THE DIFFUSION OF ATLANTIC ENGLISH-LEXIFIER CREOLES: EVIDENCE FROM BELIZEAN CREOLE

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Abstract: The paper analyzes the attestations in Belizean Creole of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier contact languages proposed by Baker and Huber (2001). It compares the distribution of these features in Belizean Creole and the seven Atlantic English-lexifier pidgins and creoles considered by Baker and Huber (2001). The features identified serve for quantitative measures of the affinity between Belizean Creole and two varieties, Jamaican and Miskito Coast Creole, which contributed to its emergence. A number of selected diagnostic features found in Belizean Creole are also discussed.

Keywords: English-lexifier creoles, Belizean Creole, diagnostic features, origin, classification

1. Introduction

With the exception of Jamaican, most Western Caribbean English-lexifier creoles are relatively under researched. In the case of Belizean Creole, with which this paper is concerned, work on synchronic data is mainly limited to van Valkenburg (1977), Hellinger (1973, 1979), Dayley (1979), Hancock's (1987) comparative analysis of a number of syntactic features on the basis of 50 sentences and phrases in 33 Atalantic English-lexifier creoles, and Decker (2009). Holm (1978) includes data from Belizean Creole in his lexicon of Miskito Coast Creole[1]. More recently, Bartens and Farhuharson (2012) address diachronic issues as well in their study of the distribution of lexical Africanisms in six Western Caribbean English-lexifier varieties, including Belizean Creole[2].

This paper presents the attestations in Belizean Creole of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier contact languages proposed by Baker and Huber (2001). It compares the distribution of these features in Belizean Creole and other Atlantic English-lexifier Pidgins and Creoles. It then evaluates the relevance of the diagnostic features attested in Belizean Creole to establishing historical-linguistic relationships with two English-lexifier creoles believed to have contributed to its emergence. Finally, a number of selected features are also discussed.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the corpus and the methodology used in compiling the list of first attestations in Belizean Creole of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier pidgins and creoles proposed by Baker and Huber (2001). Section 3 includes the list of the first attestations in Belizean Creole of these diagnostic features. Section 4 compares the distribution of diagnostic features in Belizean Creole and in the seven Atlantic English-lexifier pidgins and creoles considered by Baker and Huber (2001). Section 5 is concerned with the affinities between Belizean Creole and

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[1] Also known as Miskito Coast Creole English (Holm 1978, 1989) or Nicaraguan Creole English (Bartens and Farquharson 2012).

[2] The other five are Bahamian, Jamaican, Limón Creole, Miskito Coast Creole, San Andrés Creole, and Providence Creole.

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two English-lexifier varieties, Jamaican and Miskito Coast Creole, which contributed to its formation. Section 6 discusses a number of selected diagnostic features recorded in Belizean Creoles. Section 7 summarizes the findings.

2. Data and methodology

The corpus of Belizean Creole consists mainly of: historical and descriptive accounts of British Honduras (Henderson 1811, Morris 1883, Robertson Gibbs 1883, Donohue 1946), memoirs (Forbes 1914); collections of folklore (Metzgen and Cain 1925, Ricketson jr. 1935, Beck 1980, Young 1980, Beck 1983); stories (Escure 1983, Anon. 1997, Anon. 1999, Anon. 2003, Anon. 2005, Glock 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d, 2005f); religious literature (*Lord's Prayer* 1974, *Di Nyoo Testiment eena Bileez Kriol*); grammars (van Valkenburg 1977, Dayley 1979, Decker 2009); general descriptions of the language (McKesey 1974); glossaries and dictionaries (Allsopp 1996, Crosbie et al. 2009, Wiwords the Caribbean Dictionary n.d.). Additional sources are indicated for the individual entries in the list of first attestations of diagnostic features.

For the purposes of the present paper, diagnostic features are "significant phonological, lexical, or grammatical deviations from, or innovations to, varieties of British English – since British English was the major input in the restructuring process" (Baker and Huber 2001: 163). The 302 diagnostic features suggested by Baker and Huber (2001: 197-204) are divided into three groups: Atlantic (173), world-wide (75), and Pacific (54). Atlantic features are recorded in at least two Atlantic English-lexifier pidgins and creoles. World-wide features are attested in at least one Atlantic and one Pacific variety. Pacific features are only found in Pacific varieties. The approach adopted here is not limited to synchronic attestations, but it takes into account features recorded at any time in the history of Belizean Creole, although not all of these remain in use. One advantage of this approach is that it can contribute to establishing the historical links between Belizean Creole and other English-lexifier pidgins and creoles. Another advantage is that making use of Baker and Huber's (2001) list of diagnostic features, the distribution of which is illustrated in seven Atlantic and six Pacific varieties, ensures comparability of their data with those on Belizean Creole.

For ease of reference, each diagnostic feature is numbered and labeled and/or defined as in Baker and Huber (2001: 197-204). In the case of a number of items found in published works, there are discrepancies between the year of the first attestation and the year of publication of the source. The date of the first attestation of some of these items corresponds to the year when the author is known to have been in Antigua. For others, it corresponds to a year explicitly mentioned by the author. The entry for each feature includes the date of the first attestation and the relevant reference. When an exact year cannot be established, the system used by Baker and Huber (2001: 164-165) has been adopted: a year preceded by a hyphen reads 'in or before'. The year of full attestations, i.e. of well-established features, is unbracketed, while that of a marginal feature is given in square brackets. Attestations are scored as follows: a full attestation is scored 1, whereas a marginal one receives a score of 0.5.Variants are also listed, if they are

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suggestive of different pronunciations or if they illustrate different uses/meanings. Some entries also include later attestations to illustrate the use of particular features. The sources are mentioned between round brackets. All examples appear in the orthography or system of transcription used in the sources. The length of quotations has been kept to a reasonable minimum. Relevant items in quotations are in bold characters. All quotations are accompanied by their translation.

