COMPLETIVE ASPECT IN JAMAICAN CREOLE: THE COMPLETE STORY?*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Aspectual markers in Jamaican Creole all obligatorily precede the VP with the exception of one: the completive marker *don*, which can also be found in a post-VP configuration (Cassidy 1961, Bailey 1966, Durrleman 2001). In addition, a completive reading may be derived in the absence of the overt realization of *don* in certain instances. I take these two properties to be related. Following Durrleman (2001), I adopt an analysis of the marker *don* as the head of the Completive Aspect Projection in the clausal structure, and account for post-VP realizations in terms of VP-movement[1]. I further propose that such an analysis has repercussions on deriving a completive reading in the absence of the overt realization of *don*: it is this movement of the VP to the Specifier of CompletiveP that suffices to render the projection visible and as such allows for its head, Completive°, to be left morphologically null.

2. ASPECTUAL MARKERS IN JC

This section provides an overview of aspectual markers in Jamaican Creole. These markers form the group of inflectional particles located closest to the VP (see Bybee 1983). They do not occur with stative verbs "since all the phases in a state are identical (…) (and as such states) lack an internal dynamic structure. Aspect, however, crucially deals with the internal structure of situations. Therefore states and the expression of aspect are naturally incompatible" (Lamiroy 1987:284).

2.1. Aspectual markers in JC

2.1.1. *Progressive Aspect*

The marker *a* precedes the [-stative] verb so as to give the action or event evoked by this verb an 'on-going' interpretation:

(1a)   Jan a   nyam di bami
         John [prog] eat   the bammy
         'John is eating the bammy'

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[1] See Durrleman (2001) for arguments against a Serial Verb Construction analysis.

Note that [-stative] VPs such as [*nyam di bami*] are generally interpreted in the past in the absence of markers[2]:

(1b)   Jan   nyam di bami
        John eat   the bammy
        'John has eaten/ate the bammy'

In (1a), however, the sole use of the particle *a* with this same VP implies that the event described is going on at the time of the utterance. In the presence of *a*, even with projections of [-stative] verbs, a past interpretation has to be specified:

(2)   Jan did   a   nyam uno   bammi   (… good ting mi tell im fi stap)
        John [past] [prog] eat your[plur] bammy   (… good thing I tell him to stop)
        'John was eating your bammy   (…good thing I told him to stop)'

Therefore the use of the progressive suggests that the verb evokes something in progress, by default at the time of utterance.
    As will be the case for all Asp markers, the progressive cannot occur with stative verbs:

(3)   * Jan   a   nuo   dat
        John [prog] know that

A combines with (*g*)*o* to yield a reading of futurity referred to as prospective aspect.

2.1.2. *Prospective Aspect*

Cinque (1999:99) underlines that "the term 'prospective aspect' has come to be used for those grammatical forms (…) which mark "a point *just prior* to the beginning of an event" (Frawley 1992:322). This is for example the case with the English construction "to be going to"/ "to be about to".[3] Comrie (1976:64) points out an important difference between "prospective meaning" as in *Bill is going to/is about to throw himself off the cliff* and expressions of future time reference as in *Bill will throw himself off the cliff*, since Bill's eventually not throwing himself off the cliff makes the speaker wrong in the second case, but not in the first.
    One can therefore distinguish between *wi* and *a(g)o* based on this interpretational difference. Another difference is their syntactic behaviour with respect to the past tense marker *did*: The marker *wi*, expressing future tense, is in complementary distribution with the past tense marker *did* (4a,b), while *a(g)o* does not share this restriction (4c):

(4)   a. * Im   **did**   **wi** nyam i' aaf
            s/he [past] [future] eat it off
       b. * Im   **wi**   **did** nyam i' aaf
            s/he [future] [past] eat it off
       c.   Im   **did**   **a**   **(g)o** nyam i' aaf, bot mi (did) stap im
            s/he [past] [prog] [prosp]   eat it off
            'S/he was going to eat it all up, but I stopped her/him'

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[2] We return to a discussion of this phenomenon in section 3.
[3] Comrie (1976:64ff).

Prospective *go* must be used in combination with the progressive (even though in rapid speech the latter may become somewhat shortened). That any other occurrence of *go* is not the aspectual marker but rather a lexical verb can be seen by the fact that a minimal pair can be formed between preverbal *go* used without the progressive (lexical) and one used with the progressive (aspectual)[4]:

(5)   (Afta wa im se…)   yu **go pik i' up**? Vs.   y(u) **a   go   pik i' up**?
          (After what s/he say)   you go pick it up   you [+prog] [+prosp] pick it up
          '(After what s/he said) you **went** and **picked** it up? /you're **going to pick** it up?'

