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## ON CERTAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HAITIAN AND FRENCH PREDICATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS\*

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### 0. *Haitian and French in Diachrony*

The Haitian language emerged around the XVII century in Saint-Domingue (now Haiti) from the contact between French, the then-colonial language, and the (mostly) Kwa languages spoken by the enslaved West-Africans. This contact situation was one indirect consequence of Columbus's travels half a millennium ago. French (hereafter FR) is the lexifier language for Haitian (hereafter HA), i.e., the phonetic shapes of the majority of HA lexemes originate from FR.

But according to some scholars, FR might have provided much more to HA than just the phonetic basis for a vocabulary. Indeed, it has been argued that HA should be classified as a Romance language because of its presumed status as a non-standard dialect of FR, related to the popular vernacular variety spoken by the colonizers and navigators of the XVII century (Faine 1937, Valdman 1978, Chaudenson 1979, Fournier & Whittman 1983, etc.). Such claims imply that the syntax of HA (and of other Creoles with FR-based lexicons) evolved from that of FR. Faine (1937:xi), for one, argues that HA is "une langue néo-romane issue de la langue d'oïl, en passant par les anciens dialectes normand, picard, angevin, poitevin ..." and concludes that "le normand [est] le vrai père du créole" (ibid:2). More poetically, Chaudenson (1979:168f) writes that "French Creoles" duly belong to the "galaxie francophone." According to him, these languages embody extremely advanced stages of FR; these advances, inherent to FR, result from unbridled evolutionary tendencies in the (earlier) absence of established socio-cultural norms. And with verve, Fournier and Whittman (1983) proclaim: "Le créole, c'est du français, coudon!"

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However, the syntax of HA displays properties which are not straightforwardly extrapolated from the syntax of FR (cf. e.g. Koopman 1986, Lefebvre & Lumsden 1989, DeGraff in press). Such divergences challenge the contention that HA is a FR dialect.<sup>1</sup> In this paper I examine one particular domain in which HA and FR exhibit different syntactic behaviors. The domain in question is predication.<sup>2</sup>

In certain predicative contexts in HA, which I will shortly define, the morpheme *se* occurs between the subject and the predicate. This morpheme is historically related to FR *c'est*. But I will argue that HA *se* and FR *c'est*, although diachronically connected, synchronically give rise to constructions with distinct properties.<sup>3</sup> These distinctions are not predicted by HA's purported affiliation with the Romance family of languages.

#### 1. Haitian *Se* and French *C'est*: Alike?

The paradigm involving the (non-)use of HA *se* manifests itself most clearly in matrix affirmative clauses which are unmarked for tense, as in (1). Adjectival, prepositional, and bare nominal predicates (AP, PP and NP, respectively) are string-adjacent to their subjects, as in (1a) through (1c). What is important to note about (1a) through (1c) is that these clauses do not contain an overt copula.<sup>4</sup>

- All in one
- (1) a. *Bouki (\* se ) malad*  
 Bouki SE sick  
 "Bouki is sick"
- b. *Bouki (\* se ) anba tab la*  
 Bouki SE under table DET  
 "Bouki is under the table"

<sup>1</sup> Muysken & Smith (1986) provides a sampling of the debate on the genesis of Creole languages.

<sup>2</sup> The predicates of main interest to this paper are those not headed by verbs. In some languages, these predicates give rise to copular constructions.

<sup>3</sup> The evidence I give for the differences between *se* and *c'est* is, for the most part, independent of the analysis that I propose for *se* in DeGraff (1992a, 1992b). But see 2.4 and note 16.

<sup>4</sup> The following abbreviations are used: ANT 'anterior', COMP 'complementizer', CONJ 'conjunction', DEM 'demonstrative', DET 'determiner', EMPH 'emphatic marker', FUT 'future', IRREAL 'irrealis', PROG 'progressive', 1sg 'first singular', ..., 3pl 'third plural', # 'pause' (denoting comma intonation); 'phonetically null element'.

- c. *Bouki (?? se ) doktè*  
 Bouki SE doctor  
 "Bouki is a doctor"<sup>5</sup>
- d. *Bouki \*( se ) { yon doktè // doctè a | Lafontant }*  
 Bouki SE DET doctor | doctor DET | Lafontant  
 "Bouki is { a doctor | the doctor | Lafontant }"

To the best of my knowledge, it is a common property of Romance languages and their dialects that, in matrix clauses, they do not allow non-verbal predicates to be adjacent to their subjects (in the most commonly used registers). In other words, it seems to be the case that all these languages use an overt verbal copula to link a non-verbal predicate to its subject in matrix environments.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, that the grammar of HA generates (1a)-(1c) doesn't seem straightforwardly reconcilable with its alleged status as a Romance language.<sup>7</sup>

However, not all HA predicates in matrix clauses are string-adjacent to their subjects. In (1d), the predicate is either a nominal occurring with a determiner, *yon doktè* "a doctor" and *doktè a* "the doctor", or a proper name, *Lafontant*. I assume that such a predicate is a Determiner Phrase, DP, in the sense of Abney (1987). With a DP predicate, the morpheme *se* must occur between the subject and the predicate.

