

Noun Phrases in Kwéyòl Donnink

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Abstract

Though Creole nominal systems have been intensely researched, in-context, corpus-based examinations are uncommon, and there are Creole languages whose noun phrases remain understudied. I use a corpus of conversational data and a pattern-building task designed to elicit demonstrative and definite noun phrases, exophoric reference, and co-speech pointing gestures to explore the noun phrase in Kwéyòl Donnink, an endangered, understudied French lexifier Creole. I focus on noun phrases that are bare, marked by the post-nominal determiners definite *la* ‘the’ or demonstrative *sa-la* ‘this/that’, or accompanied by the pre-nominal indefinite determiner *yon* ‘a(n)’. Results pinpoint the readings conveyed by each noun phrase type, identify the word categories of their nouns, and address similarities in usage between definite *la* and demonstrative *sa-la*.

Keywords

Kwéyòl Donnink, Noun Phrases, Determiners, Bare Nouns, Corpus-Based

1. Introduction

Creole noun phrases have been intensely researched, particularly with respect to their semantics and syntactic structures. For example, this is demonstrated by Baptista & Guéron's (2007) edited volume *Noun Phrases in Creole Languages: A Multi-faceted Approach*, which examines noun phrases across several Creoles with various lexifiers. Research of this kind that focuses specifically on French lexifier Creoles (FLCs) includes work by Déprez (2007), Guillemin (2011), Aboh and DeGraff (2014), Valdman (2015), and Lefebvre (1998), among others.¹ Much of the research on FLC noun phrases addresses these languages' definite, indefinite, and demonstrative determiners, as well as their plural markers and the various interpretations of their bare nouns.

However, research in which Creole noun phrases are investigated in-context using a corpus-based approach, such as work by Déprez (2018, 2019) on Haitian and Mauritian, is uncommon. Also, despite the wealth of literature on this topic, there remain Creole languages whose noun phrases are understudied; examining their nominal systems is crucial to gaining a holistic understanding of how bare nouns and other noun phrase types are used crosslinguistically. In this study, I explore the noun phrase in Kwéyòl Donnik (or Dominica Creole; henceforth referred to as Kwéyòl), an endangered language (Paugh 2012:9), FLC, and member of the Lesser Antillean Creole family. This research expands the limited body of work on Kwéyòl noun phrases and takes the less common approach of investigating a Creole's nominal system through corpus-based analysis.

I focus on Kwéyòl bare nouns as well as on noun phrases marked by the post-nominal determiners definite *la* 'the' or demonstrative *sa-la* 'this/that' or by the pre-nominal indefinite determiner *yon* 'a(n)'.² Based on an examination of the FLC noun phrase literature (see Section 3), I anticipated that Kwéyòl's indefinite determiner would be compatible with specific and non-specific readings but incompatible with the plural marker *sé*. I also expected Kwéyòl bare nouns to be open to specific or non-specific readings, to express generic reference, to reference inherently unique entities, and to reference entities that are unique within the discourse domain. However, this study also considers long-standing questions about noun phrases in FLCs like Kwéyòl, in particular whether *la* has a deictic force akin to a demonstrative and whether bare nouns in these Creoles take on a broader range of uses beyond unique, plural indefinite, and generic reference.

To respond to this literature by carefully examining bare and non-bare noun phrases in Kwéyòl, I included two types of data in my corpus analysis: naturalistic conversational data contributed by dyads of Kwéyòl users, as well as recordings of those same dyads completing a pattern-building task. The pattern-building task (see Section 4) was designed to elicit demonstrative and definite noun phrases, exophoric reference, and co-speech pointing gestures, providing a unique lens through which to study how *la* 'the' and *sa-la* 'this/that' are used in Kwéyòl. My analysis of the resulting corpus of data investigates Kwéyòl noun phrases' anaphoric, associative, cataphoric,

¹ As modeled by Baptista (2020), this manuscript follows DeGraff's (2003, 2004) recommendation that Creole be capitalized 'as it refers to a language grouping' (Baptista 2020:160).

² The Kwéyòl indefinite article may be represented as *yon*, *an*, or *on* (Mitchell 2014:22); I use the spelling *yon* throughout for consistency.

and exophoric reference patterns; how interlocutors use them to convey referents' uniqueness/inclusiveness, familiarity/identifiability, specificity, and genericity; and the word categories of their nouns.

In addition to revealing that the Kwéyòl nominal system generally aligns with observations made in the literature on FLC noun phrases, the results of the analysis also demonstrated the versatility of Kwéyòl bare nouns, as well as the extensive overlaps in usage that definite *la* shares with demonstrative *sa-la*. Crucially, *la* was found to accompany spatial and temporal deictic referents in the corpus data, and a single instance of *la* produced during the pattern-building task appears to mark an explicit deictic contrast, underscoring the need for further research into the possibility that *la* may also be capable of imposing a demonstrative reading.

In the following section, I begin with a brief overview of key concepts. Then, in Section 3, I discuss Kwéyòl noun phrases within the context of the broader literature on FLC nominal systems. After describing my methodology in Sections 4 and 5, I discuss the results in 6. In Section 7, I conclude with main take-aways.

2. Key concepts

2.1 Uniqueness/inclusiveness

Much of the literature surrounding definiteness focuses on phrases containing determiners like English definite *the* and indefinite *a(n)*, and linguists have yet to definitively agree on all the various differences in meaning between definite and indefinite noun phrases (Lyons 1999:2). According to the uniqueness approach, definite noun phrases refer to 'at most one entity in the domain of discourse' (Abbott 2004:125). Based on this framework, put forth by Russell (1905), *the bookcase* in ***The bookcase*** *is made of metal* applies to a single, unique bookcase within the domain of the discourse.³ Meanwhile, '[u]nless clarifying information is added, indefinites are neutral with respect to uniqueness' (Lyons 1999:8); *a doctor* in 'I went to the surgery this afternoon and saw **a doctor**' may be interpreted either as the only doctor at the surgery or as one of many (Lyons 1999:12).⁴ Applied to plural or mass nouns, uniqueness is better characterized as inclusiveness (Hawkins 1978): 'the reference is to the totality of the objects or mass in the context which satisfy the description' (Lyons 1999:11). However, note that there is a drawback to the uniqueness approach: since even the uniqueness of an inherently unique noun phrase's referent, like *the sun*, is contingent on 'the universe of discourse' (Guillemin 2011:165), 'one can always find a context in which a noun ceases to be uniquely denoting' (Lyons 1999:9).

2.2 Familiarity/identifiability

Another approach, discussed by Christophersen (1939) and highlighted by creolists like Lefebvre (1998:79), points out that both the person producing the utterance and the person receiving it are

³ However, there are instances in which definite *the* does mark a non-unique noun phrase, like in '**the** bank of a river' (Christophersen 1939:140 cited by Abbott 2004:131): a river, by definition, has two banks.

⁴ Where not already added by the original author, I have added bolding to cited examples throughout to highlight key portions for the reader.

likely to be familiar with the referent of a definite noun phrase. Meanwhile, the referent of an indefinite noun phrase may be new to the receiver (Lyons 1999:2-3). Thus, definite noun phrases are usually hearer-old (Prince 1992) while indefinite noun phrases typically indicate novelty (Heim 1982), i.e. that the referent is hearer-new (Prince 1992). I will use the terms receiver-old and receiver-new in this manuscript to refer to these distinctions.⁵

Familiarity captures the situational or exophoric use of definite noun phrases: when ‘the physical situation in which the speaker and hearer are located contributes to the familiarity of the referent’ (Lyons 1999:4). Sometimes the referent is present or in the general vicinity, such as *the bathroom* in ‘Put these clean towels in **the bathroom** please’ (Lyons 1999:4). The situation may be broader, such as a ‘reference to *the prime minister* [, which] would normally be taken to be the prime minister of that country’ (Lyons 1999:4). The situation can even be so broad that the referent is part of interlocutors’ general knowledge, like *the sun* (Lyons 1999:4). Familiarity also accounts for the anaphoric use of definite noun phrases. In these cases, the phrase ‘refer[s] to something previously introduced in the discourse’ (Valdman 2015:260) or discourse-old (Prince 1992), like *the woman* in ‘An elegant, dark-haired woman, a well-dressed man with dark glasses, and two children entered the compartment. I immediately recognized **the woman**’ (Lyons 1999:3).⁶

However, notice that the familiarity approach struggles to account for the definiteness of certain noun phrases. For example, some definite noun phrases are inferrable (Prince 1992); an inferrable noun phrase has an associative-anaphoric use in that its referent ‘has not been mentioned previously, but it belongs to the “semantic frame” established by the context’ (Bollée 2004:3-4 citing Himmelmann 1997:35-39, 2001:833-834), such as introducing *the pilot* shortly after mentioning *a plane*. Cataphoric noun phrases like in ‘**The fact that you’ve known them for years** is no excuse’ (Lyons 1999:3), are also problematic, ‘since the uniquely identifying information follows the definite article’ (Abbott 2004:135). In other words, the clause *that you’ve known them for years*, which ‘follow[s] rather than preced[es] the definite noun phrase, act[s] as an “antecedent” for *the fact* ... [and] is therefore anticipatory anaphoric (or “cataphoric”)’ (Lyons 1999:5). Thus, Birner and Ward (1998) frame this definiteness property as identifiability: a definite noun phrase indicates that the receiver can identify or individuate the referent using background information, and ‘familiarity ... is what enables the hearer to identify the referent’ (Lyons 1999:6).

2.3 Specificity/referentiality

Also relevant to this discussion is the specific-non-specific (referential-non-referential) distinction which ‘hangs on whether or not the speaker has a particular individual in mind’ (Abbott 2004:145), as illustrated by ‘John would like to marry **a [woman] his parents don’t approve of**’ (Partee 1972:example (1) cited by Abbott 2004:146). A specific/referential reading

⁵ Notice that throughout this manuscript, I use terminology that is modality-neutral, such as user rather than speaker and receiver rather than hearer or listener. However, terms such as speaker and hearer are used in the cited literature, as most of this research centralizes spoken languages.

⁶ However, notice that an English user may also introduce a new referent with a definite noun phrase, as in *My favorite pencil is pink with white polka dots*. Examples like *my favorite pencil* are better accounted for by the uniqueness approach to definiteness.

of the bolded noun phrase is that John has a particular person in mind, and his parents do not approve of her; a non-specific/non-referential interpretation is that John is willing to marry any woman, so long as his parents disapprove. The same distinction holds for definite noun phrases as well (Lyons 1999:165). An illustration of this, provided by Lyons (1999:167), is the definite noun phrase *the woman of his dreams* in ‘Did Fred meet **the woman of his dreams** during his trip to Poland last year?’. This question might be followed by the utterance ‘– or am I mistaken in thinking that accent is Polish?’ (Lyons 1999:167), suggesting a specific/referential reading: Fred has indeed met a specific person. Alternatively, it could be followed by ‘– or is he still looking?’ (Lyons 1999:167), suggesting the non-specific/non-referential interpretation that Fred has yet to meet such a person.

