

On the non-creole basis for Afro-Caribbean Spanish

John M. Lipski

University of New Mexico {1993}

0. Introduction

The claim has frequently been made by scholars that Africans in the Spanish Caribbean, deprived of the opportunity for learning the prevailing dialects of Spanish, developed a Spanish-based creole. The most ambitious theories assert that this Afro-Hispanic language permanently affected other varieties of Caribbean Spanish. An accompanying claim is that the postulated creole was built upon an earlier Afro-Portuguese trade jargon, pidgin, or even fully nativized creole, originally formed on the coast of Africa, and learned in the African slaving stations and on slave ships crossing the Atlantic. The present study injects a note of caution, after considering a wider corpus of Afro-Hispanic materials than has heretofore been examined. It is shown that most recurring features of Afro-Hispanic language are common to second-language learners, and that only two or three features link Afro-Caribbean Spanish to creole languages. Moreover, all the features in question come from a small group of 19th century Cuban and Puerto Rican texts. Closer examination of the texts, together with an inquiry into the demographic shifts of black slaves and laborers in the 19th century Caribbean, suggests that the most creole-like features of Afro-Caribbean Spanish may have been acquired from speakers of other Caribbean creole languages, especially Papiamentu. In other cases, spontaneous blending of Spanish and African languages yielded combinations which bear a superficial resemblance to creole structures.

One of the most interesting chapters in the history of Latin American dialect differentiation is the African contribution. There exists a tantalizing corpus of literary, folkloric and anecdotal testimony on the earlier speech patterns of Afro-Hispanics, in Spain and Latin America. The greatest obstacle in the assessment of earlier Afro-Hispanic language is the high level of racial prejudice, exaggeration and stereotyping which has always surrounded the description of non-white speakers of Spanish, and which attributes to all of them a wide range of defects and distortions that frequently are no more than an unrealistic repudiation of this group. One group which did use a distinctly Afro-Hispanic language were the *bozales*, a term referring to slaves born and raised in Africa, who spoke European languages only with difficulty. *Bozal* language, a halting approximation to Spanish or Portuguese typical of first-generation immigrants, first arose in the Iberian Peninsula late in the 15th century; the earliest attestations come from Portugal. *Bozal* Spanish makes its written appearance in Spain early in the 16th century, and continues through the middle of the 18th century. Latin American *bozal* Spanish was first described by writers like Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, who imitated the speech of black slaves (brought from Puerto Rico) in Mexico at the beginning of the 17th century. Other surviving documents from the 17th century demonstrate the existence of *bozal* Spanish in Peru, Bolivia and Central America. Few documents representing Afro-Hispanic speech remain from 18th century Latin America; Cuba and Mexico are among the regions so represented. Beginning at the turn of the 19th century, the last big surge of slave trading, spurred by the sugar plantation boom and by increased urbanization of many coastal regions, resulted in an outpouring of literary representations of *bozal* Spanish. The geographical distribution of extant Afro-Hispanic texts mirrors the profile of the African slave trade in Latin America. The 19th century texts come principally from three regions: Cuba, coastal Peru, and the Buenos Aires/Montevideo region (cf. Lipski 1986a, 1986b). Only the Cuban texts, however, together with a handful of Puerto Rican examples, have been offered as evidence of an Afro-Hispanic creole.

Due to a number of influential studies, the prior existence of a Spanish-based creole in the Caribbean has become widely accepted, and the hypothesis that an earlier Afro-Portuguese creole,

such as found in Cape Verde, Annobón, and São Tomé enjoys nearly as much support. The number of Afro-Caribbean texts which have been offered as evidence is, however, very small: fewer than a dozen sources, among the more than one hundred available poems, plays, novels, travel narratives, and anthropological documents which describe the speech of Africans in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Upon considering a wider range of data than has previously been used to state the case, a different picture emerges. The presence of a stable creole, if one existed at all, is overshadowed by a wide range of pidginized varieties, none of which embodies the creole structures which support the 'relexification' of a previously-acquired Portuguese creole. The present study, while not totally rejecting the possibility that some Africans taken to Latin America may have spoken a Portuguese pidgin, nor that Afro-Hispanic modalities may have occasionally stabilized, demonstrates the fragility of the evidence upon which such claims are based. By considering a wider corpus of *bozal* texts, the idiosyncratic and non-representative nature of some 'key' texts which form the centerpiece for the creole theories is revealed. In the balance, a small number of unique texts has been given disproportionate importance in the evaluation of Caribbean *bozal* Spanish.

1. *Bozal* phenomena of non-creole origin

The majority of Afro-Hispanic linguistic phenomena can be accounted for without recourse to controversial theories, and suggest only a gradual approximation to regional varieties of Spanish. The rudimentary attempts of adult Africans to learn Spanish resemble the Spanish still used non-natively in several parts of the world. Africans of a particular language background might lend individualizing touches to this broken Spanish, but in most cases only the lowest common denominators would be expected. By taking a cross-section of West African language families known to have been represented among the Africans taken to Spain and then to Spanish America in the first few centuries of the slave trade, some elementary predictions can be made, all of which are borne out in literary representations of pidgin or *bozal* Spanish (cf. Lipski 1986a, 1986b).

Due to substantial grammatical differences between Spanish and West African languages, we would predict little attention to inflectional endings in *bozal* Spanish, together with simplification of pronouns, articles and prepositions, and use of basic strategies like repetition to achieve specific grammatical purposes. Since *bozal* Spanish represents either the halting attempts of language learners, or the minimal communication strategies adopted by captives forced to use a foreign language, one would expect simple sentences, with minimal subordination or conjunction. A perusal of *bozal* texts yields a high percentage of structures which need no special explanation, either in terms of theories claiming access to universal aspects of language structure, or as regards the eventual creation of a uniform dialect of 'black Spanish.' If such considerations could exhaustively account for Afro-Hispanic texts, we could simply stop here, by claiming that the situation is similar to that of immigrant groups elsewhere in the world: first-generation Africans who learned Spanish imperfectly spoke a pidginized or *bozal* form of the language, possibly passing it on to their immediate offspring, but subsequent generations learned Spanish natively, and the ethnic background left no traces other than occasional vocabulary items. This model adequately accounts for Afro-Hispanic language in Spain, Peru, Mexico, and the Río Plata area.

2. Portuguese elements in early *bozal* Spanish

More difficult to tease out of the reconstruction of Africanized Spanish is the Portuguese contribution, in particular the input of stable Portuguese-based pidgins or creoles. During the first two

centuries of the slave trade, Spain acquired the majority of its slaves from Portuguese traders, and due to the nature of the Portuguese slaving empire, some of the Africans had acquired a Portuguese pidgin before being transferred to other regions. The Portuguese maintained *feitórias* or slave depots in Angola, São Tomé, Fernando Poo, Cape Verde, Annobón and later Brazil, in addition to supplying some of the market from Africans already resident in southern Portugal. Pidgin Portuguese sprang up as a coastal African lingua franca (cf. Naro 1978), at one time stretching from Senegal, around the Cape of Good Hope, along the coast of India and reaching as far as Hong Kong and Indonesia; this type of speech may also have been used by slaves who spoke mutually unintelligible African languages, although the claims that such populations were deliberately chosen to minimize uprisings have been overstated.

A comparison of texts purporting to represent early pidgin Portuguese reveals some consistent features, nearly all of which made their way into Portuguese-based creoles in Africa, as well as some Latin American creoles. Some recurring tendencies include:

- (a) use of *(a)mi* as first person singular subject pronoun;
- (b) confusion of *ser* and *estar*, eventually giving rise to the hybrid form *sa* (and occasionally *santar*) for all persons and tenses;
- (c) use of *vos* as the second-person subject pronoun;
- (d) use of *bai* from the third person singular form of *ir* in Portuguese, as the verb for 'to go.'

The earliest Afro-Hispanic texts generally follow the same patterns as the Portuguese examples and at first the direct imitation of Portuguese writers is evident. Once literary 'black Spanish' became established in Golden Age drama, the linguistic characteristics move sharply away from pidgin Portuguese, and acquire traits typical of Spanish 'foreigner talk,' together with considerable phonetic deformation. After 1550, use of *(a)mi* as subject pronoun rapidly disappears (Lipski 1991), as does use of *bai/vai* for 'to go.' Unstable gender and number assignment remain, as do incorrectly conjugated verb forms, although use of the uninflected infinitive becomes increasingly rare. Confusion of *ser* and *estar* is still found from time to time, augmented by use of *sar*, and loss of the copula occurs sporadically.

3. Portuguese pidgin as the basis for Latin American *bozal* Spanish?

By all indications, any pidgin Portuguese component in *bozal* Spanish had all but disappeared by the time of the first appearance of Afro-Hispanic language in Latin America. The 17th century texts from Mexico,¹ Peru and Puerto Rico, as well as the 18th century Mexican and Cuban *bozal* specimens, show no Portuguese features. Most 19th century Latin American examples, including the extensive corpus from Peru, Argentina and Uruguay, are similarly nondistinctive in their reproduction of Africans' approximations to regional varieties of Spanish, and do not point to recurring features which cannot be explained as spontaneous independent developments or as natural learners' errors.

Although most *bozal* Spanish texts from Latin America do not exhibit strong resemblances with Afro-Iberian creoles, several scholars noted that certain texts from 19th century Cuba and Puerto Rico showed striking similarities with Papiamentu, Cape Verde creole and Palenquero, which could not be attributed to mere chance or predicted from the pidginized Spanish of earlier examples. Among the more striking parallels are verb forms based on the particle *ta* plus a stem derived from the Spanish infinitive, and use of an undifferentiated third person pronoun for masculine and feminine referents. A number of other traits of Caribbean *bozal* Spanish, to be surveyed below, were also cited as evidence of creole origins for Afro-Hispanic pidgin.

One of the earliest investigators to link Caribbean *bozal* Spanish to an earlier Afro-Lusitanian pidgin was Wagner (1949: 101):

I negri "*bozales*", cioè frescamente importati, sapevano più o meno il negro-portoghese come si parlava sulla costa occidentale dell'Africa, e lo cambiarono in un primo tempo, come è naturale, con uno spagnolo rudimentale, che rassomigliava molto alle lingue creole; usavano la terza persona del singolare dei verbi come forma generale ... scambiavano i generi ... e non sapevano separare bene le parti del discorso ...

Wagner's comments lay fallow until the development of more ambitious theories of creolization and monogenesis. The first attempt to document the presence of an Afro-Lusitanian pidgin among *bozales* in Latin America was Granda (1970)'s analysis of the observations of Sandoval (1956: 94). The latter, a (Spanish-born) Peruvian priest resident in Cartagena de Indias, remarked in 1627 that African slaves from São Tomé spoke 'con la comunicacion que con tan bárbaras naciones han tenido el tiempo que han residido en San Thomé, las entienden casi todas con un género de lenguaje muy corrupto y revesado de la portuguesa que llaman lengua de San Thomé ...' The reference to some sort of Portuguese-based pidgin or creole is clear, but the implication that slaves from other regions also acquired an Afro-Lusitanian pidgin is not, since Sandoval's quote continues: '... al modo que ahora nosotros entendemos y hablamos con todo género de negros y naciones con nuestra lengua española corrupta, como comúnmente la hablan todos los negros.' Although Granda interprets Sandoval's observations to mean that an Afro-Lusitanian pidgin formed a substrate for ALL Afro-Hispanic language in Cartagena (and by extrapolation, elsewhere in the Spanish American colonies), the final sentence seems to indicate the opposite, namely that even Africans speaking the 'lengua de San Thomé' eventually acquired *bozal* Spanish. In any event, by the end of the 18th century, when the critical Caribbean *bozal* texts appear, Spain was acquiring few slaves from the Portuguese depot on São Tomé.

The perceived similarities between Caribbean *bozal* Spanish and Afro-Iberian creoles gave rise to the claim that an Afro-Lusitanian creole once existed in ALL of Latin America, or at least in the Caribbean region. The same similarities were also used to bolster 'monogenetic' theories of creole formation, which postulate that an original Portuguese-based maritime pidgin or lingua franca was relexified and coalesced to form creole dialects of English and French in the Caribbean and Africa; Spanish and Portuguese in Asia; and Dutch in the West Indies, Guyana and possibly South Africa (cf. Naro 1978; Thompson 1961; Whinnom 1965, and the references therein). The importance of reconstructing Afro-colonial Spanish thus rises enormously, for far-ranging issues are at stake. In its most radical form, this theory claims that a SINGLE creole underlay virtually all Afro-Hispanic speech over a period of more than three centuries, and therefore was more important than the strictly African element in determining the characteristics of *bozal* Spanish and its possible repercussions in general Latin American Spanish. This hypothesis is clearly stated, e.g. by Granda (1976: 5-6):

Los esclavos negros establecidos en diferentes áreas de la América española desde el siglo XVI al XIX manejaron, primeramente junto a sus hablas africanas aborígenes y posteriormente con carácter exclusivo o al menos dominante, un código lingüístico criollo. Esta modalidad de lenguas fue evolucionando ... hacia el español substandard de las diferentes zonas hispanoamericanas en que el fenómeno se produjo, a través de un continuum pos-criollo ...

This creole in turn had its origins in an Afro-Lusitanian pidgin, developed in West Africa (e.g. Granda 1976: 8):

Las modalidades del criollo desarrollado y empleado en las diferentes zonas hispanoamericanas de población negra derivaron, genética y por lo tanto estructuralmente, del ... protodiasistema criollo portugués de Africa que constituyó la base de la cual, por diferentes procesos de relexificación ... se originaron aquéllas.

Although Granda (1976) includes data from Afro-Hispanic groups in Colombia and elsewhere in the Caribbean region, he concentrates his remarks on similarities involving Colombian Palenquero, Papiamentu, and purported *bozal* creoles in 19th century Puerto Rico (cf. also Granda 1968) and Cuba (cf. also Granda 1971, Perl 1982, 1985, 1987, 1989b). Megenney (1984, 1985a) draws together the triad Palenquero/Papiamentu/Afro-Cuban creole to claim a common origin in an Afro-Lusitanian pidgin. Perl (1989a) also provides comparisons which tend to support this view. Alvarez Nazario (1974) supports the hypothesis of a Portuguese pidgin infrastructure for Afro-Hispanic language in both Spain and Latin America, although conceding (p. 128) that *bozal* Spanish, especially in Spain, lacks the characteristic preverbal particles found in Afro-Portuguese creoles.

4. Was Puerto Rican *bozal* Spanish ever a stable creole?

Although Palenquero and Papiamentu are undisputed creoles, the corpus of *bozal* Spanish from the Caribbean and elsewhere in Latin America is not as unequivocal as regards the former existence of a stable creole, rather than a rudimentary pidgin which arose as new arrivals from Africa entered the speech communities.