3. First attestations in Belizean Creole

The following is the list of diagnostic features found in Belizean Creole:

3. *aki* (fruit/tree)
   akee 1883 (Morris 1883: 113)
7. *Anancy* (folktale character)
   Anansi *stuorii* 1966 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 104)
   'Anansi story'
   brada ***hanansi*** 1966 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 104)
   'Brother Anansi'
   nansi *stori* 1966 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 106)
   'Anansi story'
   Hanaasi 1980 (Young 1980: 13)
   Hanasse 1985 (Hellinger 1985: 174)
   Anaansi/Hanaansi 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 28)
8. *bad mouth* 'speak ill of, curse'
   Noh kay humoch Mayri ***bad-mowt*** *Betsi* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 37)
   'No matter how much Mary speaks ill of Betsy'
9. *bakra* 'European, white person'
   Buckras 'white men' 1883 (Robertson Gibbs 1883: 1)
10. *bang* 'hit (as punishment)'
    ih wahn ***bang*** *mi gud* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 41)
    'he'll really beat me'
13. *bateau* 'boat'
    bateau 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 84)
15. *big eye* 'greed(y)'
    big eye 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 99)
22. *bra* 'brother'
    *i se...****bra*** 1966 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 104)
    '"Bro…" he said'
    Bre *Tayga* (Escure 1983: 46)
    'Brother Tiger'
    Braa 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 62)
23. *bubby* 'woman's breast'
    bobi 'large breast' 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 58)
27. *calaloo* 'a rich soup or stew'
    kalalu 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 172)
29. *chigger* 'chigoe'
    laik yu ga ***chiga*** *eena yu* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 74)
    'as if you had chiggers'
30. *copper* 'money'
    Yu kyaahn bai notn fi ***kapa*** 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 176)
    'You can't buy anything for a penny'

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31. *crapaud* ‘frog’
crapaud 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 175)
32. *cunny* ‘stealth, cunning, cleverness’
kóni 1978 (Holm 1978: 25)
34. *da*, *de* (progressive)
*Fool **di** talk* 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
‘A fool is talking’
37. *de*, *da*, *na*, *a* (equative copula)
*Fus laugh **da** no laugh*. 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
Lit. ‘The first laugh is not a laugh’
*den **a** jos wan nyuusans* 1966 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 105)
‘they are just an annoyance’
38. *de* (locative copula)
*wey weak fence **dey*** 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
‘where the weak fence is’
39. *dead house* ‘mortuary’
ded hows 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 86)
40. *dem* (article, demonstrative)
***Dem** Indian men no be long now* -1798 (Forbes 1914: 71)
‘Those Indian men won’t be long now’
41. postposed *dem* (nominal plural)
*jentilman hu had waif **ðem*** 1970 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 106)
‘the gentlemen who had wives’
42. preposed *dem* (nominal plural)
***dɛm** pɔkɛt* 1987 (Hancock 1987: 305)
‘pockets’
43. *dem* (3PL POSS)
*wid **dehn** ban an music* 1974 (McKesey 1974: 95)
‘with their band and music’
45. *dokunu*/*dukna* (kind of starchy food)
['dɒkʊnʊ] 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 198)
dukunu n.d. (BKMD)
*di kaan eena di **dukunu*** 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 95)
‘the corn in the dukunu’
47. *done* VERB (completive)
*til you **done cross** da ribber* 1950 (Anderson 1958: 99)
‘until you have crossed the river’
48. *doormouth* ‘threshold’
*bai dehn **doa mowt*** 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 92)
‘in their doorway’
49. *dohti* ‘earth, dirt’
***dutty** get slippery* 1980 (Young 1980: 13)
‘the earth gets slippery’
50. *dry eye* ‘boldness’
jrai aiy ‘barefaced, brazenness, nerve, shamelessness’ 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 164)
51. *duppy* ‘zombie’
duppy 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 207)
55. *eyewater* ‘tear’
*Save you **eye-water** for when you ma ded*. 1980 (Young 1980: 21)
‘Save your tears for when your mother dies’.
58. *for* PRON NP (genitive)
***Fe you coco** roas*. 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
‘Your tuber is roasted.’
Fɪ dɛm kaa 1987 (Hancock 1987: 291)
‘their car’

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59. *for* VERB (modal)
*Whey **fe happen** affu happen*. 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
'What must happen has to happen.'
60. *for true* 'truly'
*you 'trike him good **for true*** -1798 (Forbes 1914: 33)
'you struck him really hard'
fu true 'in truth' 1997 (*BKGSG*: 42)
*di man mi did gaan eena di laydi haws **fi chroo***. 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 80)
'the man really did go into the lady's house.'
61. *fufu* (starch food, boiled and pounded)
*Good soup neber meet good **fufoo***. 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
'A good soup never meets a good fufu.'
62. *fullup* 'fill, be-full'
***ful op** di kantayna dehn wid wasta* 2012 (*NT* 2012: 236)
'fill this container with water'
*Dehn haat **ful op** wid aal kaina wikidnis* 2012 (*NT* 2012: 380)
'Their heart is full of all kinds wickedness'
63. *fum* 'beat'
fum-fum 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 247)
65. *goatmouth* 'a Cassandra'
*to have **goat-mout*** 'to bring bad luck to whatever one talks about' 1980 (Young 1980: 21)
*Yu put **goat mowt** pahn mi* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 126)
'You said that about me'
67. *gumbay* 'drum'
*Barra **gumbo** neber play till day-light.* 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
Lit. 'A borrowed drum never plays till dawn.'
goombeh 1980 (Young 1980: 1)
69. *honi* 'bee'
*loakos ahn wail **honi*** 2012 (*NT* 2012: 6)
'locusts and wild bees'
70. *how come* 'why' etc.
***How kom** dehn seh* 2012 (*NT* 2012: 214)
'Why did they say'
71. *hungry* 'hunger, *starvation*'
*Pipl mi-di ded fi **hongri*** 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 214)
'People were dying of hunger'
72. *ina, na* (locative preposition)
***ena** same road* 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
'on the same road'
***inna** di ashes* 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
'in the ashes'
73. *Irish potato* 'potato'
áirish pitiéta 'white potato' 1978 (Holm 1978: 1)
76. *john crow* (bird sp.)
*"**John Crow**" (vulture)* -1798 (Forbes 1914: 58)
jancrow 'carrion crow' 1980 (Young 1980: 1)
jranko 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 164)
77. *jook* 'pierce, stab' etc.
jook 1965 (Allsopp 1996: 316)
juk 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 168)
79. *jumbee* 'malevolent spirit, zombie'
jumbie 'spirit' 1980 (Young 1980: 31)
81. k/g palatalized before /a/
kyaan tel yu 1966 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 105)
'I can't tell you'
***gy**ardin* 'garden' -1798 (Forbes 1914: 216)