2.4 Demonstratives and Generics

Demonstrative noun phrases ‘are generally considered to be definite’ (Lyons 1999:17), and they highlight ‘a contrast, clear or implied, between the actual referent and other potential referents’ (Lyons 1999:18 summarizing Hawkins 1978). Thus, the expression of deictic contrasts across various dimensions is what distinguishes demonstratives from other kinds of definite noun phrases, whether that dimension be person (e.g. *you*), time (e.g. *now*), space (e.g. *here*), social distinction (e.g. honorifics), or even within the discourse itself (e.g. *next*).

Demonstratives that are exophoric are ‘used with reference to entities in the speech situation’ (Diessel 1999:93) and may be accompanied by gestures, such as the gestural use of *this* in ‘I hurt **this** finger’ (Levinson 2004:107). Like other definite noun phrases, they may also be endophoric and ‘refer to elements of the ongoing discourse’ (Diessel 1999:93), such as the anaphoric use in which a demonstrative noun phrase refers to an entity mentioned previously. An example is *this man* in ‘The cowboy entered. **This man** was not someone to mess with’ (Levinson 2004:108).

Generic noun phrases, which ‘reference...the entire class referred to by the noun’ (Valdman 2015: 257), are like demonstratives and other definite noun phrases in that they are inclusive and identifiable (Lyons 1999:198). However, the ways in which generics are expressed in a given language may vary. Consider the following English examples: *A computer is a powerful machine* (indefinite) / *The computer is a powerful machine* (definite) / *Computers are powerful machines* (determinerless plural).

Though the discussion around defining definiteness continues, linguists have identified these categories as capturing some of the meaningful differences between definite and indefinite noun phrases. These distinctions are realized differently across languages, including across FLCs.

3. Overview of noun phrases in French lexifier Creoles

3.1 The indefinite determiner

Across FLCs, Déprez (2007:265) finds that an indefinite determiner derived from French *un* ‘one/a(n)’ imposes a singular reading, is pre-nominal, and is compatible with specific and non-specific interpretations. It is also ‘generally in complementary distribution with the plural

marker’ (Déprez 2007:265). Gadelii’s (2007:248) Guadeloupean examples below in (1) illustrate these patterns. Notice how the indefinite determiner *on* ‘a(n)’ is compatible with specific (1b and 1d) and non-specific readings (1a and 1c), and plurality results in the use of a bare noun (1c and 1d).

- (1) a. Indefinite, non-specific, singular: *on chimiz disparèt*
INDF shirt disappear
‘some shirt disappeared’⁷
- b. Indefinite, specific, singular: *on chimiz disparèt*
INDF shirt disappear
‘a (particular) shirt disappeared’
- c. Indefinite, non-specific, plural: \emptyset *chimiz disparèt*
shirt disappear
‘some shirts disappeared’
- d. Indefinite, specific, plural: \emptyset *chimiz disaprèt*
shirt disappear
‘some (particular) shirts disappeared’
(Guadeloupean; adapted from Gadelii 2007:248)

Christie (1998:272) proposes that Kwéyòl *yon* ‘a(n)’ is simply the numeral ‘one’. However, similar to the indefinite *yon* vs. numeral *younn* ‘one’ distinction in Haitian (Lefebvre 1998:88), the numeral ‘one’ in Kwéyòl differs in pronunciation and usage: *yonn* ‘one’ (Taylor 1977:214). See (2) below.

- (2) *Yonn sé bon jou.*
One PL good day
‘One of the good days.’
(Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

3.2 Definite and demonstrative determiners

The definite determiner—usually *la* in FLCs—tends to impose a specific reading (Baptista 2007:465). There is also a ‘demonstrative marker *sa*, which quite commonly co-occurs with the definite *la*’ (Déprez 2007:266). In fact, Valdman (2015:254) refers to Haitian *la* and *yon* as ‘outer Det (indefinite vs. definite)’ and *sa* as an ‘inner Det (demonstrative)’. In Haitian, Mauritian, and Lesser Antillean Creoles, *la* is postnominal, while the Seychellois definite determiner *sa* is prenominal (Baptista 2007:463). Also, while Mauritian places demonstrative *sa* and definite *la* on either end of the noun phrase (*sa NP-la*), Lesser Antillean Creoles like Kwéyòl and Guadeloupean place them both after the noun (Déprez 2007:267). This is illustrated in Guadeloupean examples (3) and (4) below. Notice that in many FLCs, including Kwéyòl,

⁷ There is a word for *some* in Lesser Antillean Creoles. In Kwéyòl, this word is *cèk*. However, Gadelii (2007:248) uses the word *some* in the translations of (1a), (1c), and (1d) to highlight the presence (*some particular shirt*) or lack (*some [unspecified] shirt*) of specificity in the readings conveyed by these example noun phrases.

Guadeloupean, and Haitian, the demonstrative ‘is a strong deictic; it corresponds to both *this* and *that* in English’ (Valdman 2015:262).⁸ Crucially, in FLCs that have both *sa* and *la* in their determiner system, the *sa* post-nominal ‘demonstrative cannot appear alone’ without *la* (Gadelii 2007:245).

(3) *konpè Zanba tand muzik -la*
 friend Zanba hear music DEF
 ‘Zanba heard the music’
 (Guadeloupean; adapted from Gadelii 2007:250)

(4) *liv -la -sa*
 book DEF DEM
 ‘**this/that** book’
 (Guadeloupean; adapted from Gadelii 2007:244-245)

Lefebvre (1998:81) argues that Creole *la*’s phonological representation is derived from a deictic element: ‘the French post-nominal demonstrative reinforcer *là* found in expressions such as *ce livre-là* (this book **here**)’ (Déprez 2007:269). Déprez (2007:269) points out that the *la* found in many FLCs is also ‘often said to have deictic force’. Though she does not deeply investigate the topic, Christie (1998:269) makes a similar statement regarding Kwéyòl *la* in particular, stating that it ‘has a deictic function’ and observing that ‘the meaning of *la* is sometimes indistinguishable from the meaning of demonstrative *-sa+la*’. These observations suggest that users of some FLCs may use *la* ‘the’ in deictic ways that resemble demonstratives.

3.3 More than one *la*

Sometimes more than one *la* morpheme surfaces alongside a noun phrase, such as in examples (5) and (6) that I encountered during my corpus analysis.

(5) *Blé -a la, yonn sé blé -a. Wi, asou.*
 Blue DEF there one PL blue DEF yes on.top
 ‘**That** blue one **there**, one of the blue ones. Yes, on top.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

(6) *Mété yon, yon pitit asou blé -a ;*
 put INDF INDF small on blue DEF
 ‘Put a, a small one on the blue one;

asou blé -a la, èvè mété yon wouj
 on blue DEF there and put INDF red
 on **the** blue one **there**, and put a red one

⁸ However, in Haitian Creole there is also the demonstrative variant *sila* (*la*) or *sit* (*la*). According to Valdman (2015:262), use of this demonstrative form alongside *kote* ‘place’ as in *jaden kote sila a* ‘this garden’ yields a proximal reading. For participants in Lefebvre’s (1998:90-91) research, however, use of *sila* ‘that’ imposed a distal reading.

asou tèt -li, asou tèt -li.
 On head 3sg on head 3sg
 on its head.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

Zribi-Hertz and Glaude (2007:278) observe that ‘a Haitian DP may contain two distinct occurrences of LA, positioned below and above Number’. They propose that ‘there is only one LA morpheme in Haitian, but...it can occupy two distinct and combinable functional heads’ and conclude that examples like (7a) below are optional double-occurrences of the same *la* (Zribi-Hertz & Glaude 2007:278). Similarly, Sylvain (1936:55 summarized by Valdman 2015:261) analyzed the contrast between single *la* examples like (7b) and *la a* examples like (7c) as cases in which ‘the first LA (LA^1) carries a meaning indeterminate between the English definite and demonstrative determiners...[and] the second LA (LA^2) increases the level of presupposition’ (Valdman 2015:261-262).

- (7) a. *liv mwen sa a yo (a)*
 book 1sg DEM DEF PL DEIX
 ‘**those** books of mine **over there**’
 (Haitian; adapted from Gadeli 1997:142 and cited by Zribi-Hertz & Glaude 2007:278)
- b. *jwèt la*
 toy DEF
 ‘**the** toy (in question)’
 (Haitian; adapted from Valdman 2015:261)
- c. *jwèt la a*
 toy DEF/DEM DEF
 ‘**the** toy (**precisely** in question)’
 (Haitian; adapted from Valdman 2015:262)

As is the case in many FLCs, the Kwéyòl adverb ‘there’ is also *la*, much like the French demonstrative reinforcer *là* ‘there’ which also has adverbial uses (Dostie 2007:50-52).⁹ However, in some FLCs, the determiner *la* is distinguishable based on allomorphic morphophonological patterns (Déprez 2007:270 citing Joseph 1989). This is the case in Haitian, in which the single underlying definite determiner /la/ is realized as *la* [la], *a* [a], *an* [ã], *nan* [nã], or *lan* [lã] depending on the preceding sound (Lefebvre 1998:79). In the Haitian examples (7a) and (7c) above, both occurrences of *la* undergo morphophonological changes in pronunciation, suggesting that they are both tokens of definite /la/. However, in the Kwéyòl examples (5) and (6) above, only the first instance of /la/ is realized as [a], demonstrating the Kwéyòl determiner’s morphophonological patterning: /la/ is realized as [la] after a consonant and [a] post-vocally. Thus, only the first *la* in the Kwéyòl cases is the determiner, while the second is adverbial *la* ‘there’.

⁹ Kwéyòl *la* ‘there’ can also form existential constructions of the type *la ni ...* ‘there is/are ...’.

3.4 Plural marking

The plural marker in many FLCs ‘commonly co-occurs with the definite marker or has itself a definite reading’ (Déprez 2007:266); in these FLCs, such as Lesser Antillean Creoles, ‘definiteness and plural are marked separately’ (Valdman 2015:264).¹⁰ Most FLCs have an unbound plural morpheme, such as *ban* in Seychellois and Mauritian or *sé* in Lesser Antillean Creoles (Baptista 2007:462); see the Guadeloupean example (8) below. Since indefinite plurals are left bare, *sé* is in complimentary distribution with singular indefinite *yon* ‘a(n)’. Note that *sé* does not mark generic noun phrases.

- (8) *sé timoun an moin -la ké joué avè sa*
 PL child of 1sg DEF FUT play with that
 ‘my children will be playing with that’
 (Guadeloupean; adapted from Gadelii 2007:251)

3.5 Bare nouns

FLC bare nouns can be singular or plural, and while Baptista (2007:466-467) reports that bare nouns in Haitian and Mauritian are non-specific, bare nouns in Seychellois, in Réunionnais, and those Lesser Antillean Creoles that she examined were compatible with both specific and non-specific readings. It is common for bare noun referents to be unique at the level of general knowledge in FLCs; for example, Guillemin (2011:170-171) reports that inherently unique nouns, like *soley* ‘sun’, function much like proper nouns in Mauritian. FLC bare nouns may also indicate uniqueness within the discourse domain, like in (9) below. *Chen* ‘dog’ refers to ‘a unique prominent dog in the extra-linguistic context...or in a story-telling context where there is a preceding sentence that introduces *yon chen* ‘a dog’’ (Aboh & DeGraff 2014:214).

