Echoes from the past:
traces of Old Portuguese in Santiaguense TMA system

Ecos do passado: traços do português antigo no sistema TMA do kabuverdianu de Santiago

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Abstract: This paper examines the Tense, Mood, Aspect (henceforth, TMA) markers of the Santiago variety of Cape Verdean Creole and focuses on the diachronic development as well as the grammaticalization process that a subset of the markers underwent. We propose that some of the variants pertaining to the expression of the present progressive and of anteriority are traceable to Old Portuguese. With regard to the present progressive markers, we start with the uncontroversial assumption that some of the forms are derived from the Portuguese verb estar but also show that this verb has actually undergone grammaticalization in stages and layers. We propose that some of the forms were likely present in the early stages of creole formation and that others appeared later but that in the end, all forms are preserved in the language and conglomerate in a cluster of variants expressing the same semantics. We offer in this paper a quantitative analysis of the variants, emphasizing their frequency rates in our corpus; we then explore the parameters of grammaticalization offered in Heine & Kuteva (2005) to account for the present forms.

Keywords: Cape Verdean Creole, TMA markers, grammaticalization.

I am delighted to contribute this paper to John Holm’s festschrift, a well-deserved tribute to his invaluable legacy to our field. I personally owe him a heartfelt debt of gratitude for his support and guidance in my early years of graduate school.
Resumo: Este artigo estuda os marcadores de tempo, modo e aspeto (TMA) do crioulo cabo-verdiano de Santiago, do ponto de vista do desenvolvimento diacrónico bem como dos processos de gramaticalização manifestados por alguns marcadores. Defendemos que algumas variantes relativas à expressão de presente progressivo e de anterioridade têm origem no Português Antigo. No que diz respeito aos marcadores de presente progressivo, assumiremos que algumas formas derivaram do verbo português estar mas também demonstraremos que este verbo sofreu efetivamente um processo de gramaticalização por etapas e níveis. Algumas formas teriam estado certamente presentes nas primeiras etapas da formação de crioulos, enquanto outras terão surgido mais tarde. No final, contudo, todas as formas se conservaram na língua e formaram conjuntos de variantes que partilham a mesma semântica. Oferecemos uma análise quantitativa das variáveis, sublinhando as taxas de frequência no nosso corpus, e aplicaremos os parâmetros de gramaticalização formulados por Heine & Kuteva (2005).

Palavras-chave: Crioulo de Cabo Verde, marcadores de TMA, gramaticalização.

1 Introduction

The objective of this paper\(^2\) is two-fold: first, we present a subset of the synchronic markers involved in the Tense, Mood and Aspect system (henceforth TMA) of the Santiago variety of Cape Verdean Creole (CVC)\(^3\). Second, we examine the plausible diachronic development of two of the TMA forms present

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\(^2\)Some of the diachronic data presented in this paper have been examined in Baptista (in press) with the crucial addition that we offer in this study a quantitative analysis of the synchronic markers and explore the possible grammaticalization processes some of the forms may have undergone. I am grateful to Ana Luís and an anonymous reviewer for their input on this paper. Some of the synchronic data I use in this paper come from a corpus I collected in 2010 and 2011. An NSF grant (Noah Rosenberg, p. 1.) funded fieldwork in Cape Verde in 2010 and 2011. Other data were collected during a course on Field Methods I taught at the University of Cape Verde in December 2011.

\(^3\)See Baptista (in press) for a comparative, synchronic and diachronic examination of the entire set of TMA markers in the Santiago and the São Vicente varieties.
in that variety. Assuming the founder principle, we explore whether it is possible to trace some of the markers to particular varieties of the Portuguese language spoken in the 15th/16th centuries. In other words, did some of the TMA forms present today in CVC survive from the very early stages of that creole formation, in coexistence with new forms that developed later?

We support the common view that the markers expressing the present progressive are all derived from the Portuguese auxiliary *estar* and more controversially we propose that the anterior marker *–ba* did not undergo a *–v* to *–b* change (Almada 1961) but that *–ba* has been present in Cape Verdean Creole from the very early stages of that creole development. For the first set of markers, we argue that *estar* has actually undergone grammaticalization in stages and layers in the Santiago variety of Cape Verdean Creole. We propose that some of the forms were likely present in the early stages of creole formation and that others appeared later but that all forms are preserved in the language and eventually become part of a cluster of variants that express the same semantics: they yield the present progressive interpretation for the verb they modify. For the anterior marker *–ba*, present in the 16th century language of the Blacks (in Gil Vicente’s play and Teyssier’s description, see section 3 below), we argue that its presence may be due to multiple causation, a point we elaborate on in section 3.

