

ABSTRACT

The Classification of the English-Lexifier Creole Languages Spoken in
Grenada, Guyana, St. Vincent, and Tobago
Using a Comparison of the Markers of Some Key Grammatical Features:
A Tool for Determining the Potential to Share and/or Adapt Literary
Development Materials

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This dissertation examines the four English-lexifier creole languages spoken in Grenada, Guyana, St. Vincent and Tobago. These languages are classified using a comparison of some of the markers of key grammatical features identified as being typical of pidgin and creole languages. The classification is based on a scoring system that takes into account the potential problems in translation due to differences in the mapping of semantic notions. This scoring system allows for a quantification of the data being compared, which provides a relative score for the potential intelligibility and acceptability of sharing literary material from one creole to another. Basing the classification on key grammatical markers allows for the use of this classification in determining if it is possible to conduct machine assisted human translation (MAHT) of literary materials developed in one creole to another (i.e. adaptation). Using the markers to classify and group these languages provides further information in the MAHT process. The markers of the grammatical features can be input into the MAHT tool (the computer programme) even before the translation process is begun. This classification tool has implications in the areas of the classification of creole languages based on historical and sociohistorical events, the spread of grammatical features among English-lexifier creoles, decreolisation, variation studies, and literary development.

Keywords: David Joseph Holbrook; creole languages; Grenadian Creole; Guyanese Creole; Tobagonian Creole; Vincentian Creole; translation; classification of languages; literary development; grammar.