- (9) *Chen antre nan kay la.*
 Dog enter in house DEF¹¹
 ‘The dog entered the house.’
 (Haitian; adapted from Aboh & DeGraff 2014:214)

In some FLCs, like Haitian, “[t]he generic is indicated by the absence of any determiner” (Valdman 2015:258), like *wosiyòl* ‘nightingales’ in example (10). As seen in the Mauritian example in (11), they may even take on a plural indefinite reading, particularly in existential constructions (Guillemin 2011:163). Observations by Christie (1998:273) and Taylor (1977:205) suggest that bare nouns may be used similarly in Kwéyòl.

¹⁰ While ‘for some speakers, the plural marker may occur within the same noun phrase as the determiner’ (Lefebvre 1998:84) *la*, the Haitian post-nominal plural marker *yo* can also function alone, imposing both a plural marker and a definite reading (Valdman 2015:263, Lefebvre 1998:84).

¹¹ In addition to person/number abbreviations (e.g. 1sg = first person singular), I included the following grammatical category abbreviations when glossing examples throughout: DEF (definite), DEM (demonstrative), INDF (indefinite), PL (plural), POSS (possessive), ANT (anterior), PROG (progressive/continuous), and FUT (future).

- (10) *Wosiyòl manje kowosòl.*
 nightingale eat soursop
 ‘**Nightingales** eat soursop.’
 (Haitian; adapted from Aboh & DeGraff 2014:209)
- (11) *Ti ena pyes teat, sant, poem.*
 ANT have play song poem
 ‘There were **plays, songs, poems.**’
 (Mauritian; adapted from Guillemain 2011:163 citing Legallant 2002:51)

It has been proposed that bare nouns may also be put to a variety of non-generic, non-unique uses in FLCs. Gadelii (2007:243) suggests that bare nouns in Lesser Antillean Creoles can give rise to the same interpretations as non-bare nouns with respect to definiteness, plurality, and perhaps even specificity (Gadelii 2007:250). Examples (12) and (13) below, drawn from a Guadeloupean folktale that provided the surrounding context and aided in his interpretation, illustrate a *yon*-less indefinite singular bare noun and a *la*-less definite singular bare noun.¹²

- (12) *ou ké rapòté moin kaka tig*
 2sg FUT bring.back 1sg poopoo tiger
 ‘you will bring back **a tiger poopoo** to me’
 (Guadeloupean; adapted from Gadelii 2007:250)
- (13) *i fini pa touvé koulèv*
 3sg finish by find snake
 ‘he finally found **the snake**’
 (Guadeloupean; adapted from Gadelii 2007:251)

What factors influence whether a language user chooses a bare or non-bare noun when both options are grammatical? Gadelii (2007:260) proposes that ‘once a referent has been introduced, it can subsequently appear in the form of a bare NP’. For instance, notice that *makak* ‘the monkeys’ in (14) below is left bare when mentioned for the second time. Christie (1998:277) acknowledges that context renders bare noun usage in Kwéyòl flexible as well, suggesting that bare nouns can refer to entities that make up ‘the universe shared by the speaker and hearer(s)’. She highlights that their referents are often ‘physical features and culturally-defined entities’ (Christie 1998:277), like *layvyé* ‘river’ in (15) below. Their high level of familiarity seems sufficient for these nouns to be used in much the same way as inherently unique entities like *sòlèy* ‘sun’.

- (14) *I di: “Gay sé makak -la: oui, zò lèd...!”*
 3sg said look PL monkey DEF yes 3pl ugly
 ‘He said: “Look at **those monkeys**, aren’t they ugly!”

¹² However, as was pointed out by a reviewer, the use of data from a single folktale to draw these conclusions is a limitation of Gadelii’s (2007) study. The reviewer suggested that their own Guadeloupean Creole consultants would likely dispute Gadelii’s (2007:250) claims regarding the grammaticality of singular specific bare nouns and stated that examples like *koulèv* ‘(the) snake’ in (13) are unlikely to surface in conversation.

Ka zòt santi! Alor, makak pa té kontan!
 how 3pl smell so monkey not ANT happy
 'How they smell!' So, **the monkeys** were not very happy!
 (Guadeloupean; adapted from Gadelii 2007:252)

(15) *lè yo wivé an layvyé, layvyé té fò*
 when 3pl arrive in river, river ANT strong
 'When they reached **the river**, **the river** was strong'
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; adapted from Christie 1998:277)

Based on this examination of the FLC noun phrase literature, I anticipated that Kwéyòl's indefinite determiner would be compatible with specific and non-specific readings but not compatible with the plural marker *sé* (Déprez 2007:265-266), thus leaving plural indefinite noun phrases bare. I also expected Kwéyòl bare nouns to be open to specific or non-specific readings, as reported by Baptista (2007:466-467) and Gadelii (2007:243-250) for other Lesser Antillean Creoles; to be used to express generic reference, as suggested by Christie (1998:273) and Taylor (1977:205); to reference inherently unique entities, as observed by Guillemain (2011:170-171) in Mauritian; and to reference entities that are unique within the discourse domain, as observed in Haitian by Aboh and DeGraff (2014:214).

What was less clear based on past studies was whether Kwéyòl *la* 'the' has a deictic force reminiscent of demonstrative *sa-la* 'this/that', a possibility that has been raised in research across several FLCs (Déprez 2007:269) including Kwéyòl (Christie 1998:269). Also in need of further investigation was the extent to which bare nouns in FLCs take on a broader range of uses beyond unique, plural indefinite, and generic reference, such as referencing singular (in)definites that are discourse-old, as Gadelii (2007:243-260) and Aboh and DeGraff (2014:214) suggest is the case in Guadeloupean and Haitian respectively, or even referring to 'physical features and culturally-defined entities', a possibility Christie (1998:277) raises regarding Kwéyòl. In the next two sections I describe the methodologies I used to investigate these topics.

4. Fieldwork methodology

The corpus used for this research is made up of data I collected during fieldwork in London, United Kingdom (UK) in 2018. The corpus was transcribed and translated by a Kwéyòl-English bilingual literate in the language's orthography system. Though the French arrived on Dominica before the British, Dominica was part of the British Commonwealth for more than two centuries, making the UK a common destination for emigrants from the island. Both on Dominica and in the UK, Kwéyòl users typically grow up bilingual in English; if any monolingual Kwéyòl users remain, they are extremely rare, and many who use the Creole today are community elders. The data analyzed here were contributed by six Kwéyòl users, all of whom consented to the research: five who identified as female and one as male, ranging in age from 58 to 82 years. They chose their own conversation partners, yielding three pairs: mother-daughter, wife-husband, and friend-friend. Five were born in Dominica and one was born in London to emigrants from Dominica but spent her early childhood on the island. Though all but one reported English dominance, which is

typical of the language contact situation, participants were all users of the Creole exposed to Kwéyòl from early childhood.

These three participant pairs completed four tasks: a wordless picture book narration, responding to a silent video, a casual conversation on topics of their choosing, and a pattern-building activity. The pattern-building task was a modified form of the Stacks and Squares experiment developed by Cooperrider et al. (2014, 2018). Unlike participants in the Cooperrider et al. research, who sat on the ground to carry out the Stacks and Squares task, each pair of Kwéyòl users faced each other across a dining-sized table and could either sit or stand. My camera was positioned perpendicular to the length of the table to capture the utterances and gestures produced by both participants. I gave the Builder participant in the pair an array of felt Squares and a Stack of craft items (four wooden blocks, four bean bags, and three cardboard boxes). I showed the Director participant a photo illustrating how to arrange the Stack items into a pattern on the Squares; their task was to use utterances and pointing gestures to guide the Builder through constructing the depicted pattern. Once the Builder had successfully done so, the Stack items were cleared from the Squares, a new photo was provided, and the next trial began. Every two trials, the participants switched roles, and there was a total of eight trials, the first three being practice. The photo pattern guides were modeled after those designed by the Cooperrider et al. (2014, 2018) team.

Because it requires participants to use utterances and gestures to guide their partners through a pattern-building game, Stacks and Squares elicits demonstrative and definite noun phrases and instances of exophoric reference, as well as co-speech pointing. Pointing is associated with many of the exophoric uses of definite and demonstrative noun phrases, particularly the gestural use mentioned by Levinson (2004:105). While pointing is one of many gestures that can accompany referents crosslinguistically (others include eye gaze and various head and body movements), I could most effectively track pointing gestures while recording both participants simultaneously from a sidelong camera viewpoint. The Stacks and Squares task elicited an abundance of examples of *la* ‘the’ and *sa-la* ‘this/that’ and helped me gain further insight into how Kwéyòl users employ these determiners.

5. Coding methodology

I analyzed the data collected during two of the four tasks: the casual conversations and the pattern-building task. This yielded a relatively small corpus of data, which somewhat limits the strength of this study’s conclusions. However, analysis of participants’ unstructured conversations with their chosen partners provided insight into how bare and non-bare noun phrases are employed when Kwéyòl users are dialoguing freely and drawing on their shared knowledge. Incorporating data from the Stacks and Squares task, which elicited exophoric noun phrases and captured participants’ co-speech pointing gestures, also made this data set particularly conducive to examining definite and demonstrative noun phrases in Kwéyòl as they arise in naturalistic speech. For coding, I imported the videos and transcriptions into Atlas.ti qualitative data analysis software, highlighted the noun phrase tokens, and assigned color-coded category labels or *codes* to each.

5.1 Coding the conversation task

When analyzing the conversation task data, I assigned a code to each noun phrase based on its morphological type and number. For example, *fonmi* ‘ants’ in (16) was coded Plural and Bare, *wimèd* ‘medicine’ in (17) was coded Mass and Bare, *yon boutèy diven* ‘a bottle of wine’ in (18) was coded Singular and *Yon*-marked, and *nanné-sa-la* ‘this year’ in (19) was coded Singular and *Sa-la*-marked.

- (16) *I di la ni fonmi an kay -la, “so”*
 3sg said there have ant in house DEF so
 ‘She said there are **ants** in the house, so

mon di pou di Richardson pou nétwayé ’y.
 1sg said to tell Richardson to clean 3sg
 I said to tell Richardson to clean it.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (17) *Ou ké mèyè. Sé pou ’w tapé wimèd*
 2sg FUT get.better it.is for 2sg get medicine
 ‘You will get better. You should get **medicine**

pou sa.
 for that
 for that.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (18) *Sanmdi mon té andidan London Fields*
 Saturday 1sg ANT in London Fields
 ‘Saturday I was in London Fields

èvè dimanch mon alé London Fields ankò.
 and Sunday 1sg went London Fields again.
 and Sunday I went to London Fields again.

