

Chapter 1 : Conferences - Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics

A Creole is a fully-developed language. A Pidgin is not. A pidgin arises when speakers of two different languages encounter one another and have a need for limited communications.

Pidgin and Creole are two common terms used in linguistics to describe a language. This post will define and explain some of the characteristics of these two linguistic terms. A pidgin is a language that does not have any native speakers. In other words, it is a younger language that is developed as a means of communicating between two groups who do not speak the same language. Pidgins are frequently developed for business and trading. Buying and selling and other transactions are reasons for the development of a pidgin. Pidgins are not used as a form of group identification but rather for practical communication. A pidgin is also the combination of two different languages. The language that provides the majority of the vocabulary is called the superstrate and the minority language is called the substrate. Pidgins are highly simplified in their grammar and syntax. For example, pidgins are often missing affixes, inflections, and a smaller vocabulary compared to other languages. A pidgin usually sounds ridiculous to a speaker of either of the two languages it is derived from. As such, they are often difficult to learn for a speaker of either the superstrate or substrate language to learn as they do not follow the normal rules of grammar as found in the superstrate or substrate language. There are many pidgins in the world today. Many came as a result of slavery in the western hemisphere. Slaves came from different parts of Africa and often could not communicate without developing a pidgin. A creole is a pidgin that now has native speakers. Children grow speaking a creole as their first language. There are also other differences between a pidgin and creole. Since it is the first language of a group, creoles are used in many more areas of life and have a much richer structure. Furthermore, a creole has a much more standardized grammar rules. Since it is the first language of many people, there is a sense of pride over using the language. A creole can also be used to identify members of a group. This was not possible with a pidgin as pidgins serve as a way of communicating between two groups while creoles are for communicating both between groups and within a group. Conclusion Pidgins and creoles serve the purpose of communicating among people groups who have different languages. With time a pidgin may become a creole if native speakers of a pidgin develop.

Chapter 2 : Former Dept. of Linguistics | Atlas of Pidgin and Creole Language Structures (APiCS)

Pidgin: Pidgin, originally, a language that typically developed out of sporadic and limited contacts between Europeans and non-Europeans in locations other than Europe from the 16th through the early 19th century and often in association with activities such as trade, plantation agriculture, and mining.

Previous versions of this article: Contrary to other languages, which tend to arise through a very gradual process of dialect differentiation in an uninterrupted linguistic tradition, creoles result from interruptions in the ordinary transmission of language from generation to generation. When we say that the moment of emergence is known, we are talking about a fifty year period. Sranan, for instance, the creole of coastal Surinam, emerged between and Full-text access is restricted to subscribers. Log in to obtain additional credentials. W Temporal frames in spoken Papiamentu discourse. Creole genesis attitudes and discourse,: Smith Pidgins and Creoles. Bickerton, D Beyond roots. Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages 1: Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages 6: Stewart Binding theory binding program, and creolization. Journal of Pidgin and Creole Studies 3: T The status of Isicamtho an Nguni-based urban variety of Soweto. The Structure and Status of Pidgins and Creoles: Escure, G Creole and Dialect Continua. The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics , 2nd edition. Escure, G b Belize: Schwegler Creoles Contact and Language Change: Linguistic and Social Implications vol. Politeness and face in Caribbean creoles, 45â€” The socio-pragmatics of homophobia in Jamaican Dancehall culture. Politeness and face in Caribbean creoles, â€” Kiss teeth and negotiation of the public sphere. Politeness and face in Caribbean creoles, 73â€” Schwegler Lengua y ritos del Palo Monte Mayombe: Dioses cunaos y sus Fuentes africanas. Readings in Creole studies: Moskowitz The Limonese calypso as an identity marker. Holm, J Pidgins and Creoles 2 vols. Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages 17 1: Migge, B Greeting and social change. Migge Politeness and face in Caribbean creoles. J The origin of West African pidgin. Papers from the 9th regional meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society. Journal of Linguistic Anthropology 6 1: Pollard, V The particle en in Jamaican Creole: English World-Wide 10 1: Romaine Creole genesis attitudes and discourse,: Romaine, S Pidgin and creole languages. BoP Sankoff, G a The social life of language. University of Pennsylvania Press. BoP Sankoff, G b Variability and explanation in language and culture. The social life of language, â€” Laberge On the acquisition of native speakers by a language. Wekker Semantic transparency as a factor in creole genesis. Substrata versus universals in creole genesis: University of the West Indies. V On the marking of temporal sequencing in Vernacular Liberian English. Snow, P The use of "bad" language as a politeness strategy in a Panamanian Creole village. Politeness and face in Caribbean creoles, 23â€” Focus and grammatical relations in creole languages: G Language contact. Den Besten Fronting.

