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► **To cite this version:**

Nicolas Quint. Capeverdean words derived from Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms: a descriptive and comparative study. *Papia*, 2015, 2 (25), pp.189 - 215. halshs-01482124

HAL Id: halshs-01482124

<https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01482124>

Submitted on 8 Mar 2017

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Capeverdean words derived from Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms: a descriptive and comparative study

Palavras do cabo-verdiano derivadas de formas verbais não-infinitivas: um estudo descritivo e comparativo

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Abstract: This article focuses on Santiaguense Capeverdean words derived from Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms and among these, more specifically on those elements which were not recently borrowed from modern Portuguese and do not compete with Capeverdean more basilectal items. In section 1, the category of Capeverdean words under scrutiny is defined contrastively with other similar types of words. In section 2, all known members of this category are examined in turn and according to the characteristics of their respective Portuguese sources. In section 3, a comparative approach is developed, in which the etymological counterparts of the Capeverdean words presented in the previous sections are systematically investigated for other Upper Guinea Creoles (i.e. Guinea-Bissau Creole, Casamance Creole and Papiamentu). The conclusion section stresses the main points of interest of this study, namely (i) the methodology used herein, which combines historical and comparative linguistics, (ii) the centrality of imperative forms as an input for new lexical verb roots in Upper Guinea Creoles and more generally in situations of language acquisition, and (iii) the scientific prospects that a comparison covering a wider

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sample of Ibero-Romance-based Creoles could offer concerning words derived from Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms in these languages.

Keywords: Capeverdean; Upper Guinea Creoles; Historical Linguistics; Portuguese.

Resumo: O tópico deste artigo centra-se nas palavras do cabo-verdiano santiaguense derivadas de formas verbais não infinitivas do português e entre estas, mais especificamente, naqueles elementos que não foram recentemente emprestados do português contemporâneo e que não competem com itens cabo-verdianos mais basiletais. Na seção 1, a categoria de palavras cabo-verdianas sob escrutínio é definida por contraste com outros tipos semelhantes de palavras. Na seção 2, todos os membros conhecidos desta categoria são examinados um a um de acordo com as características de suas respectivas fontes portuguesas. Na seção 3, uma abordagem comparativa é desenvolvida, em que os correspondentes etimológicos das palavras cabo-verdianas apresentadas nas seções anteriores são sistematicamente investigados em conjunto com outros crioulos da Alta Guiné (ou seja, o crioulo da Guiné-Bissau, o de Casamance e o Papiamentu). Na conclusão salientam-se os principais pontos de interesse deste estudo, a saber: (i) a metodologia aqui utilizada, que combina linguística histórica e comparativa, (ii) a centralidade das formas imperativas como fonte de novas raízes lexicais verbais nos crioulos da Alta Guiné e de modo geral em situações de aquisição de língua, e (iii) as perspectivas científicas que uma comparação cobrindo uma amostra mais ampla de crioulos baseados em línguas ibero-românicas poderia oferecer, no que diz respeito às palavras derivadas de formas verbais não infinitivas portuguesas nessas línguas.

Palavras-chave: Cabo-verdiano; Crioulos da Alta Guiné; Linguística Histórica; Português.

1 Introduction and characterization of the words derived from Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms in Santiaguense Capeverdean

The vast majority of Santiaguense Capeverdean² (SCV) verbs derive from Portuguese and among these, most are derived from Portuguese infinitives (Quint 2000a: 86-94; 2001a; 2011)^{3,4}:

- (1) SCV **kánta** ‘sing’ < PT⁵ *cantar* ‘id’.
- (2) SCV **parsi** ‘seem, look like’ < PT *parecer* ‘id’.
- (3) SCV **fla** ‘say’ < PT *falar* ‘speak’.

However, a limited number of Portuguese verbal forms other than infinitives also made their way into present-day Santiaguense Capeverdean. Such forms basically belong to two different categories:

Category 1: inflected verbal forms directly borrowed from Portuguese — in most cases probably after the period of formation of SCV — which tend to compete with more basilectal SCV forms with the same value or meaning (Quint 2012):

²The Capeverdean data adduced in this paper are all drawn from the Santiaguense variety, traditionally spoken on the island of Santiago. However, the predominantly infinitive origin of Portuguese-derived Capeverdean verbs is a phenomenon common to all varieties of the Capeverdean language.

³For a somewhat different analysis of this point, see also Rougé 2000.

⁴I want hereby to acknowledge the kind help and advice (either linguistic or bibliographic) of the following people: Eliane Araújo Vieira, Philip Baker, Noël Bernard Biagui, Claire Gardent, Yonatan Ginzburg, Tjerk Hagemeyer, Bart Jacobs, Sylvain Loiseau, Mafalda Mendes, Joseph Jean François Nunez, Stefano Manfredi, Braima Sam Mendes, Joseph Jean François Nunez & Aires Semedo. I also would like to thank the participants to the 5th International Conference of GELIC (*Grupo de Estudos de Línguas em Contato*) [Praia (Cape Verde) 2014, June, 5-6] and to the 10th ACBLPE (*Associação para o estudo dos Crioulos com Base Lexical Portuguesa e Espanhola/Association for Portuguese and Spanish Lexically Based Creole languages*) Annual Conference [Villejuif (France) 2010, July, 1-3], during which I presented earlier versions of this study. The comments and suggestions of the people who attended my communications significantly contributed to enrich and refine the views and analyses developed in the present contribution.

⁵For a list of the abbreviations used in this article, see section Abbreviations right after section 4 (Conclusion).

- (4) Borrowed (e) **kria** [ˈkrijɐ] ‘(he) wanted’ < PT *queria* [keˈrijɐ]⁶ 3PS imperfect indicative of PT *querer* ‘want’.
vs. basilectal (e) **kreba** [ˈkreβɐ] past form of SCV **kré** ‘want’.
- (5) Borrowed (e) **tinha** [ˈtɨɲɐ] ‘(he) had’ < PT *tinha* [ˈtɨɲɐ] 3PS imperfect indicative of PT *ter* ‘have’.
vs. basilectal (e) **tenba** [ˈtẽβɐ] past form of SCV **ten** ‘have’.

Category 2: words deriving from Portuguese inflected verbal forms which do not compete with any basilectal equivalent. Such items often lost their original value and provided the lexical root of some SCV verbs (6, 7) or even lost their verbal character and gave birth to SCV items belonging to parts of speech other than the verb (8, 9):

- (6) SCV **bai** [ˈbɛj] ‘go’ (verb) < PT *vai* [ˈva.j] 3PS present indicative ((*s/he goes*) or 2PS imperative (*go!*) of *ir* ‘go’.
- (7) SCV **suponha** [suˈpoɲɐ] *suppose* (verb) < PT *suponha* [suˈpoɲɐ] present subjunctive of *supôr* ‘suppose’.
- (8) SCV **mantenha** [mẽˈteɲɐ] ‘greeting’ (noun) < PT *mantenha* [mẽˈteɲɐ] present subjunctive of *manter* ‘keep’.
- (9) SCV **ovi** [ˈovi] ‘what (a)’ + *noun* ! (exclamative) < PT *houve* [ˈowvi] impersonal past preterit of *haver* ‘be (there)’.