Mon ka alé èvè yon boutèy diven.
 1sg PROG go with a bottle wine
 I go with **a bottle of wine.**’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (19) *Yo té envité mwen nanné pasé, mé mwen*
 3pl ANT invite 1sg year last but 1sg
 ‘They invited me last year, but I

pa té alé.
 NEG ANT go
 didn't go.¹³

Nanné-sa -la, mwen di mwen ka alé.
 year DEM DEF 1sg said 1sg PROG go
 'This year, I said I am going.'
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

If a token was demonstrative, like *nanné-sa-la* 'this year' in (19) above, I coded it according to the type of deixis it expressed. For instance, *nanné-sa-la* 'this year' was coded as Temporal. Meanwhile, examples like *plas-sa-la* 'that place' in (20) were coded as Spatial.

- (20) A: *Pis mon byen bouzwen plas -sa -la.*
 because 1sg well need place DEMDEF
 'Because I really need **that place**.'
- B: *Lè 'w vlé plas -la pou?*
 when 2sg want place DEF for
 'When do you want the place for?'
- A: *Pou lanné pwochen.*
 for year next
 'For next year.'
- (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

If a noun was used to generalize over a class, like *moun* 'people' in (21), I coded it as Generic.

- (21) *Moun pa ka vini lè ou ka kwiyé yo.*
 people NEG PROG come when 2sg PROG call 3sg
 'People don't come when you call them.'
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

If a referent was discourse-new but identifiable by the receiver because its identity could be inferred, I coded the noun phrase as Associative-Anaphoric, like *chimen-la* 'the road' in (22). The topic of how to get to a destination by car had already been broached, so the existence of a road could be inferred.

¹³ As was highlighted by a reviewer, the past tense is the default tense across FLCs. In other words, 'past is most commonly expressed via [an] unmarked verb' (Migge 2020:160) that is not accompanied by other temporal information, such as adverbial phrases like *lè lèndi* 'on Mondays'. For this reason, I gloss Kwéyòl *té* as ANT (anterior tense). It is a 'relative past marker...[that] can be combined with [other tense and] aspectual markers' (Migge 2020:160) in Kwéyòl, like the future marker *ké* in the conditional phrase *té ké dansé* 'would have danced' or the progressive marker *ka* in the imperfect tense phrase *té ka dansé* 'was dancing'.

- (22) “So”, *kouman* 'w *kè fè alé la?*
 So how you FUT do go there
 ‘So, how will you be able to go there?’

Ou pa sa mété motoka 'w asou chimen -la.
 2sg NEG can put car 2sg on car DEF
 You can’t put your car on **the road.**
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

For those tokens used exophorically, I coded for the breadth of the situational context within which the referent could be identified. For example, the Exophoric: Physically Present code, which was also used in the analysis of the Stacks and Squares data, was assigned to those items that were physically present, like the biggest box in the Stack of craft items being referenced in (23). Other exophoric referents were part of the broader situation, like when a user uttered *lékòl* ‘school’ in (24) to refer to a local school. Those noun phrases that referred to elements of general knowledge, like *foutbòl* ‘football’ and *krikèt* ‘cricket’ in (25) I coded as Exophoric: General Knowledge. I also included the code Exophoric: Immediate Vicinity for tokens like *kay-la* ‘the house’ in example (16) above (reproduced below as (26)), which the participant uses to refer to the house in which the conversation took place.

- (23) *Mété pli gwo bwèt -la asi sa.*
 put most big box DEF on DEM
 ‘Put **the biggest box** on that.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

- (24) *O, wi, mon wè 'y la mon viyé ési.*
 oh yes 1sg saw 3sg there 1sg come.back here
 ‘Oh, yes, I saw him when I came back here.’
Mon wè Curtis ka sòti lékòl,
 1sg saw Curtis PROG come-out school
 I saw Curtis coming out of **the school,**

“but” *i pa wè mwen* “because”
 but 3sg NEG saw 1sg because
 but he didn’t see me because
i té douvan mwen.
 3sg ANT in.front.of me
 he was in front of me.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (25) A: *Apwézan toutmoun ka gadé foutbòl èvè...*
 Right.now everyone PROG watch football and
 ‘Right now everyone is watching **football** and –’

B: *Non, sé krikèt mwen ka gadé.*
 no it.is cricket 1sg PROG watch
 ‘No, it is **cricket** I watch.

Mwen pa mété èvè pyès foutbòl.
 1sg NEG put with any football
 I’m not concerned with **football**.

Mwen enmen krikèt -mwen, wi.
 1sg like cricket 1sg yes
 I like my cricket, yes.’

(Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

(26) *I di la ni fonmi an kay -la, “so”*
 3sg said there have ant in house DEF so
 ‘She said there are ants in **the house**, so

mon di pou di Richardson pou nètwayé ’y.
 1sg said to tell Richardson to clean 3sg
 I said to tell Richardson to clean it.’

(Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

Tokens I coded as Anaphoric were discourse-old: their referents had been mentioned earlier in a pair’s conversation. For instance, *katon-la* ‘the carton’ in (27) refers back to *yon katon* ‘a carton’ mentioned earlier in the discourse. Meanwhile, tokens like *nonm-la ki mo* ‘the man who died’ in (28) were coded as Cataphoric, since the information that rendered them identifiable followed the determiner.

(27) *Mwen ni yon katon.*
 1sg have INDF carton/cardboard box
 ‘I have **a carton/cardboard box**.’

[...]

Am, non, pli ta mon ké mété katon -la
 erm no more late 1sg FUT put carton DEF
 ‘Erm, no, later I will put **the carton/cardboard box**

andidan lapòt madanm -la ba ’y. Ki non ’y ankò?
 in door wife DEF for 3sg what name 3sg again
 in the wife’s door for her. What’s her name again?’

(Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

(28) *Pou ’w té mennen yon, yon, yon katon*
 for 2sg ANT take INDF INDF INDF carton
 ‘For you to take a, a, a carton/cardboard box

koté *nonm -la ki mò la.*
 by man DEF who die there
 by **the man who died** there.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

To determine whether a noun phrase was familiar/identifiable, I considered whether the receiver was already familiar with the referent or was able to easily identify it thanks to the discourse or situational context. For example, the code Familiar-Identifiable was attributed to anaphoric noun phrases like *madanm-la* ‘the wife’ in (27) above (mentioned earlier in the discourse as *madanm-li* ‘his wife’), but the code Not Familiar-Identifiable was assigned to receiver-new noun phrases like *yon baton* ‘a stick’ in (29).

(29) *Pa to lwen, mé i di*
 NEG too far but 3sg said
 ‘Not too far, but he said
I té ni yon, yon, yon strok,
 3sg ANT have INDF INDF INDF stroke
 he had a, a, a, stroke,

èvèk, am, pis i ka maché èvè yon baton.
 and erm because 3sg PROG walk with INDF stick
 and, *erm*, because he walks with **a stick**.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

To determine whether a noun phrase was unique/inclusive, I considered whether it referred ‘to at most one entity in the domain of discourse’ (Abbott 2004:125). For example, while *kay-la* ‘the house’ in (16) and (26) above was coded as Unique-Inclusive because only the house in which the conversation took place could have been the referent, *yon stand* ‘a stall’ in (30) did not receive this code. Like many indefinite noun phrases, its relationship to uniqueness is unclear, though presumably it would be non-unique (one of many stalls assigned to various vendors).

(30) *Mé nanné -sa -la ké pwèmyé fwa -a*
 but year DEM DEF FUT first time DEF
 ‘But this year will be the first time
mwen ké ni yon stand pa kò -mwen.
 1sg FUT have INDF stall for self 1sg
 I will have a **stall** by myself.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

Next, I coded each token for specificity/referentiality based on whether the participant was using the noun phrase to refer to a particular group or individual that they presumably had in mind. I coded tokens like *nonm-la* ‘the man’ in (28) above as Specific-Referential because the interlocutor was referring to a particular man within the interlocutors’ community. *Yon mòso*

papyé ‘a piece of paper’ in (31) was coded Non-Specific-Referential. The participant was referring to any scrap the receiver might have had on hand.

- (31) *Mé ékwi ’y; asi yon mòso papyé.*
 but write 3sg on INDF piece paper
 But write to her; on **a piece of paper.**
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

Finally, I coded each of the tokens into word categories based on the types of entities their nouns referenced.¹⁴ This was an exploratory coding process in that I first noted meaningful similarities across tokens and then coded them into word categories accordingly. This procedure yielded eleven word category codes: Abstract Concepts (e.g. *lavi* ‘life’), Activities/Sports (e.g. *krikèt* ‘cricket’), Animals/Insects (e.g. *fonmi* ‘ants’), Celestial/Weather (e.g. *lapli* ‘rain’), Events (e.g. *yon fèt Règé* ‘a Reggae festival’), Institutions (e.g. *légliz* ‘church’), Medical Treatments (e.g. *fizyo* ‘physical therapy’), Objects (e.g. *yon katon* ‘a carton’), People/Populations (e.g. *Donmitjen* ‘Dominicans’), Space (e.g. *plas-la* ‘the place’), and Time (e.g. *nanné-sa-la* ‘this year’). I incorporated this step into my methodology to investigate the interplay between type of referent and morphosyntactic realization, particularly with respect to referents that tend to surface as bare nouns, such as those that are celestial/weather-related.

One set of tokens that was difficult to code were cases where *la* marked an element that does not appear at first to be nominal, such as *ési-a* ‘here’ in (32a) and *jodi-a* ‘today’ in (32b) below. In instances like these, *la* has a nominalizing effect, and Christie (1998:269) offers the alternative translations ‘this very place’ and ‘this very day’, noting that these adverbials are actually referring expressions. In response to similar examples, Taylor (1977:215) suggests that Kwéyòl *la* may *particularize* the item it accompanies, a term he does not elaborate on but that hints at *la*’s association with specificity and deixis. These *la*-marked tokens, realized as [a], do adhere to the determiner’s morphophonological patterns, and *la* does not invariably mark items of this kind in Kwéyòl. For example, see the non-*la*-marked example *ési* ‘here’ in (32c). Thus, I coded (32a) as expressing Temporal deixis and placed it into the Time word category; similarly, I coded (32b) as expressing Spatial deixis and placed it into the Space word category. I also applied the code Nominalization/Particularization to these and other elements nominalized by *la*.