Chapter 3 : Creole language - Wikipedia

*JPCL at a Glance*The mission of the *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* is to provide a forum for the scholarly study of pidgins, creoles, and other contact languages, from multi-disciplinary perspectives.

In this course, we will survey aspects of the linguistic structure, history, and social context of pidgin and creole languages spoken, past and present, in several locations around the world. We will consider their histories of formation and development, ask whether and how they are different from non-creole languages, and learn about the grammatical features common to language varieties that emerged from specific types of language contact situations including, but not limited to: Pidgins and creoles are believed by many scholars to be important to linguistic theory because they provide a window into universal grammar and the evolution of the human language faculty. We will explore the grounds for and against such claims. Students should have had an upper-level introduction to linguistics. Linguistic research since the s has tended to focus more on Atlantic Creoles than Pacific ones. As a result, linguists know the most about those languages emerging in contexts of plantation economy-formation and the African slave trade e. By the end of the quarter, students will be "specialists" in one pidgin or creole variety of their choice--its linguistic structure, parent languages, historical development, and social setting. This specialization will be developed across the quarter as students "adopt" a language, and conduct an ongoing, data-based analysis project that elaborates on the features of their chosen language with respect to each of the main syllabus topics. Students will be conversant in the claims, strengths and weaknesses of the important theories of pidgin and creole genesis; in definitions of linguistic adequacy and simplification theories. The library exercise counts toward this part of the grade, which involves independent, written work. Be sure to consult the list of language resources listed on the course website. This is the final project for this course. All students will adopt by the end of week 3 a language on which they will focus for the quarter. The linguistic structure, historical development and social context of this language will be documented in a final portfolio pages. You may include audio or video recordings about your language, attach songs, writings, etc in the language. Students must meet with the instructor to discuss their plans during week 5. Students will orally present the contents of their portfolio in class during the last two weeks of the quarter. The portfolio is to be handed in at the beginning of the final examination period scheduled for this course: Thursday, March 18, , That means you must either email it to me by Required reading on electronic reserve: Holm, John Phonology. Pidgins and Creoles, vol. Language Creation and Language Change:

Chapter 4 : Definition: What is Pidgin and What is Creole.

The Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics will hold its annual winter meeting from January , at the Sheraton New York Time Square, New York, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America (LSA).

