



**HAL**  
open science

## A new look into relativization in Martinican

Minella Duzerol

► **To cite this version:**

Minella Duzerol. A new look into relativization in Martinican. Summer Conference of the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics, Jun 2019, Lisboa, Portugal. hal-04653768

**HAL Id: hal-04653768**

**<https://hal.univ-lyon2.fr/hal-04653768v1>**

Submitted on 19 Jul 2024

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

# A new look into relativization in Martinican

Minella DUZEROL

Dynamique du Langage,

University Lumière Lyon 2, CNRS



— université  
— LUMIÈRE  
— LYON 2



# Outline

1. Martinican
2. State of the Art
3. Methodology
4. Results
  - a) Strategies
  - b) The RC-final morpheme *la*
  - c) Relativization in discourse
5. Take home message: a new look into...



# 1. Martinican

# Martinican

- Regional language of France - Martinique, Lesser Antilles
  - 600.000 speakers (APiCS)
  - SVO language
- The lexicon: French-based (Holm 2000, 146)
- Sociolinguistic background
  - bilingual speakers (Martinican; French)
  - socially stigmatized language  
(Hazaël-Massieux 2002, 65; Valdman 1978, 32)
  - language of instruction and administration: French



## 2. State of the Art

Bernabé 1983

description of the Martinican basilect

Bernabé and Pinalie 1999

didactic handbook

Colot and Ludwig 2013

online description of Martinican and Guadeloupean

Damoiseau 2012

comparative syntax

# Relativization of the subject

- RC-initial marker *ki*
- Expletive form *éti* (Bernabé and Pinalie 1999)
- Before the imperfective marker *ka*: 3 phonetic realizations of *ki*

- [ki]
  - [i]
  - Not realized
- (Colot and Ludwig 2013)

(1) *Ni*                      *moun*                      [(*ki*)                      *ka*                      *kwè*                      *sa*].  
have                      people                      REL                      IPFV                      believe                      DEM

‘There are people who believe that.’

(Damoiseau 2012, 39)

# Relativization of the direct object

➤ No RC-initial marker

(2) Kabrit-la            [ou                    maré                    a]  
goat-DET.DEF        2SG                    tie.up                    DEF

‘the goat you tied up’

(Bernabé et Pinalie 1999, 34)



# Relativization of the oblique (place)

➤ 5 RC-initial markers

- *oti*
- *éti*
- *ola*
- Definite NP + *otila*
- Definite NP + *étila*

(3) Koté-a                    [*oti* *man*                    *ka*                    *alé*                    *a*]  
place-DET.DEF            REL    1SG                    IPFV                    go

‘the place where I am going’

(Bernabé 1983, 1424)

# Domains with a definite determiner

➤ The RC-final marker *la~a*

(4) *Kabrit-la*  *[ou* *maré* *a]*   
goat-DET.DEF      2SG      tie.up

‘the goat you tied up’

(Bernabé et Pinalie 1999, 34)

1) A repetition of the **definite determiner** present in the definite domain

(Bernabé and Pinalie 1999, 190; Colot and Ludwig 2013)

2) A **discourse marker** with a deictic function

(Colot and Ludwig 2013)

# **3. Methodology**

# The corpus: 200 RC + 2 questionnaires (1/2)

## Written data

- ✓ *Jik dèyè do Bondyé* (Confiant 1979): 45 first pages

## Oral data

- ✓ *Ziétaj*: TV programme broadcast on La1ère Martinique
- ✓ Recordings of native speakers (narrations ; descriptions)

# The corpus: 200 RC + 2 questionnaires (2/2)

- Online questionnaires

✓ Do speakers accept subject RC with no initial marker?

=> Questionnaire 1 (5 native speakers)

✓ What are the language attitudes to several strategies to relativize the direct object?

=> Questionnaire 2 (4 native speakers)

# Criteria of the syntactic analysis (1/2)

**1) The relativized syntactic role** (Creissels 2006): S, DO, IO, DOC, OBL

**2) Presence of a syntactic gap** (Creissels 2006, 2:209-10)

vs.

**Presence of a resumptive pronoun**

**3) The type of domains** (Creissels 2006, 2:207)

=> Domain: nominal constituent of the matrix whose reference is specified by the RC

=> DEF NPs, INDF NPs, DEM NPs, DEM PR...