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84. *kaka* ‘shit, excrement’
caca ‘shit’ 1980 (Young 1980: 26)
86. *kasada* ‘cassava’
cassada 1883 (Morris 1883: 114)
87. *kata* ‘head-pad’
*if yu put wahn **kata** anda it* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 177)
‘if you put a pad under it’
89. *kiba* ‘cover’
*all y hayr **kibba** y face* 1974 (McKesey 1974: 91)
91. *kokobe* ‘leper, leprosy’
cacaobay ‘a local leprous affection’ 1883 (Robertson Gibbs 1883: 181)
94. *kunumunu* ‘stupid person’
kunu'munu (Hellinger 1973: 134)
98. *maga* ‘thin’
*Tiger **mauger*** 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
‘The tiger is thin’
*dehn mi **maaga*** 1980 (Beck 1980: 433)
‘they were thin’
maager dog 1980 (Young 1980: 17)
‘meagre dog’
99. *magass* ‘crushed cane’
bagash ‘sugar cane byproduct, used as a fertilizer’ 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 37)
100. *married* ‘marry’
*Wai yu noh **marid** da gyal* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 225)
‘Why don’t you marry that girl’
104. *me one* ‘just me’
*Fu me turkey da fu **me one*** 1974 (McKesey 1974: 76)
‘My sweetheart belongs only to me’
107. *mouth water* ‘saliva’
*Mi **mowt waata** staat tu ron* 2009 (Crosbie et al 2009: 236)
‘My mouth started to water’
109. *nasey* ‘nasty’
*Bever Dam da wan **nasi** place* 1946 (Donohue 1946: 69)
‘Bever Dam is a nasty place’
111. *nose hole* ‘nostril’
*Di baybi **noaz hoal*** 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 244)
‘The baby’s nostrils’
112. NP1 *for* NP2 (possessive N2’s N1)
*Unu da laik **salt fi dis werl*** 2012 (*NT* 2012: 10)
‘You are the salt of the earth’
114. *nufnuf* ‘many, plenty of’
nof nof ‘abundance’ 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 383)
115. *nyam* ‘eat; food’
*Dawg no **nyam** dawg*. 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
‘A dog will not eat a dog.’
120. *obeah* ‘kind of magic’
***Obeah** art* 1883 (Robertson Gibbs 1883: 173)
122. *pantap* ‘on’
*an payl dem **pan ap** a dem myul bak* 1978 (Escure 1983: 34)
‘and pile them on the back of their mule’
123. *pass* (serialized comparative)
pass 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 432)
*Da fish don **paas** faiv pong lang taim*. 2013 (Decker 2013: 52)
‘The fish was much more than five pounds.’

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127. *pikni* 'small; child, offspring'
picney 1883 (Robertson Gibbs 1883: 172)
128. *pinda* 'peanut'
***pindar**-nuts* 1883 (Morris 1883: 110)
pinda 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 266)
129. *(make) play* '(to have a) party, dance, amusement'
*laydiz **play** eena […] minischri* 2012 (*NT* 2012: 141)
'ladies have a party in [a] monastery'
131. *polly* 'parrot'
*ðis **pali** se* 1970 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 110)
'this parrot said'
132. *potapota* 'mud; muddy' (Bartens and Farquharson 2012: 184)
poto-poto 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 451)
133. *rata* 'rat'
rata 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 285)
134. *rockstone* 'stone'
rock (s)tone 1883 (Robertson Gibbs 1883: 172)
raktone 1980 (Young 1980: 1)
rakstoan 2009 (Crosie et al. 2009: 283)
135. *(for) sake (of)* 'because'
***seek a** intafearing* 1970 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 112)
'because of interfering'
***sayk a** kyaahn kip yu mowt shet* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 301)
'because you can't keep your mouth shut'
*beks **fi sayka** dehn* 2012 (*NT* 2012: 468)
'angry because of them'
137 *santapi* 'centipede'
*Wen **santapi** stin yu* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 300)
'When you are stung by a centipede'
139. *say* (complementizer)
*a tel unu **se** breda taiga no ded* 1966 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1966: 106)
'I tell you brother Tiger is not dead'
140. *self* 'even'; (emphasis)'
*ɪm av a nɛks aas **sɛlf*** 1987 (Hancock 1987: 320)
'He even had another horse'
143. *soso* 'only'
*a mɛ de **soso** taak* 1987 (Hancock 1987: 322)
'I was merely chatting'
*dehn gi wi **soaso** waata* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 326)
'They gave us only water'
144. *so te(l)* 'until; a long time'
*nebba caal halligetta big mout **sotay** you done crass di riba* 1974 (McKesey 1974: 103)
'Never call an alligator 'big mouth' until you have crossed the river.'
*mi mɛ so ɔŋgri **swo tɛl** mi mɛ waan dɛd* 1987 (Hancock 1987: 319)
'I was so hungry, I almost died'
146. *strong ears*/*hard ears* 'stubbornness'
aze-haad 1980 (Young 1980: 5)
***hard-ears**/ears-hard* 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 284)
147. *sweet* 'tasty; please (v.)'
*Da joak […] **sweet** mee* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 340)
'That joke made me laugh.'
148. *sweetmouth* 'flattery'
*shee ga **sweet mowt*** 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 340)
'she has a flattering mouth'

