

ABSTRACT

THE COPULA IN JAMAICAN CREOLE

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From the writer's own experience as a native speaker of Jamaican Creole and from data tested on other native speakers, examples of forms and distribution of the copula in Jamaican Creole have been collected.

They are presented and analysed against a background of predication in general. The kinds of predication examined are equational, locational and stative.

Arguments for and against the theory of the "absence of the copula" are given considerable treatment since this feature seems to be characteristic of English based creoles.

The copula in Jamaican Creole is compared with the copula in Haitian Creole, Guyanese Creole, Papiamentu and Black English and striking similarities have been found. An overview of the copula in non-creole languages has revealed interesting similarities to the copula in Jamaican Creole. This could be of some significance to the study of typology and language universals especially in the area of predication.