# Criteria of the syntactic analysis (2/2)

## 4) Presence of relative markers

- Relativizer: invariable morpheme which informs about the presence of a RC
- Relative pronoun: pronominal morpheme which informs about the relativized syntactic role

## 5) Position of the RC

Always postposed to the domain

## 6) Form of the verb within the RC

Always finite

# 4. Results



# **a) Strategies**

# Subject relative clauses

# 1) Subject RC with the RC-initial marker *ki*

## ➤ Overt domain

(5) *i té ka pwopté sé sijé-a [ki \_\_\_ té anlè lòtel]*  
3PL PST IPFV clean DEF.PL trinket-DET.DEF REL PST on altar  
‘she was cleaning the trinkets that were on the altar’

- RC-initial marker *ki*
- Syntactic gap

## ➤ No overt domain (oral data, 1 occurrence)

(6) (*sa*) [*ki \_\_\_ vlé di*]  
DEM REL want say  
‘which means’

- No overt domain
- Casual expression
- No loss of information
  - pronominal head
  - semantically empty,
  - anaphoric function

## 2) Subject RC without RC-initial marker

- (7) a. *nou té konfronté a dé pwofésionnel*  
1PL PST deal.with to DET.INDF.PL professional  
[ — *té ka vini déwò* ]  
PST IPFV come outside  
‘we were dealing with profesional coming from outside’

- No RC-initial marker
- The corresponding RC with *ki* is correct (b.)
- Syntactic gap

- b. *nou té konfronté a dé pwofésionnel*  
1PL PST deal.with to DET.INDF.PL professional  
[ *ki* — *té ka vini déwò* ]  
REL PST IPFV come outside  
‘we were dealing with profesional who were coming from outside’

# Direct object relative clauses

# 1) DO RC without RC-initial marker

(8)	<i>li</i>	<i>Mano</i>	<i>té</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>espéré</i>	
	3SG	Mano	PST	IPFV	wait	
	<i>pou</i>	<u><i>fanm-la</i></u>	[ <i>i</i>	<i>té</i>	<i>chwèzi</i>	__]
	for	woman-DET.DEF	3SG	PST	choose	

‘He, Mano, was waiting for the woman he chose’

- No RC-initial marker
- Syntactic gap

## 2) DO RC with the RC-initial marker [*kø*]

(9) <u>aktivité-mwen</u>	[[ <i>kø</i> ]	<i>man</i>	<i>mété</i>	<i>an</i>
activity-1SG	REL	1SG	put	in
<i>plas</i>	—	<i>an</i>	<i>91</i> ]	
place		in	91	

‘my activity that I implemented in 1991’

- RC-initial marker [*kø*]
- Syntactic gap

### 3) DO RC with the RC-initial marker *ki*

(10) Jean Bernabé [*ki nou kay fété* —]

Jean Bernabé REL 1PL FUT celebrate

‘Jean Bernabé who we will celebrate’

- RC-initial marker *ki*
- Syntactic gap

(11) Jean Bernabé [*ki — kay fété* *nou*]

Jean Bernabé REL FUT celebrate 1PL

‘Jean Bernabé who will celebrate us’

- RC-initial marker *ki*
- Syntactic gap



# RC-initial markers $[k\emptyset]$ and $ki$ (1/2)

- Rare strategies: **7%** of direct object RCs have an RC-initial marker
  
- Which role could bilingualism play in these rare constructions ?
  - In Martinican, for some syntactic roles like S, there is a RC-initial marker
  - French direct object RCs begin with the relativizer *que* (Riegel, Pellat, Rioul 2009, 799)
  - In Martinican like in French there are RC markers:
    - clause-initial
    - monosyllabic
    - with an initial [k]

# RC-initial markers $[k\emptyset]$ and *ki* (2/2)

## ➤ Direct object RC-initial markers in the literature

Because of the bilingual repertoires of Martinican speakers, direct object RC-initial markers are frequently described

- Bernabé (1983, 3:1151): *ké, ki, ku*
- Damoiseau (2012, 139): *ké, ki, ke*

## ➤ My hypothesis: interlectal direct object RC-initial marker

‘Interlectal zone’: ‘obeys neither to the nuclear basilect nor to the acrolectal grammar’ (Prudent 1981, 26, 31)

