Verb Focus in Haitian:  
From lexical reiteration to Predicate Cleft

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Abstract

This article bears on VFD (Verb Fronting with Doubling) constructions in Haitian, whose left periphery contains a bare homonym of the lexical verb and which trigger a Verb-Focus effect. We seek to update the description of VFD and to reach a satisfactory analysis providing empirical support for addressing the theoretical issues central to the present volume. Our study leads us to conclude that: (i) The syntactic operations involved in the derivation of VFD are available independently of reiteration; (ii) The semantic effect of VFD is not ‘intensive’ but contrastive, and arises from restrictive modification, a form-meaning relation hardly analysable as ‘iconic’; (iii) Haitian VFD may have arisen from a regular recombination of features partaking in focus effects in French, Gbe, and Universal Grammar.

1 Introduction

The constructions under study here, which we call Verb Fronting with Doubling (VFD), are attested in Haitian and some other French-Caribbean Creoles. In Haitian, VFD may occur as a bare complete sentence, as in (1a), or be part of larger syntactic structures, as illustrated in (1b-d). Some of the labels used to designate the contexts licensing VFD are borrowed from Lefebvre (1998). However previous studies all fail to distinguish the case illustrated in (1a), which we call Bare VFD, from the Predicate Cleft pattern in (1d), and they generally leave aside the ALA and ATA cases illustrated in (1b,c):

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(1a) Malad m te malad.  
     sick 1SG ANT sick  
     ‘I was SICK (not LAZY).’

(1b) Ala bèl li te bèl!   
     ala pretty 3SG ANT pretty  
     ‘She was SOOO pretty!’

(1c) Ata malad m te malad  
     ata sick 1SG ANT sick  
     lè Brezil pèdi.  
     when Brazil lose  
     ‘I was even SICK when Brazil lost.’

(1d) Se malad m te malad!  
     SE sick 1SG ANT sick  
     (i) ‘I was actually SICK (e.g. not LAZY).’
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VFD subtype

Bare VFD

ala-VFD

ata-VFD

Predicate-Cleft

<contrastive>
(ii) ‘I was REALLY SICK.’  

(1e) \[\text{[Malad } m \text{ te } \text{ malad } la]\]  
Factive  
sick 1SG ANT sick DET  
te fè manman m tris.  
ANT make mum 1SG sad  
‘The fact that I was SICK made my mum sad.’  

(1f) \[\text{[Malad } m \text{ te } \text{ malad } la]\]  
Causative  
sick 1SG ANT sick DET  
manman m te tris.  
mum 1SG ANT sad  
‘Because I was SICK, my mum was sad.’  

(1g) \[\text{[Rive } m \text{ te } \text{ rive}]\]  
Temporal  
arrive 1SG ANT arrive  
(epi) Pòl te pati.  
and-then Paul ANT leave  
(Lit. ‘I had ARRIVED, so-then Paul (had) left.’)  
‘Once I had ARRIVED, Paul (had) left.’  


The properties of VFD constructions raise challenging problems for theories of natural-language syntax and of creole genesis. Although Mufwene (1987, 1994) points out some parallelisms between cleft constructions in Haitian and French, it is quite clear that the grammars of French do not generate VFD constructions similar to those in (1):

(2a) *Déprime je déprime !  
be-depressed 1SG be-depressed.PRS

(2b) *C’est malade que je suis malade.  
it-is sick that 1SG be.PRS.1SG sick

(2c) *Arrivé je suis arrivé,  
arrive.PP 1SG AUX.PRS.1SG arrive.PP  
et puis Paul est parti.
French only allows such constructions as those illustrated in (3), which involve the fronting of a nonfinite null-subject intransitive clause introduced by a preposition – à (3a), pour (3b) or en (3c) – and construed as topical, rather than focal:

Standard French:

(3a) A dormir comme il dort.

P sleep.INF as 3MSG sleep.PRS.3SG
il doit être en pleine forme.
3MSG must be in full shape
Lit. ‘Sleeping the way he sleeps, he must be in top shape.’

(3b) (Ah) pour dormir,

ah as-for sleep.INF
il [dort bien / a bien dormi].
3MSG sleep.PRS.3SG well/AUX.PRS.3SG well sleep.PP
Lit. ‘Ah, as for sleep(ing), he sleeps well/has slept well.’

(3c) En dormant comme il dort.

in sleep.GND as 3MSG sleep.PRS.3SG
il doit être en pleine forme.
3MSG must be in full shape
Lit. ‘(By) sleeping the way he sleeps, he must be in top shape.’

Previous studies on VFD therefore explore similarities between Haitian and Kwa (Koopman 1984, Piou 1982a, Lefebvre passim), or Bantu (Mufwene 1987, 1994).

In what follows we first present (section 2) an updated description of VFD in Modern Haitian, encompassing the various types of contexts in which it is licensed. We then devote section 3 to the syntactic analysis of VFD. Reviewing the available literature on this topic, we aim at working out an analysis which should both account for the surface diversity and underlying unity of the data in (1), and also shed light on the apparent paradox that VFD seems to involve A'-movement applying to a V-head. The analysis we select is a revised formalisation of Harbour’s (2008) intuition that VFD is fed by ‘low contrastive V reiteration’. On the basis of the descriptive results achieved in section 3, we conclude by addressing (section 4) the main theoretical issues raised in the introduction of this volume.

2 VFD in Haitian: a descriptive update

In this section, we survey the properties shared by all instances of VFD in Haitian, and bring out the properties specific to the different contexts where VFD is licensed.

2.1 Properties shared by all VFD constructions in Haitian

2.1.1 Lexical doubling and extraction: (X) L1+[TP ......[v= L2]......]

In Haitian, all instances of VFD linearly surface as (X) L1+TP strings, where the fronted lexeme labeled L1 is phonologically identical to the lexeme (L2) filling the V head inside the following tensed clause. In the constructions under study here, L1 (the verb's homonym) crucially does
NOT support any modifier which fails to occur on L2 (the verb), as is the case in, e.g., (4b) below, a clefted variant of (4a), where L1 is modified by bon:

(4a)  Elsi malad bon malad.
    Elsi sick real sick
    ‘Elsi is REAL sick.’

(4b)  Se bon malad Elsi malad.
    it-is real sick Elsi sick
    Lit. ‘It is REAL sick Elsi is.’ (‘Elsi is REAL sick.’)

Sentences of the type exemplified in (4) share important syntactic properties with those exemplified in (1), but we leave them out of this study for reasons of space, and focus on constructions involving a fronted bare homonym of the verb, correlating with a verb-focus effect.

The fact that the reiterated lexeme is the one filling the V head in the TP domain has been convincingly shown by DeGraff (1992). Such predications as those in (5a) and (6a), crucially do not allow the reiteration-and-fronting of any lexeme within their predicate:

(5a)  [DP Jan] [PP sou tab la].
    John on table DET
    ‘John is on the table.’

(5b)  *Sou Jan sou tab la.

(6a)  [DP Jan] [LocP lakay].
    John at-home
    ‘John is (at) home.’

(6b)  *Lakay Jan lakay.

In (7), where la may ambiguously be construed either as a property-denoting predicate meaning ‘to be around’ or a deictic locative meaning ‘there’, VFD only correlates with the property-denoting reading:

(7a)  Jan la.
    (i) ‘John is around.’
    (ii) ‘John is there.’

(7b)  La Jan la.
    (i) ‘John is (indeed) AROUND
        (e.g. though he doesn't DO anything).’
    (ii) *‘John is THERE₁ (not THERE₂ ).’

These facts support DeGraff’s (1992) assumption that VFD exclusively applies to verbal predications and involves the reiteration-and-fronting of the lexeme filling the V head. That is, VFD is unavailable if the predicate is nonverbal (contains no V), as in (5) and (6), and it only applies to (7a) if la is identified as a V. VFD thus provides a diagnostic test for identifying verbs, in Haitian.

VFD is associated with a single argument grid: L1 cannot have an overt subject of its
own, as witnessed by (8), and L1 cannot be assumed to have a covert (PRO) subject, since a bound subject would be likely to be overtly realised, as witnessed by the ‘control’ contexts in (9):

(8a)  
\[(Se) \text{ } m \text{ } malad \ (*m) \text{ } te \text{ } malad. \]  
\[SE \text{ } 1SG \text{ } sick \text{ } 1SG \text{ } ANT \text{ } sick \]  
‘I was SICK (not LAZY).’

(8b)  
\[[M \text{ } malad \ (*m) \text{ } te \text{ } malad \text{ } la] \]  
\[1SG \text{ } sick \text{ } 1SG \text{ } ANT \text{ } sick \text{ } DET \] \[te \text{ } fè \text{ } manman \text{ } m \text{ } tris. \] \[ANT \text{ } make \text{ } mum \text{ } 1SG \text{ } sad \]  
‘The fact that I was SICK made my mum sad.’

(9a)  
\[M \text{ } pwòmèt \text{ } Mari_{k} \ (*m) \text{ } ap \text{ } pati. \]  
\[1SG \text{ } promise \text{ } Mary \text{ } 1SG \text{ } UNAC \text{ } leave \]  
‘I promised Mary I would leave.’

(9b)  
\[*M \text{ } pwòmèt \text{ } pati. \]  
\[1SG \text{ } promise \text{ } leave \]

(9c)  
\[Jan \text{ } mande \text{ } m \text{ } pou \ (*m) \text{ } pati. \]  
\[John \text{ } ask \text{ } 1SG \text{ } for-to \text{ } 1SG \text{ } leave \]  
Lit. ‘John asked me that I leave.’

If the verb governs an object, the object may only be realised on L2. This well-acknowledged restriction is exemplified in (9b-c) with the Predicate-Cleft construction, but it obtains across all the VFD subtypes illustrated above in (1):

(10a)  
\[Pòl \text{ } achte \text{ } machin \text{ } sa \text{ } a. \]  
\[Paul \text{ } buy \text{ } car \text{ } DM \text{ } DET \]  
‘Paul bought this car.’

(10b)  
\[Eske \text{ } se \text{ } achte \text{ } Pòl \text{ } achte \text{ } machin \text{ } sa \text{ } a? \]  
\[QSE \text{ } buy \text{ } Paul \text{ } buy \text{ } car \text{ } DM \text{ } DET \]  
‘Did Paul BUY this car?’

(10c)  
\[*Eske \text{ } se \text{ } achte \text{ } machin \text{ } sa \text{ } a \text{ } Pòl \text{ } achte \text{ } (machin \text{ } sa \text{ } a)? \]  
\[Q \text{ } SE \text{ } buy \text{ } car \text{ } DM \text{ } LA \text{ } Paul \text{ } buy \text{ } car \text{ } DM \text{ } DET \]

The relation between L1 and L2 in VFD further exhibits the unbounded-dependency effects taken as characteristic of A’-movement (Chomsky 1977). Harbour (2008: 855) recalls Piou’s (1982a: 130-133) original evidence revealing successive-cyclicity effects in the Predicate-Cleft subtype:

(11a)  
\[Li \text{ } di \text{ } li \text{ } vle \text{ } se \text{ } ale \text{ } pou \text{ } Jan \text{ } ale \text{ } avè \text{ } li. \]  
\[3SG \text{ } say \text{ } 3SG \text{ } want \text{ } SE \text{ } go \text{ } COMP \text{ } John \text{ } go \text{ } with \text{ } 3SG \]  
‘He said she wants John to GO with her.’
Piou (1982a) further notes that when a long-distance dependency obtains between L1 and L2, as in (11b,c), the intervening context may only contain ‘bridge’ verbs – a restriction generally associated with A’-movement under Chomsky’s (1977) theory:

(11b)  
\[ Li \ di \ se \ ale \ li \ vle \ pou \ Jan \ ale \ avè \ li. \]
3SG say SE go 3SG want COMP John go with 3SG
‘He said she wants John to GO with her.’

(11c)  
\[ Se \ ale \ li \ di \ li \ vle \ pou \ Jan \ ale \ avè \ li. \]
SE go 3SG say 3SG want COMP John go with 3SG
‘He said she wants John to GO with her.’
[Piou’s (1982a) examples, quoted by Harbour (2008)]

By (Piou’s (1982a)) further notes that when a long-distance dependency obtains between L1 and L2, as in (11b,c), the intervening context may only contain ‘bridge’ verbs – a restriction generally associated with A’-movement under Chomsky’s (1977) theory:

According to Piou (1982a,b), Lefebvre & Ritter (1993) and Lefebvre (1998), only the Predicate-Cleft subtype of VFD illustrated in (1b) allows for an unbounded dependency between L1 and L2. We (Herby Glaude and our Haitian consultants) however find the examples in (13b) through (15b) acceptable alongside (11a), which shows that an unbounded dependency may also obtain in VFD in the Bare (13), factive (14), causative (15) and temporal (16) subtypes. In other words, an unbounded dependency between L1 and L2 is a general characteristic of VFD in Haitian:

Bare VFD

(13a)  
\[ Yo \ di/soufle \ [plase^7 \ Pòl \ plase \ Pòtoprens]. \]
3PL say/whisper live.wsc Paul live.wsc Port-au-Prince
‘They say/whisper (that) Paul IS LIVING WITH SOMEBODY in Port-au-Prince.’

(13b)  
\[ Plase \ yo \ di/*soufle \ [Pòl \ plase \ Pòtoprens]. \]
live.wsc 3PL say/whisper Paul leave-wsc Port-au-Prince
‘Paul is said/whispered to BE LIVING WITH SOMEBODY in Port-au-Prince.’

