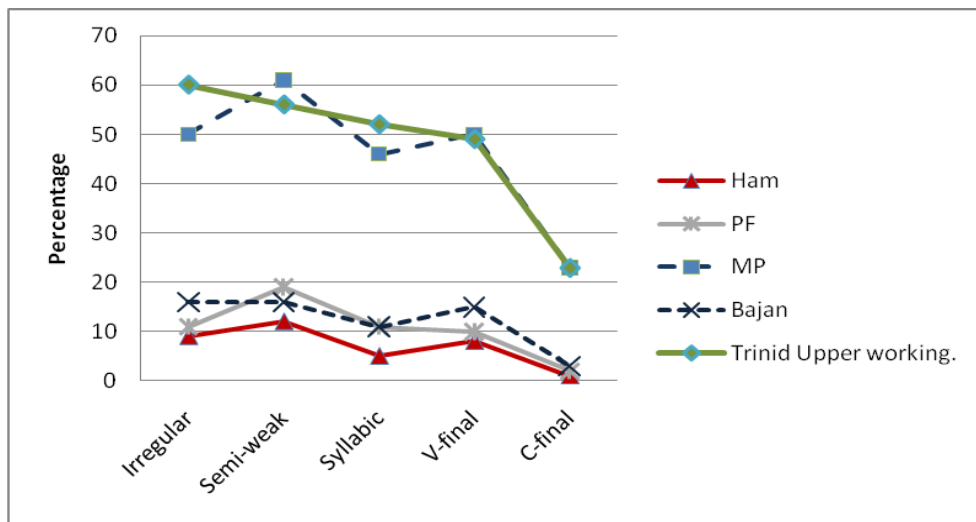


Figure 4.3 Verb inflection by morphological class in BeqCE, TC, and BC

Whereas we must be cautious about overstating the degree to which these varieties overlap in terms of inflection rates, especially considering the low number of speakers examined by Blake (1997) in Barbados, or the above-mentioned problems with accounting for differences in coding decisions, it is nevertheless interesting that the two varieties with which the Bequia villages can be most accurately compared are spoken on some of the closely neighbouring large islands, where Bequians frequently travel. As far as the relationship between Barbados, and the two Bequia villages is concerned, the historical link between the two islands in the context of the Atlantic slave trade cannot be underestimated (this connection was discussed in Chapter 2). Hackert (2004: 159) also reports a strong resemblance of her Bahamian creole data to Bajan and TC suggesting (after Winford, 1992; 2000) that these varieties form a group of intermediate creoles, represented by higher rates of standard forms than the “radical” creoles represented by basilectal JamCE or GC. However, if we again take a closer look at the rates of verb inflections from Paget Farm, and Hamilton (Table 4.4), and compare them to Jamaican Low data, the numbers are not far off (except perhaps for the class of syllabic regular, and vowel-final regular morphological classes).

On the other hand, in Mount Pleasant the similarities between rates of inflection with Trinidadian Upper Working are apparent, but for some morphological classes correspondence with other creole varieties can also be

observed. For example, the rates of inflection in Mount Pleasant for the class of consonant-final regular verbs resemble those in Jamaican Mid (23% in MP and 21% in JamCE Mid), and Guyanese Lower mesolect for vowel-final regular verbs (50% in MP and 44% in GC Lower mes.). A suggestion could be made therefore, that in Mount Pleasant the rates of inflection are more similar to those apparent in other varieties classified as “intermediate” creoles, while Hamilton and Paget Farm show rates of inflection which correspond to more basilectal varieties.

4.5 Distributional analysis – summary

So far, the analysis of the distribution of inflected verbs across the Bequia villages has pointed to several observations:

- Analysis of intra-speaker variability for verb inflections has highlighted three groups of speakers stratified according to the frequency of verb inflection: High, Mid, and Low. Examination of the communities these speakers come from revealed that the above stratification corresponds to grouping speakers according to their village affiliation. This result warrants analysing two generations of speakers from Hamilton, Mount Pleasant and Paget Farm as different speech communities.
- The group of speakers labelled as Mid in terms of their use of verb inflection will be considered here as in-betweens. Their linguistic behaviour will be monitored separately, compared to speakers in the other communities, and eventually interpreted with consideration of their social practices.
- Several exceptional verbs have been established based on their high frequency in the data set: *come*, *go*, and *have*. I conducted a quantitative analysis in which I tested whether these verbs distort the overall picture of the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs (cf. Appendix 1). Even though *have* does not significantly affect the significance of Stativity on verb inflection, excluding *have* offers a neater model of this variation. A similar investigation of *go* and *come* resulted in a decision to combine *come* with other irregular verbs on the basis of similar factor weights and rates of inflection, and separate *go* from other factors within the morphological class category.

- Semi-weak and irregular verb classes display the highest rates of verb inflections across the communities. Also, high variability across the morphological classes of regular verbs in each community was reported (syllabic, vowel-final, and consonant-final).
- Comparison of frequency of inflection with other CECs has highlighted a tentative linguistic resemblance of the Mount Pleasant community to intermediate creoles such as Trinidadian Upper working and Jamaican Mid strata, and Hamilton and Paget Farm to Bajan, and a more basilectal Jamaican Low.

In the following section I investigate the significance of morphological class for the overall distribution of inflected verbs across the communities next to aspect. These categories have been at the heart of the discussion as to which grammatical factors are responsible for the rates of verb inflection within past temporal reference (Bickerton, 1975; Winford, 1992; Patrick, 1999). Multivariate analysis will also enable for comparisons to be made between the systems of verb inflections across the individual communities and reveal whether there is a change in the use of this form among the younger generation of speakers.

4.6 Testing the grammatical effects: morphological class vs. aspect

For the current and subsequent analyses in this chapter inflected verbs were selected as an application value, while bare verbs were modeled as the non-application value. In addition, in all runs *have* has been excluded from the analysis, *come* was combined with irregular verbs, and *go* features as a separate factor within the morphological class category. The factors examined here are: lexical aspect (where verbs were coded as states, punctual, accomplishments, and activities), grammatical aspect (which includes verbs marking situations which are habitual or perfective), and morphological class (where verbs were divided according to their morphological type of inflection as irregular, semi-weak, syllabic regular, vowel-final regular, and consonant-final regular). For a more detailed analysis of these categories refer to Chapter 3.

As far as the analysis of two types of aspect is concerned, cross-tabulating grammatical and lexical aspect illustrated in Table 4.6 showed expected interactions between them, especially between punctuality and perfectivity, and accomplishments and perfective situations.

Situation aspect category	habitual		perfective		Total
	N	%	N	%	
activities	197	49	200	51	397
punctual	230	14	1420	86	1650
states	144	31	313	69	457
accomplishments	228	18	994	82	1222
Total	799	21	2927	79	3726

Table 4.6 Cross-tabulation of lexical and grammatical aspect

One way of removing this interaction would be to analyse these categories in two different variable rule runs, although this makes the comparison of the communities more challenging. Instead, to avoid interactions, and to establish a coherent picture of the way different aspectual categories contribute to the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs, a decision was made to combine both aspectual categories into one single complex factor group. Testing the same predictors for each community will make comparing the results between them more efficient and credible.

Finally, each run analysing variation across the Bequia communities includes mixed effects with the lexeme predictor modelled as a random effect. In Section 4.2.1 I spelled out the importance of incorporating mixed-effects models for unbalanced samples including independent variables with high intra-group variability. Lexeme factor group was classified as a good candidate for a random effect due to its “unstable” nature and a potential effect this instability might have on the correlation between other fixed predictors. Applying mixed effects modelling in addition to separating and monitoring the exceptional verbs should reduce the risk of distorting the overall picture of variation across the communities by adding significance to some predictors, while reducing it in others.

To test the contribution of mixed modelling on this data, I have conducted two separate runs. Model one includes lexeme as a random effect, while in model two the lexeme category is excluded altogether. This calculation is conducted on the

sample of older speakers from Hamilton and the results of this analysis are presented in Table 4.7.

Model	1) Lexeme as a random effect			2) Lexeme excluded		
Input prob.	0.006			0.112		
Total N	581			581		
Log likelihood	-174.245			-190.585		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Aspect	p.<0.0002			Not significant		
perf. punctual	0.18	11	374	[0.48]	11	374
perf. accompl.	0.17	9	139	[0.43]	9	139
perf. activities	KO	0	21	KO	0	21
hab. punctual	KO	0	60	KO	0	60
hab. states	0.95	16	68	[0.58]	16	68
hab. accompl.	KO	0	39	KO	0	39
hab. activities	KO	0	25	KO	0	25
<i>Range</i>	78			N/A		
Morph. class	Not significant			p.<0.00000214		
Go	[0.89]	28	88	0.8	28	88
Irregular	[0.37]	8	259	0.63	8	259
Semi-weak	[0.58]	14	57	0.6	14	57
Syllabic reg.	[0.43]	7	14	0.47	7	14
V-final reg.	[0.66]	12	88	0.44	12	88
C-final reg.	[0.08]	1	75	0.12	1	75
<i>Range</i>	N/A			68		
Lexeme	Random			Excluded		

Table 4.7 Comparison of results with and without mixed modelling for the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs among older speakers in Hamilton. Activities verbs (KO) were excluded from the analysis, hab. accomplishments were combined with perf accomplishments, and hab. punctuals were combined with perf. punctuals

Interestingly, the hierarchy of constraints in this community changed depending on whether Lexeme is modelled as a random effect or excluded from the analysis. With Lexeme excluded, Aspect is no longer a significant category influencing the pattern of verb inflection among older speakers in Hamilton. Instead, we observe a strong effect of morphological class. In addition, an overall input probability for an inflected verb to occur has increased. The factor weightings have also been affected. Although not significant, in model two the factor weights for Stativity are much lower than in model one, while punctual situations and accomplishments show an almost neutral effect. However, in model one they strongly disfavour inflection.

To sum up, if mixed effects are not included in the model, idiosyncrasies of individual verbs: (i) add significance to the morphological class predictor and mask the significance of aspect for the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs among the older generation of Hamilton speakers, (ii) suggest a higher average tendency for inflection to occur, (iii) reduce the factor weights for the effect of stativity on this variation, and increase the correlation between punctual situations and accomplishments from negative to almost neutral.

What is interesting, previous research on several other creole speaking communities where the variable rule analysis was applied (Winford, 1992; Poplack and Tagliamonte, 2001; Hackert, 2004) showed that indeed, morphological class is one of the strongest predictors contributing to variable tense marking. However, in none of these studies mixed modelling, helpful in handling unbalanced data, was applied. When variation across individual lexical items is levelled out it turns out that among older speakers in Hamilton aspect holds a stronger explanatory value than morphological class of a verb.

In the following sections I discuss the results of the multivariate analysis for all four communities: Hamilton, Paget Farm, Mount Pleasant, and in-betweens. The factors which were categorically distributed as \emptyset or *-ed* (the so called knock-outs) were combined with other tokens of the same category. For example, in the cohort of Hamilton older speakers the tokens of habitual punctual verbs displayed a zero distribution of inflection, and were combined with perfective punctual verbs. In the case where both perfective and habitual variants of one category were knockouts, the whole category was excluded. There are two such cases: habitual activities and perfective activities in both age groups in Hamilton show a zero distribution of inflected verbs. Therefore, activities were excluded from the multivariate analysis of variation in Hamilton.

4.6.1 Testing the grammatical effects: morphological class vs. aspect - Hamilton

First, let us compare the two generations of speakers in Hamilton which are illustrated in Table 4.8. The result from the group of older speakers in Hamilton

shows a very high significance of aspect for the distribution of inflected verbs in this village. While stative verbs very strongly favour inflection, non-stative (punctual and accomplishments) verbs disfavour it.

Community	Hamilton Older			Hamilton Younger		
Input probability	0.006			0.081		
Total N	581			337		
Log likelihood	-174.245			-116.74		
Factor group	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Aspect	p.<0.0002			Not significant		
perf. punctual	0.18	11	374	[0.52]	13	223
perf. accomplish.	0.17	9	139	[0.50]	7	60
perf. activities	KO	0	21	KO	0	41
hab. punctual	KO	0	60	KO	0	4
hab. states	0.95	16	68	[0.46]	11	54
hab. accomplish.	KO	0	39	KO	0	7
hab. activities	KO	0	25	KO	0	41
<i>Range</i>	78			N/A		
Morph. class	Not significant			p.<0.003		
<i>Go</i>	[0.89]	28	88	0.82	29	52
Irregular	[0.37]	8	259	0.64	13	158
Semi-weak	[0.58]	14	57	0.52	8	23
Syllabic reg.	[0.43]	7	14	0.38	6	16
V-final reg.	[0.66]	12	88	0.24	2	36
C-final reg.	[0.08]	1	75	0.31	3	52
<i>Range</i>	N/A			58		
Lexeme	Random			Random		

Table 4.8 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors selected as significant to the probability of verb inflection in Hamilton (factor groups not selected as significant in square brackets)

However, a very low number of *-ed* tokens should discourage us from making generalisations about the effect stativity has on this variation in Hamilton. In Table 4.9 below I illustrate the distribution of stative verbs in this sample.

Lexeme	Bare	Inflected	Total
<i>Feel</i>	3	0	3
<i>Frighten</i>	1	0	1
<i>Get (possessive)</i>	0	4	4
<i>Hear</i>	8	0	8
<i>Know</i>	10	2	12
<i>Like</i>	3	2	5
<i>See</i>	25	3	28
<i>Want</i>	7	0	7
Total	57	11	68

Table 4.9 The distribution of stative verbs in the sample from Hamilton older speakers, in raw numbers

The table demonstrates that only eleven tokens are responsible for the strong result of Stativity illustrated in Table 4.8. This is also confirmed statistically. When stative verbs are excluded from the sample, aspect is no longer a significant predictor for this variation, and the overall input probability is increased. This is illustrated in Table 4.10.

Community	Hamilton Older		
Input prob.	0.109		
Total N	513		
Log likelihood	-145.574		
Factor group	F.w	%	N
Aspect	Not significant		
perf. punctual	[0.50]	11	374
perf. Accomplish.	[0.49]	9	139
perf. Activities	KO	0	21
hab. punctual	KO	0	60
hab. states	Excluded		
hab. accomplish.	KO	0	39
hab. activities	KO	0	25
<i>Range</i>	N/A		
Morph. class	Not significant		
<i>Go</i>	[0.89]	28	88
Irregular	[0.37]	8	259
Semi-weak	[0.58]	14	57
Syllabic reg.	[0.43]	7	14
V-final reg.	[0.66]	12	88
C-final reg.	[0.08]	1	75
<i>Range</i>	N/A		
Lexeme	Random		

Table 4.10 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors selected as significant to the probability of inflection among older speakers in Hamilton when stative verbs are excluded

The fact that the distribution of inflected verbs is not sensitive to either aspect or morphological class type might be linked to two inter-related factors: a very low overall frequency of inflected verbs in this community (19%, cf. Table 4.1), and the potential significance of discourse-related categories on the distribution of inflected verbs. It is possible that discourse organisation, such as backgrounding and foregrounding, or narrative structure can offer a more plausible explanation of variable tense marking in Hamilton. Without a doubt, bare verbs are preferred over

inflected verbs for expressing past temporal reference among older speakers in this community. Since the infrequent utilisation of inflected verbs is not conditioned by any of the grammatical predictors considered here I suggest that they might be sensitive to the discourse organisation, and narrative structure. I test this hypothesis in Chapter 5.

Another observation can be made regarding the overall classification of aspectual categories employed in this analysis. Contrary to the prediction made by Gooden (2008), and Hackert (2004), a more fine-grained treatment of aspect (executed through: (i) a combined effect of lexical and grammatical aspect, and (ii) separate categories of non-stative verbs - accomplishments, activities, and punctual situations) proved non-significant in this community. A final conclusion that the results from the community of older speakers in Hamilton point to is that stativity indeed seems to be highly correlated with inflection but we should be careful attaching high explanatory value to this category for variable inflection in this community. More likely, a key to interpreting this pattern lies in discourse organisation. I suggest that the infrequent distribution of inflected verbs is sensitive to their place in a narrative and depends on whether they feature in foregrounded or backgrounded discourse.

Among the younger generation of speakers in Hamilton, aspectual distinctions are not significant for the distribution of inflected verbs. The categories examined, that is punctual situations, accomplishments, and states show an almost neutral effect which means that the type of aspect a verb realises is not correlated with inflection. Instead, a morphological class it falls into is a significant constraint. This result is in line with other accounts of past marking in creole languages, AAVE, and other varieties of English, such as Nova Scotia Vernacular English, or Early AAE (e.g. Samaná English) (Poplack and Tagliamonte, 2001: 133). The comparison refers also to the direction of this effect which shows irregular verbs receive inflection more frequently than vowel-final and consonant-final regular verbs. Such a result brings several analogies with the acquisition of inflection reported in second language acquisition (SLA) studies. These are discussed below.

According to Patrick (1999: 251), a comparison of inflection rates in CECs to patterns within SLA is warranted on two grounds. First, high rates of variation between creole and StE forms suggest a process of decreolisation, which can be understood as a gradual acquisition of standard forms by creole speakers. Acquisition of inflection across different morphological classes has also been examined in SLA studies and so the patterns can be compared. Parallels are usually made according to the salience principle: the more distinct phonetically the past tense irregular form is from the non-past, the more likely it will be marked for tense (Hakuta, 1976). Therefore, in acquiring past tense inflection of English, creole speakers would use the highest rates of inflection in the irregular class of verbs, while vowel-final, and consonant-final regular verbs will attract the lowest rates of inflection (Winford, 1992). Studies of Chinese learners of English (Bayley, 1991), and Jamaican Creole (Patrick, 1999) contradicted this pattern, however, Winford's study of Trinidadian Creole (1992), and Wolfram and Hatfield's (1984) study of Vietnamese learners of English confirmed it.

This diversity in results led Patrick to conclude that the analogy to SLA studies does not provide a useful interpretation of variable patterns in JamCE. However, if we take a look at the results from the sample of Hamilton adolescents, the direction of morphological class effect does conform to the one proposed by Winford (1992) and Wolfram and Hatfield (1984). This could suggest that inflected verbs are acquired by Hamilton youth in the same way as SLA speakers. We might ask though, why is adolescence (and pre-adolescence) the time where this acquisition develops?

I suggest that a possible explanation of it lies in an increased pressure to speak and write English exerted in the course of education. This is problematic for the majority of children as was evident through the hours spent in school observing students' interactions in-class and outside of it. This suggests that the process of acquiring English could be intensified for these speakers during the early school period under the pressure of the schooling system where speaking and writing Standard English becomes necessary. An example of this can be provided by the exercises prepared for high school students who are taking the final CXC exam. For example, in Borely and Knight's (2003) CXC teacher's guide, several exercises are

designed for practicing past tense formation. The authors acknowledge that: “some (students) may find the correct use of the simple past tense or the present perfect a formidable challenge” (Borely and Knight 2003: 9). Elsewhere, when discussing the past participle they claim: “This is an important aspect of the course as the past participle is probably the form of the verb that is most frequently misused by examination candidates.” (ibid. 12).

Nevertheless, whether the school years is indeed the time where young Bequians from Hamilton acquire the Standard English verb inflection is subject to further analysis. Although some evidence for this claim comes from the pattern of inflection according to the salience principle observable among Hamilton adolescents, a more thorough investigation of it, for example though an analysis of variable patterns among pre-school children in Hamilton, needs to be left for further study and indeed will be discussed as one of the implications for further research, which are spelled out in Chapter 8.

To sum up, for both generations of speakers in Hamilton the overall input probability for the distribution of inflected verbs is very low, which corresponds to the frequency chart for this form (across both generations of speakers) presented in Figure 4.1. Nevertheless, the conditions under which inflection applies are different for the two generations of speakers. Below, we shall see that a similar conclusion can be arrived at when the results from Paget Farm are considered.

4.6.2 Testing the grammatical effects: morphological class vs. aspect – Paget Farm

The results in Table 4.11 compare the constraints which were identified as significant in both age groups of speakers in Paget Farm.

Community	P.Farm Older			P. Farm Younger		
Input probability	0.019			0.104		
Total N	607			427		
Log likelihood	-208.106			-139.688		
Factor group	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Aspect	p.<0.01			Not significant		
perf. punctual	0.79	20	240	[0.60]	15	192
perf. accomplish.	0.43	8	110	[0.59]	11	102
perf. activities	0.19	3	28	[0.22]	2	42
hab. punctual	0.61	11	74	[0.59]	13	13
hab. states	0.77	13	60	[0.62]	15	60
hab. accomplish.	0.37	3	32	KO	0	4
hab. activities	0.31	3	63	[0.39]	5	18
<i>Range</i>	60			N/A		
Morph. class	Not significant			p.<0.001		
Go	[0.77]	27	97	0.76	27	51
Irregular	[0.29]	9	237	0.6	15	162
Semi-weak	[0.82]	25	44	0.52	11	36
Syllabic reg.	[0.50]	15	33	0.38	6	30
V-final reg.	[0.37]	11	89	0.23	3	148
C-final reg.	[0.19]	4	107	KO	0	92
<i>Range</i>	N/A			53		
Lexeme	Random			Random		

Table 4.11 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors selected as significant to the probability of inflection in Paget Farm (Factor groups not selected as significant in square brackets)

The results from older speakers demonstrate that activities and accomplishments in both perfective and habitual situations disfavour inflection. This encourages combining these categories, and indeed doing so results in a statistically better fit to the data, according to the log likelihood ratio test. This combined result is presented in Table 4.12 below. As we can see, habitual stative verbs favour inflection, but similarly to the result from Hamilton, this effect is fostered by few tokens of inflected habitual stative verbs. Unlike in Hamilton, even when habitual stative verbs are excluded from the model the factor group is still strongly significant. Therefore, aspect can be considered as a category which is largely responsible for the distribution of inflected verbs among older speakers in Paget Farm.

Similarly to the situation in Hamilton, the overall frequency rate of inflected verbs in Paget Farm is low (13%). Both in Hamilton and Paget Farm creole bare verbs are utilised more frequently than inflected verbs, which justifies their position in the Low group of standard *-ed* users. The latter point is also corroborated through the low values of input probabilities for both communities.

Community	P.Farm Old		
Input prob.	0.028		
Total N	607		
Log likelihood	-203.106		
Factor group	F.w	%	N
Aspect	p.<0.0005		
perf. punctual	0.73	20	240
hab. states	0.70	13	60
hab. punctual	0.52	11	74
Accomplishments	0.34	7	142
Activities	0.21	3	91
<i>Range</i>	52		
Morph. class	Not significant		
<i>Go</i>	[0.77]	27	97
Irregular	[0.29]	9	237
Semi-weak	[0.82]	25	44
Syllabic reg.	[0.50]	15	33
V-final reg.	[0.37]	11	89
C-final reg.	[0.19]	4	107
<i>Range</i>	N/A		
Lexeme	Random		

Table 4.12 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors selected as significant to the probability of inflection among older speakers in Paget Farm – accomplishments and activities combined

Looking at the direction of the effect of aspect in this community we observe that punctual verbs strongly favour inflection, while accomplishments and activities disfavour it. Examples of such tokens are illustrated below.

Accomplishment expressed with a verb stem:

4.4 (Maya; Ham; 00:36:15)

We see when the man **pack up** and leave.

Activity expressed with a verb stem:

4.5 (PF; 020; 576)

[020] I go on the rock, I catch some butter fish, I make a broth, and then I cook, I eat
and I go on the gallery top.

Punctual inflected verb:

4.6 (PF; 010; 739)

[010] S. dead when I had um- she dead January when I had M. February she died.

Results from Early AAE and NSVE reported by Poplack and Tagliamonte (2001: 133) show an effect which corresponds to the one found in Paget Farm. For the varieties where aspect is significant, both weak and strong punctual verbs disfavour \emptyset . This is also true for basilectal speakers in Veeton, Jamaica where punctual verbs promote inflection with a very similar strength to Paget Farm (factor weight equals 0.71; Patrick 1999: 259), while in BahCE, non-stative verbs show a neutral effect on verb inflection with factor weights values of precisely 0.50 (Hackert, 2004: 165). Whereas in Hamilton stativity could be the first environment where inflection as past tense marking enters these grammars (Bickerton, 1975; Patrick, 1999: 259), in Paget Farm punctuality could be the first area where this happens.

Among adolescents in Paget Farm, similarly to Hamilton, the data is not evenly distributed across different morphological classes. This results in several interactions between different morphological categories which can be observed in Table 4.13 where the distribution of variants is cross-tabulated with morphological class. Because of the zero distribution of inflected verbs within the consonant-final regular verb class, tokens in this category were combined with vowel-final regular class into a single category of regular verbs. Aspect does not significantly influence the distribution of inflected verbs in this community which is an identical result to the one obtained for Hamilton adolescents. Moreover, the input probabilities for the occurrence of verb inflections between both groups of speakers are equally low. This suggests that, similarly to the older generations, bare verbs could be the default variant for expressing past temporal reference.

Morph. class	Bare verbs		Inflected verbs		Total N
	N	%	N	%	
<i>Go</i>	37	72	14	28	51
Irregular	138	85	24	15	162
Semi-weak	32	89	4	11	36
Syllabic reg.	28	93	2	7	30
V-final reg.	51	91	5	9	56
C-final reg.	92	100	0	0	92
Total	378	88	49	12	427

Table 4.13 Distribution of bare verbs and inflected verbs across different morphological classes among adolescent in Paget Farm

Other comparisons between these two communities can also be made. When we look at the direction of the effect of morphological class many similarities become apparent. In Paget Farm too the factor weightings are ordered according to the hierarchy proposed for decreolisation (Winford, 1992) and second language acquisition (cf. Patrick, 1999). Therefore, the hypothesis which predicts that adolescents are subject to SLA acquisition of StE past temporal reference forms in the course of education can be extended to Paget Farm.

So far, results of the multivariate analysis point to several similarities between the system of past inflection across the older generation of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm, and adolescents in these two villages. There seems to be a boundary between the constraints which determine the pattern of tense marking by inflection among adolescents and the elders. The remaining analysis will investigate the position of Mount Pleasant in relation to these results.

4.6.3 Testing the grammatical effects: morphological class vs. aspect – Mount Pleasant

Among the older generation of speakers in Mount Pleasant both aspect and morphological class make a significant contribution to the pattern of variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs which is illustrated in Table 4.14. Let us first examine the group of older speakers. The results in the table above suggest that,

with the exception of habitual stative verbs, there is a split between perfective and habitual aspect in terms of tense marking.

Community	M. Pleasant Older			M. Pleasant Younger		
Input probability.	0.289			0.581		
Total N	549			271		
Log likelihood	-297.43			186.793		
Factor group	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Aspect	p.<0.000			p.<0.003		
perf. punctual	0.79	65	123	0.39	60	83
perf. accomplish.	0.59	55	198	0.61	59	151
Perf. activity	0.61	26	19	0.56	53	17
hab. punctual	0.19	21	37	KO	0	4
hab. states	0.71	47	63	0.75	76	50
hab. accomplish.	0.31	15	71	0.23	27	11
hab. activities	0.18	8	38	0.46	50	6
<i>Range</i>	61			52		
Morph. class	p.<0.00003			p.<0.005		
Go	0.83	72	98	0.85	85	47
Irregular	0.47	43	244	0.49	64	130
Semi-weak	0.65	55	31	0.63	71	21
Syllabic reg.	0.43	41	39	0.36	54	22
V-final reg.	0.45	43	60	0.41	62	32
C-final reg.	0.16	14	77	0.21	33	66
<i>Range</i>	67			64		
Lexeme	Random			Random		

Table 4.14 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors selected as significant to the probability of inflection in Mount Pleasant

Overall, perfective verbs (punctual situations, accomplishments and activities) favour inflection, while habitual verbs disfavour it. Furthermore, habitual stative verbs can be distinguished from other verbs in habitual aspect in that they also correlate positively with inflected verbs. Table 4.16 also shows that there are several interactions within this factor group, caused perhaps by an uneven distribution of tokens across the different aspectual categories. To remove interactions, a decision was made to combine all perfective verbs into one category, and habitual verbs into another group, leaving the class of habitual stative verbs separate. The results of this process are provided in Table 4.15. The model shown in the table above is not significantly worse according to the log likelihood ratio test, and offers a neater

pattern of the contribution of aspect to the distribution of inflected verbs. Moreover, this model shows a higher input probability, and a stronger significance of both predictors.

Community		M. Pleasant O		
Input probability		0.354		
Total N		549		
Log likelihood		-299.613		
Factor group	F.w	%	N	
Aspect		p.< 1.88e-19 ⁷		
PFV	0.71	57	340	
Hab. stative	0.64	47	63	
Other Hab.	0.19	15	146	
<i>Range</i>		52		
Morph. class		p.< 2.81e-05		
<i>Go</i>	0.83	72	98	
Semi-weak	0.66	55	31	
Irregular	0.48	43	244	
V-final reg.	0.45	43	60	
Syllabic reg.	0.43	41	39	
C-final reg.	0.15	14	77	
<i>Range</i>		68		
Lexeme		Random		

Table 4.15 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors selected as significant to the probability of inflection among older speakers in Mount Pleasant – perfective and habitual verbs combined

The result where inflection is favoured in PFV contexts, and disfavoured in habitual ones, corresponds to analyses of grammatical aspect in previous research on CECs and varieties of AAVE (e.g. Winford, 1992; Poplack and Tagliamonte, 2001; Hackert, 2004). According to Winford, the higher proportion of inflected verbs in PFV contexts could be indicative of decreolisation:

“As they shift toward the acrolect, TC speakers, like their GC counterparts, preserve Ø much more in the habitual past function than in specific past contexts. This pattern of use is arguably diagnostic of a pattern of decreolizing change in

⁷ The p. value such as this one is a shorter way of illustrating that p is lower than 1.99 preceded by nineteen zeros. Similarly, the significance of morphological class shows that p is smaller than 2.81 preceded by five zeros.

which perfective \emptyset gradually yields to {ed} to mark past reference.” (Winford, 1992: 338)

In Mount Pleasant this hypothesis is complicated by the fact that unlike accomplishments, activities and punctual situations, habitual states strongly favour inflection. We observed a similar effect among older speakers in Paget Farm, where both perfective punctual, and habitual stative verbs favoured inflection. If Winford’s proposal is correct, this would suggest that habituality is the next context, after the perfective, where inflected verbs are used less frequently, although this does not include all habitual contexts, but affects the habitual stative environment first.

Moreover, the effect of habitual context disfavouring verb inflection should not be assigned to creole properties of the system, but is generally considered as a pan-variety effect. As Dahl (1985: 100) explained: “there is a cross-linguistic tendency for generic and habitual sentences to be expressed with the most unmarked category”. This statement will be tested more carefully when the correlation between verb inflection and the narrative structure is investigated. In addition, Poplack and Tagliamonte (2001: 143-150) attribute the propensity of bare verbs to be more frequent in habitual context due to the phonological process of reduction of *would* to *'d* and *'d* to \emptyset (*would* \rightarrow *'d* \rightarrow \emptyset) which makes such verbs indistinguishable from creole bare verbs. An example of such a case from Poplack and Tagliamonte’s data is presented below:

4.7 (Poplack and Tagliamonte, 2001: 147)

We boys **would go** down an’ **see** them, an’ **they’d** take them, hang them up by his thumb.

Poplack and Tagliamonte suggest that the predominance of bare verbs in habitual contexts in English-based creoles is an effect of a phonological process, which is not limited to creole varieties, but extends to other varieties of English (cf. Tagliamonte and Lawrence, 2000). However, the hypothesis highlighting the effect of phonological factors as largely responsible for the high rate of bare verbs in habitual contexts seems questionable considering the favouring effect of inflected verbs in habitual stative verb contexts. Evidently, if phonological factors indeed were

responsible for the process of /d/ deletion, they would affect all habitual contexts including habitual statives.

Another predictor which shows a significant effect on this variation in Mount Pleasant is morphological class. Here, the factor weightings differ from the ones reported among the samples of adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm. Inflection is strongly favoured by *go* and semi-weak verbs, but in other morphologies classes the effect is almost neutral. Again, consonant-final regular verbs stand out from the other classes in showing the lowest inflection rates. In addition, the probability that an inflected verb will occur is much higher in this community than among older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm which indicates that the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs is more prominent in Mount Pleasant than in the other communities.

Among adolescents in Mount Pleasant, a difference in marking between habitual and perfective contexts can also be observed but it is less sharp than among the older generation. Moreover, unlike for the elders, inflection in punctual verbs is disfavoured. This is illustrated again in Table 4.16.

Community	M. Pleasant Younger		
Input prob.	0.599		
Total N	318		
Log likelihood	-187.331		
Factor group	F.w	%	N
Aspect	p.< 0.0007		
hab. states	0.74	76	50
perfective	0.59	60	168
punctual	0.37	58	83
other hab.	0.29	35	17
<i>Range</i>	45		
Morph. class	p.< 0.0005		
<i>Go</i>	0.85	85	47
Semi-weak	0.71	71	21
Irregular	0.48	64	130
V-final reg.	0.40	62	32
Syllabic reg.	0.37	54	22
C-final reg.	0.21	33	66
<i>Range</i>	64		
Lexeme	Random		

Table 4.16 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors selected as significant to the probability of inflection among adolescents in Mount Pleasant – perfective and habitual verbs combined

In Table 4.16 habitual accomplishments and activities were combined into a single category of habituals, and perfective accomplishments and activities were combined into a category of perfective verb situations. Punctual situations and states were considered separately. Again, a log likelihood ratio test was applied to establish whether the second run was significantly worse but the result shows otherwise. Stative verbs favour inflection for Mount Pleasant adolescents, similarly to the older group of speakers in this village, as well as Paget Farm. The most striking difference between the two generations is the low factor weight for punctual verbs among adolescents, which indicates that punctual verbs are less likely to feature as inflected among the younger group of speakers than among the elders.

This is also demonstrated in Figure 4.4 where the factor weights for aspect between both age groups are compared. The factor weight for punctual verbs among older speakers is drawn from Table 4.14.

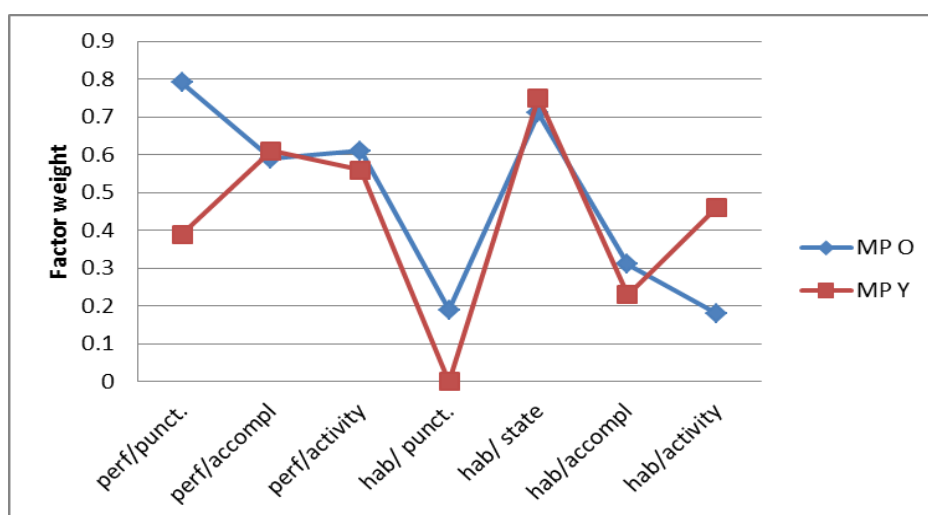


Figure 4.4 Comparison of factor weights within aspect between older speakers and adolescents in Mount Pleasant

The lower inflection rates within punctual verbs and high inflection rates for stative verbs could be related to discourse organisation already discussed for the group of older speakers in Hamilton. While inflected verbs are hypothesised to occur more frequently in backgrounded discourse, and sections of a narrative which support the main story line, bare verbs are more likely to occur in foregrounded clauses, and in the complicating action of a narrative. This corresponds to a proposed pattern of allocation of stative and punctual verbs across discourse. Stative verbs have been

observed to occur more frequently in orientations, evaluations, and backgrounded discourse, while punctual verbs are more likely to occur in complicating action and foregrounded discourse (Youssef and James, 1999; Hackert, 2004; Gooden, 2008). In Chapter 5 I investigate whether aspect and discourse grounding indeed correlate in the community of Mount Pleasant adolescents.

Even more striking parallels can be observed between the two generations for the effect of morphological class on this variation, illustrated in Figure 4.5.

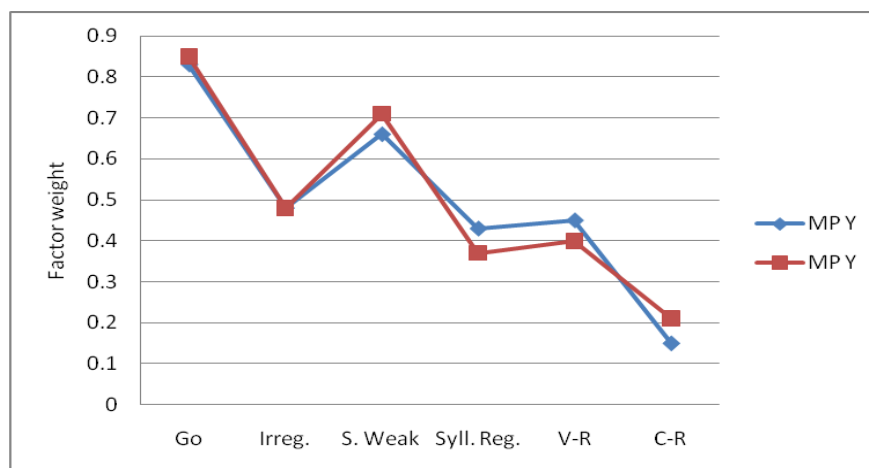


Figure 4.5 Comparison of factor weights within morphological class between older speakers and adolescents in Mount Pleasant

In both communities *go* and semi-weak verbs most strongly favour inflection, and the other morphological classes follow. The rates of inflection among different morphological classes are coherent among both generations despite the fact that the input probability for inflection to occur among adolescents has almost doubled. This suggests that whereas the frequency of inflected verbs has increased in each of the morphological classes, the conditions under which this process occurs remain the same for both age groups.

Finally, few parallels can be observed between adolescents in Mount Pleasant and their peers in Hamilton and Paget Farm for the way this variation is structured. First, unlike in Hamilton and Paget Farm, in Mount Pleasant aspect does make a significant contribution to the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs. Secondly, there is a split between these two groups of young speakers reflected not only through constraint rankings, but also in terms of input

probabilities. While in Hamilton and Paget Farm bare verbs are clearly the preferred variants for expressing past temporal reference, in Mount Pleasant there is a strong likelihood that an inflected verb will be used. Third, whereas morphological class is a predictor which significantly determines the pattern of inflection in all three communities, there are differences in the way it operates in Mount Pleasant. For example, irregular verbs which strongly favour inflection in Hamilton and Paget Farm, show no effect in Mount Pleasant. On the other hand, semi-weak verbs show a stronger correlation with inflection in Mount Pleasant than in the other communities. Some of the parallels include a similarly high rate of inflection for *go*, and an overall disfavoured effect for all types of regular verbs.

Finally, it would be tempting to draw direct comparisons between patterns of variation among adolescents in Mount Pleasant, and the older communities in Paget Farm and Hamilton, where stativity is also a strong predictor of variable patterns. However, the rates of inflection for these cohorts suggest that these communities are indeed very different. While stative verbs are inflected only 11% of the time in Paget Farm, and 15% of the time in Hamilton, in Mount Pleasant inflected verbs constitute 56% of the Stativity category. I suggest that again, a key to the interpretation of the correlation between stativity and *-ed* is related to discourse organisation.

In the next section I investigate the variable patterns within one more cohort of speakers, namely the in-betweens comparing the results with the communities discussed above.

4.6.4 Testing the grammatical effects: morphological class vs. aspect – in-betweens

The in-betweens is a group of speakers for whom the rates of verb inflection stand out from the other members of the community they come from, reflected in either higher rates of inflection (as for speakers 007 and Celia from Paget Farm, and Chris from Hamilton), or lower than the community norm (speakers 301, 304 and Nigel from Mount Pleasant). Two motivations were given to separate these speakers from other members of the communities they come from: (i) their unusual distributional

rates could distort the overall pattern of inflection for individual communities, and (ii) in-betweens in sociolinguistic literature were acknowledged as individuals whose sociolinguistic practices can provide a significant insight into the categories which are used in the construction of social meanings (Eckert, 2000). Let us now discuss the results of multivariate analysis for both age cohorts in this group.

Community	In-between Older			In-between Younger		
Input prob.	0.173			0.153		
Total N	404			430		
Log likelihood	-195.975			-217.961		
Factor group	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Aspect	p.<0.0000001			p.<0.01		
perf. punctual	0.78	57	90	0.75	41	163
perf. accomplish.	0.59	28	131	0.58	26	153
perf. activities	KO	0	6	0.64	22	32
hab. punctual	0.33	17	23	KO	0	15
hab. states	0.65	29	65	0.48	24	37
hab. accomplish.	0.23	3	53	0.14	15	20
hab. activities	0.47	14	28	0.46	10	10
<i>Range</i>	55			61		
Morph. class	p.<0.01			p.<0.00003		
Go	0.78	60	90	0.78	54	52
Irregular	0.49	27	177	0.63	37	175
Semi-weak	0.46	21	19	0.61	36	36
Syllabic reg.	0.73	45	20	0.68	43	33
V-final reg.	0.41	19	51	0.14	6	30
C-final reg.	0.14	4	47	0.22	9	104
<i>Range</i>	64			64		
Lexeme	Random			Random		

Table 4.17 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors selected as significant to the probability of inflection among in-betweens

The results obtained from the analysis of variation among the older in-betweens show that similarly to Mount Pleasant, perfective verbs overall favour inflection, while habituals disfavour it. Again, habitual stative verbs are an exception. In addition, there were no tokens of inflected perfective activities so this group was excluded from the dataset. Similarly to the previous communities several interactions were observed within this factor group, especially between habitual verbs, and so a decision was made to collapse the habitual categories into one factor,

separating it from stative verbs. In addition, to remove an interaction between irregular and semi-weak verbs, these two classes were combined into a single factor of irregular verbs. The results are presented in Table 4.18. According to the log likelihood ratio test the model in Table 4.18 is not significantly worse, but shows an increased input probability and a stronger significance of aspect for this variation.