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149. *Takoma* ‘Anansi’s son’
Hatakuma 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 144)
150. *tan lek* ‘be like, resemble’
*Dis ya time no **tan laka** before’ time*. 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
‘This time is not like former times.’
*Dɛm no **stan laɪk** dat* 1987 (Hancock 1987: 287)
‘They’re not like that’
151. *tata* ‘father’
tata ‘Father; term of affection or respect for an elderly person’ 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 549)
152. *tief* ‘steal’
*‘e **tief** piece* 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
‘he steals a piece’
156. *tother, tara* ‘other’
*John live **tara** side the canal* 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 548)
‘John lives on the other side of the canal’
158. *ugly* ‘evil’
*God no like **ugly***. 1980 (Young 1980: 30)
‘God doesn’t like evil.’
***oagli** / woagli* ‘evil’ 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 247)
160. *unu* (2PL)
***unu** piipl* 1966 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1966: 105)
‘you people’
161. *vex* ‘be-angry’
*i pa get op **beks*** 1970 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 109)
‘Her pa got up, vexed’
*And no **vex** with we* 1974 (Lord’s Prayer)
Lit. ‘And do not be angry with us’
162. *wari* (African board game)
warree 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 589)
164. *we* (1PL POSS)
*make **we** belly full* 1974 (Lord’s Prayer)
Lit. ‘fill our belly’
165. *we* (1PL OBL)
*Night catch **we*** -1798 (Forbes 1914: 64)
‘Night caught us’
166. WH *make* ‘why’
***Weh mek** you mout so long?* 1980 (Young 1980: 16)
‘Why is your mouth so long?’
169. *woodslave* (lizard sp.)
wood-slave 1806 (Henderson 1811: 153)
172. *yai* ‘eye’
yaiy 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 172)
173. *yerri* ‘hear’
*You **yerri** Bellona blow?* 1976 (Beck 1983: 54)
‘Did you hear Bellona blow?’
174. *all about* ‘everywhere’
*Ah saach **aal bowt** fi mi kee* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 296)
‘I searched everywhere for my keys’
177. *be* (predicative copula)
*dey **be** mos’ goos as free* [-1798] (Forbes 1914: 157)
‘they are almost as good as free’
179. *before time* ‘formerly’
*Dis ya time no tan laka **before’ time***. 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
‘This time is not like former times.’

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180. *born* 'give birth'
fi di uman ***baan*** *ih baybi* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 34)
'for the woman to have her baby'
181. *bruck* 'break'
me ***bruk*** *rockstone* 1957 (Beck 1983: 44)
'I break stone'
Big wo'd no ***brok*** *man jaw-bone* 1980 (Young 1980: 15)
'Big words don't break a man's jaw'
182. *byandby* (adv.) 'soon'
I come back to 'dis place for true, ***by and by*** -1798 (Forbes 1914: 215)
'I'll really come back to this place soon'
Sayv it fu ***bumbai***. 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 69)
'Save it for later.'
bam-bye 'presently, soon' 2013 (Decker 2013: 57)
186. *da(t)* (definite article)
til you done cross ***da*** *ribber* 1950 (Anderson 1958: 99)
'until you have crossed the river'
187. *dead* 'die'
ii noa ðat ii weng ***ded*** 1966 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 105)
'he knows that he will die'
188. *dem* (3PL)
Dehn *di fight fi bigger potato* 1932 (Beck 1983: 50)
'They are fighting for the bigger potato'
deng *gaan chap ði planteej* 1966 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 104)
'they went to clear the scrub'
ðem *gaan aal roung* 1970 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 106)
'they went all around'
189. *falldown* 'fall' (reanalysis)
fall down *ina temptation* 1974 (Lord's Prayer)
'fall into temptation'
faal dong 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 408)
192. *for* (infinitive)
me no know ***for*** *talk* -1798 (Forbes 1914: 45)
'I don't know how to speak'
Dawg hab liberty ***fi*** *watch gubnor*. 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
'A dog has liberty to look at a governor.'
Wen man got natt'n ***fo*** *do* 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
'When a man has nothing to do'
193. *go* (future)
we ***go*** *beat dem 'paniar man* -1798 (Forbes 1914: 70)
'we will beat those Spaniards'
194. *got* 'have'
You ***got*** *more gall than iguana* ***got!*** 1924 (Ricketson jr. 1935: 286)
'You have more gall than an iguana has'
Dadi noh ***ga*** *no moni fi bai mi buk dehn*. 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 129)
'Daddy doesn't have any money to buy my books.'
Humoch aklak yu ***gat***? 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 26)
'What time is it?'
196. *he* (resumptive)
Jaaji ***hihn*** *ga big akonk da bank* 2014 (Salmon 2014: 91)
'That Georgie has a big bank account'
197. *he* (3SG OBL)
wid ***he*** -1798 (Forbes 1914: 157)
'with him'

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198. *he* (3SG POSS)
*No nigger […] wink **'e** eye* -1798 (Forbes 1914: 74)
'No Black will wink his eye'
199. *him* (3SG POSS)
***um** picney white* 1883 (Robertson Gibbs 1883: 172)
'his child is white'
200. *him* (3SG)
***Hihn** noa evriting!* 2012 (*NT* 2012: 646)
'He knows everything'
202. *lili* 'little'
***Lili** hatchet* 1950 (Anderson 1958: 99)
'the small hatchet'
203. *little bit* 'slightly'
*Ah di boas **lee bit** tu moch* 2012 (*NT* 2012: 465)
'I boasted slightly too much'
205. *make* (causative/imperative)
*No **make** I [let me] beat you up?* 1980 (Beck 1980: 433)
'won't you let me beat you up?'
206. *make haste* 'hurry'
mi'ke:s 'hurry up' 1973 (Hellinger 1973: 132)
207. *-man* (agentive suffix)
*hunts**man*** 'hunter' 1806 (Henderson 1811: 57)
208. *me* (1SG)
***me** nevar see* -1798 (Forbes 2014: 23)
'I have never seen'
209. *me* (1SG POSS)
*cussin **me** daddy* 1883 (Robertson Gibbs 1883: 171)
'cursing my father'
211. *more better* 'better'
*unu **moa beta** dan sohnbadi els* 2012 (*NT* 2012: 492)
'you are better than somebody else'
212. *most* 'almost'
*dey **mos'** same as Maas Steve* -1798 (Forbes 1914: 79)
'they are almost like Master Steve'
213. NP1 NP2 (possessive N1' N2)
riber-bottom 1924 (Ricketson jr. 1935: 285)
'the bottom of the river'
214. *never* (negative-completive)
*i **nɛva** sɪŋ arɛdi* 1987 (Hancock 1987: 303)
'She hasn't (already) sung'
neba 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 214)
215. *no* (negator)
*me **no** know for talk* -1798 (Forbes 1914: 45)
'I don't know how to speak'
218. *one* (indfinite article)
*Bever Dam da **wan** nasi place* 1946 (Donoue 1946: 69)
'Bever Dam is a nasty place'
219. *one time* '(at) once'
*I go swinge dem out **one time*** -1798 (Forbes 1914: 124)
'I'll swing them out at once'
*wi mi de luk fu rowp **wan taim*** 1978 (Escure 1983: 34)
'we were looking for rope once'
221. *piccaninny* 'small; child'
*Every John-crow believe his own **pickaninny** white*. 1924 (Ricketson jr. 1935: 285)
'Every vulture believes its own offspring is white.'