Some specialized languages were developed to keep the outsider at bay. In other circumstances, languages have been deliberately created to facilitate communication with outsiders. This happens when people speaking two different languages have to work together, usually in some form of trade. The communicative functions and circumstances of pidgin development account for the variable degree of normalization within their often reduced systems. Among other things, they often lack inflections on verbs and nouns, true articles and other function words such as conjunctions , and complex sentences. Nevertheless, several pidgins have survived for generations, a characteristic that indicates a fairly stable system. Some of the pidgins that have survived for several generations are also spoken as vernaculars by some of their users, including Nigerian Pidgin, Cameroon Pidgin, Tok Pisin Papua New Guinea , and Bislama Vanuatu , all of which are based on a predominantly English vocabulary. Such vernaculars have developed systems as complex as those of related creoles and are called expanded pidgins. However, some linguists who assume that creoles are erstwhile pidgins that were nativized and expanded by children tend to lump both kinds of vernaculars as creoles. A more plausible explanation for the distinction is the fact that in their histories pidgins have not been associated with populations that consider themselves to be ethnically Creole. Some scholars of creole languages think that Lingua Franca, the variety that developed during the Middle Ages out of the contact between Romance languages and Arabic and other Levantine languages, was a pidgin. If this extension of the term pidgin is justified, then many other such contact varieties must have developed during the course of human history. Like creole, the term pidgin has been extended to language varieties that developed out of contacts between indigenous groups—for instance, Chinook Jargon U. As is evident from the name of the first of these examples, the term pidgin has also alternated with jargon in common speech despite the scholarly stipulation that a jargon is developmentally an unstable pre-pidgin. Accordingly, some linguists posit that a creole may remain as such or decreolize. Until the end of the 19th century, there was no developmental or technical correlation between creoles and pidgins. The term pidgin was first recorded in English in , as English was adopted as the business and trade language of Canton Guangzhou , China. At the time, the term business English was often written as pigeon English, a spelling that reflects the local pronunciation. The communication necessitated to effect trade between the English and the Cantonese led to the development of Chinese Pidgin English. As trade spread, there proved to be too few interpreters among the local Cantonese traders and their European counterparts. Many local traders applied what little English they had learned from their sporadic contacts with more-fluent speakers. This caused the business English spoken in Canton to diverge increasingly from more-standard English varieties. Since the late 19th century, linguists have extended the term pidgin to other language varieties that emerged under similar contact conditions. Pidgin was subsequently indigenized in several languages, as with pisin in Tok Pisin. However, European businessmen actually used other, and often derogatory , lay terms for such varieties, including jargon, baragouin, and patois, because the new varieties were not intelligible to native speakers of their lexifiers. For instance, according to the French creolist Robert Chaudenson, plantation communities were preceded by homesteads on which approximations of the colonial varieties of European languages, rather than pidgins, were spoken by masters, servants, and slaves alike. This practice caused the colonial European varieties to diverge more and more from their original lexifiers until they eventually became identified as creole languages. The divergence was thus gradual from closer approximations of the lexifier to varieties more and more different, an evolutionary process identified as basilectalization basilect being the variety that is the most divergent from the European lexifier.

When children start learning a pidgin as their first language and it becomes the mother tongue of a community, it is called a creole. A pidgin, a creole is a distinct language which has taken most of its vocabulary from another language, the lexifier, but has its own unique grammatical rules.

What is Pidgin and What is Creole? The Oxford English Dictionary definition of Pidgin is: A language containing lexical and other features from two or more languages, characteristically with simplified grammar and a smaller vocabulary than the languages from which it is derived, used for communication between people not having a common language; a lingua franca. A pidgin is a reduced language used by groups with no language in common who need to communicate for trade or other purposes. A creole, by contrast, is a natural language developed from a mixture of different languages, like Haitian Creole, which is based on 18th-century French but absorbed elements of Portuguese, Spanish and West African languages. Semi-creole languages, which Mr. Holm also studied – Afrikaans is an example – share even more traits with their vocabulary-source languages. The word pidgin seems to have had its origin in the inability of 19th century Chinese to articulate the word business. It came out as bigeon or bidgin, and since it is a short step from B to P, it finally flattened out as pidgin. He, de Hog, no workee; he eat, he drink, he walk about, he go to sleep when he please, he libb like a gentleman. Dillard, *Black English*, Vintage Books, p. There are many of them, but in this case, the reference to Nigerian Creole English possibly including the closely related Ghanaian and Cameroonian varieties, judging from where the BBC has been recruiting local reporters. Every public, private, home school, and youth-serving club is eligible. Where do you live? Aron, and Mark A. The paper outlines common misconceptions of U. Holm helped bring the study of creole and pidgin languages into the scholarly mainstream. He also insisted that pidgins and creoles be regarded as languages in their own right, not debased versions of source languages. While hitchhiking through Mexico and Central America as a teenager, Mr. Holm heard black Nicaraguans along the Caribbean coast speaking a non-Spanish language that seemed oddly familiar. *World Creoles Southern Bahamian*: Stephanie Hackert and John Holm published in vol. It has since come to light that most of the immigrants came from Gullah-speaking areas of the US, suggesting that AAVE was from its beginnings the product of partial rather than full creolization. Many also speak Kriol, an English-based creole developed in the late 19th century and widely spoken in northern Australia among aboriginal people of many different native languages. Lajamanu parents are happy to have their children learn English for use in the wider world, but eager to preserve Warlpiri as the language of their culture. Given the size of the community, the demographics, and how remote it is yet with several languages in contact, I wonder, as well, how the spread of technology will influence this.