Community	In-between older		
Input prob.	0.249		
Total N	385		
Log likelihood	-196.700		
Factor group	F.w	%	N
Aspect	p.< 9.12e-08		
perf. punctual.	0.71	57	90
states	0.55	29	65
perf. accomplish.	0.51	28	131
other hab.	0.23	11	99
<i>Range</i>	48		
Morph. class	p.< 0.0006		
<i>Go</i>	0.77	60	77
Syllabic reg.	0.74	47	19
Irregular	0.47	27	194
V-final reg.	0.41	20	50
C-final reg.	0.14	4	45
<i>Range</i>	63		
Lexeme	Random		

Table 4.18 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors selected as significant to the probability among older in-betweens (perfective and habitual verbs combined; semi-weak and irregular verbs combined)

As far as the order of constraints is concerned, the group of Mid older speakers looks similar to Mount Pleasant elders, although several differences are conspicuous when individual factor weightings are compared. For example, in both communities punctual verbs favour inflection, but among in-betweens perfective accomplishments show a neutral effect, while perfective activities verbs did not feature as inflected at all. Also, stative verbs favour inflection, while other habitual disfavour it which again is parallel to the result obtained for older speakers in Mount Pleasant.

As far as the effect of morphological class is concerned, the factor weights largely resemble the results from both generations of speakers in Mount Pleasant, although the class of syllabic regular verbs seems to favour inflection significantly

more among the older in-betweens, than among Mount Pleasanters. Moreover, the input probabilities are lower which confirms that the older in-betweens lag behind Mount Pleasant in terms of past marking by verb inflection. This is perhaps unsurprising considering two out of three speakers in this group are from Mount Pleasant. However, the fact that speaker 007 from Paget Farm also follows the pattern of variation reported for Mount Pleasant is somewhat surprising and this result justifies maintaining the Mid group as separate .

This result is interesting considering Meyerhoff and Walker's (2007) finding which showed that for several Bequians, individual grammars correspond to community grammars despite their time spent away from home. The example of speaker 007 shows that there are also individuals in the Bequia communities whose patterns of variation stand out from the community norm despite limited mobility. This is an important observation which confirms that individuals' membership in a speech community should be empirically tested (Labov, 1972).

The constraints selected as significant for the group of younger in-betweens are the same as for the older speakers, although the factor weightings within them again vary. Similarly to the older in-betweens punctual verbs favour inflection, and habitual stative verbs show an almost neutral effect. Other PFV verbs show a similar pattern of factor weights and so they have been combined into one category. Similarly, habitual states and habitual activities have been combined and separated from habitual accomplishments which very strongly disfavour inflection. Again, an interaction between irregular and semi-weak verbs within the morphological class predictor is removed by collapsing these two factors. The model with the combined categories, demonstrated in Table 4.19 is not significantly worse according to the log likelihood ratio test.

Similarly to the group of adolescents in Mount Pleasant the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs is sensitive to aspectual differences, but unlike adolescents in Mount Pleasant, where stative verbs highly favoured inflection, among the young in-betweens the factor weights for stativity are neutral. On the other hand, punctuals show a strong positive correlation with inflection. In this respect inflection by aspect among young in-betweens corresponds strongly with the result from older in-betweens.

Community	In-between younger		
Input prob.	0.135		
Total N	415		
Log likelihood	-218.234		
Factor weight	F.w	%	N
Aspect	p.< 0.003		
perf. punct.	0.76	45	163
other perf.	0.62	25	185
other hab.	0.49	21	57
hab. accomplish.	0.16	10	10
<i>Range</i>	60		
Morph. class	p.< 1.24e-05		
<i>Go</i>	0.78	63	44
Syllabic reg.	0.69	45	33
Irregular	0.65	38	204
C-final reg.	0.20	9	104
V-final reg.	0.18	6	30
<i>Range</i>	60		
Lexeme	Random		

Table 4.19 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors selected as significant to the probability of inflection among younger in-betweens – perfective and habitual verbs combined; semi-weak and irregular verbs combined

Comparison of the effect of morphological class also shows several parallels between both age groups. Syllabic regular verbs highly favour inflection in both communities, and the factor weights for *go* are also very similar. Nevertheless, the group of younger in-betweens differs in showing a much lower factor weight for vowel-final regular verbs, and a higher weighting for the class of irregular verbs. Overall, the apparent similarities between the older and the younger in-betweens, both in terms of constraint rankings and parallel factor weights suggest this is a discrete group with a coherent pattern of variation.

A larger question that needs to be asked is put forward by Eckert (2000) in her analysis of in-betweens in Belten High, namely, why do some speakers linguistically express their resistance to, or conformity with a particular social identity. I argue that in Bequia an interpretation of these individual linguistic patterns could be strongly linked to these speakers' social practices, networks, and possibly also their attitudes towards the community they come from and the other communities.

So far, the results show that several communities share the constraints which are significant for the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs, while in others these constraints differ. Moreover, we have seen that even when the constraint rankings overlap, the factor weights may go in different directions. In the next section I summarise and compare the results obtained from the set of multivariate analyses demonstrated above. The main goal of this examination is to establish: (i) whether there is indeed a sharp split between Hamilton/Paget Farm, and Mount Pleasant for this variation among older speakers and, (ii) whether the results can point to change among the younger generation of speakers.

4.7 Comparing the communities through constraint rankings

In Chapter 1 I outlined several quantitative techniques which will serve as a diagnostic for establishing similarities and differences between the communities (also employed in Tagliamonte, 2004; Buchstaller and D'Arcy 2009; Meyerhoff 2009a; Nagy and Irwin 2010). These are:

- 1) Comparison of the factor groups which are selected as significant in each community
- 2) Comparison of the hierarchy and weightings of factors within the predictors selected as significant
- 3) Calculation of the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient between these factors which will allow for establishing how "close" the variable patterns are between different predictors⁸

In this section I deal with the first step - comparing which factors make a significant contribution to the distribution of inflected verbs in each of the communities examined. In Table 4.20 the significant effects of aspect and morphological class are listed. Whenever a factor group is marked with a ✓ this indicates it was selected as

⁸ The application of Pearson's correlation test to not-normally distributed data is perhaps problematic although the primary reason for using the test was to illustrate the strength of association between two variables which Pearson's correlation coefficients indeed illustrate. This method is subject to improvement in future research.

significant in the variable rule analysis. On the contrary, a factor group marked with X was not significant.

Factor group	Ham O	Ham Y	PF O	PF Y	MP O	MP Y	IB O	IB Y
Aspect								
Morph. class								

Table 4.20 Comparison of constraint hierarchies across the communities

Comparing the constraints selected as significant in each community we can distinguish three different groups according to the pattern of inflection:

- 1) Group One: where aspect is responsible for the variable pattern of inflection, marked with the oval dashed line. The communities which fall into this group are older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. These cohorts are also characterised by a similar input probability for inflected verbs to occur, and similar frequency rates (Table 4.1).
- 2) Group Two: aspect is not significant but instead the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs is sensitive to different types of morphological classes (marked with the rectangle shape). This is evident of adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm. Just as for the older inhabitants in these communities, variation in these cohorts is characterised by low input probabilities and low frequency rates of verb inflection.
- 3) Group Three: both aspect and morphological class make a significant contribution to this variation (marked with oval solid line). Two generations of speakers from Mount Pleasant fall into this category, and both generations of in-betweens. All of these groups show a higher input probability than in Hamilton and Paget Farm although the rates are not uniform within this group. For example, for the younger speakers in Mount Pleasant the input probability equals 0.599 while for younger in-betweens it is much lower, namely, 0.135.

This preliminary examination shows that some villages show variable patterns that are closer than in the other communities. An interesting observation that needs to be noted is that no parallels in terms of constraint rankings are conspicuous across both generations of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. That is, younger speakers in Hamilton pattern more like their peers in Paget Farm than their grandparents in Hamilton. Nevertheless, adolescents in both villages show a similar frequency and input probability rates to the elders suggesting no change has taken place in terms of frequency of inflected verbs. This observation is crucial in the discussion of language change in Bequia and will be investigated in due course.

In the following section I examine each of the established groups in terms of the correspondence of factor weights. In Chapter 1 I discussed that simply comparing significance of constraints might not be enough to determine the relationship between individual varieties (the same point is made by e.g. Meyerhoff, 2009a and Nagy and Irwin, 2010). Namely, comparing and quantifying the factor weightings within each predictor might unmask the relationships between these varieties, and help us establish the degree of change across different communities and generations of speakers.

4.7.1 Comparing the communities through factor weightings

First, let us consider Group One, consisting of older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. Table 4.21 compares the factor weights for different aspectual categories across these communities.

Aspect	Hamilton Older	P. Farm Older
Significance	p.<0.0002	p.<0.0005
Pearson's correl. coeff.	0.57	
hab. states	0.95	0.70
perf. punctual	0.18	0.73
accomplishments	0.17	0.34
activities	KO	0.21
hab. punctual	KO	0.52
<i>Range</i>	78	52

Table 4.21 Comparison of factor weights within aspect across the older generations of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm

In both communities aspect shows a similar significance value, although the comparison of ranges suggests that it has a greater magnitude in Hamilton. A strong relationship in the treatment of individual aspectual categories between the two communities can be observed for the weighting of stative verbs which strongly favour inflection and accomplishments which disfavour it.

The relationship between the two communities is better illustrated in Figure 4.6 below.

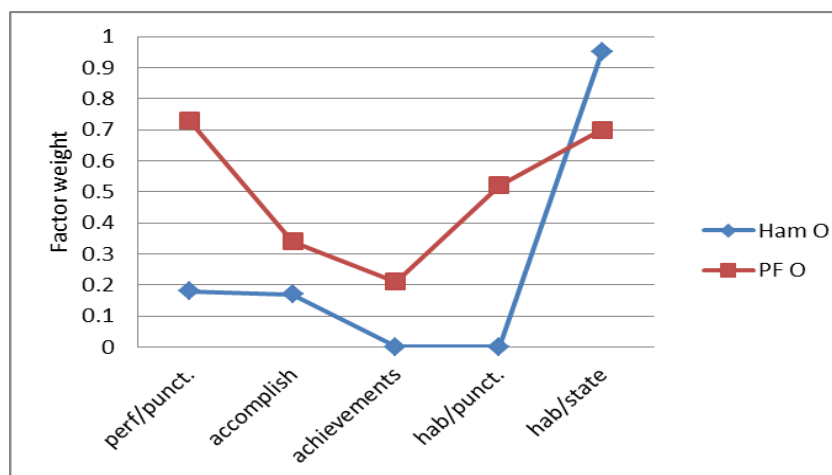


Figure 4.6 Comparison of factor weights within aspect between older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm

The figure confirms that several of the factor weights in these communities correspond but overall the effect is quite different. This is corroborated by the correlation value of 0.57 which implies that there is a weak positive relationship between aspect in both communities. Perhaps the biggest difference lies in the treatment of punctual verbs which highly favour inflection in Paget Farm, but show a disavouring effect in Hamilton.

In the previous section it was already noticed that the pattern of inflection according to different morphological classes largely corresponds in the communities of adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm which were classified above as Group Two based on the same constraint hierarchies. I discussed the resemblance of this pattern to the research on second language acquisition (e.g. Winford, 1992; Patrick, 1999). The strong relationship between the communities is also corroborated when

individual factor weights within morphological class are compared. This is illustrated in Table 4.22 and Figure 4.7.

Morph. class	Hamilton Younger	P. Farm Younger
Significance	p.<0.003	p.<0.001
Pearson's correl. coeff.	0.90	
<i>Go</i>	0.82	0.76
Irregular	0.64	0.60
Semi-weak	0.52	0.52
Syllabic regular	0.38	0.38
V-final reg.	0.24	0.23
C-final reg.	0.31	KO
<i>Range</i>	58	53

Table 4.22 Comparison of factor weights within aspect across adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm

The figure shows a strong linear relationship between the two variables and this is confirmed through the correlation test which calculated a correlation coefficient of 0.90. The only point where the two communities perhaps diverge in their treatment of morphological class is the class of consonant-final regular verbs. In Paget Farm no tokens of inflected verbs within this category occurred, while in Hamilton 3% of consonant final regular verbs were inflected. Further evidence for a strong correspondence between the two communities for the pattern of variation comes from comparing the p. values and range values within the effect of morphological class for this variation.

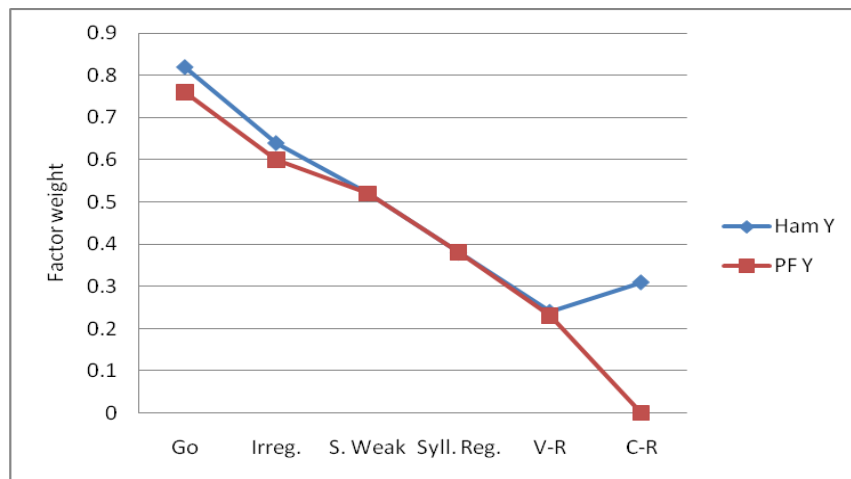


Figure 4.7 Comparison of factor weights within aspect between adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm

In Group Three the analysis is more complex since four different communities need to be compared here, which include two different age groups. The factor weights for aspect and morphological class, which both show a significant effect on this variation in all of the communities in Group Three, are demonstrated in Table 4.23. Since we are interested in the relationship between and across different generations the following comparisons are in order:

- a) Mount Pleasant Older vs. Mount Pleasant Younger
- b) In-between Older vs. In-between Younger
- c) Mount Pleasant Older vs. In-between Older
- d) Mount Pleasant Younger vs. In-between Younger

Factor group	MP O	MP Y	IB O	IB Y
Aspect	p.<7e-15	p.<0.003	p.<1e-06	p.<0.01
perf. punct.	0.79	0.39	0.78	0.75
perf. accomplish.	0.59	0.61	0.59	0.58
perf. activities	0.61	0.56	KO	0.64
hab. punct.	0.19	KO	0.33	KO
hab states	0.71	0.75	0.65	0.48
hab. accomplish.	0.31	0.23	0.23	0.14
hab. activities	0.18	0.46	0.47	0.46
<i>Range</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>61</i>
Morph. class	p.<0.00003	p.<0.005	p.<0.01	p.<0.00003
<i>Go</i>	0.83	0.83	0.78	0.78
<i>Irregular</i>	0.48	0.49	0.49	0.63
<i>Semi-weak</i>	0.66	0.63	0.46	0.68
<i>Syllabic reg.</i>	0.43	0.36	0.73	0.68
<i>V-final reg.</i>	0.45	0.41	0.41	0.14
<i>C-final reg.</i>	0.15	0.21	0.14	0.22
<i>Range</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>64</i>

Table 4.23 Comparison of factor weights within aspect and morphological class across both generations of speakers in Mount Pleasant and in-betweens

Across the communities the magnitude of the effect of morphological class seems to be more uniform than that of aspect, which is reflected through more homogenous range values. Interestingly, in the adolescent cohorts morphological class shows a stronger probability value than aspect, while the reverse effect is found among the older generations. This corresponds to the results obtained from Hamilton and Paget Farm.

In Table 4.24 below the correlations between the communities listed in a) – d) are calculated. Based on the estimation of correlation values from two factor groups, aspect and morphological class, an average was calculated which corresponds to the strength of the relationship between two communities.

Communities	Aspect	Morph. class	Average
M. Pleasant older/younger	0.651	0.981	0.816
In-between older/younger	0.363	0.776	0.570
M. Pleasant older/In-between older	0.422	0.749	0.586
M. Pleasant younger/In-between younger	0.736	0.694	0.715

Table 4.24 Pearson’s correlation values calculated on the basis of factor weights within aspect and morph. class across different communities

Following the average values we can observe that the strongest correlation exists between the two age groups of speakers in Mount Pleasant, especially as far as morphological class is concerned. In addition, the calculation confirms the strong relationship between younger speakers in Mount Pleasant and younger in-betweens. Figure 4.8 below illustrates the strong relationship between young in-betweens and adolescents in Mount Pleasant for the effect of aspect.

The above analysis leads to several observations and conclusions which are considered as a benchmark for the remaining analysis of language variation and change within past temporal reference in Bequia following in the remaining chapters. First, several concluding remarks are drawn for the group of older Bequians.

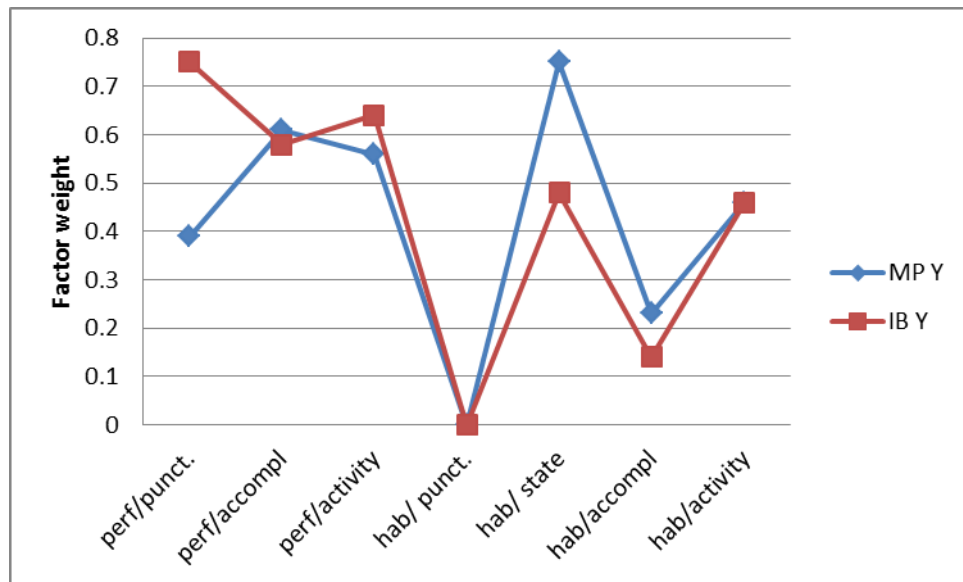


Figure 4.8 Comparison of factor weights within aspect between adolescents in Mount Pleasant and younger in-betweens

4.8 Summary of results – older speakers

One of the research questions raised in Chapter 1 was to what extent is the system of marking past temporal reference different across the villages. This issue was highlighted as particularly significant for the generation of older Bequians who acquired their vernacular before the recent tourist boom on the island. In addition, previous analyses of variation in Bequia showed that for all the variables investigated village is often a significant predictor determining this variation. In the analysis above several methods were applied in an attempt to establish the relationship between these communities using quantitative methods. Previous studies investigating language contact and change across different varieties and speaker groups emphasised the need to establish replicable methods of quantification which would enable such comparisons (Buchstaller and D’Arcy, 2009; Meyerhoff, 2009a; Nagy and Irwin, 2010). In this study this was done in several ways: (i) through the comparison of constraints selected as significant for tense marking in each community, (ii) the comparison of factor weights within these constraints, and (iii) calculation of Pearson’s correlation coefficients between variables with the goal of establishing how strong the relationship between the communities is.

The fact that place is indeed a significant effect for Ø/-ed variation between is undeniable and can be confirmed statistically. Table 4.25 shows the effect of place as the strongest constraint of this variation when contrasted with other grammatical categories.

Total N	2174		
Village (p.< 7.83e-53)	F.w	%	N
Mount Pleasant	0.80	45	549
In-betweens	0.60	30	391
Paget Farm	0.31	13	607
Hamilton	0.27	10	627
Range	53		

Table 4.25 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of village to the probability of inflection in Bequia – older speakers

Looking at the rates of inflection in Table 4.1 one could suggest that variation in Bequia forms a linear continuum on which each of the communities represents one of the lects depending on the frequencies with which individuals in these villages use verb inflections: Hamilton looks like the most basilectal community, Mount Pleasant can be placed closest to the acrolect, and Paget Farm looks like a typical mesolectal community placed between the acrolect and the basilect. Multivariate analysis, however has shown that this is not the case.

First, we find many similarities between the way the pattern of verb inflection operates in Hamilton and Paget Farm. This apparent similarity is also confirmed by the factor weights shown in Table 4.21. We observed that in both communities aspect is a category to which inflection is sensitive, although a very low frequency of inflected tokens in Hamilton suggests that caution should be urged in utilising this constraint as the sole explanation for inflection patterns in Hamilton.

Whereas similar input probabilities and constraint rankings point to a strong similarity between Hamilton and Paget Farm, the comparison of factor weights and correlation values shows that inflection patterns in these communities are not as close after all. Although stativity favours inflection in both Hamilton and Paget Farm, punctuality disfavors it in the former village but strongly favours it in the latter.

The favouring effect of stativity is interesting if we consider the discussion surrounding this effect in the creole literature, where it was classified as a diagnostic of a more creole-like grammar, an approach strongly advocated by Bickerton (1975), but seriously criticised by other scholars analysing variability in creoles (e.g. Sankoff, 1990; Rickford, 1987; Patrick, 1999). The major controversy surrounding the effect of stativity relates first of all to the fact that Bickerton's model does not account for all examples, and that both stative and non-stative verbs can be realised as bare verbs or inflected verbs in past temporal reference.

Another dose of criticism surrounds the idiosyncrasies of individual verbs, such as high frequency tokens combined with high rates of inflection, and their potential influence on the category of stativity (but also other categories, such as morphological class; Poplack and Tagliamonte, 2001: 139). These lead several researchers to believe that stativity is in fact not significant for the variation in question (Patrick, 1999; Hackert, 2004). Results from Hamilton and Paget Farm suggest otherwise for BeqCE, although a greater number of inflected stative verbs would shed more light on the magnitude of this effect.

There is no question that Bickerton's (1975) model is flawed and that both stative and non-stative verbs can feature as \emptyset or *-ed* in BeqCE. This is illustrated specifically in Paget Farm, where both punctual and stative contexts favour past marking by inflection. Although the issue of individual lexical variability is indeed a problematic one to solve, substantial effort has been put into levelling out lexical variability by (i) excluding *have* and empirically investigating the effect that other exceptional verbs might have on statistical analyses, and (ii) modelling variation through mixed effects. The latter procedure, when compared to a model with fixed effects only, showed that in Hamilton aspect is not significant when the lexeme factor group is removed from the analysis altogether, and shows that morphological class is a significant predictor.

In conclusion, the analysis shows that Hamilton and Paget Farm indeed share many features according to which they could be classified as more creole-like, such as very low frequency of inflected verbs, and a strong effect of stativity on verb inflection. Nevertheless, we cannot conclude that older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm share one grammar as the analysis has shown that the systems diverge in many ways. Furthermore, although a low number of inflected verbs and the effect of stativity break off the systems in these communities strongly from the acrolect, classifying them as "creole" or "basilectal" simply based on these characteristics would prejudge the case. Finally, although there is a strong division between the system of inflection in Hamilton, and Paget Farm, and Mount Pleasant, there are also several similarities between them.

Perhaps the sharpest split between these communities can be drawn on the basis of frequency rates and input probabilities which are much higher in Mount Pleasant suggesting that in this village inflected verbs constitute a much more frequent resource for expressing past temporal reference. Comparison of constraint rankings has also pointed to several differences between Mount Pleasant and the other communities in how this variation is operated. In Mount Pleasant apart from aspect, morphological class also determines whether a verb features as inflected or not. While *go* and semi-weak verbs strongly favour inflection, all other verb classes, except for consonant-final regular verbs show an almost neutral correlation with verb inflection (cf. Table 4.16).

Although several grounds can be established on which Mount Pleasant is different from Hamilton and Paget Farm, a strong significance of aspect brings these communities closer. Additional similarities can be drawn through a comparison of factor weights within this category. The relationship between the three villages in terms of factor weightings within aspect is illustrated in Figure 4.9.

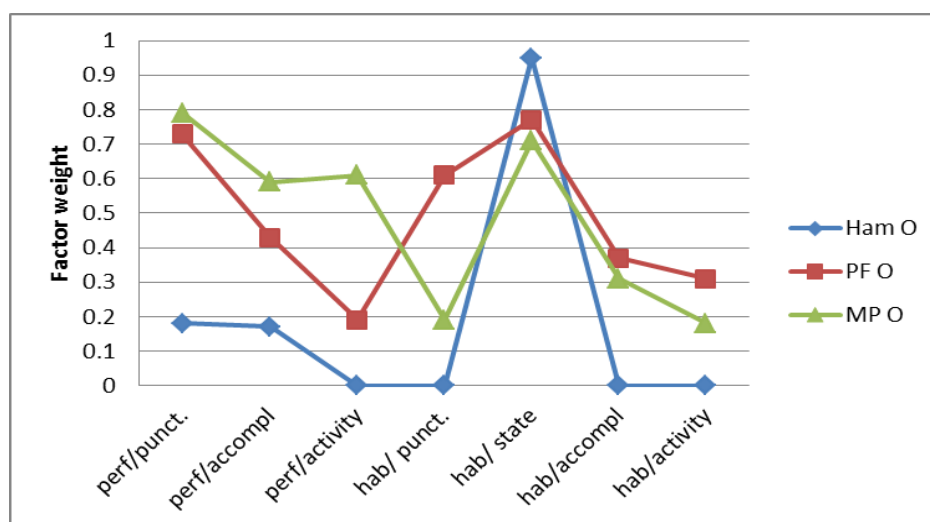


Figure 4.9 Comparison of factor weights within aspect between older speakers in Hamilton, Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant

The correlation values show that the relationship between aspect is stronger between Mount Pleasant and Hamilton (0.55) but several parallels can be established between all three communities. For example, in all the villages habitual stative verbs strongly favour inflection and habitual accomplishments and activities disfavour it. In light of these similarities the system in Mount Pleasant cannot be

characterised as dramatically different from the one in Hamilton and Paget Farm, although there is no doubt that the frequency of inflected verbs is much higher in Mount Pleasant which suggests for this variable this village could be placed closer towards the acrolect than Mount Pleasant and Hamilton. Nevertheless, there seems to exist a smoother transition between the systems across the villages, rather than there being a definitive cut off point which would define where one system ends (e.g. that in Hamilton and Paget Farm), and the other one starts (as the one in Mount Pleasant).

The results presented in this section will have a serious consequence for classifying the nature of system of past temporal reference marking in Bequia. I will, however, leave the discussion of the nature of the system of past temporal reference in BeqCE for Chapter 7 where I compare the results obtained from an analysis of the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs to preverbal markers.

4.9 Summary of results - adolescents

An interesting result was obtained from the analysis of the effect that aspectual and morphological constraints have on past marking by verb inflection among adolescents in the three villages. First, it seems that the pattern of inflection in Hamilton and Paget Farm is strikingly close. This was confirmed on several levels: similar frequency rates and input probability values, the same constraints which influence this variation (morphological class), comparable factor weights across different morphological classes, and a very strong correlation value between the two communities in terms of the effect of morphological class.

Secondly, whereas the conditions under which verb inflection operates among adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm are very similar, they are different to what we have found for the samples of older speakers in these communities. Although the frequency of occurrence of inflected verbs has not changed among adolescents, the underlying system which determines this occurrence is different. According to the apparent time hypothesis this would suggest that over time in Hamilton and Paget Farm the system operating on the distribution of inflected verbs has undergone some restructuring and levelling so that: (i) the factors which

influence this variation are different among adolescent than among the elders, and (ii) the system is now more uniform across these communities which suggests that the cross-village differences have been levelled out. Interestingly, the frequency with which inflected verbs occur has not been altered (and in fact is very close to the one reported for older speakers) which suggests this change is not a result of the gradual loss of the creole bare verb variant.

As far as the relationship between Hamilton, Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant is concerned, again it seems that there exists a sharp split in terms of the distribution of inflected verbs. In Hamilton and Paget Farm we observe an extremely low probability of occurrence (0.007 and 0.057), while in Mount Pleasant it goes up to over a half (0.599). This was confirmed through an analysis of the effect of a village membership, which showed that, similarly to the older speakers, place is a significant, and in fact it is the strongest determinant of the variation between bare verbs and verb inflections (Table 4.26).

Total N		1553	
Village (p.< 4.18e-61)	F.w	%	N
Mount Pleasant	0.86	60	318
In-betweens	0.60	33	430
Paget Farm	0.26	11	427
Hamilton	0.23	11	378
Range	63		

Table 4.26 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of village to the probability of inflection in Bequia – adolescents

This analysis confirms that Hamilton and Paget Farm are more alike in contrast to Mount Pleasant where inflected verbs are clearly the preferred variant.

Although the system of inflection in Mount Pleasant is constrained by aspect, which is not a significant predictor in Hamilton or Paget Farm, the significance of morphological class points to a few similarities between these communities. There are several parallels reflected in factor weightings within the morphological class predictor, and for this category the relationship between Mount Pleasant and the other communities is highly correlated (the correlation value

between Hamilton and Mount Pleasant for the factor weights within morphological class equals 0.84, and 0.90 between Paget Farm). Therefore, similarly to what has been established for the older community, it seems that there are strong differences between Hamilton and Paget Farm vs. Mount Pleasant but they do not point to clearly defined separate systems.

Whereas the analysis of the variation in Hamilton and Paget Farm points to restructuring and levelling of the system which operates verb inflection, no such processes can be observed across the two age groups in Mount Pleasant. First the constraints which influence this variation are the same, that is both aspect and morphological class are strongly responsible for the use of inflected verbs in this village. Secondly, we have seen that within morphological class the factor weights are also similar which suggests morphological class operates in the same way for both generations of speakers. This is also corroborated by the strong correlation coefficient (0.98). Although the correlation coefficient is lower when it comes to aspect, again, a strong resemblance in the treatment of the aspectual categories is apparent, which was illustrated in Figure 4.5.

Such a fair degree of consistency in patterns of variation between the two generations of speakers in Mount Pleasant indicates that the system which operates verb inflection is faithfully reproduced among adolescents. A situation where a system is closely passed on to the younger generation is known as transmission (Labov, 2007: 346). However, transmission, that is a close preservation of a system between generations can also involve language change. According to Labov:

“(...) internal changes are generated by the process of incrementation, in which successive cohorts and generations of children advance the change beyond the level of their caretakers and role models, and in the same direction over many generations (Labov 1994; Ch. 14). Incrementation begins with the faithful transmission of the adult system, including variable elements with their linguistic and social constraints (...). These variable elements are then advanced further in the direction indicated by the inherited age vectors” (Labov, 2007:346)

This pattern can be observed in Mount Pleasant where the system of verb inflection is transmitted across generations, and the rate of occurrence of inflected verbs has

been increased. This is corroborated by a statistical test of the effect of “age” on this variation which shows this factor is only significant in Mount Pleasant suggesting a change towards the system of verb inflections in Mount Pleasant, but not in the other villages. This is illustrated in Table 4.27.

Total N	Hamilton 918			Paget Farm 1034			In-betweens 821			M. Pleasant 867		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Age	Not significant			Not significant			Not significant			p.<0.001		
Younger	[0.48]	11	337	[0.49]	11	427	[0.48]	31	430	0.56	60	318
Older	[0.51]	12	581	[0.50]	13	607	[0.51]	30	391	0.43	45	549
<i>Range</i>	N/A			N/A			N/A			13		

Table 4.27 Results of the variable rule analysis of the contribution of Age to the probability of inflection in Bequia

While the frequency of inflected verbs has significantly increased across generations in Mount Pleasant, the rules which govern this distribution have not changed. The change has been generated by the reproduction and advancement of the system employed by the older generation of speakers. A question arises as to which factors condition this cross-generational change in Mount Pleasant. In the remaining chapters I analyse additional factors, discourse-organisational and socio-cultural ones, which should shed light on which categories determine this change.

Finally, several conclusions can be drawn from the observation of the group of speakers labelled as in-betweens. Although closest parallels can be established between in-betweens and the Mount Pleasant community for the patterns of variation, there is no evidence that either generation of in-betweens closely replicates the variable system from any of the Bequia villages. This observation is based on the same criteria which were applied in the comparison of the systems across other communities, that is constraint rankings and factor weight values. Such a result justifies analysing in-betweens as a separate cohort and confirms their status as a group placed in-between the most standard and less standard communities. But it also raises an issue of the motivations behind in-betweens’ linguistic choices. I discuss these issues in Chapter 7.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter has led to several important findings. First of all I have demonstrated that grouping Bequians into different speech communities according to their village affiliations is justified quantitatively. However, examination of individual inflection rates across the class of exceptional verbs and individual morphological classes revealed that there is a group of in-betweeners who stand out from the community norms. While some of the results concerning this group have been discussed, a more detailed examination of in betweeners' linguistic behaviours features in Chapter 7.

One methodological problem dealt with establishing the methods of quantification used for drawing comparisons and differences across the communities. Following previous studies (especially Meyerhoff, 2009a and Nagy and Irwin, 2010) the degree of difference between the communities and age groups was calculated on the basis of comparing constraint rankings, factor weightings and the calculation of correlation coefficients between predictors for each community. Several conclusions were established based on these calculations.

As far as the relationship between communities within each age group is concerned, the results show that the split between Mount Pleasant and the other communities is not as sharp as it was previously assumed. Although among both age groups there are clear differences between these communities, several similarities were also highlighted which make drawing a clear boundary between the systems difficult. Moreover, whereas the pattern of variation among adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm turned out to be almost identical, in the cohort of older speakers the similarities are not as clear-cut and are mostly limited to constraint hierarchies and similarly low frequency rates.

Finally, several important observations were made regarding the degree of change across the generations in the use of inflected verbs. In Hamilton and Paget Farm there has been a restructuring of the system which operates on the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs. This means that although the frequency of inflection has not changed, the rankings of factors which influence this distribution have been replaced from aspect to morphological class. Furthermore, this pattern is

more similar between the younger generations (the patterns of inflection in Hamilton and Paget Farm are almost identical) than the older which suggests that the cross-village differences have been levelled out and the variable pattern of verb inflection is now more uniform among the younger generation of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm.

The opposite was found for Mount Pleasant where the pattern of variation among the older generation was replicated among adolescents suggesting a transmission of the system across generations. In addition, a change in frequency rates was reported in this community towards verb inflection. Among adolescents in Mount Pleasant inflections are chosen approximately 60% of the time over bare verbs. However, the analysis of grammatical constraints has not revealed any possible motivations of this change. Similarly, the analysis showed multifarious similarities between the grammars in Paget Farm and Hamilton, however, it would be flawed to group these as one speech community. This is supported by the ethnographic data which shows a long existing antagonism between these villages (cf. Chapter 2).

In the following chapter I investigate whether the analysis of discourse constraints can shed light on where the underlying differences between these two communities lie, and point to any factors which set off adolescents in Mount Pleasant from the older generation in this community.

Chapter 5 Past marking by discourse constraints

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss a set of factors which could be broadly classified as discourse organisational and functional. I hypothesise these factors are strongly responsible for the variable patterns of verb inflection established in the previous chapter.

First, I determined that the variable system for older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm shares many similarities which distinguish them from the system in Mount Pleasant but the exact point where these systems start to diverge is difficult to define. In addition, I concluded that the variable system for the cohort of adolescents in Paget Farm and Hamilton has undergone restructuring and levelling. Evidence for this comes from the difference in constraints which condition this variation for both generations of speakers, and several strong similarities between the systems among adolescents. Finally, the results from Mount Pleasant show that the variable system has been transmitted from the older generation to younger speakers but with an additional increase in the frequency of inflected verbs.

However, the features of these systems which emerged in the course of the quantitative analysis of grammatical factors do not cover the whole picture as to the patterns of past marking by verb inflection, neither do they fully explain the resemblances and differences between the communities. By considering several discourse-functional constraints in this chapter I aim to: (i) shed more light on the relationship between the variable systems for the older groups of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm, and on their relationship with the system in Mount Pleasant, (ii) confirm that the system among adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm for this variation has been restructured and levelled out, and (iii) determine whether discourse-functional constraints contribute to the increased frequency of *-ed* for the group of adolescents in Mount Pleasant.

This chapter is organised in the following manner. First, I discuss the importance of discourse related and functional factors in an analysis of variable morpho-syntactic forms. Attention to discourse has been regarded as particularly important in an analysis of creole languages, under an assumption that temporal information will be stored in the surrounding discourse considering the limited inflectional structure. Secondly, I characterise the following discourse/functional factors and test their significance for the variable marking by inflection across the communities: narrative structure, discourse grounding, priming and presence/absence of a temporal cue. In the final section I evaluate the significance of discourse-functional effects next to the grammatical ones and decide whether such factors can indeed be helpful in an interpretation of variable tense marking in Bequia.

5.2 Why are discourse-functional factors important?

One of the hypotheses put forward in this study is that the variable use of inflected verbs in Bequia is not only determined by grammatical constraints, but also discourse-pragmatic, and functional ones. At least two arguments motivate this hypothesis. The first one is related to the relationship between grammar and discourse, arguably the fundamental one in the process of communication (e.g. Sankoff, 1980; Chafe, 1994; Givon, 1995; Ono and Thompson, 1996; Prince, 1997, 1998; Thompson and Hopper, 2001; Thompson and Couper-Kuhlen, 2005). In order to disentangle this relationship, grammatical constructions need not only to be defined structurally but also in terms of functions they serve in discourse. The importance of the holistic analysis of grammar and discourse was spelled out by Givon:

“(...) the study of syntax, when limited to the sentence-clause level and deprived of its communicative-functional context, tends to bypass and even to obscure the immense role that communicative considerations affecting the structure of discourse play in determining so-called syntactic rules. [The relationship between discourse and grammar allows us to ask] the most interesting questions about the grammar of human language, namely, why it is the way it is; how it got to be that way; what function it serves, and how it relates to the use of human language as an instrument

of information processing, storage, retrieval, and-above all-communication” (Givon, 1979: xiii).

These questions lead to the second motivation for considering discourse as an integral factor for the variation between bare verbs and verb inflections, namely, the nature of creole languages, which originated from communicative demands. It is commonly assumed that, among others, the general processes of discourse organisation have played an important role in the development of creole languages. The TMA system is the area of creole grammar which is especially regarded as relying on the surrounding discourse contributing to the redundancy of inflectional morphology (Poplack and Tagliamonte, 1993; Mufwene, 1984). It seems then that an analysis of the discourse and contextual cues in which a given form is uttered might provide important insights into the interpretation of variable patterns of verb inflection in BeqCE.

In subsequent sections I test the strength of the above factors for the distribution of verb inflection across the communities. One of the initial observations of the dataset is that several of these categories have a multicollinear effect on the dependent variable. It is hypothesised that foregrounding, the complicating action section of a narrative, lack of a temporal cue, and the priming effect have a cumulative effect on the distribution of bare verbs. This is illustrated in Figure 5.1 where the distribution of bare verbs and inflected verbs across these categories is plotted.

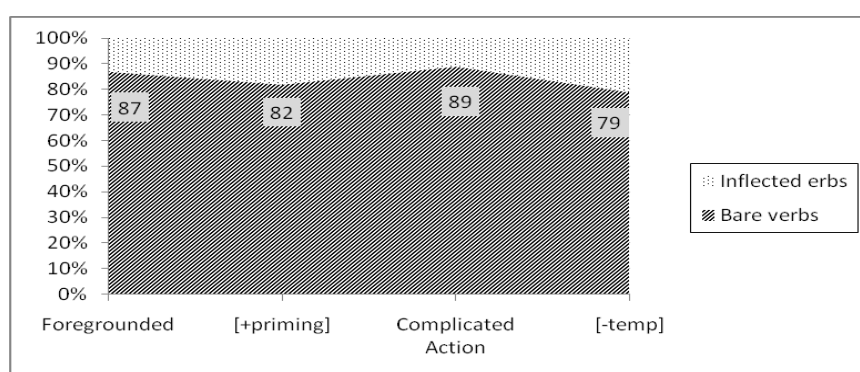


Figure 5.1 Cumulative effect of several discourse-specific/functional categories on the distribution of bare verbs and inflected verbs across the Bequia communities

Because of this collinearity, a single multivariate analysis including these effects would potentially skew their overall significance on this variation. In order to disentangle the contribution each of these factors might have on the distribution of inflected verbs I will test each of them in turn by comparing them to the grammatical effects selected as significant for each of the communities and age groups examined in Chapter 4. Let us first consider the narrative structure.

5.3 Narrative structure

Analyses of the effect a narrative structure has on the variable grammar were pioneered by Labov and Waletzky (1967) who show a narrative as an organised speech event which consists of individual elements reflecting speakers' experiences. The narrative structure proposed by the authors has been widely drawn upon in various sociolinguistic studies and the current one is no exception.

Labov defines a narrative as "one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events that actually occurred" (1972: 359). In the current study I focus on the sections of a narrative of personal experience and evaluate the organisation of variable forms in each of these sections in order to investigate whether the narrative structure determines speakers' choices of *-ed* vs. \emptyset . Claims have already been made regarding the correlation between complicating action and the distribution of unmarked verbs (cf Chapter 4, Section 4.6.3). Because the information surrounding the complicating action in a narrative establishes the temporal frame for events discussed, temporal marking in the main story line might seem redundant.

The three narrative sections coded in the current study are as follows (Labov and Waletzky, 1967):

- a) Orientation – provides background for the story and sets up the main story line
- b) Complicating Action – encompasses the main story line, events which move it forward, usually single occurrences in the perfective.
- c) Evaluation/commentary – communicates speaker's feelings, attitudes, and commentaries towards the main story line.

An example of a narrative extracted from the Bequia data which illustrates the above classification is presented below, where the speaker tells a story about her experience with a supernatural spirit⁹. The individual sections of the narrative have been isolated as shown in the table below.

You would know it's Jumbee cause you feel it. Sometime you just feel it. Sometimes you doz hear it too. Because one time, my house is like, my mommy deh upstairs, my room deh here and my grandmother deh here. And I went out by the steps to go downstairs and I was on the phone so downstairs was lock up.	Orientation
So I hear somebody start come up the steps, cause I have like a railing down by steps and...it doz hit it cause it make like a noise, I hear the thing hitting, coming up the steps, I watch and I see nobody, I hear , I go back on the phone, I hear it again.	Complicating action
Is the fastest I ever run, we. The fastest I ever run. I run , I scream out , I say , 'mommie somebody deh in me house'. Girl I been frighten.	Evaluation/commentary

Table 5.1 Example of a narrative structure in Bequia. (LB; Ashley; 614)

Arguably, each of these narrative sections is characterised by different linguistic strategies, which suggests that individual sections of a narrative will reflect separate temporal marking patterns. For example, the narrative above shows that bare verbs are extensively used in the complicating action. However, the discussion before has already introduced the problem arising when factors such as narrative structure are considered as triggers of variation, namely, its collinearity with other non-grammatical effects, such as discourse grounding, priming and temporal disambiguating factors. Only a careful quantitative analysis will allow us to clarify the real effect these factors might exert on variable tense marking.