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222. *plenty* NOUN 'a lot of'
*Ih teech wi **plenty** moa **ting*** 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 269)
'He taught us many more things'
***plenty blod** kohn fahn owta da palys* 2012 (*NT* 2012: 659)
'a lot of blood came from out of the place'
223. *plenty* (postverbal) 'a lot'
*I talk **plenty*** 1980 (Beck 1980: 429)
'I talk a lot'
226. *-side* (locative suffix)
*gens ðis benk**said*** 1970 (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 107)
'against this bank of the river'
227. *sitdown* 'sit, reside'(reanalysis)
*ahn help ahn fi **sidong** op* 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 316)
'and help her to sit up'
229. *standup* 'stand' (reanalysis)
*Empty crocus-bag kyaa(n't) **'tan up*** 1980 (Young 1980: 3-4)
'Empty sacks can't stand upright'
*Dehn mi stil di **stan op** said a di hows*. 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 335)
'They were still standing beside the house.'
234. *throwaway* 'throw' (reanalysis)
*Wi gaahn **chro weh** gyaabij op di road*. 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 79)
'We went up te road to dispose of the garbage.'
236. ADJ/VERB *too much* 'a lot'
*he luve him […] **too much*** [-1798] (Forbes 1914: 68)
'he loves him […] a lot'
239. *walkabout* 'wander'
*goh **waak bowt** Sondeh eevnin*. 2009 (Crosbie et al. 2009: 361)
'to make the rounds on Sunday evening.'
240. *we* (relativizer)
*No ebery thin **wey** got sugar sweet*. 1925 (Metzgen and Cain 1925)
'Not everything which has got sugar is sweet.'
244. WH *side* 'where'
wich said 'where?' 1978 (Holm 1978: 52)
246. WH time 'when'
wen taim 'when?' 1978 (Holm 1978: 51)
248. ZERO (predicative copula)
um picney white 1883 (Robertson Gibbs 1883: 172)
'his child is white'
275. *look out* 'take care of'
*Unu mos **luk owt** fi wan anada* 2012 (*NT* 2012: 503)
'You must take care of one another'

The total number of diagnostic features recorded in Belizean Creole thus amounts to 141. Of these, the following 15 features are not listed in Crosbie et al. (2009): 13. *bateau* 'boat'; 31. *crapaud* 'frog'; 15. *big eye* 'greed(y); 32. *cunny* 'stealth, cunning, cleverness'; 49. *dohti* 'earth, dirt'; 51. *duppy* 'zombie'; 63. *fum* 'beat'; 69. *honi* 'bee'; 73. *Irish potato* 'potato'; 79. *jumbee* 'malevolent spirit, zombie'; 91. *kokobe* 'leper, leprosy'; 132. *potapota* 'mud; muddy'; 151. *tata* 'father'; 162. *wari* (African board game); 221. *piccaninny* 'small; child'.

A brief comment is in order with respect to the attestations that predate 1900. According to Baker and Huber (2001: 159), the discovery of such attestations "minimizes the effect of later, non-diffusionist cross-influences" between the Atlantic English Creoles

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"e.g. through the media, modern communication or increased mobility in the 20th century". As seen above, although the first records of Belizean Creole date from as early as -1798, only 29 (i.e. 20.5%) out of the 141 diagnostic features found in Belizean Creole are first recorded before 1900. This is a consequence of the fact that attestations of Belizean Creole are found in only four pre-1900 sources (see Henderson 1811, Morris 1883, Robertson Gibbs 1883, and Forbes 1914).

Note, however, that, in spite of the paucity of early records of Belizean Creole, two Atlantic features are, based on current evidence, first attested in this variety. The diagnostic features at issue are 76. *john crow* (bird sp.) and 81. k/g palatalized before /a/, both first recorded in -1798.

A number of diagnostic found in Belizean Creole must have been in use considerably earlier than the date of their first attestations. This is, for instance, the case of the African-derived lexical items. Out of a total of 19, only 3 have pre-1900 attestations. The remaining 16 are all first recorded after 1925: 7. *Anancy* (folktale character); 45. *dokunu*/*dukna* (kind of starchy food); 49. *dohti* 'earth, dirt'; 51. *duppy* 'zombie'; 61. *fufu* (starch food, boiled and pounded); 63. *fum* 'beat'; 67. *gumbay* 'drum'; 77. *jook* 'pierce, stab, etc.'; 79. *jumbee* 'malevolent spirit, zombie'; 87. *kata* 'head-pad'; 115. *nyam* 'eat; food'; 132. *potapota* 'mud; muddy'; 143. *soso* 'only'; 149. *Takoma* 'Anansi's son'; 160. *unu* (2PL); 162. *wari* (African board game);

Also, as is the case of other Atlantic English-lexified pidgins and creoles, feature 84. *kaka* 'shit, excrement' must have been in use earlier than the date of its first attestation. Presumably, as put by Baker (1999: 330), "many authors and publishers would formerly have considered this word too vulgar to print".