- (32) a. *Donmnik ni anpil lapli, mé ési -a,*
 Dominica has a.lot rain but here DEM
 ‘Dominica has a lot of rainfall, but **here/in this very place,**

lè lapli ka tonbé:
 when rain PROG fall
 when it is raining:

“*O, mwen pé ké alé la,*
 oh 1sg NEG FUT go there
 “Oh, I will not go there,

¹⁴ I am grateful to a reviewer for their suggestion that I incorporate word categories into my coding methodology and analysis.

lapli ka vini, lapli ka tonbé.
 rain PROG come rain PROG fall
 rain is coming, rain is falling.”
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

b. *Am, ou “though” wè Curtis jodi -a?*
 um 2sg though saw Curtis today DEM
 ‘Um, you saw Curtis **today/this very day** though?’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

c. *O, i ké vini dimanch ési?*
 oh 3sg FUT come Sunday here
 ‘Oh, she will come **here** on Sunday?’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

Tokens of this kind are not unique to Kwéyòl but have also been documented in other FLCs. For instance, cases like *dèyò a* ‘right outside’ and *isit la* ‘right here’, in which *la* ‘reinforces [the] deictic force’ of an adverb, have also been documented in Haitian as well (Valdman 2015:266); notice how the researcher’s translations ‘right outside’ and ‘right here’ call to mind Taylor’s (1977:215) claim that Kwéyòl *la* deictically particularizes the items it modifies. Also, ‘[c]ertain emphatic constructions...[in Haitian] involve using verbs and adjectives in nominal functions’ (Valdman 2015:253) like the phrase *kouri a* ‘the fact that you run’ in (33a) and the phrase *yon bon ti dòmi* ‘a nice little sleep’ in (33b). Even the Kwéyòl post-nominal demonstrative determiner consistently includes *la*, and some users do apply *la*’s morphophonological patterning to demonstrative *sa-la*, realizing /la/ as [a] post-vocally in this context: *sa-a*.

(33) a. *Kouri a bon pou ou*
 run DEF good for 2sg
 ‘**The fact that you run** is good for you.’
 (Haitian)¹⁵

b. *Li dòmi yon bon ti dòmi.*
 3sg sleep INDF nice little sleep
 ‘She had **a nice little sleep.**’
 (Haitian; adapted from Valdman 2015:253)

As example (33b) above illustrates through the nominalization of the verb *dòmi* ‘sleep’, similar nominalization patterns have been observed for Haitian indefinite *yon* as well as definite *la*. I only found one phrase in this Kwéyòl corpus that resembles this particular pattern: *yon piti “shopping”* ‘a little shopping’. However, since one function of the English *-ing* suffix is the nominalization of verbs, it is unclear whether indefinite *yon* itself is functioning as a nominalizer in this instance.

¹⁵ I am grateful to a reviewer for this example, as well as for their observations regarding *la*- and *yon*-nominalization in Haitian.

There were also cases in the data where inherently unique referents that are typically expressed using bare nouns, like *sòlèy* ‘sun’ in (34a), were used in ways that suggested a non-unique/inclusive reading; some of these non-unique/inclusive instances were even marked by *la* ‘the’, as seen in (34b). Here, the interlocutor hopes the sun will shine on a particular day for a special event. Guillemin (2011:175) remarks on similar examples in Mauritian where items like *soley* ‘sun’ are *la*-marked when ‘a specific instance or aspect of the noun is the intended meaning’. In the same vein, Haitian words referring to institutions, such as *lopital* ‘hospital’, or abstract concepts, such as *lajistis* ‘justice’, that one might expect to surface as bare nouns may also be marked by *la* in order to refer to a specific instance.¹⁶ No institution or abstract concept examples of this kind surfaced in the Kwéyòl data, but this phenomenon is illustrated by the contrast between Haitian examples (34c) and (34d) below.

- (34) a. *mwen pa sav si sòlèy ka vini lè,*
 1sg NEG know if sun PROG come when
 ‘I don’t know if it will be sunny [lit. ‘if sun is coming’]

lè zò ka fè fèt -zò
 when 2pl PROG have festival POSS.2pl
 when you are having your festival.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)
- b. *Ève si sòlèy -la la, moun ké vini.*
 and if sun DEF there people FUT come
 ‘And if **the sun** is there, people will come’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)
- c. *Mari renmen lekòl.*
 Mari like school
 ‘Mari likes school (in general).’
 (Haitian)
- d. *Mari renmen lekòl la.*
 Mari like school DEF
 ‘Mari likes the school (that she attends).’
 (Haitian)¹⁷

5.2 Coding the Stacks and Squares task

Since the deictic nature of *la* ‘the’ as compared with demonstrative *sa-la* ‘this/that’ has been a topic of discussion in the FLC literature, I focused solely on the *la*- and *sa-la*-marked noun phrases when examining the Stacks and Squares data. I coded them based on whether they expressed any Spatial or Temporal deixis, whether their referents were exophoric, and whether

¹⁶ I am grateful to a reviewer for these observations regarding word categories that are often realized as bare nouns in Haitian but may be modified by *la* in ways that alter their semantics.

¹⁷ I am grateful to a reviewer for examples (34c) and (34d), as well as for their observations regarding this particular *la*-marking pattern in Haitian.

their referents were unique/inclusive. I included the Unique-Inclusive code because demonstratives can single out a referent from among alternative possibilities. I also included the code Exophoric: Gesture when analyzing this segment of the corpus. This code was applied to any token the participant paired with a pointing gesture towards the Stacks and Squares craft item being referenced. For instance, in (35), *wouj beanbag-la* ‘the red beanbag’ was uttered while the participant pointed to the only red beanbag in the Stack, so this noun phrase was coded *La*-marked, Singular, Exophoric: Physically Present, Exophoric: Gesture, and Unique-Inclusive. Notice that, since the Stacks and Squares tokens simply referred to craft items used to carry out the task, I did not code them according to word categories.

- (35) *Wouj “beanbag” -la [+ point], mété ’y asi blé -la.*
 red beanbag DEF put 3sg on blue DEF
 ‘The red beanbag [+ point], put it on the blue.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

Due to a back injury, one participant rested immobile during her turns as Director of the task. On occasion, her daughter, who partnered with her during the fieldwork tasks, silently produced a clarifying gesture herself as her mother gave instructions. In these cases, I applied the Exophoric: Gesture code when the receiver’s (the daughter’s) pointing gestures aligned with a noun phrase produced by the person who contributed the utterance (the mother) as in (36).

- (36) *Pwan, am, pa pli piti bwèt -la,*
 take erm NEG most small box DEF
 ‘Take, *erm*, not the smallest box,

lòt -la [+ point]; mété ’y ... wi, sala.
 other DEF put 3sg yes that.one
 the other one [+ point]; put it ... yes, that one.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

5.3 Atlas.ti tools

Once both tasks’ tokens were coded, I used the Cooccurrence Explorer and Cooccurrence Table tools in Atlas.ti to facilitate data analysis. The Explorer allowed me to select a single code (e.g. *La*-marked) and see a list of all the tokens to which I had assigned that code, along with the other codes assigned to each of those tokens. The Table then showed me how many tokens I had assigned my selected code to as well as how many of those tokens had also been assigned to each of the other codes (e.g. 13 of the 54 total Bare tokens were also coded as Unique-Inclusive). These tools helped me pinpoint the readings and uses expressed by each bare and non-bare noun phrase type and identify illustrative examples.

6. Results and discussion

Given the relatively small size of the corpus, 139 noun phrase tokens surfaced in the conversation task data contributed by the three participant pairs: 54 were bare nouns while 40

were marked by *yon* ‘a(n)’, seven by *sa-la* ‘this/that’, and 38 by *la* ‘the’ (seven of which were also marked by plural *sé*). The quantitative results regarding the number, genericity, uniqueness/inclusiveness, specificity/referentiality, familiarity/identifiability, reference patterns, and deixis of each noun phrase type are summarized in tables towards the end of their respective subsections: see Section 6.1 and Table 1 on bare nouns, Section 6.2 and Table 2 on indefinites marked by *yon*, Section 6.3 and Table 3 on demonstratives marked by *sa-la*, and Section 6.4 and Table 4 on definites marked by *la* (and *sé*). I examine the word categories of their nouns separately in Section 6.5 and summarize them in Table 5. Lastly, in Section 6.6 and Table 6, I report on the uniqueness/inclusiveness, co-occurrence with pointing gestures, and deictic types of the 180 *la*- and thirty *sa-la*-marked noun phrases produced during the Stacks and Squares task.

6.1 Bare nouns

Among the fifty-four bare nouns, six were singular (e.g. *lopital* ‘hospital’), but most were plural ($n = 26$) or mass nouns ($n = 22$). Only six, including *moun* ‘people’ in (21) (reproduced below as (37)), had generic readings. Thirteen bare nouns were unique/inclusive within the domain of the discourse. Some of these unique nouns were generic, which are inclusive by definition. Others were either inherently unique, like *sòlèy* ‘(the) sun (in our solar system)’ or had achieved an inherent-like level of uniqueness within the interlocutor’s shared knowledge, like *légliz* ‘the (local) church’. The rest ($n = 41$) were not unique/inclusive. These were typically indefinite plural nouns, like *ti chimiz* ‘t-shirts’, or mass nouns, like *bijou* ‘jewelry’ in (38). As anticipated, many non-unique/inclusive tokens surfaced in existential *la ni* ‘there is/are’ constructions, like *moun* ‘people’ in (38).

- (37) *Moun pa ka vini lè ou ka kwiyé yo.*
 People NEG PROG come when 2sg PROG call 3sg
 ‘**People** don’t come when you call them.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (38) *Wi, wi, la té ni moun*
 yes yes there ANT have people
 ‘Yes, yes, there were **people**

ki té ka vann bijou.
 Who ANT PROG sell jewelry
 who were selling **jewelry.**’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

Thirty tokens, which included generics, various mass nouns, and a number of indefinite plural nouns, were non-specific, such as indefinite plural *moun Donmnik* ‘Dominican people’ in (39). The 24 bare nouns that were specific were either inherently unique nouns (see *sòlèy* ‘sun’ above in example (34a), reproduced below as (40)), plural indefinites like *kat* ‘cards’ throughout (41a) below, or mass nouns like the *bon mizik* ‘good music’ played at a particular event in (41b).

- (39) *La ké ni anpil, moun Donmnik ké la.*
 There FUT have a.lot people Dominican FUT there
 ‘There will be a lot, **Dominican people** will be there.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (40) *mwen pa sav si sòlèy ka vini lè,*
 1sg NEG know if sun PROG come when
 ‘I don’t know if it will be sunny [lit. ‘if **sun** is coming’]

lè zò ka fè fèt -zò
 when 2pl PROG have festival POSS.2pl
 when you are having your festival.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (41) a. *Mwen té ka vann kat osi.*
 1sg ANT PROG sell card also.
 ‘I was also selling cards.

Kat pou annivèsè, kat pou nésans tibébé,
 card for birthday/anniversary card for birth baby
 cards for birthdays/anniversaries, cards for births of babies,

kat pou mawiyaj, tout biten kon sa.
 card for marriage all thing like DEM.
 cards for marriages, all those kinds of things.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- b. *Yo té ka jwé bon mizik,*
 3pl ANT PROG play good music
 ‘They were playing **good music**,

mé la pa té ni asé moun pou ganyen
 but there NEG ANT have enough people to buy
 but there were not enough people there to buy.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

Most of the bare nouns (n = 34) were familiar/identifiable, many of which were inherently unique nouns and generics. Some tokens (n = 20) were not identifiable/familiar, however, particularly many of the plural indefinites. One example was *fonmi* ‘ants’ in (16) and (26), reproduced below as (42); this plural indefinite bare noun’s referent is not identifiable/familiar, since presumably the receiver was not yet aware that there were ants in the house.