We ultimately wish to demonstrate that in some areas of the grammar such as TMA markers, ST actually displays forms that are more readily traceable to Old Portuguese.

2 A synchronic overview: expressing present progressive and past tense in ST

For the purpose of this festschrift, we only examine a subset of markers in Santiago (for an exhaustive treatment of the full range of markers in ST in comparison to SV, see Baptista (in press)). In the next subsections, we compare markers expressing the present progressive tense, and anteriority.

2.1 Present Progressive and Anteriority in ST

The first part of this section focuses on the aspectual preverbal markers *sta, sa, sa ta, sta ta* that all seem to be conveying the same interpretation of present progressive in the Santiago variety of Cape Verdean Creole. Consider the use of *sta* in (1), *sa* in (2), *sa ta* in (3) and *sta ta* in (4). All variants mark present progressive. *Sa* or *sta* can also function as a copula, as shown in (5).
(1) N fla nha pai: ami N sta ben Praia. (Film 2011/21)
I say my father me I be come Praia
‘I said to my father: I am coming to Praia.’

(2) E fla ma kabesa sa due-l. (Film 2011/27)
he say that head be hurt-him
‘He said that his head is hurting.’

(3) E sa ta faze rekolha. (Film 2010/22A)
he be do harvesting
‘He is doing the harvesting.’

(4) E kel-li ki N sta ta odjaba. (Film 2011/50)
it that-here that I be see+ANT
‘This is the one I was looking at.’

(5) a. Tenpu sta un bokadinhu klaru dimás. (Film 2011/27)
weather be a little clear too much
‘The weather is a little bit too bright.’
b. Ka sa dretu? (Film 2011/49)
NEG be right
‘Isn’t it correct?’

There is a general consensus among linguists specialized in this creole that all these forms occur in free variation with each other with no real semantic difference distinguishing one form from the other (Meintel 1975: 220). We find evidence for the apparent free variation in our corpus in which the same speaker produces both sa and sa ta in the same speech act, as shown in (6):

(6) Rapazinhu djobe-l modi k’ e sa ta faze, s’e
boy looked-him how that he TMA do if he
sa vira o s’e ka sa ta vira
TMA turn or if he NEG TMA turn
‘The boy observed what he is doing to see whether he is turning around or not turning around.’

If one adopts the free variation approach to these markers, one would predict that they are all combinable with other markers like the anterior marker –ba for instance. As we see in the examples below, this prediction does not hold true for all variants. Appending the past tense morpheme –ba to sta in sta ta yields a grammatical sentence in (7). However, appending –ba to sta alone or to sa alone both yield ungrammatical sentences, as shown in (8) and (9) respectively.

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It remains a puzzle that only sta ta tolerates the suffixation on sta whereas the isolated TMA forms sta and sa do not, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (8) and (9)\(^4\). The marker combination test makes it difficult to maintain that the forms sta, sta ta and sa are all variants of one another, as both (8) and (9) are synchronically unattested\(^5\). However, the form saba is attested as occurring in isolation in the diachronic data, as noted in Baptista (2011), Holm (2012) and as discussed in section 3.

An obvious question that comes to mind is why such a wide range of variants has subsisted in the language when sta is not only available but also directly related to its Portuguese lexifier counterpart estar. The grammaticalization process we explore in section 5 may yield a partial answer to this question\(^6\). Table 1 presents a summary of the forms under study.

We wish to explore in the next section the assumption that some of the forms still present in the modern day variety of Santiago were already present in Old Portuguese and were inherited from the first settlers. We provide here a summary of Baptista (in press) before we offer a grammaticalization analysis of the forms under study. We particularly focus on the variants that

\(^4\)It is important to note that the copula sta can form the past tense by appending –ba, as in:

(a) El sta ba duenti

he was sick

‘He was sick.’

\(^5\)In Baptista (2011), I was able to elicit saba ta from my informants but saba in isolation is not attested in the 50-page corpus I examined for this paper.

\(^6\)See Baptista (in press) for a plausible phonological account of the variants, based on Chataigner (1963).
Tab. 1: Present Progressive and Anterior TMA markers in ST.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marker</th>
<th>Semantics</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sta + V</td>
<td>Present Progressive</td>
<td>Preverbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa + V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa ta + V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sta ta + V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staba ta + V</td>
<td>Past Progressive</td>
<td>staba ta preverbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*staba+V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*saba + V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

are attested in 15th-16th century Portuguese texts but have disappeared from Modern Portuguese while surviving in modern day ST.

