

CONDITIONAL SENTENCES IN KRIO GRAMMAR

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ABSTRACT: The increasing interest in creole languages has heightened the need for grammar descriptions of them. Sierra Leone Krio, an English-derived creole, is not an exception. However, the research regarding this language has tended to focus on the semantic area rather than on syntax; there is little grammar description available on Krio, and with respect to conditionals, no work has been done. The aim of this paper is to analyze the actual interrelation of the components in Krio conditional sentences as well as to determine the importance of Tense, Aspect and Mood (TAM) markers in these syntactic constructions. The results of the research described here show that conditionals in Krio are made up of two constituents and that markers do account for tense. These results may contribute to the emerging development of Krio grammar use.

KEY WORDS: Creole, english Krio, conditional sentences in Krio.

ESTRUCTURAS CONDICIONALES EN LA GRAMÁTICA DE KRIO

RESUMEN: El aumento en el interés del idioma krio ha motivado la necesidad de una descripción gramatical. El idioma Krio en Sierra Leona, y el créole derivado del inglés no son la excepción. Los estudios acerca del Krio se han enfocado mayoritariamente en el área semántica, por consiguiente, existe muy poca información disponible sobre la descripción de la gramática Krio, y, especialmente, con respecto a las (oraciones) condicionales no se han hecho trabajos. En este contexto, el presente estudio de caso se centrará en las oraciones condicionales en Krio. Para ser más específicos, el objetivo de este estudio es analizar la real

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conexión de los componentes de las oraciones condicionales en Krio y también determinar la importancia de los marcadores del tiempo que se usa, aspecto y modo (TAM por sus siglas en inglés) en estas construcciones sintácticas. En otras palabras, el propósito es determinar cómo los hablantes de Krio de Sierra Leona expresan oraciones condicionales. Los resultados de este estudio que se encuentran descritos aquí muestran que las estructuras condicionales en Krio están constituidas por dos constituyentes y que los marcadores indican tiempo verbal; es por eso que la descripción de estas oraciones contribuirían en el desarrollo emergente del uso de la gramática del Krio.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Créole, inglés Krio, estructuras condicionales en krio.

1. INTRODUCTION

Much is already known about Krio, the creole language spoken as a Lingua Franca across the West African nation of Sierra Leone, but some particulars of its grammatical structure remain less well documented. The purpose of this article is therefore to report on one particular grammatical function, conditional sentences, which have been largely absent from published descriptions of the language.

In this article, we review the literature in the field, beginning with an elaboration on Krio, its origins, its sub-varieties, its status in Sierra Leone and a general description of this language. In addition, the section closes with a review of conditionals, their components and basic categories. We then describe the data collection and analysis methods, including a pedagogically-inspired elicitation activity, and present the results obtained after analyzing data on conditionals in the Krio language. The study identifies the role of TAM markers (Tense, Aspect and Mood) and addresses the distinction between the words *if* and *when* in conditional sentences. Finally, we focus on the order of the clauses and the possible difference in their connotation in the Krio language. The conclusion considers the role of markers as structure components and their impact in the description of Krio as well as the contribution of this study's unique methods for eliciting language data.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Sierra Leone and Krio

Sierra Leone is a small country situated on the West African coast. The indigenous population is made up of 18 different ethnic groups, each with its own language. The largest groups are the Temne in the north and the Mende in the south.

Huber (2000) stated that this nation was founded in 1787 by the Sierra Leone Company, the capital city, Freetown, became the settlement for freed slaves who came from the United States, Nova Scotia, and Great Britain. These liberated slaves constituted a new ethnic group, the Krios. Their language, Krio, became the *Lingua*

*Franca*¹ due to historical reasons. Krios hardly integrated with the indigenous people. Since Krios were employed increasingly as domestic servants in Freetown, these liberated Africans assimilated some aspects of the colonial British lifestyle. Similarly, the emergence of Krio society was strongly influenced by colonial rule: Freetown became the centre of socio-economic life in the 18th century. Because the concentration of social and economic facilities remained in Freetown, many non-Krio speakers moved from the provinces to the capital city for work; in this sense, speaking Krio was compulsory and reduplication of English as lingua franca (Nordlander y Shrimpton, 2003) same as reduplication in pidgins, creole and other contact languages (Kouwenberg. 2004). As a consequence, people with different ethnic backgrounds learned this language and took it home when they returned to their provinces. Nowadays, many Sierra Leoneans of mixed heritage who have grown up in the cities (and who are *not* ethnic Krios) also speak Krio as their native language. Therefore because of the influence of the Krios in the colonial period, their language has become the lingua franca among all the tribes in Sierra Leone (Sengova, 1987; Kumar, 2015, Jenkins 2009).

As mentioned before, Krio is used as the national lingua franca in Sierra Leone; it is, however, the native language of just 10 % of the population of the country who live mostly in the Western Area of the peninsula. To the rest of the residents, Krio is a second language since their mother tongue is one of the other Sierra Leonean languages. Krio has been associated with other English-based Creoles in West Africa, namely Cameroon Pidgin English and Ghanaian Pidgin English since Krio shares its historical background and linguistic characteristics with these two pidgins. According to Yakpo (2016) Krio has a recognized level of prestige since it is the only English-based creole taught as a subject at schools.