The existence of a prior stable Afro-Hispanic creole in Puerto Rico is based on a literal handful of texts analyzed by Alvarez Nazario (1974), principally the skit 'La juega de gallos o el negro bozal' (PR-5). Alvarez Nazario demonstrated many parallels between the Puerto Rican texts and Afro-Iberian language from other regions and time periods, although his characterization of Puerto Rican *bozal* language as a 'criollo afroespañol' may refer to a non-native pidgin, rather than to a nativized creole. That the latter might indeed have existed in Puerto Rico was first claimed by Granda (1968), who notes (p. 194, fn. 4): '... es fácil demostrar el carácter igualmente "criollo" de la modalidad lingüística puertorriqueña ...' From this point forward the claim that an Afro-Hispanic creole was once spoken in Puerto Rico has never been seriously challenged, despite the fact that the case rests on such a small corpus. Among later studies of 'Caribbean *bozal* Spanish,' little attention has been paid to a possible Afro-Hispanic creole in Puerto Rico, with the latter region usually lumped together with the more extensive Afro-Cuban corpus.

The creoloid structures in the Afro-Puerto Rican texts just mentioned are subject to alternative explanations, to be presented below. There is, however, an important text (not included in Alvarez Nazario's analysis), which suggests much less consistent *bozal* language in Puerto Rico. In 1884, the poet/playwright Ramón Méndez Quiñones (1847-1889) wrote the play 'Pobre Sinda!,' which was never published. This neo-Romantic drama is set in Puerto Rico, in the 'época de la odiosa esclavitud--1864.' Among the characters is a 'esclavo viejo, congo,' who in the definitive version of the manuscript speaks in normal, even sublime, Spanish, as he delivers his impassioned denunciations of the cruelties of slavery. In unpublished notes, discovered by Girón (1991: 399-411), Méndez Quiñones gives his reasons for not having this African-born slave use *bozal* language: 'Hablando en su jerga, no convencería, y en los momentos más patéticos no haría sentir, produciendo con sus exclamaciones de

dolor la hilaridad del público' (Girón 1991: 400). To demonstrate his point, the author adds examples of several scenes which he had originally written in *bozal* Spanish, 'y de las cuales prescindí por los conceptos antes expresados.' These fragments (PR-7) show great similarity with *bozal* texts from elsewhere in Latin America, but contain few of the creoloid traits which form the cornerstone of Caribbean *bozal*-creole theories. For example, there is no consistent alternative verb system; correctly conjugated Spanish verbs alternate with inappropriate forms, and no auxiliary particles signal tense or aspect. Similarly, nouns and adjectives are sometimes inflected for gender and number, while in other cases there are lapses of agreement.

5. Putative creole origins of Cuban *bozal* Spanish

The existence of a former Afro-Hispanic creole in Cuba has been forcefully asserted by a number of investigators. Wagner (1949: 158) stated that 'poche e confuse sono le notizie che abbiamo sul negro-spagnolo parlato una volta a Cuba dai negri *bozales* ... ma sono sufficienti per dimostrare che si trattava anche in questo caso di una lingua creola del tipo del papiamento ...' Wagner's case was based on the poem 'Yo bota lan garafó' (C-10) and the 'Diálogo' between a *negro criollo* and a *bozal* (C-7). In a later and more comprehensive analysis, Granda (1971: 483) offered the claim that '... Cuba ha poseído y posee aún entre su población negra rastros y manifestaciones lingüísticas "criollas" ... uniéndose así al "papiamento:, al "palenquero" ... y a las manifestaciones puertorriqueñas en la formación de un "corpus" dialectal "criollo" de superestrato español ...' To prove his case, Granda made ample use of *El monte* by Lydia Cabrera (C-20), originally published in 1954, an anthropological text containing data on religious beliefs among Afro-Cubans, and which includes extensive imitations of *bozal* Spanish. Granda unquestioningly accepts the accuracy of Cabrera's imitations, given her high reputation in other linguistic and folkloric matters, and suggests that such language, 'caracterizadores de una estructura "criolla" de lengua, persistían en el "registro" hablado de negros cubanos ... como continuación de la modalidad lingüística adoptada por generaciones anteriores de esclavos ...' In this article, Granda did not explicitly link the putative Afro-Cuban creole to the monogenetic Portuguese pidgin hypothesis, but this claim was eventually made in Granda (1976). Lapesa (1980: 560) believes that 'las postreras supervivencias del criollo español parecen ser el habla "bozal" que se usaba entre negros de Puerto Rico en el siglo pasado y todavía entre los de Cuba a mediados del actual ...' Using phonological data from Afro-Cuban texts, Sosa (1974) also offers the claim that an Afro-Hispanic creole once existed in Cuba, and affected popular varieties of Cuban Spanish.

Cabrera's extensive writings, particularly *El monte*, have figured importantly in most subsequent writings on a putative Afro-Cuban creole. Otheguy (1973) adds to the list of creoloid traits mentioned by Granda, and claims that Cabrera's work demonstrates the prior existence of an Afro-Hispanic creole in the Caribbean. Perl (1982) also refers to *El monte*, as well as to the brief *bozal* fragments from Miguel Barnet's *Autobiografía de un cimarrón* (C-14). Perl (1982: 424) asserts that '... the Cuban "habla bozal" was no idiolectally determined jargon of the Blacks in the 19th century but a social variety of Spanish comparable with other varieties of Spanish- and Portuguese-based creoles.' With respect to a possible extra-territorial origin, Perl (1982: 423) suggests that '... especially the morphosyntactic features of the "habla bozal" are very suitable for demonstrating the relations to other Iberian-based creoles and the embedding of the "habla bozal" within the Creoles and the "intermediate varieties" in the Caribbean area.' This line of approach is extended in Perl (1985, 1987).

Perl (1984, 1985) strengthens his claim that an Afro-Portuguese creole was once spoken in Cuba, based on two sources. The first is the 'baile portugués,' recorded by García Herrera (1972) in the predominantly Afro-Cuban neighborhood La Guinea in the central Cuban village of Lajas. This

song is of undetermined origin, although oral tradition links the song to the 'portugueses de Africa' (García Herrera 1972: 160). García Herrera (1972) postulates that the reference is to the Angola/Congo region, given the documented existence of slaves from that zone in central Cuba, and the preservation of some lexical items from the languages of this region. Perl (1985: 195) claims that this song is 'un ejemplo típico para una forma lingüística criolla más antigua,' although Perl (1984: 56) states that the text in question is simply 'una canción que contiene voces como p. ej. "gayina" o "volá" que se puede explicar como palabras ibéricas (españolas o portuguesas).' The text in question is (García Herrera 1972: 162):

Tié tié tié tié
 ngongo ti ngurá
 ca gayina npá volá
 mangué mangué
 makina ma ntué ...

This song is composed of Bantu elements, and rather than demonstrating the prior existence of an Afro-Portuguese creole, is more typical of the incorporation of Portuguese lexical items in a broad spectrum of African languages from the Congo Basin.

Perl (1984, 1989b) also quotes from the anti-slavery treatise of Buxton (1839: 122), who in turn cites a British ship captain who intercepted a Portuguese slave ship headed from Cape Verde to Cuba. The captain claimed that 'two of the Africans ... speak Portuguese ...,' which Perl (1984: 56) interprets as meaning that 'los esclavos que llegaron a Cuba también tenían conocimientos del portugués/portugués criollo.'

Ziegler (1981) assumes axiomatically that Afro-Cuban *bozal* Spanish constituted a definable creole, and attempted to write a grammar of this putative creole. Ziegler believes that Cuban *bozal* creole resulted from 15th century Portuguese, with later accretions from several West African languages, from nonstandard Spanish dialects, and from Jamaican creole English, carried by Jamaicans arriving in Havana in the 18th century. It is known, for example, that during the British occupation of Havana in 1763, tens of thousands of slaves were quickly imported into Cuba by the British (Knight 1970: 7). The minimal traces of Portuguese in surviving *bozal* texts is, according to Ziegler, due to sustained contact with non-creole Cuban Spanish. Megenney (1984, 1985a) adopts Ziegler's evidence, and groups 'Afro-Cuban creole' together with Palenquero and Papiamentu in a comparative analysis of Portuguese-influenced Latin American creoles. Valkhoff (1966: 116) states, without further discussion, that the only surviving Spanish-based creoles are 'Malayo-Spanish' of the Philippines (i.e. Chabacano), 'Negro-Spanish of Cuba,' and Papiamentu. Holm (1989: 305-9) is more cautious, speaking only of 'restructured Spanish' in the Caribbean, and noting that while there is ample evidence of a Spanish pidgin in 19th century Cuba, it is not clear that a true creole developed. Speaking of the possibility for creolization of Spanish in Cuba, Reinecke (1937: 269) noted that 'conditions, one would assume, were eminently favorable for the formation of a Cuban Spanish creole dialect,' although admitting (p. 271) that 'the jargon [i.e. the rudimentary speech of first-generation *bozales*: JML] was there, but there is no indication that it took definite shape.'

An objective look at the Cuban *bozal* corpus reveals far fewer similarities with acknowledged Afro-Iberian creoles than might be supposed by the research cited above. One of the earliest surviving *bozal* texts from Cuba is an anonymous 18th century *canto de cabildo* (C-6):

Dondó jachero

pa un palo.
 Palo ta duro.
 jacha no cotta.
 Palo ta brabbo.
 ¿qué son ese?
 Si palo so jocuma,
 yo so quiebrajacha.
 Bamo be quie pue ma.
 Tu jabla y no conose.
 Tambó ta brabbo.

In addition to exhibiting many vernacular Cuban phonetic traits, including gemination of obstruents following the reduction of syllable-final liquids, this text gives the first hint of what was to be a commonly-recurring feature of Cuban *bozal* Spanish, the use of *so(n)* as an uninflected copula. In this example, no creoloid features appear.

The first explicit mention of Cuban *bozal* Spanish comes in the catechism *Explicación de la doctrina cristiana acomodada a la capacidad de los negros bozales* by the Spanish priest Nicolás Duque de Estrada, written in 1797 (C-55). The author describes *bozal* speech (Laviña 1989: 67) as 'aquel lenguaje de q. usan ellos sin casos, sin tpos., sin conjunciones, sin concordancias, sin orden ...' This work contains a few fragments of *bozal* language, none of which suggest a creole resembling Papiamentu:

pa nuetro ta seno cielo (Laviña 1989: 75)
 yo soi un pobre esclavo, yo tiene dos gallinas no más, gente tiene suelto su cochino, cochino come mi gallina. Yo ya no tiene con que comprar tabaco ni nada ... ¿yo va andando en cueros? (Laviña 1989: 119)

Many observers (e.g. Martínez Gordo 1982, Valdés Bernal 1978)) have based claims on the creole status of Afro-Cuban speech on the remarks of the Cuban lexicographer Esteban Pichardo (C-57), which accord to 19th century Cuban *bozal* speech the status of a separate linguistic variety, compared with the French creole of Haiti (Pichardo 1985):

... este lenguaje es comun e idéntico en los Negros, sean de la Nación que fuesen, y que se conservan eternamente, a ménos que hayan venido mui niños: es un Castellano desfigurado, chapurrado, sin concordancia, número, declinación ni conjugación, sin *R* fuerte, *S* ni *D* final, frecuentemente trocadas la *Ll* por la *Ñ*, la *E* por la *I*, la *G* por la *V* &; en fin, una jerga más confusa mientras más reciente la inmigración; pero que se deja entender de cualquiera Español fuera de algunas palabras comunes a todos, que necesitan de traducción. Para formarse una ligera idea de esto, vertiremos una respuesta de las ménos difíciles: "yo mi ñama Frasco Mandinga, negligito reburujaoro, crabo musuamo ño Mingué, de la Cribanerí, branco como carabon, suña como nan gato, poco poco mirá oté, cribi papele toro ri toro ri, Frasco dale dinele, non gurbia dinele, e laja cabeza, e bebe guariente, e coje la cielo, guanta qui guanta" ...

Pichardo's imitation of this 'special' language, however, does not show the characteristics of a stable

creole, but rather a rudimentary pidgin such as might arise spontaneously in any environment where *bozal* slaves were rapidly acquiring Spanish. Pichardo's text bears considerable resemblance to *bozal* texts from 16th-17th century Spain, as well as from elsewhere in 19th century Latin America, but the similarities with Afro-Iberian creoles are minimal.²

Another widely-cited example of Cuban *bozal* Spanish, an anonymous mid-19th century text (C-7) quoted by Bachiller y Morales (1883), bears even fewer resemblances with Papiamentu or other Afro-Iberian creoles:

Ah, si oté no lo cubrá,
 si oté tovía no fué,
 ßa que buca que bebé?
 Con qué oté lo va pagá?
 Cuando oté lo cubra, anjá,
 antonsi ma qui ti muere
 bebé oté como oté quiere,
 como oté como dan gana,
 y durmí oté una semana
 ma que lan tempo si piere.

Bachiller y Morales notes: 'no es posible confundir un lenguaje [i.e. the speech of *criollo* blacks: JML] con el otro: la supresión de letras, la conversión de otras, no es peculiar de todo negro ...' Indeed, this example is far less removed from non-African Spanish than Pichardo's text, despite the fact that both represent the same time period. The example cited by Bachiller y Morales (published in Matanzas earlier in the 19th century) contains only two elements which cannot be analyzed as simply imperfectly pronounced Spanish minus a few connecting words: the element *tempo* instead of *tiempo*, contains a non-diphthongized root homologous with Portuguese and Papiamentu.³

With the new perspective of a possible Afro-Lusitanian origin, the focus of Afro-Hispanic studies shifts away from the search for direct African- American links to the postulate of an intermediate pan- Hispanic creole stage. This intermediate language, through contact with European Spanish following the abolition of slavery, gradually came to resemble regional Latin American Spanish more and more, while perhaps transferring some of its own characteristics to the Spanish spoken by descendents of Europeans. In this vein, Perl (1985) proposes a model for the 'decreolization' of Cuban *bozal* Spanish, while Megenney (1985) suggests that even 'acrolectal' varieties of Caribbean Spanish bear the imprint of the early Afro-Hispanic/Afro-Lusitanian creole.

6. Opposing views

Although only a handful of texts have previously been used in the discussion of Cuban *bozal* Spanish, the available corpus is much wider; a representative sample has been included in the Appendix. The majority of these texts show few creoloid features, but rather conform to the pidgin/foreigner-talk patterns expected of Africans learning the rudiments of Spanish as a second language. The remaining creoloid traits may be attributable to a direct infusion of creoles from elsewhere in the Caribbean, as will be suggested below. Put in this perspective, the case for a previously existing Afro-Hispanic creole in Cuba is shown to rest heavily on a single text, Cabrera's *El monte* (although by extension more of Cabrera's extensive writings might also be included), together with ambiguous remarks such as those of Pichardo. The Afro-Lusitanian theory is based on tenuous evidence of Portuguese participation in the

18th-19th century slave trade to Cuba, together with similarities between the putative Cuban *bozal* creole and the acknowledged creoles Papiamentu and Palenquero, for which Afro-Portuguese roots may be more uncontroversially established. For Puerto Rico, the case is even more precarious, for only two literary texts (for which a possible imitation of Cuban models cannot be entirely excluded) establish claims of a stable Afro-Hispanic creole, and the parallels with Papiamentu and Palenquero are therefore even more limited.