In Baptista (in press), I adopted a three-pronged approach to identifying the possible source of the forms present in ST today. First, I examined grammars of 16th century Portuguese (Oliveira 1536/1975) and looked for correspondences between their description and the forms present in 16th century Portuguese plays, with the objective of detecting consistency in the tense, aspectual and modal forms under study. Then, I studied the ‘stylized’ language of three populations in the plays by 16th century playwright, Gil Vicente. I compared the forms found in the plays featuring Língua de Preto, a 16th century stylized language of the Blacks spoken by the slaves who were in Portugal to those found in the stylized language varieties of the Jewish and Peasantry populations at the time. The basic assumption for this comparison is that Língua de Preto is related to Upper Guinea Creoles (cvc and Guinea-Bissau Creole) on both historical and linguistic grounds (see Baptista 2011; Kihm and Rougé 2013).

Crucially, the objective of the comparative analysis is to detect which forms in Modern day ST were already present in 16th century Portuguese across varieties (based on Gil Vicente’s descriptions) and which ones may have been more specific to the Língua de Preto and eventually to ST.

We summarize in the next section the findings of Baptista (in press).

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7Following a reviewer’s comment, I call it ‘stylized’ rather than ‘caricaturized’ because it highlights fairly accurately the most salient features characteristic of these particular speech varieties. Most studies of Gil Vicente’s works (including Teyssier 1959) acknowledge Gil Vicente as a keen observer of language uses, it is therefore safe to trust that his plays represent a fairly faithful rendition of language as it was used at the time.
3 15th/16th century Portuguese: a comparison across diachronic sources

Regarding the forms used in the expression of the present progressive, we adopt the uncontroversial view that the variants, \( sta, sa, sa \, ta \) and \( ta \) are all derived from the Portuguese \( estar \). Regarding the marker \(-ba\), it has been traditionally assumed that it is derived from Portuguese \(-va\), having undergone a \(-v\) to \(-b\) sound change (Almada 1961). We propose instead that it may have been the bilabial stop \(-ba\) from the start, reinforced by other language sources, and possibly inherited from a variety of Portuguese spoken in earlier times. We revisit this issue in section 3.3.3 where we show that \(-ba\) was present in the language of the Blacks spoken in earlier times (see Baptista 2011) and that it may have been the result of multiple causation.

3.1 Portuguese grammars: Oliveira (1536/1975) and Nunes (1945)

In this subsection, we briefly refer to some of the descriptive observations that Fernão de Oliveira made when he published the first grammar of the Portuguese language in 1536 (an edited version was published in 1975). Regarding the verb \( ser \) ‘to be’, Oliveira notes that instead of \( sei \) ‘I am’, the forms \( som, sou \) and \( so \) (Oliveira 1536/1975: 121) were used and gradually evolved into \( são \). One could speculate that the interchangeability of the verbs \( ser \) and \( estar \) at that time (as mentioned in Teyssier 1959) would allow for a possible connection between those markers and the marker \( sa \) in \( st \). On this matter, Nunes (1945) refers to a change from \( som \) to \( sou \) and to the influence of the verb \( estar \) on the development of the copula \( ser \) (1945: 310). Furthermore, Nunes observes that Portuguese \( estar \) is derived from Vulgar Latin \(*stao\) and that in Colloquial Portuguese, the forms \( tas \) and \( ta \) are commonly used instead of \( estás, está \) and earlier on \( stás, stá \) (dissimilation) (Nunes 1945: 313, footnote 1). Such observations could lead us to speculate that \( estar \) developed into \( star \) and later into \( ta \), generating the variants \( sa, sta, ta \) in \( ST \) at different points in time. We will, however, unveil through our examination of the language of the Blacks in Gil Vicente’s plays attestations of \( estar, sta(r) \) and \( sa \). This would mean that the variants \( sta \) and \( sa \) have been in competition with each other all along and that \( ta \) may have appeared later.

In summary, the forms attested in 16th century Portuguese Oliveira 1536 grammar are as in (10):

(10) \( ser: sei, som, sou, so \) Oliveira (1536/1975: 121) (gradual development into \( são \))
(10) \( estar \) is attested
(10) \(-va\) is attested
3.2 Forms attested in 16th century Portuguese plays

In this section, we contrasted the two descriptive accounts introduced above to 16th century plays where we were more likely to find Portuguese as it was spoken at the time. More precisely, we reported in Baptista (in press) on the forms we found in two 16th century plays taken from the volume Teatro Profano in *Teatro Português do Século XVI* compiled and edited by José Camões (2010). The two selected plays are *Auto de Dom Fernando* and *Auto das Capelas*. We only address the verbs *ser* and *estar* in this section, see Baptista (in press) for a more comprehensive list of markers.