As I have already dealt in previous contributions both with SCV verbs derived from Portuguese infinitives (Quint 2000a: 86-94; 2001a; 2011) and with category 1 (Quint 2012), this paper will focus exclusively on the study of words belonging to category 2 (henceforward C2Ws for ‘Category 2 Words’), which have never been studied in detail so far. In section 2, I will examine in turn all known members of category 2 in SCV, classifying them according to

⁶Unless otherwise specified, throughout this article, the phonetic transcriptions of Portuguese items are based on the pronunciation of classical Portuguese, as described in historical studies such as Teyssier (1980). Indeed, classical Portuguese (spoken during the XVth and XVIth centuries) is the most likely source of the majority of Santiago Capeverdean basic vocabulary.

their Portuguese origin⁷. In section 3, I will provide a comparative approach, investigating the etymological counterparts of Santiaguense C2Ws in other Upper Guinea Creoles (UGCs) — namely Papiamentu (PAP)⁸, Guinea-Bissau Creole (GBC) and Casamance Creole (CAS). I will then conclude about the linguistic significance of C2Ws both for Creole studies and for general linguistics.

2 A review of the known words derived from Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms in Santiaguense Capeverdean, classified according to their etymology

2.1 Capeverdean words which can both be derived from Portuguese 3PS present indicative (PI) or 2PS imperative (IMP)

All such words are verbs in Santiaguense.

2.1.1 *Bai* ‘go’ and *ben* ‘come’

Table 1 displays some inflectional and etymological characteristics of those two Santiaguense verbs.

⁷In this study, I have only dealt with items whose etymology can be proven beyond doubt or at least sustained with a high level of certainty, which has led me to exclude forms of disputed origin such as (i) SCV **sábi** [‘sabi] ‘nice, pleasant, tasty’ (although attested as **sabi** [‘sabi] both in CAS and GBC), traced back by Rougé (1988: 131; 2000: 87-88; 2004: 254-255) to PT *sabe* [‘sabi] ‘it tastes’ 3PS present indicative (i.e. a non-infinitive verbal form) of *saber* ‘taste, have a flavor (of)’, but at least equally plausibly (Lang 2002: 671-672; Quint 1999: 233-234) derived from PT *suave* [‘swavi] ‘sweet, pleasant’ (adjective); (ii) SCV **dému** [‘dému] ‘say, for instance’, traced back by both Lang (2002: 107-108) and Rougé (2004: 127-128) to PT *dêmos* [‘demus] ‘let’s give’ 1PP present subjunctive (i.e. a non-infinitive verbal form) of *dar*, ‘give’. Although this origin is plausible, it becomes more questionable (or less straightforward) when one considers the existence of the variants **ndému** [‘ndému] (quite frequent) and **damu** [‘dému] (much rarer), which I have personally observed during various fieldwork sessions in many Santiaguense rural localities. That is the reason why I have chosen not to include **dému/ndému/damu** (whose semantic history could be quite similar to that of **supunhámus** (see 2.2.1.), provided that PT *dêmos* is the right etymon) in the present paper.

⁸For the question of the inclusion of Papiamentu into UGCs, see Jacobs (2012); Quint (2000b: 119-208).

Portuguese		CVC	
Infinitive	Etymon of the SCV verb	Present	Past
<i>ir</i> 'go'	<i>vai</i> ['vaj] 's/he goes' (PI) or 'go!' (IMP)	bai ['bɛj]	bába ['babɐ]
<i>vir</i> 'come'	<i>vem</i> ['vɛ] 's/he comes' (PI) or 'come!' (IMP)	ben ['bɛ]	benba ['bɛbɐ]

Tab. 1: **Bai** and **ben**.

Interestingly enough, **bai** and **ben** form a subsystem in the SCV verbal lexicon at several respects:

— from a segmental point of view, both present forms are monosyllabic in SCV and share the same onset ([b]).

— from a semantic point of view, both verbs encode |VERBAL MOTION| (**bai** = |MOTION AWAY FROM THE SPEAKER|; **ben** = |MOTION TOWARDS THE SPEAKER|) and this common notional basis could well account (at least partly) for the fact that **bai** and **ben** were singled out in the process of creolization and derived from non-infinitive forms (contrary to more than 99% of Capeverdean verbs). We will come back further about the question of the origins of **bai** and **ben**(see 2.1.5 and 3.).

For formal reasons, the Portuguese infinitives *ir* and *vir* are obviously not plausible etyma for SCV **bai** and **ben**. Furthermore, in the case of **bai** [bɛj], the loss of the [j] element in the past form of the verb (see the first syllable **bá** - [ba] of the past form **bába**) is a clear morphological difference with other SCV monosyllabic verbs ending also with [j] and deriving from Portuguese infinitives, as shown in Table 2.

Portuguese etymon		SCV	
Inflectional type	Form	Present	Past
Non-infinitive	<i>vai</i> ['vaj] 's/he goes' (PI) or 'go!' (IMP)	bai ['bɛj]	bába ['babɐ]
Infinitive	<i>caír</i> [kɛ'ir] 'fall'	kai ['kɛj]	kaíba [kɛ'ibɐ]
Infinitive	<i>moer</i> [mo'er] 'grind'	mui ['mu:j]	muíba [mu'ibɐ]
Infinitive	<i>sair</i> [sɛ'ir] 'go out'	sai ['sɛj]	saíba [sɛ'ibɐ]

Tab. 2: Past and present forms of several SCV monosyllabic verbs ending with [j].

For those SCV infinitive-derived monosyllabic verbs which have a [j] ending in their present form, such [j] is a reduced form of the thematic vowel of

the Portuguese infinitive etymon (either [i], e.g. PT *caír* or [e], e.g. PT *moer*) which regularly alternates with [i] in the past form. Such morphological behavior clearly contrasts with the loss of [j] (which is not derived from the thematic vowel of the Portuguese infinitive) in the past form **bába**.

2.1.2 *Ten* ‘have’

On purely formal grounds, this SCV verb can, like the previous ones, be equally traced back to 3PS present indicative or 2PS imperative of Portuguese *ter* [ter] ‘have’:

(10) **ten** [tẽ] ‘have’ < PT *tem* [tẽ] ‘s/he has’ (3PS PI) or ‘have!’ (2PS PI).

Besides, the segmental proximity between **ben** and **ten** (both monosyllabic and ending in **-en** [ẽ]) may have helped the retention of both forms by the first speakers of Capeverdean.

2.1.3 *Poi* ‘put’

There are good reasons to suspect that the present-day form of this Capeverdean verb might be traced both to (i) Portuguese 3PS present indicative (PI) or 2PS imperative (IMP) and (ii) Portuguese infinitive.