4. Belizean Creole and other English-lexifier pidgins and creoles

Baker and Huber (2001: 171, Figure 5) show the absolute number of diagnostic features in the Atlantic varieties considered. With a total of 141 features, Belizean Creole ranks lower than Jamaican, Krio and West African Pidgin English, but higher than Kittitian, Suriname[3], Gullah and Bajan.

According to Baker and Huber (2001: 171), "a fundamental difference between the Atlantic and Pacific varieties" is that "the absolute number of features in the latter is generally lower, with the average in the Atlantic being more than twice as high than that in the Pacific". The average number of diagnostic features in Atlantic varieties is 145.4, but only 63.3 in the Pacific ones (Baker and Huber 2001: 171). With an absolute number of 141 features, Belizean Creole is therefore below the average for the Atlantic English-lexifier pidgins and creoles considered by Baker and Huber (2001),

The absolute number of world-wide features attested in Belizean Creole is 44. Table 1 compares the distribution of world-wide features in the Atlantic English-lexifier varieties[4] considered by Baker and Huber (2001: 171) and in Belizean Creole:

[3] The creoles of Suriname are treated as "a single entity" by Baker and Huber (2001: 161).

[4] Abbreviations used in Tables 1 and 2: BEL = Belizean Creole; BJN = Bajan; GUL = Gullah; JAM = Jamaican; KRI = Krio; SKI = Kittitian; SRN = Suriname; WAF = West African Pidgin English.

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Table 1. World-wide features

SRN	BJN	SKI	JAM	GUL	KRI	WAF	Average	BEL
44.5	36.0	38.0	52.5	42.0	63.0	63.0	44.2	44

Belizean Creole thus would fall within the range of Atlantic varieties (from 36.0 to 63.0), slightly below the average. Table 2 illustrates the proportion of world-wide features in the Atlantic varieties considered by Baker and Huber (2001: 172) and in Belizean Creole:

Table 2. Percentage of world-wide features

SRN	BJN	SKI	JAM	GUL	KRI	WAF	Average	BEL
33.2	30.9	28.4	28.8	34.6	35.4	41.6	33.3	31.2

Belizean would be again situated within the range of Atlantic varieties (from 28.4 to 41.6), below the average. According to Baker and Huber (2001), the relatively low percentage of world-wide features in the Atlantic pidgins and creoles is generally indicative of varieties spoken in territories in which there were population movements[5] (see also section 5).

In light of the above, it may be concluded that Belizean Creole exhibits characteristics typical of the Atlantic English-lexifier Creoles in terms of the distribution of diagnostic features.

5. Affinities of Belizean Creole with Jamaican and Miskito Coast Creole

Diagnostic features are also relevant to the assessment of the historical links between specific Atlantic English-lexifier creoles. Their distribution thus supplements historical evidence on e.g. colonization, demographics, the origin of slaves, and migration patterns.

It is well known that "as England's largest and economically most important island in the West Indies, Jamaica became the "metropolis" for the smaller British settlements in the Western Caribbean" (Holm 1989: 467). Given that Jamaica "sent people of African descent to most of the other places where WECCs[6] are spoken" (Bartens and Farquharson 2012: 187), from the point of view of the diffusion of Atlantic English-lexifier creoles, Jamaican is therefore "the most important variety in the area" (Holm 1989: 467).

British logwood settlements were established in what is today Belize in the 1670s. These settlers, known as the "Bay Men" were expelled by the Spanish in 1730 and 1754, when they joined the so-called "Shore Men" on the Miskito Coast, in what is today Honduras (Holm 1989: 477). After a military defeat by the Spaniards in 1786 and a peace treaty between Britain and Spain in 1787, some British 2,000 colonists and their slaves

[5] In varieties having developed to a large extent independently, the percentage of world-wide features is significantly higher: thus, the average is 66.6% for the six Pacific varieties considered by Baker and Huber (2001: 173).

[6] WCECs = Western Caribbean English-lexifier Creoles.

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emigrated from the Miskito Coast and settled in the Belize River area (Holm 1989: 477, Bartens and Farquharson 2012: 171).

The socio-historical background outlined above points to historical-linguistic relationships between Belizean Creole, on the one hand, and Jamaican and Miskito Coast Creole, on the other hand. This is confirmed by the number of diagnostic features shared by Belizean Creole with Jamaican[7] and respectively Miskito Coast Creole[8]:

Table 3. Diagnostic features shared by Belizean Creole with Jamaican and Miskito Coast Creole

Varieties	Number of features
BEL with JAM	126
BEL with MCC	99

However, as shown by Baker (1999: 337), measuring the affinity between individual varieties must go beyond the mere comparison of shared features, given the differences in the quantity and quality of data available for each variety. Affinity can be determined with the statistical method used by Baker (1999: 337). First, the number of diagnostic features a pair of varieties would share if the distribution of these were random is calculated. The formula can be stated as follows: $N_i \times N_j / N_t$ (where N_i = number of features in variety$_i$, N_j = number of features in variety$_j$, and N_t = total number of features considered). Second, the result obtained is deducted from the actual number of diagnostic features shared. This shows whether the number of the shared features is more or less than predicted by a random distribution. A high positive value for the difference between the actual and the predicted number of shared features indicates relatedness. This method[9] can therefore be applied to the quantification of the affinities between Belizean Creole and other Atlantic English-lexifier Creoles which have influenced it. Since all three are Atlantic varieties, the base taken into account should consist of the 173 Atlantic and the 75 world-wide features of Baker and Huber (2001), i.e. a total of 248. The results are set out in Table 4:

Table 4. Affinities of Belizean Creole with Jamaican and Miskito Coast Creole

Varieties	Actual	Predicted	Difference
BEL and JAM	126	87.3	38.7
BEL and MCC	99	50.4	48.6

As can be seen, for both pairs, i.e. Belizean Creole and Jamaican and respectively Belizean Creole and Miskito Coast Creole, high better-than-random scores obtain. These reflect the strong influence of both Jamaican and Miskito Coast Creole on Belizean Creole.

[7] Including five features, which do not figure among those attested in this variety according Baker and Huber (2001: 197-204). For the relevant attestations see Avram (2003, 2004 and 2015a).
[8] Data from Holm (1978).
[9] The method was first used by Baker (1999).