Factive VFD

(14a)  
\[ Yo \ di/soufle \ [pati \ Pòl \ pati \ a ] \ fè \ Elsi \ tris. \]
3PL say/whisper leave Paul leave DET make Elsi sad
‘They say/whisper that the fact that Paul LEFT makes Elsi sad.’

(14b)  
\[ Pati \ yo \ di/*soufle \ [Pòl \ pati \ a ] \ fè \ Elsi \ tris. \]
leave 3PL say/whisper Paul leave DET make Elsi sad
‘[The fact that Paul is said/whispered to have LEFT] makes Elsi sad.’
2.1.2 Primary stress

In all the VFD examples in (1), the extracted lexeme (L1) bears primary stress. This property is transcribed in (17), and in further Haitian examples, as well as in our English translations, by means of small capitals:

(17a) \textit{MALAD m te malad.} \quad [= (1a)]
‘I was SICK (not LAZY).’

(17b) \textit{Ala BÈL li te bèl!} \quad [ = (1b)]
‘She was SOOO pretty!’

(17c) \textit{Ata MALAD m te malad lè (...)} \quad [= (1c)]
‘I was even SICK when...’

(17d) \textit{Se MALAD m te malad.} \quad [= (1d)]
(i) ‘I was actually SICK (not LAZY).’
(ii) ‘I was REALLY SICK!’

(17e) \textit{MALAD m te malad la te fè manman m tris.} \quad [= (1e)]
‘The fact that I was SICK made my mum sad.’

(17f) \textit{MALAD m te malad la, manman m te tris.} \quad [= (1f)]
‘Because I was SICK, my mum was sad.’
2.1.3 Focus

In all instances of VFD, the reiterated lexeme is construed under focus. In the Verb-Focus, ala, ata and Predicate-Cleft subtypes illustrated in (1a-c)/(17a-c), this property is quite straightforward. But in the factive, causative and temporal subtypes, the same property may also be shown to obtain. The contextualised examples in (18)-(20) show that VFD is infelicitous if focus is intended on an argument rather than on the predicate. In (18), factive VFD is felicitous in a discourse context licensing predicate focus (18a), not in a context licensing argument focus as in (18b-(i)): if the focused constituent must be an argument, another construction is called for, e.g. (18b(ii)):

Factive VFD

(18a) [CONTEXT: Elsi p-ap travay, men Pòl pa enkyete.]
   Elsi NEG-UNAC work  but Paul NEG worried
   ‘Elsi is out of work, but Paul is not worried.’
   MALAD li malad la enkyete l.
   sick 3SG sick DET worry 3SG
   ‘The fact that she is SICK worries him.’
   (‘What worries him is the fact that she is SICK.’)

(18b) [CONTEXT: Tout moun gen grip, men sa pa di Jan anyen.]
   everyone have flu but this NEG tell John nothing
   ‘Everyone is down with the flu, but John doesn’t give a hoot.’

(18b-i) *Malad Elsi malad la enkyete Pòl.
   sick Elsi sick DET worry Paul
   Intended reading: ‘Only the fact that ELSI is sick worries Paul.’

(18b-ii) Se paske Elsi malad ki fè l enkyete.
   SE because Elsi sick that make 3SG worried
   Lit. ‘It is because ELSI is sick that makes him worried.’

Similarly in (19), causative VFD is felicitous in a discourse context licensing predicate focus (19a), not in a context calling for argument focus (19b-i). Under such pragmatic conditions, focus is signaled by means of another construction (19b-ii):

Causative VFD

(19a) [CONTEXT: Elsi p-ap travay, men sa pa enkyete Pòl.]
   Elsi NEG-UNAC work  but DM NEG worry Paul
   ‘Elsi is out of work, but this does not worry Paul.’
   MALAD li malad la, li tris.
   sick 3SG sick DET 3SG sad
   Lit. ‘Because she is SICK, he is sad.’
   (‘The reason he’s sad is that she is SICK.’)
(19b) [CONTEXT: Tout moun gen grip, men sa di Jan anyen.]
   everyone have flu but this NEG tell John nothing
   ‘Everyone is down with the flu, but John doesn’t give a hoot.’

(19b-i) *Sèlman malad Elsi malad la, Pòl tris.
   only sick Elsi sick DET Paul sad
   Intended reading: ‘Paul is sad only because Elsi is sick.’

(19b-ii) Sèlman paske Elsi malad, Pòl tris.
   only because Elsi sick Paul sad
   Lit. ‘Only because Elsi is sick, Paul is sad.’
   (‘Paul is sad only because Elsi is sick.’)

Temporal VFD is similarly felicitous in a discourse context calling for predicate focus, as in
(20a), but not in a context calling for argument focus, as in (20b-(i) vs. (ii)):

Temporal VFD
(20a) [CONTEXT: Eske Elsi te manje yè?]  
       Q Elsi ANT eat yesterday
       ‘Did Elsi eat yesterday?’
       Wi: RIVE Pòl rive, li manje.
       yes arrive Paul arrive 3SG eat
       ‘Yes: as soon as Paul ARRIVED, she ate.’

(20b) [CONTEXT: Elsi pa t(e) vle manje depi yè, men..]  
       Elsi NEG A NT want eat since yesterday but
       ‘Elsi had been refusing to eat since yesterday, but..’

(20b-i) *Rive POL rive, li manje.
       arrive Paul arrive 3SG eat
       Intended reading: ‘As soon as PAUL arrived, she ate.’

(20b-ii) Lè POL rive, li manje.
       when Paul arrive, 3SG eat
       ‘When PAUL arrived, she ate.’

These data are evidence that a verb-focus effect characterises VFD constructions independently
of clefting. The fact that the reiterated V is construed under focus regardless of the external
syntax of VFD is confirmed by the minimal pairs in (21)-(23). When a clause contains two or
several combined Vs available for VFD (e.g. a modal V and a lexical V, a matrix V and an
embedded V, a serial-verb string\(^\text{10}\)), reiteration always indicates which V must be construed
under focus:

Factive VFD
(21a) [VLE Pòl vle vini an fè manman li kontan.
       want Paul want come DET make mum 3SG happy
       ‘The fact that Paul WANTS to come pleases his mum.’
2.2 Distinguishing VFD subtypes

We propose to describe VFD as a single syntactic structure which forms a root sentence in the Bare subtype exemplified in (1a), and whose embedding in larger syntactic contexts gives rise to the other cases distinguished in (1) – ala, ata, factive, causative, temporal, and Predicate Cleft. In this section we survey the empirical properties of five of these subtypes, starting with the Bare subtype, and leaving Predicate Cleft to the last, due to the greater intricacies of this construction.

2.2.1 The Bare-VFD subtype

The Bare-VFD construction is exemplified above in (1a) and below in (24) in an appropriate pragmatic context calling for contrastive focus on the lexical V:

(24) Malad Elsi te malad (li pa te pati).
Sick Elsi ANT sick 3SG NEG ANT leave
‘Elsi was SICK (she hadn’t LEFT).’

Unlike the Predicate-Cleft construction in (25a) (further discussed below, section 2.2.5), the Bare VFD construction may only host one Tense specification, as witnessed by the minimal pair in (25):

(25a) Se te Malad Elsi te malad (li pa te pati).
SE ANT sick Elsi ANT sick 3SG NEG ANT leave
‘Elsi was SICK (she hadn’t LEFT).’
Bare VFD may only host sentence negation within its inflectional domain:

(26a) [CONTEXT: Although Elsi is supposed to be on sick leave, I just learned that she organised a huge party last night] 
\[A, MALAD Elsi pa te malad!\] 
ah sick Elsi NEG ANT sick 
‘Ah, so Elsi wasn’t SICK!’

(26b) \[Pa MALAD Elsi (pa) te malad.\] 
NEG sick Elsi NEG ANT sick

If properly contextualised, Bare VFD may host what Lefebvre (1998) calls the clausal determiner, LA (spelt out as a in (27b)):  

(27a) [CONTEXT: As I get up I can see Paul does not believe I am about to leave – maybe he thinks I’m just going to get myself a drink] 
\[ALE m ale.\] 
go 1SG go 
‘I’m GOING.’

(27b) [CONTEXT: Paul was expecting me to leave, but as I get up I can see he rather believes I intend to get myself a drink and return to my seat] 
\[ALE m ale a.\] 
go 1SG go DET 
‘What I’m doing is GOING (as you know I was planning to do).’

In the *ala, ata, Factive, Causative, Temporal and Predicate-Cleft subtypes distinguished in (1), the Bare VFD pattern described above may be argued to occur as a substructure, embedded in several types of broader syntactic contexts. For lack of space, we must leave aside here the details of *ala and *ata-VFDs. They share the main distributional characteristics of Bare VFD. *ala-VFD however gives rise to an intensive reading requiring a scalar predicate, while *ata-VFD gives rise to a narrow restrictive-focus reading. In the next subsections we further explore the Factive, Causative, Temporal and Predicate-Cleft subtypes.

### 2.2.2 Factive VFD

In the factive subtype, VFD occurs in Haitian (H) where English (E) or French (F) would license nominalised clauses of the form *the fact that*+TP/*le fait que*+TP. Just like their English analogues, factive VFDs may occur in Haitian as subject-binding dislocated topics (28a), in subject position (28b), or in object position, as in (28c).

(28a) H \[Pati Duvalier pati a], sa bon. 
go Duvalier go DET, DM good

(28a') E \[The fact that Duvalier is GONE\] that is a good thing.
Le fait que Duvalier soit parti, c’est bien. (English: It is good that Duvalier be gone.)

The fact that Duvalier is gone is a good thing. (French: Le fait que Duvalier soit parti est une bonne chose.)

Elsi est contente de regretter le fait que Duvalier soit parti. (Elsi is pleased with regretting the fact that Duvalier be gone.)

Elsi does not accept the fact that they killed Masiyon. (French: Elsi n’accepte pas le fait qu’ont ait tué Massillon.)

Importantly, in contexts which fail to license a nominalised clause of the form the fact that TP (English) or le fait que+TP (French), VFD fails to be licensed in Haitian, regardless of the presuppositional properties of the matrix predicate. VFD is thus unacceptable throughout (29), although under Kiparsky & Kiparsky’s (1970) semantic definition of factivity, the verb meaning ‘know’ licenses a factive complement clause, unlike ‘think’ and ‘(be) possible’:

The fact that Duvalier is gone, it’s possible.

Le fait que Duvalier soit parti, c’est possible.
Elsi knows the fact that Duvalier is GONE.

Elsi sait le fait que Duvalier est parti.

Elsi thinks the fact that Duvalier is GONE.

Elsi pense le fait que Duvalier est parti.

Under our own use of the term factive, the subject or object argument clause is nonfactive in (29a, b, c) since it may not be realised as the fact that TP in English, le fait que TP in French, or VFD in Haitian.

Like nominalised argument clauses of the form the fact that+TP/le fait que+TP in English or French (cf. (30c,d), factive VFDs in Haitian may be clefted, as witnessed by (30b):

The fact that Duvalier is GONE is a good thing.

It is the fact that Duvalier is GONE that is a good thing.

It is the fact that Duvalier is GONE that is a good thing.

It is the fact that Duvalier is GONE that is a good thing.

In Haitian, however, the clefting of factive clauses seems restricted to subjects. Thus, clefting the object VFD in (31a) gives an unacceptable result in (31b), contrasting both with the acceptable clefted nominal object in Haitian (31c), and the acceptable clefted clausal object in English (31d) and French (31e).

Elsi does not accept the fact that they KILLED Masiyon.

Intended reading: ‘It is the fact that they KILLED Masiyon that Elsi doesn’t accept.”
In order to turn (31b) into an acceptable cleft in Haitian, we need to make the clefted VFD a subject, as in (32):

(32)  
\[ \text{Se [TOUYE yo touye Masiyon an]} \]
\[ \text{SE kill 3PL kill Masiyon DET} \]
\[ \text{ki fè Elsi pa dakò.} \]
\[ \text{that make Elsi NEG agree} \]
Lit. 'It is the fact that they KILLED Masiyon, that makes Elsi disagree.'
('It's [the fact that they KILLED Masiyon], which upsets Elsi.')

These Haitian data are in keeping with Keenan and Comrie's (1977) Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy,\textsuperscript{12} which states that from a crosslinguistic viewpoint, 'subjects are easier to relativise (or cleft) than any of the other major constituents of a sentence'. In Haitian it appears that nonsubjects may be relativised or clefted when they are noun phrases (cf. (31c)), but not when they are clausal.

The factive VFDs in (28) through (32) contain the allomorphic\textsuperscript{13} morpheme $\text{LA}$ in phrase-final position, which correlates with an aspectual effect: in the presence of $\text{LA}$, the factive VFD is construed as denoting an actualised and completed event, while in its absence it is construed as generic or habitual. This aspectual effect of allomorphic $\text{LA}$, illustrated by the contrast between (33a) and (33b), is crucially distinct from the presuppositional effect triggered by the so-called clausal determiner (see fn. 11), as witnessed by the unavailability of the reading glossed in (33b-ii):\textsuperscript{14}

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(33a)] $[\text{GENYEN Pòl genyen }]$ fè li enteresan.
\text{earn/win Paul earn/win make 3SG interesting}

'The fact that Paul WINS/EARNS (GOOD MONEY) makes him interesting.'