Apart from orientation, complicating action, and evaluation sections of a narrative of personal experience, I have also coded for two genres which occur across the dataset: chat, and reminiscence. The former is not a part of a narrative of personal experience and encompasses speakers' casual engagement in a conversation which does not include a recount of past situations in any organised

⁹ A Jumbee is a mythical creature, a ghost, popular in the Caribbean folklore (Gafur, 2003)

way (Example 5.1), while the latter accounts for mainly habitual situations within a narrative through which speakers awake memories of what life used to be like in the past, their habits and customs (5.2).

5.1 (Ham; Vikki; 10) (PF; Anka; 11)

[Vikki] (Dialling a number on a mobile phone) The number unavailable.

[Anka] Just try again.

[Vikki] But the number unavailable!

[Anka] Ah **said** try again. How you know that number by the way...?

[Vikki] From K.

[Anka] Oh Jesus, how you ask her for it?

[Vikki] I **call** she...You see, unavailable.

5.2 (PF; 009; 55)

[009] Let me tell you sweetheart, when you see Christmas, the onlyest time we **know** to eat a piece of meat in our days is when Christmas, (clearing throat) when Christmas **come**. That is how we use to taste a piece of meat, and if we parents have a sheep or a goat and it **hang**. And they **skin** it and then we **eat** a piece of meat. We never use to know about meat. But now, the people eating more meat than me who- who rearing an animal.

However, one of the drawbacks of accounting for more specific discourse types is an unbalanced deployment of unmarked and inflected verb tokens across the genres. The gaps in distribution of tokens across individual narrative sections need to be monitored and dealt with for an accurate numerical analysis of the significance of this effect. An example of such an unbalanced distribution of verbs across the different sections of a narrative for Hamilton older speakers is illustrated in Table 5.2. As a result, a decision was made to collapse and/or exclude several of these categories. A near categorical distribution of bare verbs within reminiscences motivated the exclusion of this genre from the analysis in the sample from Hamilton older speakers, Paget Farm adolescents, Mount Pleasant adolescents and older in-betweens.

Narrative section	Bare verbs	Inflected verbs	Total
Orientation	49	20	69
Complicated action	206	18	224
Evaluation	234	29	263
Chat	6	0	6
Reminiscence	19	0	19
Total	514	67	581

Table 5.2 Distribution of bare verbs and verb inflections across different genres among both generations of speakers in Hamilton.

In addition, because orientation and evaluation in a narrative rely heavily on the information which offers supplementary material to the main story line, these categories were collapsed into a single group – supplementary material. This was executed for all the communities analysed.

Table 5.3 illustrates the contribution that narrative structure makes to the overall distribution of inflected verbs across the communities. As in the analyses conducted in Chapter 4, *have* was excluded from the analysis, *go* was retained as a separate factor within the morphological class predictor, and *come* was combined with other irregular verbs. For each community, narrative structure was included in the model next to the grammatical predictors tested in the analysis conducted in Chapter 4 – aspect and morphological class. The strength of the effect of narrative structure is listed in the table under *rank*. This will allow us to compare the constraint rankings between discourse and grammatical factors for this variation.

Community	Hamilton Old			Hamilton Young			P.Farm Old			P. Farm Young		
Input prob.	0.004			0.072			0.019			0.101		
Total N	562			337			605			414		
Log likelihood	-165.903			-119.599			-204.204			-137.647		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Narrative structure	p.<0.001			Not significant			Not significant			Not significant		
Reminiscence	KO	0	26	[0.39]	9	11	[0.30]	6	81	KO	0	13
Chat	KO	0	6	[0.65]	16	25	excluded		2	[0.46]	14	14
Complicating action	0.35	8	230	[0.36]	5	108	[0.55]	13	227	[0.41]	9	219
Suppl. material	0.64	15	332	[0.58]	13	234	[0.64]	14	297	[0.62]	15	181
<i>Range</i>	29			N/A			N/A			N/A		
Rank	2nd			Not significant			Not significant			Not significant		
Lexeme	Random			Random			Random			Random		
Community	M. Pleasant Old			M. Pleasant Young			In-between Old			In-between Young		
Input prob.	0.294			0.584			0.155			0.102		
Total N	549			310			380			421		
Log likelihood	-283.521			-168.583			-166.216			-211.107		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Narrative structure	p.<3.28e-06			p.<3.99e-05			p.<3.99e-09			p.<6.65e-07		
Reminiscence	0.48	27	37	excluded		2	excluded		34	0.34	41	26
Chat	excluded		6	0.53	57	21	excluded		5	excluded		9
Complicating action	0.34	34	135	0.32	42	96	0.20	14	118	0.44	22	171
Suppl. material	0.67	50	371	0.65	71	193	0.79	38	228	0.7	0	224
<i>Range</i>	33			33			59			36		
Rank	2nd			1st			2nd			1st		
Lexeme	Random			Random			Random			Random		

Table 5.3 Contribution of the effect of narrative structure for the distribution of inflected verbs across the villages and age groups

First, let us consider the relationship between older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. As we can see, narrative structure makes a significant contribution to the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs only in Hamilton. As I predicted, the few inflected verbs which occur in this sample are most likely to feature in the sections of a narrative which add additional information to the main story line, such as orientation, or evaluation. On the other hand, in the complicating action the vast majority of verbs are unmarked. The categorical distribution of bare verbs in reminiscence and chat modes among older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm confirms that verb stems are indeed the default form across the majority of genres in these communities. The different contribution of narrative structure in Hamilton and Paget Farm provides one more argument which supports the conclusion reached in Chapter 4, namely, that despite many similarities, the variable system of verb inflection in these communities is different. That is, while we can find many arguments to characterise these systems as very similar, it is not enough to claim these villages share one system.

Further, this result provides an additional support for considering the systems in Hamilton/Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant as closer than we previously assumed. Here, this is confirmed by the contribution of narrative structure to this variation in Hamilton and Mount Pleasant. In both communities not only is the constraint ranking for this factor identical, but the factor weights are also similar. This again raises the question as to how close the systems across the older group of speakers in these communities are, and whether we can draw a clear boundary line which breaks them off.

Third, narrative structure does not shed any more light on the relationship between the variable system among the group of adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm. In both communities narrative structure is not significant suggesting allocation of variants across the different genres in a narrative does not influence whether a verb will appear as inflected or bare. So far, we do not have sufficient evidence to consider the systems of variable inflection among younger speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm as different.

As far as the relationship between the two generations of Mount Pleasanters is concerned, we classified it as transmission which means that the system of verb inflection is probably passed on from the older generation to the younger. However, it is not as yet clear which factors determine the change towards the inflected system progressing among adolescents. The result shown in Table 5.3 suggests that discourse organisation could indeed be influential in explaining this pattern. Although narrative structure is significant for the distribution of inflected and bare verbs in both communities, among adolescents it is the strongest factor which holds more significance than any grammatical constraint. Among older speakers, it is the second most significant factor after aspect. This suggests that perhaps allocation of variable forms in a narrative could hold the key to the interpretation of the increase of inflected verbs among younger Mount Pleasanters. Analysis of other discourse-functional factors will be helpful in testing this hypothesis.

Looking at the contribution of narrative structure among both generations of in-betweens we can confirm that these groups strongly lag behind Mount Pleasant. These similarities are apparent for both age groups based on constraint rankings and factor weight comparisons. Among the older in-betweens, a limited number of (inflected) tokens led to a decision to exclude reminiscence and chat from the analysis. As we can see, there is a strong correlation between inflected verbs and supplementary information in a narrative, while bare verbs are favoured in complicating action. Among adolescents, the results for complicating action is almost neutral and inflected verbs are disfavoured in reminiscence, which distinguishes this community from adolescents in Mount Pleasant. Therefore, yet again, we can confirm that although many resemblances between the systems in Mount Pleasant and among in-betweens can be found, there are features which are characteristic only for the latter group and this justifies analysing them separately.

In the communities where narrative structure significantly contributes to the variable pattern of inflection, we observe a general tendency for bare verbs to be favoured in complicating action, and inflected to be consistently favoured in supplementary material, such as evaluations, commentaries or introductions. One interpretation of such a pattern points to the relationship between narratives of

personal experience and the nature of the sociolinguistic interviews. According to Labov (1972), personal experiences and emotions which accompany their recollection, such as the famous “danger of death” story, often result in less monitored speech and more vernacular language. The complicating action of a narrative is at the very centre of a narrative and includes events evoking speakers’ emotions, evaluations and commentaries expressed next to the main story line as supplementary material. However, an interpretation of the low number of inflected verbs in complicating actions should not be limited to speakers’ ways of emotive storytelling. As Figure 5.1 implied, this pattern could be strongly influenced by other effects, such as priming and grounding, which call for attention in an interpretation of variable patterns.

Another possibility for the higher frequency of bare verbs in the complicating action clauses than in any other section of a narrative could be due to the Historical Present (HP) which involves describing the past events as if they are happening at the time of speaking. According to Quirk et al (1985: 181) such an effect accounts for “something of the dramatic immediacy as if it is happening now” which suits the complicating action section of a narrative where the main events of the story line are expressed in a chronological order. However, the utilisation of an unmarked verb in the complicating action section does not automatically indicate that speakers are using the HP. First of all, unmarked verbs do not exclusively occur in the complicating action but are distributed also across different narrative contexts, and in foregrounded as well as backgrounded events.

Secondly, in creole languages analysing HP is complicated by two factors: (i) variable inflection in the past temporal VP, and (ii) variable inflection in the present temporal VP (5.3 and 5.4).

5.3 (Vikki; Ham; 84)

[Vikki] (While learning each other’s names) Miss L. only **know** Anka’s name you know, she ain’t even know mine.

5.4 (PF; Anka; 576)

[Anka] (Discussing gossiping) Yeah, is big komes, well we doz talk. When I there out, I **talks** too much.

The implications of variable inflectional morphology in both present and past time reference for analysing HP are laid out by Patrick, who claims that “no single token can signal to a hearer that a different mode of time-reference [HP] is in effect, as happens with the HP in English” (1999: 184). This motivates Patrick to conclude that HP, which could interfere with tense marking, hardly operates in creole languages:

“Using the HP label for the creole phenomenon obscures more than it reveals, especially if it inclines analysts to assign meaning a priori to the absent or zero forms” (Patrick, 1999: 184)

Due to the predominant frequency of bare verbs over inflected verbs in BeqCE in both past and present time reference (Walker et al., 2009) I follow Rickford (1987) and Patrick (1999) and claim that including HP in the analysis of past temporal reference in BeqCE does not explain the variable patterns in this data. Nonetheless, the frequent use of unmarked verbs in complicating action is undeniable.

According to Hackert (2004: 192) this is related to the iconic nature of this section of a narrative, which includes events ordered chronologically, in perfective aspect with little possibility of temporal confusion. In such contexts overt morphological marking might be omitted, a phenomenon reflected in HP in English and in other languages (Comrie, 1985: 61). In other words, the low rates of inflected verbs in CA stem more from the character of this part of the narrative which invites unmarked verbs, rather than being a side-effect of the HP effect.

The limited data sample and uneven distribution of tokens make it impossible to draw definitive conclusions as to the pattern of variation across the chat and reminiscence modes of a narrative. The result for reminiscence shows that there are either too few tokens to consider this factor as a separate category, or there are no inflected tokens within this genre. The same can be claimed for the chat mode. When it does not come back as a knockout, chatting shows a neutral effect on this variation

(this is illustrated for young Mount Pleasanters). Overall, chatting is represented by few tokens in this data since the primary method of data collection was a sociolinguistic interview where narratives prevail. The data samples which include the chat modes are the so-called freestyle recordings (cf. Chapter 3). Nevertheless, such samples offer a limited number of past temporal reference tokens. In order to analyse the patterns of variation within a chat mode in detail, a different type of data would be necessary, and perhaps a different method of analysis (this was discussed in more detail in Chapter 1 and 3).

5.4 Discourse grounding

Next to narrative structure, discourse grounding has been recognised as one of the most significant categories responsible for patterns of variation in CECs (Youssef and James, 1999; Gooden, 2008) but also in other varieties of English (Langacker, 1999; Khalil, 2000; Brandt and Brandt, 2005). By definition, foregrounded events move the main story line forwards while backgrounded events provide additional information and commentary to it (Hopper and Thompson, 1980). The table below provides features according to which it is possible to classify a clause in discourse as fore- or backgrounded, although overall, coding for discourse grounding was often difficult and intuitive.

Foregrounded clauses	Backgrounded clauses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - usually expressed through a sequence of events rendered through perfective aspect - events that advance the main story line, that are perceived as important by the speaker - situations which are of primary focus - events which speakers consider as non-remote - usually a part of complicating action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no sequential ordering - backdrop to the main story line, explanatory material, commentary, evaluation, reference to established states or conditions - events extraneous to the structural coherence of a narrative - remote events -in a narrative, backgrounded events are a part of abstract, orientation, and evaluation

Table 5.4 Classification of clauses into foregrounded and backgrounded (Hopper, 1979; Hopper and Thompson, 1980, Givon, 1984; Pollard, 1989, Youssef and Winford, 1999)

Since foregrounded events usually occur in the complicating action, and backgrounded in evaluations and orientations, it is not surprising that the contribution of this effect to the distribution of variable verb forms is similar to that observed for narrative structure. This is illustrated in Table 5.5.

Community	Hamilton Old			Hamilton Young			P.Farm Old			P. Farm Young		
Input prob.	0.007			0.072			0.039			0.104		
Total N	581			378			605			427		
Log likelihood	-167.562			-119.599			-199.413			-139.688		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Grounding	p.<1.42e-05			Not significant			p.<9.92e-06			Not significant		
Backgrounded	0.64	20	219	[0.54]	13	184	0.65	23	200	[0.58]	16	98
Foregrounded	0.35	6	362	[0.46]	8	194	0.34	8	407	[0.42]	10	329
<i>Range</i>	29			N/A			31			N/A		
Rank	1st			Not significant			1st			Not significant		
Lexeme	Random			Random			Random			Random		

Community	M. Pleasant Old			M. Pleasant Young			In-between Old			In-between Young		
Input prob.	0.323			0.623			0.208			0.128		
Total N	549			318			380			430		
Log likelihood	-280.184			-169.94			-170.549			-213.89		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Grounding	p.<7.22e-09			p.<2.86e-10			p.<2.17e-12			p.<3.38e-05		
Backgrounded	0.65	58	298	0.68	79	148	0.74	48	176	0.63	42	165
Foregrounded	0.34	29	251	0.31	43	170	0.25	16	209	0.36	24	265
<i>Range</i>	31			37			49			27		
Rank	2nd			1st			1st			3rd		
Lexeme	Random			Random			Random			Random		

Table 5.5 Contribution of the effect of grounding for the distribution of inflected verbs across the villages and age groups

For the communities where grounding makes a significant contribution to the variable patterns, it shows a very strong effect (evident through high constraint rankings). In fact the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs heavily relies on discourse organisation in all the communities analysed, except for the younger generation of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. It would be flawed, however, to separate discourse-organisational categories, such as narrative and grounding, from grammatical structure. On the contrary, discourse and grammar are considered here as tightly connected and mutually reinforcing (Langacker, 1991; Givon, 1984; Chafe, 1994). Foregrounding and backgrounding is a distinction which can be attributed to psychological functions for ordering reality (Fleishman, 1985), which in Bequia is reflected through narrative organisation. Speakers isolate certain elements of a story and fit them into a particular discourse context mirrored in a narrative structure. Considering the close relationship between discourse and grammar, it is likely that the organisation of a story-line, whether in an oral or a written mode, will also be realised grammatically.

It has been argued that in StE the contrast between back- and fore-grounded discourse is expressed through the categories of perfective (for foreground), and imperfective (for background) (Herweg, 1991; Givon, 1984; Youssef and James, 1999). This distinction would involve non-stative verbs in simple past used in foregrounded function to move the story line forward, and stative verbs in simple past or non-stative verbs in the progressive aspect providing the supplementary material (Youssef and James, 1999: 604). Comparison of grammatical and discourse specific factors which significantly influence the distribution of variable verb inflection in BeqCE could confirm this. Recall that among older speakers in Hamilton, Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant, stative verbs strongly favour inflection, while non-stative verbs disfavour it. This, however, does not indicate that BeqCE neatly follows the organisation of discourse in Standard English. Rather, the pattern reflects the way humans organise the flow of discourse (Hopper, 1979; Chui, 2003). Grounding, represented through narrative structure, is thus inextricably linked to the grammatical organisation of forms which confirms that grammar and discourse together are responsible for patterns of variation in Bequia.

However, while among adolescents in Mount Pleasant the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs is conspicuous on a discourse level, the results from Hamilton and Paget Farm so far show that in these communities the variation is not dependent on grounding or narrative structure. Several possible reasons for this are discussed in the final section of this chapter where all the quantitative results are summarised. However, before this is done, the remaining effects need to be tested, that is priming and presence/absence of a temporal adverb. This issue is further discussed in Section 5.5.

5.5 Temporal cues and priming

Including the predictor of presence/absence of a temporal cue in the study was motivated by functional hypotheses whereby the presence of a temporal cue, expressed through an adverbial or any other temporal indicator, would make inflectional morphology redundant. Considering their hypothesised origins, creoles are especially appropriate for an empirical investigation of functional effects operating on grammar, due to their predisposition to show redundancy in syntax and reliance on the surrounding discourse in the interpretation of grammatical forms (Mufwene, 1984; Tagliamonte and Poplack, 1993). Tagliamonte and Poplack (1993) and Poplack and Tagliamonte (1996) refer to this effect as temporal disambiguation. Examples of clauses which include temporal indicators are provided below.

5.5 (MP; 108; 1306)

[108] And we leave over there at three o'clock to come back.

5.6 (PF; Tanya; 1024)

[Tanya] When the high sea, I go under sand all thing and my mommy think I been lost until she see my foot.

5.7 (Ham; 005; 1392)

[005] Look at G. today. He always like to cook. Anytime they going do- um- Home Economics he always ready.

In this study different types of temporal indicators were coded into one category although the analysis would undoubtedly benefit from a more fine-grained classification of such markers (for example, Hackert, 2004: 182 found that duration adverbials, such as *up to*, *until*, favour inflection, while adverbs of frequency, such as *always*, *whenever*, disfavour it). In addition, temporal indicators were coded as present if they occurred next to a verb within the same clause. Another improvement would be to establish a coding scheme which would account for the temporal cues which occur beyond the clause level assuming that their disambiguating effect radiates to surrounding clauses.

Since the primary question here is whether the presence of a temporal marker indeed occurs more frequently next to verbs with no overt inflection, this time bare verbs were selected as the application value in the variable rule analysis. The results are illustrated in Table 5.6. Only in two communities, the cohort of adolescents in Hamilton and older speakers in Mount Pleasant is the effect of [\pm temporal cue] significant. In both communities the effect operates as predicted: the correlation between presence of a temporal cue and the distribution of bare verbs is positive. However, in both communities this effect is much weaker compared to the other predictors, both the grammatical ones, as well as the discourse-organisational ones (this is conspicuous when we compare the p. values for narrative structure, grounding, and [\pm temporal cue]).

If we assume that the correlation between bare verbs and the presence of a temporal cue is indeed a typically creole (basilectal or lower-mesolectal) constraint, then we would expect this effect to operate in the communities where the propensity of bare verbs is the highest – both generations of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. The fact that the effect does not operate consistently across these communities, and that it is the weakest effect in the samples where it is significant, casts a doubt on the overall contribution of this factor for the variable pattern of inflection (although I acknowledge the potential limitations of several coding decisions outlined above).

Community	Hamilton Old			Hamilton Young			P.Farm Old			P. Farm Young		
Input prob.	0.99			0.94			0.97			0.89		
Total N	581			378			607			427		
Log likelihood	-174.245			-116.563			-208.218			-139.688		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Temp. cue	Not significant			p.<0.01			Not significant			Not significant		
Present	[0.53]	90	135	0.62	92	105	[0.52]	87	169	[0.67]	93	88
Absent	[0.46]	88	446	0.37	87	273	[0.48]	87	438	[0.33]	87	339
<i>Range</i>	N/A			25			N/A			34		
Rank	Not significant			2nd			Not significant			Not significant		
Lexeme	Random			Random			Random			Random		

Community	M. Pleasant Old			M. Pleasant Young			In-between Old			In-between Young		
Input prob.	0.66			0.401			0.711			0.821		
Total N	549			318			380			430		
Log likelihood	-296.348			187.331			-198.019			-230.731		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Temp. cue	p.<0.01			Not significant			Not significant			Not significant		
Present	0.57	66	158	[0.49]	37	75	[0.48]	69	101	[0.54]	71	104
Absent	0.42	49	391	[0.50]	40	243	[0.52]	69	284	[0.45]	68	326
<i>Range</i>	15			N/A			N/A			N/A		
Rank	3rd			Not significant			Not significant			Not significant		
Lexeme	Random			Random			Random			Random		

Table 5.6 Contribution of the effect of [\pm temporal cue] for the distribution of **bare verbs** across the villages and age groups

The final effect which needs to be discussed is priming. In the current study, only structural priming is considered which could be defined as a repetition of structural material across natural discourse (Messenger, 2009: 34). In practice this means that the structure of the prime sentence strongly influences the structure of the sentence produced. Here, this would mean that if the priming effect operates, an unmarked verb will be preceded by an unmarked verb and/or an inflected verb will be preceded by another inflected verb. The effect of priming, although also classified as a discourse-related predictor, is different to grounding and narrative structure. As for the two latter factors, variation between forms served the means of highlighting certain parts of a narrative or parts of a story line, while priming is a more mechanical, production-related phenomenon. The effect has been classified as one of the factors representing usage-based approaches to grammar. Priming has been extensively researched in psycholinguistics (Bock, 1986; Bock and Loebell, 1990; Pickering and Branigan, 1998; Branigan et al., 2000), but has also been attracting gradual attention within variationist sociolinguistics, especially in studies of morpho-phonemic, and discourse variation (Scherre and Naro, 1991; Poplack and Tagliamonte, 1996; Buchstaller, 2008) and phonetic and phonological variation (Abramowicz, 2007; Clark, 2010; Clark and Watson, 2011; Schleef et al., 2011).

Structural priming has been analysed as one of the crucial factors in the variation within the passive analysed by Labov and Weiner (1983). The study showed that structural priming is a stronger factor constraining this variation than any other non-grammatical factor (e.g. given vs. new information). This result pointed to the limitations of the information factor in determining sentence structure but highlighted a strong effect of persistence instead. Moreover, in their study of plural marking in Brazilian Portuguese, Scherre and Naro (1991) investigated priming as one of the constraints of variation and concluded that in Brazilian Portuguese, the use of markers resembles the pattern of “birds of a feather flock together”: marking leads to more marking and non-marking leads to more non-marking. The same process was observed for lexical-pragmatic variables such as quotatives (Cameron, 1998; Rickford et al., 2007). The exceptional significance of the priming effect led Scherre and Naro (1991) to believe that formal parallelism should be considered as a universal property of language.

The applicability of priming has also been tested for the variation within past temporal reference in pidgins and creoles. Tagliamonte and Poplack (1993) and Poplack and Tagliamonte (1996) investigated variation within past temporal reference in Samaná, the Ex-slave Recordings (1993) and Nigerian Pidgin English (1996). In the (1993) study the mark on the preceding verb turns out to be the strongest effect constraining past tense marking, while in the later study, the unmarked verb favoured unmarking of the following verb (1996: 204). A similar pattern is observable in Bequia and priming is hypothesised to be a strong factor contributing to a choice of variants within the past temporal reference. Each verb was coded as [+priming] whenever the structure of that verb was repeated in the following adjacent verb. For example, if an inflected verb was preceded by another inflected verb, it was coded as ‘preceding structure same’. The same procedure was applied if a bare verb was preceded by a bare verb. However, if a bare verb was preceded by an inflected verb or any predicate structure other than a bare verb, it was coded as ‘preceding structure different’. This was also executed for inflected verbs. A direction for future research would be to test the effect of the priming effect for verbs within greater distance from the prime verb, and not just the adjacent VP (e.g. Travis, 2007). Examples of bare verbs and inflected verbs coded as [+priming] are provided below.

5.8 (Ham; 001; 322)

[001] And when the boy, a boy name BS, and he **bring** me up and he **drop** me right before the door and when I **catch** up the morning my mother **come** down, my mother **say** to me- say to me ‘watch this Tobago whore, how she drunk’.

5.9 (MP; Nigel; 219)

[Nigel] So we **went** up on the beach with couple of bottles of alcohol and **relaxed**.
That that was the best time I had so far.

The effect of priming for the variation across the Bequia communities is illustrated in table 5.7.

Community	Hamilton Old			Hamilton Young			P.Farm Old			P. Farm Young		
Input prob.	0.992			0.93			0.96			0.9		
Total N	581			378			607			427		
Log likelihood	-166.664			-112.519			-199.413			-130.279		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Priming	p.<9.05e-05			p.<0.0001			p.<0.009			p.<1.34e-05		
Preceding v. same	0.66	94	355	0.65	94	228	0.59	92	302	0.67	94	247
Preceding v. diff.	0.34	79	226	0.34	81	150	0.4	82	305	0.33	80	180
<i>Range</i>	32			31			19			34		
Rank	1st			1st			2nd			1st		
Lexeme	Random			Random			Random			Random		

Community	M. Pleasant Old			M. Pleasant Young			In-between Old			In-between Young		
Input prob.	0.646			0.432			0.751			0.855		
Total N	549			318			380			430		
Log likelihood	-299.613			172.474			-196.7			-226.846		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Priming	Not significant			p.<1.73e-08			Not significant			p.<3.38e-05		
Preceding v. same	[0.50]	55	256	0.33	25	187	[0.55]	71	215	0.58	75	247
Preceding v. diff.	[0.49]	55	293	0.67	59	131	[0.45]	66	170	0.41	60	183
<i>Range</i>	N/A			34			N/A			17		
Rank	Not significant			1st			Not significant			2nd		
Lexeme	Random			Random			Random			Random		

Table 5.7 Contribution of the effect of priming for the distribution of bare verbs across the villages and age groups

The significance of priming would indicate that the choice of a bare verb or an inflected verb could be to some extent experience-driven. The more frequently and recently a linguistic item is used by speakers, the more prominent it is in memory (according to ET – the bigger the cloud of remembered exemplars of this token), and so, the more likely it is for a speaker to utilise. However, again several questions need to be asked: how much explanatory power can priming hold for patterns of variation in Bequia? Can we disentangle priming from the other discourse constraints, such as narrative structure or grounding?

As in the above analysis of the contribution of temporal cues, bare verbs are the application value for the analysis of priming. Interestingly, in the communities where narrative and grounding were not significant, that is adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm, priming is an important effect. In fact, the only communities where we do not see a significant effect of priming is Mount Pleasant older speakers and in-betweens. This result provides important support for the hypothesis that the pattern of variation among the older in-betweens is very much like the one illustrated for older speakers in Mount Pleasant. We can also conclude that in these cohorts the difference between bare verbs and verb inflections is manipulated by speakers in the process of structuring discourse, rather than being an artefact of the mechanical production of tokens stemming from speakers' recent exposure to a variant. In the communities where priming is a significant predictor alongside narrative structure and discourse grounding (older speakers in Hamilton, and younger in-betweens) we can confirm that all of these factors can have a cumulative effect on the \emptyset /*-ed* variation.

In the communities where priming is significant, except for adolescents in Mount Pleasant, there is a positive correlation between an occurrence of a bare verb and a preceding bare verb. Let us focus on these communities first. According to the priming hypothesis, this result suggests that a bare verb prompts the following verb to also occur as a stem. However, it is difficult to tell with certainty that this process is taking place solely due to speakers' recent exposure to a bare verb. As we already know, for the majority of these villages bare verbs are the default strategy for expressing past temporal reference, and inflected verbs occur sporadically. This is true of both generations of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. In this case it is

only natural that a bare verb will follow another bare verb in a narrative. A more probing question is perhaps: when will speakers in these communities *not* use a bare verb? Namely, in which contexts/situations do they reach for an inflected verb rather than the default bare verb? While we have arrived at some answers by analysing narrative structure and discourse grounding, the effect of priming cannot provide an explanation of this pattern. What it does, however, is confirm that bare verbs are the primary tool in the construction of past temporal reference when compared to inflected verbs. Therefore, although the research on priming in sociolinguistics is ongoing, the correlation between priming and frequency is yet to be explored.

Interestingly, among Mount Pleasant adolescents we see the opposite effect to the rest of the communities – a bare verb is likely to be preceded by an inflected verb. Since inflected verbs are the non-application value in this analysis, this result points to priming of inflected verbs (an inflected verb is likely to be preceded by another inflected verb). Again, this result is perhaps related to the high frequency of the inflected variant in Mount Pleasant, and the fact that arguably, it is the default strategy for expressing past temporal reference in this community. It also demonstrates that grammatically marked linguistic units, in this case past marking through verb inflection, lead to more markers which contradicts the principle of economy according to which marked linguistic elements should not occur where they are not “needed” for listeners’ understanding (Haiman, 1983). This should be especially applicable to BeqCE where tense marking is highly variable.

One context where I hypothesised inflection is not “needed” is the complicating action section of a narrative. It is a context where the story line had been introduced and where events usually occur sequentially without abrupt changes in their temporal order. Therefore, theoretically speakers do not have to reach for inflections to mark a backdrop to the main story line, or any other elements which would violate listeners’ understanding of an utterance.

To sum up it seems that discourse-organisational constraints hold the key to an interpretation of patterns of verb inflection across the Bequia communities. The final question that needs to be raised deals with the explanatory power of these

constraints for variation and change in Bequia, next to the grammatical factors explored in Chapter 4.

5.6 The relationship between grammar and discourse in an interpretation of variable tense marking in Bequia - discussion

We have seen that the distribution of inflected verbs in different villages and age groups is highly dependent on discourse constraints, although there is not a single factor out of the ones analysed which is consistently significant across all the communities. The effect of functional-cognitive constraints, that is [\pm temporal cue] and priming is less conspicuous in this data set. In two communities we see the significant correlation between a distribution of a bare verb, and a presence of a temporal cue. Nevertheless, this effect is much weaker than for any other predictor. Surely, if the distribution of bare verbs was strongly dependent on functional factors we would expect the effect of a temporal cue to be significant in more than two groups, and especially in those where the frequency of inflected verb is scarce.

The effect of priming, although significant in almost all the communities, also leaves some doubts as to the contribution it makes for interpreting the pattern of inflection across the villages. It seems that priming is highly correlated with the frequency of variants: a bare verb is likely to occur if it is preceded by another bare verb in the communities where stems constitute the majority of tokens. On the other hand, in Mount Pleasant, where adolescents use more inflected verbs than bare verbs, we see priming in the other direction: it is more likely for an inflected verb to occur when it is preceded by another inflected verb. It is hard to decide whether this effect is really a result of speakers' constant exposure to the variants they are most used to. If so, we might ask whether priming and frequency are the same thing and if not how do we disentangle between the two. In addition, surely it is not just the exposure that dictates the variable patterns. How do we, therefore, disentangle priming from other effects? Finally, I admit that the effect of priming has only been touched upon in the current study. Further research should focus on modelling priming within research on naturally occurring data and tackle the problems related to coding for this category. In addition, other types of priming, such as semantic

priming, should also be considered in order to uncover the significance of this category for research on variation in naturally occurring speech.

Similarly to Chapter 4, in the table below I provide a summary of the factors which significantly contribute to the variation between \emptyset and *-ed* across the different communities. The table includes also the grammatical categories so that we can obtain a bigger picture as to the different types of factors this variation is sensitive to across the villages. Factor groups marked with ✓ were selected as significant, while those marked with X were not significant. The results lead to some important observations and trigger several explanations about the nature of variability in Bequia and patterns of language change.

Predictor	Ham O	Ham Y	PF O	PF Y	MP O	MP Y	IB O	IB Y
Aspect	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Morph. class	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Narr. structure	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grounding	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Priming	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓
[±Temp. adverb]	X	✓	X	X	✓	X	X	X

Table 5.8 A summary of predictors selected as significant for the distribution of bare verbs and inflected verbs across the communities

In the previous chapter I discussed the challenge of drawing comparisons between the communities based on constraint rankings and factor weights. Nevertheless, several observations can be made based on Table 5.8:

- (i) So far, we do not have enough evidence to claim that older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm share one system, although several similarities between them are conspicuous. Also, it is not clear how close/distant the relationship between these communities and Mount Pleasant is for the older speakers, since despite many differences, similarities between them are also apparent.

- (ii) Strong resemblances between the variable patterns among adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm allow us to claim that these communities share one system for the variable in question which has been restructured and levelled out compared to the patterns illustrated for the older generations in these communities.
- (iii) The variable pattern of inflection established for the elders in Mount Pleasant has been passed on to younger speakers. What has changed, however, is the frequency rate of verb inflection which has increased among young speakers.
- (iv) The system across both generations of in-between speakers seems to share many features with the pattern of inflection observed in Mount Pleasant, which suggests in-betweens lag behind this community. Nevertheless, we cannot conclude that in-betweens share the system of variation found in Mount Pleasant and for this reason analysing them separately seems justified.

Below I consider each of these claims and evaluate whether the results obtained for discourse-functional constraints can confirm or at least shed more light on these arguments, and contribute to the interpretation of variation and change across the generations of speakers in the Bequia communities.

5.6.1 The relationship between the systems among older speakers in Hamilton, Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant

At the first glimpse, the results for discourse constraints strengthen the similarity between Hamilton and Paget Farm. In both communities discourse grounding and priming are the categories which correlate with the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs. Nevertheless, it would be questionable to consider these two factors as exhaustive in drawing boundaries between the communities. There are several reasons behind this. First, discourse grounding is a category which is significant in almost all the Bequia communities, therefore its significance for the variation in question in both Hamilton and Paget Farm is not surprising. Secondly,

we must consider the ambiguous nature of the priming effect. As I discussed above, we must acknowledge the fact that priming correlates strongly with frequency rates.

Nevertheless there is no denying that older speakers in all three communities display sensitivity to discourse-related constraints, such as grounding and narrative structure. This supports an integral model of discourse and grammar (cf. Sankoff and Brown, 1976; Bybee et al., 1994; Hopper, 1987, 1988; Ono and Thompson, 1996; Travis, 2007), rather than as an abstract entity contained in the mind of speakers and accessed independently for each utterance. The results show that the interpretation of the use of bare verbs and verb inflections cannot be based solely on grammatical features but must be supported by examining the level of discourse context. Therefore, to explore the correlations between language use, communication, and grammatical structure, a sentence-level analysis would not suffice. While the majority of variationist studies indeed draw from speech patterns extracted from more or less naturally occurring discourse, such as sociolinguistic interviews, exploring variation beyond the level of a clause is less common (although not rare, cf. e.g. Rickford and McNair-Knox, 1994; Meyerhoff, 2000; Cheshire, 2007; Sharma, 2011). This study shows that utilisation of inflected verbs across the older generations in Bequia cannot be fully understood without considering speakers' capacities to organise the story line in a narrative, reflected through the process of grounding.

In particular, I suggest that the significance of aspectual oppositions and narrative structure and grounding is not accidental. The fact that the distinction between fore- and backgrounded events is strongly related to aspect has been underlined in previous studies (Youssef and James, 1999; Lopez-Ortega, 2000; Gooden, 2008). Similarly, the correlation between aspect and narrative structure is expected (Bardovi-Harlig, 1995, 1998; Lopez-Ortega, 2000; Hackert, 2004). This relationship is illustrated in Table 5.9 which shows the values of Pearson's correlation coefficients (Rodgers and Nicewander, 1988) between the following factor groups: aspect and narrative structure, and aspect and discourse grounding. The coefficients were calculated on the basis of factor weights within each of these predictors (the factor weights for aspect across the villages were drawn from the analysis in Chapter 4).

Factor groups	Hamilton Older	P. Farm Older	M. Pleasant Older
Aspect/Narrative structure	0.84	Narrative not significant	0.88
Aspect/discourse grounding	0.84	0.82	0.93

Table 5.9 Pearson's correlation coefficients illustrating the relationship between aspect and narrative structure and aspect and discourse grounding for the older generation of speakers across the communities

Clearly, the strong effect of aspect on the variable pattern of inflection across the villages cannot be interpreted without the consideration of the larger discourse in which these forms vary, such as narrative structure, and the strategies which speakers follow to separate certain sections of the story through fore- and backgrounding. This shows that aspect and discourse factors together have a profound effect on patterns on this variation and must be taken into account in order to better understand older speakers' choices between bare verbs and inflected verbs.

Further, the significant effect of discourse constraints, narrative structure and discourse grounding which operate similarly across the communities make establishing the distance between the communities of older speakers on the continuum scale challenging, and in addition, raise the question of discreteness (cf. Chapter 1; Patrick, 1999). Indeed, these results confirm that it is very hard to establish discrete, finely isolated systems operating in each of these communities. Rather, there seems to be a fluid transmission as we move on from the most creole-like communities (Hamilton and Paget Farm) to more acrolectal ones – Mount Pleasant. This is evident through at least one shared constraint which links the systems across the communities. Such a pattern suggests that rather than modelling this variation as different co-existing systems, we have to acknowledge the possibility of a highly variable mesolectal grammar (Patrick, 1999) which incorporates the fluctuating frequency rates and the comparisons/ differences between constraint rankings. I provide more motivations behind the mesolectal grammar approach in Chapter 7. In addition, the analysis of preverbal markers which features in Chapter 6 should add more arguments to this discussion.

5.6.2 Restructuring and levelling of the systems among adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm

Analysis of the grammatical factors which condition the patterns of variation between \emptyset and *-ed* across the younger generation of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm revealed that these factors have been: (i) restructured – since different factors constrain the use of inflected verbs in this age group than among the older speakers, and (ii) levelled out – since the discrepancies between the systems in these communities have been minimised and it is hard to find elements which separate these communities. This levelling, however does not neatly fall under the definition of this process characterised as “the reduction of the number of variants following speaker accommodation through face-to-face interaction” (Torgersen and Kerswill, 2004: 4), or elsewhere as “a shift away from a localised form to a non-localised one” (Kerswill and Williams, 2000: 10). As far as the “number of variants” is concerned, results from Hamilton and Paget Farm show an opposite effect: the frequency of a “non-localised” variant has not increased at all, and in fact it has remained stable across generations. What has changed though is the factors which constrain this distribution. The structural factors which constrain this variation among the elders have been restructured, and the cross-community differences which went hand in hand with these constraints have been levelled out. This result offers an interesting insight into the notion of levelling addressed in sociolinguistic literature. Clearly, levelling can be not just a surface-level process reflected in frequency rates, but can operate on the deeper level linguistic structure affecting the underlying system constraining this variation.

Undoubtedly, an interesting question that needs to be answered deals with the motivations for this structural levelling. Several phenomena were proposed in previous studies on levelling, such as contact and mobility (Britain, 2002; 2004; Kerswill, 2004; Torgersen and Kerswill, 2004), which often fall under a more general socio-cultural and economic process of globalisation (cf. Meyerhoff and Niedzielski, 2003; Buchstaller and D’Arcy, 2009). In Chapter 7 I discuss to what extent globalisation is responsible for the pattern of language change in Bequia.

Another issue which needs to be discussed concerns the ways through which locality is marked among adolescents in Paget Farm and Hamilton. So far we have seen that the constraints which condition the \emptyset /*-ed* variation in these communities, both the grammatical and the discourse ones are shared. The only factor which distinguishes these communities from each other is a positive correlation between the distribution of bare verbs and the presence of a temporal cue for younger speakers in Hamilton but not in Paget Farm. Nevertheless, in the section above I discussed why we should be cautious in considering this effect as a category which would help us establish the differences between the communities.

Looking at the distribution of inflected verbs in these villages we can conclude that: (i) the frequency of inflected verbs is similar across them and cannot serve as a feature which cuts these communities off, and (ii) the overall input probability rate is very low suggesting bare verbs are the default variant for expressing past temporal reference. A form classified as default is not usually used by speakers meaningfully as a marker of social identities. Rather, speakers reach for variants with high social markedness, which are recognised in the social realm as a tool of meaning making enterprise (cf. Chapter 1 but also Campbell Kibler, 2007; Eckert, 2008; Johnstone and Kiesling, 2008). I suggest that this is indeed the case in these communities, and that not inflected verbs, but preverbal markers are used by individuals to mark the underlying differences between these two communities. This issue is the main focus of Chapter 6.

5.6.3 Transmission of variation in Mount Pleasant and the case of in-betweens

Analysis of discourse constraints confirmed the uniformity of the pattern of inflection across both generations of speakers in Mount Pleasant. Despite the fact that the presence/absence of a temporal cue is only significant among the older cohort of speakers, we cannot deny that these systems indeed share many similarities, not only when it comes to constraint rankings but also factor weights (this was illustrated in Chapter 4). In addition, among adolescents in Mount Pleasant we observe a significant effect of priming which I suggested correlates with

high frequency of inflected verbs reported in this community. Unlike in the other communities, it is likely that an inflected verb will be preceded by another inflected verb.

Another feature which distinguishes these speakers from the other communities is an overall higher number of factor groups selected as significant in the multivariate analysis, especially among adolescents in Mount Pleasant where all factors hypothesised to condition the variable process of verb inflection are significant, except for the presence/absence of a temporal cue. This is interesting considering that in this village the rate of inflections is the highest and I suggest this relationship is not coincidental. Perhaps, the more speakers utilise the inflected variant, the more complex and fine-grained the mechanisms which are responsible for this utilisation become (cf. Meyerhoff, 2008 on the notion of complexity in creoles). This is especially conspicuous on the discourse level. Among adolescents in particular discourse constraints are highly responsible for speakers' linguistics choices since all the discourse categories examined showed more significance than grammatical factors, and had the strongest constraint rankings. On the other hand, among the older generation in this community, aspect was consistently the most significant predictor.

Previous research has demonstrated that narrative can be used as a vehicle for identity construction (Bamberg, 2006; Johnstone, 2006; Georgakopoulou, 2007). Narratives are not only an expression of embodied experience, but also a means of communication and a meaning making enterprise. A narrative is a space where speakers navigate various resources in order to construct a particular manifestation of identity. Language variation has long been investigated as one such means of identity construction (cf. Chapter 1 and 2). Through the use of variable forms speakers indirectly signal their position in a social realm, such as identification or differentiation from a particular community. Through linguistic choices in a narrative, speakers manipulate different aspects of self (Goffman, 1974), which are often connected with larger social identities. For example, Johnstone (2006) demonstrated that a personal narrative is an area where ideologies towards a local variety in Pittsburgh are constructed and typified. In order to investigate the exact

ways in which this process occurs, other methodological techniques would need to be executed, such as discourse analysis (e.g. Harris, 1952; Blommaert, 2005). Such an analysis is not central to the current study, however as Johnstone demonstrates, the narratives are especially well suited for producing and circulating ideological differentiation between individuals and communities. In Mount Pleasant, the narrative structure is the environment where speakers incorporate the innovative variants: supporting information and backgrounded clauses are the contexts which are most strongly favoured by inflected verbs, while complicating action is affected by this variant at a slower pace.