- (42) *I di la ni fonmi an kay -la, “so”*
 3sg said there have ant in house DEF so
 ‘She said there are **ants** in the house, so

mon di pou di Richardson pou nètwayé 'y.
 1sg said to tell Richardson to clean 3sg
 I said to tell Richardson to clean it.'
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

While there were no bare nouns used associative-anaphorically or cataphorically, there were eighteen anaphoric examples, seven tokens that were exophoric and found within the broad situational context (e.g. *légliz* ‘the church’), and ten that were part of general knowledge (e.g. *foutbòl* ‘football’).

This analysis of the conversational data suggests that Kwéyòl bare nouns can take on a wide variety of interpretations. They can be singular, plural, or mass; can express generic reference; can be (non-)unique/inclusive; can be (non-)specific/referential; can be (non-)familiar/identifiable; and can surface in anaphoric (or discourse-old) contexts. They are also often used exophorically to reference entities that are present in the broader situational context or that are part of interlocutors’ general knowledge; this is reminiscent of Christie’s (1998:277) suggestion that Kwéyòl bare nouns are often ‘culturally-defined entities’.

The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 1 below and align with Gadelii’s (2007) suggestion that bare nouns in Lesser Antillean Creoles are often anaphoric and can be plural or singular, specific or non-specific, definite (e.g. inherently unique nouns), or indefinite (e.g. plural indefinites).

	Bare (n = 54)
Singular	6, 11.1%
Plural	26, 48.1%
Mass	22, 40.7%
Generic	6, 11.1%
Unique/Inclusive	13, 24.1%
Non-Unique/Inclusive (or Ambiguous)	41, 75.9%
Specific/Referential	24, 44.4%
Non-Specific/Referential	30, 55.6%
Familiar/Identifiable	34, 63.0%
Non-Familiar/Identifiable	20, 37.0%
Anaphoric	18, 33.3%
Associative-Anaphoric	0, 0.0%
Cataphoric	0, 0.0%
Exophoric	17, 31.5%
Spatial	0, 0.0%
Temporal	0, 0.0%
Discourse	0, 0.0%

Table 1. Bare Nouns in the Kwéyòl Conversation Task according to their Number, Genericity, Uniqueness/Inclusiveness, Specificity/Referentiality, Familiarity/Identifiability, Reference Patterns, and Deictic Type

In addition, a sweep of the Stacks and Squares data revealed examples like (43) below. Much like Haitian *chen* in (9) above, *gwo blòk* ‘the big block’ in (43) can be expressed as a bare noun

because, while it is not a plural indefinite or an inherently unique noun, it has a high level of contextual uniqueness: it is the only big block involved in the Stacks and Squares task. However, as evidenced by *bwèt* ‘box’ in (44), which is not unique within the discourse domain but surfaces after *yon bwèt* ‘a block’ has already been mentioned, anaphora alone appears to be sufficient to license optional bareness.

- (43) *Mété yon lòt blòk douvan gwo blòk.*
 put INDF other block in.front.of big block
 ‘Put another block in front of **the big block.**’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

- (44) A: “Now”, *mété yon bwèt asou wouj -la.*
 now put INDF box on red DEF
 ‘Now, put **a box** on the red one.’

- B: *Gwo, o piti? Népòt bwèt?*
 big or small any box
 ‘Big, or small? Any box?’

- A: *Mété bwèt.*
 put box
 ‘Put **a box.**’

(Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

6.2 Indefinites with *yon*

As anticipated, nearly all of the noun phrases in the conversational data that were marked by indefinite *yon* ‘a(n)’ (n = 39 of 40) were singular, the only exception being the mass noun *lajan* ‘money’ accompanied by both *yon* and the quantifier *ti* ‘little’: *yon ti lajan* ‘a little money’. None of the *yon*-marked nouns were unique/inclusive. Instead, they were all either non-unique, like *yon lanmen* ‘a hand’ in (45), or ambiguous with respect to uniqueness, like *yon lòt plas* ‘another place’ in (46). Whereas the producer of the utterance in (45) clearly broke only one of her two hands, it is unclear whether the person who uttered (46) was told about just one other event venue or several.

- (45) *Mwen pa sa menm chonjé; non papa,*
 1sg NEG DEM 1sg remember no papa
 ‘I can’t even remember that; no papa,

“‘cause” *mwen ni yon lanmen la ki kasé la.*¹⁸
 because 1sg have INDF hand there which broke there
 because I have **a broken** hand there which is broken there.

¹⁸ The tokens of *la* in this utterance are neither post-nominal definite determiners nor instances of *la* functioning as an adverb or as part of an existential construction. Instead, they appear to punctuate the discourse, bringing emphasis and focus to key portions of the utterance’s content. Tokens like this one lead me to propose that *la* also functions as a pragmatic marker in Kwéyòl Donmnik (Peltier 2022, forthcoming).

Mwen pa sa fè anyen.
 1sg NEG can do anything
 I can't even do anything.'

(Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (46) *O, wi, èvè i di mon kont, am, yon lòt plas i sav,*
 oh yes and 3sg told 1sg about erm INDF otherplace 3sg knows
 'Oh, yes, and she told me about, *ern*, **another place** she knows,

èvè plas -la, am, té pa lwen, èvè
 and place DEF erm ANT NEG far and
 and the place, *ern*, was not far, and

i di mwen mé sé yon, am, "Community Hall".
 3sg told 1sg but it.is INDF erm Community Hall
 she told me it is a, *ern*, "Community Hall".'

(Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

As suggested by Gadeliï (2007) in his Guadeloupean study, indefinite Kwéyòl nouns with *yon* can be either specific (n = 30) or non-specific (n = 10). For example, while *yon katon* 'a cardboard box' in example (28) (reproduced below as (47a)) is non-specific and refers to any cardboard box the receiver might have on hand, the same noun phrase in example (47b) is specific: here, the receiver replies that she does indeed have a particular item that will fulfill her interlocutor's request. Another similar example is *yon Fèt Règè* 'a Reggae Festival' in (48), which refers to a specific event the participant attended.

- (47) a. Pou 'w té mennen yon, yon, **yon**
 for 2sg ANT take INDF INDF INDF
 'For you to take a, a, **a**

katon koté *nonm-la ki mò la.*
 carton by man DEF who die there
carton/cardboard box by the man who died there.'

(Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- b. *Mwen ni yon katon.*
 1sg have INDF carton
 'I have **a carton/cardboard box**.'
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (48) *Mwen té alé andan yon Fèt Règè.*
 1sg ANT go to INDF festival Reggae
 'I went to **a Reggae Festival**.'
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

Unless a *yon*-marked noun phrase attributed new information to a referent that was already the topic of conversation, like *yon Community Hall* in (46) above, or was physically present, like *yon lanmen* ‘a hand’ in (45) above, the noun phrase was not familiar to or easily identifiable by the receiver (n = 27). *Yon lanmen* ‘a hand’ in (45) was the only exophoric instance of a *yon*-marked noun phrase in the corpus, and many of those that were familiar to the receiver were anaphoric (n = 10). There were no associative-anaphoric tokens containing *yon*.

In summary, this analysis of the conversational data suggests that *yon*-marked nouns in Kwéyòl are consistently singular, are non-unique/inclusive (or are ambiguous with respect to uniqueness), and are not used for generic reference. However, they may give rise to specific or non-specific readings, can be (non-)familiar/identifiable, and can surface in anaphoric (or discourse-old) contexts. These results are displayed below in Table 2.

	<i>Yon</i>-Marked (n = 40)
Singular	39, 97.5%
Plural	0, 0.0%
Mass	1, 2.5%
Generic	0, 0.0%
Unique/Inclusive	0, 0.0%
Non-Unique/Inclusive (or Ambiguous)	40, 100.0%
Specific/Referential	30, 75.0%
Non-Specific/Referential	10, 25.0%
Familiar/Identifiable	13, 32.5%
Non-Familiar/Identifiable	27, 67.5%
Anaphoric	10, 25.0%
Associative-Anaphoric	0, 0.0%
Cataphoric	0, 0.0%
Exophoric	1, 2.5%
Spatial	0, 0.0%
Temporal	0, 0.0%
Discourse	0, 0.0%

Table 2. *Yon*-marked Noun Phrases in the Kwéyòl Conversation Task according to their Number, Genericity, Uniqueness/Inclusiveness, Specificity/Referentiality, Familiarity/Identifiability, Reference Patterns, and Deictic Type

6.3 Demonstratives with *sa-la*

Nouns marked by *sa-la* ‘this/that’ can be pluralized by *sé* in Kwéyòl, but all seven *sa-la*-marked nouns in the conversational data were singular.¹⁹ As expected, all were demonstratives and encoded deictic contrasts; five were Temporal (e.g. *mwa-sa-la* ‘this month’), one was Spatial (*plas-sa-la* ‘that place’), and one referred to an entity mentioned elsewhere in the Discourse (*krikèt-sa-la* ‘that cricket’). They were also all non-inherently unique, specific, and easily identifiable to the receiver, like *nanné-sa-la* ‘this month’ in (20) above. Each of the *sa-la*-marked tokens was exophoric in nature as well, either because it referred to an entity that was part of the

¹⁹ It was somewhat surprising that only seven tokens marked by the demonstrative *sa-la* ‘this/that’ were found throughout the conversation data. However, given that the Stacks and Squares task is designed to elicit demonstrative and definite noun phrases, the greater frequency of *sa-la* in that data (n = 30) was to be expected.

broad situational context, like *nanné-sa-la* ‘this month’, or to something that was part of general knowledge, like the sport *krikèt-sa-la* ‘that cricket’. Though none of the tokens were associative-anaphoric, five were anaphoric, including *plas-sa-la* ‘that place’ in (49), which refers back to *yon lòt plas* ‘another place’ mentioned in (46) above.

- (49) *Pis mon byen bouzwen plas -sa -la.*
 because 1sg well need place DEM DEF
 ‘Because I really need **that place**.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

Thus, this analysis of the few tokens present within the conversational data suggests that nouns in Kwéyòl that are marked by *sa-la* are consistently singular, specific/referential, and familiar/identifiable. While they do not express generic reference, they can surface in anaphoric or exophoric contexts, and they can express spatial, temporal, or discourse deixis. These results are displayed below in Table 3.