\item[(33b)] $[\text{GENYEN Pòl genyen an}]$ fè li enteresan.
\text{win Paul win DET make 3SG interesting}
\item[(i)]  'The fact that Paul has WON/EARNED (GOOD MONEY) makes him interesting.'
\item[(ii)] *'The fact that Paul WINS/EARNS (GOOD MONEY) as expected makes him interesting.'
\end{enumerate}

The semantic effect of $\text{LA}$ in (33b), contrasting with (33a), is similar to the one it has in relativised DPs, as in (34b), contrasting with (33a) (cf. Zribi-Hertz & Glaude 2007):
With predicates a priori open to a stage-level (temporary) or individual-level (permanent) reading, phrase-final LA in factive VFD selects a temporary or telic interpretation. The more the predicate resists this type of interpretation, the less LA-insertion seems felicitous. Thus LA in (35c) would have to involve temporary ugliness, e.g. due to some hideous mask worn for the carnaval. With inherently stative predicates such as renmen ‘like, love’, LA is on the other hand obligatory in factive VFD (35d):

(35a) \textsc{M}AL\textsc{A}D P\textsc{o}l \textsc{m}al\textsc{a}d \textsc{f}é \textsc{m}an\textsc{m}an \textsc{l}i \textsc{t}ris. \\
    sick Paul sick make mum 3SG sad \\
    ‘The fact that John is ill makes his mum sad.’

(35b) \textsc{M}AL\textsc{A}D P\textsc{o}l \textsc{m}al\textsc{a}d \textsc{la \ f}é \textsc{m}an\textsc{m}an \textsc{l}i \textsc{t}ris. \\
    sick Paul sick DET make mum 3SG sad \\
    ‘The fact that John has fallen ill makes his mum sad.’

(35c) \textsc{L}È\textsc{D} P\textsc{o}l \textsc{l}èd (?la) \textsc{f}é \textsc{l}i \textsc{e}nteresan. \\
    ugly Paul ugly DET make 3SG interesting \\
    ‘The fact that Paul is ugly makes him interesting.’

(35d) \textsc{R}EN\textsc{M}EN P\textsc{o}l \textsc{r}en\textsc{m}en \textsc{E}lsi *(a) \textsc{f}é \textsc{l}i \textsc{k}ontan. \\
    Love Paul love Elsi DET make 3SG happy \\
    ‘The fact that John \textsc{L}\textsc{O}\textsc{V}ES Elsi makes him/her happy.’

The data presented in this section are consistent with the assumption that factive VFDs are nominalised clauses, viz. DPs. As is expected of DPs, they are available in argument positions; also, as expected of DPs, they may be headed by the specific determiner (LA). Similarly to relativised DPs, the LA determiner in factive VFDs is crucially sensitive to Aktionsart.

2.2.3 Causative VFD

Causative VFD differs from factive VFD only with respect to external syntax. While factive VFD fills or binds an argument slot in the thematic grid of some predicate, causative VFD is left-joined to a matrix clause and construed as a causative adverbial. In (36) and (37) we see that with a dynamic predicate such as kouri ‘run’, the non-occurrence (36) or occurrence (37) of the specific determiner LA has the same aspectual effect in causative VFDs ((36b)/(37b)) as it has in factive VFDs (33):

(a) Factive and (b) causative VFD without LA

(36a) \textsc{H} \quad \textsc{K}\textsc{O}\textsc{U}\textsc{R}I P\textsc{o}l \textsc{K}\textsc{o}\textsc{u}ri \textsc{a}n\textsc{p}i\textsc{l}. \\
    run Paul run a.lot \\
    (\textsc{s}a) \textsc{f}é \textsc{m}an\textsc{m}an \textsc{l}i \textsc{k}ontan. \\
    DM make mum 3SG happy \\
    Lit. ‘The fact that Paul runs a lot (, it) makes his mum happy.’
(36a') E  [The fact that John runs a lot] (it) makes his mum happy.

(36a'') F  [Le fait que Jean court beaucoup]
DET fact that Jean run SBJ.3SG a.lot
(it) make pleasure to his mum
‘The fact that John runs a lot (it) pleases his mum.’

(36b) H  [Kouri Pól kouri anpil], li bouke.
run Paul run a.lot 3SG knackered
Lit. ‘The fact that Paul runs a lot, he is knackered.’

(36b') E  [Because John runs a lot], he is knackered.
(36b'') F  [Du fait que Jean court beaucoup], il est crevé
of the fact that John run a.lot he is knackered
‘Due to the fact that John runs a lot, he is knackered.’

(a) Factive and (b) causative VFD with LA

(37a) H  [Kouri Pól kouri anpil la]
run Paul run a.lot DET
(sa) make mum 3SG happy
‘The fact that Paul has run a lot (it) makes his mum happy.’

(37a') E  [The fact that John has run a lot] (it) makes his mum happy.

(37a'') F  [Le fait que Jean ait beaucoup couru]
DET fact that Jean AUX.SBJ.3SG a.lot run PP
(it) make pleasure to his mum
‘The fact that John has run a lot makes his mum happy.’

(37b) H  [Kouri Pól kouri anpil la], li bouke.
run Paul run a.lot DET 3SG knackered
Lit. ‘The fact that Paul has run a lot, he is knackered.’

(37b') E  [Because Paul has run a lot], he is knackered.
(37b'') F  [Du fait que Jean a beaucoup couru],
of the fact that John has a.lot run
he is knackered

Note that argument clauses of the form the fact that+TP (Fr. le fait que+TP) are typically (though not necessarily, cf. (1a)) theta-marked by their predicate as CAUSE, i.e. [+c, -m] under Reinhart & Siloni’s (2005) Theta System, both in subject position (cf. The fact that John is ugly makes him interesting) and in the object position of some psychological predicates (cf. John regrets the fact that Duvalier is gone). Conversely, the causal connection between the adjunct
and matrix clauses in, e.g., (37b), requires that the adjunct VFD be construed as reporting a fact whose truth value needs to be checked as positive for the matrix assertion to obtain. Further note that in French, a factive clause of the form the fait que+TP may occur as a causative adverbial when introduced by the functional preposition de –etymologically a Source marker (cf. (37b”)). In Haitian, factive VFDs are licensed as sentence adverbials and construed as causative without any overt causal theta-marker.

Basing ourselves on their similar internal morphosyntax, we assume that the factive and causative subtypes are two instances of nominalised VFDs, sketchily represented in (38), which may be merged in a larger clause either as arguments or as dislocated topics:15

The factive and causative subtypes

(38)   [DP [VFD] D° ]

Factive and causative VFDs differ with respect to clefting, since clefting, in Haitian, only seems available for clauses if they occur as subjects (see section 2.2.2). In this respect, causative VFD is more restricted than causal adverbials in English or French:

(39a) E    It is [because (of the fact that) Paul is SICK] that Mary is sad.
(39b) F    C’est [(à cause) du fait que Paul est MALADE] que
it is because of the fact that Paul is sick that
Mary is sad
‘It is because Paul is SICK that Mary is sad.’
(39c) H    *Se [MALAD Pòl malad la] Elsi tris.
SE sick Paul sick DET Elsi sad
Lit. ‘It is the fact that Paul is SICK (that) Elsi is sad.’
(39d) H    Se [MALAD Pòl malad la] ki fè Elsi tris.
SE sick Paul sick DET that make Elsi sad
‘It is the fact that Paul is SICK that makes Elsi sad.’

2.2.4 Temporal VFD

Temporal VFD occurs in sentence-initial position and precedes a tensed clause optionally introduced by epi ‘(and/so) then’, expressing temporal succession. In such cases the initial VFD sets a time-reference background for the onset of the following event. Construed as salient, the predicate of the second clause is in the matrix focus. Depending on lexical and functional aspect within the sentence-initial VFD, the onset of the matrix event is located at the reference time-point of the VFD event, if the VFD event is punctual (40a) – or at the endpoint of the VFD event, if the VFD event is nonpunctual (40b). Similar temporal connections may be conveyed in English by, e.g., when, as soon as, once, introducing a temporal topic clause:

(40)   [RIVE Pòl rive], (epi) Elsi PATI.
arrive Paul arrive then Elsi leave
Lit. ‘Paul ARRIVED, so then Elsi left.’
‘As soon as Paul ARRIVED, Elsi left.’
(‘Once John had ARRIVED, Mary left.’)
The temporal-succession effect characteristic of this subtype requires VFD to be construed as event-denoting and telic. Hence, the VFD predicate cannot denote a state (41a/b), and its TMA specification must allow the successive connection to obtain (cf. (42)):

(41a) *[GRAN Pòl gran], (epi) Elsi pati.
    big Paul big then Elsi leave
Lit. ‘Once Paul is BIG, Elsi left.’

(41b) [GRAN Pòl fin gran], Elsi pati.
    big Paul ACC big Elsi leave
Lit. ‘Once Paul had become BIG, Elsi left.’
    (‘Once Paul had GROWN UP, Elsi left.’)

(42) [MANJE Pòl t-ape manje], Elsi t-ape pale.
    eat Paul ANT-UNAC eat Elsi ANT-UNAC talk
(i) *‘While Paul was/had been EATING, (so-then) Elsi was/had been talking.’
(ii) ‘Due to the fact that Paul was EATING, Elsi was talking.’

In (41a), with zero TMA specification, the predicate in the VFD component is construed as stative, and the result is rejected as ill-formed. In (41b), the temporal VFD is made acceptable by the aspectual marker fin which triggers an inchoative, hence dynamic, effect. In (42), where VFD is specified as unaccomplished by the ap particle, it may be construed as causative (42-ii), but excludes the temporal reading glossed in (42-i).

If the temporal VFD hosts the determiner LA, LA must be construed as the clausal determiner, not as the DP-determiner. Conversely, if LA is construed as the DP-determiner, the dislocated VFD is interpreted as causative, not as temporal. Thus, if the semantic connection between the sentence-initial VFD and the following clause is left morphologically unspecified, the LA determiner is a priori ambiguous (DP- or clausal determiner), whereas if the temporal connection is overtly specified by epi, as in (43b), the LA determiner may only be construed as clausal:

(43a) [RIVE Pòl rive a], Elsi pati.
    arrive Paul arrive DET Elsi leave
(i) ‘As soon as Paul ARRIVED (as we thought he would), Elsi left.’
(ii) ‘Due to the fact that Paul had ARRIVED, Elsi left.’

(43b) [RIVE Pòl rive a], epi Elsi pati.
    arrive Paul arrive DET and.then Elsi leave
    ‘As soon as Paul ARRIVED (as we thought he would), Elsi left.’

With predicates denoting permanent properties, LA-less VFD dislocated in sentence-initial position is straightforwardly ungrammatical (cf. (41a)), since their properties satisfy no requirement for VFD licensing. The paratactic context calls for some inter-clausal connection to be construed, but the absence of the DP determiner precludes the causative connection, while the
stative predicate precludes the temporal connection.

Temporal VFD cannot undergo clefting, as witnessed by (44):

(44) *Se [RIVE Pòl rive], (epi) Elsi pati.
    SE arrive Paul arrive and.then Elsi leave
    Lit. ‘It’s Paul had arrived, so.then Elsi left.’

Lefebvre (1998:366) proposes to derive this restriction from Ross’s (1967) assumption that extraction is universally banned out of a conjoined constituent.

2.2.5 Predicate Cleft

2.2.5.1 Argument-Cleft and Predicate-Cleft. In Haitian as in English or French, arguments may be clefted, i.e. placed in the predicate of a matrix identificational clause hosting an expletive subject pronoun (cf. Piou 1982a, Lumsden 1990, DeGraff 1992, Lefebvre 1998, Veenstra 2007, Harbour 2008). Haitian clefts only contrast with their English or French homologues as to the (co)vert realisation of the copula and complementiser:

(45a) E It is books that Paul hates t₂.  
(45b) F C’est les livres que Paul déteste t₂.  
     ‘It’s books that Paul hates.’  
(45c) H Se liv Pòl rayi t₂.  
     SE book Paul hate  
     ‘It’s books (that) Paul hates.’

The biclausality of clefts is witnessed by the availability of TMA markers in both the upstairs and downstairs domains:

(46) Se te liv Pòl te rayi.  
    SE ANT book Paul ANT hate  
    ‘It was BOOKS that Paul used to hate.’

As regards interpretation, clefting – in Haitian, as in English and French – signals contrast, viz. the selection of an option (or subset of options) from a preidentified (topical) set. Thus, the clefted sentence Se Elsi Pòl renmen (‘It is ELSI that Paul loves.’) provides a felicitous response to (47b) rather than to (47a):

    who Paul love it Elsi 3SG love  
    ‘Who does Paul love?’ ‘It’s ELSI he loves.’

    Paul love Mary no it Elsi 3SG love  
    ‘Does Paul love Mary?’ ‘No: it’s ELSI he loves.’

A remarkable property of Haitian, which has no counterpart in English or French, is that clefting may affect the fronted homonym of the verb in the VFD structure, giving rise to the construction
known as Predicate Cleft:

\[(48) \quad \text{Se} \quad \text{MALAD} \quad \text{tifi a malad.}\]
\[\text{SE} \quad \text{sick} \quad \text{g} \quad \text{DET} \quad \text{sick}\]

‘The girl is sick.’ [adapted from Piou 1982a:123]

Like the argument-cleft construction exemplified in (46), the Predicate-Cleft construction is biclausal, as witnessed by (49):

\[(49) \quad \text{Se te} \quad \text{MALAD} \quad \text{tifi a te malad}\]
\[\text{SE ANT} \quad \text{sick} \quad \text{g} \quad \text{DET ANT} \quad \text{sick}\]
\[\text{se te pa MOURI l te mouri).}\]
\[\text{SE ANT NEG} \quad \text{die} \quad \text{3SG ANT } \text{die}\]

‘The girl was sick (she did not die/was not dead).’