2.1.1. *Origins of Sierra Leone Krio*

The origins of Krio are highly debatable. Since Krio has a rich history of contact with other West African languages, some linguists have argued that Krio descended from an original West African creole, although it might well have been the offshoot of the Guinea Coast Creole English (GCCE). Hancock (1986, 1987, 1980) states that even before the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, the original “core” Creole came into existence along the Upper Guinea coast in West Africa in the 1600s. He supports his view with evidence: written certificates from that period which reported intermarriages between Europeans and Africans. According to Hancock’s view, the offspring from these unions, called *mulattos*, would have been the first Creole speakers.

¹ The concept *lingua franca* was defined by UNESCO (1953: 46) as “a language which is used habitually by people whose mother tongues are different in order to facilitate communication between them”.

Another perspective about the context leading to the emergence of Krio bases its argument on the resettlement of the rescued and repatriated freed slaves who came from the Americas. Huber (2000: 278) notes that “the Recaptives could very well have dominated the linguistic scene in 19th century Sierra Leone by swamping any other variety that may have developed in the years prior to their arrival.”

2.1.2. *Sub-varieties*

The spread of Krio in the country accounts for varieties of this language. According to Katrijn Maryns (2000), “Freetown Krio” is the variant spoken in West Sierra Leone (Freetown). It is the mother tongue of the residents of the Western areas and some non-native speakers who have stayed a long period of time in Freetown. “Up-line Krio” refers to the Krio spoken by the people who speak it as a second language in the provinces.

2.1.3. *Description of the language*

The lexical source of Krio is English. According to Jones (1971, 1990), about four-fifths of the kernel vocabulary is derived from English. The following sections provide an overview of what is already known about the Krio language as a foundation for interpreting the results from our study.

2.1.3.1. *Syntax*

Owusua (2015) stated that the structure of a simple Krio statement is noun + verb. The sentence can be extended to refer the various functional positions in Krio:

Da	ticha	kam
The:DET	teacher:NOM-SING	come:PST-SING

‘The teacher came’

Da	ticha	bin	kam	yestade
The:DET	teacher:NOM-SING	IPFV	come:PST-SING	yesterday:ADV

‘The teacher came yesterday’

Da	vex	ticha	bin	kam
The:DET	big:ADJ	teacher:NOM-SING	IPFV	come:PST-SING

‘The big teacher came yesterday’

Negative statements are achieved by preceding the particle *no* before the verb: *no kam*

In Krio, nouns and verbs of the same concept are usually alike. This is because this language borrows concepts rather than words from English. For example, the word “sing” in English is a verb; in Krio *sing* occurs as a verb and as a nominal:

A lek dis sing we i de sing
I:1SING like:PRS-SING the:DET song:SING PROG he:3SING PRO sing:INF
'I like the song which he is singing'

Other features of Krio include lack of inversion in questions¹: Besides, the linking verb "to be" does not occur usually:

Na-ou-sai yu de go?
Where:ADV you:2SING PRO go:INF
'Where are you going?'

A redi
I:1SING ready:ADJ
'I am ready'

Krio has an impressive ability to adapt borrowings to fulfill grammatical needs. In this sense, freestanding units are needed to indicate function and meaning. Finney (2008) proposed that since Krio lacks inflectional markers (like *-s*, *-ed* and *-ing* in English), separate words are used instead: *dem* (plural marker) and *in* (possessive marker). Besides, he reports that the verb *be* is often omitted in linking positions. Other characteristics he describes are no inversion when asking questions, lack of articles and double negatives.

2.1.3.4. Tense

According to Beerman (2016), in Krio, tense is indicated by means of TAM markers. These particles are situated immediately before verb forms. Nevertheless, it is paramount to take into account the distinction between stative and nonstative verbs² in order to interpret correctly the tense implied by the marker. The markers in Krio are:

2.1.3.4.1. Present Tense: *de*

A de fred ju
I:1SING PRO afraid:PRS-SING you: 2SING-ACC
'I am afraid of you'

De indicates progressive present tense in combination with nonstative verbs; it refers to a continuous process. In contrast, present tense for stative verbs is indicated by no external marking on the verb. This is because stative verbs cannot occur with the aspect marker (Njeuma, 1995) Nordlander (1997) also states that the present

² A **stative verb** is one which asserts that one of its arguments has a particular property (possibly in relation to its other arguments). Statives differ from nonstative verbs in that they are static; they have no duration and no distinguished endpoint. Nonstative verbs are defined as continued or progressive actions on the part of the subject. They have duration; that is, they occur over time.

moment in Krio is expressed by *de* giving this particle the function of a tense and the imperfective aspect marker³.