2.1.3. *Retrospective Aspect*

I take the marker *jos* designating 'immediate past' to be the overt realization of retrospective aspect, along the lines of Cinque (1999):

(6)   Im   did   jos   a   go   dw i'
          S/he [past] [retrospective] [progressive] [prospective] do it
          'S/he was just about to do it'

2.1.4. *Completive Aspect and Anterior*

The inflectional particle *don* may precede the VP as we have seen for other aspect markers of JC, but it also has the particularity of occasionally occurring in a post-VP configuration:

(7)   Jiemz no   riid di buk don yet   (Bailey 1966: 42)
          James [neg] read the book don yet
          'James has not finished reading the book yet'

This characteristic was already noticed by Cassidy (1961) who writes that "The participle *done* enters into a peculiar adverbial idiom. Placed after verbs it shows completion of the action. (…) 'Me *feed* him *dun* dis long time' (…) *done* loses verbal force and becomes a modifier of the other verb."
      Note that in the event that *don* occurs in a pre-VP configuration with [-stative] verbs, it can yield two different interpretations:

(8)   Im don nyam i'
          S/he done eat it
     a.   'S/he already ate it'
     b.   'S/he finished eating it'

The additional interpretation in (8a) is erased in a post-VP configuration, so the ambiguity observed for (8) no longer obtains in (9) where *don* follows the VP it modifies:

(9)   Im nyam i' don
          S/he eat it done
     a. * 'S/he already ate it'
     b.   'She finished eating it (up)'

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[4] In '*yu **o** pik i op*' the only possible interpretation of *o* is as prospective since only this functional element undergoes phonetic erosion, unlike the lexical verb *go*.

I take this to suggest the presence of two different *don* markers in JC, one corresponding to the meaning [+completion] as given by the verb 'to finish' in English, and the other corresponding to the meaning [+anterior], as given by the adverb 'already' in English.

These two *don* markers behave differently syntactically: Assuming that VP-movement[5] takes place to the Spec of the completive marker *don* when the latter appears in a post-VP configuration, then according to the data in (9) the VP projected by a [-stative] verb is not accessible to VP-movement to the Spec of Anterior *don*.

A possible hypothesis to account for the fact that a VP cannot move to the Spec of [+anterior] *don* is that the VP in JC cannot move as high as the [+anterior] projection. Movement of the VP in JC is limited:

(10) a.   Im jos nyam i'
              S/he just eat it
              'S/he just ate it'
      b. *   Im nyam i' jos
(11) a.   Im a nyam i'
              S/he [prog] eat it
              'S/he is eating it'
      b. *   Im nyam i' a
(12) a.   Im a (g)o nyam i'
              S/he [prog] [prosp] eat it
              'S/he is going to eat it'
      b. *   Im a nyam i'(g)o

If movement of [-stative] VPs in JC cannot go as high as the specifiers of aspectual particles such as *jos, a* and *(g)o,* yet the specifier of the particle *don* [+completive] may host the [-stative] VP in JC, then it follows that the projection of *don* [+completive] is situated quite low in the structure: lower than the aspectual markers considered here. If this were not the case, then movement to the specifier of completive aspect would be excluded since it would violate Relativized Minimality (Rizzi 1990) through having to skip intermediate specifier positions. This predicts a structure along the lines of (13):

(13)   [Intermediate Asp] >   [*don* [+completive]] >   VP
                       ^   ^   ^
                       |——————————X——|————————←——————————|

This structure is confirmed by the examples in (14,15) which overtly illustrate the distribution of this particle [+completive] as used in JC in relation to other inflectional markers:

(14)   Wentaim mi reach, im **did**   **jos**   **don**   nyam i'
                When   I reach,   s/he [past] [retrospective] [completive] eat it
                'When I arrived, s/he'd just finished eating it '

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[5] Cinque (1999: 190n26) also makes use of leftward VP-movement to derive sentence final *don* for Guyanese Creole.

(15)   Mine! Im **a**   **go**   **don**[6]   nyam di whole a i'!
            Mind! S/he [prog] [prosp] [completive] eat   the whole of it
            'Careful! S/he is going to finish eating all of it!'

These data reveal that *don* follows the lowest of the other overtly expressed aspectual heads in JC, along the lines of the structure in (16):

(16)   Asp [+retrospective] > Asp [+prog] > Asp [+prosp] > **Asp [+completive]**

As expected, this occurrence of *don,* i.e. deeply embedded structurally, cannot correspond to an interpretation meaning [+anterior].

The observations above suggest that JC makes use of two different types of inflectional particles *don*: one [+anterior], the other [+completive]. Completive may occur either in a pre- or post-VP configuration, and is only compatible with [-stative] verbs, Anterior can only occur in a pre-VP configuration, and may occur with both [+stative] and [-stative] verbs.