Predicate Cleft crucially contrasts with Argument Cleft in that the clefted predicate is a lexical root and seems to leave no trace, since it also overtly occurs in what looks like the V head within the TP domain. We return to this paradox in section 3.

2.2.5.2 Bare VFD and Predicate-Cleft. The biclausal Predicate-Cleft construction must be compared to the monoclusal Bare VFD construction discussed in section 2.2.1. From a formal viewpoint, reiteration-with-fronting and clefting both and independently signal the verb as focused. The contrastive-focus reading of the verb is common to Bare VFD and Predicate-Cleft, but Predicate-Cleft further allows an intensive reading of the focused verb, glossed in (50b-ii), which goes unlicensed in the Bare VFD in (50a-ii). Under the intensive reading, Predicate-Cleft is semantically similar to ala-VFD, but further work needs to be done on the precise semantics of ala:

\[(50a) \quad \text{MALAD li malad.}\]
\[\text{sick} \quad \text{3SG sick}\]
\[(i) \quad ‘(S)he is actually sick (e.g. not dead).’\]
\[(ii) \ast ‘(S)he is REALLY sick.’\]

\[(50b) \quad \text{Se MALAD li malad.}\]
\[\text{SE sick} \quad \text{3SG sick}\]
\[(i) \quad ‘(S)he is actually sick (e.g. not dead).’\]
\[(ii) \quad ‘(S)he is REALLY sick.’\]

\[(50c) \quad \text{Ala MALAD li malad!}\]
\[\text{ALA sick} \quad \text{3SG sick}\]

‘(S)he is SOOO sick!’.

Under the intensive reading, the Predicate-Cleft construction occurring as a complete utterance is – like the ala-VFD construction – perceived as having exclamatory force.

Among the pragmatic contexts which a priori license both Bare VFD and Predicate-Cleft, we may mention the type exemplified in (51), where VFD (with or without clefting) occurs sentence-initially, followed by a clause optionally conjoined by men (‘but’) – or some other opposition connector (e.g. poutan ‘however’, etc.) – whose predicate is also under focus. The resulting interpretive effect may be conveyed in English or French either by oppositive conjunction – as translated in (i), or by concessive subordination – as translated in (ii):
(51a) ENTIELJAN Pòl entelijan ,
intelligent Paul intelligent
(men/poutan) li PA RENMEN LEKOL.
but/however 3SG NEG like school
(i) ‘Paul is CLEVER, {but/however} he DOESN’T LIKE SCHOOL.’
(ii) ‘Although John is CLEVER, he DOESN’T LIKE SCHOOL.’

(51b) Se ENTIELJAN Pòl entelijan ,
SE intelligent Paul intelligent
(men/poutan) li PA RENMEN LEKOL.
but/however 3SG NEG like school
(i) ‘Paul is CLEVER, (but/however) he DOESN’T LIKE SCHOOL.’
(ii) ‘Although Paul is CLEVER, he DOESN’T LIKE SCHOOL.’

In such cases, Bare VFD and Predicate-Cleft are intuitively perceived as synonymous.

2.2.5.3 Predicate Cleft and sentence negation. As emphasised in previous works on clefting, sentence negation may freely occur upstairs and/or downstairs in argument-clefts:

(52a) Se [LIV] Elsi pa renmen.
SE book Elsi NEG like
‘It’s BOOKS that Elsi does not like.’

(52b) Se pa [LIV] Elsi renmen.
SE NEG book Elsi like
‘It’s not BOOKS that Elsi likes.’

(52c) Se pa [LIV] Elsi pa renmen.
SE NEG book Elsi NEG like
‘It’s not BOOKS that Elsi does not like.’

In the Predicate-Cleft construction, however, sentence negation appears to be blocked:

(53a) Se MALAD tifi a pa malad
SE sick girl DET NEG sick
*(ki fè l ap kouri konsa).
that make 3SG UNAC run thus
(i) ‘The girl is not SICK (e.g. she’s BUSY).’
(ii) ‘It is [the fact that the girl is not SICK]
which makes her run the way she does.’

(53b) Se pa MALAD tifi a malad
SE NEG sick girl DET sick
*(ki fè l bouke konsa).
that make 3SG tired thus
(i) ‘The girl is not SICK (e.g. she’s BUSY).’
(ii) ‘It is not [the fact that the girl is SICK]
which makes her so tired.’
Unlike the affirmative sentence in (50b), which is licensed as an independent clause involving a focused V, the negated examples in (53) are not construed as Predicate Clefts. The only available readings involve the clefting of a factive VFD – hence of a DP – whether negation occurs downstairs (as in (53a)), upstairs (as in (53b)), or both upstairs and downstairs (as in (53c)). In other words, the sentences in (53a,b,c) only allow the structural and logical representations in (54), where focus and negation crucially do not scope together over the same predicate:

(54a)  \[ \text{Se } \text{MALAD tifi a pa malad} \] \[ ki fè l ap kouri konsa. \] \[= (53a) \]

(54b)  \[ \text{Se pa } \text{MALAD tifi a malad} \] \[ ki fè l bouke konsa. \] \[= (53b) \]

(54c)  \[ \text{Se pa } \text{MALAD tifi a pa malad} \] \[ ki fè l ap kouri konsa. \] \[= (53c) \]

Correlatively, an example such as (55) can only be licensed with the indicated structure involving a clefted factive VFD providing the subject of an elliptical predicate: in other words, as an incomplete sentence, an elliptical variant of, e.g., (54a):

(55)  \[ \text{Se } [\text{DP MALAD tifi a pa malad}] (...) \]

\[ \text{SE sick girl DET NEG sick} \]

‘It’s the fact that the girl is NOT SICK (which...’

These data therefore support the assumption that the Predicate-Cleft construction cannot be placed under sentence negation. This constraint crucially distinguishes Predicate Cleft from Bare VFD: Bare VFD allows sentence negation to occur within its Inflectional Domain, as witnessed by (26a) above, whereas – according to all our consultants – Predicate Cleft does not, as shown by (53a).

Piou (1982a) already observes that sentence negation is constrained with Predicate-Clefts, leaving the issue open for future research. She notes (1982a:135-136) that in the paradigm of examples reproduced below in (56), only (56b) may be construed as an instance of Predicate-Cleft:

(56a)  \[ \text{Se pa renmen Mari renmen Nouyök.} \]

\[ \text{SE NEG like Mary like New York} \]

(i)  *‘Mary DOESN'T LIKE New York.’

(ii)  *‘Mary doesn't LIKE New York (e.g. she LOVES it).’

(iii)  ‘It is not [that Mary LIKES New York].’  [Piou’s adapted translation]

‘It is not [the fact that Mary LIKES NY] (which causes this situation).’  [our own translation]
(56b) *Se travay Mari pa vle travay.
   SE work Mary NEG want work
   (i) ‘Mary doesn’t want to WORK.’ [Piou’s translation]
   (ii) ‘What Mary doesn’t want to do is WORK.’ [our own translation]

(56c) *Se pa etidye Mari pa etidye lesan an.
   SE NEG study Mary NEG study lesson DET
   (i) **Mary hasn’t STUDIED the lesson.’
   (ii) ‘It is not [that Mary hasn’t STUDIED the lesson].’ [Piou’s adapted translation]
   (ii’) ‘It is not [the fact that Mary hasn’t STUDIED the lesson] (which causes this situation).’ [our own translation]

Piou’s intuitions as regards the previous examples converge with Herby Glaude’s, and our other consultants’, suggesting that the same predicate cannot be at once clefted and negated: (56b) is thus well-formed because its negated V is *vle while its clefted V is *travay. But this restriction seems to bear specifically on the Predicate-Cleft subtype, hence on clefting, since negation seems to freely combine with verb focus in all other VFD subtypes (cf. (26a) for Bare VFD). An open issue at this point.19

2.2.5.4. The clausal determiner LA. What Lefebvre (1998) calls the ‘clausal determiner’ LA may occur in Haitian Predicate Clefts, with its usual presuppositional effect. The example in (57b) is intuitively synonymous with its bare-VFD counterpart in (57a) (repeated from (27b)):

[CONTEXT: Paul was expecting me to leave; but as I get up I can see he now believes I intend to get myself a drink and return to my seat]

(57a) ALE m ale a.
   go 1SG go DET
   ‘I’m GOING (as you know I was planning to do).’

(57b) *Se ALE m ale a.
   SE go 1SG go DET
   ‘I’m GOING (as you know I was planning to do).’

Although these two elements are identical as to their morphology (base form LA, same allomorphic variation) and (phrase-final) linear position, the clausal determiner (hereunder: clausal LA) which occurs in Bare and Predicate-Cleft VFD differs as to its distribution and interpretation from the nominal determiner (hereunder: DP-LA) which occurs in factive VFD: (i) unlike DP-LA, clausal LA is always syntactically optional, including with stative predicates; (ii) unlike DP-LA, clausal LA does not trigger a completion effect with dynamic predicates (cf. (57)); (iii) unlike clausal LA, DP-LA does not trigger the presuppositional effect glossed in our examples by ‘as expected’ or ‘as you know I was planning to do’ (cf. (57)).

2.2.6. Descriptive summary

Our descriptive survey leads us to revise our initial subclassification of VFD based on the examples in (1). VFD in Haitian first and foremost comes out as a Verb-Focus construction. Verb Focus signaled by VFD may (among other options) combine with clefting, giving rise to the Predicate-Cleft structure. Nonclefted VFD may be placed under the scope of the exclamative-intensive marker ala, or of the restrictive-focus marker ata; VFD may also be nominalised, viz. embedded in a DP phrase revealed by the availability of the DP-determiner

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LA—distinct from the homonymous clausal determiner. In the variety of Haitian under consideration (see fn.3), the clausal determiner seems available in a subset of cases where the homonymous DP-determiner is not—an issue we leave open for future research. Nominalised VFD is a factive nominalisation containing a focused V.

3 In search of a syntactic analysis

3.1 Laying out the issues

We now turn to the syntactic analysis of VFD in Haitian. An optimal analysis should be consistent with all the descriptive results presented above: it should account both for the central unity of VFD as a Verb-Focus strategy and for the crucial contrast between nominalised and non-nominalised VFD. It should bring a solution to the Extraction Paradox identified by Harbour (2008). On the one hand, the properties surveyed above (single argument grid for the iterated lexeme, unbounded dependency between the two identical instantiations, with sensitivity to bridge verbs) is evidence that the fronted lexeme in VFD has undergone A'-movement, hence landed in a specifier in the clause periphery. On the other hand, the fronted constituent appears to be a lexical root rather than a phrase, it cannot govern an argument the way a ‘fully verbal’ head can, and its extraction seems to leave no gap since the same lexeme is overtly spelt out in the V position within the TP domain. An optimal analysis should shed light on these apparently mysterious properties, and also provide empirical grounds for a theory of reiteration phenomena in natural languages, e.g.: Why is VFD attested in some natural-language grammars (e.g. Haitian) while it goes unlicensed in others (e.g. French)? Do the VFD constructions of Haitian indicate an ‘iconic’ relation between reiteration and ‘intensive’ semantic effects? Does the lexical reiteration characteristic of VFD constructions arise from a ‘Copy’ mechanism at any level of representation?

The available linguistic literature contains various analyses of VFD. We shall straightforwardly discard those proposals which crucially hinge on the presence of se, hence only account for the Predicate-Cleft subcase: Piou (1982a), Mufwene (1987), Lefebvre (1989, 1990, 1991), Lumsden (1990), Lumsden & Lefebvre (1990), DeGraff (1992). This leaves us with four major lines of analysis, discussed below.

3.2 The Cognate Object assumption (Bernabé 1983)

Bernabé (1983) discusses a number of Matinikè examples which are akin to the VFD constructions considered in this study but not strictly identical to them. His VFD-like examples are either cleft constructions whose cleft component is quantised and placed under negation, as in (58), or left-dislocated strings quantified by tout, as in (59):

Matinikè

(58a) Sè pa ti dòmi Pyè dòmi.
SE NEG little sleep Pyè sleep
‘It is not little sleep that Peter slept.’
(‘Peter slept a lot.’) [adapted from Bernabé 1983: 1183-84]

(58b) Sè pa an sèl chayé Pyè chayé dlo.
SE NEG a single carry Pyè carry water
Lit. ‘It is not a single carry Peter carried water.
(‘Peter did a lot of water-carrying.’) [adapted from Bernabé 1983 : 1114]
(59a) **Tout dòmi i ka dòmi a, i toujou las.**
    all sleep 3SG NONP sleep DET, 3SG always tired
    Lit. ‘(For) all the sleeping he sleeps, he’s always tired.’
    (‘Although he sleeps a lot, he’s always tired.’) [adapted from Bernabé 1983: 1090]

(59b) **Tout alé ou alé lékòl la, ou pa apwann ayen.**
    all go 2SG go school DET 2SG NEG learn nothing
    Lit. ‘(For) all the going you went to school, you didn’t learn anything.’
    (‘Although you went to school a lot, you didn’t learn anything.’)

Such examples have analogues in Haitian, e.g.:

(60a) **Se pa ti dòmi Elsi dòmi.**
    SE NEG little sleep Elsi sleep
    Lit. ‘It’s not little sleep Elsi slept.’
    (‘Elsi REALLY slept.’)