- ## ➤ No prediction = impossible to know if $[k\emptyset]$ works
- as a Martinican RC-initial marker
  - as a rephonologization of French *que*

# Oblique relative clauses

# 1) Peripheral oblique RC with the RC-initial marker *oti*

(12)	<i>sé</i>	<i>pyékloliko-a</i>	[ <i>oti</i>	<i>sé</i>	<i>nèg-la</i>
	DEF.PL	hibiscus-DET.DEF	REL	DEF.PL	man-DET.DEF
	<i>té</i>	<i>maré-'y</i>	—	<i>la]</i>	
	PST	tie-3SG		DEF	

- RC-initial marker *oti*
- RC-final morpheme *la*
- Syntactic gap

‘the hibiscus where the man had tied him’

## 2) Peripheral oblique RC with the RC-initial marker *éti*

(13) Séchel      [*éti*      *kréyol*      *sé*  
Seychelles      REL      Creole      be  
*an*      *lang*      *ofisièl*      —]  
DET.INDF.SG      language      official

‘Seychelles where Creole is an official language’

- RC-initial marker *éti*
- Syntactic gap

## **b) The RC-final morpheme *la***

13 RC out of 200 (1h27min of recordings)

### 3 homonyms:

*la* RC-final marker, *la* definite, *la* ‘here/there’

	Position	Allomorphs
<i>la</i> RC-final marker	RC-final	<i>la, a, an</i>
<i>-la</i> definite suffix	NP-final	<i>-la; -a; -an; -lan; -ya; -yan; -wa; wan</i>
<i>la</i> ‘here/there’	In NPs and in RCs	<i>la</i>

# Phonetic realizations of *la* RC-final marker

After an oral  
vowel

- (14) *tout*      *sé*      *lanné-a*      [*ki*      *fini*      *pasé*      *a*]  
all      DEF.PL      year-DET.DEF      REL      end      go.by      DEF  
‘all the years which have just went by’

After an oral  
consonant

- (15) *sé*      *pyékloliko-a*      [*oti sé*      *nèg-la*      *té*      *maré-'y*      *la*]  
DEF.PL      hibiscus-DET.DEF      REL      DEF.PL      man-DET.DEF      PST      tie-3SG      DEF  
‘the hibiscus where the man had tied him’

Rare, after a  
word with a  
nasal feature

- (16) *fòs-la*      [*i*      *ni*      *an*]  
strength-DET.DEF      3SG      have      DEF  
‘the strength he has’



# *-la* definite suffix

➤ Position: NP-final

(17) *loto-a*

car-DET.DEF

‘the car’

(18) *loto*

car

‘the red car’

*wouj-la*

red-DET.DEF

➤ Systematic nasalisation

(19) *chien*

door

*vwazen-an*

neighbour-DET.DEF

‘the neighbour’s dog’

# *-la* definite suffix vs. RC-final marker *la* (1/2)

➤ Non systematic nasalization of the RC-final morpheme *la*

(20) fòs-la                    [i    ni    —   an]  
strength-DET.DEF    3SG    have            DEF  
'the strength he has'

(21) *Chonjé*    sa    [ou   ka   fè   mwen —   a]!  
remember DEM    2SG    IPFV    do    1SG            DEF  
'Remember what you are doing to me !'

# *-la* definite suffix vs. RC-final marker *la* (2/2)

- The RC-final marker *la* does not repeat the definite determiner which is on the domain  
(Bernabé and Pinalie 1999, 190)

⇒ *la* can be used when the domain is not determined by the definite suffix

Demonstrative  
pronoun

(22) *sa* [ *dé zyé-mwen ka wè* — *a* ]  
DEM two eye-1SG IPFV see DEF  
'what my two eyes see'

Proper noun

(23) *Carbet* [ *oti man ké alé* — *a* ] *sé an vil péchè.*  
Carbet REL 1SG FUT go DEF be DET.INDF.SG city fisherman  
'Carbet, where I will go to, is a fishing town'