In view of these considerations, not all investigators have accepted the notion that any stable Afro-Hispanic creole was ever spoken in the Caribbean. Goodman (1987) casts doubt on the notion that many African slaves arriving in Spanish America had acquired a Portuguese pidgin. He observes that in any given slave depot in West Africa, a regional African language usually prevailed as a *lingua franca*, while the brief passage to the New World provided neither opportunity nor motive for acquiring a Portuguese-based pidgin. Only slaves brought from São Tomé and later Angola were exceptional in possessing knowledge of an Afro-Lusitanian pidgin. Goodman provides alternative explanations for Portuguese elements found in Latin American creoles. Laurence (1974) notes that the proportion of Africans to Europeans was never as high in the Spanish Caribbean as on islands such as Jamaica, Saint-Domingue and Barbados, where blacks at times outnumbered whites by more than ten to one. In Cuba and Puerto Rico, the African population never came to represent more than 50% of the total, even at the height of the sugar plantation boom, and was usually much lower. In the Spanish Caribbean, a larger proportion of slaves worked away from large plantations, in closer contact with native speakers of Spanish. Through the system of *coartación* many slaves eventually purchased their freedom, and the free black and colored population became significant. All observers coincide in remarking that blacks born in the Spanish colonies spoke Spanish with native fluency. Beginning in the final decades of the 18th century, and continuing through the middle of the 19th century, the rapid expansion of the sugar industry in Cuba created a plantation environment which, if it had lasted long enough, might have provided a fertile ground for creole formation. However, due to the high mortality of the slaves, the proportion of recently-arrived *bozales* speaking little or no Spanish was always quite high, and after only 2-3 generations the end of the slave trade brought an end to new *bozal* arrivals. The remaining African-born blacks gradually acquired Spanish, many moving to urban areas and reinforcing contact with natively spoken Spanish (cf. Aimes 1907; Castellanos and Castellanos 1988, 1990; Klein 1967; Knight 1970).

López Morales (1980) finds similar objections to the theory of a former stable Afro-Cuban creole. He notes that Pichardo (1836) and Bachiller y Morales (1883) both stress that blacks born in Cuba spoke 'normal' Cuban Spanish, and he interprets the remarks which these two authors made about *bozal* speech, as well as their imitations, as evidence of a rough pidgin, not a stable creole. As for a Portuguese component to Cuban *bozal* Spanish, López Morales observes that by the time of the sugar plantation boom in the late 18th century the Portuguese supremacy in the Atlantic slave trade had been replaced by Dutch, French and British dealers. At the same time, he notes a number of lexical items (drawn from Ortiz 1916: 238-9), many of which are common to West African Pidgin English, which he claims formed the true 'lingua franca' which *bozal* slaves used with one another while acquiring Spanish on Cuban plantations. Such words include *chapi-chapi* < *chapear* 'to chop weeds,' *luku-luku* < *look* 'look, see,' *ñami-ñami* < *nyam* 'to eat,' *tifi-tifi* < *thief* 'to steal,' etc. López Morales agrees with Otheguy (1973)'s reluctance to accept Cuban *bozal* texts as examples of a prior Afro-Portuguese pidgin or creole, but he disputes Otheguy's view that the ungrammaticality and 'un-Spanish' nature of many *bozal* constructions necessarily point to a prior creole of any sort. Few *bozal* texts evidence these forms exclusively; nearly all appear counterpoised with unremarkable Spanish morphosyntactic constructions attributed to the same speakers. For López Morales, this

represents not a creole but rather 'un polimorfismo,' indicador aquí de deficiencias particulares de estos hablantes en su proceso de castellanización ...'

7. Preliminary counterexplanations to claimed creoloid features

With the exception of the preverbal particle *ta* and genderless third person pronouns, most features of *bozal* Spanish which have at one time or another been cited as evidence of a pidgin or creole Portuguese basis cannot be accepted as probative of an earlier Afro-Hispanic creole language. Among the more dubious traits are:

(1) Non-inverted questions of the type *¿qué tú quieres?* 'what do you want?' (Otheguy 1973). These constructions are common throughout the Caribbean, and may have been reinforced by Canary Island immigration. Afro-Iberian creoles exhibit non-inverted questions, but so do non-Africanized dialects of Spanish, e.g. in the Canary Islands and Galicia.

(2) Categorical use of redundant subject pronouns (Granda 1968, 1971). All Afro-Romance creoles use obligatory subject pronouns, due to lack of verbal inflection. The same occurs in vestigial Spanish lacking a creole basis (Lipski 1985), and in many cases of Spanish as a second language. Given that subject pronouns or clitics are obligatory in nearly all West African languages known to have come into contact with Spanish, preference for overt pronouns in *bozal* Spanish would be predicted without the intermediate stage of a creole.

(3) 'Personalized' infinitives with lexical subjects of the type *para tú hacer eso* 'for you to do that' (Alvarez Nazario 1959: 46; Megenney 1984). Such constructions are found not only in Afro-Iberian creoles, but also in Canary Island and Andalusian Spanish, in Galician and Portuguese, and throughout Latin America. It is likely that this construction has arisen spontaneously in more than one area, since it results from the reduction of a marked conjugated form to the maximally unmarked infinitive; the same process occurs in Spanish child language (Gili Gaya 1960: 29; 1972).

(4) Loss of common prepositions, particularly *a* and *de* (e.g. by Alvarez Nazario 1959, Granda 1971, Otheguy 1973, Perl 1982). The same feature is found in nearly all foreign-influenced and vestigial varieties of Spanish. In contemporary syntactic analyses, *de* and *a* may not be underlying prepositions but rather superficial case-markers, subject to variable deletion during imperfect learning or linguistic erosion.

(5) Occasional elimination of the copula (Alvarez Nazario 1959, 1974; Granda 1971, Perl 1982). This often occurs in vestigial speech, and given that a large cross-section of West African languages employ 'verbalized adjectives' instead of a combination of VERB + PREDICATE ADJECTIVE, loss of a copula might be an African areal characteristic rather than a post-creole carryover. In the Caribbean *bozal* corpus, there is only a tiny number of cases where the copula has been deleted. Much more frequent is the use of a default copula, such as *son* or occasionally *ta*.

(6) Loss of articles (Alvarez Nazario 1959, 1974; Granda 1971, Perl 1982). This is also found in vestigial and foreign-influenced Spanish, and in view of the generalized absence of articles in West African languages, could also be an areal characteristic.

(7) Postposed demonstratives of the type *piera ese* [= *la piedra esa/esa piedra*] 'that rock' (Otheguy 1973). Postposed demonstratives are found in many non-creole dialects of Spanish, as well as in several creoles. Moreover, Latin American *bozal* texts yield only a couple of examples, all from the works of Lydia Cabrera. It would seem that this construction was never common in Afro-Hispanic language, so no particular value should be accorded to this specific example.

(8) Lack of syntactic complementizers such as *que* (Granda 1971). Syntactic simplification through reduction of subordinate structures characterizes all reduced forms of Spanish, and is found in Afro-Hispanic, Amerindian-Hispanic and Anglo-Hispanic foreigner talk.

(9) Use of the subject pronoun *vos*, in *bozal* texts from the Caribbean, where this pronoun is not normally found. The pronoun (*a*)*bo* is found in all Afro-Lusitanian creoles, as well as in Papiamentu and Palenquero. In Caribbean *bozal* examples, *vos* is found only in a single text, a 19th century Cuban *villancico* from Camagüey (C-10):

... Francisco mi pariente
disió que ya *vos* parió,
como yo quería aguaitá
lo que *vó* había parío,
aquí me tenei, Señá.

The presence of *vos* in this lone example does not implicate a former creole in Cuba, for vestigial *vos*, together with diphthongized verb forms, is amply documented for 19th century Cuba in precisely this region (López Morales 1965, Pichardo 1985: 12).

(10) Use of the portmanteau preposition/connector *na*, found in a few Afro-Caribbean texts, and also found in many Portuguese-based creoles (deriving from the contraction of *en + a*). A rare Cuban example is (C-35): *atrá quitrín pa yegá prisa, prisa, na panadería* 'behind us the carriage is arriving quickly, to the bakery,' *cuando yo me piá de na caballo* 'when I dismounted from the horse.' Brau (1894: 138; PR-4) observed that in 19th century Puerto Rico, 'cimarrones bozales' used expressions such as *na- cosina*, *ne- pueblo*, *na- casa*, etc. for *en la cocina* 'in the kitchen,' *en el pueblo* 'in the town,' *en la casa* 'in the house.' This form is very limited in Afro-Caribbean texts, and is not attested for *bozal* language of other areas.

(11) The use of *tener* 'to have' instead of *haber* 'for there to be' as the existential verb (Meggeney 1984, 1985a; Granda 1968). Most Afro-Iberian creoles, as well as African-influenced vernacular Brazilian Portuguese, have replaced existential *haber* by *tener/ter*. While use of *tener* in *bozal* speech may indeed come from an earlier proto- creole, this is not a necessary conclusion, since use of existential *tener* is also found in vestigial Spanish of many regions, and even in some Spanish dialects with no demonstrable Afro- creole connection (cf. Lipski 1985). Moreover, use of *tener* with existential force is quite rare in *bozal* language; one example (C-25) is: *en botica tien de tó* 'in the medicine chest there is everything.'

(12) The frequent Caribbean preposing of *más* in negative expressions (*más nada* 'no more,' *más nunca* 'never again') instead of the more usual phrase- final position has been claimed as the result of earlier Portuguese- based creole language (Meggeney 1985a). A Portuguese connection is quite

likely, but the presence of this construction in Caribbean Spanish is more likely due to the heavy Canary Island influence, in which such constructions (apparently due to earlier Galician- Portuguese maritime contacts) are common.

8. Undifferentiated 3rd person pronouns in Caribbean *bozal* Spanish

We turn now to one of the more clearly creoloid features of Latin American *bozal* Spanish, the use of third person pronouns undifferentiated for gender. In Afro-Lusitanian creoles, including Palenquero and Papiamentu, third person pronouns are reduced to a single variant each for singular and plural. Typically the singular variant has the general form *e(le)*, while there is more variation in the plural, including pronouns of non-Romance origin (e.g. Papiamentu *nan*, Palenquero *ané*). Some Afro-Caribbean texts show third person pronouns similar to those found in Afro-Iberian creoles. The general form is *elle* or *nelle*; these words are attested for 19th century Cuba, and sporadically Puerto Rico. *Nelle* was occasionally used as third person plural. Typical examples include:

Elle estaba en un mortorio. El borbanaó manda prendeslo. Dentra Tondá, *elle* solito con su espá, coge dos (C-68)

¿*Nelle* lo muchachito va pendé su Paña de nuté? (C-53)

Eso mimo quiere yo, *nelle* lo mimo, vamo pa la engresia (C-15)

si yo lo tené uno niño como *nelle*, yo va murí de cuntentamienta (C-34)

yo mirá que *nelle* tiene sangre, ese simbregüenza mimo se piá detrás la quitrín y arrancá corré. (C-35)

Hora, dipué que *nelle* coge yebba la gloria, vamo saludá Ocha ... Muñeco con píritu de mueto muchacho, que *nelle* metía dentro (C-20)

Po que juntó con la mala compañía y *nelle* lo pervierte o lo sonsacá. (C-65)

Yo tiene la pecho premio pur *nelle*. Yo ta namorá, yo va vé si *nelle* quié só mugé mía pur langresia ... yo pué casá *cunelle* ... vereme *nelle* ... *nelle* toca violín y pone casaca ... tú ta mirando que *nelle* va llorá tovía ... (C-41)

nelle que lo só intriuo ... *nelle* mimo que lo só ... poque *nelle* ta en la tea ... porque *nelle* lo gatá ... y *nelle* mimo disiba que yo só como la miba ... y dimpué que diga *nelle* que yo só bruto ignorante ... (C-40)

noté que jabla cun *nelle* ... y disí que va a tumbá mi bují, vereme *nelle* ... (C-50)

no lo tengo *cunelle* la mayó cuñusimienta ... *nelle* lo pue laigá uno lintenaso ... disí *nelle* que la gente lo gutaría uno cumería ne lengua mío ... Cun la güeve *dielle* yo mecá sei lichonsito ... no son cosa que *nelle* tené, sino que jileño dé *porelle* diese funsión ... (C-33)

nelle tiene un vapó ... *nelle* viene, yo le da ... *Neye* se ñama mujé ... *neye* va acabá con pacífico insurrecto ... (C-26)

toíto *neye* ta cargá ... cuando *neye* mira yo ... *neye* ta morí de risa ... (C-29)

cuando *nei* ta vení, ya yo no tiene que da vueta ... singá caballo pa *neye* ve jodienda la Tajonera ... (C-21)

varón quitá *neye* ... (C-22)

Neye lo que tiene só un bariga con su yijo lentro (C-54)

yo te ba da un medalló pa que tu luse con *eye* (C-10)

luego *nelle* va viní a comé la buen caliente (C-48)

mucha grasía, sumesé, pero *nella* son honrá {PR-7}

Nelle son mala cabeza {PR-7}

Nella memo ta casando (C-48)
Yo no quisió di con *elle* (PR-6)

Alvarez Nazario (1974: 185-97), in the only analysis of this form, feels that semantic replacement of a preposition plus an article (as in *na*) has occurred. There is, however, no plausible source in the case of (*n*)*elle*. The [y] represented by *ll* is presumably derived from *ella*, *ellas* and *ellos*; neither Portuguese *êle* nor similar forms in Papiamentu, Palenquero, São Tomense, etc., provide a source for the [y]. In a few texts (e.g. C-48 and P-7), the feminine variant *nella* is found alongside *nelle*. *Elle/nelle* may thus be a spontaneous Afro-Hispanic development which arose in the 19th century Caribbean. However, the fact remains that this pronoun is not attested in the ample *bozal* Spanish corpus from 16th-17th century Spain, from *bozal* attestations from 19th century Argentina, Uruguay, nor from Mexico and Peru in the 17th and 18th centuries. The existence of this element only in the 19th century Caribbean is thus food for thought.