(60b) **Tout lèd li lèd la, (men) tout moun renmen li.**
    all ugly 3SG ugly DET but every person like 3SG
    Lit. ‘However ugly she is ugly, everyone likes her.’
    (‘UGLY (as) she may be, (but) everyone likes her.’)

Bernabé doesn’t propose any structural representations for such examples, but he clearly relates them to sentences involving non-extracted occurrences of what he informally labels *homonymous complements* of the verb, exemplified in (61) for Matinikè, and in (62) for Haitian:

Matinikè

(61a) **Pyè dòmi an bon dòmi.**
    Pyè sleep a good sleep
    ‘Peter had a pleasant sleep.’ [adapted from Bernabé 1983 : 1083]

(61b) **Pyè ka chayé moun {bon/gwo} chayé.**
    Pyè NONP carry people good/big carry
    ‘As for carrying people, Peter does a lot of that.’ [adapted from Bernabé 1983 : 1111]

Haitian

(62a) **Pyè dòmi bon dòmi.**
    Pyè sleep good sleep
    Lit. ‘Peter slept good sleep.’
    (‘Peter slept real good.’)

(62b) **Pyè pote moun bon pote.**
    Pyè carry people good carry
    Lit. ‘Peter carried people good carry.’
    (‘Peter carried people for good.’)

Since such ‘homonymous complements’ of V may cooccur with direct objects, as witnessed by (60b)/(62b), Bernabé concludes (1983: 1118) that they themselves cannot be identified as direct
objects. He proposes to analyse them as secondary cognate objects (French: compléments d’objet internes seconds), and assumes that the Matinikè constructions exemplified in (58) and (59) involve the clefting or raising of such secondary cognate objects to the clause periphery. He further emphasises that secondary cognate objects are complements of the verb, unlike ‘NON-complement copies’ of the verb, illustrated in (63):

Matinikè

(63a) *Pyè ka dòmi dòmi è(pi) i ka kité.*

Pyè NONP sleep sleep and 3SG NONP leave
tout travay la ba(n) mwen.
all work DET to 1SG
‘Peter is sleeping sleeping and he’s leaving all the work to me.’ [adapted from Bernabé 1983 : 1080]

(63b) *Sa Pyè ni ka dòmi dòmi konsa?*

what Pyè have NONP sleep sleep like that?
Lit. ‘What does Peter have (to) be sleeping sleeping like that?’
(‘What’s the matter with Peter sleeping on and on like that?’) [adapted from Bernabé 1983 : 1080]

Bernabé draws a syntactic parallel between ‘homonymous complements’ of the verb, as in (61) above (repeated in (64a)), and the nonhomonymous complement of *fè* ‘do’ in (64b):

Matinikè

(64a) *Pyè dòmi an bon dòmi.*

Pyè sleep a good sleep
‘Peter had a pleasant sleep.’

(64b) *Nou fè an ti dòmi.*

1PL do a little sleep
‘We took a little nap.’ [adapted from Bernabé 1983: 1086]

To summarise, Bernabé discusses Matinikè constructions which are similar to the VFD constructions considered in this study, in that they involve a homonym of the verb, but are also distinct from the VFD constructions under consideration in two crucial respects: (i) the homonym of the verb which they contain is crucially quantified and/or modified; (ii) the interpretative effect they trigger is distinct from contrastive verb focus. In the constructions he discusses, Bernabé analyses the ‘copy phrase’ (the phrase containing the verb’s homonym) as a ‘secondary cognate object’ of the verb, therefore as nominal. The assumption that ‘homonymous complements’ are nominal in nature, also emphasised by Mufwene (1987), is consistent with the cognate-object analysis. However, in the absence of any modifier or determiner on the verb’s homonym in the VFD constructions under study here, the claim that the V-homonymous extracted expression is nominal needs to be supported by independent evidence. However, such supportive evidence is lacking. Thus, although many lexical roots in creole may alternatively occur as nouns or verbs in syntax (e.g. Haitian *manje* = ‘to eat’ or ‘food’, cf. Filipovich 1987, a.o.), some lexical roots are restricted to one type of position. Haitian examples of such V/N pairs are given in (65) and (66):

*bay* ‘give’ vs. *don* ‘gift’
(65a) Elsi {bay/*don} LaCroixRouge rad sa yo.
Elsi give gift the.Red.Cross clothes DM PL
‘Elsi gave (*gift) the Red Cross those clothes.’

(65b) Elsi fè LaCroixRouge {*bay/don} sa a.
Elsi make the.Red.Cross give gift DM DET
‘Elsi made the Red Cross this gift (*give).’

opere ‘operate on’ vs. operasyon ‘surgery’

(66a) Doktè a {opere/*operasyon} yon malad.
doctor DET operate/surgery a patient
Lit. ‘The doctor {operated/*surgeried} a patient.’

(66b) Doktè a fè {*opere/operasyon} sa a.
doctor DET did operate/surgery DM DET
‘The doctor performed this {*operate/surgery}.’

It turns out that of the two members of such lexical pairs, only the one available for the V head may fill the extracted position in VFD constructions:

(67a) (Se) {BAY/*DON} Elsi bay LaCroixRouge rad sa yo.
SE give/*gift Elsi give the.Red.Cross clothes DM PL
‘Elsi actually GAVE the Red Cross those clothes.’

(67b) (Se) {OPERE/*OPERASYON} dòktè a opere malad la.
SE operate/*surgery doctor DET operate patient DET
‘The doctor actually OPERATED on the patient.’

These examples challenge the claim that the extracted expression in VFD constructions is a (bare) nominal instantiating a (secondary) cognate object.

3.3 The Event-Argument assumption (Manfredi 1993, Lefebvre 1998)

Unlike the previous theory, this one aims at accounting for VFD constructions of the types described in section 2, viz. involving extraction of a lexical root. Like the previous theory, this one treats the extracted expression as nominal. It however departs from the previous approach in assuming that this raised nominal instantiates an event argument of the verb, phonologically spelt out as a copy of V. Although categorially nominal, it may cooccur with a thematic argument (a direct object) because it instantiates an event feature. The fact that the fronted L1 in VFD may not project is derived from its inherent feature content. Lefebvre further assumes that the availability of the type of event feature which gives rise to VFD crucially correlates with the existence of an event clausal determiner in the grammar of the language. The two minimal pairs in (68) and (69), adapted from Lefebvre (1998), are meant to illustrate the clausal determiner LA in Haitian, distinguishing two uses of this element: as an assertion marker (68b), and as an event determiner (69b):

The clausal determiner LA as an assertion marker (Lefebvre 1998)
The clausal determiner LA as an event determiner (Lefebvre 1998)

Lefebvre thus predicts that VFD should arise in Haitian and Fongbe, whose grammars are both claimed to license an event clausal determiner, but not in, e.g., French or English, assumed to have no such determiner.

Lefebvre’s theory of VFD however faces at least three problems. First, in at least one variety of informal French (Modern Parisian French), we find a very widespread use of the functional locative morpheme LA (the lexifier of Haitian LA) exemplified in (70b), which is very reminiscent of Haitian LA used as a ‘clausal event determiner’:

(Parisan) French

(70a) Le type (il) a bousillé une voiture.

‘The guy (he) has destroyed a car.’

(70b) Le type (il) a bousillé une voiture, là.

‘There you see, the guy destroyed a car.’

The occurrence of unstressed LA in clause-final position in informal French triggers a range of interpretations, one of which (glossed by ‘there you see’ in (70b) and below) an expectation effect very similar to the one Lefebvre glosses by ‘as expected’ and associates with ‘clausal LA’ in Haitian. Furthermore, like Haitian LA in (71), the clause-peripheral unstressed LÀ in French (72) seems incompatible with a predicate denoting a permanent property:

Haitian

(71a) Li mouri (a).

‘(There you see/this time) she’s dead.’

(71b) Li entelijan (*an).

‘(*There you see/this time) she’s intelligent.’
French

(72a) Elle est morte (, là).
3FSG AUX.PRS.3SG dead.FSG LA
‘(There you see/this time) she’s dead.’

(72b) Elle est intelligente (*, là).
3FSG AUX.PRS.3SG intelligent.FSG LÀ
‘(*There you see/this time) she’s intelligent.’

Second, the event-argument theory predicts that VFD in Haitian should be globally incompatible with noneventive predicates, viz. stative predicates denoting permanent properties. This prediction, however, is not empirically borne out, as witnessed by the acceptability of (73):

(73) E N T E LiJAN li entelijan (li pa konn KOPYE).
intelligent 3SG intelligent 3SG NEG know crib
‘(S)he’s INTELLIGENT ((s)he wouldn’t CRIB).’

Only the temporal use of VFD excludes predicates denoting permanent properties: this follows from an external factor — the successivity connection which, in this subcase, must link the VFD string to the following clause.

Third, in claiming that the fronted expression in VFD is an event argument of the V raised by A'-movement, the event-argument theory predicts that the same event argument should be able to be spelt out, prior to raising, in some position within the inflectional domain. As pointed out by Harbour (2008), low V reiteration does occur in Haitian, as exemplified in (74b). However, the semantic effect of low V reiteration is contrastive focus (as glossed in (74b-i)), rather than any effect we would be entitled to expect from an ‘event argument’ — e.g. those glossed in (74b-ii), (74iii), (74iv):

(74a) Li malad.
3SG sick
‘(S)he’s sick.’

(74b) Li malad MALAD.
3SG sick sick
(i) ‘(S)he’s actually SICK (e.g. not DEAD).’
(ii) ‘*There you see, (s)he’s SICK (as expected).’
(iii) ‘This time (s)he’s SICK.’
(iv) ‘*She has become SICK.’

This is evidence that the event argument assumed to occur in VFD could not be spelt out in its base position, hence should undergo obligatory raising to the clause periphery. But the event-argument theory explains neither why event arguments should be obligatorily focused, nor why focus marking should obligatorily trigger movement for this type of arguments.

We conclude that the event-argument theory of VFD cannot be upheld for Haitian.

3.4. The Parallel-Chain Theory (Koopman 1997, Aboh & Dyakonova 2009)

Under these two theories the derivation of VFD in Gbe crucially involves two independently-motivated movements of the V, one to Tense/Aspect, the other to a Focus projection in the
clause periphery. Under Koopman’s analysis, these two movements are respectively Head Movement (V-to-Tense), and Phrasal Movement (VP to spec,FocP): the object (should there be one) moves out of VP to some functional projection within the inflectional domain, and what raises up to the periphery is the remnant VP (now reduced to V). The V ends up being spelt out both in Tense and in a Focus head in the clause-periphery, with reiteration explained by the fact that focus requires overt spell out. Under Aboh & Dyakonova’s theory, both movements instantiate Head Movement, and they respectively target the Aspect and Focus heads, analysed as different types of heads.

Each one of these two theories brings its own solution to the Extraction Paradox and sheds light on other properties: Koopman makes use of the ‘remnant movement’ idea to account for the paradoxical status of the fronted expression in VFD – it must be phrasal (a VP) in order to undergo A'-movement; but it is reduced to a lexical root, since the object has left the VP prior to extraction. Under this analysis, we expect long-distance dependencies to obtain across VFDs, a correct prediction as regards Haitian, but not as regards Gungbe, according to Aboh & Dyakonova (2009). Under these authors’ theory, the analysis of Focus Movement as Head Movement predicts that long-distance dependencies in VFD should exhibit Minimality effects, an assumption supported by the fact that VFD cannot host sentence negation in Gbe: since Focus and Negation are two heads of the same (quantificational) type – Aboh and Dyakonova argue – V cannot move past Negation on its way up to Focus. The fronted V in VFD generally cannot undergo long-distance extraction in Gbe: Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) (following Aboh 2003, 2004) derive this constraint from the overt spell-out of the C head. This idea may account for the fact that unlike Gbe, Haitian (where C is null), allows long-distance extraction of the fronted V:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(75a) Gbe} & \quad \*\text{Xò ìn sè dò Sùrù xò wémá.} \\
\text{buy 1SG hear that Suru buy book} \\
\text{Intended reading: ‘I heard that Suru BOUGHT a book.’} \\
\text{[adapted from Aboh & Diakonova 2009]} \\
\text{(75b) H} & \quad \text{ACHTE yo dì m Elsi achte yon liv.} \\
\text{SE buy 3PL tell 1SG Elsi buy a book} \\
\text{‘I’m told Elsi BOUGHT a book.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Unlike the other theories discussed above, the Parallel-Chain theory does not treat the raised expression in VFD as a nominal argument. Nevertheless, the transference to Haitian of this theory proposed for Gbe runs into a few problems.

First, the claim (put forward by Aboh & Dyakonova, but not by Koopman) that the fronted expression targets the Focus head conflicts with the assumption that cleft constructions in Haitian are structured – as are clefts in e.g., English or French – as identificational predications whose subject is filled by an expletive pronoun (se in Haitian, cf. DeGraff 1992) and whose predicate is instantiated by the clefted constituent (cf. (45) above). If the clefted expression stands as a predicate with respect to the expletive pronominal subject se, the clefted expression should occupy a phrasal position, not a head position, whatever its categorial status.

Second, the Parallel-Chain theory crucially hinges on the availability of V-to-Asp in languages licensing VFD (this remark applies to both Koopman’s and Aboh & Dyakonova’s theories). In Haitian, however, unlike in Gbe, there is no sign of V raising to Tense, Mood or Aspect – no such examples as (76b) below, showing affixation of a TMA marker to the verb root:
(76a) Gbe  \textit{Elom dù-na mònlù.}  
Elom eat-HAB rice  
‘Elom habitually eats rice.’  
[Aboh & Dyakonova 2009, ex. (18a)]

(76b) H  \textit{*Pòl manj-ap diri.}  
Paul eat UNAC rice  
‘Paul will eat/is eating rice.’