Don when used in combination with [+stative] verbs in a pre-VP configuration, unlike that observed with respect to [-stative] verbs, does not give rise to ambiguity in JC.

(17)   Im don nuo se mi like im
     a.   'S/he already knows that I like her/him'
     b. * 'S/he finished knowing that I like her/him'

Recall that "states and the expression of aspect are naturally incompatible" (Lamiroy 1987: 284). It follows then that stative verbs may be specified for T [anterior] *don*, but not for Asp [completive] *don*.

Pursuing this line of reasoning, if *don* [+anterior] cannot host VPs in its Spec because it is too far away, and only this *don* can occur with [+stative] verbs, then we predict that [+stative] VPs should never be able to occur in a pre-*don* configuration, as the latter configuration is derived by movement to the specifier of *don* [+completive] only. This prediction is borne out:

(18) a.   Im don nuo dat
            S/he done know that
            'S/he already knows that'
      b. * Im [[nuo dat]$_i$ don] t$_i$
            S/he know that done

Don [+anterior] does not easily combine with other markers in JC, so although we have reason to believe it is relatively high in the hierarchy of markers, it would be difficult to locate its exact position in the structure if we did not have recourse to its corresponding adverb *aredi,* an overt manifestation of its specifier position along the lines of Cinque (1999:94): *Aredi*, like *don*[anterior], has as "its core meaning (…) one of temporal priority (…), in fact, one of precedence with respect to a reference time. (…) This makes it plausible to locate it in the specifier position of the lowest TP (TP anterior)". Along these lines, the data in (19) give evidence for the structure in (20):

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[6] Note that while *don* [completive] may potentially occur with prospective *a (g)o*, it does not occur easily with progressive *a* alone: ??*im a don nyam i'*.

(19) a.   Im   (*aredi) **did (aredi)** nuo   dat
          S/he (*already) did (already) know that
          'S/he already knew that'
    b.   Im **(aredi)**   **a**   (*aredi) gwaan bad
          S/he (already) [prog] (*already) go+on bad
          'S/he's already behaving badly'
(20)   Mod (epistemic) T (past/future) > **aredi (anterior) > Asp prog**

Given the respective distributions of *don* [+completive] in relation to progressive (15) and *aredi* [+anterior] with respect to Asp [+prog] (19b), the projection corresponding to [+anterior] is by transitivity higher in the structure than the one corresponding to [+completive]:

(21)   Asp [+retrospective] > **Asp [+prog]** > Asp [+prosp] > **Asp [+completive]**
(22)   **T [anterior]** > Asp [+prog] > **Asp [+completive]**

This reasoning yields the following overall order for the markers in JC considered here:

(23)   [*aredi* **T(Anterior)** *don1* > [*jos* **Asp**$_{retrospective}$ > [**Asp**$_{progressive}$: *a* > [**Asp**$_{prospective}$: *(g)o* > [**Asp**$_{completive(I)}$: *don2* … > **VP**

Post-VP *don* constructions would then involve VP-movement to [Spec,CompletiveP], as illustrated below:

(24) … AspCompletive
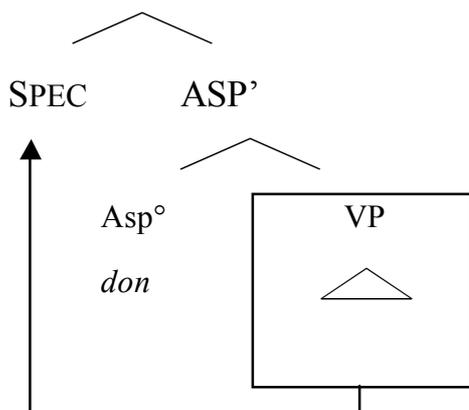
3. COMPLETIVE IN THE ABSENCE OF *DON*

In the absence of TMA marking, JC temporal and aspectual interpretations vary depending on properties of (i) the verb and (ii) the type of object it selects. It is internal arguments (not external ones), that impact on the aspectual/temporal interpretation of the event at hand:

3.1. Direct objects and temporal/aspectual readings

In the absence of markers, stative verbs such as *nuo* with both bare nominal and definite objects have a default [-past] interpretation (25):

(25)   Jaimz nuo   regei / di sang
            James knows reggae / the song
            'James knows reggae / the song'

Default interpretations for [-stative] VPs differ: With a bare nominal object, the default reading is [-past] (26a & b) while a [+definite] direct object yields a [+past] default reading (27):

(26) a.   Jan nyam aki
            John eat ackee
            'John **eats** ackee'
      b.   Jiemz no   nyam puok
            James [neg] eat   pork
            'James does not eat pork'
(27)   Jan nyam di   aki
            John eat   [def] ackee
            'John **has eaten**/ **ate** the ackee'

However the selected DP does not have to be [+definite] to give rise to a [+past] reading. In fact it suffices for a direct object to bear a numeral for this effect to arise (28).