# *la* (here/there) vs. RC-final marker *la* (1/2)

➤ *la* ‘here/there’: invariable form

➤ *la* ‘here/there’ vs. RC-final morpheme *la*: no free variation

(24) a. *tout*                    *sé*                    *lanné-a*                    [*ki* — *fini*                    *pasé*                    *a*]  
all                    DEF.PL                    year-DET.DEF                    REL                    end                    go.by                    DEF

‘all the years which have just went by’

b. *tout*                    *sé*                    *lanné-a*                    [*ki* — *fini*                    *pasé*                    *la*]  
all                    DEF.PL                    year-DET.DEF                    REL                    end                    go.by                    here

‘all the years which have just went by recently’

# *la* (here/there) vs. RC-final marker *la* (2/2)

➤ *la* ‘here/there’ and *la* RC-final marker can co-occur

(25) *tout*    *sé*        *lanné-a*                    [*ki*    —    *fini* *pasé* *la*    *a*]  
all    DEF.PL    year-DET.DEF                    REL                    end go.by here    DEF

‘all the years which have just went by recently’

# How to analyse the RC-final marker *la* ? (1/2)

- The RC-final marker *la* is not a relativizer: it can be used with a RC-initial relativizer

(26) *tout sé lanné-a [ki — fini pasé a]*  
all DEF.PL year-DET.DEF REL end go.by DEF  
'all the years which have just went by'

- Use of the RC-final marker *la* in the corpus according to the domain

NPs with a definite determiner:	8 RCs
Demonstrative pronouns:	4 RCs
NPs with a demonstrative:	1 RC

# How to analyse the RC-final marker *la* ? (2/2)

- RC-final marker *la* **indicates the end of the RC**
- RC-final marker *la*: **a morpheme of definiteness**
  - **The RC-final marker *la* is used when the domain of the RC is semantically definite**
  - **Definite = referential + identifiable** (Creissels 2006, 1:129)