Note that in (1d), *yon doktè* "a doctor" does not have the same referential force as *Lafontant*: *yon doktè* "a doctor" is non-referential and indicates a property of the subject (attribution), while *Lafontant* is referential and identifies the subject (identification). This suggests that occurrence of *se* in (1) is not a syntactic reflex of the semantic relation of identification (or equation). I therefore disagree with Fauchois' (1982) analysis of *se* (also used in modified form by Damoiseau (1987)), according to which HA, unlike English (cf. "That man is proud"/"That man is a doctor" and "That man is John"), would overtly

<sup>5</sup> The question marks indicate that some of my informants favor omitting *se* when the predicate is a bare nominal.

<sup>6</sup> Such statement about universal properties are always subject to exceptions (even when made about a circumscribed family of languages) and I would be grateful to anyone who would bring forward such exceptions.

<sup>7</sup> Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, Illongo and Russian are among other languages which share with HA the property of not manifesting an overt copula (at least in certain given contexts). In DeGraff (1992a, 1992b), I argue that HA does not at all have a verbal copula; cf. Sections 3-5. Interestingly, various other creoles can be argued to also manifest copula-less structures: Jamaican, Belizean, Gullah, Guyanese, Miskito, Morisyen, the Creoles of Guinée-Bissau and Principe, etc. (Holm 1984 and references therein).

distinguish between 'relation d'attribution'—expressed without *se*— and 'relation d'identification'—expressed with *se*.<sup>8,9</sup>

What (1) reveals is a distinction in HA vis-à-vis the occurrence of *se* between AP, PP and NP predicates on one hand and DP predicates on the other hand. It is tempting to conjecture that such a distinction results from the role of FR in the genesis of HA. For concreteness, consider the FR left-dislocation patterns in (2).<sup>10</sup> The pattern in (2) closely approximates that in (1).<sup>11</sup>

- (2) a. \**Jean, c'est malade*  
       Jean C'+is sick  
       b. \**Jean, c'est sous la table*  
       Jean C'+is under DET table  
       c. \**Jean, c'est medecin*  
       Jean C'+is doctor  
       d. *Favrang Valcin, c'est (un peintre | Valcin II)*  
       Favrang Valcin C'+is DET painter Valcin II

The parallel between (1) and (2) becomes even more seductive when one considers the following observations about FR left-dislocation with *c'est*. Barnes (1985:49) notes, for example, that "the use of left-dislocation with lexical subjects of *être* is quasi-obligatory where *ce* is an appropriate anaphor." In addition, Campion (1984:73), who wrote her thesis on left-dislocation in Montréal French, observes that "the more noun-like the post-copula constituent, the more likely left-dislocation will occur."

Drawing the parallel between (1) and (2) to its seemingly logical conclusion, one could surmise like Faine (1937:156) that "il est [...] probable que [*se*] créole ne soit autre chose que *c'est* français prononcé [*se*] selon le mode phonétique du créole." If so, one could also argue firstly that *se* in (1a)

<sup>8</sup> See Barnes (1985:51ff) for a similar analysis of FR left-dislocations with *c'est*. In Barnes' own words, left-dislocation "is a sort of iconic representation of the identity relation denoted by *c'est*."

<sup>9</sup> In DeGraff (1992b), I provide further arguments against an analysis of *se* as an equative verb. One argument relies on the fact that *se* in (1d) may be omitted when the subject is questioned, with the complementizer *ki* preceding the predicate, as in (i):

- (i) *kimoun ki (?? se) Lafontant?*  
       who KI SE Lafontant

If *se* were responsible for the equative meaning of (1d) (with *Lafontant* in predicate position) as supposed by Fauchois and Damoiseau, then the occurrence of *se* should be obligatory in (i). Indeed, in (i) as in (1d), *Lafontant* is "equated" to the subject. This prediction is not compatible with the facts.

<sup>10</sup> I take (2) to hold of pragmatically unmarked contexts.

<sup>11</sup> Favrang Valcin, a.k.a. Valcin II (cf. (2d)), born in Jeremie in 1947, is a Haitian painter.

through (1c) in HA is illicit because the corresponding FR left-dislocations in (2a) and (2c) are ungrammatical, and, secondly that (1d) in HA is actually an instance of left-dislocation, the counter-part of (2d) in FR (given (1d), such left-dislocation would be obligatory in HA). However, I will reject this conclusion and argue that although *se* and *c'est* are cognates, the (non-) occurrence of *se* in (1) is synchronically divorced from left-dislocation.<sup>12</sup>

## 2. Haitian *Se* and French *C'est* : Different?

As suggested by their phonetic resemblance and the parallel between (1) and (2), the use of *se* in HA historically evolved from that of *c'est* in FR. But, in what follows, I present arguments that *se* and *c'est* fulfill disparate functions in their respective synchronic grammars. These arguments evoke optionality of use, intonation properties, distributional facts, binding properties, person agreement features and raising possibilities.