9. Verbal constructions with *ta*

The most indisputably creole element found in some Caribbean *bozal* texts, which has formed the centerpiece for theories which claim a previous Afro-Hispanic creole, is the use of *ta*, in combination with a verbal stem derived from the infinitive lacking final /r/:

Po que tú no *ta* queré a mí? (PR-5)
Siempre *ta* regalá dinero a mí (PR-5)
Horita *ta* bení pa cá (C-71)
Río seco *ta* corre mamba (C-56)
Como que yo *ta* cuchá la gente que habla tanto ... yo *ta* mirá gente mucho (C-29)
Primero *ta* llorá na má. (C-66)
yo *ta* yorá poque Calota ya *ta* morí. (C-70)
Sí, páe, yo *ta* robá un gaína jabá. (C-21)
Como no va *ta* contenta si uté vovió cuando yo *ta* acodá mi yari yari que etá en Guiní.
(C-21)
Cuando ojo *ta* llorá a narice toca su parte. (C-25)
Amo *ta* pedí leche. (C-18)
Ya branco *ta* debaratá cosa (C-22)
pavo real *ta* bucá palo (C-20)
Ta juí, *ta* pujá mí, señó (C-67)
é *ta* dicí: tu buca la cosa bueno (C-26)

This construction, unlikely to have arisen spontaneously from an unstructured Spanish pidgin, is identical to verb phrases in Iberian-based creoles throughout the world, including Palenquero and Papiamentu in Latin America, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde *Kriol* in Africa, Portuguese-based creoles in India, Sri Lanka, Macau and Malaysia, and in Philippine Creole Spanish (Chabacano). Many investigators, including Otheguy (1973), Granda (1968), Megenney 1984, 1985a), Perl (1982), etc. have regarded the presence of *ta* in Afro-Caribbean *bozal* Spanish as virtually conclusive proof that an Afro-Hispanic creole, similar to Palenquero and Papiamentu, was once spoken throughout the Caribbean, and perhaps even in South America. The existence of *ta* + V_{inf} in these creoles is a strong bit of evidence in favor of a common origin or at least mutually shared influences (but cf. Lipski 1987a, forthcoming b). In other

respects, the verbal systems of these creoles share fewer similarities. In the languages just mentioned, *ta* is variously used for present/imperfective and durative aspect. For the past/perfective, *ya/ja* is the most common variant, but other forms are also used; Papiamentu, for example uses *a*, as does the Ternateño dialect of Philippine Creole Spanish. In Palenquero, *ba* is used as an imperfective marker, although its syntactic properties are different from those of *ta*. Papiamentu and Cape Verde *crioulo* make some use of Spanish/Portuguese imperfect verb forms. No Latin American *bozal* text shows consistent use of any past/perfective particle; in particular, *ya* appears in the same positions as in Spanish.

There is even more variation among creoles to represent future/irrealis: Papiamentu has *lo* (apparently from Ptg. *logo* 'later'), Palenquero has *tan*, Philippine Creole Spanish has *di* or *ay*, and so forth. Latin American *bozal* texts, on the other hand, use no particle to signal futurity; either the simple present or a periphrastic Spanish future with *va* are used. The latter element is never used consistently enough to be considered an innovative particle. This casts considerable doubt on the prior existence of a uniform Afro-Hispanic creole, since only one component of the usual three-particle creole verb system is found in attested *bozal* language. A re-evaluation of the role played by *ta* in *bozal* Spanish is called for.

It is striking that among the scores of Afro-Hispanic texts, from Spain and all of Latin America and spanning nearly 400 years, the combination *ta* + V_{inf} is found ONLY (1) in a very small number of texts, (2) in the 19th century, (3) in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Even in the 19th century Afro-Caribbean corpus, constructions based on *ta* alternate with the archetypical *bozal* pattern of partially or incorrectly conjugated verb forms. No use of *ta* occurs in the large Afro-Hispanic corpus from Argentina, Uruguay or Peru, nor in scattered texts from other regions. The Dominican Republic, which shares the island with speakers of Haitian creole (which makes ample use of pre-verbal particles, including *ta* < perfective *te* + future/irrealis (*v*)*a* as conditional), some of whose elements have penetrated into hybrid border dialects, shows no evidence of ever having had *ta* + V_{inf} or other preverbal particles, despite the existence of other possibly postcreole phenomena (González and Benavides 1982, Megenney 1990).

In a few cases it might be possible to argue that spontaneous developments took place, e.g. where *ta* is clearly derived from *esta(r)* acting as either a locative verb or in combination with an adjective: *Yo no pue TA quieto ya* (C-34) 'I can't be still now'; *Nángüe TA bueno ...* (C-20) 'The *nangüe* [tree] is good.' In other instances, phonetic erosion of what was once a gerund, ending in *-ando* or *-(i)endo* is also a possibility: *Que to mi cuepo me ETÁ temblá* (C-26) 'My whole body is trembling'; *pavo real TA bucán palo* (C-20) 'the peacock is looking for a tree'; *yo ESTÁ CORTÁ un cañas* 'I am cutting sugar cane' (C-31). In other cases, however, the verbs in question are habitual or durative, contexts where Spanish would not use any combination involving *estar*. This residue is among the few sure indicators of an infusion of creole elements into *bozal* language.

An overview of Puerto Rican *bozal* texts reveals only a small number of cases of the particle *ta* combined with an invariant verb stem (Alvarez Nazario 1974: 193- 4), as compared with other examples in which no non-Hispanic verb forms appear. By far the greatest number of cases of *ta* occur in texts from Cuba, beginning towards the middle of the 19th century, carrying through to the early 20th century. Even in Cuba, numerous *bozal* texts from the same time period lack any use of *ta*, employing instead the prototypical *bozal* verbal system in which verbs were reduced to the third person singular or to a bare infinitive (or in the case of the copula *ser*, to *son*).

10. Cabrera's 'transcriptions' and Afro-Spanish hybrids

Given the importance of Lydia Cabrera's writings, in particular anthropological- religious studies

such as *El monte*, to Afro-Caribbean creole theories,⁴ it is useful to consider how accurate and representative such texts might be as specimens of *bozal* speech in Cuba and elsewhere in the Caribbean. Cabrera's works are extensive and captivating, and the long segments written in African languages and in *bozal* and vernacular Cuban Spanish sound so convincing that they seem to be the transcription of actual recordings. For Granda, Perl and Otheguy, Cabrera's Afro-Cuban anthropological studies are not only the most accessible source of *bozal* speech, but also the most trustworthy, given the author's clearly positive attitudes towards Afro-Cuban culture and her avowed intention of describing it accurately. Missing in these writings is the mocking humor which characterized the *habla de negros* in the Cuban `teatro bufo,⁵ and in other writings from Spain and Latin America (although in such texts as *Francisco y Francisca* [C-21] and *Refranes de negros viejos* [C-25] some glimpses of this tendency emerge). At the same time, many of her writings employ literary techniques of magical realism, complete with possible exaggeration of linguistic usage. For Ortiz (1940: 9):

estos cuentos [Cabrera's *Cuentos negros*: JML] vienen a las prensas por una colaboración, la del folklore negro con su traductora blanca. Porque también el texto castellano es en realidad una traducción, y en rigor sea dicho, una segunda traducción. Del lenguaje africano ... en que las fábulas se imaginaron, éstas fueron vertidas en Cuba al idioma amestizado y dialectal de los negros criollos. Quizá la anciana morena que se las narró a Lydia ya las recibió de sus antepasados en lenguaje acriollado. Y de esta habla tuvo la coleccionista que pasarlas a una forma legible en castellano ... la autora ha hecho tarea difícil pero leal, y por tanto, muy meritoria, conservando a los cuentos su fuerte carácter exótico de fondo y de forma ...

For Ortiz, then, the *bozal* language of Cabrera's writings is (at least) twice-removed from what might have once been an Afro-Cuban creole (cf. also Martínez Gordo 1982: 52). This position contrasts radically with, e.g., Granda's view that Cabrera's literary representation of *bozal* Spanish is as faithful as a tape recording or verbatim transcription. This is not to say that Cabrera used *bozal* Spanish to represent conversations held mostly or entirely in African languages, although many older Afro-Cubans did use African languages amongst themselves. In personal conversation, the late Lydia Cabrera described to the present writer the manner in which older *bozales* spoke throughout Cuba (not just in Havana, as Granda seems to imply), but both from her writings and her personal recollections it is clear that no *bozal* speaker used creoloid forms exclusively. Most combined creoloid, pidgin, and standard Spanish forms, not necessarily because the *bozal* language was `decreolizing,' but because the creoloid elements often arose spontaneously as African-born Cubans evolved in their acquisition of Spanish.

It is not insignificant that in Cabrera's writings, as well as in nearly all Cuban literary works in which any Afro-Hispanic language with creoloid tendencies appears (cf. the appendix for a representative list of items consulted for the present study), it is always older, *bozal* Africans, never native-born Cuban blacks, who exhibit creoloid traits. This fact led López Morales (1980: 109) to question `si los hijos de estos hombres ya no son congos, ya manejan un español cubano estándar, desconociendo en muchas ocasiones la lengua africana de sus padres, ¿qué tipo de transmisión es ésta?' Although there are some creoloid forms in *bozal* texts, nothing in the texts themselves or in known facts of Cuban history would suggest that these African-born slaves had learned such items from a FORMER generation, either in Africa or in Cuba. If there were a stable Afro-Hispanic creole from which *bozales* learning Spanish could draw elements, there should be convincing evidence that NATIVE-born black Cubans spoke this creole, even more consistently (i.e. to the exclusion of both standard Spanish and pidgin items) than did *bozales*. Such evidence is entirely lacking.

There is an even more problematic aspect of texts like *El monte*, which adds another degree of indeterminacy to the reconstruction of Afro-Caribbean *bozal* Spanish. This involves the fact that, not only are the most creoloid features preferred by the oldest, African-born blacks, but most are an integral part of Afro-Cuban religious rituals, which implies fossilization and transmission in automatic form to initiates. Thus López Morales (1980: 108):

En estos textos donde los informantes negros hablan de sus religiones, supersticiones, magias y folklore, hay ejemplos de naturaleza morfosintáctica y léxica ... que han sido tomados con valor de muestra de la pervivencia de una lengua criolla. Sin embargo, sólo se trata de ejemplos de estadios lingüísticos individuales, aunque por fuerza coincidentes en hablantes de la misma lengua materna, que denuncian una adquisición imperfecta del español. Todos ellos aparecen en boca de bozales, ninguno en labios criollos.

Most of the speakers implicated in the use of creoloid items in *bozal* Spanish were native speakers of an African language, from which they routinely drew lexical elements and morphosyntactic structures when speaking to religious initiates, other Africans with knowledge of the same or similar African languages, or sympathetic listeners such as Lydia Cabrera. Among the linguistic strategies employed by such *bozal* speakers was the free creation of hybrid structures, employing a Spanish (or pidgin Spanish) morphosyntactic frame with an African lexical core. Thus in Lachatañeré's *Oh, mío Yemayá!* (C-47) we find the Yoruba/Spanish chant:

A la mofilé
Changó tá molé ...

From Cabrera's writings come:

pa *nkamá* [enter the religious ceremony], coge huevo ese, pasa cara, pasa cuerpo, limpia bien y cuando te limpio to uté pué cogé Mpegó' (C-17)
 Por qué tú coge *owo* Elégbara? Si é mimo dicí tú ta *olé* y é te va agarrá pinado su papalote ... (C-20)
 Ese otro yo me lo va *yéun* y a Migué no pasa ná ... (C-20)
 Olofi ya *okuó*, Olofi ta mirando, ya *ikú*. (C-20)
 Olofi no está *aro*. Olofi está *óddara*. (C-20)
 Cómo va sé mano branco, si ta *afé*, ta prieto yo ... (C-22)
 Vamo *siré* (C-22)
 Ahora ese *ewe*, to ese palo ta sacramentao ... (C-22)
 Ay mi marío! *ðkó mi, okó mi!* (C-18)
 Mañana yo *ikú* (C-22)

From the Afro-Cuban song 'Elegua quiere tambó' by Celia Cruz (Castellanos 1983: 57) comes the fragment:

No hay Orisa como Elegua pa la *ilé*, porque siempre etá *ofé* ... Ochún ta *weye weye* ... 'There is no god like Elegua for the [ceremonial] house, because [he] is always watching ...'

These examples show the incorporation of Yoruba elements into Spanish sentences, sometimes slightly modified, and in other cases without modification. Thus *owo* 'money,' *yéun* (Yoruba *jeun*) 'to eat,' *olè* 'thief,' *ofé* 'to watch' (< *ó fe* '(s)he watches'), *aro* 'sick,' *oko* 'husband,' *afé* 'dark,' *ewe* 'leaves,' ? *iré* 'to play,' etc. However, the texts also reflect Yoruba morphosyntax, including the at times tenuous or non-existent morphological difference between nouns, verbs and adjectives, and the attempt to create hybrid verbal constructions using Spanish elements to replace Yoruba particles, in conjunction with a Yoruba stem. In several instances, the results closely resemble verbal structures in Afro-Iberian creoles such as Papiamentu, Palenquero or Cape Verdian Crioulo, but in which the case for an independent development can be made quite strongly.

Consider, for example, the Hispano-Yoruba hybrid transcribed by Cabrera: 'Olofi *ya okuó*, Olofi *ta mirando, ya ikú*.' In this combination, *ya* seems to be acting as a preverbal particle, much as in Afro-Iberian creoles. In reality, however, this sentence embodies a subtle form of code-switching. In Yoruba, the root for 'die' is *kú*. This element can also be used as an adjectival verb, meaning 'be dead.' Thus *ó kú* can mean either '(s)he dies/died' or '(s)he is dead.' When modifying a noun, the adjectival form is *kíkú*. The corresponding noun is *ikú* 'death.' In the pidginized Yoruba used by the Abakuá/Lucumí Afro-Cuban religious cults, much of this grammatical information has been lost, so that, e.g., *ikú* can be used as a verb/adjective: *mañana yo ikú* 'tomorrow I will die/be dead' (cf. also Cabrera 1970c: 160). When combined with *ya*, as in *Olofi ya okuó ... ya ikú* 'Olofi is already dead/already died,' there seems to be a prototypical creole formation in which *ya* operates as a preverbal [+anterior] particle.⁶ In many Iberian-based creoles, in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, the [+anterior] particle is derived from Sp. *ya*/Ptg. *ja*, almost always combined with an Ibero-Romance verbal stem. In such cases, *ya* has evolved from a free adverbial to a preverbal clitic particle, always as part of the verb phrase. In the Spanish/Yoruba hybrid constructions transcribed by Lydia Cabrera, the fact of code-switching precludes analyzing *ya* as a clitic or verbal particle; rather, it is still behaving as an adverbial adjunct.