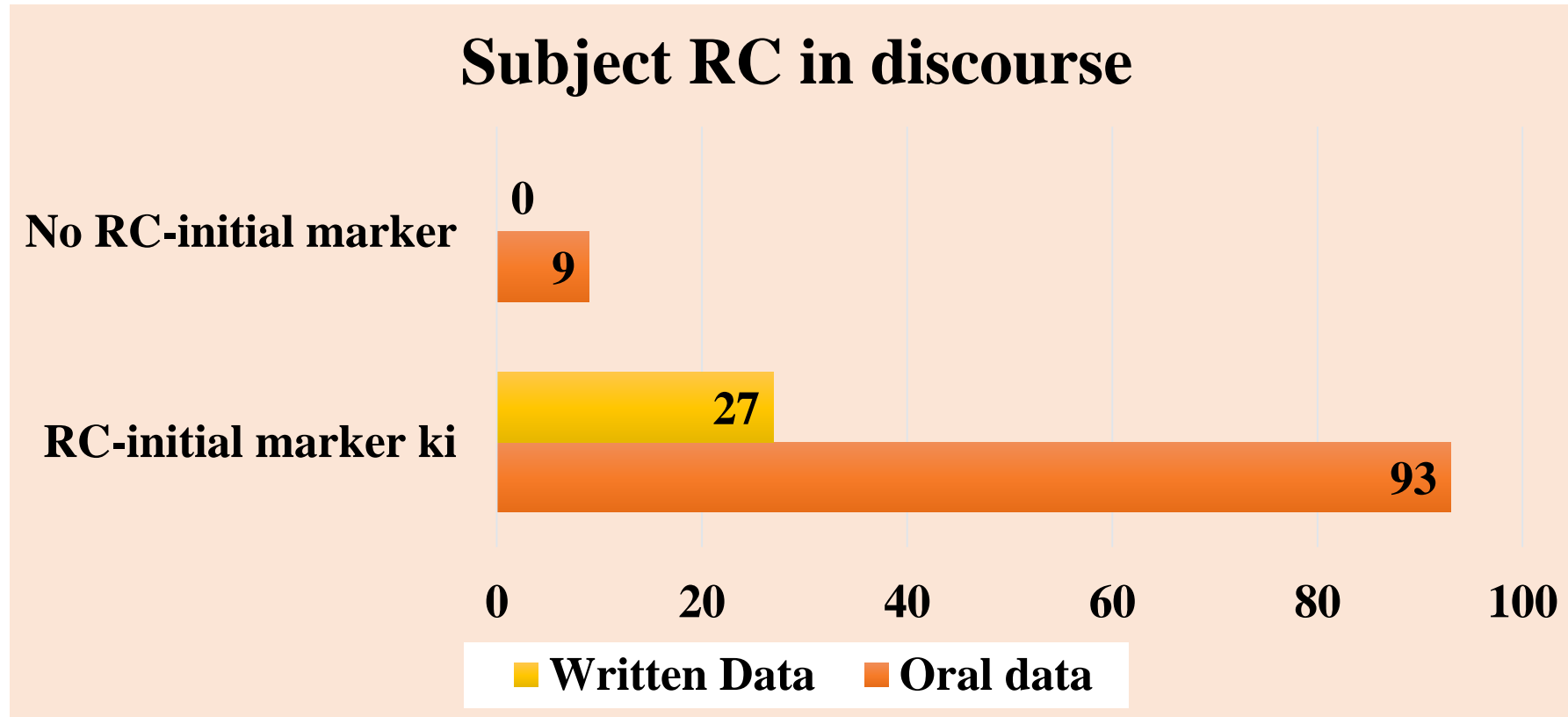
## **c) Relativization in discourse**



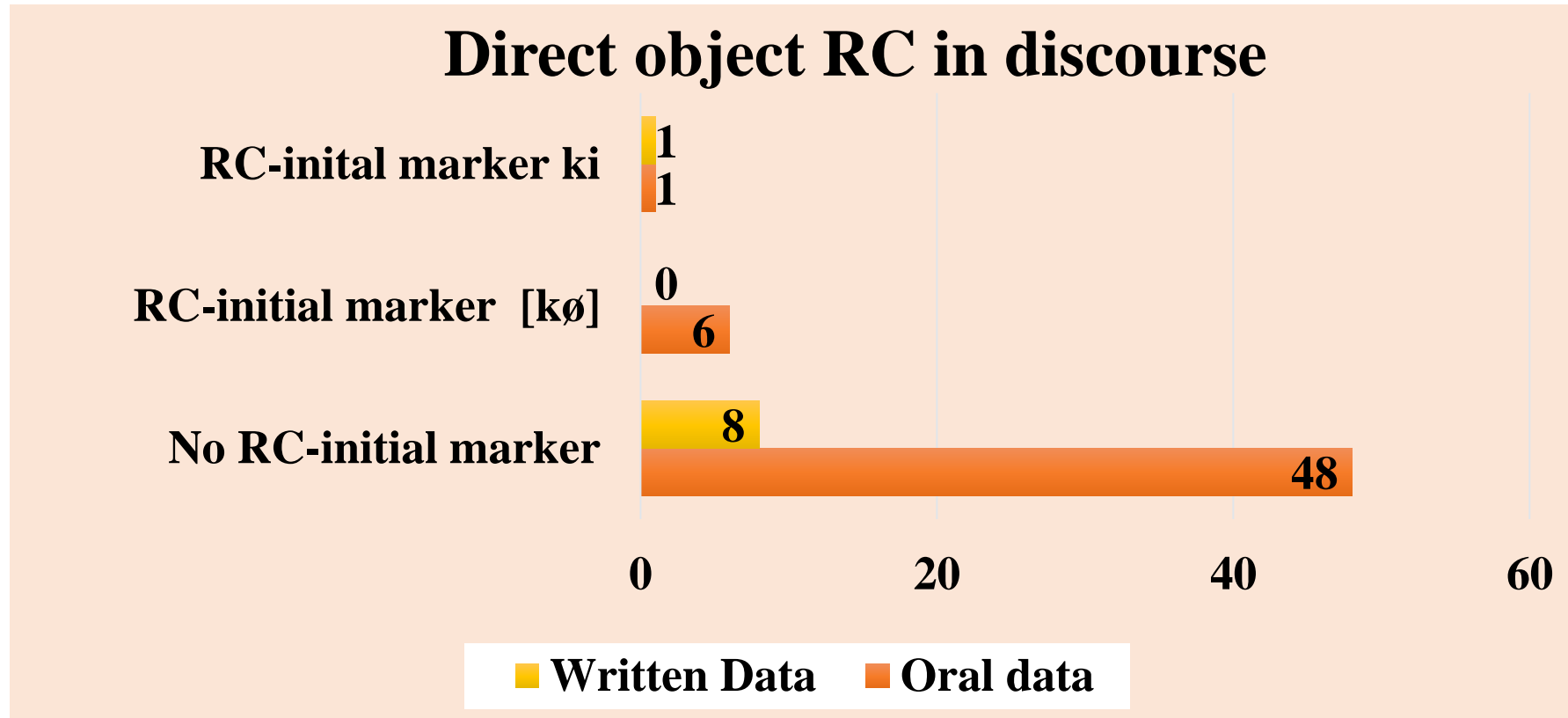
# The syntactic roles relativized

	<b>Oral data</b>	<b>Written data</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>Object</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Peripheral