(76c) H  \textit{Pòl ap manje diri.}  
Paul UNAC eat rice  
‘Paul will eat/is eating rice.’

Third, the Parallel-Chain theory proposed by Aboh & Dyakonova is claimed to be supported by the unavailability of sentence negation in VFD, in Gbe. But as shown above by (26a) and other examples (cf. section 2.2.5.2), VFD is compatible with sentence negation in Haitian. In this language, what seems to block sentence negation in VFD is not VFD itself but Predicate Clefting, which does not appear to have an exact equivalent in Gbe.

We conclude that the Parallel-Chain theory, as formulated either by Koopman or by Aboh & Dyakonova to account for the Gbe data, does not provide a satisfactory account of VFD in Haitian.

3.5. \textbf{The Contrastive-Doubler theory}

3.5.1. \textit{Deriving VFD from low contrastive V-reiteration}

Basing his analysis on the Predicate-Cleft construction of Haitian (\textit{Klivaj Predika}), which he does not distinguish from the Bare VFD, Harbour (2008) proposes to derive, via A'-movement, the Predicate-Cleft construction in (77b) from the low V-reiteration structure in (77a) (so-called \textit{Contrastive Reduplication} (CR)), which also triggers a verb-focus effect. Harbour observes that the CR pattern exemplified in (77a) is productive in Haitian and may trigger either an intensive reading (as in, e.g. ‘\textit{FRIGHTFULLY} sick’) or a contrastive reading (as in ‘actually sick’). The same ambiguity arises from the English translation ‘\textit{really}+Predicate’:

\begin{itemize}
  \item (77a) \textit{Yo touye touye Janmari Vinsan.}  
    \textit{3PL kill kill Janmari Vinsan}  
    Lit. ‘They KILLED-killed Janmari Vinsan.’  
    (‘They REALLY KILLED Janmari Vinsan.’)
  \item (77b) \textit{Se touye yo touye Janmari Vinsan.}  
    \textit{SE kill 3PL kill Janmari Vinsan}  
    ‘They REALLY KILLED Janmari Vinsan.’
\end{itemize}

The CR pattern illustrated in (77a) for Haitian verbs is the same as the one illustrated by the English examples in (78), taken from Ghomeishi & al. (2004), who show that CR may a priori apply to any lexical category:

\begin{itemize}
  \item (78a) \textit{I’ll make the tuna salad and you make the \textit{SALAD-salad}.}
  \item (78b) \textit{They are rich, of course, but not \textit{RICH-rich,}}  
    \textit{not NEW YORK CITY rich.}
  \item (78c) \textit{Are you LEAVING-leaving?}
\end{itemize}
The CR examples in (77a) and (78) must crucially be distinguished from the Haitian constructions illustrated in (79), already mentioned above, where the verb’s homonym supports a modifier and no verb-focus effect obtains:

(79a)  \( \text{Pòl } \text{dòmi } [\text{yon } \text{ti } \text{dòmi}] \).
Paul sleep a little sleep
‘Paul slept a little.’

(79b)  \( \text{Kite } \text{m } \text{ekri } [\text{ekri } \text{m}] \).
let 1SG write write 1SG
‘Let me write as I please.’

Harbour’s major assumption is that the verb-focus effect observed in the Predicate-Cleft construction – but we showed above (sections 2.1.2 and 2.1.3) that verb focus is a property of all VFD subtypes – primarily arises from a low V-reiteration (CR) structure, and thus obtains prior to both V-fronting and clefting. In other words, a Predicate-Cleft VFD construction such as (80a) is derived from (77a) above. This analysis straightforwardly predicts that VFD and CR are in complementary distribution in Haitian. This prediction is borne out regardless of the VFD subtype. (80) illustrates this restriction for the Bare VFD:

(80a)  \( \text{TOUTE } \text{yo touye Janmari Vinsan.} \).
‘They REALLY KILLED Janmari Vinsan.’

(80b)  \*\( \text{TOUTE } \text{yo touye touye Janmari Vinsan} \).

Further evidence supporting Harbour’s assumption that Haitian VFD is fed by low contrastive V reiteration is the fact that the same small set of monosyllabic degree adverbs (mainly \( \text{trè} \) ‘very’ and \( \text{byen} \) ‘well, very, much’) may optionally be included in the reiterated material both in the low contrastive V-reiteration construction (cf. (81a), (82a)) and in the VFD construction (cf. (81b), (82b)):

(81a)  \( \text{Li } \text{TRÊ FO } \text{trè fò} \text{ (oubyen li } \text{jis PASAB)?} \).
3SG very strong very strong (or 3SG just so-so)
‘Is (s)he REALLY VERY STRONG (or is (s)he just SO-SO)?’

(81b)  \( \text{SE } \text{TRÊ FO } \text{li } \text{trè fò } \text{(li pa jis PASAB).} \).
SE very strong 3SG very strong 3SG NEG just so-so
‘(S)he’S REALLY VERY STRONG ((s)he’s not just SO-SO).’

(82a)  \( \text{Li } \text{BYEN MANJE } \text{byen manje (oubyen li } \text{jis GOUTE)?} \).
3SG well eat well eat or 3SG just pick
‘Did (s)he REALLY EAT WELL (or did she just PICK AT HER FOOD)?’

(82b)  \( \text{SE } \text{BYEN MANJE } \text{li } \text{byen manje (li } \text{pa jis GOUTE).} \).
SE well eat 3SG well eat 3SG NEG just pick
‘(S)he REALLY ATE WELL ((s)he didn’t just PICK AT HER FOOD).’

We assume that the degree adverbs under consideration are in such cases construed as forming with the V head a complex lexeme (e.g. \( \text{trè-fò}, \text{byen-manje} \)), which regularly undergoes low contrastive V reiteration and Focus Raising.
3.5.2. In search of a formal analysis

Harbour’s analysis however raises two problems for Haitian. First, he analyses the reiterated string (e.g. touye touye in (77a)) as a complex lexeme, therefore assumes that A’-movement applies from within a word. However this option does not seem a priori available. Thus in such English examples as in (83), the verb-internal modifier cannot be extracted:

(83) John **double**-locked the door.
(83a) How did John lock the door? — **#Double**.
(83b) *It was [**double**] that John locked the door.

(84) John was **clean**-shaven
(84a) How was John shaven? — **#Clean**.
(84b) *It was [**clean**] that John was shaven.

(85) They **dry**-cleaned my coat.
(85a) How did they clean your coat? — **#Dry**.
(85b) *It was [**dry**] that they cleaned my coat.

In order to smooth out this problem, the expression undergoing A’-movement in the derivation of VFD should be as a syntactic phrase, rather than as a word-internal constituent.22

Another problem lies in the assumption that both the intensive (which Harbour calls ‘augmentative’) and the ‘contrastive’ readings available for low contrastive V-reiteration are triggered by a single structure, from which VFD is derived. While it is true that Predicate-Clefts may trigger intensive effects (cf. (1d-ii)), this property neither obtains across all Predicate-Clefts, nor extends to all other VFD subtypes. Harbour further notes that the intensive reading of Predicate-Clefts is only available with scalar predicates. With nonscalar predicates, Predicate-Clefts only allow a contrastive-focus reading:23

(86a) Se **MALAD** Pòl malad!
se sick Paul sick
‘Paul is REALLY SICK.’
(i) ‘literally SICK, as opposed to sick-ISH’ or DEAD.’ [contrastive]
(ii) ‘FRIGHTFULLY sick’ [intensive]

(86b) Se **BILINEG** Pòl bileng!
se bilingual Paul bilingual
‘Paul is REALLY BILINGUAL.’
(i) ‘literally BILINGUAL, as opposed to KINDA-bilingual’
or ‘MONOLINGUAL’ [contrastive]
(ii) *‘FRIGHTFULLY bilingual’ [intensive]

Similarly, in bare VFDs, as well as in the factive, causative and temporal subtypes, only the contrastive reading arises:

(87a) [**MALAD** Pòl malad la] fè manman li tris.
‘The fact that John is SICK makes his mum sad.’
(i) ‘SICK, as opposed to, e.g., UNEMPLOYED’ [contrastive]
(ii) *‘FRIGHTFULLY sick’ [intensive]
This indicates that intensiveness is only a side-effect of VFD with a subclass of scalar predicates, and in a subclass of external contexts (Predicate Clefts, or *ala*-exclamatives, cf. (1b)). The semantic effect of Bare VFD is contrastive focus, which also characterises one subtype of low lexical reiteration – the one described by Ghomeishi & al. (2004) under the label contrastive reduplication (CR), and illustrated above by the English examples in (78). This type of reiteration, whose effect may be roughly paraphrased by ‘actually X (not Y)’, is shown by Ghomeishi & al. to apply to items having lexical features, whose denotation they describe as ‘restricted to [their] prototype’ (Ghomeishi & al. 2004: 316). We may note that unlike intensive reiteration, as in Haitian (88a), or English (88b), CR does not allow more than two occurrences of the reiterated lexeme:

(88a) H  
Li ekri ekri (ekri) (...), jiskaske men li fê l mal  
3SG write write write until hand 3SG make 3SG pain  
‘(S)he wrote wrote (wrote) (...), until his/her hand hurt.’

(88b) E  
He wrote (and) wrote (and) wrote (until his wrist hurt).

(88c) H  
Li bileng BILENG (*BILENG), oubyen li jis  
3SG bilingual bilingual or 3SG just  
debrouye fè annanglè?  
handle.the.basics REFL in.English  
‘Is she actually BILINGUAL, or can she just handle the English basics?’

(88d) E  
Is (s)he (*BILINGUAL) BILINGUAL bilingual, or can (s)he just handle the basics?

Since, as noted by Harbour, VFD cannot involve more than two occurrences of the reiterated item, as further witnessed below by (89), the contrast between (88a,b) and (88c,d) brings empirical support to our claim that CR (NOT intensive reiteration) must be singled out as the low contrastive reiteration structure which feeds VFD:

(89a) Se TOUYE (*TOUYE) yo touye Janmari Vinsan.  
SE kill kill 3PL kill Janmari Vinsan  
‘They actually KILLED Janmari Vinsan.’

(89b) [TOUYE (*TOUYE) yo touye Janmari Vinsan]  
kill kill 3PL kill Janmari Vinsan  
make Elsi NEG agree  
‘The fact that they actually KILLED Janmari Vinsan seriously upsets Elsi.’

(89c) [RIVE (*RIVE) Jan rive], (epi) Elsi soti.  
arrive arrive Jan arrive and.then Elsi go.out  
‘Once John had ARRIVED, Elsi WENT OUT.’
This discussion leads us to conclude that although Harbour’s leading idea – that VFD in Haitian is fed by low contrastive V-reiteration – is correct, the derivation he proposes needs to be amended for at least two reasons: (i) the extracted expression should be a syntactic constituent filling a phrasal position; (ii) the low contrastive V-reiteration configuration should only trigger contrastive focus, with the intensive effect triggered by independent properties (e.g. clefting, ala, exclamative force).

Ghomeishi & al. (2004) propose to derive Contrastive Reduplication (CR) via a copy rule analysed as an instance of Head Movement, as represented in (90):

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{CR°} \\
\text{XP} \\
\text{X°}
\end{array}
\]

These authors analyse CR° as a functional head which hosts a strong contrastive feature, hence attracts the head of its lexical complement (XP). Reiteration results from the tail of the chain failing to be deleted. This property distinguishes CR (91a) from contrast without reiteration (91b):

\[
\begin{align*}
(91a) & \quad \text{It’s YELLOW-yellow.} \\
(91b) & \quad \text{It’s YELLOW.}
\end{align*}
\]

Exported to Haitian, this analysis however does not allow us to derive VFD from CR, if VFD should – as shown above – be derived via A’-movement: if CR is derived by Head Movement, as in (88), and VFD by A’-movement, we are led back to the paradox which Harbour’s analysis was attempting to solve.

The Morphological Doubling Theory proposed by Inkelas & Zoll (2005), followed by Ghaniabadi & al. (2006), could lead us to a solution. Under this theory, the low contrastive reiteration structure crucially does not involve any copying rule (hence, no Head Movement operation as in (90)). It simply involves the external merging of the same lexeme in two different structural positions, which in this case triggers a contrastive-focus effect. Following Jackendoff (1997, 2002), the authors assume that the reiterated string (e.g. yellow yellow) forms a lexical entry. However, if we consider the Persian example in (92) from Ghaniabadi & al. (2006), which exhibits the typical CR semantics, we note that its two lexical constituents are syntactically articulated by the ezafe morpheme:

Persian

\[
\begin{align*}
(92a) & \quad \ddot{\text{abi}} \\
& \quad \text{‘blue’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(92b) & \quad \ddot{\text{abi-e}} \ddot{\text{abi}} \\
& \quad \text{‘completely/pure blue’ [Ghaniabadi & al.’s translation]} \\
& \quad \text{‘BLUE blue’ (our own translation)}
\end{align*}
\]
The *ezafe* morpheme\textsuperscript{25} may be identified as a functional head linking together a lexeme and its modifier/specifier. We may therefore assume for (92b) the structure in (93):

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{FP} \\
\text{\textbackslash} \\
\text{âbi F'} \\
\text{\textbackslash} \\
\text{F° XP} \\
\text{|} \\
\text{|} \\
\text{e âbi}
\end{array}
\]

Since *ezafe* only links the modifier and the phrasal head, and does not in itself trigger any contrastive effect, and since lexical reiteration does not *as such* trigger a contrastive-focus effect (as witnessed by, e.g., (79)), we assume that the contrastive effect in (92b), as well as in the English CR examples discussed by Ghomeishi & al. arises from the fact that the same lexical item is merged in (93), both in the X° head, and in the modifier scoping over this head.