The case of *é mimo dicí tú ta olé* 'he himself says that you are a thief/are robbing' appears to embody *ta* as a preverbal particle. In Yoruba, *olè* is a noun meaning 'thief,' while the verb 'rob' is *jalè*. Once more, in the pidginized Yoruba used in *El monte*, this distinction is usually lost, either because the speakers in question were not truly native speakers of Yoruba (whether or not they were born in Africa), or because code-switching between two languages with radically different morphosyntactic patterns resulted in canonical full forms from Yoruba being used when a Yoruba item was inserted in a Spanish sentence.⁷ The hybrid combination *tú ta olé* is thus ambiguous, meaning both 'you are (a) thief,' and 'you steal/are stealing.' In the first interpretation, *ta* is used incorrectly as a copula with a predicate nominal, a usage also found in vestigial or semi-fluent usage in other regions. In the second meaning, *ta* is more clearly derived from the progressive auxiliary *está*, routinely pronounced as *ta* in vernacular Cuban Spanish. The resulting configuration, however, is superficially identical to quintessential Iberian-based creole constructions derived from *ta* plus the Romance infinitive. The combination *vamo siré* 'let's play,' involves a Yoruba verb used identically to a Spanish infinitive; the superficial form of the Yoruba verb resembles a Spanish infinitive. Many of the other Yoruba items transcribed by Cabrera have the same canonical shape as Ibero-Romance infinitives: *afé*, *molé*, *olé*, etc. In the hybrid constructions characteristic of Afro-Cuban speech these items are not behaving as verbal infinitives, whether or not derived from a Yoruba verbal stem. Similarly, in the hybrid constructions, *ta < está* is not behaving as an auxiliary for a progressive construction, much less as a preverbal particle signalling tense, mood, or aspect, as occurs in legitimate Afro-Romance creoles. It is a simple copula, introducing a patently foreign insertion.⁸ Despite the analysis of Yoruba-Spanish hybrid constructions in a fashion different from that of TMA PARTICLE + VERBAL STEM found in

Afro-Iberian creoles, the superficial similarity with the latter phenomena has led to the inclusion of the hybrid constructions in the 'evidence' of a former creole status for Cuban *bozal* Spanish, as well as to the purported similarities with Afro-Portuguese pidgins and creoles. Among Cuban *bozales*, purely Spanish constructions based on *ta* + V_{inf} were used in addition to the hybrid Spanish+Yoruba constructions, but not necessarily as part of a pan-Caribbean creole pattern. It is more likely that, having established a productive hybrid system in which Spanish *ta* could serve as a copula or generic verb introducing inserted borrowed elements, this same combination was extended to uninflected Spanish verbs (i.e. infinitives), with similar use. In other words, speakers of Yoruba and other African languages in which the noun/adjective verb distinction is marked differently from Spanish, or not at all, would freely combine Spanish verbs, nouns and adjectives with *ta* to create complex verbs with simple meanings.

The assertion that *ta* was used in Afro-Hispanic language to introduce elements regarded as foreign is difficult to substantiate, given the limited nature of the Cuban *bozal* corpus and the fact that Spanish-speaking observers would not be likely to notice the non-Spanish fashion in which such combinations were being used. One possible method is to look for cases where *ta/está* is combined with verbal stems in which progressive aspect is entirely lacking, perhaps even where a perfective aspect can be assumed. Also, one might look for use of *ta/está* with adjectives in a fashion which could be re-analyzed as a simple verb, as well as combinations involving *ta/está* with the meaning of a simple verb. Some Caribbean *bozal* verbal constructions based on *ta* which lack a

progressive aspect, or where the following element is not based on the Spanish gerund, include:

- Po que tú no *ta* queré a mí? `Why don't you love me?' (PR-5)
 Siempre *ta* regalá dinero a mí `He always gives me money' (PR-5)
 Horita *ta* bení pa cá `Soon she (will) come here' (C-71)
 Yo ta llorá pocque Calota ya *ta* morí `I am crying because Carlota died' (C-70)
 la campana *ta* pin, pin, Brágame Dios la tragín que lo tiene la critiano! `The bell is going "pin, pin. Good God, how these Christians are dressed up!' (C-29)
 Yo llegá, quitá cachucho, cuchá música bonito ... yo *ta* mirá gente mucho ... `I arrive(d), take off my hat, listen to the pretty music ... I looked at all the people' (C-29)
 moso ta mirando neye, neye *ta* morí de risa, `The boys are looking at them [the girls], [the girls] are dying of laughter (C-29)
 Lamo *ta* regañá mí, yo siempre con soramienta no cuchá ... `The master always scolds me, annoyed, I never listen' (C-29)
Ta tentá doló en su cabeza. Tié fiebre. `He has a headache and fever.' (C-21)
 Sí, páe, yo *ta* robá un gaína jabá, y dipué yo robá una yegua. `Yes, Father, I stole a hen, and then I stole a mare' (C-21)
 Sí, que progrosa son buey, poque cuando nei *ta* vení ya yo no tiene que da vueta y vueta y vueta lo trapiche `Oxen are very dangerous, because when they come, I don't have to turn the sugar mill' (C-21)
 Ay Dió, cuando mi marío *ta* juyí, siñó médico dicí yo ta embarazá `Oh, God, when my husband left, the doctor told me I was pregnant' (C-22)
 Miamo Juan *ta* murí `Master Juan (has) died' (C-11)
 soldao *ta* cabrón, mambí piliando con machete afilá y cortá cabeza. `The soldiers are bastards, Mambís fighting with sharp machetes, cutting off heads' (C-1)

In all these examples, *ta* cannot be adequately analyzed as indicating progressive aspect. This provides indirect evidence that *ta* was being used neither as a preverbal particle nor as an auxiliary verb, but rather as part of a hybrid form in which *ta* introduced foreign elements. In fact, there is evidence that in the more rudimentary forms of Caribbean *bozal* Spanish, it was the bare uninflected infinitive (lacking final /t/) that was used as the default verb. In slightly more fluent forms of *bozal* Spanish, the infinitive might be supplemented with `auxiliary' verbs such as *(es)tá* and *va*, while in the most fluent varieties of *bozal* Spanish, the 3rd person singular verb form normally acted as the default (although *son* was more commonly used as the default copula), at times in alternation with fully conjugated Spanish verbs. Examples of the bare infinitive in *bozal* speech include:

- La vieja Asunción nunca *jablá* (C-63)
 yo también me *calentá* ... y cuando *cuchá* campana, yo me va pa la Tamisa (C-29)
 No, siñó, yo no *matá* ninguno, yo *sentá* atrá quitrín pa yegá prisa, prisa, na panadería (C-35)
 yo tindora, ya yo *jablá* mimo hoy don Ciriaco ... (C-15)
 Na dotó, né *comé* lo chicharró caliente, *bebé* de l'agua fría, y to la noche *pasá* de lo catre a lo tibó ... (C-21)

ya yo no sé si lon gato *matá* la jutía o si la jutía *matá* lon gato ... (C-20)
 Yo *llevá* ya mucho tiempo comiendo con mano, y *queré* dame guto comé con tenedó y
 cuchillo lo mimo que gente rica, porque viejo no *queré* morí sin meté pinchacito tenedó dentro
 carne sabroso (C-32).
 Cañón pañó no *sebí* pa ná. Cañón pañó tira tiro paf y se *cayá* ... (C-72)
 yo lo *disí* po bien suya (C-34)
 En la guerra yo *pefiá* ... (C-36)
 Bueno, sumesé, siende como *disí* la niña ... (GC-44)
 Yo *sabé* que ño Rafé son guardiero tu bují ... (C-34)
 Uno biyete que yo *cumprá* la loterí yo me *sacá* (C-34)
 Yo *llevá* ventidó muelto, aquí va clito ... (C-38)
 Torcuato *tené* que hablale ... Torcuato *cogé* guerrillero, Torcuato *cambiá* viejo po bueyes ...
 (C-52)
 si *murí*, mijó sería (PR-7)

Examples of the use of *son* as the default copula include:

Cura que no *son* de acá, ta caramá como chiva (C-29)
 tú *son* dueño e tierra (C-14)
 ¿qué *son* ese? (C-6)
 Tu boca *son* la capuyo de la susena fragante (C-10)
 Ya yo *son* libre, yo ta casá (C-34)
 porque tú *son* mis antojos (C-15)
 hoy *son* día grande (C-15)
 ¿qué cosa mimo *son* ese? (C-21)
 Tú no *só* congo bruto musulungo, tú *só* congo luanda (C-21)
 Tú *dicí* que yo *son* tu corazó y no retuece pecuezo pollo? (C-21)
 mañana *son* día corobata (C-24)
 Tú *son* chimosa? (C-45)
 Papá *son* ma diablo que yo (C-26)
 Calabela to nosotros *son* de allá, to nosotros *son* familia africana ... (C-22)
 Calamba mujé *so* ruín (C-48)
 tú *son* bruto (C-20)
 tú no *son* valiente (C-13)
 ¿Y quiéne *son* noté? (C-50)
 Mosotro no *son* casá por le iglese (C-68)
 Yo que lo *son* mu agradisí a la favó que me lo jase ... (C-44)
 tú *son* negro que no pué ta caggao, tu mare no *son* rico ... (Castellanos 1983)
 si tú *son* cubano, di gabanso, y no te pasa na. (C-37)
 tú *son* criollito sinvegiénza... (C-26)
 Usté *son* muchacho hoy, pero usté *son* hombre mañana (C-17)
 mi padre *son* coturero, mi madre *son* coturera (C-38)
 ud. *son* lo mimo que la madrecita pa nosotros (C-63)
 lamo *son* amo brabo ... nella *son* honrá (PR-7)

Many of the examples given above also illustrate the use of the 3rd person singular verb as the default.

This is most often noticeable when the subject is *yo*. When the subject is *tú*, normal Cuban loss of final /s/ cannot be ruled out. The Caribbean *bozal* corpus contains very few examples of 3rd person singular verbs combined with plural subjects (e.g. *nosotros* or *ustedes*), but nothing suggests that verbs behaved any differently in these cases. More examples include:

- yo empeña* mi ropa (C-56)
- Yo *alebanta* sojo (C-29)
- A mí no *bebe* aguariente, mi ama (C-51)
- Yo *sabe* lavá, planchá, jasé dulce y cosiná (C-9)
- Aquí *ta* yo. (C-53)
- yo mi *ñama* Frasco Mandinga (C-57)
- yo *bota* lan garafó (C-10)
- ya yo *ta* contento (C-15)
- yo no *quiere* mi compae con pata candelá (C-21)
- yo *llama* Mayombe sacuré (C-24)
- Yo *va* con uté, sí señó. (C-20)
- yo no *tiene* la culpa. (C-67)
- Aguaita que yo *mata*. (C-59)
- Yo *va* a na San Savaó a comprá un poco de tasao (C-69)
- Totí pájaro negro, el amo, yo *llama* Eugenio (C-49)
- Sí, Taita, yo *entiende* (C-11)
- yo *está* cortá un cañas (C-31)
- yo *va* salí pa lamprasa (C-64)
- Yo *va* preguntá a too la gente si conoce a mi yijo Eulogio (C-65)
- Yo *tiene* la pecho premio pur nelle (C-41)
- yo *va* donde está mi capatá pa entregalo ese botella (C-50)
- Yo no me *ñama* José, me *ñama* Cirilo (C-68)
- Yo *va* pa la gallería (C-36)
- si yo *sabe*, yo *dise* a su mesé (C-44)
- Yo *tiene* crupa na ma de to lo que ta pasando (C-34)
- yo *va* sé uté lo criollo cuento de mi tiela (C-26)
- yo *tiene* mala cabeza ... (C-55)
- Yo *va* matá mi materiá (C-61)
- yo le *da* yeba pa quitá anbenenao (C-63)
- yo no *puere* aguantá má (PR-7)

Examples such as the ones above characterize the vast majority of the Caribbean *bozal* corpus, in comparison with 'creoloid' combinations involving *ta*, and show that Afro-Hispanic pidgin in the Caribbean did show evidence of a move toward consistency, but not in the direction of TMA PARTICLE + VERB combinations. Rather, *bozal* Spanish adopted minimally inflected verb forms, at first based on the infinitive and then gravitating toward the most unmarked conjugated form (3rd person singular).

11. Caribbean *bozal* Spanish in contact with Papiamentu

In partial summary, Latin American *bozal* Spanish exhibits only one recurring trait which converges with other Afro-Iberian creoles, namely verbal constructions based on *ta*. Undifferentiated

third person pronouns might also fit in this category, although the pronouns in question do not find as close a match among known creoles. These two traits, however, do not characterize all or even most Latin American *bozal* texts. Rather, their distribution is strikingly limited in both time and space. All known examples occur in 19th century Cuba (together with 2-3 collateral examples from Puerto Rico). Earlier Caribbean *bozal* texts show no signs of the constructions in question, nor do 18th and 19th century Afro-Hispanic documents from the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Argentina and Uruguay, not to mention the extensive Peninsular Spanish *bozal* corpus of 16-18th century texts. Reconstruction of the vestigial Afro-Hispanic language spoken by the *negros congos* of Panama (Lipski 1990) also fails to reveal evidence of earlier verbal constructions involving *ta*, nor of undifferentiated third person pronouns. This very limited distribution undermines sweeping claims of a previous stable Afro-Hispanic creole spoken widely throughout the Caribbean and elsewhere. At the same time, the creoloid traits discussed above must be accounted for in the cases where they appear. This dilemma may be at least partially resolved by taking a closer look at the recruitment of the labor force in the 19th century Caribbean, and by offering a closer examination of many lesser-known examples of Caribbean *bozal* Spanish.

In the final decades of the 18th century, the sugar plantation boom caused an unprecedented demand for laborers in Cuba, Brazil, and to a lesser extent Venezuela, Trinidad, and Puerto Rico. The African slave trade had slowed to a trickle, and was rapidly reinitiated without concern for separating slaves speaking the same languages. Slaves were carried *en masse* from West Africa to Latin America, resulting in the existence of Yoruba- Kikongo- and Ewe-speaking groups well into the 20th century. By the first few decades of the 19th century, anti-slavery movements in Europe were strong, and slaving ships en route to the Americas were intercepted and confiscated. A burgeoning contraband slave trade ensued, and the Dutch slave station at Curaçao was instrumental in making up the difference between the slaves coming from Africa and the total needs of the Spanish colonies. For much of the colonial period, the Dutch had maintained an *asiento* on Curaçao, from which slaves were reshipped to Spanish, French and English possessions in the Caribbean. The *asiento* was revoked in 1713, but clandestine traffic from Curaçao and St. Eustatius continued past this point, transshipping African slaves throughout the Caribbean.

The importance of Curaçao in the history of the African slave trade to Cuba and Puerto Rico is well documented. For nearly two centuries, the Dutch slave depot at Curaçao supplied the authorized and clandestine slave traffic to Cuba and Puerto Rico, together with other sources of African labor. There is no indication that Curaçao played a predominant role during the period prior to the 19th century, although the flow of slaves was constant. In the first decades of the 19th century, European (particularly British) attempts to stop the flow of African slaves to the Americas became significant, and the transshipment of slaves from one Caribbean island to another rose in importance, creating a Caribbean-wide shell game which was difficult to interdict in its entirety. Western Puerto Rico and eastern Cuba received numerous slaves from Curaçao, as well as from the Danish colony in the Virgin Islands, and from St. Barthelmy, Martinique and Guadeloupe (Morales Carrión 1978: 39).