2.1 *Optionality*. One notable difference between HA *se* and FR *c'est* has to do with optionality. In FR, when the predicate position is occupied by a DP, left-dislocation with *c'est* is optional, at least in formal registers. For example, (3a) is acceptable as a non-dislocated clause alongside (3b), which is dislocated:

- (3) a. *Favrang Valcin est un peintre engagé*  
       Favrang Valcin is DET painter committed  
       "Favrang Valcin is a (socially-) committed painter"  
       b. *Favrang Valcin, c'est un peintre engagé*  
       Favrang Valcin C'+is DET painter committed  
       "Favrang Valcin, that's a (socially-) committed painter"

The pattern in (3) is not replicated with *se* in HA. When the predicate position is occupied by a DP, absence of *se* produces categorical ungrammaticality:

- (4) \**Bouki yon bon doktè*  
       Bouki DET good doctor  
       "Bouki is a good doctor"

<sup>12</sup> The *se* under study has different properties from the sentence-initial *se* of cleft constructions which uniformly precedes the clefted constituent, irrespective of the category of this constituent. For various analyses of clefts in HA, see Fauchois (1982), Lumsden (1990) and their references.

Such ungrammaticality doesn't seem compatible with the assumption that (1d) is a left-dislocated structure. (1a), (1b) and (1c) strongly indicate that the copula in HA can be absent or phonetically null. But if (1d) were a left-dislocated clause like (3b), then (4) should be acceptable in HA, on a par with (3a), as the copula-less, non-dislocated version of (1d). This is definitely contrary to fact; cf. (4). Besides, (1d) can itself be mapped into a corresponding left-dislocation; cf. (5). That (5) has a single intonational break suggests that it contains only one left-dislocated phrase, namely, *Bouki*. This would hardly be expected if (1d) were also a left-dislocation.

- (5) *Bouki, li se yon dokte*  
 Bouki 3sg SE DET doctor  
 "Bouki, he is a doctor"

(4) and (5) thus provide evidence that a left-dislocated analysis for (1d) based on analogy with (2) is not tenable.

**2.2 Intonation and Stress Properties of the Pre-Se/C'est Position.** The clauses in (1d) and (2d) also differ in terms of their intonation contours. Intonationally, *Bouki* in (1d) is much closer to the rest of its clause than *Favrang Valcin* in (2d). In (1d), one cannot detect an intonational break after *Bouki* whereas *Favrang Valcin* is separated from the rest of its clause by comma intonation, i.e., by a fall in intonation and perhaps a pause. This is illustrated in (6).

- (6) a. *Bouki se yon bon dokte*  
 b. *Favrang Valcin # c'est un peintre engage*

As a result, the positions preceding HA *se* and FR *c'est* show different stress requirements. In FR, the nominal phrase preceding *c'est* must be able to bear stress. Therefore, when nominal, the left-dislocated element must be a lexical DP or a tonic pronoun. Crucially, the left-dislocated element cannot be a clitic pronoun. This is exhibited in (7), where *Favrang Valcin* and *lui*, the 3sg tonic pronoun, can be left-dislocated, but where left-dislocation of *il*, the 3sg atonic subject pronoun, is ungrammatical:

- (7) { *Favrang Valcin | Lui | \*Il* }, *c'est un peintre engage*  
 Favrang Valcin 3sg 3sg C'+is DET painter committed  
 "[ *Favrang Valcin | Him* ], that's a (socially-) committed painter"

The situation is quite different in HA. The position preceding *se*, unlike that preceding *c'est*, readily accommodates atonic pronouns; cf. (5) and (8).

- (8) *Li se yon dokte*  
 3sg SE DET doctor  
 "He is a doctor"

In DeGraff (in press, 1993), I argue at length that pre-verbal pronouns in HA are clitics. (9), (10) and (11) show that that *li* is indeed a dependent morpheme.

- (9) a. *Yaya, bèl ti abitan an, ap viv nan vil*  
 Yaya beautiful little peasant DET PROG live in town  
 Sen-Mak  
 Sen-Mak  
 "Yaya, the beautiful little peasant, lives in Sen-Mak"  
 b. \**Li, bèl ti abitan an, ap viv nan vil*  
 3sg beautiful little peasant DET PROG live in town  
 Sen-Mak  
 Sen-Mak

- (10) *li ale* → *l-ale*

- (11) —*Kimoun ki genyen?* "Who won?"  
 —*Bouki | Li-menm | \*Li.*

(9) contrasts lexical subjects like *Yaya* against pronominal subjects like *li*: in (9a), the appositive phrase *bèl ti abitan an* "the beautiful little peasant" intervenes between the subject *Yaya* and the verb phrase, whereas *li* in (9b) cannot be separated from the verb phrase. Furthermore, what (10) shows is that *li* forms a single phonological unit with *ale* "go." Finally, in (11), to the question *Kimoun ki genyen?* "Who won?", one can answer *Bouki* and *li-menm*; but *li* cannot occur on its own as an answer to the same question. (*Li-menm* in (11) is the emphatic 3sg pronoun.)