oblique</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Nuclear oblique</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
			<b>200</b>

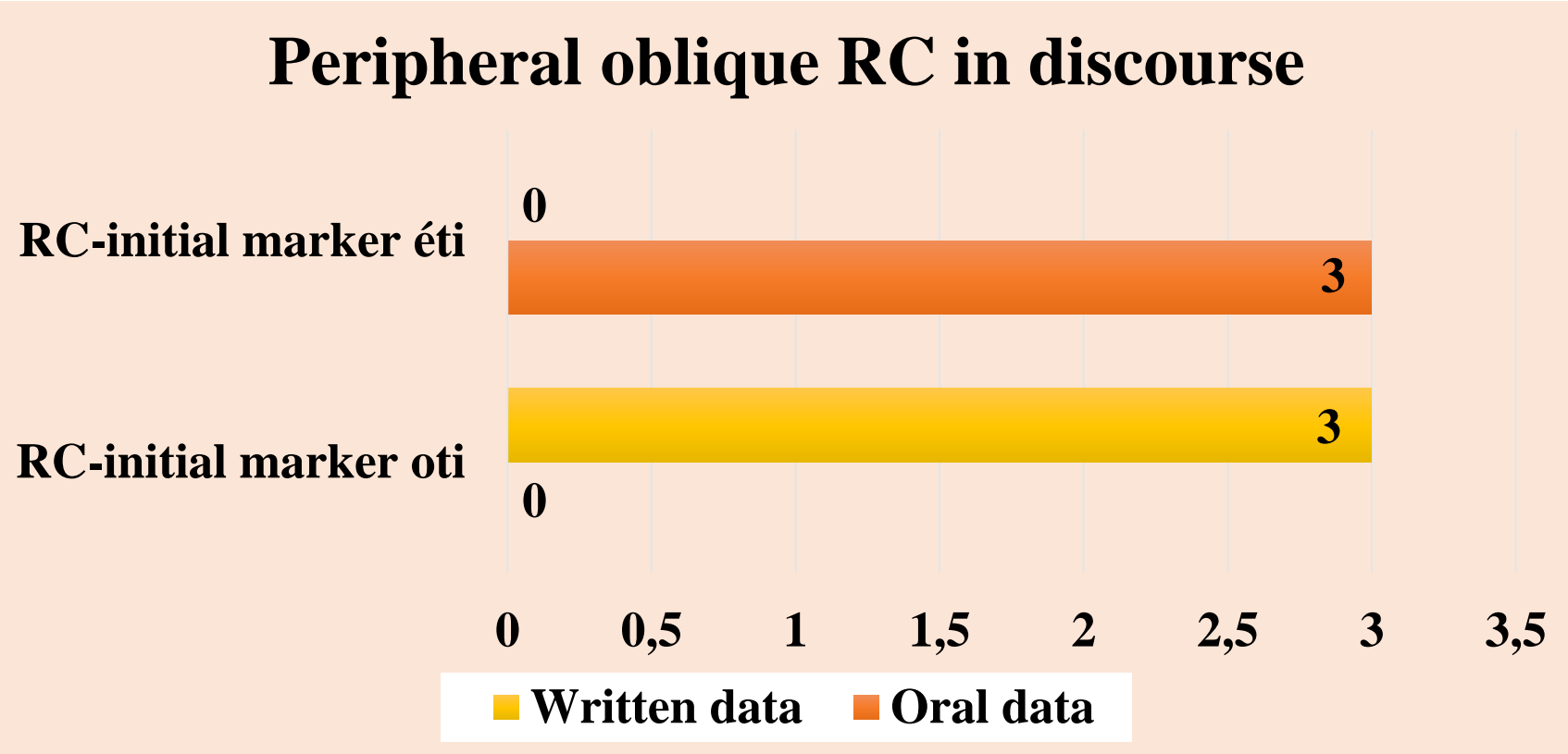
# Subject relativization strategies (129 RC)