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6. Discussion of selected features

As mentioned in section 3, the diagnostic features attested in Belizean Creole include 19 lexical items which can be traced to African languages[10]. These are listed in Table 5 below:

Table 5. Lexical items from African languages

Feature	Origin
7. *Anancy* (folktale)	Akan / Guang / Gbe
45. *dokuna*/*dukna*	Akan / Guang / Sefwi
51. *duppy* 'zombie'	Akan
149. *Takoma* 'Anansi's son'	Akan
162. *wari* (African board game)	Akan
49. *dohti* 'earth, dirt'	Akan / Igbo / Yoruba / Kikongo
132. *potapota* 'mud; muddy'	Akan
91. *kokobe* 'leper, leprosy'	Akan / Mande
61. *fufu* (starch food, boiled and pounded)	Atlantic / Bantu / Kru / Kwa / Mande
77. *jook* 'pierce, stab, etc.'	Fula
115. *(n)yam* 'eat; food'	Atlantic
9. *bakra* 'European, white person'	Efik / Ibibio
120. *obeah* 'kind of magic'	Efik / Ibibio
143. *soso* 'only'	Igbo
160. *unu* (2PL)	Igbo
63. *fum* 'beat'	Ijo
67. *gumbay* 'drum'	Kikongo
79. *jumbee* 'malevolent spirit, zombie'	Kikongo / Kimbundu
87. *kata* 'head-pad'	Bantu

The occurrence of these features confirms the important lexical contribution of the Gold Coast, i.e. the languages of the Akan and Gbe clusters, to the Atlantic English-lexifier Creoles[11] as well as of languages, such as Efik, Ibibio, Igbo, contiguous or geographically proximate to the Gold Coast. The contribution of the Atlantic, Mande and Bantu languages is also reflected. However, several remarks are in order with respect to these lexical Africanisms. First, as noted by Parkvall (2000: 154), neither "the preponderance of […] Akan" nor "the widespread 2pl pronoun /unu/ […] from Igbo" are "compatible with any known or reconstructed demographical dominance of these two groups". Second, these lexical Africanisms most probably did not emerge *in situ*. Indeed, as put by Bartens and Farquharson (2012: 187), "it seems extremely unlikely that slaves from diverse ethnolinguistic backgrounds […] would all independently adopt the same African word for the same concept". Rather, their occurrence "is highly suggestive of diffusion from Jamaica" because it is "far more likely that the word[s] in question [were] in general use in one territory that participated in the settlement of others" (Bartens and Farquharson 2012: 187). As already mentioned in section 5, the territory at issue is

[10] For their etyma the reader is referred to Allsopp (1996), Aceto (1999), Baker (1999), Bartens and Farquharson (2012), Farquharson (2012).
[11] See e.g. Aceto (1999) and Parkvall (2000: 109-112).

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Jamaica. Unsurprisingly, all the 19 lexical Africanisms found in Belizean Creole are also recorded in Jamaican (Baker and Huber 2001: 197-201) as well as in Miskito Coast Creole (Holm 1978: 1-53).

The same African substratal input is also reflected in the following calques[12]: 15. *big eye* 'greed(y)' from Akan and/or Igbo, 8. *bad mouth* 'speak ill of, curse' from Mande, and 48. *doormouth* 'threshold' from Mande and/or Yoruba[13]. As in the case of the lexical items of African origin, it is extremely likely that these calques were diffused from Jamaican, i.e. they are not independent developments *in situ*[14]. Such cases are therefore instances of indirect idiomatic calques[15].

Three other diagnostic features recorded in Belizean Creole are believed by some authors to be calques from African languages. Thus, Allsopp (1980: 91, and 1996: 221) traces feature 55. *eyewater* 'tear' to Igbo and/or Yoruba. Mande and/or Igbo sources have been suggested by Allsopp (1996: 392) for 107. *mouth water* 'saliva'. For 148. *sweetmouth* 'flattery' the sources mentioned by Alleyne (1980: 116), Holm (1992: 191) and Allsopp (1996: 542) include Akan, Gã, Igbo, Vai and Yoruba. According to Alleyne (1980: 114), for instance, "there are many lexemes in Afro-American dialects which reveal a labeling pattern whereby objects are named in terms of an association between two primary objects". However, compounds which are structurally similar to *eyewater* are also found in other pidgins and creoles (Holm 2000: 104, Parkvall and Baker 2012: 237), with different substrate languages. According to Holm (2000: 104), "such compounds may have resulted from a universal strategy for expanding a Pidgin vocabulary to fill lexical gaps". Parkvall (2000: 113), explicitly mentions *eyewater* as a word "that could predictably be invented on the spot by anybody not knowing any other word", and notes that this is typically done by lexicalizing semantically transparent compounds. Parkvall (2000: 113) therefore recommends caution since "much of what may be look African in Creole semantics may therefore well be but an indirect manifestation of former Pidginhood". The same may hold for feature 107. *mouth water* 'saliva' as well. As for 148. *sweetmouth* 'flattery', this may be an illustration of the fact that "some metaphors […] are so obvious that they may be expected to turn up by coincidence or 'reinvention'" (Cassidy 1971: 215). Finally, according to Parkvall and Baker (2012), two other diagnostic features found in Belizean Creole may be idiomatic calques. These are 50. *dry eye* 'boldness' is also a potential idiomatic calques, of "UNKNOWN ORIGIN" (Parkvall and Baker 2012: 236) and 66. *goatmouth* 'a Cassandra', for which "no African […] source […] has yet been found".

Three French-derived Atlantic features are found in Belizean Creole: 13. *bateau* 'boat', 31. *crapaud* 'frog', and 99. *magass* 'crushed cane'. Rather surprisingly, feature 31. *crapaud* 'frog' is not found in either Jamaican Creole or Miskito Coas Creole, even though Allsopp (1996: 175) states that this word for 'frog' "is the term in widest folk use in CE [= Caribbean English]". Only one Atlantic feature of Spanish origin is attested in

[12] See also Avram (2013, 2017).
[13] For their possible sources see Parkvall and Baker (2012).
[14] See also Avram (2017: 20).
[15] Which include "items diffused via transplanted creoles" (Avram 2017: 20).