2.1.3.1 Arguments for a 3PS PI or a 2PS IMP origin — Two arguments support this origin:

1. the presence of a [j] sound in the present form of SCV **poi** [poj], which is also found in its first possible Portuguese etymon *põe* [põj] ‘s/he puts’ (PI) or ‘put!’ (IMP).
2. the past form **poba** [pobə], in which the [j] of the present form **poi** is dropped, just as happens with **bai** (see 2.1.1. and Table 2) and unlike every other monosyllabic verb ending with [j], which leads one to think that **poi** is not derived from a Portuguese infinitive.

Arguments for an infinitive origin — One of the morphological tests available for SCV verbs which clearly favors an infinitive origin for a given item, is the systematic use of SCV verbal nouns (VN) ending in **-r** [r] (coming from the Portuguese infinitive ending) before the preposition **di** ‘of/from’ in certain particular constructions, such as **fórti** + VN + **di** + noun! (see Quint (2011: 197-198) and (11)):

(11) SCV **sura** [ˈsurɐ] ‘bray’

> **fórti** **surár** **di** **buru**
 so much braying (VN) of donkey(s)
 ‘[There is] too/so much donkey-braying!’

When inserted in the same construction as illustrated with **sura** in (11), **poi** also generates a verbal noun in **-r**, namely **por** [ˈpor]:

(12) **fórti** **por** **d’óbu**
 so much laying (VN) of egg(s)
 ‘[There is] so much egg-laying!’

The existence of the verbal noun **por** is a strong argument in favor of an infinitive origin for **poi**, as verbs which are clearly not derived from Portuguese infinitives (such as **bai**) cannot produce such verbal noun in **-r**. However, modern Portuguese infinitive *pôr* [ˈpor] ‘put’ cannot easily account for the existence of a [j] sound in the SCV present form **poi** [ˈpoj].

Nonetheless, the final [j] sound of **poi** might also be partly traced back to the thematic vowel [e] of the Old Portuguese infinitive *poer* [poˈer]⁹ (compare PT *moer* [moˈer] > SCV **mui** [ˈmuj] in Table 2), now replaced by *pôr* [ˈpor] in modern Portuguese.

2.1.3.2 A case of apparent morphological syncretism — From what has been seen above, it is hard to choose between the two possible Portuguese etyma available for **poi**, and therefore it might be advisable to admit that both (i) the Portuguese infinitive *pôr* (possibly under its classical form *poer*) ‘put’ and (ii) the 3PS PI/2PS IMP *põe* ‘s/he puts’ or ‘put!’, have contributed to the present shape and morphological characteristics of today’s SCV **poi**.

2.1.4 *Spéra* ~ *péra* ‘wait’

This verbal form is more likely to be traced back to a Portuguese 3PS present indicative (PI) or 2PS imperative (IMP) because of the mid-open realization [ɛ] of its first vowel as opposed to the [e] observed in most SCV comparable verbs derived from Portuguese infinitives ending in $[-eˈC(C)ar]$ (see Table 3).

⁹In all likelihood, the classical form *poer* was still in use at the time of the settlement of Cape Verde (late XVth century – early XVIth century).

SCV		Portuguese possible etymon	
Present form		Infinitive	3PS PI or 2PS IMP
kebra ['kebrɛ] 'break'		<i>quebrar</i> [ke'brar]	<i>quebra</i> ['kebra]
nega ['negɛ] 'refuse'		<i>negar</i> [ne'gar]	<i>nega</i> ['nega]
perta ['pɛrɛ] 'tighten'		<i>pertar</i> [pɛr'tar]	<i>perta</i> ['perta]
spéra ~ péra ¹⁰ ['(s)pɛrɛ] 'wait'		<i>esperar</i> [ispe'rar]	<i>espera</i> [is'pera]

Tab. 3: Some SCV verbs derived from Portuguese verbs the infinitive of which ends in $[-e'C(C)ar]$.

However, there is also ground to think that the open realization [ɛ] of the penultimate vowel of **spéra** could be due to the influence of the rolled consonant [r(r)]¹¹ for SCV verbs deriving from Portuguese infinitives ending in $[-e'r(r)ar]$ (like *esperar*), as such type of influence is attested for another subgroup of SCV verbs, namely the two items originating from Portuguese infinitives ending in $[-o'rɾer]$ ¹²:

- (13) SCV **kóri** ['kɔri] 'run' < PT *correr* [ko'rɾer].

¹⁰Both forms can be heard in SCV. However, **péra** is both rarer and more basilectal (typically used by old speakers in rural areas of Santiago).

¹¹In the phonetic transcriptions given in this paper, I have chosen to slightly deviate from the IPA standard and contrast the simple and multiple vibrant of Classical Portuguese (and other ibero-romanian varieties) using the symbols [r] (simple, IPA [r]) vs. [rr] (multiple, IPA [r]). The main justification for this choice is the fact that experience has shown me that it was much easier for the reader to visually distinguish [r] from [rr] than [r] from [r]. Furthermore, as consonantic gemination is not found in Portuguese (nor in any of the languages discussed herein), there is no risk of confusion in any part of this paper.

¹²In both cases, the open realization [ɔ] of the penultimate vowel of the SCV verb seems to be due both to :

— the presence of the rolled [rr], as SCV verbs derived from Portuguese infinitives in $[-o'Ceɾ]$ have a closed [o] when C is different from [rr]: see SCV **kosi** ['kosi] 'sew (verb)' < PT *coser* [ko'zer] and SCV **podí** ['podí] 'be able to, can' < PT *poder* [po'der].

— the combination of the vowels $[-oCe]$ in the last two syllables of the Portuguese infinitive, as SCV verbs derived from Portuguese infinitives in $[-o'(r)rar]$ (i.e. with a final vowel other than [e]) have a closed [o] even when the penultimate consonant is a rolled [(r)r]: see SCV **mora** ['mɔrɛ] 'live' < PT *morar* [mo'rar] and SCV **fora** ['foɾɛ] 'cover (verb), line (verb)' < PT *forrar* [fo'rɾar].

SCV	Portuguese etymon
Present form	Infinitive
ára [ˈarɐ] ‘be wrong’	<i>errar</i> [eˈrɾar]
dizuspera [dizusˈpɛrɐ] ‘despair (verb)’	<i>desesperar</i> [dizispeˈrar]
ntera [ˈntɛrɐ] ‘bury’	<i>enterrar</i> [ẽtɛˈrɾar]
sára [ˈsarɐ] ‘shut’	<i>cerrar</i> [seˈrɾar]

Tab. 4: SCV verbs other than **spéra** derived from Portuguese verbs the infinitive of which ends in $-[eˈrɾar]$.

(14) SCV **móri** [ˈmɔri] ‘die’ < PT *morrer* [moˈrɾer].