# Direct object relativization strategies (63 RC)



# Peripheral oblique relativization strategies



**5. Take home message:  
a new look into...**

# What differs from the literature ?

➤ A **corpus-based** study

➤ RC-initial markers not found in the corpus:

*Eti*                      Expletive form

*Ola*                        Oblique marker

*Otila*                    Oblique marker with definite domains

*Etila*                    Oblique marker with definite domains

➤ No fusion between the relativizer *ki* and the imperfective marker *ka* (Damoiseau 2012, 39)

Alignment with the omission analysis (Colot and Ludwig 2013)

# What is new ? (1/2)

- No headless RCs in Martinican

*ki vlé di* ‘which means’: lexicalized RC

- The **morpheme of definiteness** *la*

- is a RC-final marker used when the domain is semantically definite
- indicates the end of the syntactic domain of the RC

# What is new ? (2/2)

- **Interlectal RC-initial markers** for the DO
  - **[kø]: relative pronoun**
  - *ki*: relativizer
  
- The distribution in discourse of the relativization strategies
  - Martinican follows the accessibility hierarchy (Keenan and Comrie 1977)
  - An RC-initial marker is specific to oral productions: [kø]
  - High frequency of *ki* in subject RCs vs. low frequency of RC-initial markers in object RCs



**Mèsi anpil !**

# Bibliography

- Bernabé, J. 1983. Fondal-natal: grammaire basilectale approchée des créoles guadeloupéen et martiniquais : approche sociolittéraire, sociolinguistique et syntaxique. Fondal-natal: grammaire basilectale approchée des créoles guadeloupéen et martiniquais : approche sociolittéraire, sociolinguistique et syntaxique, vol. 2. L'Harmattan.
- Bernabé, J., et P. Pinalie. 1999. Grammaire du créole martiniquais en 50 leçons. Editions L'Harmattan.
- Colot, Serge, et Ralph Ludwig. 2013. « Guadeloupean and Martinican Creole ». In The survey of pidgin and creole languages. Volume 2: Portuguese-based, Spanish-based, and French-based Languages, édité par Susanne Maria Michaelis, Philippe Maurer, Martin Haspelmath, et Magnus Huber. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://apics-online.info/surveys/50>.
- Creissels, Denis. 2006. Syntaxe générale une introduction typologique. Vol. 2. 2 vol. Paris: Hermès Science [u.a.].
- Damoiseau, Robert. 2012. Syntaxe créole comparée: Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guyane, Haïti. Dictionnaires et langues. Fort-de-France : Paris: CRDP Martinique ; Karthala.
- Hazaël-Massieux, Marie-Christine. 2002. « Les créoles à base française : une introduction ». Travaux Interdisciplinaires du Laboratoire Parole et Langage d'Aix-en-Provence (TIPA) 21: 63-86.
- Holm, John A. 2000. An introduction to pidgin and creoles. Cambridge textbooks in linguistics. Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Keenan, Edward L., et Bernard Comrie. 1977. « Noun Phrase Accessibility and Universal Grammar ». Linguistic Inquiry 8 (1): 63–99.
- Valdman, Albert. 1978. Le Créole: structure, statut et origine. Initiation à la linguistique : Série B, Problèmes et méthodes ; 7. Paris: Klincksieck.

# Double-object RC: no RC-initial marker, resumptive pronoun

- (27) boug-la      [*man*    *ba- 'y*      *lajan-an*]  
man-DET.DEF 1SG    give-3SG    money-DET.DEF  
'the man to whom I gave the money'  
(Bernabé and Pinalie 1999, 34)

- No RC-initial marker
- Resumptive pronoun: 'y
- No syntactic gap