The verb *estar* occurs in the two plays with the same forms it adopts today (see examples in (12) below) but *ser* displays forms reminiscent of ST. Indeed, in the edited notes, José Camões states that the homographic form *sam* appears as the first person singular of the present indicative of *ser* but it was later converted to the modern form *são* for the 3rd person plural of the present indicative (Camões 2010: 39). In the *Auto das Capelas*, one may note the occurrence of *sam* in the first person singular of the present indicative of *ser* (Camões 2010: 90), as shown in (11a). The same form *sam* with the same meaning is found in *Auto de Dom Fernando*, as illustrated in (11b).

(11) a. Vilão:

**Eu sam padre acabado**

I am priest finished

‘I am a finished priest.’ (Auto das Capelas, line 1105)

b. Moço:

**Eu sam perdida por ti**

I am lost for you

‘I am lost for you.’ (Auto de Dom Fernando, line 128)

For *estar*, we find attestations of the usual forms of that verb in the *Auto de Dom Fernando*, as in (12):

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It should be made clear that although in these particular plays, *sam* is translatable as first person singular of the present tense of the verb *ser*, and *são* as the third person plural of the present tense of the same verb, there are other plays such as the ones portraying the language of the Peasantry in section 3.3.1 below, in which *sam* and *são* are clearly mere spelling variants of the same form (first person singular of the present tense of *ser*).
Echoes from the past...  
Ecos do passado...  

(12)  
a. Isso que m’estás dizendo  
this that me are saying  
‘This is what you are telling me.’ (Camões 2010: 105, line 131)  
b. Isso que m’estás pintando  
this that me are painting  
‘This is what you are paiting for me.’ (Camões 2010: 106, line 161)  
c. Está bom, convosco estou  
is fine with you (I) am  
‘It is fine, I am with you.’ (Camões 2010: 91, line 1109 in Auto das Capelas)  

As for the past tense suffix –va, as expected, it is consistently found in the plays, just as described in Oliveira (1536/1975) and Nunes (1945). The sentences in (13) were collected from the Auto de Dom Fernando.

(13)  
a. Já vos disse que folgava  
already you say that rested  
‘He told you that he rested’ (line 395)  
b. Porqu’eu também vos amava  
because-I also you loved  
‘Because I also loved you’ (line 397)  
c. Estava lá tanto gente  
was there many people  
‘There was a lot of people’ (line 1596)  

In summary, the past tense inflection –va is attested, which is not surprising of course. We only wish to highlight here that only –va and not –ba is found in this speech variety, in contrast to the language of the Blacks in 3.3.3 below, where both forms can be found. With regard to the verb ser ‘to be’, in addition to the forms som, sou and so reported by Oliveira (1536/1975: 121), we find the form sam in both 16th century plays Auto das Capelas and Auto de Dom Fernando. As we see in the section below, the same form sam is also found across the language varieties portrayed by Gil Vicente. We could tentatively speculate that the fact that the verbs estar and ser overlapped in use at the time privileged the retention of the marker sa in st, possibly derived from its precursor sam. We explore this issue in the next section by examining the plays of Gil Vicente.
3.3 Forms attested in Gil Vicente’s plays

In this section, we examine the markers found in three language varieties that 16th century playwright Gil Vicente portrayed in his works: the language of the Peasantry, the language of the Jews and the language of the Blacks. We look for forms that are constant across the three varieties in addition to the forms that seem more specific to the language of the Blacks, possibly related to ST on both historical and linguistic grounds.

3.3.1 The language of the Peasantry (‘Langue rustique’ in Teyssier 1959)

In the language of the Peasantry, we find for the verb ‘to be’ the forms será (Teyssier 1959: 86), sou (1959: 87), era/eras (1959: 91;96), estar (1959: 93; 96), sam (1959: 93), sé/é/see (1959: 107). Regarding the forms of ser, Teyssier (1959: 106) notes that the forms são (sam), sou, so (soo) and som are all equivalents to the first person singular of the present tense of the verb ser, as derived from Latin esse. Teyssier (1959: 108) states that in many of the cases, the diachronic use of ser, derived from Latin sedere ‘to sit’ would be today translated by estar (ser seems to have been a more prevalent form than estar), this is even clearer when we examine the language of the Jews in 3.3.2 below.

The suffix –va is attested with verbs like andavas (Teyssier 1959: 93), falava, chamava (1959: 96).