(28)   Mieri nyam chrii bredfruut!
            Mary eat three breadfruit
            'Mary **ate** three breadfruits'

Other factors can play a role as well, such as the insertion of a temporal adverb. The use of *aredi* 'already' in the examples below over-rides the above pattern, so that we get a [+past] interpretation regardless of the [+/-stative] property and independently of the type of object selected.

(29) a.   Jan aredi nyam aki
            John already eat ackee
            'John **has eaten** ackee before'
      b.   Jan aredi nyam di aki
            John already eat [def] ackee
            'Jan **has eaten** the ackee already'

Similarly, the retrospective marker *jos* forces a past reading, whether or not the object is preceded by a definite determiner or a numeral.

(30) a.   Im   jos   nyam manggo
            s/he [retrospective] eat   mango
            'He has just eaten mango'
      b.   Im   jos   nyam di manggo
            s/he [retrospective] eat [def] mango
            'He just ate the mango'

The generalization seems to be that in the absence of overt functional material in the middle-field, if the quantity of the object is 'vague', such as in the case of bare nominals, the reading

is [-past], while when it is quantized, we get [+past]. If the object clearly identifies the quantity to be affected by the action of the verb, then we can conclude that it 'measures out' the event, to use Tenny's (1987) words, such that the event is 'delimited' temporally by this object. The feature that is relevant is then not, as it has been suggested in the literature, [+definite] or [+specific] (see e.g. Fitzpatrick 2005, Patrick 2004) but rather the fact that the object is somehow *quantized*. A clear illustration of this includes the use of numerals, as seen above, as well as the element *wan* in JC, which occurs in the example below with null D° and therefore yields an indefinite reading. Despite the fact that *wan* in (31) is both [-definite] as well as [-specific], the reading that results is [+past]. This seems to follow from this marker's resembling a numeral and as such serving mainly to assign a singular quantity to the object:

(31)   Im nyam wan bami
         s/he eat [ind] bammy
         'S/he ate a bammy'

The observation that verb types affect temporal readings is recurrent in the literature, and is often coupled with the observation that the object also plays a role in this respect. Déchaine (1991:32) comments that: "In some sense, it is a 'natural or obvious fact' about events that their temporal reference is past, 'while it is a 'natural or obvious fact' about states that their temporal reference is non-past." Stowell (1991) also observes that we find bare eventive verbs such as 'beat' in headlines yielding a past reading while bare stative verbs such as 'love' yield a non-past interpretation:

(32)   MAN BEATS DONKEY
(33)   MAO SECRETLY LOVES RED GUARD

Déchaine (1991:37) further underlines that: "Semantically, Infl must be referential or 'anchored' relative to some moment: in the absence of a Tense operator, Infl is evaluated relative to the *moment of utterance,* t_0 (cf. Enç 1991). Stative predicates, which are unbounded, are non-past to the moment of utterance. Eventive predicates, being bounded, are generic (roughly, iterative) if non-delimited and past if delimited. (…) In Haitian, whether an event is delimited depends on the nominal complement: a bare noun projects NP and is [-specified quantity]; a specific noun projects a DP and is [+specified quantity] (cf. Verkuyl 1972). (…) The nominal complement participates in 'aspect composition' (Verkuyl 1989): if the complement is unspecified quantity, the event is non-delimited. In bare sentences, non-delimited events are generic. By definition, non-bounded predicates (i.e., states) are not sensitive to [+/-specified quantity]."

3.2. Previous accounts

3.2.1. *Tenny (1987): Grammaticalizing Aspect and Affectedness*

Tenny (1987) considers the notion of delimitedness and describes it as a property playing a role in syntax by contributing to the temporal organization of events. She explains that events are delimited when it is clear that they cease at some point in time. Tenny (1987:20) points out that Vendler (1967) had already outlined four classes of linguistic events, half delimited and half non-delimited:

  I.   Accomplishments are delimited, with a clear end, although their duration is of
         some length. An example would be 'making a chair'.

II.   Achievements are also delimited, with a definite endpoint, however they differ from accomplishments in that they are of brief or no duration. Such an event is, for instance, the recognizing of a face.

III.   Activities are non-delimited and indeed evince indefinite duration. This is illustrated by events such as 'running', 'swimming', 'pushing', etc.