Nevertheless, as shown in Table 4, all other SCV verbs derived from Portuguese infinitives ending in $-[eˈr(r)ar]$ have either a closed [e] or a [a]¹³ as their penultimate vowel but no [ɛ].

Particularly noteworthy is the case of **dizuspera**, which is both etymologically and morphologically related to **spéra**:

(15) PT *esperar* ‘wait, hope (verb)’ > *desesperar* ‘despair (verb)’ = inversive prefix *des* - ‘un-’ + *esperar*, word-by-word ‘un-hope’, i.e. ‘lose hope’.

The fact that the penultimate vowels of **spéra** and **dizuspera** ARE different is a strong argument in favour of a different type of etymon for each of these verbs:

— **spéra** [ˈspɛrɐ] derives from a Portuguese non-infinitive form with a penultimate vowel [ɛ], namely *espera* [isˈpɛrɐ] ‘s/he waits’ (PI) or ‘wait!’ (IMP);

— **dizuspera** [dizusˈpɛrɐ] derives from a Portuguese infinitive form with a penultimate vowel [e], namely *desesperar* [dizispeˈrar] ‘despair (verb)’.

¹³In all likelihood, the [e] items were integrated more recently into SCV (or suffered more influence from modern Portuguese) than the [a] items.

2.1.5 Present indicative or imperative?

We have just seen above that five SCV verbs, **bai** ‘go’, **ben** ‘come’, **poi** ‘put’, **spéra** ‘wait’ and **ten** ‘have’, can be derived at least partly from either (i) Portuguese 3PS present indicative (PI) or (ii) 2PS imperative (IMP).

I will argue here¹⁴ that the 2PS imperative seems to be the most plausible option for all five verbs. This assumption is based on two main arguments:

— argument 1: all five verbs obviously belong to the most frequent notions used in imperative mood in all human languages. In the particular case of Capeverdean, one must record that the language probably appeared through incomplete acquisition of Portuguese by speakers of West African languages (see Lang 2009; Quint 2008; 2000b: 3-66), many of whom were slaves and servants and had to comply with the orders they received from their Portuguese-speaking masters. Given this socio-historical context, it seems more likely that the first users of Capeverdean would hear much more often verbs such as ‘go’ or ‘come’ in their 2PS imperative forms (in sentences such as ‘go fetch some water’, ‘come here’ and the like) than in the 3PS present indicative (see also Quint 2000a: 91-93). Therefore, for pragmatic reasons, Portuguese 2PS imperative is clearly favoured as the main source for SCV **bai**, **ben**, **poi**, **spéra**, **ten**.

— argument 2: irregular imperatives (with a 2PS IMP form distinct from 3PS PI) can be found in several Western Romance languages (Aragonese¹⁵, Occitan¹⁶ and Spanish) for the semantic equivalents of all five SCV verbs, as shown in Table 5.

The existence of these irregular imperative forms in Western Romance¹⁷ varieties typologically close to Portuguese (the lexifier of SCV) implies that such imperatives have a high frequency of use (an absolute prerequisite for any linguistic irregularity to be maintained), even in conditions less dramatic than those which prevailed in the slave society where SCV began to be spoken. Therefore, the evidence available from Romance languages (with a lexicosemantic structure close to both Portuguese and Capeverdean) also supports an imperative origin for SCV **bai**, **ben**, **poi**, **spéra** ~ **péra** and **ten**¹⁸.

¹⁴For a similar discussion (based on partially different data) of the same topic, see Quint (2000a: 91-93).

¹⁵The Aragonese data are based on Ansó variety: the form *aguar-te* is discussed in Quint (1994: 59-60).

¹⁶The Occitan data are based on standard languedocien (Quint 2014; 2007).

¹⁷For a wider sample of Romance imperatives (including Italian and Sardinian forms), many of which are both irregular and semantic equivalents of the SCV verbs at stake, see Floricic & Molinu (2012).

¹⁸The imperative use of *ter* ‘have’ as a main verb is not that frequent in Portuguese, however many phraseological units including *ter* as a first element are frequently

SCV	English	Romance variety	2PS IMP	3PS IND
bai	‘go’	Occitan Spanish	‘go!’ <i>vai</i> [ˈbaj] <i>ve</i> [ˈbe]	‘s/he goes’ <i>va</i> [ˈba] <i>va</i> [ˈba]
ben	‘come’	Occitan Spanish	‘come!’ <i>vèni</i> [ˈbɛni] <i>ven</i> [ˈben]	‘s/he comes’ <i>ven</i> [ˈbe(n)] <i>viene</i> [ˈbjene]
poi	‘put’	Spanish	‘put!’ <i>pon</i> [ˈpon]	‘s/he puts’ <i>pone</i> [ˈpone]
spéra	‘wait’	Aragonese	‘wait!’ <i>aguar-(te)</i> [aˈgwartɛ]	‘s/he waits’ <i>aguarda</i> [aˈgwarda]
ten	‘have’	Spanish	‘have!’ <i>ten</i> [ˈten]	‘s/he has’ <i>tiene</i> [ˈtjene]

Tab. 5: Irregular 2PS imperatives for some semantic equivalents of SCV **bai**, **ben**, **poi**, **spéra**, **ten** in three Western Romance varieties.

used in imperative contexts in that language, such as PT *ter cuidado* ‘take care’ (word-by-word ‘have care’) > *tem cuidado!* ‘take care!, caution!’ Therefore the first speakers of SCV may also have had access to many instances of PT *tem* with a 2PS IMP value. However, there are also comparative arguments in favour of a 3PS PI origin of *ten*, as in at least one Ibero-Romance-based Creoles, Chabacano — a Spanish-based language — **tyéne** ‘have’ (Jacobs 2012: 247) is clearly derived from Spanish 3PS PI *tiene* ‘s/he has’, NOT from Spanish 2PS IMP *ten* ‘have!’ (see Table 5). I am grateful to Bart Jacobs for making me aware of those Chabacano data.

2.2 Capeverdean words derived from Portuguese verbs inflected in subjunctive

2.2.1 Words directly derived from Portuguese verbs inflected in subjunctive

This category comprises few items (four at least) in Capeverdean, and these belong to diverse parts of speech:

- (16) conjunction: SCV **tomáda** [to'maðɐ] 'if only' < PT *tomara* [to'marɐ] 1/3PS imperfect subjunctive¹⁹ (or pluperfect indicative) of *tomar* 'take'.
- (17) noun: SCV **mantenha** [mẽ'tɛɲɐ] 'greeting' < PT *mantenha* [mẽ'tɛɲɐ] 1/3PS present subjunctive of *manter* 'keep'.
- (18) noun: SCV **supunhámus** [supu'ɲamus] 'supposition' < PT *suponhamos* [supo'ɲemos] 1PL present subjunctive of *supôr* 'suppose'.
- (19) verb: SCV **suponha** [su'poɲɐ] 'suppose' < PT *suponha* [su'poɲɐ] 1/3PS present subjunctive of *supôr* 'suppose'.