Alvarez Nazario (1970) traces the arrival of slave and free blacks from Curaçao in Puerto Rico, during the course of the 18th and early 19th century. This study was the first to appreciate the significance of a text originally published by Pasarell (1951: 124), which purports to represent the use of Papiamentu in early 19th century Puerto Rico.⁹ For Alvarez Nazario (1970: 4), the text 'ofrece pruebas de primera mano que establecen el arraigo definitivo y claro en nuestro suelo por entonces de sectores poblacionales usuarios del papiamentu, con raíces que se remontan posiblemente en el tiempo a los siglos XVII y XVIII ... cuando este instrumento expresivo va definiendo y consolidando históricamente sus caracteres de lengua criolla del Caribe ...' According to him, the language in question

represents the vestiges of Papiamento transplanted to Puerto Rico several generations prior to the attestation in question, and partially remodeled through contact with evolving *bozal* and *criollo* Spanish of Puerto Rico. The most significant aspect of this discovery, amply recognized by Alvarez Nazario, is the fact that the language of these *genti di Corsó* was familiar enough to observers in early 19th century Puerto Rico as to require no special introduction or translation. Alonso (1975: 57), in the classic work *El jíbaro*, also referred to the presence of 'criollos de Curazao' in 19th century Puerto Rico, evidently an unremarkable phenomenon in his day.¹⁰

Granda (1973) extended the scope of the inquiry, tracing the transshipment of Africans from Curaçao throughout the Caribbean, and documenting the survival of folkloric texts in Venezuela in a language which is much more transparently Papiamento. In the case of Cuba, Granda points to the observations of the Dutch traveller Bosch (1836: 226), also mentioned by Hesseling (1933: 265-6), who encountered Papiamento speakers in Cienfuegos, as well as in the Virgin Islands. According to Granda's interpretation, Bosch's previous knowledge of Papiamento as spoken in Curaçao would assure that he was not mistaking a local Afro-Cuban creole or pidgin for legitimate Papiamento. Hesseling himself did not rule out the possibility that Bosch was confusing the Dutch-based creole Negerhollands with Papiamento, although according scant probability to such a hypothesis.¹¹ Given Cubans' negative attitudes towards the speech of *bozales*, it is unlikely that many observers had either the experience or the inclination to differentiate the Afro-Hispanic pidgin spoken by African *bozales* sent directly to Cuba and the already well-established Afro-Iberian creole in use on Curaçao.

St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands was often a way-station for shipments originating in Curaçao, and according to Bosch (1836) also harbored a population of Papiamento speakers during the 19th century. This provides a dual vector by which elements of Papiamento could enter Cuba and Puerto Rico during the early decades of the 19th century. It is not insignificant that the 'Papiamento' text documented in Puerto Rico comes from Mayagüez, a port on the western end of the island where slave traffic with St. Thomas and Curaçao was most intense.

The Virgin Islands connection suggests an even more subtle way in which Papiamento elements could have trickled into *bozal* language of Cuba and Puerto Rico. In the early 19th century, when the (Danish-controlled) Virgin Islands played a key role in the clandestine slave trade to Cuba and Puerto Rico, the Dutch-based creole Negerhollands was still the principal language of the black population. Hesseling (1933) has analyzed many features of 19th century Negerhollands as bearing the earlier influence of Papiamento, stemming from a time when the Dutch also controlled parts of the Virgin Islands, and transfers of Africans from Curaçao to St. Thomas and St. Croix were frequent. One of the traits attributed to Papiamento is the extension of *bo < na bobo* to include meanings far removed from the original spatial value of 'over'; this extension exactly corresponds to Papiamento *riba* as compared to Spanish/Portuguese *arriba*. It will be shown below that *riba/arriba* occurs in *bozal* Caribbean texts with an expanded range of values comparable to those of Papiamento. Although there is no evidence of Negerhollands ever being spoken in stable populations in either Puerto Rico or Cuba, it is nearly inevitable that some Negerhollands speakers were transferred to these Spanish colonies. In the process of acquiring Spanish, parallel structures from Negerhollands would likely serve as the basis for translation; combinations which had previously been calqued from Papiamento could thus enter *bozal* Spanish from a language twice-removed. The Virgin Islands-Negerhollands connection is worth considering as a potentially, as yet unproved, collateral source of creole-like elements in Caribbean *bozal* Spanish.

12. Other Papiamento elements in Caribbean *bozal* Spanish

Closer scrutiny of *bozal* texts, principally from Cuba, reveals the existence of several other elements which point to a direct Papiamento influence; in many instances, these forms are found precisely in the text which exhibit the benchmark creole features just surveyed. These same items are conspicuously absent in *bozal* Spanish texts from other regions. Among the more salient features which coincide partially or totally with Papiamento are:

- (1) The Papiamento word for 'child, son, daughter' is *yiu*, with an intrusive initial /y/ not clearly derivable from Spanish *hijo*. The form *yijo* appears in Cuban *bozal* texts from the 19th century, but is unknown in *bozal* texts from other regions:

Mi *yijo*, gayina negro son mucho, y toíto pone güebo blanco (C-53)

no ta sufrí mi *yijo* (C-63)

Yija de mi pecho son (C-15)

Si mañana *yijo* fúiri, ¿quién llora su madrina? (C-24)

ay, *yijo*, yo no tiene carabela aquí. (C-22)

Yo ta compañá to *yijo*. (C-22)

si, *yijo*, es mío el quimbombó (C-20)

mi *yijo* Eulogio, nació y criaio en el Guatao (C-65)

Tú no ve uno yegua paría que anda con la *yijo* suyo como quien la tiene orgullo porque saca lotería? (C-60)

Neye lo que tiene só un bariga con su *yijo* lentro. (C-54)

tu son mi *yijo*, arrea, vamo ... Yo no tiene mujé, no tiene *yijo* ... (C-26)

Considering that intervocalic /x/ is weakly pronounced in Caribbean Spanish, the spelling *yijo* probably represented a word similar or identical to Papiamento *yiu*. It is likely that the frequent combination *mi hijo*, pronounced with intrusive hiatus-breaking and hypocorrect /y/, is at the root of the transformation of *hijo* to *yiu/yijo*. However, while intervocalic /y/ is quite weak in Papiamento, it is generally strong in Caribbean Spanish, so that independent parallel development of *yijo* in Cuba is rendered unlikely.

- (2) In Papiamento, the word for 'today' is *awe*, which is not easily derivable from either Spanish *hoy* or Portuguese *hoje*.¹² Forms similar or identical to Papiamento *awe*, and with identical meaning, appear in several Cuban *bozal* texts. Examples include:

Poquitico fatá pa que señora murí *agüoi* (C-35)

Agüe memo, ñamito (C-66)

ahuoy lo va a jase Pancha ... Ma *ahuoy*, letó mi corasón ... *ahuoy* bariga yo saca ... *Ahuoy* vamo ta mosotro como pecá dentro lagua ... (C-33)

ahuoy cun ese cumeria (C-34)

agüé día tambó to mundo baila (C-26)

ahuoy mimo po la mañanito (C-34)

- (3) In Papiamentu, *awor* is the word for 'now.'¹³ Among existing or attested Spanish dialects, *aguora/ahuora* appears only in 19th century Cuba, in *bozal* texts or as the representation of illiterate rural speakers in areas with a strong Afro-Hispanic presence. Examples of *ahuora/aguora* in Cuban *bozal* texts include:

Y qué yo dicí *ahuora*, eh? ... *ahuora* sí mi pecho está girviendo como agua que pela engallina (C-15)

y *ahuora* que no lo ve ... donde *ahuora* yo só otra vé congo y trabajaore la muelle ... dende *ahuora* yo só José mimo ... *Ahuora* a trabajá (C-40)

con toa esa bemba se larga *ahuora* mimo de aquí ... vamo a ve si *ahuora* oté me entiende ... *ahuora* sí verdá que no pue má ... hasta *ahuora* yo no tení guto pa conocé a noté (C-50)

Prusumpueto que *ahuora* narie lo habra diotro cosa ma que de la Jópera (C-34)

... que bravu diese lo pega *ahuora* como uno pache de brea en la sojo de uno buticaria (C-34)

... la Cula ta gualando, *aguola* en la cafeté (C-48)

Camina, pícaro, que *aguora* tú lo va pagá (C-35)

aguora yo jabla oté (*Guayabo, rumores del Mayabeque*, 1881; cited in Ortiz 1924: 12).

Although Ortiz and Dihigo suggest that *agüé* and *ahuora* both derive from *ahora/agora* 'now,' several texts, including the writings of Creto Gangá (C-34) and *El quitrín* (C-35) maintain the two separate, with *agüé* meaning 'today' and *ahuora* in the sense of 'now,' just as with Papiamentu *awe* and *awor*.

- (4) In Papiamentu, *riba* (< Sp., Port. *arriba*) is a preposition meaning 'on, upon': *Kiko tin riba mesa?* 'What is on the table?' *Arriba* is not used this way in Spanish, although the combination *arriba de* occasionally appears with the meaning 'above, over.' Among Cuban *bozal* texts *riba/arriba* appears on several occasions as a preposition, with the meaning 'on, up':

ya pará *rriba* téngue ... ya pará *rriba* jagüey ... ya pará *rriba* nangüe ... yo sube arriba palo (C-20)

pone cañón *riba* alifante ... uté sienta *riba* pelo y va arastrao como en coche ... echó vara *arriba* ngombe yo brinca volante ... mi pecho ta roncando, parece toro galano que etá *nriba* la loma ... (C-26)

Ese trepa *riba* palo (C-21)

Arriba entoto me juran ganga (C-24)

arriba negro, culpa siempre ta guindá (C-25)

Savaó *ariba* loma. (C-69)

no lo guanta que moca lo para *riba* su yo (C-33)

Yo sé, moca fueron, mira como ta *arriba* la mesa. (C-37)

lo tñiba lumbaniyo ma pa *riba* la fundiyo (C-34)

Y Rupeto, qué negro sientá *riba* la vagaso (C-34)

lo salí cribindo *ariba* Lan Faro Sindutriá en luenga mandinga? (C-34)

o había *ariba* de la papé muchu diabro pintao (C-34)

(5) In Papiamentu, the word for 'say, tell' is *bisa* (< Sp., Port. *avisar*). Among non-African Spanish dialects, (*a*)*visar* is most commonly used in the sense of 'advise, warn,' but rarely with the meaning 'say tell.' Dihigo (1946: 199) gives the form *bisar*, whose sole example is the Afro-Cuban text from Santa Cruz (1908: 132), reproduced below. Although Dihigo does not explicitly list this form as pertaining to the Afro-Cuban lexicon, the choice of examples is instructive. Among Cuban *bozal* texts, however, the latter meaning is frequently associated with (*a*)*visar*:

Niña Paulita ñamá yo, *bisa* negra pa ni ... *Bisa* André que ta güeno ... (C-66)

Robé, *visa* mi señora sení que yo ta nel río (C-21)

Don José, yo va ahora mimo a la cabildo pa *avisá* too carabela pa que viene tiempla juna tambor ... (C-15)

Gente desconfiá, peligro siempre ta *avisá* Ay Dió, cuando mi marío ta juyí ... (C-25)

Amo tuyo quiquiribú un día, tú *avisá* mí. Tú entiende? (C-11)

Madre Oca *avisá* pa que jable con vo. (C-1)

Cuando ley Mechó contendía con ley inglés, né ta sentao en su trono y *visá* que baco inglés ta la bahía ... no *avisa* no, poque hata dipué de mueta yo cuido mi mujé... si hay malo, *avisa* pa el tú *avisa* pa él. (C-26)

(6) In Papiamentu, the first person singular subject pronoun is (*a*)*mi*, with the longer form being emphatic or contrastive. Since the 16th century, no form of *bozal* Spanish has used (*a*)*mí* as subject pronoun (cf. Lipski 1991), but this form reappears in a few 19th century Cuban *bozal* texts. Also found in the latter documents is the use of disjunctive *mí* as object pronoun, instead of the usual clitic *me*. This pattern is not found in any monolingual variety of Spanish, but is parallel with Papiamentu usage. Found occasionally is the use of *pa mí* 'mine,' identical in structure to Haitian *pa-m* (< *pa-mwe*), and possible a calque introduced by Haitian speakers who were especially frequent in eastern Cuba. Examples of these uses of *mí* in Cuban *bozal* texts include:

A *mí* no bebe aguariente, mi ama (C-51)

Ay, señora, nigua no deja caminá a *mí*. (C-35)

Ah, ñamito, perdona *mí* ... *Mí* no sabe, ñamito ... *mi* no sabe ná (C-66)

colazón *pa mí* ta brincando dentro la pecho como la cuebro (C-15)

No señó, vegüenza no e *pa mí*, e pa amo Tomá. (C-16)

sí, iñó, contramayorá manda *mí* ... Ta juí, ta pujá *mí*, señó (C-67)

El amo mata *mí* ... (C-49)

Tú dise *mí*, yo calla ... Eyo lleban *mí* una casa. (C-11)

Ay, Flancico, tú perdona *mí* ... (C-37)

Nél cré va agarrá *mí* ... (C-26)

la sojo suyo, que lumbrá como cocuyo, ta mirando yo namá. A *mí* no ... Lamo ta regañá *mí* ... (C-29)

Ecucha Encarna, *mí* no guta eso ... ella dise, *mí* ba casa ma Cecilia ... (C-12)

In the examples just given, use of *mí* is combined with *bozal* language in which some agreement, verb conjugation, syntactic subordination, etc. can be found. In other words, the level of approximation to Spanish is above that of an incipient pidgin such as might be spoken by a recently-arrived African with

no prior knowledge of Spanish.¹⁴

(7) Although the undifferentiated third person pronoun (*n*)*eye* does not have a direct counterpart in Papiamentu, the variant *ne*, also appearing in Cuban *bozal* texts, corresponds to a variant of Papiamentu *e* (usually found after *que*, in comparative constructions), e.g. *ta un Dios tin y no tin otro mas que NÉ* 'there is only one God and no other' (Hesseling 1933). Examples from the *bozal* corpus include:

Qué nimá son ese que *ne* parese majá? (C-4)

ne te mea, *ne* te caga, *ne* te tumba, *ne* te mete rabo la culo, y se va ... Na dotó, *né* comé lo chicharró caliente ... *Né* tiene un güequito aquí, un güequito allá (C-21)

Ne murí jayá tiempo ... *ne* contrá lo río la suete lo rey ekoi, y varón quitá neye ... (C-22)

Yo va curá *né* cun su mecé. (C-67)

Cuando ley Mechó contendía con ley inglés, *né* ta sentao en su trono ... *Né* mirá po tejo ... si *né* no tiene serrucho, y manque negro jabla mucho mucha yuca hay que rayá ... *Mi*jo de quien *né*? (C-26)

(8) One area in which similarities between 19th century Caribbean *bozal* Spanish and Papiamentu may indicate more than a fortuitous resemblance involves vowel harmony. The data are not as extensive and clear as the previously-mentioned phenomena, but the parallels are worth exploring. Papiamentu exhibits numerous cases in which etymological final vowels from Spanish or Portuguese were replaced by a copy of the stressed vowel, in a fashion which transcends simple raising of unstressed /e/ and /o/ to [i] and [u] (common in Papiamentu but also found in Portuguese and in some regional dialects of Spanish). Typical cases include *aña* < *año*, *biaha* < *viaje*, *caya* < *calle*, *siboyo* < *cebolla*, *staña* < *estaño*, *pañá* < *pañó*, *shinishi* < *ceniza*, *dede* < *dedo*, etc. (cf. Birmingham 1970: 25-6). Pretonic vowels were sometimes also drawn into the harmonizing process: *rospondé* < *responder*, *sosodé* < *suceder*. There is no indication of the chronology of this vowel harmony in the history of Papiamentu, whether it occurred only during the formative stage (when paragogic and epenthetic vowels were also occasionally added), or whether the tendency persisted as an active process in later stages of the language.