Thus *li* in HA, as a clitic pronoun, cannot bear stress and is phonologically dependent. That it occurs before *se* in (8) indicates that the pre-*se* position, unlike the pre-*c'est* position, does not obligatorily bear stress. This observation raises additional doubts about the possibility that (1d) and (8) are left-dislocations parallel to (2d).

2.3. *Distribution*. Given (7) and (8), the co-occurrence of *se* and an atonic pronoun in HA is one pattern which is not matched by corresponding use of *c'est* in FR. Vice-versa, *c'est* in FR occurs in syntactic contexts where *se* is absent in HA. Under certain conditions,<sup>13</sup> *c'est* can precede an adjectival phrase. To wit:

- (12) a. *Je me souviens que la Noël c'était plat*  
 1sg 1sg remember COMP DET Christmas C'+was flat  
 "I remember that Christmas it was boring" (Campion 1984:59)
- b. *Le linge des enfants, c'est décousu*  
 DET clothing of-DET children C'+is unstitched  
 "The children's clothes are unstitched" (Campion 1984:72)
- c. *La soupe à l'oignon, c'est bon*  
 DET soup with DET+onion C'+is good  
 "Onion soup, that's good" (Barnes 1985:53)
- d. *Les Turcs, c'est fort*  
 DET Turks C'+is strong  
 "Turks, they're strong" (Maillard 1987:164)

In HA, as already hinted at in (1a), under no condition can *se* intervene between a nominal subject and its adjectival predicate. *Se* is barred in the position preceding APs in the contexts corresponding to those in (12):<sup>14</sup>

- (13) a. *Mwen sonje Noël (\* se ) ( te ) tris*  
 1sg remember Christmas SE ANT sad  
 "I remember that Christmas it { is | was } sad"
- b. *Rad timoun yo (\* se ) chire*  
 clothing children DET-pl SE torn  
 "The children's clothes, they are torn"
- c. *Mayi-moulen (\* se ) gou*  
 cornmeal SE good  
 "Cornmeal, that's good"
- d. *Ayisyen (\* se ) varyan*  
 Haitian SE courageous  
 "Haitians, they're courageous"

<sup>13</sup> These conditions need to be defined in subtle ways, which I will not go into. For discussion, see Burston & Monville-Burston (1982), Campion (1984), Barnes (1985), Maillard (1987) and references therein.

<sup>14</sup> *Se* can precede adjectives when introducing clefts. But see note 13.

(12) and (13) further weaken the potential correspondence between *se* and *c'est* and confirm my claim that, with respect to the grammar of contemporary HA, *se* has achieved a syntactic status quite different from that of *c'est* in FR.

2.4. *Binding Facts*. In DeGraff (1992a, 1992b), I argue that *se*, when co-occurring with a preceding non-dislocated DP, is a resumptive anaphor bound by that DP.<sup>15</sup> Regarding FR *c'est*, Pollock (1983) claims that *c'* in *c'est* is a referential expression subject to Binding Principle C. My claims about *se* and Pollock's claims about *c'est* make distinguishable predictions about the coreference relations in which *se* and *c'* may enter.

For example, Pollock points out that when *c'est* occurs in an embedded clause, the embedded subject must be contra-indexed with the matrix subject (because of Binding Principle C):

- (14) *Pierre<sub>i</sub> croit que c'<sub>(j≠i)</sub>est un idiot* (Pollock 1983:113)  
 Pierre believe COMP C' is DET idiot  
 "Pierre believes that's an idiot"

As illustrated in (15), *se*, unlike *c'* in *c'est*, exhibits properties of anaphors (as per Binding Principle A). In (15), *se* is bound in its binding domain by the embedded pronominal subject *li* and need not be contra-indexed with the matrix subject, i.e. it may be the case that  $i = j$ .

- (15) *Bouki<sub>i</sub> kwè li<sub>j</sub> se<sub>j</sub> yon enbesil*  
 Bouki believe 3sg SE DET imbecile  
 "Bouki believes that he is an idiot"

Therefore, Binding theory adds another dimension with regard to which one can differentiate HA *se* from FR *c'est*.