	<i>Sa-La-Marked</i> (n = 7)
Singular	7, 100.0%
Plural	0, 0.0%
Mass	0, 0.0%
Generic	0, 0.0%
Unique/Inclusive	7, 100.0%
Non-Unique/Inclusive (or Ambiguous)	0, 0.0%
Specific/Referential	7, 100.0%
Non-Specific/Referential	0, 0.0%
Familiar/Identifiable	7, 100.0%
Non-Familiar/Identifiable	0, 0.0%
Anaphoric	5, 71.4%
Associative-Anaphoric	0, 0.0%
Cataphoric	0, 0.0%
Exophoric	7, 100.0%
Spatial	1, 14.3%
Temporal	5, 71.4%
Discourse	1, 14.3%

Table 3. *Sa-la*-marked Noun Phrases in the Kwéyòl Conversation Task according to their Number, Genericity, Uniqueness/Inclusiveness, Specificity/Referentiality, Familiarity/Identifiability, Reference Patterns, and Deictic Type

6.4 Definites with *la* (and *sé*)

Among the 38 *la*-marked noun phrases in the conversation task, 27 were singular (e.g. *lapòt madanm-la* ‘the woman’s door’), four were mass nouns (e.g. *mizik-la* ‘the music’), and seven were plural. There was a single instance of a plural *la*-marked noun surfacing without plural *sé*; notice that in example (50) the first instance of ‘the children’ is uttered as *sé zanfan-a*, but the second is *zanfan-a* without prenominal *sé*. Sixteen *la*-marked tokens in the conversational data were anaphoric, and perhaps partial bareness in (50) was sanctioned by anaphora or by the fact that *zanfan* ‘children’ is often plural. Given that the interlocutors always discuss the children collectively and never mention a particular child among the group, it is unlikely that the mention

of children earlier in the discourse brought to this participant’s mind a single specific child who had disappeared. However, as this was the only token of its kind, it may have been a performance error. Further research is required to investigate whether omission of plural *sé* is actually grammatical in Kwéyòl when the referent is discourse-old.

- (50) A: *É, yo tapé, am, biten;*
 and 3pl found erm something
 ‘And, they found, erm, something;

yo alé an kav, “cave” -la. Yo, yo,
 3pl went in cave cave DEF 3pl 3pl
 they went into the cave. They, they,

am, sa yo di?
 erm DEM 3pl say
 erm, what did they say?’
- B: *O! Sé zanfán -a?*
 oh PL child DEF
 ‘Oh! **The children?**’
- A: *Zanfán -a. Ki té dispawèt.*
 child DEF who ANT disappear
 ‘**The children.** Who disappeared.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

La-marked nouns tended to be unique (n = 34), including one token, shown in (51), whose level of uniqueness was inherent given the inclusion of *pwèmyé* ‘first’. This inherent unique example was also the only non-familiar/identifiable *la*-marked token.

- (51) *Mé nanné -sa -la ké pwèmyé fwa -a*
 but year DEM DEF FUT first time DEF
 ‘But this year will be **the first time**

mwen ké ni yon stand pa kò -mwen.
 1sg FUT have INDF stall to self 1sg
I will have a stall by myself.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

Only four tokens were non-unique. These noun phrases were either associative-anaphoric, like mentioning *chimen-la* ‘the road’ while discussing how to get to a destination by car in (52), a reproduction of (22) above, or incompatible with a unique reading, like *janm-la* ‘the leg’ in (53), which refers to one of the participant’s two legs. Notice that, while non-unique, *janm-la* ‘the leg’ in (53) is also anaphoric and thus receiver-old, since the referent had already surfaced previously as *janm-mwen* ‘my leg’.

- (52) “So”, *kouman* 'w *kè fè alé la?*
 So how you FUT do go there
 ‘So, how will you be able to go there?’

Ou pa sa mété motoka 'w asou chimen -la.
 2sg NEG DEM put car 2sg on car DEF
 You can’t put your car on **the road.**
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (53) *Mé i di mon sé tout jou mon*
 But 3sg told 1sg it-is every day 1sg
 ‘But she told me it is every day I

ni pou mété 'y asi janm -mwen,
 have to put 3sg on leg 1sg
 must put it on my leg,
èvé lè mwen ka fè 'y, mwen ni pou mété
 and when 1sg PROG do 3sg 1sg have to put
 and when I am doing it, I must put

janm -la vini, pa désann ...
 leg DEF come NEG down
the leg, not down ...
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

The literature reports that *la* tends to mark specific referents across FLCs (Baptista 2007:465), but I found one associative-anaphoric instance of a non-specific *la*-marked noun phrase: *chimen-la* ‘the road’ in (52) and (22) above. There, the person producing the utterance seems to suggest that the receiver cannot put her car on any road, not a specific one. There were seven associative-anaphoric *la*-marked tokens total and three cataphoric examples, including *nonm-la ki mò* ‘the man who died’ in (28) and (47a) (reproduced below as (54)) and *pwèmyé fwa-a mwen ké ni yon stand pa kò-mwen* ‘the first time I will have a stall by myself’ in (51) above. Twelve *la*-marked tokens were exophoric, such as the physically present noun phrase *janm-la* ‘the leg’ in (53) above.

- (54) *Pou 'w té mennen yon, yon, yon katon*
 for 2sg ANT take INDF INDF INDF carton
 ‘For you to take a, a, a carton/cardboard box

koté nonm -la ki mò la.
 by man DEF who die there
 by **the man who died** there.
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

The four Spatial and two Temporal *la*-marked tokens that I found in the conversational task were all tokens like *ési-a* ‘this very place’ and *jodi-a* ‘this very day’ discussed in Section 5, all of

which were also coded for Nominalization/Particularization. For further insight into the deictic nature of *la* suggested by the literature, I conducted an examination of the *la*- and *sa-la*-marked noun phrases that surfaced during Stacks and Squares, the results of which I report in Section 7.

Based on the analysis the conversational data discussed in this section, *la*-marked nouns in Kwéyòl can be singular, plural, or mass, and while they tend to be unique/inclusive, specific/referential, and familiar/identifiable, this analysis suggests that non-unique/inclusive, non-specific/referential, and non-familiar/identifiable instances are possible. *La*-marked tokens in the corpus also included anaphoric, associative-anaphoric, cataphoric, and exophoric nouns, as well as nominalized/particularized tokens expressing spatial or temporal deixis. These results are displayed below in Table 4.

	<i>La</i> (and <i>Sé</i>)-Marked (n = 38)
Singular	27, 71.1%
Plural	7, 18.4%
Mass	4, 10.5%
Generic	0, 0.0%
Unique/Inclusive	34, 89.5%
Non-Unique/Inclusive (or Ambiguous)	4, 10.5%
Specific/Referential	37, 97.4%
Non-Specific/Referential	1, 2.6%
Familiar/Identifiable	37, 97.4%
Non-Familiar/Identifiable	1, 2.6%
Anaphoric	16, 42.1%
Associative-Anaphoric	7, 18.4%
Cataphoric	3, 7.9%
Exophoric	12, 31.6%
Spatial	4, 10.5%
Temporal	2, 5.3%
Discourse	0, 0.0%

Table 4. *La*-marked Noun Phrases in the Kwéyòl Conversation Task according to their Number, Genericity, Uniqueness/Inclusiveness, Specificity/Referentiality, Familiarity/Identifiability, Reference Patters, and Deictic Type

6.5 Word Categories

Table 5 below displays the outcomes of my word category coding of the noun phrase tokens in the conversational data. The most common noun phrase type for each word category is highlighted in grey, and each of these results is discussed below.

	Bare	<i>Yon</i> -Marked	<i>Sa-La</i> -Marked	<i>La</i> (and <i>Sé</i>)-Marked
Abstract Concepts (n = 9)	3, 33.3%	5, 55.6%	0, 0.0%	1, 11.1%
Activities/Sports (n = 8)	5, 62.5%	1, 12.5%	1, 12.5%	1, 12.5%
Animals/Insects (n = 1)	1, 100%	0, 0.0%	0, 0.0%	0, 0.0%
Celestial/Weather (n = 12)	10, 83.3%	0, 0.0%	0, 0.0%	2, 16.7%
Events (n = 8)	0, 0.0%	4, 50.0%	0, 0.0%	4, 50.0%
Institutions (n = 4)	4, 100.0%	0, 0.0%	0, 0.0%	0, 0.0%
Medical Treatment (n = 4)	2, 50%	0, 0.0%	0, 0.0%	2, 50.0%
Objects (n = 41)	12, 29.3%	17, 41.4%	0, 0.0%	12, 29.3%
People/Populations (n = 30)	17, 56.7%	5, 16.7%	0, 0.0%	8, 26.7%
Space (n = 11)	0, 0.0%	4, 36.4%	1, 9.1%	6, 54.5%
Time (n = 11)	0, 0.0%	4, 36.4%	5, 45.5%	2, 18.2%

Table 5. Noun Phrases in the Conversation Task according to the Word Categories of their Referents

Of the nine noun phrases whose referents were Abstract Concepts, the largest portion (n = 5) were accompanied by indefinite *yon*, such as *yon chans* ‘a chance’; similarly, 17 of the 42 Objects noun phrases were *yon*-marked (e.g. *yon katon* ‘a carton’), but the eight Events were evenly split between *yon*-marked and *la*-marked noun phrases (e.g. *pwèmyé fwa-a...* ‘the first time...’). Meanwhile, most of the 11 Space referents (n = 6) were *la*-marked (e.g. *plas-la* ‘the place’), most of the 11 Time referents (n = 5) were *sa-la*-marked (e.g. *nanné-sa-la* ‘this year’), and the four Medical Treatment referents were evenly split between *la*-marked (e.g. *wimèd-la* ‘the medicine’) and bare nouns (e.g. *fizyo* ‘physical therapy’).

An analysis of the other word categories—Activities/Sports (e.g. *krikèt* ‘cricket’), Animals/Insects (*fonmi* ‘ants’), Celestial/Weather (e.g. *lapli* ‘rain’), Institutions (e.g. *légliz* ‘church’), and People/Populations (e.g. *moun* ‘people’)—revealed that they were predominantly expressed using bare nouns. This outcome, particularly with respect to sports, local institutions, and celestial or weather-related entities, aligns with Christie’s (1998:277) observation that Kwéyòl bare nouns tend to be ‘physical features and culturally-defined entities’. I expect future research based on a larger corpus of Kwéyòl data to corroborate this intriguing result.

Recall also that researchers like Guillemin (2011:175) have observed how entities like Mauritian *soley* ‘sun’ (a celestial referent) that are typically bare may be *la*-marked when ‘a specific instance or aspect of the noun is the intended meaning’. Similarly, Haitian bare nouns like *lèkol* ‘school’ (an institution) or *lajistis* ‘justice’ (an abstract concept) may be *la*-marked as well. Upon inspection, I found that similar patterns were present in this Kwéyòl corpus data in the Celestial/Weather word category. Here, I found that both *sòlèy(-la)* ‘(the) sun’, as in example (34a) and (40) above (reproduced below as (54)) and *lapli(-a)* ‘(the) rain’, as in example (55a) below, could surface with or without *la*. Notice how *lapli-a* in (55a), like *sòlèy-la*, refers to a particular instance of rainfall. While there were no instances of institutions surfacing as non-bare noun phrases, there was a *sa-la*-marked token of *krikèt(-sa-la)* ‘(this/that) cricket’—an activity/sport—to refer to a certain match that had been referenced elsewhere in the discourse, and (55b) displays a token of *fizyo* ‘physical therapy’—a medical treatment—surfacing with *la* to

refer to the particular regimen of physical therapy treatment that the receiver of the utterance will soon be undergoing.