A comparative study of *bozal* Spanish from earlier time periods (16th-18th century), in Spain and Latin America, gives evidence of both vocalic epenthesis and occasional vowel harmony, typified by the frequent occurrence of *siñoro/siolo* < *señor* and *Dioso* < *Dios*. In the 19th century Caribbean, however, vocalic epenthesis rarely occurred; widespread elimination of syllable-final consonants created the appropriate syllabic structure (usually consisting of a single consonant+vowel combination) without recurring to additional vowels. In the 19th century *bozal* corpus from Cuba and Puerto Rico, however, there are several interesting instances of final vowel harmony which cannot be explained by unstressed vowel raising. This is in addition to the dozens of examples where final /o/ is raised to [u] and pretonic and postonic /e/ is raised to [i], creating configurations very similar to those of Papiamentu. Among the instances of possible vowel harmony gleaned from the Caribbean *bozal* corpus are:

bángama < *válgame* (C-35); *beye* < *bella* (C-10); *botelle* < *botella* (C-50); *buene* < *buena* (C-21); *bunite* < *bonito* (C-68); *caserite* < *cas(er)ita* (C-68); *clava* < *esclavo* (C-68); *cosito* < *cosita* (C-34); *cuele* < *cuela* (C-50); *cusitu* < *cosita* (C-15); *diaquelle* < *de aquella* (C-34); *dielle* < *de ella* (C-34); *dinele* < *dinero* (C-57); *dinera* < *dinero* (C-68); *entierre* < *entierro* (C-68); *Francisque* <

Francisco (C-68); *grese* < *iglesia* (C-29); *jierre* < *hierro* (C-68); *linde* < *linda* (C-68); *meme* < *mismo* (C-68); *tíguiri* < *tigre* (PR-2).

There are not enough examples to base a strong claim of Papiamento carryover, but the examples just cited all appear in texts in which other Papiamento-like elements occur. When added to the other features just enumerated, they strengthen the notion that direct contact with Papiamento played a role in shaping 19th century Cuban and Puerto Rican *bozal* speech.

(9) One final trait of many Cuban *bozal* texts also reminiscent of Papiamento is also worth mentioning, as it may help illustrate the type of influence which a well-developed creole might influence on the pidginized Spanish of newly-arrived African slaves. Papiamento is known for its creation of nouns from verbal stems through use of the suffix *-mento*, e.g. *papiamento* 'language, speaking' < *papiá* 'to speak,' etc. (Lenz 1927: 292-3; 1928). Similar forms are of course found in both Spanish and Portuguese, and indeed one or both of these languages provided the model for Papiamento itself. In the latter language, however, greater flexibility is found in creations with *-mento*, including many combinations not found in Spanish or Portuguese. Among *bozal* Spanish texts from 19th century Cuba a number of nouns in *-miento* are found which do not correspond to etymological Spanish items, and which are not to be found in *bozal* texts from other regions or time periods. These include:

alegramiento (C-40); *avisamienta* (C-34); *bautizamiento* (C-39); *butisamienta* (C-34); *cagamiento* (C-34); *calenturiamiento* (C-34); *chiflamienta* (C-26; C-33; C-34); *cumpañamiente* (C-34); *cuntentamiento/cuntentamienta* (C-34); *didicamienta* (C-34); *digutamiento* (C-34); *dormiento* (C-39); *gopiamiento* (C-34); *güisiamiento* (C-34); *imbrujulamiento* (C-34); *pidimienta* (C-34); *presiamienta/presiamiento/prisiamiento* (C-33; C-34); *pruvechamienta* (C-34); *relambimiento/rilambimienta* (C-33; C-50); *simprisionamiento* (C-34); *sincuntansiamiento* (C-34); *sofocamiento* (C-34); *soramienta/soramiento* (C-34; C-36); *titulamiento* (C-34); *trivimiento* (C-33)

13. A model for *bozal*-Papiamento linguistic contacts

The trustworthiness of the *bozal* texts analyzed above varies widely, although despite the wide range of motives which apparently prompted the works to be written, and the attitudes towards Africans displayed in the works, there is surprising homogeneity of linguistic details. Among the most accurate observations were those of the late Lydia Cabrera, who respected Afro-Cuban culture and whose abilities as a transcriber of other linguistic manifestations of Afro-Cubans enabled her to penetrate many subcodes used during the last century. Significantly, every one of the possible Papiamento traits enumerated above appear in Cabrera's extensive writings; hers are in fact the only texts in which all traits converge. Fernando Ortiz was another sympathetic and meticulous observer; although he did not offer extensive transcriptions of Afro-Hispanic language, the descriptions he did offer coincide with independently-documented Afro-Hispanic linguistic manifestations, and can be assigned a high degree of credibility. The aristocratic Emilio Bacardí Moreau was also an accurate and objective observer of *bozal* speech. Even such obviously burlesque work as the writings of 'Creto Gangá' reveal an almost complete coincidence with more objectively described Afro-Cuban language. A comparison of the texts in which Papiamento-like elements occur reveals a tendency for the clustering of two or more such features in each work. This provides a partial verification of the hypothesis that

direct transfer of Papiamento elements may have contributed to the development of Caribbean *bozal* Spanish.

The influence of Papiamento on Afro-Caribbean Spanish could never have been intense or dominant; otherwise the *bozal* corpus would reveal 'purer' instances of Papiamento instead of a scattering of isolated forms. Even the putatively Papiamento text from Puerto Rico shows few unmistakably Papiamento forms. The raising of final unstressed /o/ to [u], although typical of most Papiamento dialects, is not unknown in other Spanish dialects, and is found in *bozal* Spanish from 17th century Spain and in Latin American *bozal* language from the 17th-19th centuries. The same holds for the pronunciation of *de* as *di*, and of *gente* as *genti* (indeed, the Papiamento word is *hende*). Papiamento has *tur* 'all' corresponding to Spanish *todo*. In other *bozal* texts, flapping of intervocalic /d/ has given *turo* or *turu*. The word *tutur* in the 'Papiamento' text from Mayagüez may be a hybrid of Papiamento and Afro-Hispanic forms. *Julandés* does correspond to the Papiamento pronunciation (cf. Spanish *holandés*), although archaic aspiration of Spanish *h* is also common in *bozal* language. The text is very Hispanized, and was evidently produced by second- or third-generation speakers of Papiamento, or by a mixed group of Spanish- and Papiamento-speaking singers.

By the time of the *bozal* Cuban and Puerto Rican texts which contain the Papiamento-like forms, it can be assumed that few if any monolingual Papiamento speakers were to be found in these areas. The Papiamento forms surveyed above seeped into Caribbean *bozal* Spanish over as much as a century, presumably spurred by the linguistically privileged position which Papiamento-speaking slaves or free laborers would have in comparison with African-born *bozales*. The latter would speak only the barest rudiments of Spanish, and would be at the mercy of interpreters or commands presented in the simplest terms. Regardless of the possible existence of a Portuguese-based pidgin among earlier generations of African slaves, *bozales* brought to Cuba and Puerto Rico in the late 18th and early 19th centuries were usually whisked out of Africa by legal or illegal means. Few were held in Portuguese slaving stations such as São Tomé or Cape Verde where they would have acquired a Portuguese-based pidgin. In addition, by the 18th century the Portuguese primacy in the African slave trade to Spanish America had been superseded by British and Dutch entrepreneurs, in whose slaving empires there is no evidence of pidgin Portuguese. An African captive arriving in Cuba or Puerto Rico would then have to rely more heavily on intercommunication with speakers of the same African languages, an increasingly frequent phenomenon in the latter decades of the slave trade. A speaker of Papiamento, on the other hand, would experience fewer difficulties in understanding Spanish; some may have already been in contact with (Venezuelan) Spanish on Curaçao. This would give Curaçao natives an advantage in the slave communities which could well be translated into positions of relative authority and influence within slave groups in Cuba and Puerto Rico. *Bozal* Africans acquiring survival-level Spanish would most naturally turn to fellow laborers whose abilities in some variety of 'Spanish' were superior to their own; indeed in many instances this might provide the only contact with Spanish on a regular basis.

Since many Papiamento forms are so similar to Spanish as to attract little notice, it is impossible to determine the precise Papiamento contribution to Caribbean *bozal* Spanish. For example, although Papiamento has no nominal/adjectival inflection for gender, the variable appearance of noun-adjective agreement in *bozal* texts does not rule out Papiamento influence. *Bozal* speakers covered a wide range of fluency in Spanish, and while those in closest contact with Spanish might well acquire a partial concordance system, those whose contact with Spanish was minimal would develop the sort of haphazard and precarious agreement found among currently-existent Spanish pidgins and vestigial varieties.¹⁵ If a *bozal* Spanish speaker were to encounter Papiamento nouns and adjectives in which agreement was totally missing, this would not be noticed, since the 'basilectal' *bozal* pidgin speaker would not have an accurate standard of comparison. Thus a single speaker might learn some Spanish

words from native or near-native speakers, with correct or nearly correct Spanish agreement, and other words from Papiamentu speakers in which all agreement was absent. Only if a *bozal* speakers became totally fluent speakers in Papiamentu would all inflection be eliminated, and such individuals were obviously very few in number. Since all descriptions and imitations of *bozal* speech were written by native speakers of Spanish with no apparent knowledge of Papiamentu, the subtle differences between the variable concordance of *bozal* Spanish and the uniformly agreementless Papiamentu might escape notice.

Papiamentu elements would potentially be borrowed by *bozal* Spanish speakers in direct proportion to the structural similarity with (vernacular varieties of) Spanish. Thus, for example, verbal combinations based on *ta* + V_{inf} sound similar to those of vernacular Spanish in which *está* is reduced to *ta* (Lipski forthcoming, a). In modern Papiamentu, *ta* is sometimes followed by the Spanish gerund (thus converging with the Spanish progressive forms) instead of the usual uninflected stem derived from an earlier infinitive; if such alternation is not just the result of recent partial decreolization, but has always characterized Papiamentu, then *bozal* speakers would identify *ta* + INF and *ta* + GERUND constructions, using both as free variants. Both forms, as well as several intermediate varieties, are found among the texts of the Cuban *bozal* corpus.

In a similar vein, *awor/ahuora* vs. *ahora* and *awe/agüe* vs. *hoy* have identical function in Spanish and in Papiamentu/*bozal* speech, and a *bozal* speaker would not likely notice identify the forms as belong to two separate languages. Putative Papiamentu forms identified in *bozal* Caribbean texts are convergent with equivalent Spanish forms, in both syntax and general phonological shape. Papiamentu features which are not shared by Spanish are not attested in the *bozal* corpus. For example, the marking of nominal plurality by postposing of the third person plural pronoun (e.g. *homber* '[the] man' vs. *hombenan* '[the] men') is a process totally at odds with Spanish pluralizing strategies, and is not found in even the most creoloid *bozal* Spanish texts. Future/irrealis in Papiamentu is marked by *lo*, which is placed before subject pronouns (e.g. *lo mi bai* 'I will go'), and between a subject full NP and the verb (e.g. *Maria lo bai* 'Mary will go'). Although Papiamentu *lo* is plausibly derived from Spanish *luego*/Portuguese *lôgo*, this identification is lost in modern Papiamentu, and a *bozal* speaker would not likely notice this subtle and syntactically variable particle, which does not converge behaviorally with any single Spanish element. In *bozal* Spanish, future, when signalled at all, is based on the Spanish periphrastic construction with *ir*, usually via the form *va*. Papiamentu signals past/perfective with preverbal *a*, which structurally occupies the same position as Spanish auxiliary verbs. However in spoken Papiamentu, *a* frequently fuses with subject pronouns (e.g. *mi a vini* > *ma vini* 'I came'), so that its existence as a separate element is often obscured and would not likely be noticed by a *bozal* speaker. *Bozal* texts show no consistent signalling of past/perfective. Usually just an unconjugated verb is used, and occasionally a Spanish perfective or preterite form appears.

14. Summary

The preceding discussion is not intended as a total rejection of a possible creole origin of *bozal* Spanish in the Caribbean, but includes a call for caution in not underestimating the complexity of the ethnolinguistic environment in which Afro-Hispanic language evolved in the 19th century Caribbean. Written attestations of Afro-Hispanic language are varied and at times misleading, including accurate reproductions of *bozal* speech and humorous exaggerations. Basing claims of a previous creole basis on a small and non-representative sample of texts yields conclusions which suggest that a stable creole was once spoken in Cuba and Puerto Rico. The evidence surveyed above, however, points to a much different conclusion. Caribbean *bozal* Spanish always represented a pidginized version of regional

vernacular Spanish, with the latter varieties already characterized by considerable phonetic and morphological reduction. Superimposed on this common *bozal* language was an infusion of true Afro-Hispanic creole, in the form of Papiamentu structures used by laborers imported from Curaçao. The combination of historical demographics and textual attestations renders the possibility of fortuitous similarities extremely unlikely. The Papiamentu-like features found in the Cuban and Puerto Rican *bozal* corpus are not found in other Spanish-speaking regions, even in Afro-Hispanic language, and are not found in all Caribbean *bozal* texts. These features generally cluster in the *bozal* texts in which any one of them occurs. The time and place also coincide: creoloid Papiamentu-like features are found only in 19th century Cuban and Puerto Rican texts, precisely at the time when Papiamentu speakers were known to have been living in these two countries. The Papiamentu contribution may on occasion have been supplemented by calques from French Creole and even Negerhollands, given the documented presence of speakers of these languages in 19th century Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Bozal speakers in contact with Papiamentu may have used items from the latter language to extend their own pidginized Spanish, and in some cases a restructuring of *bozal* in the direction of a more Papiamentu-like creole may have occurred. In general, however, the creole influence on Caribbean Spanish appears to have been discrete, contributing words and occasional verbal combinations but never completely recasting the authentically local *bozal* dialects.