IV.   Statives are also non-delimited because of their indefinite duration. A typical example of a state is 'know the answer'.

One way of testing this (non)-delimited status of events is to examine their (in)compatibility with duratives such as 'for 3 hours'. Stewart (2006) shows that in JC an expression such as *ina di spies a tuu owa* 'in the space of two hours' is felicitous with quantized, delimited objects, unlike *fi tuu owa* 'for two hours', which is incompatible with such nominals:

(34)   Im rait 5 leta/ evri leta / som leta/ wan leta *fi tuu owa / ina di spies a tuu owa
          S/he write 5 letter / every letter / some letter / one letter for 2 hour / in the space of 2 hours
          'He wrote 5 letters / every letter/ some letters/ one letter *for 2 hours/ in 2 hours.'

Note that activities can be made to be delimited by providing an object that delimits them:

(35) a.   Im ron fi   tuu owa / * ina di spies a tuu owa
             s/he run for two hour / *in the space of two hour
      b.   Im   ron [wan reis] *fi tuu owa /   ina di spies a tuu owa
             S/he run one race   for two hour / in the space of two hour

One can then say that [-statives] are 'delimited' when they occur with direct objects which measure out the event in terms of providing a finite spatial entity which is affected during the course of the event. There is a parallelism between spatially delimited entities and temporally delimited events: the former has a physically fixed extent and the latter a fixed duration. A spatially delimited entity contributes to rendering a verb phrase delimited in that once it is *completely* affected by the action described the event is complete.

It follows that delimitedness is compositional, depending on the type of verb as well as on the property of the direct argument to be affected by the verb. There is therefore a correlation between the degree of affectedness of the direct argument and the reading of the event as delimited/non-delimited, an interaction yielding aspectual effects.
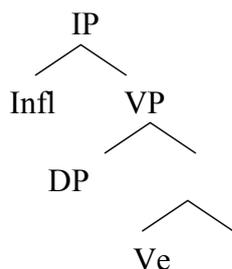
Note that this approach captures the aspectual/temporal interpretational difference between unergative and accusative verbs in Creole bare sentences. As Déchaine (1991:40) observes for Haitian Creole, an unergative verb gives rise to a [–past/+generic] default reading while an unaccusative verb yields a [+past/+completive] reading. This distinction is also found in JC grammar. Consider the questions below:

(36) a.   Mieri dans?
             Mary dance?
             '**Does** Mary dance?'
      b.   Mary kom?
             Mary come
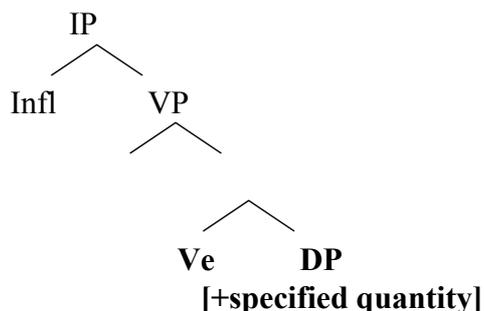   '**Did/Has** Mary come?'

Dans, being an unergative does not select an internal argument and therefore there is no entity that can serve to delimit this 'dancing event'. On the other hand *kom*, being an unaccusative,

does select an argument, and once this argument has undergone the activity at hand (i.e. that of coming) then the event is complete. Structurally, Déchaine (1991:41) explains this distinction as follows[7]:

(37) a.   Unergative: generic   b.   Unaccusative: past

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        IP                                      IP
       /  \                                    /  \
    Infl    VP                              Infl    VP
           /  \                                    /  \
         DP                                      /    \
            \                                   /      \
             \                                 /        \
              Ve                             Ve        DP
                                          [+specified quantity]
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In sum, the internal organization of the VP, i.e. the interplay between the verb and its internal arguments, inevitably impacts on aspect, and the latter interacts in turn with tense. As Tenny (1987:191) puts it "(…) the semantic property of aspectual delimitedness is relevant and accessible to syntax". She stresses the importance of such a notion by explaining (Tenny 1987:193-194) "(…) delimitedness is one of the central, if not <u>the</u> central property – or feature – expressed by the category of aspect". A relevant question at this stage is: how can one define 'specified quantity'?