2.5. *Person Agreement Features*. In 2.2, (7) and (8) exemplify one class of co-occurrence patterns involving *se* — an atonic pronoun followed by *se* — which don't have counterparts with *c'est*. Here I illustrate yet another class of patterns with *se* which lack correspondents in FR. Consider (16) and (17):

<sup>15</sup> Unlike the other arguments used in this paper to distinguish between *se* and *c'est*, the argument presented in this part of the main text assumes a particular analysis of *se*, namely that in DeGraff (1992a, 1992b). (For other analyses of *se*, see Fauchois (1982), Fèrère (1974), Damoiseau (1987), Lumsden (1990), Déprez & Vinet (1991), and Manfredi (1991).)

(16) ( *mwen* | *ou* | *li* )<sub>i</sub> *se*<sub>i</sub> *yon doktè*  
 I-am you are | he/she is | a doctor  
 " ( I am | you are | he/she is ) a doctor"

(17) ( \* *moi* | \* *toi* | *lui* )<sub>i</sub> *c'*<sub>i</sub> *est un médecin*  
 I-am | you are | him/her, he/she is | a doctor  
 " ( Me, I am | You, you are | Him/Her, he/she is ) a doctor"

What (17) shows is that *c'est* is restricted to co-occur with left-dislocated nominals which are *third-person*. No such restriction holds of *se* in (16), which is compatible with subjects of *any* person. This contrast between *se* and *c'est* receives an explanation if one assumes that *se* is devoid of intrinsic person (and number) features, whereas *c'* in *c'est* is a third person pronominal. Thus the ungrammaticality of *moi* '1sg' and *toi* '2sg' in (17) simply results from a clash in agreement ( $\phi$ ) features whereas *se* in (16) has no agreement features and there is no potential clash.<sup>16</sup>

2.6. *Raising*. Here I give the coup-de-grâce to a left-dislocation analysis for (1d). In FR, when a lexical DP precedes *c'est*, this DP is in left-dislocated position, as schematized in the templates in (18).

(18) a. DP, *ce être*+I<sup>0</sup> ...  
 b. [ $\alpha$ DP [<sub>IP</sub> *ce être*+I<sup>0</sup> ... ]]

In (18b), the sentence-initial DP is outside of the minimal clause, i.e. it is outside of the Inflection Phrase, IP. Being outside of IP, it is in a non-argument position, an A1-position. Such DP cannot be raised; cf. (19a). This is because of a theory-internal ban on movement from an A1-position to an argument-position (A-position). Such movement would violate Binding Principle C: a nominal (here *c'*) bound from an A1-position is a variable and variables must be

<sup>16</sup> See Damoiseau (1987), DeGraff (1992a, 1992b) and Déprez & Vinet (1991) for further comments on the agreement features of *se*. Damoiseau makes the important observation that *se* in HA may also occur in left-dislocated constructions and that in these contexts it does manifest agreement features which impose restrictions on the left-dislocated nominal:

(i) [ \* *mwen-menm* | \* *ou-menm* | *li-menm* ]<sub>i</sub> *se*<sub>i</sub> *yon doktè*  
 1sg-EMPH 2sg-EMP 3sg-EMP SE DET doctor

" ( Myself, I am | Yourself, you are | him/her/self, he/she is ) a doctor"

(i) contrasts with (16): *se* in (i) occurs only with a third-person left-dislocated nominal whereas *se* (16) occurs in non-left-dislocated constructions with subjects of any person and number. *Se* in subject position (Spec(IP)) of HA left-dislocations manifests the same agreement restrictions as *c'* of *c'est*: compare (i) and (17).

A-free, i.e. they cannot be bound from an A-position. (Note also that *c'* in (19a) violates the case filter.)

(19) a. \**Jean semble c'être un médecin*  
 Jean seem C'+be DET doctor  
 b. *Jean semble être un médecin*  
 Jean seem be DET doctor  
 "Jean seems to be a doctor"

Compare (19a) with (19b). In (19b), *ce* is absent, and raising of *Jean* licitly originates from the embedded subject position (embedded Spec(IP)), an A-position.

Turning to HA, the DP preceding *se*, unlike the one preceding *c'est*, can raise to matrix subject position.<sup>17</sup>

(20) a. *genlè* [ *Bouki se yon doktè* ]  
 seem Bouki SE DET doctor  
 "It seems that Bouki is a doctor"  
 b. *Bouki genlè* [ *e<sub>i</sub> se yon doktè* ]  
 Bouki seem SE DET doctor  
 "Bouki seems to be a doctor"

Thus, in (20a) (and consequently in (1d)), the DP preceding *se* is in Spec(IP). In FR, the DP preceding *c'est* is outside of IP. This concludes my demonstration that there is a class of HA predicative clauses with *se* that are structurally different from FR predicative clauses with *c'est*.<sup>18</sup>

### 3. What is the Nature of *Se*?

I have argued that *se* in (1d) is not the syntactic equivalent of *c'est* in (2d). But then what is *se* and how should the paradigm in (1) be analyzed? I have answered these questions in DeGraff (1992a, 1992b), which I now summarize briefly.