We further propose to analyse CR in English (94b) as a special instance of the restrictive-modification pattern otherwise exemplified by (94a):

\[\text{What kind of blue shirt was he wearing?}\]

\begin{align*}
(94a) & \quad \text{He was wearing a } \textit{pale}-\text{blue shirt (not a } \textit{dark}-\text{blue one).} \\
(92b) & \quad \text{He was wearing a } \textit{blue}-\text{blue shirt (not a } \textit{blue-} \textit{ish} \text{ one).}
\end{align*}

In (94a), where the head adjective and its restrictive modifier are lexically distinct, contrastive focus on the modifier comes as a free option, as witnessed by the acceptability of (95a) below, where focus scopes over the entire object DP, rather than on the adjective modifier; in (94b), on the other hand, the lexical identity of the head adjective and its modifier automatically forces narrow contrastive focus on the modifier, as witnessed by the infelicity of (95b), which shows that unlike the non-reiterated modifier in (95a), the reiterated modifier is only licensed under primary stress:

\[\text{What was he wearing?}\]

\begin{align*}
(95a) & \quad \text{He was wearing a pale-} \text{blue shirt.} \\
(95b) & \quad *\text{He was wearing a blue-} \text{blue shirt.}
\end{align*}

We now return to low contrastive V-reiteration in Haitian, as in (96):

\begin{align*}
(96a) & \quad \textit{Pòl malad } \textit{MALAD.} \\
& \quad \text{Paul sick sick} \\
& \quad \text{Lit. ‘Paul is sick.’} \\
& \quad (‘Paul is } \textit{really sick.’)} \\
(96b) & \quad \textit{Duvalier pati } \textit{PATI.} \\
& \quad \text{Duvalier go go} \\
& \quad \text{Lit. ‘Duvalier is gone.’} \\
& \quad (‘Duvalier is } \textit{really gone.’)}
\end{align*}
We propose in (97) to analyse low contrastive V-reiteration as a special instance of the restrictive-modifier structure assumed above in (93):

In such structures, the same lexeme is merged in the lexical (V) head, and in the specifier of a Modifier phrase (FP) dominating VP. The contrastive effect, as described by Ghomeishi & al. (2004), arises from the lexical identity of the phrasal head and its restrictive modifier.

VFD may now be regularly derived from the CR structure via A'-movement, as shown in (98):
The derivation proposed in (98) allows us to clarify the status of the raised constituent in VFD. As a restrictive modifier, it originates in a specifier position, and is therefore available for A'-movement. The special contrastive effect triggered by CR crucially arises from the strict lexical identity of the (V) head and its bare modifier. The expression merged in the spec of FP is thus a lexeme – a replica of the item merged in the V head.

The restrictive-modifier syntactic structure proposed in (98) for CR should be distinguished from the morphological structure of verbal compounds such as those mentioned in fn.10 (ex. (ii)), since (99d) below is ill-formed, contrasting with (99b). (97f) may be derived from (99e) via syntactic movement from the specifier of FP in diagram (98), while in (99d), movement is blocked from within a lexical entry.

\[
(99a) \quad Pôl \quad kouri \quad kouri. \\
Paul \quad run \quad run \\
'Paul REALLY RAN.'
\]

\[
(99b) \quad KOURI_k \quad Pôl \quad t_k \quad kouri. \\
run \quad Paul \quad run \\
'Paul REALLY RAN.'
\]

\[
(99c) \quad Pôl \quad kouri-desann. \\
Paul \quad run-come.down \\
'Paul came down (= came down fast).' \\
\]

\[
(99d) \quad *KOURI_k \quad Pôl \quad t_k \quad desann.
\]

\[
(99e) \quad Pôl \quad kouri \quad kouri-desann. \\
Paul \quad run \quad run-come.down \\
'Paul came down REALLY FAST.' \\
\]

\[
(99f) \quad KOURI_k \quad Pôl \quad t_k \quad kouri-desann. \\
r_u \quad Paul \quad run-come.down \\
'Paul came down REALLY FAST.' \\
\]

The contrast between (99d) and (99f) thus supports our assumption that the source of VFD is the syntactic structure represented in (98), rather than the morphological structure proposed by Harbour (2008).

As shown in section 2, the Bare VFD may occur as an independent clause indicating Verb Focus, or as the protasis of a structure overtly or covertly conjoined by epi, as in (100):

\[
(100) \quad PATI \quad Duvalier \quad pati, \quad (epi) \quad Elsi \quad vini. \\
leave \quad Duvalier \quad leave \quad so-then \quad Elsi \quad come.back \quad Lit. \quad 'Duvalier LEFT, so-then Elsi came back.' \quad = \quad 'Once/as soon as Duvalier (had) LEFT, Elsi came back.' \\
\]

If the VFD structure in (98) is nominalised, viz. embedded within a DP, as in (101), we derive the factive subtype, which fills an argument or dislocated-topic position within a larger clause:

\[
(101) \quad \text{Nominalised VFD (the factive subtype)} \\
\text{pati Duvalier pati (a)}^{28}
\]
(102a) \[\textit{PATI Duvalier pati a] fê Pòl kontan.}\]
\[\text{go Duvalier go DET make Paul happy}\]
‘The fact that Duvalier is GONE makes Paul happy.’

(102b) \[\textit{Kouri Pòl kouri}, Elsi kontan.}\]
\[\text{run Paul run Elsi happy}\]
‘(Due to) the fact that Paul RUNS, Elsi is HAPPY.’

In the Bare VFD structure in (98), the Verb Focus effect arises from two steps in the derivation: the CR structure represented in (97), and Focus Raising. In the Predicate-Cleft construction illustrated in (103b-i) below, the Verb Focus effect is further enhanced by clefting, which places the focused expression in a predicate position with respect to the expletive subject pronoun se. As shown above (section 2.2.5), however, a sentence such as (103b) is \textit{a priori }ambiguous between the Predicate-Cleft reading in (103b-i) and the VFD-cleft reading in (103b-ii) — an instance of Argument Cleft:

(103a) \textit{PATI Duvalier pati!}\]
\[\text{go Duvalier go}\]
‘Duvalier is REALLY GONE.’
(103b) *Se PATI Duvalier pati!*

(i) ‘Duvalier is REALLY GONE.’  
(ii) ‘It is [the fact that Duvalier is GONE] (which...)’

The structural representations in (104) are intended to distinguish the two analyses of (103b):\(^{29}\)

(104a) **Predicate Cleft:**  

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{TP} \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
se \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
T^o \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
FocP \\
\emptyset \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
pati, \\
\emptyset \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
CP \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
t_z \\
\emptyset \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
\text{TP} \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
Duvalier \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
T^o \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
FP \\
\emptyset \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
t_z \\
F^o \\
/ \quad \backslash \\
V^o \\
\emptyset \\
pati
\end{array}
\]
4. Concluding assumptions

Our descriptive update of Haitian VFD departs from all previous descriptions on three counts:  
(i) It reduces VFD to a single core structure represented in (98), whose derivation crucially  
involves Focus Movement, an instance of A’-movement;  
(ii) It distinguishes the Bare VFD structure from the Predicate-Cleft construction represented in  
(104a), which involves a further matrix level of predication;  
(iii) It treats the factive and causative subtypes as nominalised instances of VFD, and the  
temporal subtype as containing Bare VFD in the protasis of a conjoined structure whose  
constituents are linked by temporal succession.  

We have been led to discard, on empirical grounds, the assumption that VFD is a form of  
relativisation involving a cognate object or ‘event argument’ raising up to the clause periphery.  
We have further argued that the ‘Parallel-Chain theory’ proposed by Koopman (1997) and Aboh  
& Dyakonova (2009) to account for VFD in Gbe must be revised for Haitian, since some of the  
empirical properties it hinges on (Verb-to-Aspect raising, head-movement properties) are not  
shared by Gbe and Haitian.  

The data of Haitian lead us to adopt – and generalise to all subtypes of VFD in this  
language – Harbour’s (2008) assumption that VFD is derived from low contrastive verb  
reiteration. This analysis sheds light on the apparently paradoxical fact that VFD, in Haitian,  
seems to involve A’-movement applying to a V-head. Under our own analysis, VFD is regularly  
derived by raising to the clause periphery a VP modifier (an adverbial phrase) containing but a  
bare lexeme identical to the V head. We assume that the contrastive effect triggered by low
contrastive reiteration makes the restrictive modifier a natural candidate for Focus Movement, and (optionally) for further layers of focus or intensive marking (clefting, ala, ata). Under the derivation proposed in (98), an example such as (103a) is crucially not analysed as an elliptical variant of its Predicate-Cleft counterpart in (103b). The V-focus effect obtains prior to Focus Movement, and Focus Movement occurs prior to clefting or further focus or intensive marking. Contrastive reiteration (CR), Focus Movement, Clefting, and adverbial intensive or contrastive markers such as ala and ata, appear as independent though combinable strategies which trigger or highlight a contrastive focus effect.

As regards reiteration, the above descriptive results do not support the iconic theory of reiteration stipulating that ‘more form stands for more meaning’. Under the analysis proposed here, the semantic effect of reiteration in VFD constructions is contrastive focus, which primarily arises from a special instance of restrictive modification — in effect quite the opposite of ‘more-of’.

As regards the respective roles of syntax and morphology in reiterated strings, the derivation proposed above for VFD in Haitian entirely pertains to syntax. It involves the external merge of a V-identical VP modifier, followed by Focus Movement and (optionally) Clefting or nominalisation (embedding under DP). The reiterated XX(Y) string which feeds VFD constructions does not form a word in morphology, but a VP modified by an adverbial.

A brief final word about the diachronic issue. Among the focus-marking strategies which may combine in the derivation of VFD constructions in Haitian, low contrastive reiteration, clefting, and adverbial focus markers are all available in French (both Standard and dialectal). However, constrastive verb reiteration in French seems restricted to non-finite forms, as illustrated in (105):

(105a) *Tu vas les manger-MANGER
2SG FUT.2SG 3PL eat.INF eat.INF
(ou seulement les LECHOUILER)?
or only 3PL kind.of.lick-INF
‘Are you planning on actually EATING them (or just on
kinda LICKING them)?’

(105b) Tu les as mangés-MANG-ÉS
2SG 3PL have.prs.2sg eat-PP eat-PP
(ou seulement LECHOUILLES)?
or just kind.of.lick-PP
Lit. ‘Have you actually EATEN them (or just kinda LICKED
them)?’

(105c) *Tu les mangez -MANGES
2SG 3PL eat.PRS.2SG eat.PRS.2SG
(ou tu te contentes de les LECHOUILLER)?
Lit. ‘Do you actually EAT them (or do you just kinda
LICK them)?’

If this generalisation is correct, it is reasonable to assume that the uninflected morphology of verbs in Haitian contributed to allow the expansion of low reiteration as a Verb Focus strategy, hence the development of VFD. Focus Raising (i.e., the raising of a focused constituent to the clause periphery, without clefting) is not, on the other hand, a natural focus-marking strategy in French, where focus is generally phrase-final, especially for verbs (compare Haitian VFD with the French examples in (3)). This suggests that the one non-French property involved in the
diachronic development of Haitian VFD was Focus Raising, a property characteristically attested in Gbe (Koopman 1984, 1997, Aboh 2003, 2004, Aboh & Dyakonova 2009), a plausible substrate for this creole. The descriptive results of the present study are thus consistent with the assumption that the grammars of French and Gbe each contributed to the emergence of VFD constructions as observed in Modern Haitian. This hypothesis should however be refined on the basis of further empirical work on other ‘VFD-like’ constructions in Caribbean French-lexifier creoles, as well as in dialectal French and Indian-Ocean creoles, where a Gbe influence is less likely.

1 We owe a serious debt of gratitude to the various fellow linguists and native speakers of Haitian who provided precious feedback during the several years we spent over this research, among whom Enoch Aboh, Mahsina Alleasaib, Edelyn Dorismond, Stephanie Durelman, Duvelson Emilien, Dieudonne Exius, Dominique Fattier, Karl Gedeli, Fabiola Henri, Alain Kihm, Mélanie Jouitteau, Roberson Pierre, Emmanuel Schang, Norval Smith.

This is an adaptation of the term Predicative Fronting with Doubling used by Aboh & Dyakonova (2009). The term ‘Predicate Fronting with Doubling’ encompasses another type of construction involving the fronting of a reiterated Verb Phrase, rather than that of a verb root. VP fronting with doubling is attested in other languages including, e.g., Polish (Bonderuk n.d.), Russian (Aboh & Dyakonova 2009), Yiddish (Cable 2004), and French (see below ex. (3)), a.o.

Abbreviations and labels used in the glosses: ACC = accomplished marker (Haitian); ANT = anteriority marker (Haitian); AUX = auxiliary (French); DEF = determiner (LA in Haitian); EXCL = exclamation marker; F = feminine gender (French); FUT = future (French); INF = infinitive (French); IPF = imperfect (French); LocP = Locative Phrase (e.g. Haitian lakay); M = masculine gender (French); NEG = negation; NONP = nonpunctual (Matinikè ka); PL = plural; PP = preposition; PRS = present tense (French); REFL = reflexive; SBJ = subjective (French); SG = singular; UNAC = unaccomplished (Haitian ap); 1, 2, 3 = first, second, third person; SE = Haitian se (expletive subject in identificational and cleft clauses).