A synthesis of the forms attested in the language of the Peasantry is given in (14):

(14) ser: será, sou, era/eras, sam, sé/é/see, são, sou, so (soo), som
estar is attested
–va: andavas, falava, chamava

3.3.2 The language of the Jews (‘Langue des Juifs’ in Teyssier 1959)

The language of the Jews displayed the same form of ‘be’ as sam, as in ‘sam destroçado’ (Teyssier 1959: 203) ‘I am defeated’ or as in ‘Porque ness’ora ssam morto’ (Teyssier 1959: 204) ‘because at this time, I am dead’. Corroborating Teyssier’s observation regarding the same form being translatable as ser or estar, sam in ‘sam destroçado’ is equivalent to ser whereas ssam in ‘ssam morto’ is equivalent to estar. Other forms of estar appear in the past, as ‘onde um toyro estivesse’ (Teyssier 1959: 204) ‘where a bull was’. Ser appears as
‘seraas bom rendeyro’ (Teyssier 1959: 218). The inflection –va is attested on the verb estar as in ‘Guay dos tristes que estávão guardando’ (Teyssier, 1959: 222).

In summary, –va is attested as such, in addition to sam that could be translated by ser or estar. (15) offers a synthesis of the forms found in the language of the Jews.

(15) Ser and estar: sam, ssam (same form translatable as ser or estar)
   Ser: seraas
   Estar: estivesse bom rendeyro
   –va: estávão

Recall that sam was also found in the language of the Peasantry and is also present in the language of the Blacks, as shown in subsection 3.3.3 below, proving to be a constant form across all three varieties. In contrast, we show that other forms of ser/estar and –va (rendered as –ba) seem more exclusive of the language of the Blacks. This is the topic of the next subsection.

3.3.3 Forms attested in the language of the Blacks (Língua de Preto in Teyssier 1959)

In this section, we examine the language of the Blacks or Língua de Preto, a language variety that Gil Vicente and other 16th century Portuguese playwrights portrayed in their plays. It is presumed to have been spoken by slaves in Portugal at the time, some of which may have come from the Upper Guinea region of Africa, hence their connection with the Upper Guinea Creoles like cvc (see Baptista 2011 and Kihm & Rougé 2013 for a more extensive description of the language).

In this section, beyond bare verb stems, we focus on markers in Língua de Preto that are reminiscent of the sta, ta, sa inventory found in st, as well as the inflection –ba. Regarding verb forms per se, Teyssier (1959) notes a feature that seems exclusive of the Língua de Preto, compared to the other language varieties Gil Vicente characterized. He observes that the tense, mood and person endings are often neglected, the verb appearing in the infinitive form. At times, the infinitival ending on verb forms is overtly transcribed, as

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9Many of the examples in this section are taken from Baptista (2011).
in example (16)\textsuperscript{10}. Note that the verb is explicitly in the infinitive whether it expresses the past tense (\textit{ssar rroym} ‘be wild’ and translated as ‘was wild’) or the present tense (\textit{porque bradar} ‘why are you fussing’)\textsuperscript{11}:

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(16)]
\begin{enumerate}
\item a. \textbf{A mym nunca ssar rroym.}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
 to me & never & be & wild
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
'I never was wild' (Língua de Preto) (Teyssier 1959: 229)
\end{tabular}
\item b. \textbf{Porque bradar?}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
 why & fuss
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
'Why are you fussing.'
\end{tabular}
\end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}

Regarding the verbs \textit{ser} and \textit{estar}, the language of the Blacks exhibits a number of forms, some of which overlapping in form and function with the markers found in ST today.

The verb ‘to be’ is found as \textit{estar} (Teyssier 1959: 228), \textit{star}, as in \textit{Aquy star juyz no fora} (Teyssier, 1959: 230), \textit{saa} (Teyssier 1959: 236), \textit{sá} (Teyssier 1959: 236) and \textit{sa} (Teyssier 1959: 239). All of these markers are translated by forms of \textit{estar} in the Portuguese texts juxtaposed to the language of the Blacks. The forms of the verb ‘ser’ are \textit{sou} (Teyssier 1959: 228), \textit{ssar} (Teyssier 1959: 229), \textit{sser} (Teyssier 1959: 230), \textit{soo} (Teyssier, 1959: 232), \textit{saa} (Teyssier 1959: 232), \textit{sae} (Teyssier 1959: 234), and \textit{sa} (Teyssier 1959: 238). Two observations are in order at this point: the forms \textit{sta(r)} and \textit{sa} are reminiscent of the two markers \textit{sta} and \textit{sa} found in ST. While the marker \textit{sa} is a constant across the three language varieties under study, we were able to find \textit{sta(r)} only in the language of the Blacks. The same form \textit{sa} is translatable as \textit{estar} or \textit{ser}, as shown in examples (17) and (18):