Also contributing to the notion that Caribbean *bozal* Spanish was a stable creole with Afro-Lusitanian roots were hybrid African-Spanish combinations, often involving a Spanish auxiliary verb such as *(es)tá* or *va* plus an unassimilated African element. The resulting configurations often bear a superficial similarity with Afro-Iberian creole PARTICLE+VERB constructions, but are better analyzed as code-switches or unassimilated borrowings. The same analysis, it has been suggested, can also be extended to *bozal* verbal combinations involving only Spanish elements, in which the `verb' is employed as an unanalyzed morpheme, combined with the rudiments of an auxiliary system, or used alone. The presence of `particle + verb' constructions in prominent *bozal* texts such as those of Lydia Cabrera has created the impression of a much more sophisticated and creole-like verbal system in Caribbean *bozal* Spanish than is warranted.

To further refine the hypotheses presented here, the search must be extended, to bring to light more *bozal* texts from Cuba and Puerto Rico, and also from Venezuela, where transplanted nuclei of Papiamentu speakers are known to have arisen. Much remains to be done before the reconstruction of Afro-Hispanic language in the Caribbean can be considered complete; the preceding remarks are offered as a contribution to the ongoing enterprise.

Notes

¹ Megenney (1985b) gives one example of a 17th century Afro-Mexican text in which Portuguese elements predominate. However, later *bozal* texts from Mexico contain only Spanish items.

² The word *nan*, in *nan gato*, is identical to the Papiamento plural marker and third person plural pronoun; Alvarez Nazario (1959, 1974: 167, 185-87) considers the use of *nan* in some Afro-Caribbean *bozal* texts as related to a possible common African substrate underlying both *bozal* Spanish and Papiamento. Wagner (1949: 158-9) comes to a similar conclusion with respect to the item *lan* used in Cuban *bozal* texts. In Papiamento, however, pluralization is marked by placing *nan* AFTER the noun to be pluralized; preposed *nan* has no function in this language. Moreover, in the example cited by Pichardo, it is likely that what is written as *nan* was actually a prenasalized stop on the following word: *como ngato* 'like [a] cat.' This process is well-documented for *bozal* language (Lipski 1992), as in the formation of generic comparatives by *como* + NOUN, where other Spanish varieties would prefer an indefinite article.

³ The 'article' *lan*, like *nan*, has been considered by Alvarez Nazario to reveal an African origin, possibly related to KiKongo or Kimbundu elements in the Gulf of Guinea Afro-Portuguese creoles. Alvarez Nazario (1974: 167, 185-197) postulates that the original form was *nan*, and that the change *nan* > *lan* took place through the influence of the definite article *la*. In Puerto Rican *bozal* Spanish, both *lan* and *nan* are found, but in Cuban texts, *lan* (with occasional variant *lon*) occurs almost exclusively. If the occurrence of *lan/nan* in Cuba and Puerto Rico stems from a common extraterritorial source, then the existence of both forms in Puerto Rico and the predominance of the former in Cuba would suggest an evolution *lan* > *nan*, initiated and only partially completed in Puerto Rico. The opposite development would be suggested only if it could be demonstrated that *lan/nan* was attested in Cuba significantly before appearing in Puerto Rico, having undergone the putative evolution *nan* > *lan* before the latter form was transferred to Cuba, via an as yet unattested route of linguistic transplantation. However, a comparative search of Afro-Hispanic texts from Spain and Latin America (Lipski forthcoming a) shows that *lan* occurs from the early 17th century on, both in Spain and in Spanish America, including Puerto Rico. The almost total restriction of *nan* to 19th century Puerto Rican texts thus suggests a route of evolution opposite to that suggested by Alvarez Nazario, namely *lan* > *nan*, if in fact the two items are related etymologically. Regardless of the relationship of *nan* and *lan*, the analysis proposed in Lipski (1987b, forthcoming a) views *lan* as merely an article followed by a prenasalized obstruent at the beginning of the next word. No Papiamento or other Afro-Iberian creole element is required in this equation.

⁴ Thus for example Granda (1972: 12) discloses that 'estaba a punto de abandonar mi búsqueda ... cuando el extraordinario libro *El monte*, de la gran investigadora Lydia Cabrera ... me proporcionó, al fin, los datos que ya desistía de conseguir. Cantos de carácter religioso y, sobre todo, trozos de conversaciones mantenidas por ancianos negros habaneros con la autora son transcritos por Lydia Cabrera con toda fidelidad y, sin lugar a dudas, ofrecen características lingüísticas criollas, aún más puras que los textos puertorriqueños ... en Cuba, todavía el habla criolla más auténtica y menos desnaturalizada ... era usada corrientemente, no hace aún veinte años, por las generaciones negras ancianas en la propia capital y de modo totalmente espontáneo y normal.'

⁵ Perl (1989b) explicitly defends the use of a few presumably authentic texts such as *El monte* and the exclusion of a larger literary corpus, including the Cuban 'teatro bufo' and many novels, stories and poems, given the tendency to exaggerate and stereotype in literature. Although this caution is no doubt warranted, not all observers are so pessimistic about the linguistic value of Afro-Cuban literary texts. Thus for example García et. al. (1981) and García González et al. (1984), echoing the sentiments of Leal (1975: 18), find considerable linguistic accuracy in the 'teatro bufo,' as regards *bozal* speech and in the other typical stereotypes portrayed in this comic drama.

⁶ The form *okuó* is probably a combination of the {3sg.} subject clitic *ó*, the stem *kú*, and the rhetorical final *-o*, common in spoken Yoruba.

⁷ This same process is observable, e.g. in *Ese otro yo me lo va yéun* 'I will eat that other one.' In Yoruba *jeun* is an intransitive verb meaning 'eat.' As such, it can never be combined with an object clitic or NP, as in the example cited by Cabrera. The transitive verb 'eat' is *je*; however in the Spanish-Yoruba hybrid, the longer intransitive form has been adopted. Alvarez Nazario (1974: 216) observes that 'negros criollos' (i.e. those born in Spanish America) are often unaware of the internal structure of borrowings from Yoruba and other African languages, and that 'los descendientes de los antiguos esclavos emplean en expresiones mixtas el español y el anagó [= Yoruba: JML]: "me voy pa(ra) el *inlé*" ...'

⁸ The pattern is similar to the constructions based on *hacer* + ENGLISH WORD, at times found in the Spanish of Mexican-Americans from California: *hacer fix* 'to fix,' *hacer type* 'to type,' etc. (cf. Reyes 1976).

⁹ The text in question comes from a pamphlet describing festive activities realized in the south of Puerto Rico in 1830, celebrating the birth of the heiress to the throne of Fernando VII, who would become Isabel II. Among the songs and dances described in the pamphlet is the following song, attributed to the 'mulatos holandeses que residían en el Sur' (Pasarell 1951: 124):

Tutur genti de Corsó
 Celebrado Rey Fernandu
 Mambatindu ha tambur
 Di contentu boy bailandu.
 Comparsa di Julandés
 Celebra a Reyna Cristina
 Nan Princesa naroyna
 Novo astro boy miré.

The language of the text, while clearly written in a type of 'jerga' (the term used by Pasarell), is not Papiamento, although bearing a number of resemblances to the latter language, as will be seen below. However, the attribution of this text to natives of Curaçao, and the references to Curaçao and its history in the song itself, suggest that some form of Papiamento was once to be found among the 'mulatos holandeses' residing in Puerto Rico.

¹⁰ A more contemporary example, from a poem published in 1947 (Rodríguez de Nolla (1947: 63; PR-8) is:

Año nuevo dandé, año *tabiní*

This latter example is reminiscent of Papiamento *ta bini*; *dandé* finds no ready explanation. Puerto Rican *bozal* texts provide no examples of undifferentiated third person programs or other creoloid features.

¹¹ There are other indications, however, that Papiamento was not widely known in 19th century Cuba, at least by that name. The attestations just mentioned come from the eastern end of the island, which was sparsely populated during most of the 19th century, and where cultural contact was very limited with Havana, the center for cultural diffusion and writing. Most educated Cubans of the time period were familiar primarily with life in urban areas, particularly Havana, and were not aware of the speech of peons on remote sugar plantations. Thus the Havana resident Bachiller y Morales (1883: 102- 3) noted that 'en mi dilatada vida, ni oí hablar del papiamento, ni hubiera conocido su existencia a no haber salido de Cuba' [in all my long life, I never heard of Papiamento, nor would I have learned of its existence if I had not left Cuba]. Since Bachiller y Morales' (1812-1889) period of observation would have begun just shortly after the visit of Bosch, this indicates that caution must be used in claiming widespread use of Papiamento in 19th century Cuba. A mitigating circumstance is that the term Papiamento was rarely used by outsiders to describe the speech of Curaçao; terms such as *español arañado* or *español degenerado* were more common.

¹² Birmingham (1970: 21) proposes that Pap. *awe* developed from Spanish *hoy* '... involving ... the breaking of a diphthong ... the Spanish diphthong [oj] is broken into two separate syllables [o] and [i], and further, that the [o] has opened to [a] and the [i] to [e]. The semiconsonant [w] is then produced to facilitate pronunciation. This process is not at all unlike the one that is observed in certain varieties of American English, particularly in the South, in which the word *boy* is pronounced ['bowI]. This may be a possible route of evolution, but unlike in the Southern dialects just mentioned, where breaking is generalized and not confined to specific lexical items, Papiamento *awe* is unique in the breaking of a Spanish diphthong. Ortiz (1924: 11) gives the form *agüé*, with the meaning 'ahora.' Dihigo (1928) refers to this item as a 'forma adverbial que lleva en sí la característica del habla vulgar en boca de la clase de color,' proposing a step-by-step evolution from *ahora*. In nearly all the examples in which the form occurs, however, it is possible to substitute *hoy*, especially since at the vernacular level in many Spanish-speaking regions (particularly in Central America), *hoy* is used in the general sense of 'now.' Ortiz (1924: 11) glosses *ahuoy* as 'hoy,' suggesting the influence of Congo (i.e. KiKongo) *guau* or *oguai* 'now.' In Palenquero, the word for 'today' is also *agüé*, a fact which reinforces theories which link these two creoles to an earlier common source. Schwegler (1989: 17), rejecting earlier claims of an African etymology for *agüé*, correctly recognizes the word as of Ibero-Romance origin, and cites the variant *güe* in Asturian-Leonese, as well as Ortiz' mention of Cuban Spanish. In Cuba, however, this word was exclusively found in Afro-Hispanic speech, usually among *bozales* but sometimes extending to native-born Afro-Cubans. In the case of Caribbean *bozal* Spanish, the influence of archaic dialectal forms from the Iberian Peninsula is quite unlikely, while direct transfer from Papiamento is a more plausible explanation.

¹³ Birmingham (1970: 29) suggests an alternative variant **aguora* for the Portuguese/Old Spanish *agora*. Maduro (1960: 11) cites the Murcia variant *agua* [awa] 'now' in connection with Papiamento *awor*, although without explicitly claiming the former word as an etymon. Ortiz (1924: 12)

suggests KiKongo *guau/oguu* 'now' as a possible contributing factor. The variant *aguola* (exhibiting intervocalic shift of /r/ > [l], typical of Afro-Hispanic pidgin) is also attested among Afro-Cubans (Ortiz 1924: 12; Dihigo 1928).

¹⁴ At least one example of the latter type of speaker also appears in the *bozal* corpus, in the story 'Los chinos' by Alfonso Hernández Catá (C-46). In these short fragments, use of *mí* as subject pronoun is also found:

mí no importar guardias. *mí* tener un machete y mater todos de noche, igual que en matadero.
mí saber bien.

The use of *mí* in this case could indicate an initial contact with Papiamentu, an acquaintance with an Afro-Lusitanian creole, or a carryover from West African Pidgin English. By the 19th century, the Portuguese contribution to the Cuban slave market was minimal, and there is no evidence of arrivals, e.g. from São Tomé, but rather directly from the African mainland, or via other Caribbean islands such as Curaçao and St. Eustatius. On the other hand, the transfer of West African Pidgin English forms to 19th century Cuban *bozal* Spanish has been well-documented, e.g. by Ortiz (1916) (cf. also García 1973: 350), so yet another source of creoloid structures in Caribbean *bozal* Spanish might be postulated.

¹⁵ Such a situation appears to have obtained in Cape Verde, where vestiges of Portuguese agreement are found, whether through more recent decreolization or as long-standing traces of the original Portuguese system. The same holds for Palenquero, where Spanish-like agreement on some elements may suggest recent re-borrowings from Spanish or a trait which has carried over from the earliest stages.

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Appendix 1: List of Cuban *bozal* texts

Acosta-Rubio, Raúl (1976). *Quiquiribú Mandinga (se lo llevó el diablo)* {C-1}

Anon.

- `Cantar para matar culebras' (Guirao 1938) {C-2}
- `Canto congo de cabildo' (Guirao 1938) {C-3}
- `Canto de comparsa ta Julia' (Guirao 1938) {C-4}
- `Canto funeral' (Guirao 1938) {C-5}
- `Cantos de cabildo' (Guirao 1938) {C-6}
- `Diálogo' (Guirao 1938) {C-7}
- `Papelito "habla" lengua' (De la Iglesia n.d.: 76) {C-8}
- `Villancico' (Ballagas 1946: 92) {C-9}
- `Yo bota lan garafo' (Guirao 1938) {C-10}

Bacardí Moreau, Emilio

- Doña Guiomar* {C-11}
- Filigrana* {C-12}
- Vía Crucis* {C-13}

Barnet, Miguel (1966). *Biografía de un cimarrón* {C-14}

Benítez del Cristo, Ignacio (1930). `Los novios catedráticos' {C-15}

Berenguer y Sed, Antonio (1929). *Tradiciones villaclareñas* {C-16}

Cabrera, Lydia

- Anaforuana* (Cabrera 1975) {C-17}
- Ayapa, cuentos de jicotea* (Cabrera 1971) {C-18}
- Cuentos negros de Cuba* [1936] (Cabrera 1989) {C-19}
- El monte* (Cabrera 1985) {C-20}
- Francisco y Francisca (chascarrillos de negros viejos)* (Cabrera 1976) {C-21}
- La sociedad secreta Abakuá, narrada por viejos adeptos* (Cabrera 1970b) {C-22}
- Los animales en el folklore y la magia de Cuba* (Cabrera 1989) {C-23}
- Por qué, cuentos negros de Cuba* (Cabrera 1972) {C-24}
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