- (54) *mwen pa sav si sòlèy ka vini lè,*
 1sg NEG know if sun PROG come when
 ‘I don’t know if it will be sunny [lit. ‘if **sun** is coming’]

lè zò ka fè fèt -zò
 when 2pl PROG have festival POSS.2pl
 when you are having your festival.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- (55) a. *Avan nou fini, lapli -a té ka tonbé;*
 before 1pl finish rain DEF ANT PROG fall
 ‘Before we finished, **the rain** was falling;

nou té ni pou alé andidan pou tibwen tan.
 1pl ANT have for go inside for some time
 ‘we had to go inside for a some time.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

- b. **Fizyo -la** ké wédé ’w.
 physical therapy DEF FUT help 2sg
 ‘**The physical therapy** will help you.’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Conversation Task)

6.6 Stacks and Squares results: *la* and *sa-la*

In the Stacks and Squares task, there were 180 *la*-marked and 30 *sa-la*-marked noun phrases; all of these tokens had exophoric referents due to the physical presence of the craft items. While some of these noun phrases referenced items that were unique within the discourse domain, like *gwo mòso wouj-la* ‘the (only) big red Square’ and *gwo mòso wouj-sa-la* ‘that (only) big red Square’ (n = 66 *la*-marked; n = 6 *sa-la* marked), most of the tokens (n = 114 *la*-marked; n = 24 *sa-la*-marked) had non-unique referents. This is probably because there were many objects that shared similar qualities (three boxes, four beanbags, etc.). Thus, non-unique noun phrases were usually accompanied by either spoken or gestural clarification or had already been referenced earlier in the discourse in a uniquely identifiable way. For example, in (56), the participant clarified that the largest box was their intended referent and did not need to reiterate this detail when *bwèt-la* ‘the box’ resurfaced later. If uniquely identifying information was lacking, like in (57), the receiver asked for clarification.

- (56) *Ève mété gwo bwèt -la; pli gwo bwèt -la,*
 and put big box DEF most big box DEF
 ‘And put **the big box; the biggest box,**

an mitan -sa -la.
 in middle DEMDEF
 in the middle of that one.'

Èvè mété yon ti blòk an mitan 'y;
 and put INDF little block in middle 3sg
 'And put a little block in the middle of it;

bwèt -la, wi.
 box DEF yes
the box, yes.'

(Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

(57) A: *Gwo bwèt -la –*
 big box DEF
'The big box –'

B: *Pli gwo -a?*
 most big DEF
'The biggest one?'

(Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

All 30 *sa-la*-marked noun phrases were demonstrative. They expressed spatial deixis, sometimes even indicating a point in space, like *kwen-sa-la* 'this/that corner'. Demonstratives indicate a contrast between the intended referent and other potential possibilities, but in many cases, this contrast is implied, such as by simply saying *wouj-sa-la* 'this red (Square)' in (58) without explicitly comparing the intended Square with the others. Notice that there is no subsequent phrase translating to 'not that one'.

(58) *Yon ti blòk, mété 'y an mitan wouj -sa -la.*
 INDF little block put 3sg in middle red DEM DEF
'A little block, put it in the middle of this red one.'
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

Non-demonstrative definite noun phrases, too, are compatible with contexts like (58) above in which there is no explicit contrast mentioned (*mété 'y an mitan wouj-la* 'put it in the middle of **the** red one'), making it difficult to determine whether *la*-marked items that are not nominalization/particularization cases like *ési-a* 'this very place' can impose spatially deictic, demonstrative-like readings. Also, both demonstratives and other kinds of definite noun phrases can be exophoric. Thus, *la*-marked and *sa-la*-marked nouns can both be accompanied by co-speech pointing gestures, like *pli gwo bwèt-la* 'the biggest box' in (59).

(59) *Mété pli gwo bwèt -la [+point] asi sa.*
 put most big box DEF on that
'Put the biggest box on that.'
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

In addition, both kinds of noun phrases can co-occur with pointing when the referent is unique within the discourse domain (n = 27 *la*-marked; n = 2 *sa-la*-marked), but they do so more frequently when the referent is not unique and further specification is needed (n = 80 *la*-marked; n = 21 *sa-la*-marked).

A defining capacity of demonstratives, however, is the ability to highlight explicit contrasts, such as in Levinson’s (2004:107) example ‘I broke **this** tooth first and then **that** one next’. Consider example (60) below.

- (60) *Am, am, bwèt -sa -la, pa bwèt -la; lòt -la.*
 erm erm box DEM DEF NEG box DEM other DEF
 ‘*Erm, erm, this box, not that box; the other one.*’
 (Kwéyòl Donmnik; Stacks and Squares)

Here, post-nominal *la* appears to highlight a contrast: ‘this box, not **that** box’. It is worth noting that (60) was the only example of its kind in the corpus data. However, it suggests that, in addition to having a demonstrative-like deictic capacity in expressions like *ési-a* ‘this very place’, interlocutors may also use *la* in explicitly contrastive situations. Verification of this possibility will require further research that analyzes a larger corpus (which may contain more examples of this type) and/or that elicits Kwéyòl users’ acceptability judgements of such utterances.

Table 6 below summarizes these results of my coding of the *la*- and *sa-la*-marked noun phrases from the Stacks and Squares task. Grey is used to highlight key findings. These include the predominance of non-unique/inclusive noun phrases across both noun phrase types, as well as the greater likelihood that a non-unique/inclusive noun phrase was accompanied by a clarifying pointing gesture across both noun phrase types. Also highlighted here is that explicit spatial deictic contrasts were expressed by the *sa-la*-marked noun phrases; whether *la*-marked noun phrases can also perform this function remains unclear.

	<i>La (and Sé)- Marked</i> (n = 180)	<i>Sa-La- Marked</i> (n = 30)
Unique/Inclusive	66, 36.7%	6, 20%
<i>Unique/Inclusive + POINTING</i>	27, 15.0%	2, 6.7%
Non-Unique/Inclusive	114, 63.3%	24, 80%
<i>Non-Unique/Inclusive + POINTING</i>	80, 44.4%	21, 70%
Exophoric	180, 100.0%	30, 100.0%
Spatial	Unclear	30, 100.0%
Temporal	0, 0.0%	0, 0.0%
Discourse	0, 0.0%	0, 0.0%

Table 6: Noun Phrases in the Stacks and Squares Task according to their Uniqueness/Inclusiveness, Reference Patterns, Occurrence with Co-Speech Pointing, and Deictic Type

7. Conclusion

In this study, I examined how bare and non-bare noun phrases are used in Kwéyòl Donmnik, an endangered and understudied Lesser Antillean Creole. I focused on noun phrases marked by the postnominal determiners definite *la* ‘the’ and demonstrative *sa-la* ‘this/that’ and by the prenominal indefinite determiner *yon* ‘a(n)’. My goal was to determine whether the Kwéyòl nominal system aligns with observations made in the literature on FLC noun phrases, as well as to address lingering questions regarding the breadth of readings expressed by FLC bare nouns and the possibility that the FLC definite determiner *la* ‘the’ has a deictic force akin to a demonstrative. To pursue these aims, I took the uncommon approach of analyzing a corpus that included conversational data, as well as Kwéyòl dialogues produced by interlocutors completing a pattern-building task. This pattern-building task elicited demonstrative and definite noun phrases, exophoric reference, and co-speech pointing gestures, providing greater insight into how Kwéyòl *la* ‘the’ and *sa-la* ‘this/that’ are used.

Though the corpus was of limited size, the results were informative, demonstrating that bare nouns in Kwéyòl are indeed versatile. As suggested by the literature (Taylor 1977:205; Christie 1998:273; Baptista 2007:466-467 and Gadelii 2007:243-250 regarding Lesser Antillean Creoles), bare nouns in this language can be singular, plural, or mass; specific or non-specific; and definite or indefinite. However, most bare nouns in the corpus were plural indefinites, generics, or inherently unique nouns, as has been commonly observed in other FLCs (see Section 3).

Several bare nouns were also anaphoric, reintroducing referents that have been mentioned previously using a non-bare noun phrase, as has been observed in Guadeloupean (Gadelii 2007:260). With respect to word categories, activities and sports, animals and insects, celestial and weather-related entities, institutions, and people/populations all tended to be expressed using bare nouns. In particular, the use of bare nouns to refer to sports, institutions, and celestial entities recalls Christie’s (1998:277) suggestion that ‘physical features and culturally-defined entities’ may be left bare in this Creole.

Also in alignment with the literature, Kwéyòl noun phrases containing indefinite *yon* ‘a(n)’, the predominant noun phrase type for referring to abstract concepts and objects, were found to be specific or non-specific (see Déprez 2007:265-266 on FLC noun phrases). They also typically introduced a new referent that is not familiar/identifiable by the receiver, a defining feature of indefiniteness (see Section 2.2).

With respect to *la* ‘the’ and *sa-la* ‘this/that’, recall Christie’s (1998:269) observation that the meanings of *la* versus *sa-la* can be difficult to distinguish in Kwéyòl. This is a suggestion that has been discussed throughout the literature on FLCs (Déprez 2007:269). Analyzing the utterances and gestures produced during the pattern-building task alongside the conversational data allowed me to more closely examine how Kwéyòl users employ these determiners, and the results confirmed the great extent to which these determiners do indeed overlap in meaning and usage.

Only *la* marked associative-anaphoric and cataphoric noun phrases. These uses are commonly associated with definiteness (see Section 2.2), though it is notable that one of the associative-

anaphoric noun phrases marked by *la* was non-specific, an unusual occurrence in FLCs (Baptista 2007:465). However, there were several similarities between tokens of *la* and of demonstrative *sa-la*. For example, much like *sa-la*, which consistently marked unique/inclusive, specific, and familiar/identifiable nouns, *la* also tended to mark nouns that were unique within the domain of the discourse, specific, and familiar/identifiable. In addition, the data included instances of both determiners marking anaphoric noun phrases, as well as others that were exophoric and were thus compatible with co-speech pointing.

As Christie's (1998) and Déprez's (2007) reports would predict, *la*, like demonstrative *sa-la*, does also appear to be deictic. Demonstrative *sa-la* was used in the corpus data to express spatial and temporal deixis, and in nominalized cases like *ési-a* 'this very place', definite *la*'s deictic force resembled a demonstrative as well. Thus, both *la-* and *sa-la-*marked noun phrases were compatible with space- and time-related referents. Also, a single instance of *la* that was uttered during the pattern-building task seemed to mark an explicit contrast between referents, a function performed by demonstratives (see Section 2.4). This token in particular highlights the need for further research, since it suggests that, in addition to being deictic, *la* 'the' may also be capable of imposing a demonstrative reading.

By conducting a corpus-based analysis of both naturalistic conversations and dialogues produced during a pattern-building task, the current study carefully examined how bare and non-bare nouns in Kwéyòl are used. This work contributes to the very limited literature on Kwéyòl noun phrases as well as to our understanding of how bare nouns and the determiners *la* 'the' and *sa-la* 'this/that' are used in FLCs. Future investigations should expand upon this research, not only by analyzing a larger corpus of naturalistic Kwéyòl data, but also by conducting a follow-up study that incorporates acceptability judgement tasks and elicits users' metalinguistic knowledge about these and other facets of the Kwéyòl Donmnik nominal system.

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