Contrary to the SCV verbs examined in 2.1., the SCV items derived from Portuguese verbs inflected in subjunctive do not form a coherent subsystem in any respect: they do not come from one specific tense or person of the subjunctive mood, rather each of them seems to have been retained in SCV following its own item-particular path:

— in classical Portuguese, *tomara* was also used as a conjunction²⁰ (besides its verbal use) and therefore SCV borrowed in fact a Portuguese conjunction derived from a verb inflected in subjunctive rather than a Portuguese verbal form. We can also note that the SCV form **tomáda** must have been borrowed at an early stage of Creole formation, as the treatment Port. /r/ (*tomara*) > SCV /d/ (**tomáda**) is only attested in a few basilectal Capeverdean items (Quint 2000a: 66).

— SCV **mantenha** historically derives from an Old Portuguese greeting:

¹⁹Traditionally, Portuguese *-ra* forms (such as *tomara*) are described as pluperfect indicatives. However, at least in classical Portuguese (the form of the language from which SCV originated), it is not uncommon to find *-ra* forms with a clear imperfect subjunctive value, eg. *como se a não tivera merecida* 'as he **had not** deserved her' (in Camões's sonnet, *Sete anos de pastor Jacob servia...*), where *tivera* (a *-ra* form) substitutes (and can freely alternate with) *tivesse*, 3PS imperfect subjunctive.

²⁰ This usage is still maintained in contemporary Portuguese.

- (20) **Deus te/vos** **mantenha**
 God 2PS informal/2PS formal ~ 2PP keep.present.subjunctive.3PS
 ‘May God keep you in good health!’

Thus, ultimately, Port. *mantenha* made its way into SCV because it was the last word of that greeting formula, and hence the lexical unit bearing the main clausal stress, i.e. its most salient element on perceptual grounds.

— Portuguese *suponhamos*, word-by-word ‘let’s suppose’, is commonly used to introduce suppositions in contexts similar as those in which English ‘say (that)’ (with the meaning of ‘imagine’) appears. It is most probably this quite frequent, pragmatically salient use which explains the existence of SCV **supunhámus**, which has lost any verbal character, and is regularly attested in typically nominal contexts:

- (21) **nu fasi un supunhámus**
 1PP make a supposition
 ‘Let’s suppose/Let’s make a guess.’

— the fact that the SCV verb **suponha** ‘suppose’ derives from the subjunctive root *suponha* of Portuguese *supôr* ‘suppose’, is probably due to the above-mentioned frequent use of forms such as *suponhamos*, which led the first Capeverdean speakers to infer that the main Portuguese root associated with the verbal notion of |SUPPOSE| was *suponha-*.

2.2.2 Phraseological units directly borrowed from Portuguese and whose etymon includes a Portuguese verb inflected in subjunctive

The three most frequent representatives of this category are:

- (22) SCV **si Deus kizer** [si dewz ki'zer] ‘God willing’ < PT *se Deus quiser* [si dewz ki'zer] word-by-word ‘if + God + want.future.subjunctive.3PS’. In SCV, **si Deus kizer** is used alongside with its non-borrowed SCV equivalent **si Diós kré** [si 'djós 'kre] (Quint 2012: 175-176).
- (23) SCV **si kadjár** [si kə'dʒar] ‘maybe’ < PT *se calhar* [si kə'ʎar] ‘if + happen.future.subjunctive.3PS’.
- (24) SCV **si fosi** [si 'fosi] ‘should it be the case, if it were to happen’ < PT *se fosse* [si 'fosɨ] ‘if + be.imperfect.subjunctive.3PS’.

In such cases, the Portuguese verb inflected in subjunctive is maintained in SCV uniquely because it was integrated as part of the Portuguese phraseological unit (PU) in which it is included and outside of which it cannot be used in SCV.

2.3 Capeverdean words derived from Portuguese gerunds

There are at least two common SCV items deriving from Portuguese gerunds both of which are deprived of any verbal value:

- (25) adverb: SCV **sendi**²¹ [ˈsɛ̃di] ‘about to’ < PT *sendo* [ˈsɛ̃du] ‘being’, gerund of *ser* ‘be’.
- (26) preposition: SCV **tránderu** [ˈtrɛ̃du] ‘except’ < PT *tirando* [tiˈrɛ̃du] ‘removing’, gerund of *tirar* ‘remove’.

2.4 Capeverdean words derived from other inflected Portuguese verbal forms

2.4.1 Words derived from Portuguese non-infinitive auxiliary verbs

2.4.1.1 Ser ‘be’ In all varieties of SCV, the paradigm of the verb **ser** [ser] ‘be’ (equative copula), comprises a minimum of three different basic forms, **ser**, **é**, **éera**, the last two of which are not derived from the Portuguese infinitive *ser* [ser]:

- (27) SCV **é** [(ˈ)e] ‘am/is/are’ < PT *é* [ˈɛ] 3PS present indicative of *ser* ‘be’ X ele [ˈeli] 3PS stressed masculine pronoun²².
- (28) SCV **éera** [ˈɛrɐ] ‘was/were’ < PT *era* [ˈɛrɐ] 1/3PS imperfect indicative of *ser* ‘be’.

In this case, it seems that the exceptional status of the copula **ser** /*ser* (both in Portuguese and SCV) has contributed to the maintenance in SCV of these Portuguese-derived inflected forms. To this respect, a good point of comparison with SCV is contemporary English: in this language too, the copula ‘be’ is the verbal element which has preserved most irregular forms in its paradigms, namely ‘am, are, be, been, is, was, were’ (seven forms), i.e. more than any other verb of the language, just like **ser** in SCV.

²¹The treatment PT ‘-/du/ ~ /tu/ > SCV ‘-/di/ ~ /ti/ is attested in other items, eg. PT *cardo santo* [ˈkardu ˈsɛ̃tu] ‘thistle’ > SCV **kardisántu** [kɛ̃rdiˈsɛ̃tu]; PT *sapato* [sɐˈpatu] ‘shoe’ > SCV **sapáti** (grafia original: **sapâte**) [sɐˈpatɨ] (Fernandes 1991: 145); PT *parto* [ˈpartu] ‘delivery’ > SCV **párti** [ˈpartɨ].

²²For the possible evolutionary path SCV **é** < PT *ele* ‘he/him’ 3PS masculine stressed personal pronoun, see Baptista (1999); Quint (2000b: 207).

2.4.1.2 *Haver 'have'* This verb (in its impersonal use) has contributed one item to contemporary SCV:

- (29) SCV **ovi** ['ovi] 'great, wonderful, fabulous' < PT *houve* ['owvi] 'there was' 3PS imperfect indicative of *haver* 'be (there)'.
 (30) SCV **ovi son!** ['ovi 'sõ] 'what a nice music/sound (in a dancing party)!', etymologically 'there was [a] sound'.

Ovi is frequently heard in the youth's speech in exclamation sentences such as:

- (30) SCV **ovi son!** ['ovi 'sõ] 'what a nice music/sound (in a dancing party)!', etymologically 'there was [a] sound'.

