Summer July 12, 2012

Jamaican Lexicography in the Twenty-First Century: Issues and Prospects

Joseph T. Farquharson, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine

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Jamaican lexicography in the twenty-first century: Issues and prospects

Joseph T. Farquharson
University of the West Indies, St. Augustine

Presented at the Albert-Ludwigs Universität Freiburg
12 July 2012
The Jamaican National Dictionary (JND)

The Jamaican National Dictionary is a web-based multimedia dictionary of Jamaican (Creole) and English. It is a dictionary on historical principles which means that it aims to chart the history of all words in these languages. The treatment of each word will include information on its pronunciation(s), parts of speech, etymology, meaning(s), and usage. Each meaning will be supported by quotations from (un)published print or oral sources. Where relevant, or where information is available the entry will contain audio, pictorial, and audiovisual files.
History of Jamaican Academic Lexicography

- First published in 1967
- Many (old) words missed by editors
- 45 years of material untreated
- 32 years since 2nd edition (1980)
- 2nd edition did not add a whole lot
• First published 1996
• 16 years of material untreated
• Has made up for some gaps in the DJE
• But relies heavily on th DJE for Jamaican
Features of the JND

- Word classes (*sik* adj, (in)trans v, n)
- Etymologies
- Usage labels (more transparency)
- Pronunciations
- Definition types:
  - Textual
  - Pictorial/graphic (e.g. *yaba*)
  - Audio-visual (e.g. *kimbo, kis-тиит*)
- Quotations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Jamaica</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Region / Parish**

- Clarendon
- Hanover
- Kingston
- Manchester
- Portland
- St. Andrew
- St. Ann's
- St. Catherine
- St. Elizabeth
- St. James
- St. Mary
- St. Thomas
- Trelawny
- Westmoreland

<editor-fold desc="Tagged Text"
use [[word]] to indicate Headwords
use [as:WordSpelledNormally[WordSpelledOddly]] to indicate alternate spellings
</editor-fold>
<p>| <strong>Is Final</strong> | [ ] |
| <strong>Publication Short-Title</strong> | |
| <strong>Publication Type</strong> | Newspaper |
| <strong>Original Publication Date</strong> | 01 / 01 / [yyyy] (mm/dd/yyyy) |
| <strong>Title</strong> | |
| <strong>Author</strong> | |
| <strong>Multiple authors should be separated with an and, not with commas. See Bibtex Documentation</strong> | |
| <strong>Newspaper</strong> | |
| <strong>URL</strong> | |
| <strong>Date Downloaded</strong> | Note: date will display as Year-Month-Day |
| <strong>Year</strong> | |
| <strong>Month</strong> | |
| <strong>Day</strong> | |
| <strong>Note</strong> | |
| <strong>languages</strong> | □ Etu |
| | □ Jamaican |
| | □ Jamaican English |
| | □ Kromanti |
| | □ Kumina |
| | □ Nago |
| <strong>Use(s)</strong> | |
| <strong>Subject(s)</strong> | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PublicationTitle</th>
<th>Date Entered</th>
<th>Date Published</th>
<th>is_final</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[Clone Pub] [view] [edit]</td>
<td>Hortus Americanus</td>
<td>07-06-2012</td>
<td>12-31-1969</td>
<td>This [tayo] is a large sort of [[eddo]]. The roots of these, although never so well boiled, will heat the throat (which is called scratching the throat), and therefore are generally given to hogs to eat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Clone Pub] [view] [edit]</td>
<td>Indigenous People</td>
<td>07-06-2012</td>
<td>09-13-2001</td>
<td>The Arawaks practised subsistence farming as they grew crops such as maize, cassava, [[eddo]] and sweet potato for their household.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Clone Pub] [view] [edit]</td>
<td>Please to Behave</td>
<td>07-06-2012</td>
<td>12-09-2001</td>
<td>Yu see [as:ekschraniis[extraniss]].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Clone Pub] [view] [edit]</td>
<td>Matter of Dress</td>
<td>07-06-2012</td>
<td>05-16-2012</td>
<td>“[as:ekschr[a]Extra]]” is a term popular in Jamaican parlance that succinctly conveys anything (or anyone) that’s over-the-top, obnoxious and/or gratuitous—hence the designation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Clone Pub] [view] [edit]</td>
<td>Spotlight on Music</td>
<td>07-06-2012</td>
<td>12-28-1980</td>
<td>It refers to a town girl who was on her way to spend time with her country cousins. Too ”[as:ekschr[a]Extra]]” to stop the bus on which she was travelling, she had an ‘accident’ which she could not conceal for long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Clone Pub] [view] [edit]</td>
<td>African Jamaican</td>
<td>07-06-2012</td>
<td>05-16-2012</td>
<td>In a few years we shall probably be celebrating with unusual marks of...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Alternate Spellings