Naturally, a follow up question has to be: why is this change happening now? The system constraining this variation for both generations of speakers is very similar, yet it is the younger community that has picked up the change and are leading it. If we indeed assume that this variation is used by adolescents meaningfully to distinguish themselves from the other communities, and perhaps in particular from their peers in Hamilton, Paget Farm and the other Bequia communities not analysed here, we must ask a question: why is the current moment timely? I propose two answers to this question.

First, we have to consider the possibility of age-grading (cf. Chapter 2), under an assumption that young Mount Pleasanters are using verb inflection meaningfully to establish their position in the linguistic marketplace (Bourdieu, 1977). Second, this result could again be interpreted through the lens of globalisation. As a plethora of research studies have shown, broadly understood global processes often trigger local responses (e.g. Meyerhoff and Niedzielski, 2003; Schneider, 2003; Johnstone, 2010 analyse the way this process affects linguistic structure). The contexts of globalising trends prompts speakers to (re)negotiate their social identities and this can also be achieved through language. Dialect levelling (according to Kerswill and Williams's, 2000 definition provided above) is one linguistic consequence where speakers align their speech with non-local norms. In other cases the return to the local might be observed (Johnstone, 2010). What is apparent though is that, no matter what the consequence of this process is, global processes are usually met by some local responses. We could argue that the change in Mount Pleasant is indeed a response to the external socio- cultural

transformations which have recently affected Bequia (cf. Chapter 2). These two possible interpretations of this change, age grading and globalising trends, are discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 7.

Finally, the results obtained for the group of in-betweens show that these responses do not have to be uniform for all members of a speech community. The example of Nigel, a young in-between speaker from Mount Pleasant confirms this. Unlike adolescents in Mount Pleasant, younger in-betweens do not participate in the change (cf. Table 4.25 in Chapter 4). While some individuals, such as Nigel, show a lower rate of inflection than the rest of the community, others show not only rates of inflection that are much higher than for the rest of the community they come from, but the conditions which determine this distribution are also different (this is especially relevant for Celia from Paget Farm and Chris from Hamilton). This suggests that in-betweens are positioned somewhere between the local and the supra-local. I argue that this in-between position is motivated by speakers' negotiation of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991). This hypothesis encourages a more speaker-centred analysis of individuals' linguistic practices in order to uncover the exact ways variation on a micro-level (Mendoza-Denton, 2002) taps into macro-levels of variation (cf. Podesva, 2008; Kiesling, 2009; Bucholtz, 2009). Although variation on an individual level is not central to the current analysis, a discussion of the stylistic practices of the in-betweens is inevitable in an attempt to interpret their linguistic practices. This discussion will follow in Chapter 7.

5.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have analysed a series of discourse-related and functional constraints which were hypothesised to influence the variable pattern of verb inflection next to grammatical factors analysed in Chapter 4. The results support the conclusion that the system of past marking by verb inflection across the communities forms a rich and complex structure heavily dependent on both grammatical and discourse constraints. This result goes in line with a conclusion drawn by Meyerhoff (2008) who calls for the need to consider all aspects of linguistic structure, that is social, grammatical, and cognitive, as it is the interplay of

these various factors which can uncover the true complexity of variable patterns. This is also evident through the current results. In addition, the results revealed a correlation between this complexity, and frequency of inflected verbs: the higher the frequency, the more complex the underlying structure of this distribution is.

In this chapter several claims established in the process of quantitative analyses in Chapter 4 were confirmed. For example, the transmission of the variable system across generations in Mount Pleasant was corroborated and I suggested that the global phenomena might be indirectly responsible for the change in progress among adolescents in this village. Further, so far we have not established which features distinguish younger speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. I concluded that inflected verbs are not “available” enough for speakers in this community to be meaningful markers of identity due to their minimal distribution across these communities. On the other hand, bare verbs, the default variant of past reference marking, is not a good candidate either due to its ubiquity across a variety of grammatical and discourse contexts. I concluded that preverbal markers might be a feature which is used by speakers in these communities to mark the differences between them. This issue is the focal point of the following chapter.

Chapter 6 Pre-verbal markers

6.1 Introduction

Research on creole languages has often placed emphasis on examining form and function of linguistic elements which most conspicuously distinguish creoles from their lexifiers, and creole TMA systems provide an especially fruitful area for the distribution of such elements. In this chapter I focus on two past temporal reference forms, preverbal *bin* and *did*, labelled together as preverbal markers. Although these are significantly less frequently used than bare verbs and inflected verbs discussed in previous chapters, it has been observed that they do co-exist with *-ed* / \emptyset within past temporal system. In fact, preverbal markers can be characterised as one of the most frequently researched but at the same time one of the most enigmatic forms within creole TMA system. Traditionally they have been classified as conservative basilectal forms, a component of a less decreolised system.

Various functions of preverbal *bin* and *did* within a creole TMA system have been proposed, from Bickerton's (1975) hypothesis where *bin/did* were classified as markers of Anteriority according to the stativity/punctuality distinction, through an analysis of discourse organisation where *bin* is classified as a marker of backgrounding (Pollard, 1989; Youssef and James, 1999). The place of *bin* in the BeqCE past temporal reference system is also puzzling considering the high variability of forms across the villages. In addition, preverbal markers, and especially *bin*, have been characterised as socially stigmatised (Patrick, 1999) indexing rural dialects, and typically utilised by older speakers of lower socioeconomic status.

Based on this background information, there are several questions I aim to answer in this chapter. First, I want to establish the function of *bin* and *did* within the past temporal reference of BeqCE next to bare verbs and inflected verbs. Because the variants considered here lie above the level of phonology, several problems arise with their analysis which relate to the issue of form-function polyvalence (cf.

Chapter 1). Therefore, another goal of this chapter is to determine whether *bin*, *did*, *-ed* and \emptyset are indeed “alternative ways of saying the same thing” (Labov and Weiner, 1983: 6). Finally, following previous studies which recognised *bin* and *did* as socially salient, I determine whether these forms are socially meaningful in Bequia and whether they are used as a resource for signalling particular social moves.

In general, this chapter adds another set of variants to the pool of forms within past temporal reference of BeqCE, each of them placed on a different end of a creole continuum scale. While in Chapter 4 I focused on the nature of the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs, the main focus of this chapter is to examine which factors constrain speakers’ choice of preverbal markers, and determine their linguistic and social functions.

6.2 A summary of functions of preverbal markers established in previous research

As I already mentioned, I use the term preverbal markers with reference to both preverbal *bin* and *did* (cf. Chapter 3). A joint analysis of *bin* and *did* is not uncommon. One reason behind analysing them together is the overall low frequency of preverbal markers across TMA systems in creole languages (cf. Aceto and Williams, 2003 for Eastern Caribbean creoles). For example, Patrick (1999: 195) reports 100 instances of *did* out of 2200 past reference verb tokens in the mesolect of Veeton, Jamaica, and no tokens of preverbal *bin*. Sankoff (1990) found 49 tokens of *bin* across 536 clauses in Tok Pisin and Sranan, while in Hackert’s (2004: 88) BahCE data there are 203 *did* forms compared to 8172 tokens of bare verbs and inflections (the number of *bin* tokens in BahCE is not reported).

A second motivation for analysing these forms together deals with their assumed common function in a creole TMA system, with *did* often being characterised as a mesolectal equivalent of basilectal *bin*. For example, Winford (1993: 66) considers the functions of these forms to be exactly matched, while Bickerton (1975: 70) claims *did* is “simply slotted into” the place vacated by *bin* on a path of decreolisation, and that their grammatical functions in a grammar are identical. Finally, Holm (1988: 152) considers *did* to be “less deviant from standard

usage and thus less stigmatized" than *bin*, which points to different, and perhaps less salient social meanings of this form than those of *bin*. Although in this study the label preverbal markers is used to refer to both *bin* and *did*, an analysis of these forms individually will also be conducted.

Whereas the most important functions proposed for preverbal markers in a creole TMA system were outlined in Chapter 3, it is worth briefly summarising them to obtain a clearer picture of the potential contexts where preverbal markers might occur, and where they might co-occur with \emptyset and *-ed*. Eventually, the comparison of functions of these forms will enable us to establish the variable context for the quantitative analysis featuring further in this chapter.

- **Past/Anterior tense markers**

Bickerton's (1975) analysis of the Guyanese Creole TMA system was the first one to link preverbal *bin* with Anteriority as its primary function in the basilect. In his model, which proposes that a typical creole system is fundamentally unmarked, preverbal markers are hypothesised to be the only overt grammatical representations of PAST (Dahl, 1985). An interpretation of *bin* as a Simple Past or past-before-past ([+anterior]) marker, according to Bickerton, depends on whether the following verb is [+stative] or [-stative]. *Bin* plus [+stative] verb should be interpreted as Simple Past, while *bin* followed by [-stative] verbs should indicate past-before-past. As for *did*, Bickerton (1975: 69) claims it is a mesolectal form and its functions replicate those of basilectal *bin*.

- **Relative tense markers**

Preverbal markers *bin* / *did* have also been assigned to the relative time reference in a prototypical creole model (Jaganauth, 1988; Winford, 1993). Hackert (2004: 95) shows the use of preverbal *did* in Bahamian Creole, which is interpreted as a marker of relative past with speech time as a *possible* (but not obligatory) reference point. This goes in line with what Comrie considers is a crucial difference between absolute and relative past tense:

“the difference between absolute and relative tense is not that between the present moment versus some other point in time as a reference point, but rather between a form whose meaning specifies the present moment as reference point and a form whose meaning does not specify that the present moment must be its reference point” (Comrie, 1985: 58).

Identification of the reference point (of which the present moment is one possible option) is thus a crucial point for establishing whether the tense of an situation is absolute or relative (Comrie, 1985: 58). Therefore, the function of *bin/did* as Relative tense markers extends beyond [+anterior] occurrences.

- **Markers of Remoteness**

Although Bickerton’s (1975) interpretation of *bin/did* as markers of Simple Past or [+anterior] depending on the [\pm stativity] distinction was widely criticised, Bickerton himself was aware of the limitations of this pattern and proposed that perhaps a more appropriate function of *bin/did* is marking situations which are clearly terminated, or “very remote” (Bickerton, 1975: 36). This suggests that *bin/did* are used in situations with [+perfective] aspect, which as we already know, are primary contexts where *-ed* and \emptyset occur variably (cf. Chapter 4).

- **Markers of backgrounded discourse**

According to Hackert (2004: 95), and Winford (1993: 65, who also cites Youssef (1990), Jaganauth (1988) and Pollard (1989)), since no consistent grammatical function can be assigned to preverbal markers, the role of *bin/did* in discourse must be considered. Indeed, after Pollard (1989), and Youssef and James (1999) *bin* and *did* are characterised as markers of backgrounded discourse, and are claimed to feature in the sections of a narrative which provide additional information to the main story line - predominantly orientation, and/or evaluation (Hackert, 2004: 96). In these contexts preverbal markers are usually used to establish the context of a narrative, as a backdrop to the main story line in elaborations and commentaries, and to “distance the situation from the reference point” (Winford, 2000: 400; Chapter 5). Further, the above environments are considered as the contexts where the utilisation

of preverbal markers is distinguished from that of bare verbs, which mark situations currently in focus, recent, or relevant to the main story line (Winford, 1993: 65-66). Support for this observation can be found in Chapter 5 where bare verbs were shown to correlate strongly with narrative complicating actions in all the Bequia communities.

Bearing in mind these functions of preverbal markers proposed in the creole literature, in subsequent sections, I discuss their distribution across the Bequia communities and establish their linguistic function(s). The ultimate goal of this analysis is to determine the variable context for the quantitative analysis by considering the relationship between *bin/did*, bare verbs, and inflected verbs.

6.3 Distribution of preverbal markers in Bequia

Observation of the distribution of preverbal markers across the Bequia communities confirms that the use of these forms compared to bare verbs and inflected verbs is scarce. Moreover, not all speakers in the sample use them, even those from the villages in which the distribution of preverbal markers is the highest. Figure 6.1 shows the frequency of distribution of preverbal markers for individual speakers who use either *bin* or *did* at least once in the sample.

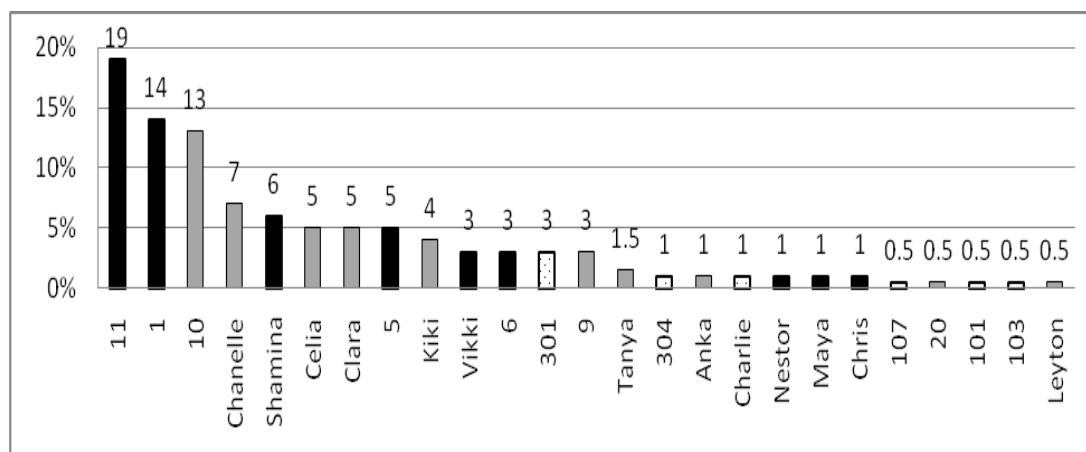


Figure 6.1 The frequency of *bin/did* per individual speaker included in the sample, in percentages. (Black bar - Hamilton; Grey bar - Paget Farm; White bar - Mount Pleasant)

Black bars represent speakers from Hamilton (speakers: 011, 001, Shamina, 005, Vikki, 006, Nestor, Maya, Chris), grey bars – Paget Farm (speakers: 010, Chanelle, Celia, Clara, Kiki, 009, Tanya, Anka, Leyton, 020), and white bars – Mount Pleasant (301, 304, Charlie, 107,101,103).

Looking at the figure, despite high inter-speaker variability, certain trends can be observed. First, the figure shows few speakers from Mount Pleasant use preverbal markers. The sporadic tokens of preverbal markers in this community come from the elders showing that these forms are almost nonexistent in the linguistic repertoire of inhabitants in this community, and especially adolescents¹⁰. Interestingly, one older speaker from Mount Pleasant, speaker 301, classified previously as an in-between (cf. Chapter 4) is responsible for the majority of tokens of *did* in this group, which again could suggest that although this form is not used by Mount Pleasanters, it is included in their available repertoire of strategies for expressing past temporal reference.

Secondly, Hamilton elders and adolescents in Paget Farm seem to be the highest users of preverbal markers overall. The utilisation of past temporal reference variables by Celia, a female from Paget Farm who appears to be a prominent *bin* user in the sample, is somewhat puzzling. On the one hand, in Chapter 4 she was classified into the cohort of speakers who stand out from the community norm in terms of the distribution of inflected verbs. Celia shows a higher use of standard forms than her peers in Paget Farm. However, looking at her higher rate of utilisation of preverbal *bin/did* contradicts this observation. I attempt to interpret this pattern in a more thorough analysis of in-betweens' linguistic behaviours which features in Chapter 7, by considering their social networks, as well as their orientations towards the communities they come from. Nevertheless, the example of Celia shows that the classification of speakers as in-betweens on the same terms as for *-ed/Ø* is not justified for *bin/did* since the distribution of preverbal markers

¹⁰ Although in this chapter I discuss the frequency of *bin/did* based on the data extracted from a sample consisting of interviews and casual recordings (cf. Chapter 3), personal communication, and ethnographic observations of the Mount Pleasant community also show that the use of preverbal markers in this community is incredibly uncommon. In fact many speakers expressed negative attitudes towards this form considering it as “incorrect” and “bad English” (cf. Section 6.6)

across individuals might not be in line with their use of bare verbs and verb inflections. In summary, the classification of speakers as in-betweeners is not justified for this variation, and will not be pursued in the analysis of preverbal markers.

An additional reason for this is the overall low frequency of preverbal markers, which complicates the allocation of tokens into more fine-grained speaker cohorts. Nevertheless, I shall keep the stratification of speakers according to their age and the village they come from. Table 6.1 shows the distribution of *bin* and *did*, next to bare verbs and inflected verbs across different villages and generation groups in raw tokens.

Variant	Ham O	Ham Y	PF O	PF Y	MP O	MP Y	Total
<i>bin</i>	61	34	4	74	1	1	175
<i>did</i>	66	2	46	3	18	2	137
Bare V.	577	391	635	566	506	203	2878
Inflected V.	136	87	244	144	414	251	1276
Total	840	514	929	787	939	457	4466

Table 6.1 Distribution of preverbal markers next to bare verbs and inflected verbs across different villages and age groups in raw numbers (O – older; Y – younger)

Considered jointly, preverbal markers are most frequent among older speakers in Hamilton, which confirms the result demonstrated in Figure 6.1. In addition, all individuals in Hamilton, except for speaker 012, use a preverbal marker at least once across the sample. Moreover, we observe that individually, *bin* and *did* are more or less equally distributed across individuals in this village. According to Table 6.1, this cannot be claimed for older speakers in Paget Farm who use preverbal markers less frequently than speakers in Hamilton, and show preference for the (arguably) mesolectal form *did*. In addition, examination of individual use of *bin/did* shows that the number of tokens of *did* and *bin* in this cohort is mostly attributed to two speakers, 009 and 010, and no other individuals in this village utilise it (cf. Figure 6.1). As I mentioned above, the situation is straightforward among the elders in Mount Pleasant who show no distribution of *bin* and few tokens of *did* which suggests that, although present in the grammar of this village,

preverbal markers are hardly ever selected as a means for expressing past temporal reference in this community.

Among adolescents the use of preverbal markers is also infrequent, although several additional observations can be made. First, although *bin* is still in use in Hamilton and Paget Farm, the distribution of *did* has dramatically dropped (two tokens in Hamilton and only one in Paget Farm). This is interesting considering the claims that *did* is the next step in the expression of past temporal reference on the path of decreolisation. On the other hand, the use of *bin* among adolescents in these communities has increased relative to *did* which again is surprising in light of previous claims, which characterised this form as basilectal. If the grammar in Paget Farm was indeed decreolising, a higher distribution of mesolectal *did* rather than a conservative *bin* form should be observed among young speakers. Moreover, the use of *bin* in Paget Farm is more frequent than in Hamilton, which again is illustrated in Table 6.1. It also needs to be noted that in Hamilton, two speakers, Vikki and Shamina are responsible for the distribution of preverbal *bin* tokens in this community (cf. Figure 6.1). This is different in Paget Farm, where all individuals included in the sample at least once utilise this form.

The differences in distribution of *bin/did* between older speakers and adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm are better illustrated in Figure 6.2 which compares the use of preverbal markers in these communities in percentages. The rates are calculated based on the total number of *bin/did* tokens from each community included in the dataset (cf. Table 6.1).

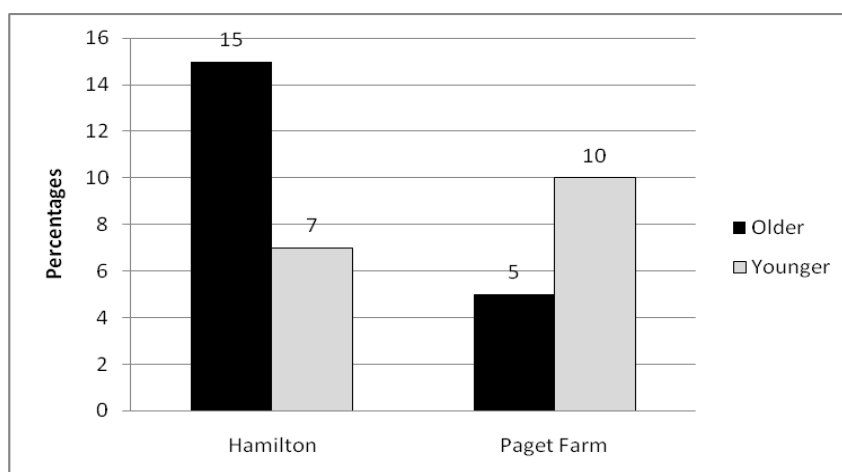


Figure 6.2 The frequency of preverbal markers across generations in Hamilton and Paget Farm, in percentages.

Looking at the distribution of preverbal markers presented in Table 6.1 and Figure 6.2 we can observe that there are differences between the two age groups in both Hamilton and Paget Farm in the use of preverbal markers. Across the Anglophone Caribbean a trend has been demonstrated showing that the distribution of these forms tends to decrease across the younger generations (e.g. Patrick, 1999: 209). According to Patrick, who analyses *bin*, *did* and *neva* in JamCE):

“Apparent-time data suggest that these markers may be dropping out of general use in the urban mesolect as indicators of past reference, unless there is a hidden stylistic constraint at work for young speakers only (and unlike *ben*, there is no evidence that *did* and *neva* are stigmatized features)” (Patrick, 1999: 211)

Several important pieces of information can be elicited from the above quotation. First of all, a general tendency for a decreasing frequency of preverbal markers in Veeton is reported, which goes in line with what we are observing among Hamilton adolescents in Bequia. Moreover, in Bequia *did* is considerably more affected by this change in frequency than *bin*. Although decreasing, *bin* seems to be still utilised by adolescents in Hamilton, while in Paget Farm its frequency has increased (cf. Table 6.1). An interpretation of this pattern might be related to the claim made by Patrick regarding the social meanings of these two variants. Patrick suggests that *bin* is subject to social stigma as a marker of rural speech, older age, and “real Patois” (Patrick, 1992; 1999: 269). On the other hand, *did* carries no such stigma, which means that its social meanings are perhaps less strong. Patrick predicts preverbal markers may disappear across younger speakers in Jamaica, unless they are subject to “hidden stylistic constraints”, suggesting there could exist a new set of indexical meanings assigned to them, available to young speakers only. I propose that this is indeed what is happening in Bequia and that the social meanings of *bin* hold the key to the interpretation of variable use of preverbal markers among adolescents in Bequia, and especially the much higher distribution of this form in Paget Farm than Hamilton. However, before I test this hypothesis, it is necessary to establish the

functions of preverbal markers in the TMA system of BeqCE, and determine whether there are any strong linguistic (rather than social) determinants of the utilisation of this form. One challenging issue with analysing *bin/did*, *-ed* and \emptyset together concerns the form-function asymmetry, which I address in the following section.

6.4 The form-function asymmetry

The issue of semantic equivalence has been central to the debate about the application of quantitative methods in an analysis of variation beyond the level of phonology (e.g. Lavandera, 1978; Romaine, 1984; Chapter 1). According to Romaine (1984) two variants of a (morpho-) syntactic variable are unlikely to ever represent “two ways of saying the same thing” (Labov and Weiner, 1983: 6), arguably one of the most fundamental theoretical prerequisites for a quantitative analysis of variation. In this study I follow the body of research which has demonstrated that variationist methodology can be successfully employed in an analysis of morpho-syntactic variables (e.g. Sankoff and Laberge, 1978; Sankoff, 1980; Silva-Corvalan, 1994; Rickford et al., 1995; Meyerhoff, 2006; Walker and Torres Cacoullos, 2009; Cheshire, 2009, and many others), although the challenges of such an analysis must be spelled out.

The issue of the form-function asymmetry is frequently faced in studies of grammaticalisation (Traugott and Heine, 1991; Bybee et al., 1994; Heine and Kuteva, 2005). The neutralisation-in-discourse hypothesis is helpful in accounting for the possible difference in meaning (D. Sankoff, 1988). It assumes that, although contexts can always be found where different forms are not precisely semantically equivalent, such subtle semantic/pragmatic distinctions are not essential to a speaker or an interlocutor (they do not disrupt the truth condition of an utterance) and are neutralised in discourse (cf. Chapter 1). According to D. Sankoff (1988: 154), if two potentially semantically equivalent morpho-syntactic forms co-occur in discourse “we cannot tell whether one form was used instead of its alternate because of the desire to convey some subtle distinction or whether a free choice was made among two or more equally serviceable alternatives (possibly under a variety of non-deterministic influences)”. What we can do, however, is to empirically

establish the grammatical and discourse contexts where such forms alternate, by observing them in the context of their use. Therefore, although there might be intra-speaker specific, non-deterministic motivations for a preverbal marker to be used by individuals in Bequia, the enterprise of this chapter is to establish the most specific but empirically testable environment where *bin/did* are used. Some of the challenges represented with this process are discussed in the following section.

6.4.1 The form-function asymmetry issue in an analysis of *bin/did*

The form-function relationship can operate in two ways: one form can have several functions according to its semantic/pragmatic meanings, or one function can be represented by several forms, in which case semantic equivalence between them is assumed. In the current study the latter understanding of the form/function asymmetry is applied (cf. Chapter 1). Past temporal reference is the most general function central to this study, and a range of possible variants used to convey it in BeqCE have been established. This however does not guarantee the semantic equivalence of these variants. As I mentioned above, in order to identify the envelope of variation for variants with the same semantic/pragmatic meaning, these forms need to be carefully analysed in discourse context and with a consideration of surface grammatical factors which might influence the distribution of a given variant (for example, temporal or aspectual restrictions). The first necessary step to establish the envelope of variation for the study of *bin/did* was to define the scope and the relevant contexts for the use of these forms, following the functions proposed in Section 6.2. Secondly, I established which other variants of past temporal reference are utilised by speakers in these contexts, this way taking care of the “non-occurrences of the variant in the relevant circumstances” (Labov, 1982: 87).

I suggest that it is possible for speakers in Bequia to variably use *bin/did*, inflected verbs and bare verbs in specific contexts which assumes shared semantic functions of these forms.

Therefore, the proposed most general envelope of variation looks as follows:

{*bin/did*} versus {-*ed*/∅}

This approach is different to the one promoted by e.g. Bickerton (1975), where *bin/did* are assigned a specific and exclusive function (in his study they are assigned to Anteriority). However, according to Figure 6.1 not all speakers in Bequia make use of this variation. It seems that while bare verbs are undeniably the preferred variant for expressing past temporal reference for speakers in the Bequia communities, inflected verbs are the second choice, and preverbal markers follow. Below I examine the functions of *bin/did* by testing their occurrence in the environments proposed in Section 6.2, and establish whether *bin/did*, *-ed* and ∅ can indeed be used to express semantically equivalent meanings. Let us first discuss the [+anterior] contexts, proposed by Bickerton as the crucial area where preverbal markers are deployed.

6.4.1.1 Anteriority

In Chapter 3 anterior situations were characterised as past relative to the past deixis (loosely “past-before-past”). The fact that [+anterior] contexts comprise only 6% of the past temporal reference contexts coded in this study (290/4466) suggests that sequenced ordering of situations prevails in the BeqCE sample. Moreover, although *bin/did* indeed occur in [+anterior] contexts, so do the other variants, bare verbs and inflected verbs. This is discussed further below.

As I mentioned in Section 6.2, Bickerton (1975) claims that the function of preverbal *bin/did* as markers of Anteriority is inextricably linked to the aspectual category of Stativity. Whenever preverbal *bin* precedes a [+stative] verb a situation should be interpreted as Simple Past. However, if followed by a [-stative] verb, *bin/did* mark a situation that is [+anterior]. Some of the examples of this pattern provided by Bickerton are as follows:

6.1 (Bickerton, 1975: 35)

Dem **bin** gat lil haus.

“They had a little house”

6.2 (Bickerton, 1975: 36)

Dem bin gatu get we an kom dis said, lef di plees an get we, bikaz terabl ting **bin hapn** wid dem chiren.

“They had to get away and come over here, leave the place and get away, because terrible things had happened to their children”.

Nevertheless, several studies following Bickerton have demonstrated that the Stativity/ Anteriority distinction is by no means privative (e.g. Sankoff, 1990; Rickford, 1987). In fact, Bickerton himself claims: “such an interpretation is at best doubtful” (1975: 36). This is also true for BeqCE where, indeed, tokens of preverbal *bin* in [+anterior] context can be found, but [-anterior] readings of *bin* are also possible, if not more frequent. Examples of *bin* and *did* in [+anterior] contexts in BeqCE are provided below:

6.3 (PF; Chanelle; 736)

[Int.] Was it easier growing up for your parents than it is for you?

[Chanelle] Things been cheaper in them days. Them used to buy a bread for one cents and two cent.

[Int.] Ok. What about like, access to things like toys and stuff in shops?

[Chanelle] Miss, in we days we get toys but them **ain't bin have** none.

6.4 (PF; 010; 1688)

[010] Like S. dead Sunday morning ten o'clock, and she bury the same Sunday evening, because C. just **did come** from sailing upon the trawler, and she bury the same evening, the Sunday evening.

Example 6.3 shows a temporal frame in which preverbal *bin* signals a situation which is [+anterior] in relation to speech time. Chanelle's youth is past in relation to speech moment which is expressed through an unmarked verb. Her parents' youth on the other hand, relates to a situation which is past-before-past. This shift on the temporal axis is hypothesised by Bickerton to be signalled grammatically through the use of preverbal *bin*. Similarly, in Example 6.4 the situation marked

with *did* took place before the moment of burying, and can be classified as [+anterior]. Nevertheless, in my data there are few tokens which could be clearly classified as [+anterior].

What is even more interesting, in Example 6.3 preverbal *bin* is followed by a [+stative] verb, which according to Bickerton's model, should signal that the situation in question is [+past] and not [+anterior]. Among the [+anterior] verb tokens extracted from the dataset I also find instances of preverbal *bin* followed by non-stative verbs, however, the lack of regularity within the model, combined with a general low frequency of *did/bin* tokens, allows us to believe that the tendency proposed by Bickerton for preverbal *bin* as the prototypical marker of Anteriority is questionable. Moreover, the [\pm stative] criterion is by no means the only factor which constraints the use of preverbal *bin* in past temporal reference. Winford (1993) notes that Anterior tense can also be expressed through grammatical means other than the preverbal particles. Examples 6.5-6.8 below show Anteriority expressed through *-ed* and \emptyset :

6.5 (Ham; 005; 1603)

[005] And my uncle who I was living with, used to send us sometimes on Sunday to spend the day with my grandmother and so on. But my grandfather... I never knew him. He **died** before I born.

6.6 (PF; Vikki; 27)

[Vikki] My grandmother she done dead. I been more small but my sister been more bigger so she **know** she more.

6.7 (MP; James; 227)

[Int.] Does Mt. Pleasant have a [cricket] team?

[James] They had.

[Int.] So what happened?

[James] They broke up because some of them, they **went away** and never come back.

6.8 (PF; 007; 698)

[007] But to my knowledge uh for now, I think that you know, everything was poor in those days. Well what you had to eat is what you **grow**.

In all the examples the forms in bold could be translated with the Past Perfect which is the way Anteriority was coded in this study. Of course, bare verbs and inflected verbs most frequently occur in [-anterior] contexts, where we also find examples of *bin* and *did*:

6.9 (Ham; 006; 1272)

[006] And we live down which part Kendrick house there, there was me mother place where we **did live** (...)

6.10 (Ham; Shamina; 00:56:25)

[Shamina] We **bin go** forest a time, we see waterfall, that the first time I **bin see** a waterfall.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the interpretation of such contexts of *bin/did* is that Anteriority is by no means the sole and most important function of preverbal markers in BeqCE, which was also observed by Hackert (2004: 94) for BahCE and Patrick (1999: 220) for JamCE. It is also possible that the definition of the category of Anteriority as 'past before past' is problematic. Indeed, later on in his analysis Bickerton revisits his definition of Anteriority and states that "a [+ anterior] action does not have to be 'past-before-past', since it could be regarded as both related and prior to a state of affairs at present in existence." (Bickerton, 1975: 46) This interpretation could account for instances of preverbal *bin* such as the one below:

6.11 (PF; Chanelle; 432)

(Recalling an argument):

[Chanelle] Miss, she **bin get drunk** a time so when she **bin get drunk**...so when she gets drunk she doz lick we of, she **bin cuss** him and tell him a whole sort of bad thing so he get vex and so she tell him about he mother and thing and he **ain't bin like** it.

Events in this narrative are ordered sequentially and are prior to speech time without necessarily being [+anterior]. According to Jaganauth (1988) and Winford (1993), the most appropriate application of preverbal *bin* is that of a marker of Relative tense, which Example 6.11 represents.

6.4.1.2 Relative tense marker

In the Relative tense situations might, but do not have to, take the moment of speech as a reference point (cf. Section 6.2). This function explains why the meaning of *bin/did* is often shifted between Simple Past and ‘past-before-past’ depending on whether the reference point is the moment of speech or any other past situations (Winford, 1993). This interpretation also accounts for the alternation of preverbal markers with \emptyset and *-ed*, which, as we have seen, can occur in both contexts. This brings up a key question, namely, which factors motivate speakers’ choice between these variants?

One possibility was proposed by Winford (1993: 65) who reported that the distribution of *bin/did* is inextricably linked to Completive aspect. Preverbal markers signal no continuing relevance to the moment of speech. This context falls under the definition of the perfective which in Chapter 3 was defined as assigned to situations “seen as unanalysed whole, with a well defined result or end-state, located in the past” (Dahl, 1985: 78). Indeed, the majority of tokens of *bin/did* found in the sample of BeqCE feature in perfective aspect, but examples of *bin/did* in habitual environments can also be found. The examples below illustrate this:

6.12 (Ham; 005; 779)

[005] Miss Q just dead yesterday, you could say. Me **bin know** your great-grand dad (...). Yeah, me know all of them.

6.13 (MP; 301; 1411)

[301] Yeah I **did wanted** children but you ain’t meet the right woman to make children.

In both examples *bin/did* + Verb could be substituted with *used to*, and refer to a situation which is “characteristic of an extended period of time; (...) not an incidental property of a moment but a characteristic feature of a whole period” which falls under Comrie’s definition of habituality (Comrie, 1976: 73). In Table 6.2 the distribution of preverbal markers, next to bare verbs and inflected verbs across grammatical aspect is illustrated.

Variant	perfective		habitual		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Preverbal markers	215	69	97	31	312
Inflected Verbs	977	76	301	24	1278
Bare Verbs	2117	73	759	27	2876
Total	3309	74	1157	26	4466

Table 6.2 The distribution of preverbal markers, bare verbs and inflected verbs across grammatical aspect in BeqCE

Thirty one percent of *bin/did* in habitual contexts suggests that grammatical aspect should be included as a potential constraint for the variation within past temporal reference. Winford (1993) attempts to distinguish the use of \emptyset from that of *bin/did* by pointing out that the former signal information currently in focus, which may bear some relevance to the current situation, or is of current relevance. According to Winford, an unmarked verb can be used to convey information such as “hot news”, or “perfect of result” that *bin* cannot, which would explain why unmarked verbs are rather frequent in a complicating action section of a narrative compared to *bin/did*. This observation points to discourse organisation as yet another factor which could determine the distribution of preverbal markers.

6.4.1.3 Markers of backgrounded discourse

Pollard (1989), Winford (1993) and Youssef and James (1999) distinguish between preverbal *bin/did* as backgrounded discourse markers and unmarked verbs as foregrounded discourse markers (cf. Chapter 5 for a more detailed definition of

these categories). While in BeqCE *bin* and *did* indeed occur only in backgrounded discourse, bare verbs and inflected verbs cover both contexts (although the quantitative analysis in Chapter 5 showed that bare verbs are more frequent in foregrounded discourse, and inflected verbs predominantly mark backgrounded discourse). *Bin/did* are often used by Bequia speakers to establish a time frame, or a reference point, and for building up a background for the main events in a narrative. Example 6.12 shows the use of *bin* in such a context.

6.12 (PF; Chanelle; 559)

[Chanelle] It had a woman from Southside, one time she **bin come** harbour. So I **bin stand up** talking to this boy, and she go down and tell my mother how some boy give me hug up in the harbour...

The situations marked with *bin* in the example above are assigned to backgrounded discourse indeed but what is also noticeable is the section of a narrative in which they occur - orientation. In Chapter 5 I claimed that there is a collinear effect between grounding and narrative structure: whereas backgrounded clauses occur predominantly in evaluations, orientations, and other parts which provide supplementary material to the main story line, foregrounded events overlap with the complicating action of a narrative where the main events moving the narrative forward occur. Therefore, by accounting for discourse grounding as influential for the distribution of *bin/did* at the same time narrative organisation is considered.

Because there are no tokens of *bin/did* in foregrounded clauses, such contexts must be removed from the quantitative analysis for the variants to be semantically equivalent. Table 6.3 shows the distribution of preverbal *bin/did* next to bare verbs and inflected verbs across foregrounded and backgrounded clauses. In the quantitative analysis only the tokens of backgrounded discourse will be considered (N=2158).

According to Patrick (1999: 218) discourse grounding is related to Anteriority. Backgrounded contexts often encompass clauses in which a temporal order of events is disrupted. On the other hand, in a complicating action sequenced

ordering of events is more frequent. It is therefore expected to find [+anterior] environments in backgrounded discourse, and [-anterior] contexts elsewhere.

Grounding	<i>Did/bin</i>		Inflected V.		Bare V.		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Foregrounded	0	0	399	33	1909	67	2308
Backgrounded	312	100	877	69	969	33	2158
Total	312	100	1276	100	2878	100	4466

Table 6.3 Token distribution of *did/bin*, inflected verbs, and bare verbs across foregrounded and backgrounded contexts

Therefore, the correlation between *bin/did* and Anteriority might be merely a residue of the discourse organisation of clauses in a narrative, embedded in the category of grounding. This again confirms that the relationship between grammar and discourse should not be underestimated for the interpretation of the variable use of past marking in BeqCE, and perhaps in CECs in general. Clearly, the occurrence of forms within past temporal reference is to a large extent dictated by discourse constraints according to which past marking is sometimes crucial for the organisation of forms in a narrative, and sometimes it is redundant.

The final potential function of *bin/did* is discussed below and deals with the temporal distance of events marked by preverbal markers from speech time/reference time, namely - Remoteness.

6.4.1.4 Remoteness

According to the definition of Remoteness, the use of preverbal markers in discourse is hypothesised to be determined by an extended temporal distance between an event time and speech time and/or reference time. Bickerton provides the following example to illustrate the remote use of preverbal *bin*:

6.13 (Bickerton, 1975; 36)

Wen mi bin smaal laik a dem pikni dis den mi **bin faal** a trench.

“When I was as small as the children, I fell in a canal.”

Remoteness here is assigned to the early childhood of the speaker indicating a large temporal distance between the moment of speech and the event described. We find tokens like this in BeqCE as well:

6.14 (PF; Tanya; 10)

[Int.] So do you think your parents behaved better when they were young? [Tanya] Miss **in them days** them ain't **bin have** them rules there.

A marker of Remoteness is frequent in African languages, such as Bantu (Kisseberth and Odden, 2003). Considering the history of the emergence of creole languages (e.g. Parkvall, 2000) it would not be surprising for such a marker to exist in Atlantic creole languages as well. However, assigning Remoteness as one of the functions of preverbal markers poses a methodological problem. Namely, in light of the lack of specific rules for establishing a degree of remoteness, one could ask, how large does the temporal distance need to be for a situation to be characterised as “remote”? An absence of such rules makes it difficult to include the category in the process of coding and apply it as a predictor for the distribution of forms within past temporal reference.

Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008) distinguish several temporal frames for the analysis of Present Perfect and the Preterite in Spanish, which cover a range of temporal distances: proximate past (e.g. “today”), prehodiernal past (“before today”), situations for which temporal distance is irrelevant, and situations where temporal distance is indeterminate. This classification, however, does not seem to be appropriate for the analysis of past temporal reference in Bequia considering the nature of the data. The majority of the data are narratives which focus on personal experiences from the past, memories and recollected stories (cf. Chapter 3). This means that a number of tokens of proximate past would be limited, and the category of prehodiernal past, which indeed applies to the majority of tokens, is in turn too large to account for a variety of time extensions expressed.

For these reasons, the category of Remoteness has not been coded and quantified. Instead, I shall consider a category which was also examined in Chapter 5, namely presence/absence of a temporal cue (cf. Chapter 5). Since situations

which are remote seem to occur next to a temporal indication rather frequently (as Examples 6.13 and 6.14 demonstrated), I will investigate whether there is a statistical correlation between the use of *bin/did* and the presence of a temporal adverbial.

The above discussion confirms that *bin/did* without a doubt are markers of past temporal reference, however their functions are strongly subject to discourse organisation. We have seen that *bin/did* in BeqCE are used as Relative tense markers where they vary with bare verbs and inflected verbs. Moreover, the context of occurrence of these forms needs to be narrowed down to backgrounded discourse since preverbal markers do not feature in foregrounded contexts. The envelope of variation for *bin/did* vs. zero and inflected verbs can be therefore summarised as follows:

{*Did/bin*} versus { \emptyset /*-ed*} in [+backgrounded] contexts

Although we can see that speakers alternate between preverbal markers and zero/inflected verbs in the context specified above, it is still unclear: (i) which factors motivate this variable occurrence, and (ii) why younger speakers in Paget Farm use these forms with much higher frequencies than the elders in their village and their peers in Hamilton. In the following section I consider several linguistic and social factors which could be useful in the interpretation of the variation between preverbal markers and bare verbs/inflected verbs.

6.5 Variable rule analysis of *bin/did*

In the following analysis the effect of grammatical categories on the distribution of *bin/did* vs. *-ed*/ \emptyset is tested, namely: grammatical aspect, lexical aspect, presence/absence of a temporal cue, and morphological class. We have already seen that some of these factors showed a significant effect for the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs (cf. Chapter 4 and 5) which means they are important predictors for the distribution of past temporal reference variants across both generations of speakers in Bequia in the three communities. Mount Pleasant is not considered in the quantitative analysis and there are at least two reasons behind it.

First, a very low distribution of *bin/did* tokens, especially for the cohort of adolescents. Secondly, a more burning issue which I aim to investigate through this analysis deals with the ways *bin/did* are used in Paget Farm and Hamilton, especially among adolescents. The analysis in Chapter 4 and 5 revealed that the profile of variation for bare verbs and inflected verbs does not break these communities off from each other. The primary goal of the following investigation is therefore to establish whether the use of preverbal markers points to any differences between these communities. Nonetheless, the low distribution of *bin/did* in Mount Pleasant remains an important argument in the discussion of the nature of the linguistic system in Bequia which follows in Chapter 7.

