

## **ABSTRACT**

### **MODELLING TIME REFERENCE IN JUDGES' SUMMATIONS: A STUDY IN TIME REFERENCE MANAGEMENT IN A CREOLE CONTINUUM COURTROOM**

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When witnesses take the stand in court, they attempt, for the most part, to reduce the past experience of a crime to a story. Because of the discourse norms inside the courtroom however, this story is usually co-created and mediated by a lawyer via examination in chief or cross examination. What can potentially occur as a result of this is a series of competing narratives – different, and sometimes contradictory, versions of the same story. Judges must somehow find a way to consolidate all the competing narratives inside the courtroom before arriving at the verdict, or, in juried cases, instruct the jury on how to arrive at a final decision.

This dissertation examines the techniques the judge uses to consolidate one particular detail - time. Since the two main languages in the Jamaican courtroom, Jamaican Creole and English have markedly distinct ways of marking time both lexically and grammatically, the judge's task is a complex one. The study develops a model of how judges manage time references presented to them in competing stories encoded in highly variable linguistic forms along the Creole to English continuum in Jamaica.

Keywords: Clive Forrester, Jamaican Creole, courtroom discourse, discourse analysis, language and law, tense and aspect, time.