The acceptability judgements borne on our Haitian examples are primarily those of Herby Glaude, who was born in 1977 in L’Estère, in the Northern department of Artibonite, but later lived for ten years in Port-au-Prince, before moving on to Paris, where he has spoken creole daily amongst the Haitian community.

We assume throughout that such lexemes as malad ‘sick’, bèl ‘pretty’, in predicate position, fill the same structural slot as, e.g. vini ‘come’ or pati ‘go, leave’ – the V head. As previously argued by DeGraff (1992) (see section 2.1.1. below) the VFD construction may actually provide the main diagnostic test for identifying the Verb category (or rather, position), in Haitian.

‘Ala (ex. (1b) and ata (ex. 1c) are two clause-initial functional morphemes whose properties are left undescribed in the present study — they clearly call for further research: at this point we don’t even have a satisfactory gloss to propose for them. Both seem to readily combine with the VFD structure discussed in this study.

Piou (1982b) however focuses on the temporal subcase illustrated in (1c) and is therefore an exception to this generalisation.

We must leave the ALA and ATA cases aside here for reasons of space, but the unbounded-dependency effect may be shown to obtain in such examples as well. The syntax and semantics of ALA and ATA call for a completely separate study.

‘Plase means ‘to live with somebody as a couple’. We gloss it by ‘live.wsc’. In (13) through (16) we substitute soule to Piou’s chichote (ex. (12)). Both lexemes translate as ‘whisper’ but chichote sounds so acrolectal it hinders our consultants’ intuitive judgments.

An alternative structural analysis (and correlated interpretation) is available for (16b), but left out in the text since it should be derived from (i) below, rather than from (16a):

(i-a) Yo diichotte [soti volè a soti].
3Pl tell/whisper come.out thief LA come.out.
‘They told/whispered (to) the thief to COME OUT.’

(i-b) Soti [yo di*chichote volè a soti],
come-out 3Pl tell/whisper thief DET come.out lapolis tire.
the police fire
‘As soon as the thief was told/*whispered to COME OUT, the police fired.’

In Lumsden & Lefebvre (1990), emphasis is placed on the ambiguity of focus, which may have wide scope on the VP (i-a) or narrow scope on the V head (i-b):

(i) Se manje Jan ap manje pen an.
it.is eat John UNAC eat bread DET
(i-a) ‘John is actually EATING THE BREAD (not LAYING THE TABLE).’
(i-b) ‘John is actually EATING (not BAKING) the bread.’
[adapted from Lumsden & Lefebvre 1990:773]

However, this ambiguity arises from a general discrepancy between the prosodic and syntactic scope of focus (cf. Büring 1997). Thus, the single sentence in (iii), with primary stress on Mary (the right edge of the predicate), may provide a felicitous answer to (ii-a) (all-focus reading), (ii-b) (wide focus on the predicate) or (ii-c) (narrow focus on the object):

(ii-a) What happened? > (iii) — John invited Mary.
(ii-b) What did John do? > (iii) — John invited Mary.
(ii-c) Who did John invite? > (iii) — John invited Mary.

* The ambiguity of focus in a serial-verb construction is illustrated by (i) below (with VFD occurring in the Predicate-Cleft subtype):

(i-a) Paul take book det show Elsi.
Paul took the book to Elsi to show it to her.

(i-b) Se Pote Paul take book DET show Elsi
(se pa BAY li bay Elsi liv la).
‘Paul (just) TOOK the book to Elsi to show it to her (he didn't GIVE Elsi the book).’

(i-c) Se Montre Paul take book DET show Elsi
(se pa BAY li bay Elsi liv la).
‘Paul (just) took the book to Elsi to SHOW it to her (he didn't GIVE Elsi the book).’

Verb series made up of intransitive verbs are analysed by Bernabé (1983) as verb compounds. As regards the ambiguity of focus, the available structural options and correlated interpretive effects are the same as in (i) above:

(ii-a) Paul run come.down
Paul came down quickly.’

(ii-b) Se Kouri Paul run come.down
SE run Paul run come.down
(li pa MIZE nan wout).
3SG NEG dawdle on way
‘Paul came down RUNNING (he didn't DAWDLE on the way).’

(ii-c) Se Desann Paul run come.down
SE come.down Paul run come.down
(li pa MONTE).
3SG NEG go up
‘Paul CAME DOWN running (he didn't GO UP).’

(What Paul did at full speed was COME DOWN (not GO UP).’

This morpheme is labeled *determiner* by Lefebvre (1998) on account of its morphology (allomorphic variation LA: -LA/-A/-AN, cf. (i) and (iiib) below; compare (iii), where locative LA exhibits no allomorphy), its syntax (right-edge position), and its semantics (presuppositional effect), three properties shared by the nominal determiner LA. Used as a ‘clausal determiner’, this element occurs mainly in intransitive clauses, where it signals the reported state of affairs as expected, as exemplified in (ii):

(i-a) Paul work LA
Paul works (as expected).’

(i-b) Paul finish/return LA
‘Paul has finished/returned (as expected).’

(i-c) Paul go.out/leave LA
‘Paul has gone out/leave (as expected).’

[CONTEXT: Poukisa ou leve? ‘Why are you getting up?’

(ii-a) M ale.
1. SG go
   'I'm going.'

(ii-b)   M  a le a.
   1SG go DET
   'I'm going, as you knew I would.'

(iii)    Pòl a che la *(l)a.
   Paul buy book DET LOC
   'Paul bought the book there.'

14 Like its French lexifier gagner, Haitian genyen ambiguously means ‘to earn’ or ‘to win’. If translated as ‘to earn’ it is transitive and its object only seems ellipsable under a generic or habitual reading – as in (32a). In (32b), the determiner triggers a completion effect, thus blocking the ‘to earn’ option.

The distribution of Tense across (i) in Haitian echoes the distribution of Tense in French clefts:

(ii-a)   C'est [les livres] que Paul déteste.  [= (i-a)]
   it-is the books that Paul hates

(ii-b)   C'est [les livres] que Paul détestait.  [= (i-b)]
   it-is the books that Paul hated

(ii-c)   C'était [les livres] que Paul détestait.  [= (i-c)]
   it-was the books that Paul hated

(ii-d)   *C'était [les livres] que Paul déteste.  [= (id)]

* We are leaving out such examples as the one in (i) below, which involve verb reiteration, sentence negation and clefting, but fall outside the range of the present study since the clefted homonym of the verb is not bare – but crucially modified by ti ‘(a) little’:

(i)    Se pa ti MALAD Elsi (pa) malad!
   SE NEG little sick Elsi NEG sick

" Thanks to Luigi Rizzi (p.c.), who reminded us of this generalisation.
" The determiner LA exhibits allomorphy but the homonymous locative lexeme la (cf. ex. (7)) does not.

13 The determiner LA exhibits allomorphy but the homonymous locative lexeme la (cf. ex. (7)) does not.

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Alternative analyses of Haitian se treat it as a copula verb (Mufwene 1994), or as ambiguous between a pronoun and a copula verb (Déprez 2003, Gadelii 2007). In cleft constructions, however, it unambiguously exhibits the behaviour of a subject pronoun, since, like the subject pronoun or DP in (ia-b), and unlike the V in (i-a), it sits on the left-hand side of sentence negation and TMA in (i-c) (compare (i-d)):

(i-a)   Se liv Pòl rayi.
   SE book Paul hate
   'It’s BOOKS that Paul hates.'

(i-b)   Se liv Pòl te rayi.
   SE book Paul ANT hate
   'It’s BOOKS that Paul used to hate.'

(i-c)   Se te liv Pòl te rayi
   SE ANT book Paul ANT hate
   'It was BOOKS that Paul used to hate.'

(i-d)   *Se te liv Pòl rayi.
   SE ANT book Paul hate
   'It was BOOKS that Paul used to hate.'

The distribution of Tense across (i) in Haitian echoes the distribution of Tense in French clefts:
Cf. section 3.2 below for further comments.

Bernâe’s assumption that (66a) and (66b) are structurally parallel is disputable on empirical grounds, but this issue is orthogonal to our central issue. We leave the matter open here and intend to take it up in a separate work.

This example is ill-formed in Herby Glaude’s dialect and rejected by our Haitian consultants. When it is adjacent to an N, LA is automatically construed as the nominal determiner. Since LA and YON cannot occur together on the same N, (69b) is discarded as ungrammatical.

Though phrased differently, a similar objection to a morphological analysis of VFD is made by Abuh & Dyakonova (2009).

The bilingual example in (86b) is borrowed from Harbour (2008: 865), but our glosses and comment are a free adaptation of Harbour’s description. Bileng is an obvious borrowing from French – basilectal Haitian would have, e.g., li pale de lang ‘(s)he speaks two languages’, rather than li bileng ‘(s)he is bilingual’. Harbour suggests that with non-nlar predicates such as bileng, ‘bilingual’, or with some other predicates such as konnen ‘know’, Predicate-Cleft is available while low contrastive V-reiteration is not – a potential problem for his central assumption. Herby Glaude and our other consultants however find low contrastive V-reiteration quite acceptable with all such predicates, under the proper prosody and pragmatic context. The resulting reading involves the contrastive-focus effect described by Ghomeishi & al. (2004) as characteristic of contrastive reiteration (CR) in English.

(i) Yo konnen-konnen l (oubyen yo jis rabache l)?:
3PL know know 3SG or 3PL just parrot 3SG
Lit. ‘Do they KNOW-know it (or are they just PARROTING it)?’
(‘Do they actually KNOW it or are they just PARROTING it?’)

‘debrouye l(i)’(‘manage’, ‘get along’) is an intrinsically reflexive verb similar to French se débrouiller. The postverbal weak pronoun must be coindexed with the local subject, viz. mwen debrouve m (I manage), ou debrouve-w (you manage), etc.

‘An indispensable element inside any noun phrase comprising a head modified by at least one non-clausal modifier and/or complement’ [Parsafar 2008]

In Haitian, as in French, and unlike in English, the modifier linearly follows the modified element at spell-out (e.g. adnominal modifiers follow the noun). We assume that the Modifier is universally merged above the modified element in syntactic structure, and that the Modified expression moves up past the Modifier in some languages and constructions (cf. Knittel 2005, Cinque 2010).

A reviewer of an earlier draft of this text reacts to (97) in the following way: ‘If two verbs are merged, what about the Theta-Criterion?’ This objection however fails to be relevant under the assumption that lexical roots have no categorial features until they are merged in syntax (cf. Halle & Marantz 1993, Kayne 2009). Thus malad and touye, in (97) ‘are verbs’ only if they are inserted in the V head; if inserted in spec,FP, they are construed as restrictive modifiers scoping over the V head, viz. as adverbial modifiers – ‘adverbs’.

Schang (this volume) argues that a modifier structure similar to the one assumed in (97) is consistent with a subtype of reiteration constructions in Saotome.

We assume DP to be head-initial in Haitian, with the complement of D raising up to the specifier, and the D head filled by LA when specified as specific (+locative), cf. Zrbi-Hertz & Glaude (2007). Similar configurations are found in Gbe, cf. Abuh (2002, 2005).

For lack of space, we must leave out here the ALA and ATA VFD subtypes. We assume that like all other VFD constructions, they contain the core substructure represented in (98). But we leave further structural details open for future research.

Wittman (1998) thus quotes the following examples from Magoua, a Canadian variety of French still spoken in the 1970s by senior citizens of Trois-Rivieres, on the Northern bank of the Saint-Lawrence river, South of Quebec City:

(i-a) Malad yé te malad, yon pa té kapab l -sové.
    sick 3SG/SUBJ ANT sick 3PL NEG ANT can 3SG/OBJ-save
Lit. ‘Sick (as) he was sick, they couldn’t save him.’

(‘Il était malade au point qu’ils n’ont pas pu le sauver.’ (Wittman’s F. translation)
(‘He was so sick they couldn’t save him.’)

(i-b) Se manje i -manj.
    SE eat 3SG/SUBJ-eat
Lit. ‘It-is eat he eats.’

(‘Il ne mange pas, il bouffe.’ (Wittman’s F. translation)
(‘He doesn’t EAT, he STUFFS HIMSELF.’)

These sentences are at first glance similar to some VFD examples in Haitian. However (ia) could a priori result from a continuous development from French (iia), where the expression in clause-initial position is topical (as in (3)
above) rather than focal; and due to its initial se, (ib) could a priori result from a continuous development from French clefting, where focus is primarily clause final rather than clause-initial, cf. (iib):

(i-a) Malade comme il était, on n’a pas pu le sauver.
    sick       as     he was      they couldn’t save him

(i-b) (Il mange) CA c’est MANGER !
    he eats     that is   eat(ing)

‘(He’s eating) THAT is (what you may call) EATING!’

It also seems (Muhsina Alleesaib and Fabiola Henri, p.c.) that the VFD constructions found in Caribbean French-lexifier creoles – as illustrated above in Haitian – have no exact equivalents in Indian-Ocean French lexifier creoles, e.g. in Mauritian. Further empirical and detailed comparative work, covering morphology, syntax and contextualised interpretation revealing information structure, clearly needs to be done to allow finer diachronic assumptions to be drawn.

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