

ABSTRACT

Predicate Marking in the Bahamian Basilect: An Integrated Approach

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This thesis examines predicate marking in Bahamian Creole data, paying particular attention to Tense, Aspect and Modal Markers, using an integrated approach. The integrated approach assumes interaction between semantics, discourse and syntax, yet insists on maintaining clear distinctions between these levels in linguistic analysis. It also assumes that semantics is basic in linguistic analysis. The integrated approach produces results which indicate a general lack of correspondence between the levels of semantics, syntax and discourse. For example, the semantic Modal *go* is treated by speakers as a syntactic predicator, and a Tense marker at the level of discourse. Similarly, a lack of correspondence was found with the semantic Tense marker *bin* and the semantic Aspect marker *don* and the semantic Modals *hafta*, *gata*, *kya*, *kud*, *na* and *iyng*. Given these observations, a simple Tense-Aspect order is proposed for pre-predicate markers at the level of syntax. Nevertheless, the question is raised as to whether syntactic pre-predicate markers co-occur at all in Bahamian. In addition, the thesis measures the adequacy of its description against data cited in competing descriptions of related varieties such as Guyanese and Jamaican. Descriptions proposed for these languages are also assessed on the basis of their ability to successfully account for the Bahamian data. The tentative conclusion is that the description proposed for Bahamian is more successful in accounting for data across the various varieties than is any competing description.