Nordlander (1997) further remarks that sentences in the indicative mood are not marked because they are in the “realis”: “Of these two moods, realis is in the majority of cases seen as the unmarked choice, since it has not overt marking in English and Krio, whereas irrealis is usually the marked choice”

2.1.3.4.2. *Future Tense: go*

A	go	rait
I:1SING	FUT	write:INF

‘I will write’

Eldred Jones (1971, 1990), claims that in Krio, the most common way of marking future is by means of *go*. In other words, *go* is related to future probability which is neutral when it is used very frequently. Another interesting feature related to *go* is described by Nordlander (1997), who argues that this marker shares a semantic duality with *kin* (ability marker) and *fo* (perfective marker). Owusua (2015), proposes that *go* as a future marker implies a low tone; otherwise, when *go* is in high tone it serves as a verb in the past. Jones (1971, 1990) stated that in some cases, *go* provides the verbs with the “irrealis” (future probability) mood but in other cases, it has a modal meaning (volition). In other words, *go* is a marker of mood that marks the irrealis⁴. Besides, Beerman (2015) agrees that commonly when a situation is marked with *go* it will be accounted for as a prediction of a future event i.e. the accomplishment of the action is regarded as likely to happen.

³ Punctual verbs are treated differently regarding TAM markers. In the following example situation, the boy asks, why do we eat?, the mom replies, “if we no it we dai”. As can be seen, there is no *de* marker in this sentence. This is because the verb *dai* (to die) does not have any temporal duration, no period of time is involved in it. According to this description, to die is a punctual verb. We can assume that punctual verbs are not marked in Krio language since they are defined as momentary or transitional.

However, we asked our informant whether the verb *dai* could be preceded by a marker in any situation. He claimed that the only one that he could picture in his mind would be the following: a terminally ill person in bed asking for his/her last wish to his/her relatives, he/she would say *a de dai nau* (I am dying now). In this kind of scenario, the person is going through the process of dying piecemeal (little by little) and as a continuous event; time is involved in this action, thus, the particle *de* is used as imperfective marking in order to limit or slow down the event in some way or the other; in other words, it would be adequate and necessary to use *de* before a punctual verb to provide it with the property of duration. This assumption is akin to Nordlander (1997:8): “the use of *de* resembles that of English when a stative verb receives progressive/imperfective marking, often in order to restrict situations.”

⁴ Mood describes the relationship of a verb with reality and intent. Realis mood indicate that something is actually the case, or actually not the case whereas irrealis, indicates that a certain situation or action is not known to have happened as the speaker is talking.

2.1.3.4.3. *Past Tense: bin*

In Krio, past tense marking adheres to the stative-nonstative verb distinction postulated by Bickerton (1974) For nonstative or active verbs, past tense occurs on two levels; as simple past tense and as remote past. Simple past tense bears no morphological marking; the form and meaning of the remote past tense is indicated with the marker *bin*. Owisua (2015) claimed that the meaning of this particle with nonstative verbs indicates remote past when used in a sequence of events before the moment of speaking. When *bin* is used with stative verbs it expresses only simple past time.

A	bin	no	se	yu	bin	gud
I:1SING	IPFV	know:INF	CONJ	you: 2SING-ACC	IPFV	good:ADJ

‘I knew that you were good’

God	gi	den	pikin	so	yu	nem	no	go	dai
God:SBJ	gave: OBJ	children:PL-ACC			you: 2SING-ACC	name:NOM-SING	no:NEG	FUT	die:INF

‘God gave them children so your name will not die’

Furthermore, Nordlander (1997) states that Krio speakers insert the particle *bin* in order to shift the time of the event back to a point which occurs before the actual instant of reference.

2.1.3.4. *Perfect Tense: don*

A	bin	don	rait
I:1SING	IPFV	PRF	write:INF

‘I have written’

Don is a particle that indicates perfective tense. Givon (1982) argues that *don* is an incipient perfect marker in Krio. However, Nordlander (1977) has postulated that *don* does not act as a tense past marker nor as a perfective aspect⁵ marker because it can be combined with both anterior tense and imperfective markers. In addition, he states that in combination with *bin*, *don* specifies the degree or level of past time in which the action was perfected. Diachcov (1976) stated that *don* could be considered a cognate to the English past participle *done*.

2.1.3.5. *Marker: fo*

A	bin	fo	don	rait
I:1SING	IPFV	AUX	PRF	write:INF

‘I ought to have written’ or ‘I would have written’

⁵ The grammatical aspect of a verb defines the temporal flow in the described event or state.

Yakpo (2016) states that this particle has uses; it is treated as a preposition, as a complementizer, and as modal auxiliary. According to Jones (1990), Williams (1971) and Van de Vate (2006), the literature on this subject postulates that if a verb is preceded by the particle *fo* in general, it corresponds to different senses of *should* which operate in the irrealis modality. These different interpretations of *fo* may imply compulsoriness, suggestion, planned future, supposition and the passive meaning. However, Jones debates the previous assumption since he claims he has found *fo* as “should” in the realis modality because it has been part of a construction in which the actions actually took place; in a profound interpretation *fo* has a “did” connotation.

2.1.3.4.6. Marker: *kin*

A	kin	rait
I:1SING	AUX	write:INF

‘I can write’

This particle is an irrealis marker which is normally related to ability. In other words, *kin* conveys two purposes, namely a modal which expresses habituality and the marking in Krio verbs for irrealis. This duality is supported by Givon (1995) who claims “there seems a strong affinity between the concepts of irrealis and habituality as it is possible to view habits, not as reoccurring events asserted in time (realis) but as predictions of future occurrences based on knowledge of the past (irrealis)”.