**A. pronoun**

1. Second person plural Subject pronoun: *you all.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>A. Bain Alves</td>
<td>Racing in Kingston Five Decades Ago</td>
<td>Da way mek de dyam cock wait till Missa Morgan hoss da pass befo' him crow, doant hoono tink it someting funny?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Second person plural Object pronoun: *you all.*

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3. Second person pronoun used in a negative way with both singular and plural reference: you and people of your ilk.

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B. adjective

1. Second person plural possessive adjective used to modify an entity possessed by a group being addressed: your.
Schizophrenic lexicography

- Jamaican Creole or Jamaican English dictionary?
- Two dictionaries in one:
  - Monolingual Jamaican English dictionary
  - Bilingual (one-way) Jamaican Creole-English dictionary
- The **cyber-split**
Resources

• Growing availability of corpora:
  • Jamaican component of Black British Corpus
  • COJEC (Hinrichs)
  • Jamaican component of Cyber-creole Project (Freiburg)
  • Ethnographic survey of Jamaica (Erna Brodber)
Online resources

Access to older publications via:

- NewspaperArchives.com
  - *Jamaica Gleaner* (1834-2012)
- Google Books
- Project Gutenberg
Online resources cont'd

- Blogs (e.g. *Theoretical Lyrics*)
- Online forums
  - Jamaicans.com
  - *Jamaica Star* forum
- Comments fields (on numerous websites)
- Online newspapers
  - *Jamaica Gleaner*
  - *Jamaica Observer*
  - *Jamaica Star*
  - *Jamaica Herald*
  - *Western Mirror*
Online resources cont'd

- Youtube (old songs with first attestations)
- Wikipedia
  - Wikibook
  - Wikisource
  - Wikispecies
Antedating DJE, DCEU, OED first quotations

1968 *Hits of 1968*: Rock Steady, Reggae, Soul, Psychedelic, Folk...the variations go on and on but the fact remains — it was a great year for sounds.

1934 *Daniel of Ras Tafari Cult*: Next followed the case of Florence Graham who testified that her post of honour in Rasta's mythical kingdom was the glorified position of that of the "Virgin Mary."
Antedating via the internet

**DJE (2\textsuperscript{nd} ed.)**
- Rastafari, Rastafarian 1960
- Rasta 1955
- Rasta man 1960
- Reggae (suppl) 1973 *London Times Magazine*

**JND using *Jamaica Gleaner* via NewspaperArchives.com**
- Reggae 1968 (music) 1968 (dance)
- Rasta 1934 (Haile Selassie) 1950 /1959 (follower)
- Rastafari 1923 (Haile Selassie) 1937 (religion) 1938 (follower)
- Rastafarian 1950
- Rastaman 1979
A Voyage to Guinea, Brazil and the West Indies in His Majesty's ... - Seite 225

books.google.de

John Atkins - 1735 - 258 Seiten - Vorschau

the latter for their Hides ; and the Park, they're ... In jerk (as they call it) that is, strip it from the Bones, ... the Jamaicans lit out Vessels to fish upon her, (the best 1 believe, being always plass'd with going shares in such ...
Social Media and Lexicography
Do you love Jamaican words? Do you want to know the meaning of a word or find out where else in Jamaica or in the world the word is used? Do you want to know when a word was first used, how its meaning has changed, where it’s from or how it’s pronounced? Also, if you can tell us all of these things about Jamaican words this is the group for you to learn and share.

This is the official facebook group of the Jamaican National Dictionary (JND), the flagship project of the Jamaican Lexicography Project (Jamlex). The JND will be a web-based, multimedia dictionary covering Jamaican Creole (Patwa), Jamaican English and other varieties used in Jamaica such as Kromanti, Rasta Iyaric, Etu/ Nago and Kumina. We expect to launch the JND in August 2012 to mark Jamaica’s 50th Independence anniversary. The discussions we have here will help in the preparation of the dictionary. We are looking forward to sharing with you as we create history!

Tell your friends about the group.

Please note that your posts may eventually be used in the Jamaican National Dictionary.

jamaicannationaldictionary@groups.facebook.com
Social media and lexicography

- Immediate access to native speakers of all ages
- (Self-reported) information on use and variation can be collected in a relatively short time and with no expense
- Illustrative quotations provided by users
- The discussion is never really closed
Is anyone familiar with the term "henka"?