However, the presence of the a [v] sound in **ovi** clearly indicates that the inclusion of this item into SCV lexicon dates back to a relatively recent period, as Portuguese [v] is systematically substituted by [b] in older SCV words (Quint 2000a: 112-114, 131-133; 2001b: 272-273; 2009: 71), eg. Port. *vaca* ['vakə] > SCV **báka** ['bakə]. Hence it follows that **ovi** was in all likelihood borrowed from modern (NOT classical) Portuguese, probably at the end of the XIXth century or during the XXth century²³.

2.4.2 Words derived from Portuguese phraseological units including an inflected verbal form

2.4.2.1 *The inflected verbal form is an imperative* Three such forms are well attested:

- (31) SCV **bénka** ['bɛkə] 'come (here)!' (command) < PT *vem* ['vɛ] 2PS imperative of *vir* 'come' + *cá* ['ka] 'here/hither'.
 (32) SCV **dádji** ['dadʒi] 'hit/beat' (verb) < PT *dá* ['da] 2PS imperative of *dar* 'give' + *lhe* [ʎi] 3PS dative (indirect object) personal pronoun.
 (33) SCV **dáka** ['dakə] 'give (me that)!' (command) < PT *dá* ['da] 2PS imperative of *dar* 'give' + *cá* ['ka] 'here/hither'.

²³In the first SCV grammar, written in SCV by António de Paula Brito and published in 1887, SCV [b] usually stands for PT [v] even in words obviously recently borrowed from Portuguese, eg. SCV **trāzítibu** (Paula Brito 1887 [1885]: 635; 1967 [1885]: 360) < PT *transitivo* [trɛzi'tivu] 'transitive'.

As regards (31) and (33), the Portuguese etymon is identifiable beyond any doubt and the domains of usage in both languages match too, as the SCV words can only be used as commands, just like the Portuguese phraseological units they derive from. Concerning (32), the Portuguese source *dá-lhe!* seems more controversial, all the more since, contrary to its proposed Portuguese etymological counterpart, the use of **dádji** in SCV is not limited to the domain of command, rather this item can assume all the standard uses and functions of any comparable Capeverdean verb. However, the presence of similarly shaped and derived verbal items in other Portuguese- or Ibero-Romance-based Creole languages is a strong argument in favour of the etymological path proposed in (32): consider Papiamentu **dal** ‘hit/beat’ < Spanish *¡dale!* [dale] and Malacca and Tugu Portuguese Creole **dali** ‘hit/beat’ < PT *dá-lhe!* [da.ʎi] (see Maurer (2014: 223); Quint (2000b: 228 and references therein)).

2.4.2.2 The inflected verbal form is not an imperative At least three SCV items fall into this category:

- (34) SCV **disruspetu** [dizrus'petu] ‘about, regarding’ (preposition) < PT *diz respeito* [dis rris'pejtu] ‘it regards’ (word-by-word ‘[it] says respect’) < PT *diz* 3PS present indicative of *dizer* ‘say’ + *respeito* [rris'pejtu] *respect* (noun).
- (35) SCV **disruspeta**²⁴ [dizrus'petɐ] ‘regard, concern’ is a endogenous SCV derivation from SCV **disruspetu** [dizrus'petu] (see etymology (34)) + **-a** ‘-[ɐ]’ SCV derivational marker used to produce verbs from nouns (Quint 2001a: 79).
- (36) SCV **ker-dizer** [kerdi'zer] ‘that is (to say), namely’(adverb) < PT *quer dizer* [kɛr di'zer] ‘id’ < PT *quer*, 3PS present indicative of *querer* ‘want’ + *dizer*, infinitive of *dizer* ‘say’.

²⁴This item should not be confused with the homophonous **disruspeta** [dizrus'petɐ] ‘disrespect’ (verb) < PT *desrespeitar* [dizrrispej'tar] ‘id’ < PT *des* - [dis] ‘un/dis’- (inversive suffix) + *respeitar* [rrispej'tar] ‘respect’ (verb).

Note that all of the above words contain a frozen form (either infinitive *dizer* or 3PS present indicative *diz*) of PT *dizer* ‘say’, which was not retained as a verb in SCV, where it was substituted by **fa** ‘say’ < PT *falar* [fe‘lar] ‘speak’. The fact that *dizer* is a very frequent item in Portuguese (and therefore used in many phraseological units (PU) and idioms) may account for its presence in several Portuguese-derived PUs, in spite of the absence of any non-compound lexeme derived from *dizer* in the SCV lexicon.

As regards (36), the maintenance of the Portuguese voiced fricative [z] (regularly substituted by [s] in basilectal items both in intervocalic and initial position²⁵), seems to indicate a relatively recent (probably XIXth or XXth century) borrowing of this Portuguese phraseological unit.

3 A comparative approach to the phenomenon throughout Upper Guinea Creoles

So far, I was able to find the following counterparts of Santiago Capeverdean words derived from Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms (henceforward C2Ws²⁶) in other Upper Guinea Creoles:

²⁵Eg. PT *casa* [‘kazə] ‘house’ > SCV **kása** [‘kasə]; PT *fazer* [fe‘zer] ‘do, make’ > SCV **fasi** [‘fesɨ]; PT *zurrar* [zu‘rrar] ‘bray’ > SCV **sura** [‘sure] (see more details in Quint 2000a: 112-114; 2000b: 87).

²⁶See Introduction above for the justification of the use of the abbreviation.

Type	Port etymon	Insular CCV	UGC branches		ABC PAP	Meaning
			Continental CAS	GBC		
BE ²⁷	<i>é x ele</i>	é	i	i	NA	'is/are'
BE	<i>era</i>	éra	yera(bañ)	yera(ba)	NA	'was/were'
IMP/PI	<i>vai</i>	bai	bay	bai	bai	'go'
IMP/PI	<i>vem</i>	ben	beñ	bin	bin/bini	'come' ²⁸
IMP/PI	<i>tem</i>	ten	teñ	ten	tin	'have'
IMP/PI	<i>põe x pôr/poer</i>	poi	(pí)	pui	NA	'put'
IMP+	<i>vem cá!</i>	bénka	beñka	NA	NA	'come (here)'
IMP+	<i>dá-lhe!</i>	dádji	(dajú)	(dajú/) (dají)	dal	'hit/beat' ²⁹
SUBJ	<i>mantenha</i>	mantenha	mantiña/ manteña	manteña	manteña	'greeting' ³⁰
SUBJ	<i>tomara</i>	tomáda	NA	tamara (Deus)	mare/ mara	'if only'

Tab. 6: Words derived from Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms in several Upper Guinea Creole varieties.

²⁶ Table legend: BE = derived from an inflected form of Portuguese *ser* 'be' (see 2.4.1.1.); IMP/PI = derived from either a Portuguese imperative or a Portuguese present indicative (see 2.1.); IMP+ = derived from a phraseological unit including a verb inflected in imperative (see 2.4.2.1.); NA = not attested; SUBJ = derived from a verb inflected in subjunctive.