It seems that we can provide a purely structural account for this concept. Durrleman (2007) argues in favour of a nominal architecture for JC along the lines of the following:

(38)   KP > DP > TopP Contrastive > FP - Functional Phrase D-Linked > Quantifier
            Phrase Distributive > NumberP Number > FP Cardinal > ClassifierP Inclusiveness
            > FocP Adjectival > FP Adjectival > NP

I propose that the projections situated syntactically higher than Adjectivals constitutes the relevant structure for defining a nominal such that it 'delimits' an event :

(39) a.   Jan nyam (**big**) **bredfruut**
            John eat   (big) breadfruit
            'John **eats** (big) breadfruits'
       Vs.
      b.   Jan   nyam **di / dis / som/ chrii   bredfruut(-dem)**
            John eat   the/this/some/three   breadfruit (plural/inclusiveness)
            'John **has eaten/ ate** the/this/some/three breadfruit(s) (up)'

Put differently, any morphological material that signals the presence of projections generated higher than the adjectival layer suffices to trigger telicity effects. Note that this is not an arbitrary point in the nominal domain. Shlonsky (2004) notes a difference in DP-internal NP-movement along the following lines: "Whereas attributive adjectives must appear to the right of the noun in Hebrew and in practically all varieties of Arabic, other functional material such as numerals, demonstratives, quantifiers, etc., is either exclusively pre-nominal (like the definite determiner) or is subject to dialectal variation as to its position relative to the head

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[7] Where Ve refers to an eventive VP.

noun'. In other words, the NP must precede the adjectival layer, but only optionally precedes other modifiers. It is the structure that hosts these modifiers that I observe to be responsible for triggering the JC telicity effects under discussion.

We now have an idea of what sort of structural make-up renders an internal argument [+specified quantity], and allows for a completive interpretation, but the next question is: What is the precise mechanism at work in the syntactic apparatus which allows one to account for the aspectual (and in turn the temporal) readings observed in Creole 'bare sentences', i.e. where overt markers encoding these notions are not realized? We turn to this in the next section.

3.2.2. *Fitzpatrick (2005): The Factitive Effect*

Fitzpatrick (2005) discusses certain instances of English where T is not pronounced and we derive a default interpretation along the lines of those observed for Creole. This is found in English question truncation contexts, and he refers to this as 'the factitive effect'. As he remarks: "in the absence of an explicit tense specification, a tense interpretation for these structures is computed based on structurally present factors". He points out that, just as in Creoles, the nature of the object plays a role, and he refers to this role in terms of the *temporal* interpretation yielded:

(40) a.   You sell your car?   (=Did you sell your car?)
      b.   You sell cars?   (=Do you sell cars?)
      c.   You like cats?   (=Do you like cats?)
      d.   You like my cat?   (=Do you like my cat?)

He observes a correlation between these instances of aux-drop and Creole bare sentences, although the language he draws on is not JC, but rather Haitian Creole (Déchaine 1991):

(41) a.   Pyè vann bèf yo   c.   Sisi renmen chat mwen
            Pyè sell cattle [def]   Sisi like cat 1sg
            'Pyè sold the cattle'   'Sisi likes my cat'

      b.   Pyè vann bèf   d.   Lili tù Kòkú
            Pyè sell cattle   Lili know Koku
            'Pyè sells cattle'   'Lili knows Koku'

Because of the parallelisms observed he concludes that the two constructions should be attributed a similar analysis. He proposes that for English, the auxiliary was present at one stage of the derivation for structural reasons, but is not ultimately submitted to the phonological and semantic components *as a result of movement* to the first position of the root. One illustration of this lies in the case adjacency effects seen to hold in aux-drop constructions (42a), just as in other instances of SAI involving an intermediary adverb (42b), or constituent questions (42c,d):

(42) a. * **Ǿ** Now **everyone** aware that Cheney's in bed with Enron?
      b. * **Is** <u>now</u> **everyone** aware that Cheney's in bed with Enron?
      c.   Who *(does) everyone like?
      d.   When *(did) everyone wake up?

These facts suggest not only that T is structurally present, but also that it has undergone movement to the front of the clause, more specifically to a position preceding the subject position. These two characteristics would be responsible for giving rise to the 'factitive effect' summarized in (43)[8].

(43)	Object	Pred = Eventive	Pred = Stative
	+def / +delimiting	+past / +completive	Present
	-def / -delimiting	-past / +generic	Present

It is worth recalling that the data from Creole, unlike that from English, shows this effect not only in interrogatives but in declarative contexts as well.

In Creole then, the T is also erased at some point. Given that these interpretations are not limited to interrogatives, however, and that even in interrogatives the inflectional markers don't seem to target CP, one cannot conclude that this deletion occurs because of movement to the left-periphery of the root.

The obvious question now is: We see that the initial position of the root clause is available for deletion in English, but what renders deletion acceptable in the Creole cases? How can a parallelism be established between this scenario observed for English and the one that occurs in Creole where there is no auxiliary movement to the root-initial position and therefore no c-command between the null element and a higher temporal one? In the next section, I argue that deletion of T° and Completive Aspect° is related to movement in Creole as well. I propose, however, that this movement is different to that outlined above for the English examples. In JC, the mechanics of this licensing of the relevant null inflectional heads has to be conceptualized differently so as to not restrict its occurrence to interrogatives. I immediately turn to an illustration of this analysis.