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(17)]
\begin{enumerate}
\item a. \textbf{Mym andar augoá jardim.}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
 me & carry & water & garden
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
'I carried (or used to carry) the water to the garden.'
\end{tabular}
\item b. \textbf{Eu andava a aguar o jardim.}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
 I & carry+ed & the & water & the & garden
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
'I carried (or used to carry) the water to the garden.'
\end{tabular}
\end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}

\textsuperscript{10}Example (16) is taken from Hanrique da Mota’s play \textit{O Pranto do Clérigo}, which can be found in the \textit{Cancioneiro Geral}, a collection of plays and poems among other genres. Hanrique da Mota was one of Gil Vicente’s contemporaries.

\textsuperscript{11}Another such example can be found in Teyssier (1959) where the infinitive of the verb \textit{andar} in the language of the Blacks is translated as Portuguese past tense \textit{andava} ‘carried’:

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(18)]
\begin{enumerate}
\item a. \textbf{Mym andar augoá jardim.} (Língua de Preto)
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
 me & carry & water & garden
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
'I carried (or used to carry) the water to the garden.'
\end{tabular}
\item b. \textbf{Eu andava a aguar o jardim.}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
 I & carry+ed & the & water & the & garden
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
'I carried (or used to carry) the water to the garden.'
\end{tabular}
\end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}
Echoes from the past...  
Ecos do passado...  

(17)  a. *Sa riabo aquella home!*
  is devil that man
  ‘That man is the devil!’ (Língua de Preto, Teyssier 1959: 242)

  b. *É o diabo aquele homem!*
  is the devil that man
  ‘That man is the devil!’ (Portuguese translation)

(18)  a. *Camisa que sa na muro.*
  shirt that is on fence
  ‘The shirt that is on the fence.’ (Língua de Preto, Teyssier 1959: 242)

  b. *A camisa que está no muro.*
  the shirt that is on+the fence
  ‘The shirt that is on the fence.’ (Portuguese translation)

The versatile nature of *sa*, standing for *ser* or *estar* and its ensuing wide distribution may account of its survival as a dominant marker in creoles like ST.

In addition to *star* which we only found in the language of the Blacks, the other marker exclusive to that variety is –*ba*, as illustrated below. First, one must say that the anterior inflection –*ba* is not attested as a suffix on lexical verb stems. However, –*ba* is found as a suffix on the auxiliary *sa*, as illustrated in (19)\(^\text{12}\) and (20):

(19)  a. how I was first *como mi saba* primeyro
  ‘How I was the first one.’ (Língua de Preto, Teyssier 1959: 235)

  b. *... como eu era primeiro.*
  how I was first
  ‘How I was the first one.’ (Portuguese translation)

(20)  a. *Que palote saba sam*  
    that ? was healtly
    ‘That your ? was healthy’ (Língua de Preto, Teyssier 1959: 240)

\(^{12}\)See Baptista (2011) regarding the form *saba* and its possible derivates in four creoles.
b. Que o teu ? estavas são.

that the your ? was healthy

‘That your ? was healthy’ (Portuguese translation)

An obvious question that comes to mind is why the Portuguese inflection –va is realized as /–ba/ only in the language of the Blacks. We propose that multiple causation may provide insights on the matter. As observed in Teyssier (1959: 323), Portuguese and Spanish were much closer to each other at that time than they are today, and influence from Spanish could be detected in both the grammar and lexicon of Portuguese in the early days. Consequently, the presence of –ba could be due to the Castilian Portuguese that was spoken in Portugal at the time or to the influence of the Northern Portuguese dialects that display –ba instead of –va to this day; however, neither of these possibilities would explain why –va was realized as –ba only in the language of the Blacks and not in the other language varieties portrayed in Gil Vicente. A plausible factor could be that the /b/ pronunciation of Portuguese /v/ is a shibboleth of the language of the Blacks due to the fact that none of the languages of Upper Guinea (where the first slaves came from) has /v/ as a phoneme. Another factor may have been convergence of forms between the superstrate and substrates. On this issue, Peck (1988: 331-333) stipulated a process of convergence for the same form –ba found in the creole of Guinea Casamance and speculated that –ba was retained in that particular creole due to the convergence of the similar form with partial semantic overlap in the African languages spoken by the slaves. The preservation of –ba could be attributed to its dual presence in the Portuguese of the time and to Mandinka forms like ka ban, translatable as ‘finish’ (Peck 1988: 333), or simply to substratal reinforcement. In our view, multiple causation may account for the presence of –ba in the language of the Blacks: the presence of –ba in some dialects of Portuguese (possibly under Castilian influence), the presence of similar forms in the African languages in contact and the absence of the /v/ phoneme in these languages would all account for why –ba is only realized in the language of the Blacks. It is, however, important to clarify that –ba only occurs a couple of times in that speech variety and only in the word-form saba, –va can also be found in the speech variety.