Despite the rich understanding of Krio grammar as described in the above sections, little is known about how conditionals are structured. The current study examined conditionals in detail through both interviews and the use of cards to elicit information.

We analyzed Krio conditionals using the formal-traditional terminology. Assuming that Krio is an English-based creole, this distinction would be useful in order to identify the representative time reference of the clause. Dancygier and Sweetser’s (1996) concept of domains further allowed us to consider issues of epistemic interpretation

Three different methodological activities were performed in three interviews to obtain actual conditional sentences: a) In the first interview, the informant was given a list of 8 sentences written in English (zero, first, second and third conditional) and asked to translate them into Krio; b) in the second interview, the informant was presented some of the sentences which he had translated before and asked to describe the situations in which they might take place; this activity led to his recounting of several anecdotes which allowed for additional interpretive information about usage; c) in the third interview, the interviewers presented a card game to the subject to find out whether the order of the protasis and apodosis in the sentence influences the meaning. In one of the cards, the sentences started with the protasis and in the other, they started the other way around, so the informant had to express differences in meaning. Using the same method explained before, the informant stated whether an *if* sentence was identical to a *we* (when) sentence; whenever he defined them as being different, he was asked to provide example situations to illustrate the dissimilarity.

In order to understand tense in Krio, the second activity was divided into two parts. In the first section, the use of markers with a dynamic verb were examined, and in the second section, those with a stative verb. The informant was given pieces of paper of two different colors in both parts of the activity. In the first part the yellow papers were a subject (a= I), a verb (gi= give), an indirect object (ju= you), a direct object (bred= bread) and some temporal adverbials (yestedi= yesterday, tidei= today, and tumara=tomorrow). The blue pieces of paper had one of the tense markers, *bin, de, go, fo, don* written on them. The informant had to form (if possible) a correct sentence and indicate an example situation for it.

2.2. Conditionals

According to Wierzbicka (1997), a core class of conditionals can be identified in all languages since the particle “if” is a universal human concept, lexicalized and grammaticalized in all languages. Conditionals such as “if-then” statements are used to talk about possible or imaginary situations. More precisely, conditionals are statements that say if one thing happens, another will follow.

Conditionals are represented as $p \implies q$. The \implies stands for “implies”. The p symbolizes the *protasis*. The antecedent, also called the hypothesis, the antecedent or the problem, is the first part of the conditional. This is the part where something is stated as possible to happen. Accordingly, the q stands for the *apodosis*. The consequent, also known as the conclusion or the answer, is the “then” part of the if-then statement. This is the constituent where something takes place because it might have happened or possibly existed before. Therefore, in an if-then statement, each part is a complete clause. Together it constitutes the order of a conditional. This will be explained in detail below.

Werth (1997) refers to three different terminologies for describing conditionals: First, the semiotic terminology postulated by Leech and Svartvik in 1975; this approach distinguishes between open conditions (*If today is sunny, I will go to the beach*) and hypothetical conditions (*If I had won the lottery, she would have married me*). The second approach to classify conditionals was used by Dancygier & Sweetser in 1996 and Lycan in 2005 who established three different domains; the content domain (*If today is sunny, I will go to the beach*), the epistemic domain (*If she sold her house, then the prices went up/must have gone up*) and the speech-act domain (*If you don't care getting less money, you can sell your house to that guy*). Finally, the third terminology to describe conditionals is called the formal-traditional approach, used in English as a second language.⁶ Werth (1997) also stated that it's important to determine the level of certainty and probability relative to the speaker, particularly whether the outcome

⁶ We want to include this information somewhere in here to justify the value of this study, since the informant's stories about when certain structures are used which is what makes this research add to what Nordlander has already done.

can be deduced from established facts or must be hypothesized based on knowledge of the person or culture.

This classification of the formal-traditional approach is in agreement with Murphy's (2014) definition and differentiation on conditionals and is organized as follows:

2.2.1. *Present factual conditionals (zero conditional)*

Lycan (2005) claimed that this conditional is a structure used for talking about general truths, or scientific facts, things which always happen under certain conditions. In other words, The *Zero Conditional* is used for actions that are always true when the conditions are met. It consists of two clauses, an "if" clause and a main clause. For example: When the "if" clause comes first, a comma is usually used. When the "if" clause comes second, there is no need for a comma. The present factual conditionals are made up by simple present tense in both clauses.

Examples:

Phosphorus burns if you expose it to air.

If you put salt to the tomato salad, it tastes better.

2.2.2. *Future factual conditionals (first conditional)*

The first conditional is used for future actions dependent on the result of another future action or event, where there is a reasonable possibility of the conditions for the action to be satisfied. Therefore, it connects two future actions, where one must take place before the second is possible. In this type of conditional, the protasis can be used with different present forms to talk about the possible future condition whereas the apodosis can contain "will", "going to" and other modal verbs such as "can" and "must" to talk about the possible future result. The important feature about future factual conditionals is that there is a real possibility that the condition will happen.

Examples:

I am flying to the Netherlands. I'll give you a ring if I can find a phone.

If he is feeling better, he will be at your party tomorrow.

2.2.3. *Present unreal conditionals (second conditional)*

In order to state an event that is unlikely or impossible, the second conditional is used. It refers to imaginary situations, where something different from what is really the case is imagined. The present unreal conditional is also used to talk about things that are unlikely to happen, as the condition is unlikely to be met.