Since Chapter 4 revealed that there has been a change in the structure of the system of past tense reference across the two generations of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm (this was established on the basis of different constraint rankings for the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs across the two age groups), it is worth considering the age cohorts separately. Despite the small sample of preverbal markers in the data set Hamilton and Paget Farm need to be analysed individually in order to determine whether the mechanisms which operate this variation are comparable across the communities. However, in an analysis which follows later in this chapter the communities are combined and Village is included as an independent predictor. This will also enable us to establish the strengths of the effect of community membership next to language-internal constraints. Preverbal *did/bin* are considered together as a dependent variable and are analysed against bare verbs and inflected verbs within the variable context specified above. Exceptional verbs were treated according to the decisions made in Chapter 4: *come* was combined with other irregular verbs, *go* was retained as a separate factor, and *have* was excluded from the analysis. The predictors analysed are: aspect and morphological class of the verb preceded by *bin/did*, and the presence/absence of a temporal cue.

The categories of lexical and grammatical aspect were again combined to avoid potential interactions (cf. Chapter 4). Due to a low number of tokens of *bin/did* across individual aspectual categories, a decision was made to combine perfective accomplishments and perfective activities into one category – ‘other perfective’

which will be analysed next to punctuals, another perfective category. Similarly, habitual accomplishments and habitual activities were combined into one group – ‘other habituals’. These form a separate group to habitual stative verbs. In addition, in all the runs Lexeme was modeled as a random effect. Let us first evaluate the results obtained from two generations of speakers in Hamilton illustrated in Table 6.4.

	Hamilton Old			Hamilton Young		
Community						
Input prob.	0.3			N/A		
Total N	350			246		
Log likelihood	-195.025			-95.872		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Gramm. Aspect	Not significant			Not significant		
Stative	[0.55]	17	66	[0.65]	15	45
Punctual	[0.48]	4	166	[0.59]	16	60
Other perf.	[0.48]	7	71	[0.53]	12	126
Other Hab.	[0.47]	1	47	[0.24]	6	15
<i>Range</i>	N/A			40		
Morph. class	p.<0.01			Not significant		
<i>Go</i>	combined (Irregular)			[0.35]	8	37
Irregular	0.31	22	183	[0.49]	13	105
Semi-weak	0.47	24	37	[0.63]	18	16
Syllabic reg.	combined (V-final reg.)			[0.60]	21	14
V-final reg.	0.51	32	52	KO	0	KO
C-final reg.	0.69	57	78	[0.41]	10	74
<i>Range</i>	38			N/A		
Temp. Cue	Not significant					
Present	[0.44]	23	89	[0.45]	10	88
Absent	[0.55]	35	261	[0.54]	15	158
<i>Range</i>	N/A			N/A		
Lexeme	Random			Random		

Table 6.4 Factors predicted to constrain the distribution of *bin/did* among two generations of speakers Hamilton

First, the effect of aspect, which encompasses habitual stative, perfective punctual situations, accomplishments and activities, is not a significant category for the distribution of preverbal markers in either cohort, which runs counter to the prediction made by Bickerton (1975). However, despite the fact the category itself is not significant, the direction of this effect agrees with Bickerton’s argument –

preverbal markers occur more frequently before stative verbs. Nonetheless, other studies on past temporal reference across CECs have demonstrated that discourse grounding and narrative organisation hold more explanatory power for the occurrence of these forms than the stative/non-stative distinction (e.g. Pollard, 1989; Tagliamonte, 1999; Patrick, 1999). The analysis of preverbal markers in Hamilton seems to confirm these observations.

An uneven distribution of tokens across morphological class was also challenging for modeling this predictor in the analysis. To reduce the interactions, I combined *go* with other irregular verbs, and syllabic regular verbs with vowel-final regular verbs (based on similar factor weight values). Morphological class is a significant predictor for this variation among the older group of speakers in Hamilton, and the factor weights suggest that there is a tendency in the hypothesised direction (C-final regular verbs favour the presence of *bin/did*). This result points to a functional role of preverbal markers, which occur predominantly before the class of verbs which are most likely to feature as stems. On the contrary, preverbal markers strongly disfavor irregular verbs which, as we have seen in Chapter 4, usually occur with the highest rate of inflection.

The result showing none of the proposed linguistic factors is significant among adolescents in Hamilton could be a residue of the low frequency of preverbal markers in this cohort. Even though the high number of stative verbs following preverbal markers indicates that there could be a pattern behind the use of *bin/did*, it is also possible that this effect is due to chance. The predictors tested above did not shed more light on the factors which determine the distribution of these forms for adolescents in Hamilton. It is also possible that other factors are responsible for this distribution which are not tested here, for example the above mentioned effect of remoteness which I classified as unsuitable for the current quantitative method.

Let us now focus on the results obtained from the two generations of speakers in Paget Farm. These are illustrated in Table 6.5. Again, the results obtained for the younger group of speakers show that none of the factors included in the analysis are statistically significant for the variation between *bin/did* vs. -

ed/Ø. But among the older speakers this variation is significant for aspectual differences.

Community	P.Farm Old			P.Farm Young		
Input prob.	0.09			N/A		
Total N	322			252		
Log likelihood	-122.441			-210.291		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Gramm. Aspect	p.<0.01			Not significant		
Stative	0.76	28	60	[0.70]	44	54
Punctual	0.53	10	154	[0.46]	23	92
Other perf.	0.59	18	73	[0.42]	21	93
Other Hab.	0.15	3	35	[0.40]	23	13
<i>Range</i>	61			N/A		
Morph. class	Not significant			Not significant		
<i>Go</i>	[0.26]	5	61	[0.33]	15	19
Irregular	[0.49]	16	127	[0.43]	23	118
Semi-weak	[0.55]	15	13	[0.53]	30	13
Syllabic reg.	[0.57]	23	17	[0.69]	53	15
V-final reg.	[0.44]	12	50	[0.47]	30	20
C-final reg.	[0.66]	22	54	[0.51]	28	67
<i>Range</i>	N/A			N/A		
Temp. Cue	Not significant			Not significant		
Present	[0.45]	7	115	[0.46]	23	74
Absent	[0.55]	18	207	[0.53]	28	178
<i>Range</i>	N/A			N/A		
Lexeme	Random			Random		

Table 6.5 Factors predicted to constrain the distribution of *bin/did* among speakers in Paget Farm

The correlation between *bin/did* and [+stative] verbs seems to support Bickerton's hypothesis that [+stative] verbs preceded by *bin/did* are used to mark the Preterite (although by all means this does not support a private relationship whereby *bin/did* + [-stative] verbs mark Anteriority). In Chapter 4 the results of variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs showed that stative verbs highly correlate with inflection among older speakers in Paget Farm. Overall, the results highlight Stativity as the environment which favours tense marking, either through inflectional morphology or preverbal markers in this community. We need to remember that in Paget Farm stative verbs correlate with backgrounded discourse context (cf. Section 4.6.2) which is the variable context established here for *bin/did*.

Thus, the correlation between preverbal markers and [+stative] verbs might be related to the foregrounded/backgrounded discourse organisation rather than representing prototypical creole grammar.

On the other hand, punctual verbs show a neutral correlation with preverbal markers. This effect is less surprising considering the results obtained in Chapter 4: (i) although punctual verbs highly correlated with verb inflection, the vast majority of [+punctual] contexts were realised as \emptyset , and (ii) punctuals are likely to occur in the complicating action section of a narrative where verb stems dominate.

The analysis of aspect in Paget Farm also confirms that habitual verbs are likely to be realised through \emptyset which was discussed as a pan-variety trend rather than a creole feature (cf. Chapter 4). Finally, the result from the older group of speakers in Paget Farm showing a positive correlation between *bin/did* and the perfective, categorised as the primary environment for the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs, confirms that preverbal markers overlap in function and meaning with standard-identified *-ed* and the vernacular default \emptyset variant.

Although morphological class is not significant in this community, an effect similar to the one observed for the two generations of speakers in Hamilton emerged, namely, regular verbs, and especially consonant-final verbs seem to follow preverbal *bin/did* more often than irregular verbs. I attributed this effect to the functional explanations claiming that speakers would use preverbal *bin/did* before the verbs which almost categorically feature as stems to avoid temporal ambiguity. On the other hand, irregular verbs, which overall showed a high rate of inflection consistently disfavour preverbal markers.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of preverbal markers across the two communities and age groups. First, yet again we observe that an interpretation of variable patterns within past temporal reference in BeqCE would be inaccurate without considering the discourse context. Observation of preverbal *bin/did* in discourse allowed us to narrow down the variable context to backgrounded clauses only, where preverbal markers overlap in function and meaning with bare verbs and inflected verbs. Secondly, the results point to a different treatment of this variation among older speakers in Hamilton and Paget

Farm. Whereas morphological class showed a significant effect on the distribution of preverbal markers in Hamilton, in Paget Farm it is sensitive to aspectual differences. Stativity seems to correlate with preverbal *bin/did* also in Hamilton but this result is not statistically significant. This argument adds to the discussion about the nature of the linguistic system(s) in these communities. Preverbal markers seem to be another area of grammar where these two communities show discrepancies which supports the argument that considering variation within past temporal reference among older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm as one “more creole-like” grammar seems unjustified.

Furthermore, it is possible that among adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm *bin/did* have lost the more narrow functions apparent among the older generations (assigned to Stativity and consonant-final regular verbs), and have merged in meaning with bare verbs and inflected verbs signaling a more general [+past] meaning (cf. Patrick, 1999: 221). The situation where a more general linguistic function absorbs the more specific ones has been associated with the grammaticalisation process (e.g. Hopper and Traugott, 2003). It is possible that for the adolescent cohorts preverbal markers have lost the narrow meaning which allows for other variants, \emptyset and *-ed*, to co-occur with them in specific environments.

One way this could happen is through the above-mentioned neutralisation of variants in discourse (cf. Chapter 1; D. Sankoff, 1988; Schwenter and Torres Cacoulios, 2008: 10). Subtle, broadly understood functional distinctions between variants are not essential to an interlocutor for a successful comprehension of an utterance if an appropriate discourse context is provided. As a result, the subtle distinctions between individual variants might be gradually lost in favour of a more general function range. This is also supported by Hackert’s (2004: 102) questionnaire data and BahCE speakers’ comments regarding preverbal *did*. BahCE speakers’ variant choices in TMA questionnaires did not show that preverbal *did* carries a unique function, different to the ones fulfilled by bare verbs and inflected verbs. Even though they indeed preferred *did* in some contexts, Hackert’s conclusion is as follows:

“Most strikingly, all speakers emphasized the fact that the meaning of most verb situations, whether **did**-marked or not, remains the same. This seems to indicate that **did** is perceived to possess a temporal value, past, which motivates many of its discourse functions, but that the latter, rather than a consistent semantic opposition, are the primary determinants of its use” (Hackert, 2004: 102).

Since merging of functions of forms seems to be one of the steps on the path of decreolisation (Patrick, 1999: 221), it is possible that the neutralisation of functions of preverbal markers and inflected verbs could prompt the latter to be slotted into the place of the former. This could explain the narrowing distribution of preverbal markers in BeqCE, and perhaps also in other CECs. While this could have been the case in Mount Pleasant, it is more probable that preverbal markers are simply not a solid component of the grammar in this community.

The fact that none of the predictors shows a significant influence on the distribution of *bin/did* among adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm confirms that the system of past temporal reference in these communities has been restructured and levelled out (cf. Chapter 4). But while in Hamilton this levelling affects both the frequency of *bin/did*, and the underlying system which determines the use of these forms, in Paget Farm only the constraints are affected. In Chapter 5 I concluded that variation between \emptyset /*-ed* is not the area of grammar which breaks off the adolescent communities of Hamilton and Paget Farm. However, the distinctions between these villages become apparent in the frequency rates of *bin/did*. This is illustrated in Figures 6.4 and 6.5 which show the percentage distribution of *bin/did* as well as bare verbs and inflected verbs in both communities. Several tendencies can be noted.

In both communities we observe a slight increase in the use of bare verbs although this does not seem to be statistically significant (cf. Chapter 4 where bare verbs were discussed as a default variant for expressing past temporal reference with a steady frequency rate across both communities and age groups). A more interesting observation can be made regarding the trend for inflected verbs and preverbal markers. In Hamilton this tendency is as expected: while inflected verbs have not changed in their distribution across the communities, the use of preverbal markers has dropped. This could indeed suggest that the functions reserved for

bin/did among the younger generations are fulfilled by \emptyset /*-ed* variation. In Paget Farm, the tendency is reverse. A slight decrease in the use of inflected verbs is observed, and the use of preverbal markers has increased. This again confirms that adolescents in this village could be using preverbal markers in the contexts where their peers from the other villages would use *-ed* or \emptyset .

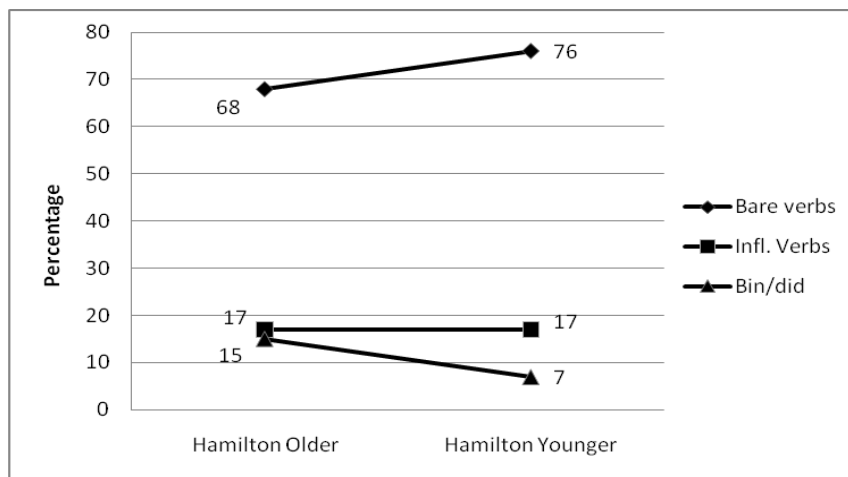


Figure 6.3 Distribution of variants across generations in Hamilton

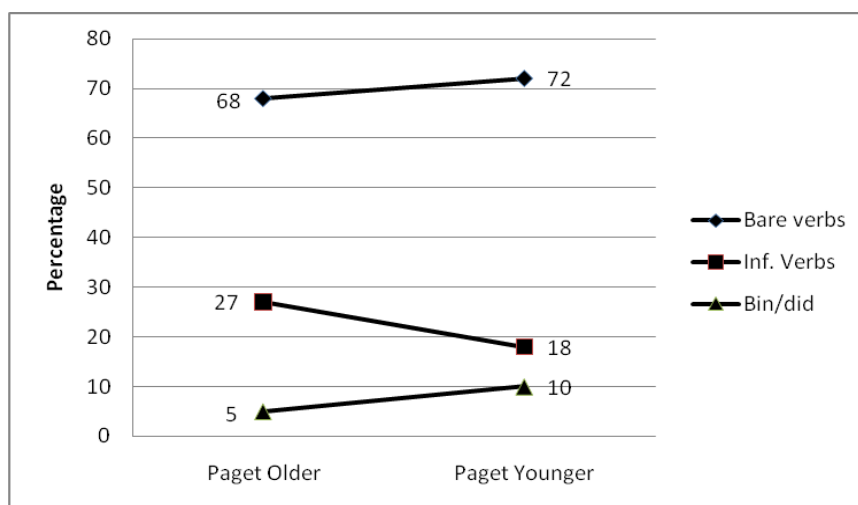


Figure 6.4 Distribution of variants across generations in Paget Farm

Analysis of the village membership (Table 6.6) confirms that there has been a change in the use of *bin/did* across generations. Whereas older speakers in Hamilton are more likely to utilise *bin/did* than their peers in Paget Farm, in the younger generation the situation is reversed: adolescents in Paget Farm strongly favour the use of *bin/did* over young speakers in Hamilton. Considering that the underlying

constraints of the use of preverbal markers are the same in Hamilton and Paget Farm, we might ask which factors condition the increase in the frequency of these forms among adolescents in Paget Farm.

Community	Older speaker			Adolescents		
Input prob.	0.108			0.076		
Total N	1090			699		
Log likelihood	-399.978			-251.224		
	F.w	%	N	F.w	%	N
Village	p.<0.000			Not significant		
Hamilton	0.74	32	350	0.62	13	246
Paget Farm	0.53	14	322	0.80	27	252
Mount Pleasant	0.22	4	418	0.13	1	201
Range	52			67		

Table 6.6 Contribution of place for the distribution of preverbal markers across the two age groups.

In the following section I attempt to answer the question as to why all of a sudden adolescents in Paget Farm have picked up the form, characterised in CECs as rural and “backwards”, and use it significantly more than the older generation.

6.6 Social stratification of *bin/did*

I suggest that the social meanings of *bin/did* is the key to the interpretation of the results obtained through the quantitative analysis. Patrick (1999) identifies several correlations between preverbal *bin* and the social profiles of its users. Some of these patterns have also been confirmed by Hackert for BahCE speakers. The perceptions towards these forms are summarised in Table 6.7.

	Perceptions/attitudes towards preverbal markers
<i>bin</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural speech • Stigmatised • Old-fashioned • Infrequent but socially salient • Characteristic of older speakers
<i>did</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working-class • Urban • Older, male (Patrick 1999) • Stronger dialect, more vernacular than unmarked verbs • Avoided by speakers of higher social classes (Hackert 2004)

Table 6.7 Perception/attitudes towards *bin* and *did* in JamCE and BahCE according to Patrick (1999) and Hackert (2004)

According to Patrick, the distinction between *bin* and *did* marks a split between rural and urban speech, possibly one of the most crucial dichotomies for the interpretation of variation within past temporal reference in JamCE. Urbanness is associated with higher social status, access to material goods, pop culture, and progress, while ruralness represents tradition, and folklore but also backwardness and lower social status (Patrick, 1999). Another strong dichotomy associated with the use of preverbal markers overall is that of old vs. young. Preverbal markers are associated with older speech, and this social category, according to Patrick (1999), strongly overwhelms others, such as gender and social class. In addition, among speakers of BahCE using preverbal *did* is associated with a more vernacular speech, and a strong local dialect (Hackert, 2004: 101).

To a large extent these social evaluations of *bin* and *did* are replicated in Bequia, although, as I discussed in Chapter 2, specific linguistic features are subject to little overt commentary among Bequians. Speakers' perceptions towards particular forms occasionally emerge in regular conversations which I took notes of, or when speakers are overtly asked about certain aspects of language. *Bin* and *did* were not once overtly commented upon, however several interesting observations were made when speakers were directly asked for their opinions about those who use these forms. For example, when I asked Samantha from Mount Pleasant about preverbal *bin* she admitted people in her community do not use it, but one might find it in the Southside. When I confirmed that indeed I heard the Southside people using it sometimes, she replied "I'm not surprised". She explained that this form is incorrect and so it is not surprising that it is found among the community which is rough and backwards (which goes in line with the general attitudes towards Paget Farm among Bequians, cf. Chapter 2 and 7). Similarly, I asked Celia from Paget Farm about the difference in meaning between *bin* and a bare verb, for example in *I bin go* vs. *I go*. Quite expectedly she said that there is no difference between them but "*I bin go*" is "how us, Paget Farm people, doz talk", after which she said she enjoys the status of Paget Farm as "different" and admitted that language is a strong part of "who we are".

I suggest that preverbal markers in Bequia, similarly to JamCE, mark a dichotomy between two strong social dimensions, but rather than marking ruralness vs. urbanness, in Bequia they mark place identities. Whereas the lack of preverbal markers in the speech of adolescents in Mount Pleasant is anticipated, a sudden increase of a stigmatised, arguably salient and negatively evaluated feature by young people in Paget Farm seems more surprising. Why out of the two forms – *bin* and *did*, which are both considered as vernacular and “creole”, do we see an increase in the use of the former and an almost complete disappearance of the latter?

I suggest that the answer, again, lies in the functional (meaning-carrying) role of variation. In Section 6.2 I quoted Patrick who claims *bin* is subject to stronger social evaluations than *did*, which could mean that the former carries stronger social meanings. In Chapter 1, I argued that it is usually the forms with high social awareness which are most frequently used as carriers of social meanings (e.g. Dubois and Horvath, 1999; Zhang, 2005). Other work has shown that social meanings can vary within a community, according to personal experiences necessary to experience such meanings (e.g. Johnstone and Kiesling, 2008). I suggest that young speakers in Paget Farm use *bin* as a meaningful identity marker of difference (Bucholtz and Hall, 2004). This difference operates on a variety of levels, which were discussed in detail in Chapter 2. Being different seems to be especially important for young people in Paget Farm to draw a demarcation line between them and Hamilton. This goes in line with the conclusion drawn in Chapter 5 where we observed that marking village differences, although a very significant aspect of Bequian identity, is not reflected in the grammatical or discourse level for the variation between bare verbs and verb inflections in these communities. I suggested that perhaps due to their minimal frequency, inflected verbs are not available enough to be used meaningfully in identity work, contrary to the way this is done among adolescents in Mount Pleasant. Instead, adolescents in Paget Farm use the resources which to them are socially salient, and perhaps the most authentic markers of ‘creoleness’ (cf. Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion of the notion of authenticity). However, the use of *bin* does not seem to be associated with individual acts of identity or as a marker of particular stances in interaction (cf.

Schilling-Estes, 1998). Namely, the form is used by all Paget Farm adolescents across all topics in narratives and in dialogues rather than in contexts where its use could be interpreted as marking or emphasising particular stances or acts of identity (LePage and Tabouret-Keller, 1985).

I also propose that some of the indexicality of *bin* might have changed (cf. Ochs, 1992; Silverstein, 2003). While elsewhere *bin* is a stigmatised marker of “old people’s talk” and backwardness, among younger Paget Farm speakers it seems to be a marker of locality, tradition, and perhaps authenticity. It is possible that the social meanings of *bin* go in line with the perceptions of Paget Farm people towards their village. Therefore, using *bin* makes you a “real” young Southsider which in turn points to several characteristics: being more traditional, fun, rougher (which aligns with a very trendy youth identity of a dancehall artist persona, and a “gangsta rapper”; cf. Chapter 2), and most importantly, different from Hamilton. Arguably, it is not accidental that it is indeed *bin*, a stigmatised, highly salient form which is used as a pointer to the meanings outlined above, and not *did*, which has been discussed as a feature with generally neutral or positive associations.

This observation largely resembles the conclusions drawn by Dubois and Horvath (1999) for a Cajun community in Louisiana. An especially interesting and relevant finding reported by Dubois and Horvath is an increase in the (stereotypical) vernacular Cajun variants among young males in the community, as a response to the Cajun Renaissance according to which Cajun traditions (e.g. food and music), and cultural values became attractive and desirable. For young men in this community, the adoption of vernacular Cajun English forms became a carrier of traditional Cajun identity. Since the Cajun Renaissance has most significantly affected the sphere of traditional male activities, males are seen as Cajun torchbearers (Dubois and Horvath, 1999: 306). There are several parallels between the situation discussed by Dubois and Horvath and the adolescent Paget Farm community in Bequia. In both cases the highly salient forms, widely associated with traditional and vernacular language have been picked up and show a sudden increase in frequency. Dubois and Horvath attribute this process to a response to massive social changes which have affected the community, and especially the

renaissance of the Cajun culture which has contributed to the perception of a Cajun persona as attractive and popular.

I suggest that Bequia right now is also a timely point for cultural and linguistic changes in light of recent globalising forces affecting the island (reflected through e.g. increased tourism and mobility, or the improved socio-economic situation of many Bequians). Paget Farm is perceived as a community which is least affected by these changes which in the eyes of other Bequians is considered as “backwards” and undeveloped. An adoption of a highly vernacular ‘creole’ variant might be seen as a response of Paget Farm adolescents who, in light of these socio-economic transformations, seem to be changing the stereotype of an undeveloped and rough to an authentic traditional community, a stronghold of creole identity.

A positive perception of several basilectal creole forms by young people in light of urbanisation and general socio-cultural changes was also reported by Youssef (2001) for the Bethel community in Tobago. Youssef found that both young men and women use several forms (*a*, *doz*, and preverbal *bin*) equally frequent or more frequently than the older generation. For example, a basilectal imperfective marker *a* is used most frequently by older men, followed by young women and young men (Youssef, 2001: 42). Although older women and young men do not use *bin* in Bethel, young women use it as frequently as older men. According to Youssef the active use of the basilectal forms by young people is connected to the positive values they attach to creole norms. However, a crucial observation for my analysis made by Youssef (2001: 44) is: “though the society may share common positive values for the ‘Creole’, what constitutes ‘Creole’ markedness differs according to age and education level”. In Bequia it seems to differ not just according to age, but more importantly, to a community one comes from. The claim that globalising trends prompt adolescents in Bequia to increase the differentiation between the Bequia communities is discussed in Chapter 7 where I focus on the impact that globalising trends have had on the identity of speakers in each Bequia community, and the influence this has on language variation and change.

6.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed two variants which add to the pool of forms within past temporal reference in BeqCE: preverbal markers *bin* and *did*. The hypothesis formulated in the beginning of this chapter predicted that *bin/did* do not hold an exclusive linguistic function based on privative oppositions which determines their utilisation, but that they co-occur with bare verbs and inflected verbs in a more general [+past] context. A more detailed qualitative analysis demonstrated that preverbal *bin* and *did* indeed can be classified as Relative tense markers, and their distribution is constrained by discourse-related factors. Moreover, I concluded that *bin/did* are likely to occur in backgrounded discourse and the sections of a narrative which add supplementary information to the main story line, where they co-occur with bare verbs and inflected verbs. Based on this observation a question was raised as to which factors condition speakers' choices between *bin/did* and *-ed* and \emptyset . Results of the variable rule analysis showed that among older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm the utilisation of *bin/did* is sensitive to grammatical factors (following regular verbs in Hamilton, and following stative verbs in Paget Farm) but these have been levelled out among adolescents in these communities. I suggested that young Bequians in these villages might be one step ahead in the process of decreolisation since the more narrow function of *bin/did* seems to have been lost in favour of a more general [+past] function. However, regardless of this structural levelling, the frequency of preverbal markers has increased among adolescents in Paget Farm. I proposed that the most important factor in the interpretation of this result is the social meaning of preverbal markers, and especially *bin*, a salient basilectal form.

Several important conclusions can be drawn from the analyses conducted in this chapter. First, I demonstrated that the variation within past temporal reference should not be narrowed down to bare verbs and inflected verbs, but that there are other co-occurring variants, available for speakers in expressing past temporal reference. Therefore, a larger picture of the past temporal reference system in BeqCE emerges where forms from various ends of the creole continuum scale occur in, what Patrick calls, "a rich, mixed, and variable grammar that has evolved over time – but has never come to resemble either the strict agreement requirements of

standard English, or the neat, predictable and purely functional systems imagined by many linguists to characterise creoles” (Patrick, 1999: 194).

Secondly, the results point to important information as to the differences between the villages. The analysis adds one more area of past temporal reference where the grammars of the older communities in Hamilton and Paget Farm diverge. Although preverbal markers are used in both villages, the constraints which determine their distribution are different. This supports the conclusion drawn in the previous chapter that classifying the system in these two villages as one more creole-like grammar does not hold enough empirical support.

After Dubois and Horvath (1999), I proposed that the “recycling” of preverbal *bin* in Paget Farm, a form considered in previous studies as stigmatised, old-fashioned, and highly vernacular, is motivated by its social meaning, and a desire of Paget Farm adolescents to project their community as different - traditional, and authentically Creole. I suggested that in light of the recent socio-economic and cultural transformations triggered by globalisation, now is a timely point for adolescents in Bequia to re-negotiate their ties to the local community, and the outside world. In the following chapter I discuss this issue in detail by considering the possible influence of globalising trends on identity construction among adolescent in Bequia, the significance of place identity on this process, and the repercussions this might have for language variation and change.

Chapter 7 Social variation in Bequia and the question of the system

7.1 Introduction

In previous chapters I analysed and characterised the pattern of variable tense marking in Bequia by examining the effect of several grammatical, discourse, and functional categories which this variation is sensitive to. Although these results point to important conclusions regarding the nature of the linguistic system in Bequia, and the relationship between the communities on the island, this study would not be complete without examining the social context of language use. The relationship between language variation, social structure and social identity is inextricably linked and has been a subject of extensive research by sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists for almost a century. This relationship is apparent in Bequia even to casual observers (cf. Chapter 2). Therefore, in order to not only describe but also interpret the patterns of variation in Bequia, the social underpinnings of language use need to be investigated. Several issues are discussed in this chapter in the following order.

First, I discuss the geographical, social and perceived dimensions of place and show how they have shaped the local ideologies across the Bequia communities. One of the most important components of the place ideology in Bequia is differentiation (e.g. Trudgill, 1972; Meyerhoff, 2001; Bucholtz and Hall, 2004), which is represented by a strong sense of orientation of speakers in one community towards each other and against the other villages. I show that language is one of the crucial resources for constructing these local ideologies.

Second, the discussion of the role of place in Bequia would be incomplete without examining the reasons *why* place is so strongly intertwined with language variation and change, especially for adolescents, and why this is happening *now*. I hypothesise that to a large extent this is a response to the recent socio-economic transformations which have affected Bequia, related to globalisation. I characterise

the different processes which have led to significant socio-economic changes in Bequia, such as mobility, increased tourism, and access to the popular media. I discuss how each of these processes has affected adolescents in Bequia and what consequences they have for language variation and change.

Next, I interpret the variable patterns found for adolescents in Bequia across the communities by bringing together the concepts of the linguistic marketplace (Bourdieu, 1984) and globalisation. The linguistic marketplace concept usually assumes that the values of symbolic resources are dictated externally by the dominant class or group. However, in Bequia the values are assigned to linguistic forms through the social meanings of those forms which are negotiated through local place ideologies. This process is triggered by recent socio-economic transformations and shows how global processes can shape local linguistic markets.

Finally, I discuss the nature of the sociolinguistic system in Bequia. The two scenarios considered here are: (i) co-existing systems (Kroch, 1989; Labov, 1998), where two distinct varieties across the communities can be established, a more creole-like one and a more English-like one, or (ii) one highly variable mesolectal grammar where speaker groups contrast with each other but show some internal agreement in terms of shared linguistic repertoires and shared underlying principles of linguistic organisation (Patrick, 1999). Drawing from the quantitative results discussed in previous chapters, and the discussion of the social factors affecting this variation, I argue that the mesolectal grammar model is more appropriate in defining the variable nature of the linguistic system in Bequia.

7.2 The physical, social and perceived dimensions of place in Bequia

In Chapter 2 I argued that space (and place) encompasses at least three inter-related dimensions: the physical, the social and the perceived (Britain, 2009). Undeniably, the insular character of Bequia contributed to the perceptions speakers developed towards the different villages. Inhabitants' limited mobility constrained by a natural boundary – the sea – makes Bequia a microcosm in which individual villages play an important role. Unlike in the neighbouring St Vincent, there is no capital city working as a centre to which all other communities and places on the island are

relative. Although in Bequia the main harbour is the busiest area of the island, individual communities constitute a very important part of the island's socio-geographical landscape. In addition, despite the fact that St Vincent is considered as the "mainland" with Kingstown as the country's capital city, Bequians think of themselves as different and are regarded as such by Vincentians. The differences between Bequia, and the other islands were frequently underlined in sociolinguistic interviews. This is illustrated below.

7.1 (PF; 007; 576)

[Int.1] I notice sometimes when you go to St Vincent you don't even have to open your mouth for people to know. That you from Bequia. And I wonder how they know.

[Int.2] They believe that, ok, Bequia only have clear people, brown skin, nice face.

[007] Well if you know families in Bequia like me, if, if I look at you, I could tell you which family you from [laughing] (...)

[007] Well is the same like people in St Vincent, but eh, you look at Bequia people. Bequia people has a- a better looking countenance, yeah. Especially Paget Farm people. A guy from Guyana, teacher was here some years ago. He was from Guyana, he was a Seventh Day Adventist, and he told me as he come out of the harbour, as you break up Gilford Hill, he say you get to different breeze, you meet better looking people, friendlier people until you get right down to Paget Farm. He say and you don't get that in the Harbour.

[Int.1] (...) You- you- If different people come to Bequia from other places, when they speak, do you- could you pick up where they come from?

[007] Yeah, like Carriacou people, and even Canouan people, Petite Martinique all of them you could, as I say if you know the trend of them, you know you could just pick them out. If you notice Petite Martinique man and them they look always salt¹¹.

¹¹ According to the Dictionary of Caribbean English usage (Allsopp, 2003) *salt* means "in an unfortunate or very bad state, unlucky, ill-started". In Bequia it is used to refer to something/someone who is unhappy and miserable. This is an example from an online

[Int.2] Rusty!

[007] Rusty (laughing) yes

[Int.2] They have a dirty red colour.

First, the above example confirms that people in Bequia indeed consider themselves as different from Vincentians, and also from inhabitants of other neighbouring island. But Bequians are not *just* different; they are unique, better looking, and happier than people on the other islands (who look “rusty” and “salt”). Secondly, language seems to be a strong component of cross-island dichotomies as the speaker admits that he is able to identify which island someone is from based on speech patterns. Thirdly, the speaker draws a boundary not only between Bequia and the other islands, but also his village – Paget Farm. He believes that people in Paget Farm are the best looking, and its inhabitants are more friendly and welcoming than individuals in the other communities. This attitude is not just apparent in Paget Farm but examples where Bequians boast about the uniqueness and beauty of their own community are easy to find also for Hamilton and Mount Pleasant.

This shows that geographical and social dimensions of place also shape speakers’ perceptions and attitudes towards their own community and the others. Bequians are strongly attached to all the elements which define their community: the history of settlement, ancestry, traditions, daily activities, and people around them, which over time have shaped peoples’ experiences and have also become strongly responsible for shaping their local identities. The definition of place which recognizes its geographical, social and perceived dimensions has led to the establishment of strong local ideologies among Bequians in each community and the strongest component of them is differentiation (cf. Irvine and Gal, 2000; Bucholtz and Hall, 2004). Speakers in each community identify themselves through contrast

interaction between two young Bequians: “*Tell me sum right, y some ppl does cnt study der own bz?? Cause their life salt so when they study urs dey does feel betah bout they small minded self nah*”. [Tell me something right, why some people can’t mind their own business? Because their lives are miserable so when they mind your business, it makes them feel better about themselves]

with members of the other villages in Bequia. In the section below I argue that language is a crucial element of the local ideology of differentiation.

7.2.1 Place and the ideology of differentiation on Bequia

In Chapter 4 I implied that an important function of language variation in Bequia is to mark cross-community differences. I have also argued that the geographical features of the villages have been largely responsible for their historical development, and inhabitants' experiences. These in turn led to the shaping of strong attitudes assigned to the Bequia communities which are often concentrated on portraying oneself as unique and "better", as opposed to speakers in the other communities. Below I discuss the attitudes of Bequians towards their community and the two others focusing on the elements which constitute the ideology of "being different" in each village. Some of these elements were also discussed in Chapter 2.

In Paget Farm the geographical distinctiveness is strongly marked by the (relatively) large distance which separates this village from the other communities, especially the main harbour. Because of this distance Paget Farm became a self-sufficient community, with its own shops, churches and a school. In addition, the fishing and whaling traditions have also contributed to the current character of Paget Farm where people are still highly involved in traditional activities such as boat building, whaling or making cassava flour. For this reason speakers in Paget often characterise themselves as more traditional than the other Bequia villages. This is especially underlined by the older generation of speakers:

7.2 (PF; 023; 30)

[023] Oh well, I think Paget Farm is a nice place and you're most welcome by the people that live here. They are very, you could say affectionate and also um they are very 'activious' people, always like to create, you know, different forms of culture.

As for the younger speakers, the unique character of Paget Farm is represented by the combination of tradition and the lively character of this village. While many of the young Southsiders still participate in traditional activities, the uniqueness of

Paget Farm is for them also strongly related to the lively atmosphere of this community which they characterise as exciting and vibrant. This is illustrated in the following dialogue.

7.3 (PF; Celia, Kiki; 05:26)

[Celia] It got good vibes down here and good cool in the evening time.

And good view on the hill. To watch the, erm, moonlight and the sunset.

[Int.] So would you say that Paget Farm is different from the other villages?

[Celia] Yeah.

[Kiki] Yeah.

[Int.] Ok so like how does it compare to Hamilton or Mount Pleasant?

[Kiki] Hamilton quiet, like no party at all doz going on.

[Celia] Hamilton just dead. It's boring. Well don't even talk about Hamilton,

Hamilton won't even get no... When it have Christmas lightup that is usually only time Hamilton and Mount Pleasant, them is the onliest how dem deh could be lively. But down here always lively. Party. Christmas, on the Christmas Southside always lively.

Overall, Paget Farm is locally praised for representing tradition and attachment to the local customs which have been practiced in this village for generations, but also for its exciting and lively character which distinguishes it from the other Bequia communities.

Whereas in Paget Farm the ideology of difference is built around being more traditional than the other communities on the island, in Hamilton the feeling of uniqueness is expressed through a sense of pride in the strong ties between the members of this community. Commentaries like the ones below are frequent among young people from this village:

7.4 (Ham; Chris; 00:31)

[Int.] So how do you think Hamilton differs from the other villages?

[Chris] You know, we associate more with one another, in our village more than, probably more than in the other villages. Because like, normally you will

find like on a Saturday, you know you will find like so many people do coming down to the front, to the water front and hanging out you know. You know, just hanging out locally, not in a bar or anything, everyone do hang out you know. Hanging out, you know, talking, speaking about sports, you know, being together. When I come to these [other] neighbourhoods I hardly see people like in groups here and in groups there. And you'll find like, if we going to a function, you always find a large amount of us. Being deh you know. You wouldn't find that in the other villages. We always try to, we always try to think we is the best. Even though we're not, we have...we think we are the best you know. Cause they always...well, we call it, you know, they say that's Westside. We always say "Wes' is the bes'" You know, sometimes when we used to go to Paget Farm down deh always say "alyo westman always think alyo better than anybody else". And yeah, we all time think we is the best and we try to be the best you know.

In Section 7.4.3 I demonstrate that the ideology of being "better" is negotiated in the process of constructing self in the changing socio-economic reality in Bequia. Young people in Hamilton are strongly oriented towards hip-hop culture which many are inspired by. The influences from hip-hop culture can be attributed to globalisation as the trend infiltrating into the social reality of young Bequians through the popular media. To young people in Hamilton "Westside" indexes "coolness" (Kirkland and Jackson, 2009) and superiority, an ideology which developed together with the changing socio-economic landscape of Bequia.

In Mount Pleasant the link between the geographical location of the village, the history of its settlement, and the ideology of difference is perhaps the strongest. In Chapter 2 I observed that Mount Pleasant is considered by other Bequians as different in almost every way. The village is located on the top of a hill with limited road access and the houses are bigger and less densely populated than in the other communities. A vast majority of Mount Pleasanters can trace their ancestry to the colonisers from Scotland and Ireland, which is reflected in the lighter skin colour of this community. For Mount Pleasanters the different heritage distinguishes them most strongly from the other communities along with the racial differences. In

addition, Mount Pleasanters often characterise their community as idyllically peaceful, quiet and safe. The commentary below highlights the strong association of speakers in Mount Pleasant with their Scottish roots.

7.5 (MP; 303; 1219)

[Int.] What type of people do you think live in Mount Pleasant?

[303] Well we is Scots, the white is Scots. (...) Came to Barbados from Scotland and came down here, the G [family name]. I don't know for the- the L [family name] came from Grenada, but they was all Scottish too. They came to these islands and they spread open.

7.6 (MP; 304; 1068)

[304] Well I remember one time, I was in England and a guy came to my side (...) So he stood up and he start speaking to me. He said, "Mister D., you have a Scottish accent. Your-your accent, you're using is-it has a Scottish accent, say you're-you told me you're from the Caribbean or from St Vincent and so but you-you have an accent that is um, Scottish". (...) So then I told him, I said "My ancestors, my foreparents was from Scotland."

These examples show that Mount Pleasanters admit their Scottish heritage and strongly identified with their ancestors ("*we is Scots*"). The Scottish heritage is also claimed on the linguistic level by comparing the language spoken in Mount Pleasant with "Scottish accent" (it is fair to say that in practice hardly any apparent parallels on the level of pronunciation between Scottish English or Scots, and the Mount Pleasant variety can be drawn).

In addition to holding a firm set of beliefs about the community they come from, Bequians also overtly express their attitudes towards the other villages on the island, usually in a pejorative way. Paget Farm is indeed recognised by other Bequians as traditional but also judged as rough, violent and backwards. The following commentary of a speaker from Mount Pleasant illustrates such attitudes.

7.7 (MP; 107; 1332)

[Int.] So you could live down in Southside?

[107] Nah, in Southside? Murder house?! (...) I could live in Hamilton. Or- or anywhere down that side of Lower Bay but not Paget Farm. (...) Anywhere but not Paget Farm. You murder house. That's what we call it down there. Me and his mother one time we went and it have funeral. And a war- a fight break out and we start to run. (...) And when we coming from the funeral, two taxi drivers start to fight and we take off our shoes and start to run. They start to call we "Mount Pleasant Bajan". It had a fella, W. [name], a red van. We jump in W. van and up the road. "Bajan coming home". We coming out of say "we going in civilisation- we coming out of devil country". Me ain't like Paget Farm. It got man working down here, I tell him plain, I say: "All you go back in Paget Farm".

The narrative illustrates the degree of hostility between the two communities. Clearly, the speaker from Mount Pleasant not only considers Paget Farm as extremely violent but also draws a clear boundary between the "civilised" areas (such as Mount Pleasant) and the "devil country" and "murder house" - Paget Farm. On the other hand, we also see the hostile attitudes of Paget Farm people who point to Mount Pleasanters' "foreign" (Bajan) heritage. This confirms that ethnic and racial distinctions could be a significant factor in Bequians' perceptions of inhabitants in this community. Other speakers' commentaries support this:

7.8 (PF; 7; 556)

[007] From what I learned, these people came from uh, Irish, they are Irish people. They- according to "The Brief History of St Vincent", they was sent to Barbados as Irish bond slaves. And uh, some broke away from Barbados and live in Dorsetshire Hill in Saint Vincent, and then I guess what break away from Dorsetshire Hill, those, some of what came to Mount Pleasant. So that is how we get them here.

In this extract Mount Pleasanters are pictured as people who not only speak a different language but also as newcomers, as a clear boundary is drawn between "us" - genuine Bequians, and "those people" - foreign incomers. Such attitudes are

recurring among both generations of speakers from Hamilton and Paget Farm who often refer to Mount Pleasanters as “foreign”, “white”, “pure”, “Scottish” or “Irish” which suggests that to them Mount Pleasanters’ Caribbean identity is in some sense problematic or even inauthentic.

Whereas speakers in Paget Farm and Hamilton think of their communities as better, “cooler”, or more traditional, they regard the other as rowdy and violent. Consider the following opinions:

7.9 (Ham; 8; 107)

[Int.] So which one of the villages in Bequia you think is the most violent?

[008] Well I believe Southside [laughing]. Southside, because they make a joke, as soon as you touch them they ready. Southside people - real violence.

7.10 (PF; 7; 1118)

[Int.] What part of Bequia you think is the most dangerous in terms of violence?