13I thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

14As an anonymous reviewer points out, the fact that only the word-form saba occurs in the language of the Blacks makes it plausible that it was not an actual morph yet. Perhaps, saba was an unanalyzable form meaning ‘was/were’, roughly equivalent to Portuguese era. This would mean that the grammaticalization of /ba/ as an anterior marker occurred later during the creolization phase of the language. Although there is no evidence that this is a fact, such a possibility should be entertained.
As far as the semantics of *saba* is concerned, it is worth noting that this form is translated in (19) by the past tense of the verb *ser* whereas it is translated as the past tense of the verb *estar* in (20), attesting to the interchangeable nature of these two verbs in Old Portuguese.

In summary, the core markers *sta(r)*, *sa*, –*ba* present today in ST have all counterparts in Old Portuguese and more specifically in the variety that was spoken by the slaves. *Sta* and –*ba* were exclusive of the language of the Blacks whereas *sa*, could be found in all three varieties spoken by the Peasants, Jews and Blacks of the time. We speculate that the variant *ta* emerged later.

(21) offers a summary of the forms found in the language of the Blacks.

(21) **estar**: *estar, star, saa, sá, sa*  
**ser**: *sou, ssar, sser, soo, saa, sae*, and *sa*  
**–va**: –*va* and –*ba* in *saba*

In conclusion to this section, there are a few findings worth highlighting: (1) the forms *sta(r)* and *sa* found in the diachronic texts are reminiscent of the two markers *sta* and *sa* found in ST today. (2) The marker *sa* is a constant across the three speech varieties under study in Gil Vicente’s plays but *sta(r)* is only attested in the language of the Blacks. (3) The form *sa* is translatable as *estar* or *ser*, which may have contributed to reinforcing its survival in Santiaguense. (4) *saba* is only attested in the language of the Blacks. (5) *saba* is translated both as the past tense of the verb *ser* and as the past tense of the verb *estar*, attesting to the interchangeable nature of these two verbs in Old Portuguese. (6) We speculate that the variant *ta* emerged later.

In the next subsection, we account for the frequency rate of the variants *sa*, *sa ta*, *sta*, *sta ta* found in ST today.

## 4 Frequency rate of the set of variants

This brief section reports on the frequency rate of *sa*, *sa ta* and *sta* in the variety of Santiago. Although all these forms are variants of each other, a frequency count of each form in a 23,441 word-corpus reveals that in the TMA position, the form *sa* combined with *ta* is by far the most frequent variant (48 tokens), followed at some distance by *sta* (21 tokens) and *sa* (16 tokens). In contrast, as a copular verb, *sta* is the most frequent (32 tokens in the present tense and 33 in the past tense). The anterior marker is attested on *sta* 33 times as a copula but only 5 times as a TMA marker. In other cases, –*ba* appeared appended to main verbs.
Tab. 2: Frequency rate of the variants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morpheme</th>
<th>sa</th>
<th>sa ta</th>
<th>sta</th>
<th>sta ta</th>
<th>staba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TMA</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5(^{15})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copula</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the forms found in *Língua de Preto*, the only speech variety where both *sta(r)* and *ba* were attested, it is reasonable to assume that the variants *sa* and *sta* (for the expression of progressive) and *ba* for the expression of anteriority are the oldest forms and that the marker *sta* may have survived to specifically function as a copula (32 tokens of *sta* versus 6 of *sa* for the same function). This division of labor could explain why *sa* and *sta* have been both preserved in the language. On one side of the coin, they are rightfully perceived as variants of the same marker but on the other side, they are not redundant and their coexistence is justified and has been ensured by the distinct function they perform in the language, as TMA marker and copula.

As for *ta*, it is not attested as an auxiliary in Gil Vicente’s plays; based on this observation, we could infer that it emerged later, which would explain why some varieties of Cape Verdean Creole that emerged later than Santiaguense (i.e., the variety of São Vicente) display *ta* as a TMA and not *sa* nor *sta* (see Baptista in press for discussion of these facts).