This form may refer to present or future time. The speaker can refer to a present situation and imagine a result that is different from the reality or on the other hand, he may imagine a particular condition in the future, and the result of it. However, what

matters is that the speaker, by using this conditional, makes clear that there is not a real possibility or that it is a hypothetical situation that this condition will happen or might occur. This second type of conditional is made up by two clauses, in which the protasis is stated in past simple while the apodosis contains the auxiliary would and the base verb form. It is also possible to use “might” and “could” instead of would.

Examples:

If I knew her number, I would call her for her birthday.

(But I don't, so I haven't called)

If we hired a lawyer, we would recover our debts easily=POSSIBILITY

2.2.4. *Past unreal conditionals (third conditional)*

This type of conditional refers to an unreal situation in the past. It is related to something that did not happen, though maybe it was once an option. In other words, the past unreal conditional concerns only past situations with hypothetical results; it describes what someone would have done differently or how something could have happened differently if circumstances had been different. Therefore, it is frequently used to talk about imaginary situations that took place in the past.

The third conditional in English is formed by the use of the past perfect in the *if*-clause followed by a comma, would have and the past participle in the *result* clause. “Might” and “could” instead of “would” are also possible.

“If I had known her number, I would have called her for her birthday.”

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To address the limited knowledge of conditional structure and usage in Sierra Leone Krio, this study therefore asks the following questions:

- a. How are conditional sentences structured in Sierra Leone Krio?
- b. To what extent does this structure reflect that of English, and to what extent does it differ?
- c. How does a Krio native speaker explain conditional usage?

4. DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS

Based on the literature, we expected that conditionals in Krio were made up of two constituents: the protasis and the apodosis. Another assumption was related to the difference between *if* and *when*. *If* implies a condition and *we* is used if the previous sentence is an inquiry that starts with the word *ustem* (when in question constructions); it is focused on frequency. Supported by the theoretical background, we expected that when expressing factual or logical implications, Krio speakers used the marker *de* in

the apodosis. In addition, regarding conditionals of facts in the future we expected that Krio speakers used the marker *go* in the apodosis in order to state what would happen if certain circumstances prevail. With respect to conditionals of Speculation about Present or Future time, this work argues that Krio speakers use the marker *bin* in the protasis and the marker *go* in the apodosis when referring to conditions of speculation or when they consider hypothetical situations in the present or the future. Finally, to express hypothetical events which look back to past situations and speculate about a completely distinct result, this study hypothesizes that Krio speakers might use the markers *bin*, *fodon* both in the protasis and in the apodosis.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1. Informant

The informant of this study is a Krio native speaker who was living in Utrecht, the Netherlands. Born in 1987 in Freetown, Sierra Leone, he learned English, the official language of the country, at school and speaks it fluently. In 2006 he left Sierra Leone to join his family, who are political refugees in the Netherlands. He still uses Krio on a daily basis with his family and friends, so Krio is his L1. At the time of the interview, the informant was eighteen years old and a high school student. He was chosen as a subject because of his interest in participating and willingness to collaborate in this study.

5.2. Data Analysis

Across the three interviews sixty conditional sentences were elicited and were analyzed in this study, in other words, through three interviews, sixty conditionals sentences were able to be isolated. Quantitative and qualitative analysis involved counting the informant's use of different particles and classifying them according to their use in the four types of conditionals and their placement in the protasis or apodosis of the sentence. Qualitative analysis of each type of conditional drew on the informant's enhanced explanations and examples to determine appropriate usage and structural rules. Results are presented illustrating each type of conditional.

6. RESULTS

6.1. Conditionals in Krio language

A quantitative account on Krio tense markers can be found in Table 1.

Marker	Zero Conditionals		First Conditionals		Second Conditionals		Third Conditionals	
	protasis	apodosis	protasis	apodosis	protasis	apodosis	protasis	apodosis
De		1			2			
Kin		2		1		1	4	
Go		8		11		5	8	
Bin					4			
Bin fodon						6		12
No marker	13		12		4			
Total	13	13	12	12	12	12	12	12

Note* The numbers represent the times that the markers were used by the speaker in the clause.

Table 1. *Use of Krio tense markers in conditionals.*

6.1.1. Present factual conditionals (Zero conditional)

The present factual conditional is used in order to express scientific principles, habits and real facts. To express factual or logical implications, Krio speakers use the markers *de*, *go* and *kin* on the apodosis.

The protasis is made up of a conditional word, a subject, a verb (or adverbial verb), and a complement. While analyzing the sample, we noted that there is no actual evidence of any marker in the protasis. As was stated earlier, this lack of marker is because these sentences are inflected indicatively, so no marker is needed.