[007] I think uh, Hamilton, in Bequia. Well because uh most of the- um men coming from down they looking old and rusty and dirty.

Interestingly, the informants cannot identify particular social characteristics that demarcate individual communities in Bequia. From the above examples it is not immediately apparent why people in Paget Farm and Hamilton consider the other community as different and on what terms. Violence and looks are the two examples presented here, but it is not clear what is understood by “rusty” and “dirty”. In Chapter 2 I reported that during fieldwork speakers often mentioned a long existing conflict between Hamilton and Paget Farm although speakers could hardly point to any specific motivations of it. Evidently, it is important for speakers in these two communities not to associate themselves with each other, to be different.

The individual levels on which the Bequia society can be stratified, such as wealth, education level, or race could encourage an application of the social class category as an explanatory tool of the cross-community differences. However, in Bequia the kind of social differentiation that is associated with class in some

Western communities is really associated with 'place' (socially defined). For example, some early definitions of the concept in sociolinguistics were determined by various socio-economic indices, such as occupation or income (Labov, 1972; Trudgill, 1974). This classification cannot be neatly applied to a non-Western community like Bequia. For example, the scale of prestige attached to particular occupations in Bequia is not homogenous to the "western" model. Jobs which are not highly desirable in the Western societies, such as fishing or boat building, are considered prestigious in Bequia where inhabitants appreciate the sailing and whaling traditions and attach high value to occupations related to the marine industry. In addition, in Bequia the correlation between prestige and wealth is also not straightforward. For example, a wealthy person from Paget Farm will still be subject to similar social judgment as the poorer inhabitants of this community, and a poorer family from Mount Pleasant will be considered on the same terms as other Mount Pleasanters. The differences in the social value of symbolic capital (comprising such resources as occupation or wealth) are linked to the non-homogenous nature of the socio-economic (and linguistic) marketplace in Bequia. This is discussed in Section 7.4.

Race and ethnicity is also a necessary component of the social stratification on the island. A community where ethnicity is arguably most strongly involved in identity construction is Mount Pleasant. In particular, a lighter skin colour of Mount Pleasanters makes them stand out from Bequians in the other communities, and reinforces the association with their British ancestors. However, the complicating factor for such a hypothesis comes with the influx of white tourists. With the growing number of incomers from Europe and America, the status of a "white" person is reserved for tourists, leaving the ethnic status of Mount Pleasanters somewhere between the foreigners and the other Bequians. In addition, again, I argue that place ideologies override the ethnic and racial distinctions between individual speakers. For example, there are speakers with lighter skin tones (and even albinos) in Paget Farm but they are perceived similarly to the other members of this community. Although ethnicity is strongly embedded in the local ideologies, it is again not clear where to draw differences in such a racially- and ethnically mixed society as Bequia.

This suggests that the concepts of social class and ethnicity (including race) are unlikely to operate independently of other local social categories (such as place). This observation supports the arguments calling for developing new approaches to analysing social class in language variation and change (Dodsworth, 2010; Kiesling, 2010), which is especially relevant to different socio-cultural settings, such as the Caribbean, where the “classic” understanding of socioeconomic class based on e.g. income or education cannot be successfully applied (cf. Rickford, 1986).

In the next section I demonstrate that the ideology of differentiation extends also to language which is perceived as an important resource in drawing boundaries across the Bequia communities.

7.2.1.1 Place, ideology of differentiation and language attitudes

First, Bequians believe that Mount Pleasant residents’ language is recognisably different from the language used by speakers in the other villages. Again, this difference is attributed to the British/Irish heritage. Bequians describe the language in Mount Pleasant speakers use in terms such as “proper” and “correct”, “better”, or “nicer” than the speech found in the other villages on the island. Mount Pleasanters themselves are aware of these differences, and think of their language as superior to the creole spoken on the island, commonly referred to as “dialect” or “Bequia talk”:

7.11 (MP; 108; 1417)

[108] These- this village, Mount Pleasant, they always had good language. (...) they never drag their words and they- they never speak the broken language of the other people in the other villages.

[Int.] So comparing the villages and dem and their language which village you think speak the best?

[108] I think Mount Pleasant.

[Int.] And comparing Southside and Hamilton?

[108] Oh- uh well I don't know which one speak the best, but to me like Hamilton have a little better language than Southside. (...) Yeah, Southside is awful.

Among adolescents the discussion about language differences usually provokes strong reactions as they argue which of the villages is the "best" spoken on Bequia. Again, language in Paget Farm is usually characterised in the most pejorative terms while Mount Pleasant is identified as the village where people speak "correctly":

7.12 (Nestor, Leon – Hamilton; Alika – La Pompe; 816)

[Int.] Do people speak the same around Bequia?

[Leon] Nah! Nah! No no no no.

[Alika] Some, some

[Leon] The best, the best, some of the best speaking places in Bequia is Hamilton

[Alika] No! Not Hamilton, up deh, Mount Pleasant

[Nestor] Mount Pleasant the best speaking.

[Leon] But the worst speaking place in Bequia...

[Alika] Paget Farm, they doz drag their words

[Leon] Southside. Deep down in South. Them dragging them words.

[Int.] So why is this...

[Nestor] Miss, them deh just talk too bad for real.

[Leon] Miss, them deh just talk bad. Drag the words.

[Int.] So can you mark Paget Farm how they speak?

[Leon] Yes. You could tell S. [name] is on: "allyo let we go down the road", "allyo go home", "allyo we go home now let we go drink some rum", that how them does talk.

[Nestor] Erm, the worst part of Paget Farm, erm...

[Leon] Right down in the bottom. That is erm, BR [place name] people doz talk bad.

[Nestor] A place in Southside, BR, they doz speak real bad.

In this dialogue speakers admit that not everyone in Bequia speaks the same. The “best” speech is attributed to Mount Pleasant, while Paget Farm is considered as the worst spoken. Interviewees often point to “dragging words” as a feature epitomising the bad language in Paget Farm which is rather puzzling since so far analyses of phonetic and phonological features of BeqCE (Ng, 2008; Partridge, 2009) have not pointed to any differences in vowel quality across the villages which could be classified as “dragging”. It is subject to further investigation which phonological features are responsible for this perception.

When asked to give an example of the type of language used by people in Paget Farm, Leon uses very similar features to the ones found in the community he is from – Hamilton, and elsewhere on the island (second personal plural pronoun *allyo*, lack of inflection in the first person plural pronoun *we*). In addition, he seems to associate drinking with Paget Farm which confirms the above mentioned perception of Southside as rowdy. Furthermore, the young interviewees claim they can pinpoint an exact place in Paget Farm where the “worst” language is spoken which shows how much language matters for drawing boundaries between the communities and supports the ideological association between language and place.

The above examples confirm that difference is the key component of the local ideologies for speakers in these three communities. As Bucholtz and Hall (2004) suggested, distinction usually operates in a binary fashion so that the contrastive identities are usually constructed on the basis of “us vs. them”, although it does not necessarily indicate that only two groups must be involved in this process.

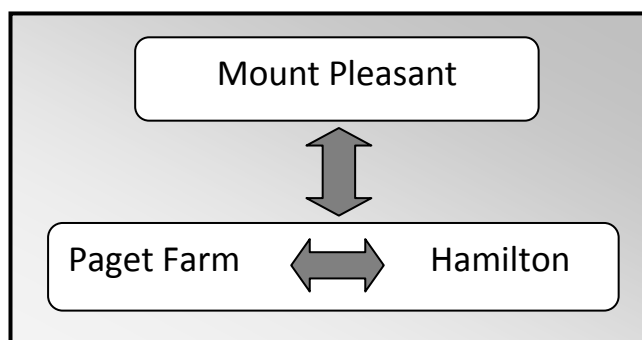


Figure 7.1 A model of difference construction between the Bequia communities

This is illustrated in the above model which shows that the orientation of Bequia speakers to each other is not homogenous but operates on two dimensions, which is especially applicable to the younger inhabitants. There is a clear demarcation line between Mount Pleasant and the other communities of Bequia which can be broken down into the aforementioned categories, such as ethnicity, economic status, heritage and language. Secondly, there seems to be a second dimension operating across Hamilton and Paget Farm which seem to be competing for the status of the “best” community on the island by projecting the other one in a negative light. Analyses of variation within bare verbs, inflected verbs and preverbal markers conducted in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 confirmed that this pattern of differentiation is also conspicuous on the linguistic level.

What is still unclear however is why Bequians feel such a strong need to distinguish themselves from the other communities socially and linguistically. Why are young Bequians in Mount Pleasant and Paget Farm using *-ed* and *bin* as symbolic resources of local identity construction? Why are these two communities trying to stand out? What is the position of Hamilton speakers in this pattern? The differences in frequency rates, as well as the underlying factors determining this distribution for the older generation of speakers across the villages is expected, especially due to limited mobility (as I discussed in Chapter 2 older speakers often admit that they infrequently visit the other communities). Nevertheless, this striving for difference is somewhat surprising among adolescents who regularly spend time with each other in the school setting and are in regular contact with young people in other communities on the island. It seems that now the time is ripe for younger speakers in Bequia to mark their local distinctiveness even more in order to stand out from the other communities. In the section below I consider several possible reasons for this phenomenon.

7.3 Marking difference in Bequia – distinction and globalisation

Studies of language variation and identity have demonstrated that variation on a local level is embedded within a larger socio-geographic context, and that local

social meanings of linguistic variants fit into a larger sociolinguistic landscape (Eckert, 2000). Such an approach encourages an investigation of what these larger patterns are and in what way they influence the local variation. I hypothesise that it is impossible to interpret the linguistic changes among adolescents in Bequia without considering the larger socio-economic landscape. The reality in which younger Bequians nowadays live has been influenced by a variety of processes which can be generally attributed to globalisation. Although it is difficult to provide one definition of globalisation, I quote McGrew whose definition was also applied in Meyerhoff and Niedzielski (2003: 539):

“Globalisation...describes the process by which events, decisions, and activities in one part of the world come to have significant consequences for individuals and communities in quite distant parts of the globe... [T]he concept therefore has a spatial connotation. On the other hand it also implies intensification on the levels of interaction, interconnectedness or interdependence...alongside the [spatial] stretching goes a deepening of the...processes” McGrew (1992: 23).

The above definition is attractive for several reasons. First, it does not limit the concept to the engagement of the local and the global. Indeed, this engagement is often a side effect of globalisation but it would be an oversimplification to reduce the process of globalisation to this one dimension only. The definition assumes an increased contact between individuals and communities from different parts of the world. Secondly, the definition emphasises that spatiality is an important concept in the discussion of globalisation, as attention to space goes hand in hand with other socio-economic and cultural processes triggered by globalisation. This is evident in Bequia today through speakers’ increased attention to the local. Even though sensitivity to place appears to be fairly established among the older groups, among adolescents it reaches a new dimension with new resources being recruited to express localness.

In sociolinguistic studies globalisation often features as a buzzword applied to a variety of socio-cultural processes which affect the world today. Globalisation as a term frequently appears in studies of language variation and change in a discussion of the non-linguistic phenomena indirectly responsible for language

variation and change. This is also hypothesised in the current study. Although I suggest that we should consider the concept of globalisation with care since the process is undoubtedly more complex reaching beyond the impact of the global on the local. Therefore, in the following section I identify which processes, trends and transformation we should have in mind in a discussion on globalisation in Bequia, and what impact they have on the local communities.

7.3.1 Globalising processes in Bequia

Before I discuss the recent processes which have transformed the socio-economic landscape in Bequia, the role of adolescence on the adoption of new trends needs to be highlighted. In sociolinguistics adolescence is considered as the transition to individuation. Considering the current socio-economic situation on the island, nowadays Bequia provides a fertile ground for this negotiation. On the one hand it is a place where the local Caribbean norms and traditions are still highly valued but at the same time we observe an overt fascination of young people with the outside trends especially when it comes to pop culture, music and commodity possession.

Perhaps the most intensive process associated with globalisation relates to the space-time compression (Harvey, 1990). With the rapidly increased development of technology and ease of travel, the temporal and distance boundaries seem less significant than ever before. In Bequia this has several important consequences. First, I mentioned before the greater opportunities young Bequians have these days to visit their relatives abroad, especially in Canada and the United States (cf. Chapter 2). It is common for adolescents from all the communities examined here, but especially Mount Pleasant, to spend summers overseas. The extent to which these speakers interact with members and non-members of the Caribbean diasporas is open to discussion, nevertheless this increased mobility distinguishes younger Bequians from the elders as it might change the ways young people think about locality and (local) boundaries.

Although many Bequians find travelling attractive, few look at it as an opportunity to move away from Bequia. Almost all the Bequians interviewed

admitted that it would be impossible for them to move away from the island for good. This suggests how strongly speakers in Bequia are tied to their homeland:

7.12 (PF; Celia: 06:47)

[Int.] So if you had a chance would you leave Bequia for good?

[Celia] I wouldn't leave for good. I would just go and spend couple months deh so just to experience new sights. And then come back cause I know, you know, you going miss your home town.

7.13 (PF; Clara; 00:02:16)

[Int.] So if you had a chance would you leave Bequia for good?

[Clara] No! Nah!

[Kiki] Not for good, for holiday and vacation.

[Clara] Place ah too nice. And too much of freedom.

[Int.] Yeah? But like to go away for 10 years or something?

[Clara] Mhm!?! That too long! Six months.

Travelling abroad however, does not evoke as emotional reactions from Bequians, as the reverse process – the increased income of tourists and temporary residents on the island. While Bequians usually have no objections towards foreign visitors' temporary or seasonal stays, the case of purchasing land on Bequia by tourists is a different matter. This attitude is particularly apparent among adolescents who fear that they will not be able to afford the land in the future since selling it to tourists by the government is more profitable. Consider the following examples:

7.14 (PF; Leyton; 00:32:10)

[Int.] What do you think about foreigners buying land in Bequia?

[Leyton] Well...foreigners buying land in Bequia to develop certain areas is good but I don't think any more land should be sold to foreigners. I think foreigners have sufficient land ok? And erm, when I look in the park right

in the spot and the other park up deh and I see thousands of children, I wonder where they going to live in the next five, ten years. Where they going get place to live they won't have land to buy, they won't get land to buy.

7.15 (Ham; Maya; 931)

[Maya] I hear people saying all ting how just yesterday, how Mustique, Mustique is private island now you know. Nobody, hardly anybody could go there now. And they say just now Bequia going come like that.

It seems that Bequians feel threatened that what has been theirs for generations might now be sold to foreigners. No matter how realistic these fears are it is possible they might trigger an increased attention to the local or at least sharpen the boundary between the local and the non-local. While Bequians care for the island in general, undeniably it is the land in their own village they worry about the most. In light of such political, and socio-economic circumstances - a situation where speakers are faced with a threat (no matter if a real one or not) of losing their land, marking difference and uniqueness of one's locality becomes especially valid. As I argued above, language is an important symbolic resource of achieving this.

In addition, younger speakers, especially from Paget Farm frequently admitted that tourists can only be tolerated on the terms defined by the local community. Some aspects of the behaviour of visitors, which are not practiced locally, are overtly frowned upon. It seems that for many young Bequians tourists disrupt the local ecology. Highlighting the local norms could be one of the ways to differentiate oneself from the "inappropriate" practices of the incomers and by demonstrating the "right" (local) way of being. Consider the following examples:

7.16 (PF; Celia; 00:08:50)

[Celia] You have certain tourists that comes into Bequia. When they buy house they feel like they wana overrun we. That is what I don't really like eh. Cause no, seriously, it has some tourists that come here Bequia and buy house and wana overtake the lands. Cause this guy that came in. This guy that came in from erm, England. He living down at G. [place name]. We used to have

lightup, whenever we have lightup people doz have music with it. But now, he erm, banned it. He write and them banned it. Now you see that is tradition fun for we. But he now come and ruin spoil the fun. (...) I mean, the tour...it is nice to have tourists for a change here yes. But when them buy the land, they doz go too far with it.

7.17 (PF; Kiki; 00:11:26)

[Kiki] It have some tourists that coming in here Bequia, like last Sunday I went to the beach and met some white people outside on top of the beach in the bare bottom! No top! Just see boobs dem fly in the air! Man, them have privilege to do them kinda stuffs down here. We now, we can't have any privilege to go and do that. Cause you woulda get head buss. Man, but they don't actually care what they do, they just going and enjoying themselves.

There are many narratives similar to the ones above which illustrate the culture clash between the local and the extra-local norms. In these short narratives the incomers are portrayed as ignorant intruders who try to impose their standards upon the already existing traditional ones. In the discourse of globalisation and culture this issue is frequently underlined (King, 1991; Tomlinson, 1999). Whereas on the one hand the global processes can stimulate progress and advancement, on the other a lot of attention has been paid to their disruptive effects, such as de-authentication or hegemony of one culture over another (Slembrouck, 2011). The question whether globalisation has a positive or a negative influence on local communities is beyond the scope of the current study. Rather, we are more concerned with the local reactions to these processes, and so far I have demonstrated that Bequians strongly respond to the socio-cultural transformations around them.

Economic improvement and easier access to commodities are other important effects of globalisation in Bequia today. The latter is perhaps the most significant feature which differentiates the younger Bequians from the elder. Like almost everywhere in the world, adolescents in Bequia are trying to keep up with the rapid advancement of technology, and trends in various aspects of popular culture such as fashion, music and electronic gadgets. Internet access and a

Blackberry phone are almost a norm among wealthier Bequians but for many these goods remain an unaffordable but desirable luxury. The rise in consumerism and the economic advancement in the region (cf. Curtis, 2009) have at the same time increased the economic gap between Bequians. This is something that younger Bequians admit themselves by comparing the life on the island when their parents and grandparents were young. Consider the following commentary of Samantha from Mount Pleasant who compares young people during her parents' youth to adolescents today.

7.18 (MP; Samantha; 00:04:37)

[Samantha] Kids were more sociable. A lot more sociable. Kids used to be out in the road and crick- playing cricket in the road and rounders and ring games, and now, now it's just about TV and the computer, your psp and electronics. Kids used to be... kids used to enjoy walking home from school because they used to socialise. And walking home they would be planning the evening activities whether they gona have cricket in the road or play rounders or play football in the hill or something. Now you don't see that anymore. TV, TV is the major influence for kids now. I think is because the parents are so busy, working and hustling that TV has become their babysitter. You know, keep the children at home, they know the TV would keep them at home, the computer would keep them at home.

According to Samantha young people in Bequia today are strongly attached to material goods. However, as implied above, possession of goods is not something everyone in Bequia has equal access to. Rather than levelling out the differences between young Bequians, we could say that goods possession increases those asymmetries. Commodity has become a resource for adolescents in the process of differentiation discussed here. I hypothesise that for some speakers, especially in Hamilton, possession of material goods is linked to the local ideology of being different, and being "the best". This is discussed further in Section 7.4.3.

The final globalising process which needs to be addressed was already touched upon in Samantha's narrative – the influence of the media. Table 2.3

(Chapter 2) demonstrated that adolescents in Bequia spend from 3-7 hours in front of a TV and a computer screen every day. This number is incredibly high as it suggests that the time spent outside the school is usually spent on watching television or browsing the web. Therefore, we must acknowledge that the media might have a significant impact on adolescents' understanding of the world, knowledge transmission, mindset and perhaps also on their social behaviours. As far as the effect of the media on language is concerned, few studies have focused on the direct relationship between media induced contact and language variation and change although many have considered the media as a contributory factor for sociolinguistic patterns (Naro and Sherre, 1996; Foulkes and Docherty, 2000; Muhr, 2003; McQuail, 2005; Buchstaller, 2008). A significant research project investigating the influence of television on sound change is conducted by Stuart-Smith and her colleagues (2010; forthcoming 2011). Stuart-Smith et al. report an increased rate of TH-fronting, DH-fronting and L-vocalisation among Glasgow adolescents, the linguistic features which are normally unexpected to be found in the Glasgow area. Preliminary interpretations of this result point to television as an indirect factor in language change. TV might be indirectly involved in style production and the process of (linguistic) appropriation (Hall, 1980; Fiske, 1980; Stuart-Smith, 2010). Appropriation is understood as viewers' reception of media texts within the context of their own socially-situated experience. Linguistic appropriation focuses on language and communication during media reception and extends to using media language as a resource for stylistic purposes (Androutsopoulos, 2001; Stuart-Smith, 2010).

In Bequia, adolescents today are probably more engaged using the Internet than watching TV. Facebook and YouTube are by far the most popular portals visited by young Bequians followed by other social networking platforms such as MSN Messenger. Although such a frequent utilisation of world popular websites might be another example of globalisation on the island, it would be an overgeneralisation to claim that using Facebook or YouTube marks the attrition of locally relevant styles, practices or trends. On the contrary, I suggest it enhances them. Although not officially codified, creole is the language of the online interaction which is especially evident through Facebook commentaries and wall

posts (cf. Hinrichs, 2006a; 2006b). Consider the following Facebook status updates and interactions (the authors remain anonymous):

7.19 Status updates:

Status 1: Ah gone wine to d side pon d beach

Status 2: Stress free...me nah scare u better nah come in me face an wnt war u better pull a trigger

7.20 Wall interaction:

A: U goin?

B: I dressing jus now

A: Me going meet you in deh...better yet you ah meet me there

As we can see from the examples above, adolescents in Bequia do not use StE in the computer-mediated communication (e.g. Jones, 1995) but choose the style which they use in the face-to-face communication. Similarly, YouTube is usually used to watch locally popular music clips within dancehall, soca and reggae, but also other music genres which young people in Bequia orient towards such as rap, hip-hop and r&b (cf. Chapter 2). These examples provide a strong illustration of glocalisation – a “tandem operation of local and global dynamics”, or “global localisation” (Robertson, 1995 in Trudgill, 2004). Glocalisation implies that local functions are assigned to global resources. The media seem to have such an effect on Bequia adolescents. Rather than replacing the local norms with the global ones, the media serve the purpose of strengthening localism and disseminate the local norms across larger contexts. I do not claim however that this process is uniform and that Bequia adolescents are not adopting the global trends. In fact, increased popularity of hip-hop and r&b could be due to the influence of the media. What I mean is that adolescents’ reception of global patterns is localised and made sense of through local world views and cultural practices (Featherstone, 1994; Street, 2000; Buchstaller and D’Arcy, 2009).

Moreover, finding the media directly responsible for the linguistic changes which we observe in Bequia is not fully justified. When it comes to the increase of preverbal *bin* among adolescents in Paget Farm, the influence of the TV or the Internet on this process is doubtful. The form is infrequent across the Anglophone Caribbean and socially stigmatised which means it is unlikely to be used even by TV presenters on local TV shows. On the other hand, it would perhaps be too simplistic to claim that adolescents in Mount Pleasant are using *-ed* more frequently because they hear in the media, although we cannot exclude this causality. I agree with Stuart-Smith that testing the effect of the media on language change is difficult in that it is extremely hard to disentangle this influence from that of other social and linguistic factors which might come into play. Similarly to Stuart-Smith et al., I suggest that the media might indeed have an indirect effect on language variation and change, but what is more important is its influence on speakers' awareness of the local, their social behaviours and local ideologies. I suggest that it is the social practices that are more likely to be adopted from the media by adolescents in Bequia, which in turn might go hand in hand with linguistic practices in identity construction (Eckert, 2000).

Adolescents in different Bequia communities seem to be selecting the resources which they find most valuable for local identity moves. For example, music clips of hip-hop artists and rappers are very popular among boys in Hamilton who are highly oriented towards hip-hop culture and slang. It is possible that some of the stylistic features they apply are adopted from hip-hop culture accessed through TV and the Internet. This can be observed through fashion, slang or gestures. Hip-hop culture and stylistics is still seen by many as underground, and different from the mainstream popular "white" culture (e.g. Toop, 1991; Kitwana, 2004), and hip-hop artists (especially African-American) and their aesthetics are considered as cool, real, and unique. This is exactly how young males (and many females) in Hamilton want to be perceived. It is hard then not to associate the media as a transmitter of stylistic and ideological practices for this group of speakers. In general then, while the influence of the media on linguistic practices remains a fascinating and highly relevant issue for the current study, it requires a separate analysis.

We can conclude that globalising processes such as increased tourism, mobility, socio-economic changes or access to the media influence adolescents in Bequia in many ways. In light of the larger socio-economic changes, marking cross-village differences becomes important and timely. In the section below I propose that the globalising processes exert pressure on the linguistic marketplace for Bequians (Bourdieu, 1977; Sankoff and Laberge, 1978), and that speakers in all three communities have interest in speaking “better” in order to project their community as “the best”. However, these market pressures diverge across the Bequia villages. Speakers in each of the communities understand what speaking “better” means in a different way and this understanding is shaped through speakers’ ideas about place.

7.4 (Socio)linguistic marketplace and symbolic power

In establishing speaker’s social motivations behind the patterns of language variation and change it is useful to consider the social and cultural conditions in Bequia in terms of a linguistic marketplace (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu, 1984). The concept is based on the consideration of speakers based on their place in the society. Sankoff and Laberge (1978) applied the concept by calculating an index of the extent to which a speaker’s life situation in life requires the use of the standard language. The indices were then compared to speakers’ tendency to use standard linguistic forms. The linguistic marketplace is tied to the socio-cultural marketplace which reflects the power relations in a community. I have demonstrated above that globalising processes have the effect of changing these power dynamics. I proposed that increased attention to the local and the ideology of differentiation are the main outcomes of these processes. In this changing reality individuals have to re-position themselves accordingly to fit this emerging marketplace (cf. Zhang, 2005). I argue that to do this, speakers will select the resources which they consider as symbolically most powerful (Bourdieu, 1991). As sociolinguistic research has demonstrated, speakers use language to improve their position in the socio-cultural marketplace (e.g. Macaulay, 1977; Sankoff and Laberge, 1978). In achieving this speakers rely on resources (including the linguistic ones) which will project them as symbolically powerful.

Linguistically, speakers often reach for variants which index standardness or correctness since such forms are usually highly valued in the linguistic marketplace. For example, Macaulay (1977) demonstrated age-grading among young Middle Class Glaswegians who adjusted to the social context by replacing a local variant – glottal stop, with the standard [t] variant. Macaulay interprets this age-grading as motivated by the pressure from the elders and from the society in general. It seems then that not only is the larger social context responsible for these linguistic adjustments but so are the social networks and communities of practice which speakers operate. I argue that in Bequia two related factors have major influences on the linguistic choices speakers make to fit into the linguistic marketplace: globalising processes and the community they come from.

Moreover, I argue that the linguistic adjustment is not a uniform process, that is, the most standard linguistic variants are not always the most valuable ones in the linguistic marketplace (cf. Giles, 1973, 1979; Woolard, 1985). To increase their market value individuals will use the symbolic resources which *they* consider as most valuable according to the locally established norms. In Bequia the values are established through the perspective of the local place ideologies. Speakers will draw from the resources which will project their community as “better”, different and unique. I argue that the indexicality of good/bad is different in each community because it has been shaped by speakers’ local ideologies. That is, the historical development, the settlement patterns, the geographic features of the villages and the experiences of their inhabitants have contributed to what people in these communities consider as good, bad, correct, local, or supralocal. Let us consider each community in turn.

7.4.1 Mount Pleasant

In Chapters 4 and 5 I concluded that the underlying factors which condition the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs in Mount Pleasant have been transmitted across the generations but the frequency with which young speakers in this community use inflected verbs has increased significantly. I suggested that we could explain this pattern by considering it as an age-graded variation which would

assume that adolescents in Mount Pleasant start using more standard language as they mature. We have to consider what motivates this proposed pattern and I suggest that the linguistic marketplace helps us to understand why young Mount Pleasanters are reaching for more standard forms. I argue that young Mount Pleasanters have a greater stake than other Bequians in speaking more standard because of the value that is attached to standardness and correctness in this village.

As I discussed in Chapter 2, Mount Pleasanters on average occupy more white-collar jobs, and many of them own a private business. These businesses are usually family-owned and are passed on from a generation to generation. Many of the privately owned initiatives in Mount Pleasant, and in Bequia in general are based on tourism. Some of the businesses owned by Mount Pleasanters include a waterfront boutique in the main harbour, holiday villa rentals, or a shop and a restaurant in Mount Pleasant. Many adolescents start working in these establishments at a very young age helping out their parents and being trained so that they can take over the business in the future. Such circumstances strongly influence adolescents' position on the social and linguistic marketplace. Speaking English is a necessary prerequisite for local people in contact with tourists who often struggle to understand BeqCE. It seems then that economical gains are one motivation why speakers reach for standard linguistic forms.

Secondly, in Chapter 2 I discussed the education pressures which adolescents in Mount Pleasant come under. Mount Pleasant is the community where it is most common for young people to continue their education after finishing high school. Many of them attend colleges in St Vincent or other islands, and some of them continue to higher education. I also mentioned how important speaking English is in the education context in Bequia, and across the Caribbean. Although attempts have been made to introduce creole language into education curriculum across the Caribbean (cf. Migge et al., 2010), Standard English is still essential in order for students to pass their final exams. Young Mount Pleasanters are normally expected to continue their education and this provides yet another pressure for them to "improve" their language and adopt more standard features.

Next, we have to consider Mount Pleasanters' church affiliation. A vast majority of the community members belong to the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) church which they regularly attend. Many adolescents not only attend the weekly services regularly but strictly follow the rules of the church which apply to many different areas of every-day life such as diet, dress-code or alcohol consumption. We cannot disregard the strong ties of the Mount Pleasant community to their church as having an effect on the use of standard language by adolescents. The church, similarly to the school, is an authoritative body and it is considered as such in Mount Pleasant more than in the other communities. Mount Pleasanters regard the Seventh Day Adventist church as the only true church and the rules of life it imposes as correct and just. Just like in education, Standard English is predominantly used in the church setting. Many still believe that Standard English is the only appropriate language for reading the scripture (Wynne-Jones, 2008). Being a good Christian then involves using the appropriate language and this provides one more motivation for young members of the Mount Pleasant community to reach for standard linguistic features.

Last but not least, perhaps the biggest pressure exerted upon young Mount Pleasanters to speak standard comes from the elders. Speaking "better" is a part of Mount Pleasant identity, next to the British ancestry. As the examples above showed this ideology is particularly strong among the elders who expect young people in the community to follow the traditions and norms rooted in this village. Young people in Mount Pleasant grow up with the ideology of difference and adolescence seems like the right time to make the necessary linguistic "adjustments" according to the community norms (although as the case of in-betweens shows not all adolescents adjust towards the direction expected by the community).

It seems then that the desire to speak more standard comes from a variety of social domains which constitute the symbolic marketplace, some of which, such as improved economic opportunities, have been influenced by the globalising economy. In the circumstances discussed above standard language becomes highly valuable and the rewards are both material and symbolic. The value of these rewards is greater now than ever due to the rapid restructuring of the socio-economic system. In this reality the rewards allocate adolescents in Mount Pleasant

more symbolic power and can also be used to draw a social distinction between the other communities. However, I argued above that symbolic power has a very different meaning in the other communities in Bequia. Therefore, the resources which are assigned high symbolic value in one community might have less value in another. This also points to a non unified nature of the linguistic marketplace which appears to be constructed according to local terms. This is evident in Paget Farm.

7.4.2 Paget Farm

As I showed above Paget Farm is a community where the local norms are highly valued, from traditional activities such as making cassava flour, whaling, but also street parties (jump-ups and light-ups). For many people in this community globalisation has introduced disruptions to these local norms which as a result have become even more valuable. This is also reflected linguistically through the increase in the use of preverbal *bin* by Southside adolescents. Although the form has been generally considered as stigmatised and old-fashioned (cf. Chapter 6) it seems that its social meaning has changed and now it functions as a part of the local semiotic repertoire. By using *bin* adolescents in Paget Farm stand out not only from their peers in the other communities but also from the older generation of speakers in Paget Farm. Before I discuss why adolescents reach for *bin* as a valuable resource of identity construction, I shall first point to several limitations of the linguistic marketplace concept as defined by Bourdieu (1977).

These limitations were also acknowledged in other studies where vernacular linguistic variants were recognised as more valuable on the linguistic marketplace than the legitimised standard language (Labov, 1963; Woolard, 1985; Haeri, 1996; Cameron, 1999; Eckert, 2000; Zhang, 2005). These studies have demonstrated that the linguistic marketplace is non linear and that the value of linguistic variants is largely dependent on the local context influenced by external forces. For example, Haeri (1996) reached a similar conclusion in her analysis of language variation and change in Cairo. She observed that different social groups, which emerged in the course of the segmentation of the labour market, operate a different type of symbolic capital and find different resources more valuable than others. Whereas Classical Arabic (the legitimised language) is highly valuable for those who occupy

government jobs and public schools, it is of lesser value for those who work in private schools or to members of the upper middle classes where the knowledge of foreign languages is more valuable.

Paget Farm has been portrayed as a generally less affluent community but strongly tied to local traditions. In fact, the community is often subject to social judgment according to the legitimate norms by the inhabitants of the other communities who consider Southside as backwards, rough, undeveloped and violent. Linguistic stereotypes are a part of these attitudes as the variety in Paget Farm is often subject to mockery, and pejorative descriptions such as “bad”, “broad”, “incomprehensible”, “bush talk”. This was illustrated in Section 7.2.1.1. Paget Farm is a community which could perhaps benefit most from the adoption of the standard forms as a way to improve their value on the social and linguistic marketplace. But on the contrary, adolescents in this community have recycled a form which across the Anglophone Caribbean is associated with rural talk, older speech and conservatism (Patrick, 1999; Hackert, 2004).

Eckert (2000: 18) observed that using vernacular forms can be a response to powerlessness in the face of the standard. I propose that this is indeed the case in Paget Farm. I have argued that the criteria which Bequians today consider in the negotiation of market value are strongly fostered by the global processes. Glorification of commodity possession which infiltrates through the popular media, and easier access to goods have influenced the development of consumer culture (Curtis, 2009 discusses this in detail for Nevis). Speakers in Paget Farm who have limited economic opportunities have a relatively low value on the socio-economic marketplace according to the legitimate norms. However, inhabitants of Paget Farm also recognise that in the current socio-economic context locality is also valuable and symbolically powerful. Attention to the local is worth investing in as it can increase the market value of the local norms (which are being disrupted with the increased arrival of tourists) and of the Paget Farm community more generally. Since the assignment of prestige on the same terms as in Mount Pleasant is not possible, they invest in what they recognise could assign them most symbolic power – traditionalism and authenticity. Due to its social meanings preverbal *bin* seems like an ideal symbolic resource to construct an identity of authenticity.

7.4.2.1 Paget Farm and authenticity

Authenticity in sociolinguistics remains an elusive concept, both in terms of its definition and applicability. It has also been frequently applied in variationist research (e.g. Zhang, 2008; Johnstone and Kiesling, 2008; Becker, 2009). Although some early debates on authenticity were focused on defining authentic speakers and communities, authenticity has been also recognised as a process of identity construction, and a tactic which speakers actively engage in (cf. Bucholtz, 2003; Coupland, 2003; Bucholtz and Hall, 2004; Hall-Lew, 2009). Authenticity is a relative concept which means that assigning an agent an authentic status is always done in relation to a local context, and in contrast to features classified as inauthentic. Because it is difficult to withdraw authenticity from a socio-cultural or political setting it is perhaps more appropriate to discuss what it means to be authentic in a particular locality. Since authenticity is understood as a process rather than a constant, we have to recognise the triggers of this process, the resources used and the motivation for using these particular resources.

I have proposed that speakers in Paget Farm construct their local identities according to the local ideology of authenticity. I argued that inhabitants of this community see themselves as the most attached to the local norms and traditions, the most 'real' group in Bequia. As I discussed above, the context (social, cultural, stylistic) plays a crucial role in constructing authenticity. In Paget Farm the rejuvenated interest in the traditional and the local can be linked to the recent societal and economic transformations attributed to globalisation. In this reality the Paget Farm community wants to be perceived as gate-keepers of authenticity (Gill, 2007: 42). This is achieved through contrasts with the other communities which are considered by Paget Farm locals as inauthentic. As the examples above showed Mount Pleasant has always been perceived as different and foreign while Hamilton has been perceived as violent, rough and not attached to local traditions. The ideology of protecting the local traditions in the time where these are threatened by external trends makes the Paget Farm community symbolically powerful – they see themselves as important for the preservation of the local norms. I argue that this especially elevated in light of the very low status of this community on the socio-

economic marketplace according to the standard socio-economic criteria. The insecurity on the socio-economic marketplace can be made up for by projecting a persona of a gatekeeper of authenticity.

In doing so, speakers choose a linguistic form which indexes authenticity most conspicuously. I proposed above that in the course of the recent globalising processes the social meaning of preverbal *bin* has changed in the Paget Farm community from a stigmatised form to an index of tradition and locality. Nevertheless this meaning might be different in the other communities, especially in Mount Pleasant where speakers still consider it as “bad English” (cf. Chapter 6). This indicates that indexical meanings can vary across different communities (and within a community; Johnstone and Kiesling, 2008), and that some indexical meanings are strongly embedded in a local context, being generated by place identities. I suggest that in Bequia place, understood as an experience, generates the indexical meanings of linguistic forms. Meanings are recognisable for a group of speakers who not only share the same geographical area but also history, experiences, and points of view. This is apparent for the indexicality of preverbal *bin* in Paget Farm and *-ed* in Mount Pleasant.

However, it needs to be emphasised that positive orientation towards the traditional norms among Paget Farm adolescents should not be interpreted as their lack of participation in the globalised marketplace. On the contrary, the overt fascination with dancehall music, style, and fashion suggests that a more global ‘Caribbean identity’ is attractive and desirable for adolescents in this community. It seems then that adolescents in Paget Farm and Hamilton are accessing different identities that are in popular, global circulation, one which is strongly related to the Caribbean region and its music scene (Paget Farm), and one which is associated with African American culture and American hip-hop more generally (Hamilton). The latter trend is further discussed in the section below.

7.4.3 Hamilton

Hamilton has been characterised as the community where the consumer culture has the greatest impact. Young people in Hamilton take advantage of the globalised

economy by enjoying easier access to goods such as technology (mobile phones, computers) or fashion. Many families in Hamilton have benefited financially from the increased tourism by setting up their own businesses which usually involve providing various services to visitors. This improved economic status is reflected in the ways Hamilton youth carry themselves compared to inhabitants of the other communities. The “Hamilton style” is considered locally as cool and special, and is inevitably related to hip-hop culture.

The fascination with hip-hop is not limited to following the music trends but it influences other stylistic practices such as fashion, socialising or other ways of spending free time. In Chapter 2 I discussed the trend of wearing clothes by labels popular in hip-hop culture. Some of the richer members of the community order these through online shops, while others buy their fake equivalents in the street markets in St Vincent. Overall though, every effort is made to look attractive and “cool”. It needs to be mentioned that the fascination with hip-hop is perhaps stronger among male adolescents than among females and some of the stylistic practices are highly gendered (see Hooks, 2003 for the relationship between hip-hop culture, “coolness” and masculinity). For example, it is only males who cruise (Eckert, 2000) between Hamilton and the main harbour in a jeep car listening to loud hip hop music. I discuss the gendered nature of linguistic variation in Bequia in due course.¹²

Although young people in Hamilton are heavily influenced by the recent globalising processes, it does not mean that they categorically adopt the standard norms. On the contrary, I argue that the nature of the influence of the outside norms on the local reality represents glocalisation (Robertson, 1995). Young people in Hamilton follow the culture which is not mainstream on the global level and select the global features which they can apply as symbolic resources for negotiating the local identity, namely being different. Elements of hip-culture such as fashion, cruising or slang are used as valuable symbolic capital in negotiating difference and “coolness”, especially because these resources are considered as desirable in the

¹² For the discussion of the gendered nature of variation among adolescents in Bequia, please refer to Appendix 2.

increasingly consumerist culture on Bequia. This has also several linguistic consequences.

First, the effect of globalising processes on the everyday lives of young people in Hamilton does not influence the increase of the standard linguistic forms. On the contrary, we have seen that the frequency of inflected verbs in this community has not changed across the generations. While Standard English could perhaps be used as a valuable resource in contact with tourists and in business, it is infrequently used between members of this community. I suggest that the use of standard forms among young people in Hamilton indeed increases but in the later stages of their lives. I propose that linguistic adjustment occurs once young people leave education since this is the time where many of them become young professionals and need to tune in their speech to the needs of the job market. I discuss this in more detail on the example of Chris, an in-between speaker from Hamilton who shows a higher frequency of the standard form than his peers in Hamilton. Overall, however, during adolescence the standard forms are not as valuable in projecting a cool Hamilton persona as the vernacular forms. To put it plainly, for many adolescents in Hamilton standard speech is not “cool” enough.

But unlike adolescents in Paget Farm, young people in Hamilton do not have to reach for the extremely local forms to increase their symbolic value on the sociolinguistic marketplace. There is no doubt that young people in Hamilton attach high value to local linguistic forms and they use it together with other (often global) stylistic resources to construct a local identity. Using a stigmatised local form such as preverbal *bin* could hazard a projection of this community as trendy and cool. On the other hand, using more standard forms would make Hamilton comparable to Mount Pleasant and this is also something to be avoided since Mount Pleasant norms are not considered as genuine or attractive. Perhaps, the fact that adolescents in Hamilton have not alternated the frequency of use of preverbal markers, bare verbs or inflected verbs compared to the older generation could be interpreted as a part of identity construction. Unlike adolescents in Mount Pleasant and in Paget Farm, speakers in Hamilton do not have to work extra hard to negotiate their symbolic value in the sociolinguistic marketplace. They use the vernacular creole

features as resources for constructing their local “cool” identity without making any significant linguistic adjustments.

Another possibility is that speakers in Hamilton might use linguistic forms, other than past temporal reference, as resources of identity construction. These might be of phonological, morpho-syntactic or lexical nature. The area of lexis is especially interesting in this community as Hamilton speakers praise themselves for being the most creative slang users on the island. Local and hip-hop slang words are frequently mentioned as an area which distinguishes Hamilton adolescents from the other communities. Another question which we could ask is whether or not using a linguistic form is also a way of constructing an identity. Whereas we might never be sure if speakers consciously choose not to utilise variants in negotiating styles, it seems feasible to assume that speakers in Hamilton are avoiding preverbal *bin* and inflected verbs because of the indexical meaning they carry.

Whereas so far I have implied that the understanding of the symbolic values of resources used to construct an identity is shared between speakers across the communities, there are also individuals who stand out from the community norms, the so-called in-betweens. By using the linguistic forms differently to other community members, in-betweens demonstrate that some linguistic resources can be used for individual identity moves. I discuss the possible interpretations of this pattern below.

7.5 Individuals in variationist research

According to LePage and Tabouret-Keller (1985), speakers’ linguistic choices can be characterised as acts of identity motivated by the wish to resemble as closely as possible to that of the group with which they wish to identify at various times. We have seen that this pattern is coherent for most of the young speakers in Mount Pleasant, Paget Farm, and Hamilton. Nevertheless, we identified a group of speakers from both older and younger cohorts who do not use the variable inflected verbs in the same way as the peers in their communities. This was reflected both through frequency rates as well as constraint rankings and hierarchies. The reasons why these speakers do not conform to the community norms need to be addressed.