In the next section, we briefly review some of the grammaticalization processes that the markers under study may have undergone, based on Heine & Kuteva (2005) grammaticalization theory and Hopper (1991).

### 5 Grammaticalization processes (Heine & Kuteva 2005; Hopper 1991)

According to Heine and Kuteva (2005: 80), there are four parameters of grammaticalization that typically yield new functional categories and constructions:

\(^{15}\)Whenever used as an auxiliary, *staba* appears with the marker *ta* as *staba ta*:

(a) **Omi**  *staba* di riba *ta*  panha *si*  fruta manenti

man was at top ASP take his fruit all along

‘The man was at the top (of the ladder) picking his fruit all along.’
• Extension: rise of novel grammatical meanings (linguistic expressions extended to new contexts)

• Desemanticization (semantic bleaching), loss in meaning content

• Decategorialization, loss in morphosyntactic properties characteristic of lexical forms

• Erosion: loss in phonetic substance

This set of grammaticalization parameters may be combined to Hopper (1991)’s process of layering according to which there are grammaticalization clines. Examples of such clines are given in (22a) and (22b):

(22)  
   a. Full verb > vector verb > auxiliary > clitic > affix
   b. Content item > grammatical word > clitic > inflectional affix

The ensuing generalization that Hopper offers is that the direction of change is from the more lexical to the more grammatical, from the less bounded to the more bounded, from the less functional to the more functional and following the cline from left to right. Heine and Kuteva’s four parameters of grammaticalization combined with Hopper’s process of layering account to a large extent for the rise of the TMA variants present in the Santiaguense variety today. Based on the observations that the forms sa and sta existed as full verbs in 16th century language of the Blacks, we can argue that both forms underwent extension in the sense that they remained copulas in the language while assuming the new function of TMA markers. They underwent desemanticization when as TMA markers, they lost the content meaning of the Portuguese verb estar. They underwent decategorialization by losing auxiliary status in their TMA function. In other words, the TMA markers that result from the process of grammaticalization in ST lost the original semantics and categorical status of the verb they derived from. Finally, these markers were subjected to erosion by changing from estar into sa and sta respectively.
6 Summary and conclusion

In this paper, we offer a synchronic and diachronic study of a subset of TMA markers in ST.

Diachronically, summarizing in part Baptista (in press), we attempted to trace back some of the TMA markers found in ST to Old Portuguese by comparing the forms found in the first Portuguese grammar (Oliveira 1536/1975), a historical account of the Portuguese language (Nunes 1945), two 16th century Portuguese plays found in Camões (2010) and works by 16th century Portuguese playwright Gil Vicente. In Gil Vicente’s plays, we compared three speech varieties that the author stylized: the language of the Peasantry, the language of the Jews and the language of the Blacks. This approach allowed us to identify which TMA forms were present in Old Portuguese across speech varieties and which ones were exclusive to the language of the Blacks.

Our findings are that the TMA marker sa, found in ST today, was also present in Old Portuguese across the speech varieties we examined, as a variant of both ser and estar; it is, however, absent in Modern Portuguese. Other TMA markers like sta(r) and –ba, present in ST today, were found exclusively in the language of the Blacks, strengthening the link that has often been made between that variety and the creoles spoken in Upper Guinea, specifically Cape Verdean and Guinea-Bissau Creoles. The marker ta, present in both ST and SV, is unattested in the texts we examined and can safely be assumed to have emerged later, possibly from Colloquial Portuguese. A frequency count of the forms under study actually reveals that the form sa ta is the most frequent variant followed by sta and sa and we stipulated that all the forms survived in the language due to the division of labor they fulfill as copulas and TMA.

As for –ba, its presence in Gil Vicente’s Língua de Preto (the language of the Blacks) allows us to argue against a /v/ to /b/ change (Portuguese –va to ST –ba), as has been traditionally assumed, and defend instead that the anterior marker –ba has existed as such from the very early stages of ST (see Baptista 2011). Given Oliveira’s (1536/1975) and Camões’ (2010) remarks on the strong influence of Spanish onto the Portuguese language of the time, –ba could have been preserved as the result of convergence, as stipulated by Peck (1988) for the Creole of Guinea-Casamance Creole –ba.

If on track, our analysis is a powerful testimony to the Founder Principle (Mufwene 1996) showing that founding populations and their speakers may leave a lasting imprint on the formation of a creole language, in this case the Santiago variety of Cape Verdean Creole.
Abbreviations

CV Consonant vowel, CVC Cape Verdean Creole, ST Santiago variety, SV São Vicente variety, TMA Tense Mood Aspect.

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