Most of the verbs in the apodosis sentence were marked (eleven out of thirteen verbs); they consist of a subject, a preceding particle and a verb: among them, eight sentences used the marker *go*, one the marker *de*, and 2 used *kin*. When analyzing the *go* particle in the sample, it was found out that in some of the sentences, this marker acts only as an immediate future auxiliary. This assumption is contrastive with the duality of the marker *go* (auxiliary- irrealis marker) discussed in other literature. For example, in the sentence *If mi mamadem drink kofi, dem ed go ad* “If my parents drink coffee, they get a headache” or in *If de oven warm pas mak, de it go bon* “If the oven is too hot, the food burns” two objective events are declared; factual statements are made. In both sentences, the speaker refers to a situation that is actually the case; therefore, it is realis. As a conclusion, we can state that *go* does not always imply a double property in conditionals of fact. It may only function as a modal marker.

As regards *kin*, we may state that this particle acts both as a modal of habituality and as an irrealis marker. As an illustration of this, in *mi dog kin gladi we a kam na os* “my dog is happy when I come home” *kin* expresses an action based on knowledge of the past. Besides, it indicates habituality; it may last for or is repeated over an extended

duration. On the other hand, in *Eniteim rein kam, de geim kin cancel* “when it rains the match is cancelled” *kin* reflects irrealis mood since it acts as a projection for the future which is made by extrapolating past observations.

In relation to the marker *de*, it may be stated that this particle behaves as present progressive tense in conditionals⁷. The informant explained during an interview that in a conversation, two Krio speakers are talking about their arrears of rent. One of them claims that in spite of the fact he has not paid yet, he is not a debtor, because he is going to pay as soon as he gets the money. So, in his defence he says, *A de pei if a eible* (literal translation= I am paying if I am able). The action of the word “pay” is kept on-going; it is the way in which the speaker can demonstrate that not paying in time is not a dishonesty issue but a temporal state, due to his lack of funding. As discussed earlier, *de* expresses an ongoing action when combined with nonstative verbs.

Punctual verbs bear no marker when indicating present time. This can be seen in the following example situation provided by the informant: at dinner time, a mother is commanding her child to eat his meal; as he is reluctant to do so, the boy asks, why do we eat? and the mother replies, *if we no it we dai*. As it can be seen, there is no *de* marker in this sentence. This is because the verb *dai* “to die” does not have any temporal duration, no period of time is involved in it. According to this description, to ‘die’ is a punctual verb. We can assume that punctual verbs are not marked in Krio language since they are defined as momentary or transitional. They would not be consistent with the continuous or durative characteristic of the marker *de* indicating in which period of time is implicated.

6.2 Future Factual Conditionals (First Conditional)

In Krio to express the probability of an action to happen if a condition takes place, its speakers use the marker *go* and *kin* in the apodosis.

The protasis has the same composition as seen in the present factual conditionals. There is no overt marking, either, because of the indicative tense inflexion. In relation to the apodosis, twelve out of thirteen sentences were marked. *Kin* preceded just one verb whereas eleven actions were inflected by the particle *go*.

The marker *go* has the same function in conditional sentences, it expresses future tense and irrealis aspect. In the example *If ju kal mi leita, a go gi ju di adres* “If you call me later, I will give you the address”, the speaker expresses the condition for an event to happen (it is important to note that he uses the word *leita* “later” in the protasis in order to indicate futurity from the moment in time the speaker has chosen as point of reference). The particle *go* marks the verb *gi* (give) in order to imply an event as not having happened yet but expected to in the future. Another property provided by

⁷ There are cases where the lack of markers indicate that action that is not frequent but one at a particular time. In the example, *a it we a unгры* “I eat when I am hungry”, the speaker did not use the marker *de* in order to indicate firmly specific time.

go to this verb is the irrealis mood since the situation is not known to have happened as the speaker is talking.

At primary school, the teacher is talking about the importance of taking care of the plants. She tells the kids how important it is to water the plants regularly. To make this point clear she says “*If ju no wata de plants, de go dai*”. In addition to providing emphasis to the serious consequence, the particle *go* is used as a preverbal tense marker in the protasis in order to state a factual and logical implication in present tense. In a linear conception of time, the future is the timeline that has yet to occur. When it comes to conditionals in Krio with future results, the consequences are indicated by the marker GO.

As an example, our informant explained a situation in which early one morning, two fellow workers are giving pieces of advice to a new colleague. They explain that punctuality is a big issue for some bosses but not for others. For example, the account manager checks the arrival time of his secretary every day. Since the financial reports are sent before 9:30, he needs her to type them. They said: “*If i leit fo go wok, im bos go vex*” (If the secretary is late for work, her boss will be angry); This in contrast to their boss who does not have morning deadlines. It seems that these two fellow workers have seen that the account manager angry because of the delay before that conversation, therefore they are positive about what will happen if the secretary will not arrive on time. The particle GO preceding the adjective *vex* in this situation is used to describe what these speakers think will happen in the future. Commonly when a situation is marked with GO it will be accounted for as a prediction of a future event i.e. the accomplishment of the action is regarded as likely to happen. However, the lexical content of the analyzed sentence provides the additional meaning which corresponds to the modal auxiliary *will* in English. In other words, GO is related to future probability which is neutral as it is used very frequently.

In the question *Weitin ju go du if rein kam?* “what will you do if it rains?” The aim of this question is to find out what will happen if a certain circumstance occurs (rain); hence it could be deduced that *go* has a future implication and an irrealis mood.