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Belizean Creole: 133. *rata* ‘rat’. Two world-features of Portuguese origin are recorded in Belizean Creole: 127. *pikni* ‘small; child, offspring’ and 221. *piccaninny* ‘small; child’.

Several forms appear to be restricted to specific registers or contexts, are obsolete or are perhaps no longer used. One such feature is 22. *bra* ‘brother’, which is nowadays “used only in folk tales” (Crosbie et al. 2009: 62). The two variants of 194. *got* ‘have’, *gat* and *ga* are in (quasi) complementary distribution: according to Crosbie et al. (2009: 122), the former is a “conditioned variant often used clause final or before words beginning with a vowel”. As for 9. *bakra* ‘European, white person’, Robertson Gibbs (1883: 171) comments that “it was once more generally their [= locals] habit to call the white folks” *Buckras*. Similarly, Donohue (1946: 65) writes that “until recently a white man was called “Backra” by his colored friends”. Feature 128. *pinda* ‘peanut’ is found in Belizean Creole, but Crosbie et al. (2009: 189) specify that this form is “archaic” and it is losing out to *peenots* < English *peanuts*. Note, incidentally, that the form *pindar nuts* recorded by Morris (1883: 110) appears to be a hypercorrect variant, lit. ‘peanut nuts’, possibly via contamination with English *peanuts*. Consider next 91. *kokobe* ‘leper, leprosy’. Its only attestation in Belizean Creole dates from 1883 (Robertson Gibbs 1883: 181), and the word has apparently fallen out of use. Similarly, 221. *piccaninny* ‘small; child’ is not used anymore, being replaced with 127. *pikni* ‘small; child, offspring’. This occurs even in proverbs: compare *Every John-crow believe his own pickaninny white*. 1924 (Ricketson jr. 1935: 285) with *Ebry jancrow tink e pikni white* (Young 1980: 1).

As shown in section 3, feature 7. *Anancy* (folktale character) has a number of variants. Some of these, *Anaansi* and *Anansi*, are quite close to the etymon: Akan *anànse* ‘spider’ and/or Ewe-Gbe *anánse* ‘spider’, Guang *ananse* (Allsopp 1996: 29, Baker 1999: 318, Bartens and Farquharson 2012: 179). Others preserve the etymological word-initial /a/, but this is preceded by /h/: *Hanaansi*, *Hanaasi*, *hanansi*, *Hanasse*. Finally, the variant *nansi* exhibits apheresis of etymological /a-/. As for feature 149. *Takoma* ‘Anansi’s son’, etymologically from Akan *ntikúma* ‘small spider’, the Belizean Creole form *Hatakuma* exhibits a non-etymological /a/, additionally preceded by /h/. Note that the addition in word-initial position of a (non-etymological) /h/ is also attested in other Belizean Creole words, of various origins, such as *haligeta* ‘alligator’, *hamadili* ‘armadillo’, *hambrelo* ‘(archaic) umbrella’, *hoa*[16] ‘owe’ (see the corresponding entries in Crosbie et al. 2009).

Some variants of several forms reflect earlier pronunciations[17]. For instance, [b] for etymological /v/ (see also Baker 1999: 317) is illustrated by 89. *kiba* ‘cover’: the Belizean Creole variant *kiba*, from dialectal English *kiver* ‘to cover’, is now “archaic” (Crosbie et al. 189), whereas its more frequent counterpart *kova*, from English *cover*, preserves the etymological /v/. Similarly, in the case of feature 214. *never* (negative-completive), Crosbie et al. (2009: 214) that the variant *neba* is “archaic”, the modern one being *neva*. Other variants reflect the deletion of /s/ in onset clusters, typical of Atlantic English-lexifier pidgins and creoles[18]. For 134. *rockstone* ‘stone’ the various early sources for Belizean Creole use spellings such as <raktone> or <rak(s)tone>. Similarly, in 150. *tan*

[16] In the orthography used in Crosbie et al. (2009) <oa> stands for [əʊ].
[17] For a review of the issues involved in the phonological interpretation of early records of English-lexifier creoles see Avram (2000).
[18] See Baker (1999: 318, Avram 2005: 34-100).

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lek ‘be like, resemble’ the reflex of English *stand* is spelled <tan> by Metzgen and Cain (1925), but it is phonetically transcribed as [stan] by Hancock (1987: 287).

Two diagnostic features recorded in Belizean Creole are relevant to the distinction made in the literature between the Western Caribbean and the Eastern Caribbean English-lexified Creoles. Holm (1989: 445) writes that “the normal word for the spirit of a dead person is usually *jumby* in the Eastern group and *duppy* in the Western group”. However, as seen in section 3, both 51. *duppy* ‘zombie’ and 79. *jumbee* ‘malevolent spirit, zombie’ are found in Belizean Creole, a Western Caribbean English-lexifier variety[19].

Consider finally feature 275. *look out* ‘take care of’. This is listed among the Pacific features by Baker and Huber (2001: 203), but, given its occurrence in Belizean Creole, which is an Atlantic variety, this diagnostic feature should be reclassified as a world-wide one.

6. Conclusions

The earliest attestations in Belizean Creole of diagnostic features of English-lexifier pidgins and creoles contribute to a better understanding of its linguistic past. The inclusion of diachronic data has circumvented the problem of the impact of language change – e.g. decreolization, various other internal developments, late (post-1900) non-diffusionists cross-influences – after the formative period of a particular variety, which may obscure historical links or the extent of the influence exerted by other varieties.

The feature-based approach adopted has provided a quantification of the affinities between Belizean Creole, on the one hand, and Jamaican and Miskito Coast Creole, on the other hand. The significant contribution of Jamaican and Miskito Coast Creole to the formation of Belizean Creole is thus confirmed. These findings corroborate historical evidence and the role of Jamaica as a centre of diffusion.

Finally, the findings shed light on the distribution of diagnostic features in English-lexifier pidgins and creoles as well as on the classification of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier pidgins and creoles.

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[19] See also Avram (2015b: 30-31).

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