Due to the lack of space, in this study only the group of adolescent in-betweens is considered although the issues which motivate the linguistic behaviours of the older in-betweens are equally intriguing.

The discussion of the place of individuals in the analysis of language variation and change has been ongoing (cf. Guy, 1980; Hudson, 1996; Johnstone 1996; Eckert, 2000; Coupland, 2001; Mendoza-Denton, 2002; Sankoff and Blondeau, 2007; Sharma, 2011). On the one hand researchers have emphasised that explanations of larger patterns of variation and change cannot be conducted on individual speakers due to a limited perspective, and should ideally involve larger groups of speakers (communities). On the other hand, advocates of analysing variability among individuals highlight an opportunity for a more fine-grained examination of the way speakers use socially meaningful linguistic forms to construct social identities, and a more sophisticated understanding of individual's social worlds. According to Eckert, analysis of individual variation can contribute to our better understanding of both individual and group identities. As Eckert explains (2000: 17):

“The individual, thus, is not a lone ranger wobbling out there in the social matrix, but is tied into the social matrix through structured forms of engagement. The individual constructs an identity – a sense of place in the social world – in balancing participation in a variety of communities of practice, and in forms of participation in each of those communities.”

Therefore, analysing individual variability allows us to: (i) establish the relationship between variation in the individual and the ways it fits with the variation on a community level, (ii) observe that not all individuals in the community follow the community norms which suggests that we should be careful in granting status of a speech community to groups of speakers without an empirical investigation of their linguistic practices, and (iii) “zoom in” to the relationship between language use and individual social practices among speakers in order to trace the factors which motivate these practices (this is more difficult to achieve if all community members are considered).

Below I discuss the possible determinants of individual variability of the three in-between adolescents considered here. Although a more detailed analysis could perhaps include an account of how variable forms are used in moment to moment interactions (as in e.g. Podesva, 2006; Sharma, 2011), or how they get assigned social meaning by marking particular stances (Bucholtz, 2009; Kiesling, 2009), in this study I limit my analysis to a focus on these adolescents' participation in the sociolinguistic marketplace. I suggest that their economic and social gains of using more valuable linguistic forms are different to those of other community members.

7.5.1 In-betweens in Bequia and the linguistic marketplace

Before I discuss the potential motivations for in-betweens' linguistic practices let us again have a look at the rates of inflection represented by each of those speakers.

Table 7.1 shows the frequency of inflected verbs across the morphological classes in raw numbers and percentages, and compares is to the rates of inflection reported for the rest of the community (these were presented in Table 4.5, Chapter 4).

Morph. Class	Celia PF		Chris Ham		Nigel MP	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Go</i>	12(22)	54	2(10)	20	14(20)	70
Irregular	39(105)	37	16(33)	48	11(43)	25
Semi-weak	8(23)	35	5(9)	55	0(6)	0
Syllabic reg.	6(18)	33	7(9)	77	2(9)	22
V-final reg.	0(14)	0	1(11)	9	1(6)	16
C-final reg.	6(73)	8	3(17)	17	1(18)	5
Total	71(255)	28	34(89)	38	29(102)	28
Community total	49(427)	11	42(378)	11	192(318)	60

Table 7.1 Distribution of inflected verbs across morphological classes among young in-betweens compared to the community

The table confirms that Celia, Chris and Nigel stand out from the community norms. Celia uses inflected verbs over twice as much as the rest of adolescents in Paget Farm, while Chris uses inflection three times as much as his peers in Hamilton. On the other hand, Nigel utilises inflected verbs half as often as other young Mount Pleasanters. Below I discuss each of these speakers individually.

7.5.1.1 Celia

First, let us focus on Celia. The key to interpreting her “unusual” linguistic behaviour is perhaps related to the fact that she was a research assistant during the process of data collection and transcription. She conducted one of the interviews and helped in data transcription (although the exact purpose of the study was not revealed to her). Because of the nature of our cooperation, Celia was quite a frequent guest in my house and throughout my stay we maintained a friendly relationship. Celia was also recorded on several occasions: once during a transcription session which was interrupted by our casual conversations and Celia’s narratives, second during her informal visit with her sister and third when she was interviewed together with her neighbour and a friend from Paget Farm – Kiki. The data in this study comes from the second and the third recording.

In the interactions with me Celia continues to use both bare verbs and inflected verbs variably rather than categorically switching to StE. This is exemplified below.

7.20 (PF; Celia; 30)

[Celia] You **have** macaroni for lunch yesterday?

[Agata] Yep.

[Celia] You have to be learning how to do all the stuff. You getting there. In my house when is messy, I got clean up.... Oh, I actually kind of **brought** some fruits. I craving orange and I want a fruit sweet.

Apart from the bare form of a verb *have* several other vernacular forms can be identified such as copula deletion next to standard verb inflections.

Secondly, on several occasions Celia uses an inflected verb following an auxiliary in an interrogative clause. This is different to the interrogative illustrated in Example 7.20 where a bare verb is used without a preceding auxiliary. Using two markers of past temporal reference where no marking is the (BeqCE) norm could serve as an example of a hypercorrection (Labov, 1966):

7.22 (Paget Farm; Celia; 64)

[Celia] You didn't actually bought the thing right?

[Agata] Hmm?

[Celia] You didn't bought the thing right? Cause I got one last night, actually even two.

7.23 (Paget Farm; Celia; 215)

[Agata] So did you record L. yesterday?

[Celia] Well when I got the thing it was kinda late and you were all kinda...

[Agata] Have you got it with you today?

[Celia] The recorder? No, did you wanted it?

Celia might be using the hypercorrected form with two markers of past temporal reference (auxiliary *did* and an inflected verb) for two reasons. First, it might be related to Celia's awareness of the social and linguistic status of Paget Farm in Bequia which could affect the level of insecurity about her speech, especially in a conversation with a foreigner. Hypercorrection might therefore be a result of her effort to adopt a "correct" (or perhaps, according to Celia, a desired) style of speech in this context. Secondly, this hypercorrection, and her higher frequency use of inflected verbs in general are perhaps stimulated by Celia's wish to project herself as more educated, knowledgeable and professional in light of the prospect of working with a foreign academic. This is related to the stigma of creole language in education which reinforces the contrast between English as the official educated variety, and creole as its "incorrect" and "bastardised" equivalent, not appropriate for scholarly purposes. Faced with an opportunity to earn some money and get involved in an academic activity, Celia chooses the speech patterns which she thinks she can benefit from most. This points to several conclusions regarding the use of inflected verbs of Celia as an in-between speaker.

First, it suggests that the speaker must recognise the potential value of inflected verbs and she chooses to use it more in contexts where greater economic

and social gains are at stake. As I showed in the discussion of speech patterns among Mount Pleasant adolescents, the value of this linguistic form lies in its social meanings which are related to sounding educated, and perhaps also smart and knowledgeable. The tactic where speakers utilise more standard forms to project an educated persona was also observed by Podesva (2006) for phonetic and phonological variables such as word-final /t/ release, and by Campbell-Kibler (2009; 2011) for *-ing*.

Additional support for the suggestion that Celia might be using inflected verbs to construct a certain style might come from the observations of her speech patterns during a sociolinguistic interview where she was accompanied by her friend and a neighbour and which took place in Paget Farm. Apart from using bare verbs more frequently in this setting, Celia also utilises preverbal *bin* and *did*. In fact, all the tokens of *bin* and *did* produced by Celia come from this interview, and make her a prominent preverbal markers user all together. Her high use of the local forms goes in line with her attitude towards Paget Farm and the recent changes in Bequia. Celia is strongly oriented towards the local norms; she enjoys local traditions and customs and opposes the recent high influx of tourists. It seems then that it is her individual gains which drive Celia to apply a more “standard” style in particular contexts to project an educated persona.

This observation highlights the functional role of linguistic variation. Speakers use linguistic forms to index particular attitudes, stances or styles (e.g. Ochs, 1992). In the case of Celia, the choice of variants is to a large extent dictated by the sociolinguistic marketplace. On her home turf, and surrounded by the people from her community, Celia follows the speech patterns characteristic of the community norms, and she is one of the highest users of preverbal markers, a form which symbolically represents the authentic local persona. Nevertheless, using more standard forms becomes more valuable when she interacts with not only a foreigner but also her employer. This suggests that Celia and perhaps Bequians in general are aware of the indexical meanings of inflected verbs. This does not imply that the variation is subject to conscious choices but rather it could be sensitive to the sociolinguistic monitor (see also Chapter 1; Meyerhoff and Walker, 2007; Labov, 2008a), a mechanism responsible for extracting and storing the social information

from speech production. Recent sociolinguistic research has applied experimental techniques to demonstrate that social meaning of phonetic and phonological variables can influence speakers' perception of those who use those variables (e.g. Campbell-Kibler, 2009; Drager, 2010; Levon, 2011). But the extent to which the sociolinguistic monitor affects the variation above the level of phonology is unclear (Meyerhoff and Walker, 2007). The example of Celia suggests that the social information is stored by the sociolinguistic monitor for morpho-syntactic variables which are available for constructing social identities in particular contexts. To a large extent this is also applicable to Chris's linguistic practices.

7.5.1.2 Chris

Similarly to the case of Celia, I suggest that Chris's higher use of inflected verbs is determined by the socio-economic gains that come with using a more standard speech style. Chris is slightly older than the majority of speakers in the dataset. In his early twenties, Chris has just entered the professional stage of life. He holds two jobs and both of them heavily rely on tourism. During the day Chris works in a small company which provides electronic services to Bequia residents. He visits residents' houses to sort out, fix or set up various electric appliances. Through this job he is in touch with foreign visitors on a regular basis. In addition, Chris works as a bartender in a popular hotel bar frequently visited by locals as well as tourists. Despite being strongly affiliated with Hamilton, Chris's networks remain open. He spends his free time with peers from the other villages and young tourists alike having a reputation of a popular and likeable character on the island. The types of jobs that Chris occupies exert a linguistic pressure on him, leading him to sound more standard. As I already discussed, speaking Standard English is a necessary requirement for achieving professional success in Bequia. For Chris speaking standard is also beneficial on a social scale as it allows him to expand his networks and gain popularity among local and non-local peers.

Just like Celia, Chris is very attached to the community he comes from. He strongly advocates the position of Hamilton in Bequia as unique and "better" and he is closely related to other young people in his village. Although I cannot provide

the data which would illustrate Chris's linguistic patterns during his interaction with other speakers from Hamilton, I suggest that the frequency of inflected verbs would decrease in such contexts, similarly to the way it decreased for Celia. I propose that Chris adjusts his speech towards Standard English to increase his value on the sociolinguistic and economic marketplace. This adjustment is directly related to the recent transformations on Bequia which provided new financial and social opportunities for young Bequians. Chris recognises that in order to benefit most lucratively from these opportunities several social and linguistic adjustments are inevitable, such as expanding his social networks and using more standard linguistic forms. The case of Chris also supports the correlation between age and linguistic adjustment. It is not accidental that Chris, a slightly older speaker, makes this adjustment compared to the other speakers in Hamilton included in sample who are still in their school age. This supports the general sociolinguistic observation that early adulthood constitutes a developmental step in the life of an individual with which the use of non-standard variants generally decreases (Labov, 1966; Trudgill, 1974; Williams and Kerswill, 1999).

So far we have seen that there are particular social and economic benefits for young Bequians which come with using more standard forms. However, the example of Nigel also shows that speakers have a lot to gain from using the vernacular forms more than other adolescents in the community.

7.5.1.3 Nigel

Unlike Celia and Chris, Nigel has little involvement in the economic marketplace. During the time of fieldwork he was in the final year of his high school education and did not hold any occupation. Just like the other in-betweens, he is also strongly attached to the community he comes from which he thinks highly of. However, Nigel's personal style differs considerably from that of other adolescents from Mount Pleasant analysed here. The data comprising Nigel's speech patterns comes from a sociolinguistic interview conducted by his peer from Mount Pleasant.

Nigel's fascination with hip-hop is immediately apparent through his clothing, and gestures. He resembles the Hamilton boys in his desire to project himself as a hip-hop persona - a "cool" kid and a "bad boy" (Chang, 2005).

Similarly to other young males in Bequia Nigel cares about his fashion, choosing baggy shorts, T-shirts by labels renown in hip-hop culture, branded and trendy sneakers, and a “flat bill” cap. In addition, Nigel participates in socialising activities characteristic for young males in Bequia, such as hanging out in the harbour, drinking, “cruising”, and flirting with girls. He socialises most strongly with a few older young males from Mount Pleasant who represent a similar style, but his social networks also include adolescents from other Bequia communities, especially the main harbour. I propose that the pattern of variation which Nigel demonstrates is strongly related to his stylistic practices (cf. Eckert, 2000; Moore, 2004; Lawson, 2009), and especially a desire to be perceived as “cool” and “hip-hop”, the same way as adolescents in Hamilton. There are additional arguments to support this.

In Section 7.4.1 I discussed the possible motivations driving the more standard speech patterns in Mount Pleasant. I listed the socio-economic pressures to use Standard English which adolescents in this village are under. At the time of data collection Nigel showed little interest in these gains, and some of them he found not applicable. For example, Nigel expressed no interest in pursuing his education further and did not care about his future career, leaving this issue for when he finishes up his high school degree. He did not go to church often either. This indicates that the socio-economic pressures exerted by the elders in the Mount Pleasant community are not (yet?) applicable to Nigel. With this comes the pressure to use more standard language. Nigel clearly does not feel this pressure but on the other hand he engages in the hip-hop stylistic practices where a more vernacular style is more desired.

In addition, Nigel’s engagement in sport activities could also be a contributory factor to constructing a particular persona. He plays cricket, basketball and football on a regular basis and often “hangs out” in the park¹³ playing sports with young people from other communities. Doing sports is often associated with being cool (Eckert, 2000) and research on communities of practice and adolescents

¹³ “The park” is a local name for the sports facilities near the High School. It consists of a larger green area with tribunes where the weekly cricket games take place, which is also used for football, athletics and other sports. Next to it is an outdoors basketball court which most of the time is occupied by players and spectators.

has demonstrated that groups of speakers joined by their common participation in sport activities usually are characterised by a lower rate of standard forms than for example the “nerds” (Bucholtz, 1999; Bakht, 2010).

But perhaps the most crucial motivation for Nigel to use bare verbs more frequently is related to the status of Mount Pleasant as clearly different. Whereas for the majority of individuals in the community this status is considered as distinctive and prestigious, for Nigel it might be problematic in achieving the desirable persona of a cool hip-hopper. This is expressed in the following commentary:

7.24 (MP; Nigel; 42)

[Int.] Anyone ever tell you this thing that Mount Pleasant people is different as well?

[Nigel] Yeah. For all the time. One time when I go beach, and this boy which I saw come and ask me if I was a foreigner.

[Int.] Really?

[Nigel] Yeah cause of my skin colour and everything. Up to today they does tell me, erm...

[Int.] If you are from Bequia?

[Nigel] No, they does tell me when I'm in school, they does tell me...well when there was the Easter Regatta they used to think I was a foreigner.

[Int.] Really?

[Nigel] God, people used to come to me and I was like, I from Bequia you know!

[Int.] I used to get that a lot too when I was younger.

In this conversation Nigel seems annoyed that he is not always recognised as a Bequian but a foreign tourist. This is mostly related to the racial distinctiveness of Mount Pleasanters compared to Bequians in the other communities. It seems that using more of the vernacular variant could be a way for Nigel to strengthen his

Bequian identity in order to be perceived as a local person. This does not mean however that Nigel despises his community or is more oriented towards the other villages in Bequia. Rather, it seems that Nigel is negotiating (balancing) between the community norms and the desirable youth culture style he follows since he strongly identifies with both. The case of Nigel shows that he is driven to achieve goals different to those of other young people in his community (analysed here). While he advocates the status of the community as the best speaking, Nigel also recognises the symbolic power embedded in the vernacular forms which carry broader social meanings related to being local, cool, and sporty.

7.5.1.4 In-betweens - conclusion

The linguistic analysis of the constraints which determine the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs among in-betweens in Bequia showed that for both generations of speakers the pattern of inflection does not neatly fall into any of the communities analysed. Whereas the linguistic constraints, which determined the distribution of forms for this group, most strongly resemble the results obtained for Mount Pleasant I concluded that in-betweens perhaps form a separate group and are linguistically driven by different factors than the peers in their community. The discussion of the three young in-between speakers showed that in fact each of them has got very different reasons for not conforming to the community norm. For Celia and Chris who use more inflected verbs than the community the economic gains were perhaps the strongest. Celia recognised the indexicality of the inflected variant as useful in projecting an educated and knowledgeable persona which she thought would help her in the professional contact with a foreign “employer”. For Chris, the gains were both economic and social. Using Standard English is a necessary requirement for the type of jobs he occupies and a desirable asset in making friends with non-local peers. On the other hand, through the less frequent use of inflected verbs than the rest of young people in his community, Nigel “compromised” between being loyal to the sociolinguistic community norms and the desirable style of a cool, hip-hop, local male.

The linguistic marketplace concept proved helpful in interpreting these variable patterns. Speakers attach symbolic value to linguistic resources according to their social indexicalities. Importantly, these values (and social meanings) are not uniform across the communities (as it was shown in the first part of this chapter) and individuals, which is apparent when in-betweens are considered. The values of these symbolic resources are negotiated on the sociolinguistic marketplace which is non-unidimensional. Instead, its dimensions are to a large extent shaped by (i) socio-economic transformations triggered by globalisation, and (ii) speakers' local ideologies about place and their place identities.

In conclusion, analysing in-betweens in this study has been worthwhile for several reasons. First, it has revealed that not all individuals in Bequia conform to the norms dictated by the community. This result should encourage a more careful application of the speech community concept since speech communities "do not already exist as "predefined entities waiting to be researched" (Patrick, 2004: 593) but should be empirically investigated with the consideration of intra-speaker variability. Secondly, I have demonstrated that individual gains can to a large extent drive individual speech patterns. In establishing this process the concept of a sociolinguistic marketplace has been useful although several limitations of the concept have been pointed out. Therefore, this analysis supports and adds to the research which emphasises that linguistic marketplace is by all means not uniform and unidimensional (Woolard, 1985; Eckert, 2000; Zhang, 2005), and that social meanings can differ across individuals and communities depending on the local ideologies which drive their construction (Eckert, 2008; Johnstone and Kiesling, 2008; Campbell-Kibler, 2009). Finally, globalising processes can reinforce these local ideologies, therefore indirectly influencing intra-speaker variability. This observation is particularly important for the linguistic research in the Caribbean, the region heavily impacted by globalising processes (Curtis, 2009).

7.6 Social factors - conclusion

In the sections above I have attempted to explain the patterns of variation found among adolescents in the three Bequia communities. I have considered the strong attitudes of Bequians towards their community and the other villages, which are

based on local ideologies shaped by the geographical, social and perceived dimensions of place. In light of recent socio-economic transformations in Bequia - an effect of the globalising economy, the local ideologies are even more important and call for constant renegotiation. I have argued that such processes as the influx of tourism, improved economy, and influence of the popular media have enhanced the ideology of differentiation between the communities and increased the symbolic power asymmetry between them causing a reshaping of the local linguistic marketplace. Local ideologies have triggered different responses to the socio-economic changes among adolescents in the three communities who are using a variety of resources to negotiate symbolic power. Language is one of the crucial tools in this process. Linguistic forms, just like other stylistic resources, become a valuable capital for exercising social and/or economic dominance. Symbolic power is understood differently in individual communities and the resources used for its negotiation also change locally.

Speakers in Mount Pleasant understand the socio-economic benefits which come with using the most standard speech patterns. By adjusting their language to the needs of the economic marketplace young people in this village open their opportunities to financial benefits. In addition, speaking standard is socially desirable in this community where sounding more “correct” and “better” than people in the other villages is a source of local pride. On the other hand, the recent transformations have decreased the socio-economic value of Paget Farm, the poorest community on the island, which is subject to the social judgement of roughness and backwardness but also considered as the most traditional. I have argued that adolescents in this village have recycled a supra-local preverbal marker *bin* as a resource of increasing their symbolic power by becoming the gatekeepers of authenticity, an important role in light of the recent increase of tourism on the island. Finally, adolescents in Hamilton have not adjusted their speech in either direction but are using the vernacular to project a desirable and trendy hip-hop persona, a style which has infiltrated Bequia through easier access to the popular media. This shows how the global patterns can be adapted and negotiated to fit the local purposes (which in Hamilton is strongly assigned to drawing differences

between the other communities), providing a strong example of glocalisation (Robertson, 1995).

In addition, I have demonstrated that the responses to the changing socio-economic landscape can vary across individuals. The analysis of adolescent in-betweens showed that variation can serve individual (social but also economic) purposes which might be different to the general community trend. I have shown that individuals can exercise a variety of linguistic resources to obtain these goals. For example, Celia utilises both supra-vernacular forms, such as preverbal markers, as well as standard verb inflections depending on the socio-economic circumstances. In Chapter 1 I hypothesised that speakers in each community can be grouped into discrete cohorts - more creole-like, and more English-like, according to linguistic patterns across the communities. Results obtained from the sociolinguistic analysis of the group of in-betweens casts a doubt over drawing such sharp contrasts since speakers have access to and indeed utilise forms characterised as occupying two different ends of the creole continuum scale. In the following section I test whether it is possible to consider the system in Bequia in terms of co-existing systems or a creole-continuum.

7.7 The nature of variation in Bequia Creole

One of the research questions raised in Chapter 1 of this study related to the nature of the linguistic variation in Bequia. Two approaches were proposed, the popular in creole studies creole-continuum model (De Camp, 1971), and the co-existing grammars model (Kroch, 1989; Labov, 1998). One of the major criticisms of the continuum model was its non-discreteness and unidimensionality. The non-discrete nature of the continuum was an attempt to grasp the highly variable nature of creole varieties where speakers are able to switch between standard and vernacular forms. According to the continuum model, speakers cannot be grouped into discrete and separate cohorts according to their linguistic practices as they can access any form on the continuum scale depending on social contexts. This view was challenged by studies applying the quantitative paradigm in analysing variation which have demonstrated that speakers can be classified into discrete speech communities based on the distribution of variable forms and the underlying patterns of variation.

The co-existing grammars model was proposed to account for the sharp contrasts between groups of speakers based on their linguistic practices and shared evaluations of these practices. It assumes that variable linguistic forms belong to separate but overlapping systems which speakers can access at any time. The overlap indicates that speakers have access to both systems but there are sharp differences which distinguish one system from the other one. According to Labov, determining whether forms indeed fall into co-existing systems is possible based on several conditions (cf. Chapter 1; Labov, 1998). However, the problems with this approach were also highlighted. One of the major challenges with this modelled deals with establishing the cut off point between the two systems, namely, how do we establish where one system ends and the other one starts.

The initial question regarding the nature of variability in Bequia came from previous accounts of variation in BeqCE which showed that the distribution of variable forms is highly correlated with individual villages. This observation was supported by speakers' commentaries which revealed that Bequians are highly aware of inter-village linguistic differences. This linguistic diversity combined with speakers' shared evaluations of the linguistic variation across the communities in Bequia prompted a question about the nature of linguistic variation in BeqCE. How should we classify variation in Bequia considering the conspicuous split between the villages in terms of the distribution of forms and speakers' recognition of this difference? Following Walker and Sidnell (2011) I tested whether variation between bare verbs, inflected verbs and preverbal markers can be modelled as separate co-existing systems assigned to different villages in Bequia. However, results of the quantitative analysis showed that despite the coherent pattern of distribution based on frequency rates, classifying the systems as different is not completely feasible. On the other hand, the two models, creole continuum and co-existing systems, should not be considered as mutually exclusive. There are several arguments behind this conclusion.

Let us first evaluate Labov's (1998) four conditions according to which forms can fall into discrete co-existing system considering the results obtained from the quantitative analyses of variants across both generations of speakers in Bequia.

- Condition 1: Segregation of variants – speakers are able to segregate the variants of either system according to the context of a topic.

The segregation of variants condition is related to the distribution of variants across different communities. Distributional analysis conducted in Chapter 4 showed that among older speakers, there are indeed clear differences in frequency rates. Mount Pleasant shows a greater distribution of inflected forms than Hamilton and Paget Farm, while in the two latter communities speakers utilise preverbal markers which are scarce in Mount Pleasant. However, the varieties in all three communities are highly variable and no speaker can be classified as a categorical user of either form.

Although among older speakers from Mount Pleasant in the sample we do not come across preverbal *bin*, speakers in this community demonstrate awareness of the creole value of this feature and overtly assign it to linguistic practices of the other communities, especially Paget Farm. High inter- and intra-speaker variability is also assumed in the creole continuum model and so it is not clear how we should distinguish the co-existing systems from the creole continuum based on distribution patterns only. Results obtained for the group of adolescents across the villages confirm this. Again, we observed a sharp split between Mount Pleasant and the other communities in terms of frequency rates for bare verbs and inflected verbs but it also became apparent that Hamilton and Paget Farm, the two communities which were assumed to represent the more creole-like grammar can be further distinguished by the distribution of preverbal *bin* which has increased among young people in Paget Farm. This result adds even more confusion to the classification of the linguistic system in Bequia.

Condition 1 also suggests that speakers can allocate the forms from each system “correctly” across various discourse contexts. I tested whether this is true in Chapter 5. Overall, the results illustrate that the villages show surprising homogeneity in how speakers allocate bare verbs and inflected verbs in discourse. For example, among the older speakers in the three villages inflected verbs are used significantly more to mark supplementary material in a narrative such as commentaries or evaluations, while bare verbs were used more in the main story line. This again reinforces the difficulty of drawing a cutoff point between the

grammars in Mount Pleasant and the other communities. But perhaps the biggest challenge with this classification emerged when Labov's second condition was considered:

- Condition 2: Heterogeneity of constraints – variables in these different systems are constrained by a different set of factors

In Chapter 1 I discussed the difficulties related to applying quantitative techniques in comparing different varieties. After Meyerhoff (2009a) and Nagy and Irwin (2010) (among others) I used the method of quantification which involved the comparison of constraint rankings and factor weight hierarchies obtained from the multivariate analysis, and the calculation of the goodness of fit correlation coefficient between the factor groups. The results for older speakers pointed to several similarities between Hamilton and Paget Farm where, unlike in Mount Pleasant we do not see a significant effect of morphological class. But the treatment of aspect across the communities shows substantial uniformity between Hamilton, Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant, which casts a doubt over the hypothesis highlighting two co-existing grammars. In addition, the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs seems to be strongly embedded in discourse contexts which operates similarly across the communities.

Finally, Labov lists a strict co-occurrence of rules as an important factor for classifying two systems as co-existing:

- Condition 3: Strict Co-occurrence: Rules show strict co-occurrence, so that one never applies without the other.

Walker and Sidnell (2011) interpret this co-occurrence as a collocation effect, where a set of constraints work together forming a separate lect. This collocation includes the frequency of distribution, and the underlying constraints of this distribution. Considering the nature of the constraints and frequency patterns across the villages discussed above I concluded that it is not clear-cut at which point we should draw a line where one system starts and the other one ends. Below I summarise the arguments which speak for and against classifying the nature of variation in Bequia

across the villages as belonging to two co-existing systems – a more creole-like one in Hamilton and Paget Farm, and a more English-like in Mount Pleasant.

Older speakers

Features which point to co-existing systems:

- Difference in constraint rankings across the communities for morphological class (significant only in Mount Pleasant)
- Perfective accomplishments and activities disfavour inflection in Hamilton and Paget Farm unlike in Mount Pleasant
- No instances found of preverbal *bin* among speakers in Mount Pleasant the form used by speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm

Features which point against co-existing systems:

- Differences in frequency of distribution of inflected verbs are nowhere near categorical (19% in Hamilton, 23% in Paget Farm vs. 45% in Mount Pleasant)
- Strong effect of aspect on the distribution of inflected verbs in all three communities
- Perfective punctual and habitual stative contexts strongly favour inflection in Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant. In fact, the calculation of R-squared showed a stronger relationship for the treatment of aspect between these two villages than for Hamilton and Paget Farm
- Discourse constraints confirm that speakers across the three villages deploy linguistic forms across the narrative in a similar manner
- Analysis of preverbal markers showed different constraints determining the distribution of these forms in seemingly more creole-like communities: in Hamilton preverbal *bin/did* have a functional-disambiguating role and occur mainly before consonant-final regular verbs. In Paget Farm they mainly precede stative verbs

Younger speakers

Features which point to co-existing systems:

- Strong co-occurrence of forms and constraints between Hamilton and Paget Farm, especially in their treatment of morphological class
- Difference in discourse constraints: narrative structure and grounding are not significant in Hamilton and Paget Farm, but they are strongly significant in Mount Pleasant
- Speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm use preverbal markers which are not utilised in Mount Pleasant, and in neither community do grammatical categories analysed here determine the pattern of distribution of *bin/did* suggesting a levelled out grammar in Hamilton and Paget Farm

Features which point against co-existing systems:

- The differences in distribution of bare verbs and inflected verbs across the villages are greater (but far from categorical)
- Morphological class constraints the distribution of inflected verbs across all the communities (regular verbs in general are less likely to feature as inflected compared to irregular verbs and semi-weak verbs)

This comparison points to several conclusions: (i) arguments supporting the co-existing grammars hypothesis cannot offset the similarities across the villages and it is impossible to draw a line between a more creole-like system and a more English-like one, (ii) among adolescents the differences are more conspicuous. We could perhaps speculate that the system in Hamilton and Paget Farm has diverged or its starting to diverge from that of Mount Pleasant (where we observe transmission of the system across generations) but again, it is difficult to draw the line separating two different systems.

I conclude that, despite many differences across the communities, the methodology applied here has revealed that the co-existing systems model is not quite accurate for characterising the nature of variation within past temporal reference across the difference villages and age groups in Bequia. Instead, I suggest

that variation in Bequia can be accounted for by what Patrick (1999) refers to as one highly variable mesolectal grammar.

7.7.1 Variation in Bequia as a mesolectal grammar

The strongest argument supporting the consideration of variable patterns in Bequia as one variable grammar is its non-discreteness. The similarities and differences across the communities discussed above show that arranging the variable forms and the constraints into discrete varieties, with clearly defined boundaries are not supported by empirical analysis. On the contrary, there seems to be a subtle continuity across the communities apparent through an overlap of constraints determining the variable patterns across the communities. In addition, we have seen that speakers can switch between forms classified as standard, such as *-ed*, or creole, such as preverbal *bin* according to social contexts. I have already mentioned the example of Celia, who uses more inflected verbs than peers in her community in the contexts where the socio-economic stakes are the highest, but she is also one of the highest users of preverbal *bin* among adolescents in the sample. This shows that speakers have a variety of forms available to them, both the vernacular creole forms, and Standard English, which are sensitive to grammatical, discourse specific, and social constraints.¹⁴

After Patrick (1999: 293) I argue that this one mesolectal grammar includes features of both the basilect and the acrolect as speakers “do not have (or at any rate, use) a full basilectal grammar, but have not fully acquired an English one”. The results show that speakers in different villages of Bequia are oriented towards different ends of this mesolectal grammar. Speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm draw more from the lower end of the continuum, which is evident through the use of preverbal markers. On the other hand speakers in Mount Pleasant are more

¹⁴ Mount Pleasant adolescents are an exception to this generalisation. They use few preverbal *did* markers and no *bin* although they are aware of its social indexicality (cf. Chapter 6). It is open to discussion whether preverbal *bin* forms exist in the linguistic repertoire of adolescents in Mount Pleasant but are not used because of the social meanings they carry, or whether they are not a part of the past temporal reference system for these speakers.

oriented towards the upper end which is supported by the higher rate of inflected verbs, and limited distribution of preverbal markers. Arguably, adolescents in Mount Pleasant are closest to “fully acquiring” an English grammar. This is perhaps what Walker and Sidnell (2011) had in mind when they classified the system in Bequia as two grammars – a more creole-like and more English-like. Indeed, speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm make greater use of the basilectal features, while Mount Pleasanters use more of the acrolectal features, although for the majority of contexts the boundaries cannot be determined.

I also argue that this pattern, although to a large extent conditioned by grammatical and discourse-specific factors, is negotiated by speakers according to social circumstances. Speakers organise, or rather negotiate the pool of forms which constitute the mesolectal grammar and some forms become more or less important depending on the social circumstances. These forms can be used for short term, immediate identity moves (as we have seen for the in-betweens), or as a response to socio-economic transformations which prompt speakers to use variable forms in a construction of a social persona (Eckert, 2008). This manipulation of linguistic forms in the mesolectal grammar was observed for adolescents in Paget Farm and Mount Pleasant. While the former recycled a basilectal form to construct a persona of an authentic Bequian, in Mount Pleasant inflected verbs are a tool for obtaining socio-economic gains stemming from improved economic situation. Which forms of this mesolectal grammar are chosen for such identity moves depends largely on local place identities and most importantly, the ideology of differentiation. The highly variable mesolectal grammar provides linguistic resources which can be utilised on the sociolinguistic marketplace. As I argued above, the values of these forms are negotiated locally but this process is a response to larger social and economic globalising changes which are affecting Bequia today. It seems that in light of the recent transformations, young Bequians today are indeed making use of the forms which vary on the creole continuum to negotiate their position in the changing socio-economic reality of Bequia. In summary, I propose that the variable linguistic system in Bequia is:

“a single [non-unidimensional] grammar, evolving and yet stable enough to serve the needs of its users, variable and yet internally-ordered enough to constitute a system” (Patrick, 1999: 294)

7.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I have demonstrated that the explanation of the linguistic patterns of variation among adolescents in Bequia is not possible without considering the local social dynamics across the communities on the island, and the larger global processes which are impacting the everyday lives of young Bequians today. Quantitative and qualitative examination of speakers’ linguistic choices on the individual and community level have also pointed to several conclusions regarding the nature of variation within past temporal reference in BeqCE. Despite its limitations, the creole continuum model was demonstrated to fit the data more accurately than the co-existing systems approach. Following Patrick (1999), I have classified the highly variable non-discrete system in Bequia as a mesolect which incorporates several basilectal and acrolectal features. Importantly, this system should not be considered as a unidimensional scale ordered from the basilect to the standard, but should be understood as a dynamic pool of forms available for the speakers as resources for identity construction. Such a definition of a creole continuum to a large extent overlaps with the co-existing systems approach. By modelling variation in Bequia as co-existing systems Walker and Sidnell (2011) highlighted the need to recognise the non-linear and non-unidimensional nature of variation in BeqCE which is also a feature of the mesolectal grammar discussed above. But although the quantitative variationist methods were useful in establishing the degree of differences between the communities, these differences are not discrete enough to apply the label of separate co-existing systems.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

In this study I investigated language variation among two generations of speakers in three different communities in Bequia. Using quantitative techniques supported by ethnographic observations and qualitative analysis of the data I have demonstrated that there are robust linguistic differences between the cohorts of speakers under investigation. The variants examined here are particularly suitable for analysing variation and change in BeqCE since they theoretically represent different 'lects' – preverbal *bin/did* have been classified as a basilectal feature, bare verbs as a part of the mesolect, and inflected verbs occur also in Standard English (Winford, 1993; Trudgill and Hannah, 2002).

An investigation of language change in a Caribbean English Creole is particularly timely considering the socio-economic transformations which have been affecting the region as an effect of globalisation (Curtis, 2009). Indeed, an initial motivation for carrying out this study was based on a hypothesis that linguistic change is inevitable in light of the current socio-economic landscape of Bequia, marked by increased mobility, economic growth and easy access to the popular media. Whereas this hypothesis has been generally substantiated, its interpretation would not be possible without considering the local ideologies of Bequians in each village and the social meanings of linguistic forms. This examination has pointed to a complex nature of the past temporal reference in BeqCE, a system highly dependent on the relationship between grammar and discourse, non-discrete, yet encompassing a spectrum of forms used by communities and individuals for distinctive identity moves.

In this concluding chapter I first summarise the findings obtained in each chapter. Next, I return to the research questions raised in Section 1.6 (Chapter 1) of this study and answer each of them in turn. In the remaining sections of this chapter I point to the aspects of this study which add to the body of sociolinguistic and

creolistics research showing how this dissertation complements the current trends in the field. However, I also acknowledge the limitations of this study and these are spelled out later in this chapter, followed by a discussion of possible future directions where the analysis could be continued and improved.

8.2 Overview of results

Because the variants analysed here most generally fall into the area of morpho-syntax, in Chapter 1 I considered the problems with including such forms in a quantitative analysis of variation, and especially the form-function asymmetry issue. I also characterised two different approaches to analysing variation in creoles – the creole continuum model (DeCamp, 1971), and the co-existing grammars approach (Labov, 1998; Walker and Sidnell, 2011) highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of both. Next, I summarised the research focusing on investigating the social meanings of linguistic variables paying particular attention to the methods applied in assigning meanings to linguistic forms.

In Chapter 2, drawing from previous research supported by qualitative data gathered during fieldwork, I characterised the Bequia society, focusing on its location, settlement patterns, history and development. I discussed the three communities analysed here – Hamilton, Mount Pleasant, and Paget Farm – characterising the dimensions according to which these villages can be classified as different. I concluded that these dichotomies are even more conspicuous today in light of the current socio-economic changes, such as economic growth and the increase of tourism. Next, the two social variables were characterised which were hypothesised to be crucial for the patterns of variation across the communities – age and place.

Chapter 3 covered the methodology applied in the thesis. First, I discussed the dependent variables – bare verbs, inflected verbs and preverbal markers, and the motivations for including these in a study of variation and change in BeqCE. Next, I characterised the grammatical factors which I hypothesised correlate with the pattern of distribution of the linguistic forms – morphological class, grammatical and lexical aspect. In Part Two of Chapter 3 I discussed the process of data

collection and provided the details of the fieldwork trip. I outlined the challenges related to the data collection process, which undoubtedly are part and parcel of any sociolinguistic fieldwork, and how these were tackled. In the end, I summarised the data sample included in the analysis, and briefly explained the features of the statistical method applied here – multiple regression analysis with Rbrul.

Chapter 4 offered a detailed quantitative analysis of the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs by focusing on the influence of morphological class and aspect on this variation. Before the analysis was conducted, I investigated whether considering individuals in three villages as different speech communities is linguistically justified. Comparison of the frequency rates of inflection across different morphological classes among individuals showed that indeed, speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm use consistently less inflected verbs than Mount Pleasanters. However, this analysis also highlighted a group of speakers who stand out from the community norms in either greater or lower frequency rates of the standard variant than the community norm. These speakers were labelled as “in-betweens” and were analysed separately in the quantitative analysis.

The main findings of Chapter 4 revealed that the patterns of variation within the older cohorts of speakers across the communities show a more similar pattern of variation than it was previously assumed. I concluded that it might not be possible to draw a boundary line between the grammar of Mount Pleasant, assumed to be a more English-like system, and the system in Paget Farm and Hamilton, initially characterised as more creole-like. The analysis of adolescents showed that the grammar in Hamilton and Paget Farm for this variation has been restructured and levelled out, while in Mount Pleasant it has been transmitted (Labov, 2007) from the older generation to the younger.

In Chapter 5 I concentrated on the relationship between grammar and discourse which I considered as crucial for the interpretation of the patterns of variation established in Chapter 4. Investigation of the discourse constraints confirmed that the patterns of variation found for the three communities cannot be accurately interpreted without considering the larger discourse context where the variable forms are organised. The results also reinforced the conclusions drawn in

Chapter 4. First, it corroborated the similarities between Mount Pleasant and the other communities for the group of older speakers. Secondly, it confirmed that the system of variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs is perhaps shared among adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm. This outcome, however, was somewhat puzzling considering the extra-linguistic differences between these communities discussed in Chapter 2. Finally, the results supported the conclusion that adolescents in Mount Pleasant are the most standard speaking community in Bequia who use inflected verbs significantly more than any other community on the island, and narrative was characterised as the primary environment where the innovative variant “overtakes” the vernacular one.

The major goal of Chapter 6 was to establish the functions of preverbal *bin/did* and their role in the past temporal reference system of BeqCE next to bare verbs and inflections. I also hypothesised that preverbal markers are the element of the creole grammar which distinguishes the adolescent communities in Hamilton and Paget Farm. To circumscribe the variable context for the quantitative analysis of *bin/did* I first evaluated whether these forms cover any of the functions hypothesised in previous research. Qualitative examination of *bin/did* showed that the forms can be generally classified as relative tense markers occurring both in the Preterite and [+anterior] context where they co-occur with bare verbs and inflected verbs.

Results of the quantitative examination pointed to the differences between older speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. Whereas in Hamilton *bin/did* meet a functional role of disambiguating the past temporal context, occurring mainly next to regular verbs which are most likely to feature as stems, in Paget Farm they are sensitive to the Stativity predictor, arguably, a typically creole constraint (Bickerton, 1975). These differences again cast doubts over classifying the system in both communities as one creole-like grammar. As far as adolescents are concerned, the findings agreed with the results from Chapter 4. Although the factors which constrain the distribution of *bin/did* in Hamilton and Paget Farm have been levelled out, adolescents in the latter community have recycled (Dubois and Horvath, 1999) preverbal *bin*, a stigmatised creole form. I argued that the principal reason for this is a desire to project the Paget Farm community as the stronghold of authenticity.

In Chapter 7 I focused on the social aspects of variation in Bequia which I suggested would shed more light on the motivations for speakers' linguistic choices. I discussed the local place ideologies and the recent globalising processes and hypothesised that the two forces are strongly related to the linguistic situation across the communities. I argued that speakers in each community are using language as a resource for exercising symbolic power which is important to project oneself as valuable on the socioeconomic marketplace. I concluded however that this marketplace is not homogenous and the values of resources on the market are to a large extent generated locally, and are subject to place ideologies. Finally, the chapter concluded with a discussion of the nature of the variable system in Bequia which I eventually classified as a non-unidimensional and a non-discrete mesolectal grammar.

In the following section I focus on several aspects of the findings summarised above and answer the particular research questions raised in Section 1.6 (Chapter 1) of this thesis.

8.2.1 The research questions revisited

The nature of variability in Bequia

- 1) Can variation in Bequia be assigned to the model of co-existing systems, which assumes variation in Bequia will fall into two separate but partially overlapping grammars – a more creole-like, operating in Hamilton and Paget Farm, and a more English-like, distinguishable in Mount Pleasant?

The conclusion drawn from the analysis of linguistic, discourse specific and social factors to which variation within past temporal marking in BeqCE is sensitive established that we do not have enough evidence to consider variation in Bequia in terms of two co-existing systems, a more creole-like and a more English-like, and that the creole continuum model is more suitable for modelling the data. After Patrick (1999), I concluded that variation in Bequia belongs to a rich, complex, non-discrete grammar which does not fit the profile of a prototypical creole system as

described in previous literature, and which is in many ways different to varieties of English (cf. Section 7.7, Chapter 7).