3.3. Deriving null completive in JC

We observe that in Creole, deletion of T° and CompletiveAsp° occurs once the eventive VP they select contains an object that is finite spatially and thus permits the measuring out of the event. This phenomenon brings us back to the beginning of the work: We have noted that when Completive° is overtly realized with the marker *don*, the VP over which it takes scope can on the one hand follow the marker, like that seen for all other TMA markers, but crucially, on the other hand, the VP can also optionally precede *don*. This seems to suggest that movement to [Spec,CompletiveP] can occur (see section 2) and I would like to propose that possibly precisely because this option is available, then when such movement does occur, the Completive° is no longer obligatorily realized. This is what I take to happen here.

Telicity effects are indeed intimately related to completive aspect: a situation can be described as telic if indeed there comes eventually a point when the action is *complete* (Comrie 1976:44). This occurs when the situation can be measured out precisely by the presence of an internal argument (as opposed to an external one) allowing for this completion to be reached. Indeed telic situations are triggered by the presence of a direct object that can be completely affected, i.e. objects that refer to a delimited entity that ultimately defines the end-point of the situation. This is what is lacking from objects that are bare nouns, but are present on objects that are grammatically delimited by some modifier generated higher than AdjPs (definite article, possessive, demonstrative, numeral, etc). So the VP that is formed by the verb and the argument that provides the terminal point for the process designated by the

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[8] Fitzpatrick (2005) proposes a similar (although not identical) recapitulation of the facts.

verb qualifies for movement to CompletiveP, and if it does move to this position, triggers a completive reading and permits deletion of Completive°.

We can take things one step further, so as to explain the absence of overt T & Asp marking in these bare sentences. More specifically, in the case of these bare sentences, it is plausible that a *snowballing-type movement* occurs, targeting specifiers of AspCompletiveP and TP respectively, so as to rendering the corresponding heads AspCompletive° and T° non-overt. The analytic structure for the bare sentences here discussed is given below:

(44) TP

Spec   T'

T°   … Asp[Completive]P

Spec   Asp[Completive]

Asp[Completive]°   …VP

Spec   V'

V°   DP [+Specified Quantity]
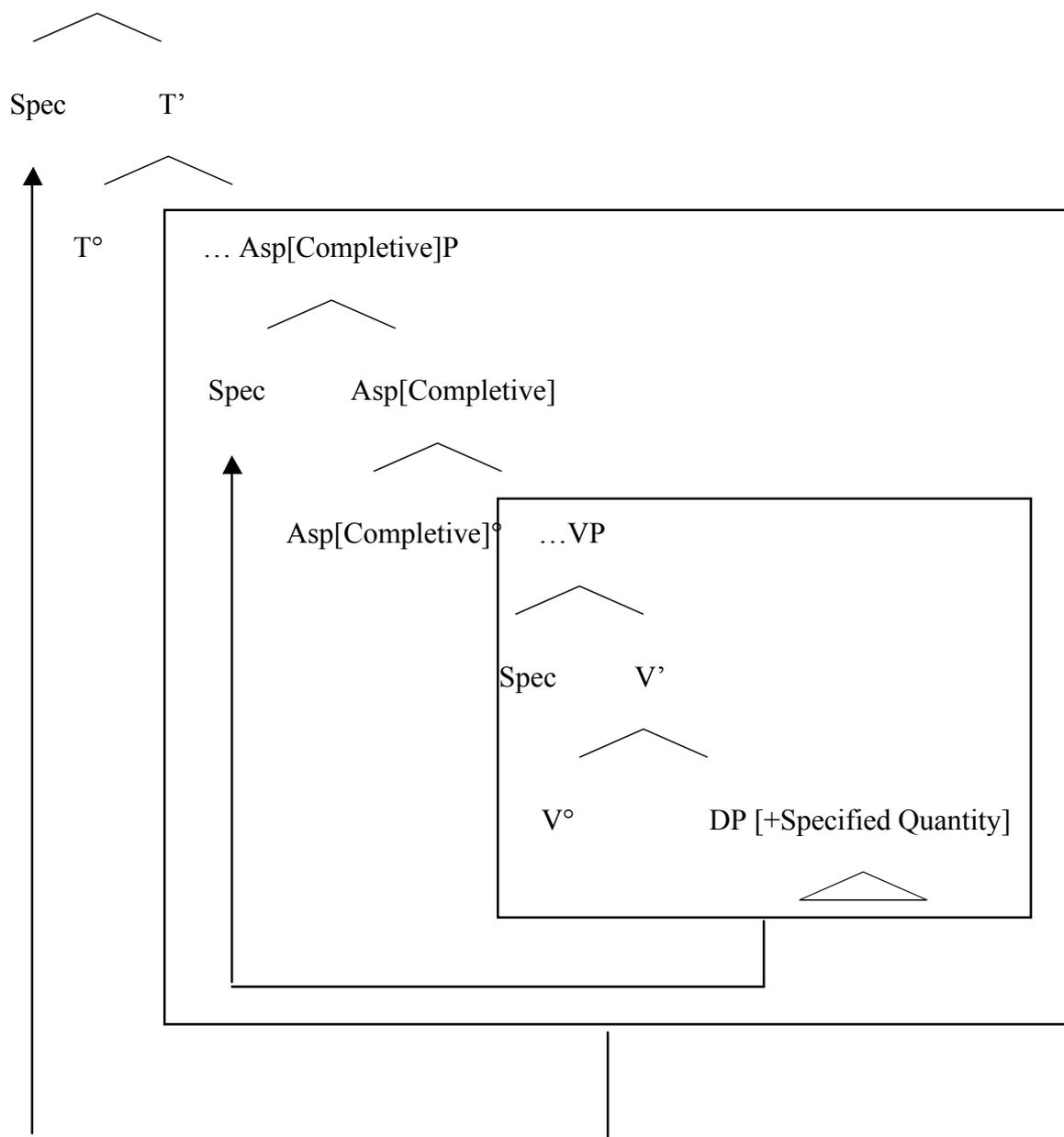
A question that the first movement in (44) may raise is how a property of the complement of V can affect the nature of the entire VP in Spec,Asp(Completive) in such a way that the empty Asp head is licensed. An analogy may be of some help here. This situation would of course be similar to what we have in certain cases of wh-movement. For example in *To whom did you talk?* the crucial property for the specifier-head relation in CP is located on the complement of the constituent in the specifier (i.e. the wh-feature on *whom*, the complement