²⁷ In PAP, the form **bini** ['bini] most probably comes from Spanish *venir* [be'nir], Ibero-Romance disyllabic verbs in [eC'ir] having regular reflexes in [iCi] in PAP (as well as in the other UGCs), eg. PT or Spanish *pedir* [pe'dir] 'ask, require' > PAP **pidi** ['pidi]; PT or Spanish *seguir* [se'gir] > PAP **sigui** ['sigi]. Given the likely Spanish origin of **bini**, one cannot absolutely discard the possibility of PAP **bin** being a shortened form of **bini**, and hence of **bin** being ultimately traced back to Spanish *venir* instead of PT *vem*. However, the fact that other PAP IMP/PI-derived verbs, namely **bai** and **tin**, are undoubtedly Portuguese-derived and have comparable counterparts in other UGCs, strongly supports the possibility of a Portuguese origin for PAP **bin**. Regarding this etymological point, see also Jacobs (2012: 246).

²⁸ In CAS **dajú** means 'happen suddenly/abruptly' (Biagui & Nunez 2015-01/02: p.c.) while in GBC, **dají/dajú** is associated with the following translations:

The contents of Table 6 calls for several comments:

— *out of the five C2Ws common*³¹ *to all three branches of Upper Guinea Creoles* (ABC = Papiamentu, insular = Capeverdean, continental = Guinea-Bissau+Casamance) *three can be traced back to Portuguese imperative verbal forms*. This results underscores the great cognitive importance of imperative inflections, especially for Romance languages, in the process of (second) language acquisition (Salustri & Hyams 2006), which must have taken place when a first generation of West African and Portuguese speakers began to interact and develop the Upper Guinea pidgin, that is an incipient Afro-Portuguese contact variety.

— insofar as C2Ws are concerned, Papiamentu is clearly an outlier when compared with the other Upper Guinea Creoles (UGC). In particular, it lacks the BE-derived forms (from Portuguese *é* and *era*) shared by both continental and insular UGCs.

— two of the subjunctive-derived words (namely the reflexes of *mantenha* and *tomara*) described for SCV are also found in non-Capeverdean UGC varieties. Note however that, in the Portuguese idiom *Deus te/vos mantenha!* ‘may God keep you in good health!’, from which SCV **mantenha** and its CAS, GBC and PAP cognates **mantiña/manteña** are derived (see above 2.2.1.),

‘*desenrascar-se, saber o suficiente para livrar-se das dificuldades*’ [‘make do, know enough to cope with (any) problem’] (Scantamburlo 2002: 144) ‘*dar dentro, provar, debicar, tartamudear, falar pouco*’ [‘give inside (?), taste, peck, stammer/mumble, be uncommunicative/quiet’] (Biasutti 1982: 72). Rougé (2004: 300) renders both CAS and GBC as ‘*faire qqch. rarement, faire qqch. avec difficulté*’ [‘rarely do something, do something with difficulty’]. Those meanings are so diversified and so different from the basic meaning ‘hit/beat’ of **dádjí** in SCV that it is not possible to assert with any reasonable degree of certainty that SCV **dádjí** and CAS/GBC **dajú/dají** are cognates. For the Spanish etymon (possibly a calque of Portuguese) of PAP **dal**, see 2.4.2.1.

²⁹In continental UGCs (CAS and GBC), the item **mantiña/manteña** both means ‘greeting’ and ‘surname’, but this second meaning is not attested in SCV and PAP. Note also that the free variation [i] ~ [e] in CAS is not specifically linked with any of these two meanings. PAP **manteña** (also attested as **mantenja**) does not seem to be frequent in today’s colloquial speech (Jacobs 2015/02: p.c.). However, it is attested in several sources (Frederiks & Putman 2004 [1859]: 134; Van Putte & Van Putte-De Windt 2005: 281) where it has a meaning clearly related with the notion of ‘greeting’.

³¹Those five ‘pan-UGC’s’ C2Ws are the items derived from PT *vai, vem, tem, mantenha* and *tomara*.

the Portuguese morphological subjunctive *mantenha* has a clearly optative value (i.e. expressing a | WISH | or a | DESIRE |), and that, semantically, such value is quite close to the notion of | COMMAND |, typically expressed in Portuguese by means of the imperative mood. This observation equally applies to the semantics of subjunctive-derived PT *tomara!*, ‘if only’, which also introduces a | WISH | or a | DESIRE | both in PT and in all UGCs. As a matter of fact, the proximity of subjunctive (in particular optative) and imperative is supported by the fact that a significant proportion of Portuguese imperative inflections (i.e. prohibitives and polite commands) are morphologically similar to subjunctive inflections³². In other words, on pragmatical grounds and taking into account the specific context in which they were inserted before being integrated into UGCs, both Portuguese *mantenha* and *tomara* can reasonably be considered as *near-imperatives*, sharing clear semantic affinities with the items labelled IMP/PI and IMP+ in Table 6.

— inside the continental branch, for some features, Casamance Creole (CAS) happens to be closer to the insular varieties than to Guinea-Bissau Creole (GBC): presence of a reflex of Portuguese *vem cá!* (apparently lacking in GBC), maintenance of a mid-open vowel e [e] (like SCV and unlike GBC) in the form derived from Portuguese *vem*³³. This demonstrates the necessity to clearly distinguish GBC data from CAS data in any comparative study or reconstruction attempt dealing with UGCs.

— two different mechanisms underlie the way C2Ws came into being in UGCs. As regards BE-derived items, the presence of forms derived from PT *é* and *era* both in insular and continental UGCs is due to a *phenomenon of maintenance* (or *retention*) of very frequent forms belonging to the paradigm of PT *ser* ‘be’ in the above mentioned incipient Upper Guinea Afro-Portuguese contact variety (UGAPCV). If we turn now towards IMP/PI-derived words,

³²See Portuguese prohibitive (= negative imperative) *não venhas!* [= subjunctive morphology] ‘don’t come’ vs. command (positive imperative) *vem!* ‘come!’; polite (formal) command *venha!* [= subjunctive morphology] ‘come!’ vs. informal command *vem!* ‘come!’.