- 2) What is the role of discourse constraints for the patterns of variation between bare verbs vs. inflected verbs, and variable use of preverbal markers vs. inflected verbs /bare verbs?

The analysis of the \emptyset /-ed variation conducted in Chapter 5 showed that the use of inflected and bare verb forms is heavily dependent on their place in a narrative, and the general organisation of spoken discourse. Bare verbs were consistently found to correlate with the complicating action part a narrative and foregrounded discourse, whereas inflected verbs occurred more frequently in orientations and evaluations, classified as backgrounded discourse. In addition, the analysis showed that the functional effects, such as the presence or absence of a temporal cue in general do not determine the pattern of variation, or at least such factors are not as significant as the abovementioned narrative organisation and grounding. I also tested the effect of priming, frequently applied in research employing the usage based approach to grammar (cf. Langacker, 1991; Bybee, 2010). However, in the current data, priming seems to be highly correlated with token frequency which led to a conclusion that it is almost impossible to separate the two, at least in the current analysis.

Discourse constraints were also found to be highly responsible for the distribution of preverbal markers *bin/did*. The qualitative analysis highlighted backgrounded discourse as the area where *bin/did* occur categorically, which enabled an accurate circumscription of the variable context by excluding the variants in foregrounded discourse. In addition, the result obtained from the older speakers in Paget Farm, which showed a strong correlation between Stativity and *bin/did*, was also interpreted through discourse organisation. Since [+stative] verbs occur predominantly in backgrounded discourse and the sections of a narrative which add supplementary information to the main story line, a positive correlation between Stativity and *bin/did* (assigned to backgrounded discourse) was expected.

Nature of language change

3) Can we identify change in progress in any of these communities?

As far as the frequency rates are concerned, two changes were identified: an increase in the use of inflected verbs among adolescents in Mount Pleasant, and an increase in the use of preverbal *bin* by adolescents in Paget Farm. Neither of these changes however was classified as a change in progress. As far as the rise of the inflected verb variant in Mount Pleasant is concerned, in Chapter 7 I classified it as an age-graded variation. I concluded that as they reach adolescence, young people in this community adjust their grammar according to the community norms. I discussed several social and economic motivations why speakers in this community might find the standard language more attractive and “valuable” (according to the sociolinguistic marketplace). I argued that the recent socio-economic transformations on the island, related to globalisation, reinforce this linguistic adjustment.

Although a limited number of tokens does not allow for definitive conclusions to be reached as to the type of change in Paget Farm, I suggest that the increase of preverbal *bin* can also be considered as a response of adolescents in this community to the recent socio-economic transformations. It is subject to further research whether the utilisation of *bin* will continue once adolescents in Paget Farm enter adulthood. The change was attributed to the process of recycling (Dubois and Horvath, 1999) – speakers increased use of preverbal *bin*, a form considered in previous studies as stigmatised, old-fashioned, and highly vernacular, is motivated by its social meaning, and a desire to project the community as traditional and authentically Creole. This is an especially important enterprise for the Paget Farm community which is subject to social judgements, both linguistically and socially, and which is assigned less symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991) according to the traditional socio-economic scale which shapes the sociolinguistic marketplace.

4) If there is a change, what type of change is it (levelling, reallocation, transmission etc.)?

The conclusions as to the nature of language change in Bequia was established based: (i) comparison of constraint rankings, (ii) comparison of factor weights within predictors, and (iii) calculation of Pearson's correlations coefficients calculated from factor weight values. First, the outcome of this investigation showed restructuring and levelling of the system among younger speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. This result is based on the fact that the factors which determine the variation between *-ed* and \emptyset are almost identical among adolescents in these communities, but different to the factors which constrain this variation among older speakers. However, the levelling of constraints which determine this variation was not reflected in frequency rates which have remained constant across the generations. This result showed that levelling can reach beyond the frequency surface and affect the underlying structure of a system.

Levelling was corroborated also for *bin/did*. Neither of the factors included in the analysis was found significant for the distribution of preverbal markers which led to the conclusion that: (i) this could be indicative of grammaticalisation (reflected in decreolisation) of the system whereby *bin/did* lost their narrow function to a more general one – past tense marking (Hopper and Traugott, 2003), and (ii) since the grammatical mechanisms which operate this variation were lost across generations, and the systems among adolescents are more similar, this could again support the cross-generational levelling.

For speakers in Mount Pleasant I observed the transmission of the system from the older generation to the younger. Results of the quantitative analysis showed that the constraints which operate the \emptyset /*-ed* variation have been faithfully replicated among the younger generation of speakers. In addition, I observed a change in the frequency of inflected verbs (cf. Q3)

Social stratification and the social meaning of the variables

5) Which social factors correlate with patterns of language variation and change in the three villages in Bequia?

The most important social categories hypothesised to determine the patterns of variation among adolescents in Bequia are age and place. The former refers

especially to adolescence, considered as a time where speakers most strongly mark their affiliations and dissociations with social groups. The latter is important because of the strong local ideologies which shape Bequians' practices and orientations. I emphasised that in this study I consider place as more than a geographical boundary accounting for its social and perceived dimensions. Place ideologies were discussed as responsible for the social meanings of linguistic forms which are used by adolescents across the communities in identity construction.

6) Are any of the linguistic forms used for individual or group identity moves and if so, are they homogenous across the island?

The analysis showed that the social meanings of the forms change across the communities. I demonstrated the magnitude of the place ideologies in Bequia and illustrated the different ways these ideologies influence speakers' perception of differences. I showed that inflected verbs and preverbal *bin* are used meaningfully to make particular moves which can be considered as a response to the recent globalising processes. I showed that these moves can be homogenous for a speech community, but can also affect speakers individually depending on their social positioning and networks (as was evident through the group of in-betweens).

7) What is the relationship between language variation as a resource for identity construction and the globalising processing affecting adolescents in Bequia?

Throughout this study I have emphasised the tight relationship between the patterns of language variation and change, and the recent global processes affecting the Bequia youth today. I argued that these linguistic patterns should be considered as a response to the socio-economic changes. I found the linguistic marketplace concept useful in interpreting the linguistic changes. I concluded that the sociolinguistic marketplace has been reshaped as a result of the external socio-economic transformations but the values of the resources negotiated in this marketplace, including language, are established locally, and are especially shaped by the local place ideologies. I concluded that speakers in each community find different values in individual linguistic forms and are using them to project symbolic power. This, however, does not apply to all members of the communities. The discussion of the "in-betweens" showed that the values of linguistic forms can

be negotiated individually as speakers in different contexts use forms which they find most valuable for personal, social and economic benefits.

8.3 Contribution of this study

Several research areas can be distinguished where this study makes a significant contribution. These are discussed below.

8.3.1 Language change in creole languages

Previous studies focusing on language variation in CECs (e.g. Patrick, 1999; Hackert, 2004) recognised and emphasised the need to investigate language changes in the region. This need stems not only from the general lack of studies examining changes in progress in creole speaking communities but also the current dynamic socio-economic landscape in the Caribbean which makes such studies particularly timely. I showed that decreolisation is by all means not an obvious outcome of language change in CECs.

Whereas in Mount Pleasant we have indeed observed an adoption of the standard variant (possibly and age-graded variation), in Paget Farm the opposite outcome was reported, an increase in the use of a stigmatised basilectal creole preverbal *bin*. In addition, among adolescents in Hamilton and Paget Farm the frequency of the vernacular verbs has not been altered compared to the older generation of speakers. I argued that to interpret these patterns we need to consider both the global processes and the local contexts (this was also emphasised by Rickford, (1986) for an analysis of social class in Guyana, and Escure, (1991) for gender in Belize). In Bequia, a detailed examination of the local place identities holds the key to an interpretation of why some Bequians adopt the standard forms faster than others, and why some are holding on to the local forms.

In this view I support LePage and Tabouret- Keller (1985) who early concluded that acts of identity are to a large extent responsible for variable patterns in creole languages. In the current study I have provided a fine-grained analysis of what these acts are and the ways speakers use variation to negotiate their position

in the changing socio-economic landscape. Similarly to LePage and Tabouret Keller, I argue that creole studies would benefit from a more detailed insight into the social meanings of linguistic forms which hold the key to an interpretation of linguistic variation - an inevitable element of creole systems.

8.3.2 Language change and globalisation

The results obtained in this study are also applicable to research investigating language change in times of globalisation, and especially in the context of creoles, and non-standard varieties more generally. Similarly to other studies within this area of research I showed that the global processes, rather than being blindly adopted, are negotiated and made sense of in local contexts. Whereas global processes might not have a direct influence on language variation and change, they cause a local reaction which can be reflected linguistically. Attention to the local (Johnstone, 2010) is one such reaction which I demonstrated contributed to the increase in frequency of a local feature - preverbal *bin*. On the other hand, speakers in Hamilton draw from the improved economy in negotiating difference. Through the use of commodities, and attributes of hip-hop culture, which became accessible to young Bequians only recently, I showed that adolescents in Hamilton are putting an effort to project themselves as cool, different and “the best” according to the local doctrine (also adopted from hip-hop discourse) - “West is the best”.

I also showed that globalisation has the power of changing the local social and linguistic marketplaces and this indirectly influences the patterns of variation in Bequia. This pointed to a non-uniform and non-unidimensional nature of the linguistic marketplace (cf. Woolard, 1985; Eckert, 2000). The values of symbolic resources on the market can differ across individuals and communities depending on the local ideologies which drive their construction. Finally, globalising processes can reinforce these local ideologies, therefore indirectly influencing inter-, and intra-speaker variability. This observation is particularly important for the linguistic research in the Caribbean, and other regions heavily impacted by globalising processes.

Moreover, the relationship between globalisation and place has been highlighted. I have argued for reinscription of place in sociolinguistics as a category which should be given more consideration, reaching beyond geographic characteristics. The tridimensional model of place, concentrating on such levels as geographical, social and perceived, has been helpful in breaking down the category of place to multiple micro-level phenomena. Different locations of the villages on Bequia have shaped the patterns of settlement and features of communities occupying them. These characteristics became a foundation for the emergence of perceived boundaries between the communities, according to which speakers in each community position themselves with respect to each other giving rise to distinctive place identities. These identities turn out to be crucial in light of the current socio-economic transformations on the island.

8.3.3 Modelling variation in creole languages

The question of how to model variation in creole languages has always been central to creole studies, and the creole continuum model (DeCamp, 1971) has been the most popular in accounting for the high variability of forms. However, the early model has been subject to some criticism especially due to its assumed non-discreteness and unidimensionality (cf. Chapter 1; Patrick, 1999). An alternative model, proposed by e.g. Walker and Sidnell (2011) for modelling variation in Bequia suggested the co-existence of two different systems, a more creole-like, and a more-English like operating in different communities on the island. The current investigation was aimed to determine whether such an approach is feasible in the context of variable past temporal marking. I concluded that whereas the co-existing grammars model is attractive as it accounts for the robust, often large, differences between the communities, it is empirically difficult to measure.

The question which was recurring in the analysis was where we should draw a line where one system ends and the other one starts considering that the distribution of linguistic verbs is not categorical across the communities and the constraint hierarchies were in many cases shared. In conclusion, I agreed with Patrick (1999) in that the continuum model, although imperfect and by all means

not unidimensional offers a better account of the variability within BeqCE temporal system. Although the continuity of the system is not straightforward and non-linear, I concluded that the shared constraint rankings could be the elements where the grammar progresses from one 'lects' to another (rather than there being a one cut off point where two grammars diverge).

I also showed that although this continuum includes forms from both the basilect and the acrolect, such as preverbal *bin* and *-Ed*, speakers choose a variant depending on the social context (I demonstrated that in Bequia this is largely dependent on the local values of these forms in the sociolinguistic marketplace). In summary, the past temporal system of BeqCE is a single system, encompassing some basilectal features, and some acrolectal, operated by a deterministic set of constraints, but yet flexible enough so that speakers can access the forms which are negotiated according to the social context.

It needs to be highlighted however that the creole continuum model, understood as a highly variable mesolectal grammar and the co-existing grammars approach are not mutually exclusive. Both approaches encompass the different dimensions of variation – the linguistic ones (which can be established by tracing the frequency rates of variables and their constraints), and the social one which considers speakers' orientation towards the community and the shared evaluation of language use. On the other hand, there are also limitations which can be applied to both models, some of which became apparent in the analysis of in-betweens in several Bequia communities. The fact that some individuals, despite their overtly shared social evaluations with the other community members make active use of features classified as belonging to the system of another community makes assigning variation into any bound groupings, such as a 'system' or a 'lect', fundamentally problematic. Future analysis on variation in BeqCE and other CECs would benefit from more detailed accounts, both quantitative and qualitative, of style shifting patterns among individuals and groups to shed more light on this issue.

8.3.4 Quantifying and measuring the outcomes of linguistic change

The issue of modelling changes and comparing them across different communities has also been central to variationist research (Tagliamonte, 2004; Buchstaller and D'Arcy, 2009; Meyerhoff, 2009a; Nagy and Irwin, 2010). The recurring perplexing question in such studies is on what basis we can claim that the grammar across communities is similar/different. What evidence do we need to characterise an outcome of a linguistic change as e.g. levelling or reallocation? Using the comparative variationist methodology I have provided empirical evidence for two types of changes apparent among younger Bequians: levelling and transmission.

Through the comparison of constraint rankings, factor weight hierarchies and correlation coefficients among two generations of speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm I concluded that the system operating the variables analysed here has been restructured and levelled out. Evidence for this comes from a reduced and unified set of constraints which determine the variable patterns compared to the older generation. As a result, the grammar in the two communities of adolescents is more uniform and less complex (cf. Meyerhoff, 2008) than that of the older generation. However, this levelling does not neatly fit the definition of the process which assumes the loss of linguistically marked and demographically minority variants (cf. Trudgill, 1986; Kerswill, 2003; Britain and Trudgill, 1999). Studies on levelling have generally demonstrated that this loss affects the frequency of such marked variants which is usually reduced across communities. In Bequia, no such loss is taking place, and in case of Paget Farm a reverse process has been observed – an increased use of a vernacular preverbal *bin* form. This result adds to the studies on levelling by showing that levelling can be not just a surface-level process reflected in frequency rates, but can operate on the deeper level linguistic structure affecting the underlying mechanism constraining this variation.

Another type of change reported here is transmission advanced by increased frequency in the use of inflected verbs among adolescents in Mount Pleasant. Labov (2007) proposed that transmission involves a faithful reproduction of a variable pattern of the older generation by children but can also include change. I demonstrated that to interpret why adolescents in Mount Pleasant are using more

inflected verbs than the elders in the community we have to understand the social context of this community, the history of its settlement and development, as well as the attitudes and perceptions of its inhabitants reflected in social practices. Therefore, this study supports the body of research which brings together ethnography and detailed methods of quantification to uncover the subtle community dynamics reflected in the patterns of language variation and change.

In addition, I demonstrated that analysing variation as embedded in discourse organisation can help us explain the variable patterns of language use. As previous research demonstrated, variation is sensitive to discourse factors such as topic (Rickford and McNair Knox, 1994) or stance (Kiesling, 2009). However, it is also subject to the ways utterances are organised in a narrative, whether they are selected by a speaker as primary information or whether they are supplementary to the main story line. More importantly, the analysis showed that grammatical factors which determine the variable patterns are to a large extent intertwined with discourse organisation. For example, a strong correlation between habituality and backgrounded clauses showed that the relationship between aspect and discourse organisation is especially strong. In addition, consideration of backgrounded discourse in an analysis of preverbal markers helped us to correctly circumscribe the variable context. I concluded that discourse organisation should be regarded as a crucial element in an interpretation of variable patterns since removing forms from the larger discourse context in which they occur obscures the interpretation of speakers' linguistic choices.

8.4 Limitations and future directions

This section discusses several limitations of the current research and several avenues where the results obtained here could be further investigated.

First, I acknowledge the unbalanced sampling of the data, a problem variationists have grappled with since the early days. Adding extra tokens to the sample of speech from adolescent participants could provide more insights as to how robust the current results are. In addition, I implied that variation within past temporal reference among adolescents in Bequia might become sensitive to gender

differences (this discussion is pursued in Appendix 2). I attribute this hypothesis to the changing socio-economic landscape and the conspicuous gendered practices which emerged in the course of it. Balancing out the sample so that the gender stratification can be analysed empirically is one area where this study could benefit.

Another avenue for improvement is related to the application of quantitative methodologies in the analysis of in-betweens, and the linguistic outliers more generally. In the current study in-betweens were grouped as a separate cohort of speakers representing those individuals who stand out from the rest of the community. However, such a grouping is problematic considering the different patterns of variable use for these speakers, and perhaps more importantly, different motivations behind their linguistic choices. One of the goals for future research is to establish a reliable method of analysing the degree of deviation of individuals from the group including the effect of individual predictors on this variation (a journal article regarding this issue is currently in preparation).

Another aspect where improvements could be made relates to the coding techniques for the cognitive/functional categories such as presence of a temporal cue, priming and possibly frequency. The relationship between language variation and the usage based approaches to grammar has been recognised as important for studies on language variation (e.g. Clark and Trousdale, 2009). There is a considerable potential for an analysis of the significance of the cognitive and functional factors for variable patterns of language use, and creole TMA systems provide an especially suitable context for such an investigation due to their limited reliance on inflectional morphology. In future research I aim to establish a more robust coding technique which would allow me to measure the effect of priming (exposure) beyond the clause level and test its explanatory value perhaps through experimental techniques.

Indeed, following recent studies which suggested an integrated approach towards understanding of how linguistic variation is produced, performed and perceived (e.g. Mendoza-Denton, 2008; Hay and Drager 2007), in future research I would like to combine the ethnographic perspectives on language variation in Bequia with an analysis of speech perception obtained through experimental

methodologies. Although I implied that Bequians express no overt perception of the variants analysed here, I aim to test empirically whether this is indeed true.

Furthermore, I aim to pursue my analysis of place by linking it to patterns of speech perception. Using a series of online matched-guised experiments, I would like to examine whether Bequians' perception of linguistic variables is affected by the information about speakers' village affiliation. The wider scope of such a project would be to combine a range of methodologies and approaches in an analysis of speech production and perception (following e.g. Hay et al., 2006 and Campbell-Kibler, 2009). I want to examine whether the social meanings attributed to linguistic variants (elicited through speech perception experiments) influence speech production patterns discussed in the current study and whether these combined approaches can provide a bigger picture as to the direction and intensity of the ongoing changes in Bequia. This in turn can be insightful in determining the future of this variety and others, embedded in a similar sociolinguistic setting.

Finally, in the future I would like to return to Bequia to collect more data. This time however, the research would target pre-school and early school children. While the majority of sociolinguistic studies, including this one, have focused on variation patterns among adolescents and adults, few have tackled the mechanisms constraining variation patterns among children at the first language acquisition level, especially in the present-day Caribbean. The future project aims to analyse the acquisition of variation among children exposed to BeqCE and StE and assess the impact of various language-internal and social constraints on this process. I am interested to investigate at which point children acquire their sociolinguistic competence in utilising creole and English, and whether this occurs simultaneously to acquiring their grammatical competence. The larger goal of this research aims to establish the relationship between patterns of variation formed at the first language acquisition level (cf. Smith et al. 2007) and the patterns seen in later life, i.e. adolescence. I would be especially interested to investigate the point where the cross-village differences are acquired, and examine whether pre-school children in Hamilton and Paget Farm would follow the levelling process apparent among adolescents, and whether the system in Mount Pleasant would be transmitted to the youngest generation of speakers (this is especially interesting considering Labov's

claim that transmission occurs through faithful replication of the variable patterns among children at the acquisition level). In addition, recording a group of early school children and comparing it to the pre-school subjects would allow me to test the effect of education on the development of variable patterns. These questions are especially relevant for the sociolinguistic context of the Caribbean where speakers are exposed to different linguistic varieties from early childhood.

8.5 Concluding remarks

The section above showed that regardless of its limitations, the study offers several opportunities for further research. Despite its small size Bequia shows an astonishing rate of sociolinguistic diversity which makes it a fascinating context for an analysis of language variation and change. I hope that in the process of uncovering and interpreting the variable patterns of language use, this study has provided a valuable contribution not only to research on Caribbean English Creoles, but to the fields of language variation, and sociolinguistics more generally.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Testing the effect of exceptional verbs in quantitative analysis

I. Exceptional verbs in BeqCE

The goal of this section is to determine whether some of the decisions made in previous research with respect to the treatment of exceptional verbs (e.g. Patrick, 1999; Hackert, 2004) can also be justified in BeqCE. Exceptional verbs are characterised by high rates of occurrence, and/or high frequency of inflection than other verbs in the sample.

The exceptional verbs *come*, *go*, and *have* constitute a total of 1351 tokens (out of 4153) in the BeqCE data set. The most striking observation stemming from the distributional data presented in Table (Chapter 4) is the high rate of inflection of the verb *have*, also reported in other studies of CECs (Bickerton, 1975; Winford, 1992; Blake, 1997; Patrick, 1999; Hackert, 2004). Only cases of *have* figuring as a main verb were counted, which excludes *have* used as an auxiliary. *Go* is another verb showing high rates of inflection, which again is in line with results obtained across other CECs (Blake, 1997: 156; Patrick, 1999: 231; Hackert, 2004: 143). According to Winford (1992: 326) high rates of inflection for *have* and *go* suggest that these two verbs are “the entry point” for verb inflections in both TC and AAVE. The inflected variant *go* is represented by two lexemes: the StEn form *went*, and the form *gone* which frequently occurs across the Anglophone Caribbean. *Gone* (Example 1) appears in perfective verb situations where it varies with a bare form (2), or *went* (3). Out of 248 inflected variants of *go*, 50 were represented by *gone*, distributed more or less evenly across the villages, and 141 instances of *went*.

1 (Ham; 006; 326)

[006] And forty years since I have the last girl, and the girl **gone** away.

2 (Ham; 001; 392)

[001] Del **go** by he, and he buy she a dress for go to a wedding.

[Leyton] Me and my sister went into the bushes, because that how they used to operate long ago you know.

Finally, *come* is featured in the category of exceptional verbs due to its high frequency, although we can observe that the rate of inflection for this particular verb is much lower across the cohorts, especially among the group of Low inflection users.

In JamCE the rates of inflection for *have* and *go* across individual speakers vary considerably from categorically marked to categorically unmarked (Patrick, 1999: 233). Classification of speakers in Veeton into one of the groups, High, Mid, or Low, according to the use of inflection shows that both *go* and *have* feature as inflected more than 90% of the time for the High speaker group, and between 50% and 60% for Mid speaker group. For Low inflection users, *have* is inflected less than 10% of the time, and *go* just over 20% (Patrick, 1999: 242). To compare, in BahCE *have* and *go* display overall higher rates of inflection than in JamCE. The High speaker group inflect both *have* and *go* almost 80% of the time. The rates for Mid users are similar, although we observe an overall higher rate of inflection for *have* – 90%, and more than 70% for *go*. The Low group makes BahCE stand out from JamCE most conspicuously in terms of rates of inflection of *have* and *go*. Low users in BahCE inflect *have* over 90% of the time, and display around 55% inflection rates for *go*. This result shows that in BahCE *have* is an overall a highly inflected form for all speaker groups which is in line with what we found for BeqCE. On the other hand, the rates of inflection for *go* in BeqCE resemble those reported in JamCE more as we observe a clear gradual increase in the use of the inflected variant of *go* from the Low inflection users to High users. The overall high rate of inflection for both *go* and *have*, and high rates of occurrence for all exceptional verbs identified that is *come*, *go*, and *have*, might lead to several consequences for the quantitative analysis of the variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs in BeqCE.

First, the high rate of occurrence and frequency of inflection of the verb *have* could affect the significance of Stativity. *Have* is the most frequent stative verb, therefore there is a high likelihood that including *have* in the data set might elevate

the significance of Stativity for the distribution of inflected verbs. The same issue was raised by Patrick (1999) for JamCE. Patrick tests the effect *have* has on the significance of Stativity for past marking by verb inflection. The results show that no matter if *have* is included or not, Stativity disfavours verb inflection. In JamCE lexical aspect significantly influences verb inflection only for the Low group of speakers. While [+punctual] verbs favour inflection, [Stative + neutral] verbs disfavour it (Patrick, 1999: 259). Therefore, in JamCE *have*: (i) does not change the fact that lexical aspect is a significant category for verb inflection among the group of Low inflection users, and not a significant one among the Mid and High group, and (ii) does not boost up the positive correlation between Stativity and verb inflection. That is, with or without *have*, stative verbs disfavour verb inflection. In general, Patrick advises to carefully monitor the behaviour of *have* and exclude it from the analysis whenever *have* distorts the overall pattern of variation (Patrick, 1999: 261).

A similar examination was conducted by Hackert for the BahCE data. When *have* was included in the data, [+stative] verbs favoured inflection, while [-stative] verbs disfavour it, which suggests BahCE follows the pattern of inflection predicted by Bickerton (1975). However, after *have* was excluded from the analysis the factor weightings did not change radically ([+stative] verbs still favoured inflection at .69, and [-statives] disfavour it at .49). Hackert suggested that the significant effect of Stativity can be assigned to other frequently occurring stative verbs, such as *think*, and *want*. Nevertheless, the analysis in which *have*, *think* and *want* were excluded still favoured verb inflection among stative verbs (at .60 while [-stative] verbs show a neutral effect of .50). Hackert (2004: 166) concluded that the overall significance of Stativity for verb inflection could be related to discourse grounding, and hypothesised that stative verbs are highly correlated with backgrounded discourse. While in JamCE *have* did not change the negative correlation between Stativity and verb inflection, in BahCE it did not affect the fact that [+stative] verbs favoured inflection. However, a direct implication stemming from the analyses conducted by Patrick (1999) and Hackert (2004) is that an empirical analysis of the significance that *have* might bear on the category of

Stativity is necessary before a decision is made to exclude this verb from the quantitative analysis.

A similar test is essential also for decision making regarding the place of *go* and *come* in the quantitative analysis. Both Patrick and Hackert consider these exceptional verbs separately, but in some cases these are merged with the irregular verb class, or excluded, depending on which factor group is being tested. The decision as to the treatment of these exceptional verbs in the quantitative analysis is important, as, similarly to the case of Stativity, it could elevate the rates of several morphological verbs classes, and perhaps, the overall significance of this factor group. In fact, Poplack and Tagliamonte (2001: 139) cast doubt on the validity of the category of morphological class as a predictor for patterns of verb inflection in creole languages and related varieties claiming its significance is a residue of varying inflection and occurrence rates of individual lexemes. According to the authors: "the apparent effect of verb class reflects the varying lexical tendencies of its members, some of which favour the stem form and the others the marked variant, and these are compounded by their differential representation in the data" (Poplack and Tagliamonte, 2001: 141). Despite the fact that individual verbs indeed display fluctuating rates of occurrence and vary in terms of rates of inflection, frequent parallels between inflection rates in individual morphological classes across different creole varieties suggest that morphological class could indeed be an important constraint of this variation.

Overall, there is no question that we need to pay attention to the effect the frequency of individual verbs has on the overall rates of inflection. In this study, this is secured in two ways. First, in a set of variable rule analyses, I test whether *have*, *go*, and *come* indeed distort the overall pattern of inflection across different morphological classes. As a result I will make a decision whether to combine these verbs with other morphological classes, analyse them separately, or exclude them. Secondly, interactions between exceptional distributions of individual lexemes and

other independent variables will be carefully investigated through cross-tabulations in Rbrul¹⁵.

In the following section, I (i) examine whether *have* affects the category of Stativity in BeqCE, and decide whether it should be excluded from the analysis, (ii) determine whether *go* and *come* should be combine with the other morphological classes, excluded, or examined separately.

II. Testing the effect of exceptional verbs on the distribution of inflected verbs

This section presents the results from a series of variable rule analyses examining the influence that exceptional verbs have on the overall pattern of past marking by verb inflection. The ultimate goal of this analysis is to decide whether *have*, *come*, and *go* should be excluded from the quantitative analyses of variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs. Because of the limited space, only the group of Low inflection users (two generations together) will be examined in this testing. Several factor groups have been included in order to investigate whether the decision regarding exceptional verbs affects the whole model. The predictors and the factors within them which were included in the analysis are as follows:

- Lexical aspect, where verbs were coded as: states, accomplishments, activities, punctual and *have* (cf. Chapter 3)
- Morphological class divided into: irregular verbs, semi-weak, syllabic regular, vowel-final regular, consonant-final regular, *go*, *come*, and *have* (cf. Chapter 3)
- Discourse grounding: backgrounded vs. foregrounded clauses (cf. Chapter 5)
- Lexeme as a random effect according to mixed-modelling (cf. Section 4.2.1)

First, I examine the hypothesised correlation between *have* and Stativity. Three scenarios are tested here:

¹⁵ Cross-tabulations are often referred to also as contingency tables and report the frequency counts of two or more categorical variables in order to show a proportional relationship between them (Tagliamonte, 2006). In Rbrul these are reported through “counts” (a total distribution of tokens in each cell), or mean, which shows the average value of the response and provides a useful way of tracing interactions.

- 1) Stative verbs and *have* are analysed separately under the assumption that *have* is indeed different from other stative verbs and deserves an exceptional treatment in the analysis.
- 2) Stative verbs and *have* are combined into one category under the assumption that *have* behaves like other stative verbs.
- 3) *Have* is excluded from the model altogether under the assumption that including it would distort the overall patterns of past marking by verb inflection within the factor group of Stativity, as well as other predictors.

Table 1 shows the overall contribution of the selected factors for the distribution of inflected verbs among the group of Low inflection users¹⁶.

¹⁶ What can be noticed is that the total N of *have* within situation aspect is different to the one in morphological class. This is because in the situation aspect only stative tokens of *have* were coded in order to determine whether stative *have* differs from other stative verbs. Morphological class includes also non-stative tokens of *have* (such as in *to have a dinner*)

1) <i>Have</i> as a separate category			
Input probability	0.09		
Log likelihood	-732.604		
Total N	2233		
Factors	FW	%	N
Lexical aspect	p.<0.003		
states	0.69	13	242
punctual	0.68	14	1121
accomplishments	0.62	10	447
<i>have</i>	0.26	73	173
activities	0.25	5	250
<i>Range</i>	44		
Morph. Class	p.<001		
<i>Have</i>	0.98	74	194
<i>Go</i>	0.65	27	293
Semi-weak	0.54	15	161
Syllabic reg.	0.41	9	99
<i>Come</i>	0.37	9	171
Irregular	0.29	10	665
V-final reg.	0.28	9	285
C-final reg.	0.1	2	365
<i>Range</i>	88		
Grounding (p.<0.000)			
Backgrounded	0.63	30	885
Foregrounded	0.37	8	1348
<i>Range</i>	26		
Lexeme (Random effect)			

2) <i>Have/Stativity</i> combined			
Input probability	0.099		
Log likelihood	-735.443		
Total N	2233		
Factors	FW	%	N
Lexical aspect	p.<0.003		
punctual	0.62	14	1121
accomplishments	0.56	10	447
states/ <i>have</i>	0.52	38	415
activities	0.29	5	250
<i>Range</i>	33		
Morph. Class	p.<001		
<i>Have</i>	0.94	74	194
<i>Go</i>	0.69	27	293
Semi-weak	0.58	15	161
Syllabic reg.	0.45	10	99
<i>Come</i>	0.4	10	171
Irregular	0.33	9	665
V-final reg.	0.32	9	285
C-final reg.	0.11	2	365
<i>Range</i>	83		
Grounding (p.<0.000)			
Backgrounded	0.63	30	885
Foregrounded	0.37	8	1348
<i>Range</i>	26		
Lexeme (Random effect)			

3) <i>Have</i> excluded			
Input probability	0.068		
Log likelihood	-632.538		
Total N	2039		
Factors	FW	%	N
Lexical aspect	p.<0.0001		
states	0.64	14	242
punctual	0.61	14	1116
accomplishments	0.54	9	443
activities	0.23	9	238
<i>Range</i>	41		
Morph. Class	p.<0.01		
<i>Go</i>	0.78	27	293
Semi-weak	0.67	15	161
Syllabic reg.	0.55	9	99
<i>Come</i>	0.52	10	171
Irregular	0.42	10	665
V-final reg.	0.41	9	285
C-final reg.	0.16	2	365
<i>Range</i>	62		
Grounding (p.<0.000)			
Backgrounded	0.6	18	720
Foregrounded	0.39	8	1319
<i>Range</i>	21		
Lexeme (Random effect)			

Table 1: Testing the influence of *have* on Situation aspect in the variable use of verb inflection within the group of Low inflection users

The results point to several observations regarding *have* and the class of stative verbs. First, including *have* in the lexical aspect factor group as well as in the morphological class results in an interaction of these two factors (as can be seen in model one). As a result, *have* shows an almost categorical rate of inflection within the morphological class factor group, but disfavours inflection in Situation aspect. Most importantly, stative verbs favour inflection independently of the behaviour of *have*. If we look at scenario two where stative verbs are combined with *have*, there is a radical change in the factor weighting of Stativity, which goes from strongly favouring inflection to almost a neutral effect. This suggests that *have* underrepresents the actual significance of stative verbs for variable verb inflection. Other factors are also affected by the combined stative/*have* group. For example, accomplishments and punctual situations favour inflection with less magnitude in scenario two.

Comparing the log likelihood rates in a log likelihood ratio test¹⁷ (cf. Tagliamonte, 2006) also suggests that combining stative verbs and *have* results in a statistically worse model which confirms that including *have* as a separate category offers a better fit to the data. However, it is model three, where *have* is excluded, that shows the overall best fit to the data. First, with *have* excluded, the interaction between *have* in Situation aspect and Morphological class is removed. Second, the factor weight of the category of Stativity resembles strongly its weighting from model one confirming that Stativity has a significant effect on the distribution of inflected verbs, regardless of whether *have* is included, or excluded from the model. The results in model three are also neater in the factor group of morphological class. In model one and two a very strong significance is attached to *have* within morphological class which seems to distort the weightings of other factors within this category. Once *have* is excluded, the factor weights of all the morphological classes (except for *go* and *come*) gain strength. In addition, the log-likelihood ratio test confirms that this model offers the best fit to the data. Finally, it seems that excluding or including *have* does not have much influence on the significance of the

¹⁷ The log likelihood ratio test is a statistical test used to compare the fit of two models. The logarithm of a likelihood ratio is used to calculate a p-value to decide whether the “new” model is significantly worse than the initial one (Tagliamonte, 2006).

category of Discourse grounding, and on the direction of this predictor. Although the magnitude of this effect is smaller when *have* is excluded from the model, in all three scenarios backgrounded clauses favour inflection, while foregrounded disfavour it¹⁸. This result suggests that excluding *have* from the quantitative analysis is justified, since scenario three: (i) provides a better model of variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs, and/or (ii) does not alternate the results radically compared to model one, where *have* is included as a separate factor.

Now, let us consider the two remaining exceptional verbs, *go* and *come*. Looking at the results provided above shows that *go* behaves very differently to other irregular verbs in that in all cases it favours featuring as *went* or *gone*. *Come*, on the other hand, resembles the class of irregular verbs in terms of similar factor weightings. Again three possibilities of how to treat *come* and *go* emerge:

- 1) *Come* and *go* should be included in the data set as separate factors as illustrated in model three in Table 1. A motivation for this would be a prediction that *come* and *go* affect the class of Irregular verbs (by adding significance to the class of Irregular verbs for the distribution of inflected verbs in case of *go*, and reducing its significance in case of *come*).
- 2) *Come* should be combined with the class of Irregular verbs based on the similarities in factor weights and frequency of inflection of these two categories, and *go* should be kept separate due to its much higher rates of inflection.
- 3) *Come* and *go* should be excluded under an assumption that retaining them distorts the overall pattern of variation for the class of irregular verbs.

Model one is already illustrated in Table 1 and it will serve as a benchmark for comparisons with the other two scenarios. Table 2 shows the results for models two and three which include the same predictors and are conducted for the same group of speakers as the analyses featuring in Table 1.

¹⁸ In addition, I conducted a separate analysis where I replaced the category of discourse grounding with another discourse-related predictor, narrative structure, as including both predictors in an analysis would result in strong collinearity of these effects. The results also show that the effect of narrative structure on verb inflection is not alternated when *have* is excluded from the analysis.

2) <i>Come</i> combined with Irreg. verbs/ <i>Go</i> as a separate factor			
Input probability	0.067		
Log likelihood	-632.582		
Total N	2039		
Factors	FW	%	N
Lexical aspect	p.<0.000		
states	0.64	14	242
punctual	0.61	14	1116
accomplishments	0.54	9	443
activities	0.23	9	238
<i>Range</i>	41		
Morph. Class	p.<0.006		
<i>Go</i>	0.78	27	293
Semi-weak	0.67	15	161
Syllabic reg.	0.55	9	99
Irregular	0.43	10	836
V-final reg.	0.41	9	285
C-final reg.	0.16	2	365
<i>Range</i>	62		
Grounding	p.<0.000		
Backgrounded	0.6	18	720
Foregrounded	0.39	8	1319
<i>Range</i>	21		
Lexeme (Random)			

3) <i>Come/Go</i> excluded			
Input probability	0.051		
Log likelihood	-406.571		
Total N	1575		
Factors	FW	%	N
Lexical aspect	p.<0.01		
states	0.63	14	242
punctual	0.58	14	1116
accomplishments	0.55	9	443
activities	0.24	9	238
<i>Range</i>	39		
Morph. Class	p.<0.003		
Semi-weak	0.74	15	161
Syllabic reg.	0.62	9	99
Irregular	0.49	10	665
V-final reg.	0.46	9	285
C-final reg.	0.2	2	365
<i>Range</i>	54		
Grounding	p.<0.000		
Backgrounded	0.62	15	544
Foregrounded	0.37	5	1031
<i>Range</i>	25		
Lexeme (Random)			

Table 2: Testing the influence of *go* and *come* on the significance of morphological class for the variable use of verb inflection within the group of Low inflection users

The results obtained from the different variable rule analyses show that excluding *go* and combining *come* with other irregular verbs does not result in a radically different model to that in scenario one, where *go* and *come* are separate categories. In addition, model three does not provide a strong justification of why *go* and *come* should be excluded from the data set. Although factor weights for irregular verbs fluctuate slightly across the three scenarios, the models are not far off and *go* and *come* cannot be claimed to distort the overall pattern of variation between bare verbs and verb inflection. For this reason, they will be included under the conditions specified for model two.

To sum up, in this section I have tested the effect of several exceptional verbs on the results of quantitative analysis of variation between bare verbs and inflected verbs.

The verbs *come*, *go*, and *have* were classified as exceptional based on their overall high distribution in the dataset and a high rate of inflection. An empirical investigation of the ways these verbs affect the results of multivariate analysis led to several decisions: *go* was retained in the dataset and coded as a separate factor within morphological class factor group, *come* was combined with other irregular verbs, and *have* was excluded from the dataset.

Appendix 2: Gender stratification in Bequia - remarks

During fieldwork I observed that gender, similarly to place, is a socially salient category in Bequia. This was also reported by Meyerhoff (2009b) who argues that this salience is reflected in different spheres of activity for older men and women in Bequia with clearly recognised gender-specific domains of social practices. Gender differences are also immediately apparent among adolescents. An example of this pattern was discussed in Section 7.4.3 regarding the practices of young males in Hamilton who often “cruise” between Hamilton and Port Elizabeth in their jeep cars listening to loud hip-hop music which is something that young females in this community never do. Nevertheless, despite these salient socio-cultural gender differences, so far we have not found a significant gender effect in subsequent analyses of linguistic variation in Bequia. Distribution of the variables analysed so far (e.g. copula absence, temporal reference, or existential constructions) does not seem to be constrained by gender differences (Meyerhoff and Walker, 2006; Meyerhoff, Walker and Daleszynska, 2009; Meyerhoff and Walker, 2010). Instead, all of these studies, including this one, have demonstrated a high significance of place for the distribution of variable speech patterns.

The fact that “place” is highly significant might suggest that symbolic power in Bequia is assigned to village affiliations, rather than gender differences (Meyerhoff, 2009b). I argue that an insight into settlement patterns and development of the Bequia villages might provide some answers to the question as to why gender is not significant for variation among the cohort of older Bequians. As the literature on gender in the Caribbean suggests, slavery had the effect of levelling the sexes (Brereton, 1991; Herzfeld, 2000; Hackert, 2004). Human worth was measured predominantly in labour and women were often forced to do physical work as hard as men. This could have been the case in Hamilton and Paget Farm as the former’s origins are traced to an ex-slave settlement, while the latter developed by work oriented tradesmen (Price, 1988). Additionally, as it was discussed before, in these two villages the frequency of single parent families is on

average greater than in Mount Pleasant. This indicates that features such as being in charge and fulfilling a family role usually assigned to men, could have attributed more symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991) to women in these villages. Therefore, the combination of historical, social and cultural norms in Hamilton and Paget Farm might have distorted the “traditional” western view of women as powerless.

It is also possible that the gap in symbolic power among men and women is smaller in Hamilton and Paget Farm than it is in Mount Pleasant. If we look again at the history of settlement and development of Mount Pleasant it appears that its inhabitants have very different perceptions and experiences both historically and demographically, as well as in terms of general family models. In Section 7.4.1 (Chapter 7) I discussed that young Mount Pleasanters are the most standard-conscious speakers, brought up with pressures to have high social and economic ambitions. This pressure is especially exerted on young females from this community. This is also reflected linguistically as the analysis of /t,d/ deletion showed gender differences (young females in Mount Pleasant tend to delete the final /t,d/ significantly less than males; Daleszynska, 2010).

I argue that this result reflects the intersection of the local place ideologies and the recent socio-economic transformations triggered by globalising processes. Socio-economic aspirations are heavily embedded in the local ideology for Mount Pleasant, and the current socio-economic landscape provides greater opportunities for individuals to fulfil them. The changing socio-economic context might also gradually affect the sensitivity of language variation to gender differences for speakers in Hamilton and Paget Farm. Globalising economy provides different opportunities for males and females and the results of it are already apparent in Hamilton. Young people follow the gendered patterns observed in the media, such as the aforementioned cruising, popular among males fascinated by hip-hop culture or getting ready for a night out with girlfriends among young females. It is subject to further investigation whether gender differences will become conspicuous in Bequia.

Although quite speculative, this observation suggests that the socio-cultural gender practices in Bequia, different for both generations of speakers, cannot be explained without an insight into the local place ideologies. Such a preliminary conclusion calls for a more careful application of the generalisations which correlate linguistic variation and gender. Although this is beyond the scope of the current study, I argue that to understand the mechanisms behind gender patterns, speakers' experiences and the social, the demographic and cultural backgrounds of the communities need to be considered. Therefore, the current study complements research which recognises the need to view gender as a social construct heavily embedded in a social and cultural setting which interacts with other community-specific phenomena (e.g. Eckert, 2000; Mendoza-Denton, 2008).

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