of P) and this property seems to affect the entire constituent in the specifier position (generally referred to as "feature percolation"). This specifier can then enter into a licensing configuration with the head C. In (44), it also seems to be the complement of the constituent in Spec,Asp(Completive) (i.e. the object DP) which determines the nature of the moved constituent (i.e. the VP) such that it can license something in the head position of this projection. Therefore in both cases, we have a complement that affects the nature of the projection of its head.

It is worth underlining that the syntactic mechanism being described here for completive constructions is not limited to these but instead seems a pervasive characteristic of the Creole grammar being described here:[9] indeed once the specifiers are overtly realized in JC then the heads become potentially null, while when the Spec is empty the head is filled with a marker. This is reminiscent of the observation made by Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Giusti (1998) that "A Functional Projection must be visible at all levels of representation: by (a) making the Spec visible and/or (b) making the head visible".

4. CONCLUSION

The marker for completive aspect *don* differs from other TMA markers in JC by optionally occurring in a post-VP configuration. This was accounted for by Durrleman (2001) in terms of VP movement to [Spec,CompletiveAspP] and the arguments in favour of this approach are sketched in section 2. Another interesting property of completive aspectual readings is that in certain instances, these may be derived without the overt realization of *don*. In other words, in instances of absence of morphological material in the IP or 'bare sentence', temporal/aspectual interpretations are affected not only by the type of verb involved ([+/-stative]) but also by the absence or presence of overt structure in the complement DP.

Data presented in Durrleman (2007) uphold that the DP domain in JC is highly articulate, involving various projections that host nominal functional material. The overall structure arrived at in that work is as follows:[10]

(45)   KP > DP > TopP Contrastive > FP - Functional Phrase D-Linked > Quantifier
            Phrase Distributive > NumberP Number > FP Cardinal > ClassifierP Inclusiveness
            > FocP Adjectival > FP Adjectival > NP

This structure is seen here to correlate directly with certain telicity effects in instances of 'bare sentences'. More precisely, a quantized nominal, i.e. a nominal including structure higher than the adjectival layer, if it is a direct object in a [-stative] VP, triggers a default past, completive reading for this VP in the absence of TMA marking. In these instances, the presence of functional material in the DP serves to delimit the VP along the lines of Tenny (1987), qualifying VP-movement to the specifier of CompletiveAspP. It is this movement that would allow the head of this aspectual projection to remain potentially null, given that the specifier in these instances would be responsible for rendering the projection visible.

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[9] See Durrleman (2007) for additional illustrations.
[10] This is an abbreviated structure. The interested reader is referred to Durrleman (2007) for details.

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