Let me recall the basic data in (1), repeated in (21).

<sup>17</sup> For further data and an analysis for raising in HA, see Déprez (1992).

<sup>18</sup> One important caveat is in order: note 17 documents HA clauses with *se* which are left-dislocations. These are examined in detail in DeGraff (1992a). But what matters here is that the occurrence of *se* in predicative constructions in HA does not necessarily imply left-dislocation. This is unlike *c'est* in FR.

- (21) a. *Bouki (\* se ) malad*  
 Bouki SE sick  
 "Bouki is sick"
- b. *Bouki (\* se ) anba tab la*  
 Bouki SE under table DET  
 "Bouki is under the table"
- c. *Bouki (?? se ) doktè*  
 Bouki SE doctor  
 "Bouki is a doctor"
- d. *Bouki \*( se ) { yon doktè | doktè a | Lafontant }*  
 Bouki SE DET doctor | doctor DET | Lafontant  
 "Bouki is { a doctor | the doctor | Lafontant }"

In (21), *se* discriminates AP, PP and NP predicates vs. DP predicates. But the contrast in (21) becomes blurred in at least three cases: (1) when the predicate is preceded by a tense morpheme, as in (22); (2) when the predicate is negated, as in (23); and (3) when the subject is questioned, with the complementizer *ki* preceding the predicate, as in (24).<sup>19</sup>

A Tense, Mood or Aspect marker preceding the predicate gives rise to the pattern in (22), where *se* is illicit throughout.<sup>20</sup>

- (22) a. *Bouki (\* se ) te (\* se ) malad*  
 Bouki SE ANT SE sick  
 "Bouki was sick"
- b. *Bouki (\* se ) te (\* se ) anba tab la*  
 Bouki SE ANT SE under table DET  
 "Bouki was under the table"
- c. *Bouki (\* se ) te (\* se ) doktè*  
 Bouki SE ANT SE doctor  
 "Bouki was a doctor"
- d. *Bouki (\* se ) te (\* se ) yon doktè*  
 Bouki SE ANT SE DET doctor  
 "Bouki was a doctor"

<sup>19</sup> For further data on *se*, see Fèrère (1974), Fauchois (1982) and Damoiseau (1987), etc.

<sup>20</sup> Other Tense, Mood or Aspect markers like *pral* 'FUT', *ap* 'PROG, IRREAL, FUT', *ka* 'IRREAL' produce patterns similar to (22). In DeGraff (1993), I argued that HA Tense, Mood and Aspect markers are verbs.

Negating the constructions in (21) produces the pattern in (23), which is similar to (22). In (23) (as in (22)), *se* is uniformly absent between subject and predicate.

- (23) a. *Bouki (\* se ) pa (\* se ) malad*  
 Bouki SE NEG SE sick  
 "Bouki is not sick"
- b. *Bouki (\* se ) pa (\* se ) anba tab la*  
 Bouki SE NEG SE under table DET  
 "Bouki is not under the table"
- c. *Bouki (\* se ) pa (\* se ) doktè*  
 Bouki SE NEG SE doctor  
 "Bouki is not a doctor"
- d. *Bouki (\* se ) pa (\* se ) { yon doktè | Lafontant }*  
 Bouki SE NEG SE DET doctor Lafontant  
 "Bouki is not { a doctor | Lafontant }"

Another pattern of interest is produced when the subject is *wh*-moved, as in (24). Throughout (24), the complementizer *ki* uniformly surfaces in a position preceding the predicate. Interestingly, in (24d), the predicate, even though a DP, may occur without *se*.<sup>21</sup>

- (24) a. *kimoun ki (\* se ) malad*  
 who KI SE sick  
 "Who is sick?"
- b. *kimoun ki (\* se ) anba tab la*  
 who KI SE under table DET  
 "Who is under the table?"
- c. *kimoun ki (?? se ) doktè*  
 who KI SE doctor  
 "Who is a doctor?"
- d. *kimoun ki (?? se ) { yon doktè | Lafontant } ?*  
 who KI SE DET doctor Lafontant  
 "Who is { a doctor | Lafontant } ?"

In (21d), (22d), (23d) and (24d), the predicate is a nominal co-occurring with a determiner, a DP. But (22d), (23d) and (24d) contrast with (21d) by the absence of *se* between subject and predicate. However, one generalization

<sup>21</sup> Relative clauses with the operator extracted out of subject position are similar to (24) with respect to occurrence of *se*.

emerges: a DP predicate is never string-adjacent to its subject. Such a predicate must be preceded by *se*, a tense morpheme such as *te*, the negation marker *pa*, or the complementizer *ki*.

I assume that at D-structure, predication in HA is always realized within a Small Clause and that the subject moves to Spec(IP) at S-structure.<sup>22</sup> Crucially, what varies is the internal structure of this Small Clause. I take the lexical heads A, P and N to be inherently predicative.<sup>23</sup> According to Stowell (1989: 248), nouns and adjectives — and, I would like to suggest, prepositions — are “pure predicative categories.” As such, at D-structure, they contain a subject that appears in Spec, directly under XP and as a sister of the predicate X'.