³³However, the fact that the same vowel [i] is shared by both PAP and GBC **bin** does not seem significant in comparative terms, as many other items show that the vowel systems of these two UGC varieties are clearly different as regards their respective distribution of [i] and [e], eg. PT *tem* [tẽ] ‘have!’ > PAP **tin** [tin] vs. GBC **ten** [ten] (see SCV **ten** [tẽ], CAS **tenj** [tenj]); PT *lamber* [lã’ber] ‘lick’ > PAP **lembe** [’lembe] vs. GBC **limbí** [li’mbi] (see SCV **lembi** ~ **lembe** [’lẽbi] ~ [’lẽbe], CAS **lembé** [lem’be]); PT *quem* [kẽ] ‘who’ > PAP **ken** [ken] vs. GBC **kin** [kin] (see SCV **ken** [kẽ], CAS **kej** [kej]).

they clearly result from *aphenomenon of remotivation*, through which originally Portuguese imperative forms were used as an input to create new verb roots in UGCs. In so far as these two phenomena are concerned, the IMP+- and SUBJ-derived words of Table 6 stand somewhat halfway between BE- and IMP/PI-derived items. Indeed, *thevem cá!* -derived forms result from the *retention* of a Portuguese common phraseological unit while the SCV and PAP reflexes of *dá-lhe!* clearly involve a mechanism of *remotivation* (from a Portuguese/Spanish command to a full verb in UGCs, see 2.4.2.1.). As for the various reflexes of Portuguese *mantenha*, an originally subjunctive verbal form, they are all nouns in the various UGCs where they are attested and therefore represent another clear instance of *remotivation*. Finally, in the case of *tomara*, the *remotivation* of this originally subjunctive verbal form took place in classical Portuguese itself (where *tomara* already meant ‘if only’, see above 2.2.1.) and hence, the UGC reflexes of this form are due to a phenomenon of *retention*.

— all IMP/PI-derived verbs of Table 6 have very irregular counterparts in their common lexifier language, Portuguese³⁴, eg. the paradigm of PT *ir* resorts to three different roots, (i) [i] ~ 0: *ir* [‘ir] ‘to go (infinitive)’, *ia* [‘i(j)]e] ‘I/he/she used to go’ (imperfect indicative); (ii) [f(o)]: *fui* [‘fuj] ‘I went’ (preterit indicative), *fossem* [‘fosẽ] ‘(that) they went, they should go’ (imperfect subjunctive); (iii) [v]: *vou* [‘vow] ‘I go’ (present indicative). This multiplicity of roots must have been a puzzle for the non-Portuguese users of the UGAFCV, who finally opted for the most salient and/or frequent root in the Portuguese utterances they were exposed to, namely the root used in the imperative forms in the case of the verbs ‘come, go, have, put’³⁵.

— many of the C2Ws described above for SCV are not found in any other UGC variety, either continental or ABC, which leads one to infer that most of such C2Ws are due to idiosyncratic developments which took place in Cape Verde after the common stage of Upper Guinea Pidgin or Upper Guinea Afro-Portuguese contact variety³⁶. Conversely, C2Ws found both in SCV and in other branches (continental and/or ABC) of the UGCs must date back to this common stage and therefore predate the split between the three branches.

³⁴Most linguists agree on the fact that Spanish is the main lexifier of contemporary Papiamentu but the items shared by Papiamentu and the remaining UGC Creoles (all of which are clearly Portuguese-based languages and have virtually no lexical trace of Spanish) necessarily have a common Portuguese origin.

³⁵At least in the case of **bai** ‘go’, the creation of a new verb root could also have been encouraged by the fact that the corresponding Portuguese infinitive *ir* [ir] should have led to a *[i] form in UGCs, an evolutionary path clearly disfavoured in these languages, which generally tend to avoid onsetless syllables (see Quint (2000a: 36-38) for SCV and Biagui (2012: 60-63) for CAS).

³⁶This assertion is especially valid for SCV items such as **ker-dizer** and **ovi**, whose segmental form denotes a recent origin (see discussions of those two SCV words in 2.4.1.2. and 2.4.2.2. respectively).

4 Conclusion

Throughout this paper, I have focused my attention on a quite circumscribed subject, namely the study of the reflexes of Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms both in Santiago Capeverdean and in other Upper Guinea Creoles. However, a thorough examination of these forms is of some interest for Creole studies and general linguistics in several respects.

First, on a methodological level, it has been shown that through rigorous use of the knowledge we have of the history of Portuguese and through systematic comparison of the data available for several Upper Guinea Creole varieties, it is possible to get a better, more precise idea of the diachrony of those Creoles and to distinguish the different historical layers which make up their lexicon. Such approach, combining historical and comparative linguistics, allows us in particular to have access to some forms shared by all these varieties and probably dating back to the common ancestor of Upper Guinea Creoles, i.e. the first Upper Guinea Afro-Portuguese contact variety which, in all likelihood must have come into existence in the second half of the XVth century, when the first Portuguese sailors reached Western Africa and trade, as well as different kinds of social and cultural interactions, began to take place between natives and newcomers.

Secondly, I would like to emphasize again the crucial role played by Portuguese imperative forms in the creation of new lexical verbal roots in the incipient Upper Guinea Creoles. This phenomenon illustrates the saliency and centrality of the imperative (at least in Romance languages³⁷) in mechanisms of language acquisition, particularly of second language acquisition, and therefore the existence of imperative-derived verbal items in Upper Guinea Creoles represents a piece of evidence which could be used with much profit by the specialists of cognitive and acquisition linguistics, as well as those working on new models for the teaching of spoken Portuguese (and other Romance languages).

³⁷Note however that Arabic imperative forms were also used as a source for: (i) a significant proportion of the verbal lexemes of Kinubi (Owens 2014: 247-257), a creole language whose lexifier is Sudanese Arabic, i.e. a non-Romance language; (ii) the majority of verbal forms used in contemporary Arabic-based pidgins, such as Pidgin Madame and Gulf Pidgin Arabic (Versteegh 2014: 151-154); (iii) many Swahili verbal items borrowed from Arabic (Versteegh 2014: 156-157). Therefore, the centrality of imperative for language acquisition applies in linguistic contexts other than the Romance-speaking world and seems to be of particular relevance in the processes of pidgin- and creole-formation.

Thirdly, within the scope of this article, for reasons of available space and data, I have preferred to limit my comparative investigation to the genetic grouping I know best, namely the Upper Guinea Creoles (UGCs). However, this investigation could be extended to other Portuguese-based Creoles, some of which also have words derived from Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms with uses and etyma quite similar to those attested in the UGCs (consider for instance the reflexes of *dá-lhe!* in Malacca and Tugu Portuguese Creoles (see 2.4.2.1. above) or São Tomense Creole **ba/be** ‘go’ < PT *vai* (Hagemeijer: 2004)). Indeed, a systematic comparison of all known terms derived from Portuguese non-infinitive verbal forms in every Portuguese- or Ibero-Romance-based Creole or contact variety would be the next step to take for a better understanding of the trends and phenomena dealt with in this contribution.

Abbreviations

CAS Casamance Creole, C2W Category 2 Word (see section 1), GBC Guinea-Bissau Creole, IMP imperative, PAP Papiamentu; PI present indicative, PP person plural, PS person singular, PT Portuguese, PU phraseological unit, SCV Santiago Capeverdean, UGC Upper Guinea Creole, UGAPCV Upper Guinea Afro-Portuguese Contact Variety, VN verbal noun.

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Received: 02/01/2015

Accepted: 07/31/2015