6.3 Present Unreal Conditionals (second conditional)

The present unreal is used to talk about the present time, life today, right now, but imagining (or wishing) something that is untrue. In Krio, when referring to conditions of speculation which consider hypothetical situations in the present or the future, speakers might use the marker *bin* in the protasis, and the marker *go* in the apodosis.

The order of the protasis is structured as follows: a conditional word, a subject, a TAM marker, a verb and a complement. A considerable variation in the use of markers is perceived since only four out of twelve clauses were marked by the particle *bin*. On the other hand, two sentences used the marker *de* whereas two conditional clauses were marked by the combination *bin fodon*. In contrast, four sentences were not marked by any particle.

In the sentence *If Sea bin get black hia, i bin fodon luk different* “If Sarah had black hair, she would look different” the particle *bin* is used as a simple past marker

in the protasis. This assumption is consistent with the description of this marker since for some stative verbs *bin* seems compulsory for stating past time reference for many speakers.

Two sentences used *de* marking in the conditional clause. As it can be noted from the example *I go get wok if I de weik quick* "he could get a job if he woke up earlier" *weik* is preceded by this particle which, as stated before, implicates present continuous tense and imperfective aspect. In spite of the fact that the given situation was presented to him as hypothetical, the speaker assumed it as a present factual conditional.

In *ivn a sel mi motoka, a no go stil get di moni a want* "if I sold my car, I would not get much money for it" there is no marker in the protasis. This could be the result of the fact that this sentence is described as an indicative one, therefore no marker is required.

The result clause of the present unreal conditionals is made up by a subject, a compound particle, a verb and a complement. In this type of conditionals, the verb may be marked in three different ways: *bin fodon*, *sontem + go* and *kin*. To start, six out of thirteen clauses used *bin fodon* before the verb. As it can be seen in the result conditional *if a bin get teim, a bin fodon go wid ju* "If I had time, I would go with you" *bin fodon* precedes *go* in order to imply the unreal result from an imaginary condition. Based on the literature, the literal translation of the apodosis into English would be *I would have written*, consistent with the structure of the past unreal result clause in this language.

The particle *bin* modifies both the protasis and the apodosis in this conditional. However, in the following example situation, the discussion will be centered in the result clause.

It is important to note that *bin* behaves differently when combined with *fodon* in hypothetical conditionals. The particle *fo* provides irrealis mood, so if the hypothetical result clause uses *bin fodon*, the *bin* in the hypothetical protasis becomes irrealis as well. There is no need to distinguish tense in a hypothetical. Once the event is hypothetical, it does not have a time and the distinction between stative and nonstative verbs is not needed.

Two foreigners are talking about pets in their countries. One of them remembers his dog yoyo that had to be given to a neighbor before going abroad. When asked if the dog would recognize him if he went back, he replies *mi dog bin fodon gladi if a bin don kam go na os* "my dog would have been happy if I had come home".

The combination *bin fo don* is consistent with what was mentioned in chapter 3; by using *bin don* before a verb, it expresses the idea that an event occurred before another action in the past or that something happened before a specific time in the anterior time, *if a bin don kam go na os* = "if I had come home".

To indicate future speculation, two verbs were marked by the combination *sontem + subject + go + verb*. The word *sontem* may be translated in English into sometimes. However, the informant defines this word in two ways closely connected; first as the adverb "maybe" and the second, when combined with the marker *go*, as the modal "might" in English. In the example *if wi no de it, sontem wi go dai* "If we did not eat,

we could die” it may be interpreted that the speaker used this combination in order to speculate about the future. As the particle *go* only implicates future tense, there is need of an adverb to refer to results about conditions of speculation which consider hypothetical events in the present or the future.

To express predictability the marker *kin* was used. One verb was preceded by this particle. In *If ju put solt, i teis kin bete* “If you had put salt, it would have tasted better”. As it can be noted, this marker indicates the notion of possibility. However, in this speaker’s speech *kin* seems to assume another role as well: to convey future tense since it retains the same interpretation as replaced by the actual future tense marker *go*. In fact, when the same sentence was said as a future fact conditional, the participant marked the verbs with *kin* too.

6.4 Past Unreal Conditionals (Third Conditional)

To express hypothetical events which look back to past situations and speculate about a completely distinct result, Krio speakers use the markers *bin*, *fo don* both in the protasis and in the apodosis.

Bin was used only in the protasis as verb marking. Four out of twelve conditional clauses were marked by this particle. Because of the fact that this conditional takes place in a hypothetical context, the particle *fo* present in the result clause, already indicates irrealis mood both in the protasis as in the apodosis.

Eight conditional clauses were similar in terms of composition. In the example *If a bin fodon study bete bete wan, a bin fodon pas di egzam* “If I had studied harder, I would have passed the exam” the protasis is composed in the same way as the apodosis. The combination *bin fodon* marked these verbs. This finding is not consistent with the protasis structure in English which is composed by past pluperfect. This is because in Krio, since the event is hypothetical, there is no time; in other words, there is no tense. However, the composition of the apodosis is similar to its English version. The anterior marker co-occurs with the irrealis particle *fo* plus the perfect marker *don* conveying a perfect conditional sense.