Differently from AP/PP/NP, nominal phrases containing a determiner, DPs, are not inherently predicative, but “have a dual nature” (Stowell 1989:233). They can be either predicative, as in “John is a good doctor,” or referential, as in “John met a good doctor” (see also Williams 1983). As suggested by Stowell, the potential referentiality of DPs may be attributed to the occurrence of the functional head D<sup>0</sup> which selects NP. In DeGraff (1992a, 1992b), I argue that at S-structure, assuming Abney's (1987) structure for DP, [<sub>DP</sub> Spec [<sub>D'</sub> D<sup>0</sup> NP]], and abstracting from linear order, the determiner and one segment of its projection hierarchically intervene between the subject and the head noun of the predicate. More precisely, I propose that differently from AP/PP/NP, the subject predicated over by DP is generated not in Spec(DP), but in a position adjoined to DP. (Spec(DP) is reserved for the genitive phrase.)

The distinction among various predicative Small Clauses is illustrated in (25) (SC-SP denotes the base-generated Small Clause Subject Position):

- (25) [<sub>AP</sub> SC-SP [<sub>A'</sub> ... A<sup>0</sup> ... ]]  
 [<sub>PP</sub> SC-SP [<sub>P'</sub> ... P<sup>0</sup> ... ]]  
 [<sub>NP</sub> SC-SP [<sub>N'</sub> ... N<sup>0</sup> ... ]]  
 [<sub>DP</sub> SC-SP [<sub>DP</sub> ... [<sub>D'</sub> ... D<sup>0</sup> ... ] ... ]]

The subject, generated inside the Small Clause, does not receive Case in this position, and would violate the Case filter if it remained in its D-structure position. In (21)-(24), the D-structure subject, no matter what the category of the predicate is, moves from SC-SP into Spec(IP) in order to get Case through Spec-Head agreement with I<sup>0</sup>, leaving a trace. This trace must be both identified

<sup>22</sup> This is similar to Stowell's (1978) and Burzio's (1986) analyses of copular *be* as a raising verb, except that the raising element in HA is I<sup>0</sup>. See also Couqueaux (1981) for FR *être*.

<sup>23</sup> Two exceptions: locative PPs may be arguments, and some Ps are merely Case assigners/spell-outs, not heads (Rothstein 1983).

and head-governed, according to the conjunctive definition of ECP (Stowell 1985). In all the relevant cases, identification of the trace in SC-SP is satisfied through antecedent-government by the nominal in Spec(IP). What about head-government?

Head-government is government by an overt head. I follow Aoun & Sportiche (1983) in assuming that government must be expressed in terms of *maximal* projections and not in terms of branching nodes. This relation, denoted *m-command* by Chomsky (1986), is defined in (26):

- (26) *X m-commands Y* iff  
 $\forall \phi, \phi$  a maximal projection, if  $\phi$  dominates X then  $\phi$  dominates Y.

In (21), with AP, PP and NP predicates ((21a)-(21c), respectively), the trace in SC-SP is head-governed by the lexical head of the predicate, and, I<sup>0</sup> being phonetically null, the mapping from D- to S-structure is string-vacuous. But in the case of predication by DP, (21d), where the subject moves from a position adjoined to DP, the trace is not head-governed from inside the Small Clause because of the intermediate DP node. Neither does I<sup>0</sup> head-govern SC-SP, since I<sup>0</sup> is either phonetically null or occupied by a subject clitic, which is not a head.<sup>24</sup> And this is where *se* comes into play. In order to save the structure, the trace must be spelled out as a resumptive nominal which, being overt, is not subject to ECP; that resumptive nominal is *se*:

- (27) [<sub>IP</sub> Bouki<sub>i</sub> [<sub>I'</sub> [<sub>I<sup>0</sup></sub>  $\emptyset$  ] [<sub>DP</sub> *se*<sub>i</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> ( *yon doktè* | *Lafontant* ) ] ] ] ]  
 ]  
 Bouki SE DET doctor Lafontant  
 “Bouki is { a doctor | Lafontant }”

In (22), (23) and (24), head-government is uniformly ensured from outside the Small Clause by *pa* ‘NEG’, *te* ‘ANT’<sup>25</sup> and the complementizer *ki*, respectively, and *se* is not needed. Thus, head-government by *pa*, *te* or *ki* obscures the distinction between AP/PP/NP and DP otherwise manifested by (non-)occurrence of *se*, and the data in (21), (22), (23) and (24) are explained.

