

Information Sheet on Guyanese Creole (GC)

Guyanese Creole, also known as Creolese, is the language variation spoken by the nearly 780, 000 inhabitants of the country of Guyana, in South America. It is also spoken by the over 275,000 Guyanese who reside in the United States. The majority of US-based Guyanese live in the northeastern portion of the country. According to the latest U.S. Census fact finder, close to 150,000 Guyanese-Americans reside in New York city—making them New York’s fifth-largest foreign-born population. However, both in Guyana and abroad, Standard Guyanese English is considered the official language and is used in most formal and educational settings. (See US Census Quick Facts, 2019).

Frequently-used GC Features	Examples
1. Overgeneralization of regular past or PP	When he waked up... He standed up.
2. Use of unmarked form of verb (e.g. look, run) -- Zero regular past --Zero irregular past --Zero -ing --Zero 3 rd person singular	He look (for ‘he looked’) He run (for ‘he ran’) He look (for ‘he’s looking’) He run (for ‘he runs everyday’)
3. Zero use of indefinite article “an” before a vowel.	He see a ant.
4. Zero use of definite and/or indefinite articles in specific contexts.with other frog
5. Zero possessive marker,(i.e. possessor and possessed are juxtaposed)	... the bee nest
6. Zero pre-verbal markers (auxiliaries—is, are)	And the bees still chasing the boy.
7. Use of pre-verbal marker /bIn/	The dog been running.
8. Alternative subject constructions	And when is morning...
9. Alternative preposition use	in/on, on/in, in/into
10. Use of multiple negationnot see no sign of
11. Highlighter verb	Is when he lost his pet?
12. Repetition denoting intensity (for ‘very’)	He was mad, mad!

Note: Coding for Guyanese Creole use is ongoing.

For more information regarding features of Guyanese Creole (Creolese), see:

Devonish, H., & Thompson, D. (2010). *A Concise Grammar of Guyanese Creole (Creolese)*. München: Lincom Europa.

Kortmann, B., Lunkenheimer, K., & Ehret, K. (eds.) 2020. The electronic World Atlas of varieties of English. Zenodo. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3712132 (Available online at <http://ewave-atlas.org>).