6.5 We/ If

Using two cards, one with a conditional sentence with *we* as the conditional word, and the other with the same sentence but with *if*, the informant had to state whether he perceived differences in meaning and if so, whether he would use these two conditional clauses in other contexts. The informant claimed that *if* and *we* can be interchangeable when the statement of the conditional clause is a fact or a general issue.

Example:

If	you	put	solt,	di	teis	go	bete
COND	you: 2SING-NOM	put:INF	salt:ACC-SING	the:DET	taste:SING	FUT	better:ADJ

‘If you put salt, the taste gets better.’

When you put salt, di teis go bete
 COND you: 2SING-NOM put:INF salt:ACC-SING the:DET taste:SING FUT better:ADJ
 ‘When you put salt, the taste gets better.’

He also states that both *if* and *we* mean the same when they are used in the sense of whenever.

Example:

I de it we a angry ‘she eats when she is hungry’

Two people are discussing someone else’s eating disorder. One of them asks the other, “Why is she not eating?” showing an angry and negative attitude says *i de it we i angry*

I de it if a angry ‘she eats if she is hungry’.

The father is worried about his baby. He asks his wife why he is not eating. The wife says he doesn’t have to worry because “*i de it if i angry*” as babies do.

After analyzing other examples, the informant claimed that *if* and *we* can be used differently when it comes to certainty. He argues that he would use *we* in a definite situation whereas *if* would be proper when he is skeptical about the situation. Therefore, it may be stated that in Krio, *if* is used for something that, according to the speaker, might happen and *we* is used for something that, according to the speaker, will happen.

Example:

Weiting ju go du if rein kam? ‘What will you do if it rains?’

The informant provided the following context situation: the mother is watching TV while talking to her son. He tells her that he has to leave in half an hour to the gym, so the mother says to him *Weiting ju go du if rein kam?*, she argued that it would be wise to take an umbrella in case it rains, since the weather said that it might happen, in spite of the fact that the sun was shining at that moment.

Weiting ju go du we rein kam? ‘What will you do when it rains?’

In the same scenario described previously, the mother stands up and gives an umbrella to her son, as he rejects it, the mother says; *Weiting ju go du we rein kam?* She claims that it is rainy season, clouds are dark and that rain had been predicted (that the weatherman said there was going to be rain).

6.6 Order

As was stated in the methodology description, cards were used to find out whether the order of the protasis and apodosis in the sentence influences meaning. It is important to mention, that all the categories of conditionals were presented to the informant. He claimed that the order did not matter in terms of meaning, since according to him, the sentences meant the same and he would use them in the same situation.

Example:

PROTASIS- APODOSIS

If a get buk, a go rid

If a bin fodon get buk, a bin fodon rid

APODOSIS- PROTASIS

A go rid if a get buk.

A bin fodon rid, if a bin fodon get bu

7. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of data analyzed, sixty conditional sentences, we can conclude that conditionals in Krio are made up of two constituents: the protasis and the apodosis. The order in which the conditional is presented (protasis-apodosis or apodosis-protasis), does not influence meaning. Regarding the difference between the conditional words *if* and *we* in *Krio* it can be concluded that *if* is used in uncertain situations whereas *we* is used in a definite situation. In other words, a Krio speaker would use *if* when something might happen and *we* when the situation will happen. This is not consistent with the hypotheses presented here, which argued that *if* would imply a condition and *we* might be used if the previous sentence is an inquiry that starts with the word *ustem* (when in question constructions). Another conclusion is related to the fact that *if* and *we* are not related to the frequency of the action in the conditional sentence. Therefore, we may suggest that *if* and *we* are distinguished in terms of certainty. When expressing factual or logical implications, we can conclude that Krio speakers use the marker *de go* and *kin* in the apodosis.

In addition, regarding conditionals of facts in the future we may conclude that Krio speakers use the marker *go* and *kin* in the apodosis. With respect to conditionals of speculation about Present or Future time, this work may conclude that Krio speakers use the marker *bin* in the protasis and the marker *go* in the apodosis. To express hypothetical events which look back to past situations and speculate about a completely distinct result, we may conclude that Krio speaker use the markers *bin*, *fodon* both in the protasis and in the apodosis. With regard to the further investigations of conditionals in Sierra Leone Krio, it would also be interesting to compare the results here presented with other English-based creoles smakman namely Jamaican Creole or Bislama and perhaps to find out whether TAM markers account for tense within conditional structures as it does in Sierra Leone Krio.

8. LIMITATIONS

This study has not attempted to provide a full documentation of Krio grammar but rather to add further understanding to one specific set of grammatical structures, conditionals. With only a single informant who had been living away from Sierra Leone for two years, we can only make tentative claims about these structures being representative of all Krio speakers. In addition, because the researcher did not speak Krio, she was dependent on the informant to explain the meaning of his language production. Nevertheless, what is reported above does add nuance to existing understandings of Krio grammar.

9. FUTURE RESEARCH

The elicitation methods used in this study offer a valuable contribution to the process of language documentation. Drawn from pedagogical techniques, the process of having informants use cards showing words and phrases and explain their reasoning promises an additional window into grammatical structures and metalinguistic knowledge of informants. In addition, it serves as a ‘friendly’ way for informants to provide information about their language and knowledge about its rules. Further research should investigate how these techniques can be used with additional grammatical structures and in other languages.

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