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · April 1 at 3:23am

Winsome Tia Maria Hewitt, Abena Kaakyire Dixon and Nicola Ricketts Wescott like this.

View previous comments 50 of 82

Denese Brown Joseph, mi can ogle sum it up, based on ow mi know ni use it. Also, "Yuh si dem fren de whe yuh always ave a henka roun yuh? Try nuh bodda bring dem come a mi yard a day time wen mi nuh de yah." Meaning: The friends you have hanging around you (following you and dropping anchor where ever you go) are not welcome in my home whenever I'm not around.
April 1 at 9:45pm · Like · 1

Denese Brown Exactly bro!! They've anchored in my home altho they aren't necessarily seeking anything." I don't see any relation to them having a persistent desire for anything in that sentence...
April 1 at 9:48pm · Like

Joseph T. Farquharson Well, if this is how you use it Denese then there is no arguing with that, but I would also derive it from hanker and not from anchor. The possibility here is that the meaning was broadened to refer to just the action of "hanging on; around" and the desire meaning dropped.
April 1 at 9:50pm · Like · 1

Nicola Ricketts Wescott I agree with Joseph. No one hangs around another person's house unless food (that they hanker for) is involved. Or for sex (but they wouldn't use that term.)
April 1 at 10:00pm · Like

Joseph T. Farquharson I wouldn't narrow it down to food or to sex. Let me put it this way, although some people appear to be hanging around for no apparent reason, there is always some kind of desire behind it. That desire might not always be an overt one. It mi...
April 1 at 10:05pm · Like
Improving search potential: Alternate spellings

User [3179]:

Yuh si jerk, is a strickly Jamaican spice weh tek wi centuries fi develop it to perfeckshan seen. Now di tradishanal way fi jerk, is wan weh di meat tek it time cook ova a pimentah wood fiyah seen. Now dis is a ting weh hawd fi chry do a yuh yaad. Missa Sumit come up wid a kine a Jerk season weh do justis to jerk in a way weh yuh can dweet a yuh yaad an wance yuh chry ee yuh naw goh figget it it so nice. Chroo dat now jerk cookin is a ting weh get papulah all rung di worl.
Jamaican Patwa Translator

Translate an English word or phrase...

Mi bredda is sick

What is Jamaicanize?

Jamaicanize is the easiest way to translate English to Jamaican Patois (Patwa). You can start translating now using the web, Android or your iOS device.

Thanks for taking the time to try our Jamaican Patwa Translator. You can also download the Android and iPhone app. Chrome users can find Jamaicanize in the chrome webstore.

Like the website and Jamaican translations? Spread the word and share with your friends on Twitter and Facebook.

Top Patwa Translations

- I love you
- Hello
- What are you doing
- Are you ok
- Hey what's up
- Do it
- How are you
- What is your name
- Where are you
- What's up

Visiting Jamaica? Want to impress Jamaicans with your Patwa skills? Download our Android or iPhone app today!
Anyhow, here is a taste of Jamaican Slang, as compiled and explained by a very willing group of girls at Hampton School, St. Elizabeth, with additions by contacts in Kingston and all over.

**A dat wid you** That's how you are - used to comment on someone's (bad) habits

**A mi fi tell yu!** That's right - used to show agreement with something you've been told

**A yasso nice!** Expression used when one is having a good time (originates from an extremely X-rated song of the same name)

**Bait up** Set someone up for a downfall/ Cause disappointment or embarrassment (Yu a bait up di ting)

**Beat dem bad** Surpass, be better than anyone or anything else

**Ben Upset, angry**

**Big man ting** Grown up business/Honestly

**Big tings** Good things/Monetary success

**Bill Chill, take it easy**

**Boom Listen up**

**Breathe easy** Relax, calm down

**Bush Look awful**

**Cheddar Money**

**Crawb up** Looking good, something good

**Crawful** Outrageously good

**Crawny** Look awful

**Creng** Muscular, buff

**Daadie** A term of address, used usually by males talking to each other (see "Paadie" below)

**Dat a shot/dat shot** That's fantastic (used to describe something fabulous)

**Deh pon a endz** Gone out (usually somewhere nice)

**Devo** Used to describe a challenging situation/a rough time

**Do yu ting** Go ahead (do your thing)

**Dun** (see "shell dun")

**Dups/Doops** Friend

**Fish Male homosexual**

**Flassing** Spending big - buying drinks by the flask etc

**Fluffy Fat, plump**

**Jamaican Animals**

**Jamaica People**

**Jamaican Climate**

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