#### 4. Implications

It can be argued that predication for both FR and English is, as in HA, realized within a Small Clause at D-structure, with the subject of predication moving to Spec(IP) at S-structure (Stowell 1978, Couqueaux 1981, Burzio

<sup>24</sup> As argued by DeGraff (1993), the subject clitic under INFL spells out the agreement features (AGR) of INFL, but is not, in a strict sense, the head of INFL.

<sup>25</sup> Recall that I assume Tense, Mood and Aspect markers to be V<sup>0</sup>s (DeGraff 1993).



1986, etc.). However, unlike HA, FR and English have overt copulas, *être* and *be*. In matrix predicative clauses, these copulas head-govern the trace in the base-generated subject position SC-SP, independently of the category of the predicate. Therefore, the paradigm in (21) is not replicated in either FR or English.

Assuming the validity of the preceding arguments (see DeGraff (1992a, 1992b) for more details), *se* is not a verbal copula, but a resumptive nominal which spells out the trace left by movement of the base-generated subject from a DP Small Clause to the S-structure subject position (the Spec(IP) position). This spell-out is necessary whenever the trace is not properly governed.<sup>26</sup> An interesting corollary of this analysis regarding HA's "French connection" is that HA does not have a copula with the categorial status of FR *être*. *Se*, the would-be copula which occurs in HA with DP predicates in certain contexts, is argued to be nominal, not verbal. Furthermore, non-DP predicates in HA may occur with no morphologically-realized copula. Therefore, HA predicative clauses exhibit properties different from those of FR, its lexifier.

### 5. Haitian and French in Diachrony (bis)

Having demonstrated the synchronic differences between HA *se* and FR *c'est*, one left-over question is: By what process are they diachronically related? In DeGraff (1992a), I espouse the view that copula-less structures in HA might result from language acquisition strategies. Radford (1990), among many others, has indicated that language learners start the acquisition process by using mainly "copula-less" sentences (see also Ferguson (1971)). The copula is semantically empty: it is often only a tense-bearer (Radford 1990, Li & Thompson 1977) and it does not exert any selectional property over either its subject or the following projection. Thus, the language user loses no expressive power by not having a copula. Furthermore, given that the copula is generally phonologically unstressed (and frequently in liaison with the subject), its acquisition requires robust data. Taken together, these facts would explain the absence of a copula in the first approximation of the 'target' language and consequently in a Creole.

As to the process whereby FR *c'est* was recruited as *se* to function as the resumptive nominal in certain HA DP predicative constructions, I will speculate on one possible scenario. Li & Thompson (1977) have evidenced that copular constructions often emerge from left-dislocated topic-comment constructions in languages which were previously copula-less. In this process, the resumptive subject pronoun referring to the left-dislocated topic is reanalyzed as a copula,

<sup>26</sup> DeGraff (1992a, 1992b) gives further HA examples where resumptive pronouns surface to spell out traces which fail to be properly governed.

and the left-dislocated topic is reanalyzed as a non-dislocated subject, following the schema in (28):

- (28) Topic<sub>i</sub> # – [Pronominal Subject]<sub>i</sub> – Predicate ⇒  
Subject – Copula – Predicate

Li & Thompson's test-languages are Chinese and Wappo, with the copulas *shi* and *ce?* respectively (derived from demonstrative pronouns), and Hebrew, Palestinian Arabic and Zway, with the copulas *hu*, *huwwe* and *u*, respectively (derived from 3sg masculine subject pronouns). McWhorter (1992) further exemplifies this mechanism for Sranan, for the Creole of Guyane and for Swahili.

It is important to note that what Li & Thompson call 'copula' is any morpheme "which is *not* a NP [my emphasis] and whose only function ... is to 'link' ... two NP's" in an equational sentence, an equational sentence being any sentence "in which an identificational or a member class relationship is expressed between two NP's" (p. 419f). In that respect and given the analysis in Section 3, HA *se* is not a copula since it is nominal. Yet, in some sense, it fulfills the copula function of 'linking' the subject to its predicate: it is both bound by the subject and dominated by a projection of the predicate.<sup>27</sup>

Interestingly, *se* is also used as a resumptive pronoun in some HA left-dislocated topic-comment constructions, as exemplified in (i) of note 17. These constructions parallel FR left-dislocated constructions with *c'est*; cf. (2d), (17) and note 17. It is thus likely that the use of *se* in (1d), as a spell-out of the ungoverned trace of the surface subject, takes roots in the left-dislocation uses of *se* (and *c'est*).

I now lay to rest my sketch of the synchronic and diachronic (dis)connection between *se* and *c'est* ... until further strokes.

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<sup>27</sup> One might even argue that the trace in SC-SP, which is spelled out by *se* under the conditions outlined in Section 3, might be needed in all cases of predication in order for the dominating maximal projection to contain a free variable (a 'predicate variable' in Williams' (1980) terms) and thus become an open function. The trace (or its spell-out *se*) is dominated by the predicate projection and has an index which fulfills the same role as the predicate index in Williams' theory: both indices link the subject to the predicate.

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