Chapter 6 : Conferences - Society for Pidgin & Creole Linguistics

The website for the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics has now been relocated to: calendrierdelascience.com

It has been published in four volumes September The atlas of pidgin and creole language structures. The survey of pidgin and creole languages, Volumes In the first volume, the Atlas volume, the data are presented in the form of maps. The other three survey volumes contain sociohistorical and grammatical surveys of each language. Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. The project covers 76 pidgin and creole languages. The language set contains not only the most widely studied Atlantic and Indian Ocean creoles, but also less well known pidgins and creoles from Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Melanesia and Australia, including some extinct varieties, as well as a few mixed languages. The database consists of structural features which are drawn from all areas of grammar: A feature has between two and nine values, shown on the maps by different colours and shapes of the language symbols. APiCS Online includes map display and various filtering and search functions, allowing users to address various research questions. Furthermore, APiCS Online includes sound files of every language, enabling the users to listen to a short text that is glossed and translated. APiCS Online also contains references for each datapoint, as well as a large number of fully glossed examples, often from naturally occurring texts. There is also additional information on phonological segments and sociolinguistic features. The Atlas book in addition contains text chapters for each of the features, written by the editors, as in WALS. These text chapters are not available online. Each language is the responsibility of a single author or a team of authors, which were requested to fill out a questionnaire for the structural features and to write a sociohistorical and grammatical survey article for their language. The presentation of the data in map form has two goals. On the one hand, maps are more easily accessible to students and lay persons who have a general interest in contact languages, but who would be less likely to pay attention to data presented as tables with numbers. On the other hand, the properties of contact languages are often dependent on their geographical distribution, as similar contact languages are often spoken next to each other. Since pidgins and creoles are not distributed equally around the world, and because some areas, such as the Caribbean, have a high density of creoles, the main world map of each feature will be accompanied by blow-up maps showing certain areas in detail. The three survey volumes contain concise prose descriptions of the sociohistorical context of each language, as well as synchronic grammatical surveys highlighting the major distinguishing features. The four-volume publication plus APiCS Online is a comprehensive and authoritative reference work on pidgin and creole language structures bringing together the expertise of dozens of specialists from around the world. APiCS thus serves as an invaluable tool for teaching and research, making systematic data on these languages readily available for a wide range of research questions theories of creolization, uniformity and diversity of creoles, general properties of language contact, typological characteristics of contact languages. Pidgins and creoles were not completely excluded from WALS, but since the primary goal was to present the precolonial linguistic areas, pidgins and creoles were backgrounded.

Chapter 7 : Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages

Presenters at SPCL conferences must be members of the SPCL, and when the conference is held jointly with the LSA they have to register with the LSA for the LSA meeting.. There is no separate registration fee for the SPCL meeting when held jo.

Overview[edit] A creole is believed to arise when a pidgin, developed by adults for use as a second language, becomes the native and primary language of their children – a process known as nativization. Like most non-official and minority languages, creoles have generally been regarded in popular opinion as degenerate variants or dialects of their parent languages. Because of that prejudice, many of the creoles that arose in the European colonies, having been stigmatized, have become extinct. However, political and academic changes in recent decades have improved the status of creoles, both as living languages and as object of linguistic study. Linguists now recognize that creole formation is a universal phenomenon, not limited to the European colonial period, and an important aspect of language evolution see Vennemann For example, in Sigmund Feist postulated a creole origin for the Germanic languages. Pidgins, according to Mufwene, emerged in trade colonies among "users who preserved their native vernaculars for their day-to-day interactions. These servants and slaves would come to use the creole as an everyday vernacular, rather than merely in situations in which contact with a speaker of the superstrate was necessary. The terms criollo and crioulo were originally qualifiers used throughout the Spanish and Portuguese colonies to distinguish the members of an ethnic group who were born and raised locally from those who immigrated as adults. They were most commonly applied to nationals of the colonial power, e. However, in Brazil the term was also used to distinguish between negros crioulos blacks born in Brazil from African slave ancestors and negros africanos born in Africa. Originally, therefore, the term "creole language" meant the speech of any of those creole peoples. Geographic distribution[edit] As a consequence of colonial European trade patterns, most of the known European-based creole languages arose in coastal areas in the equatorial belt around the world, including the Americas , western Africa , Goa along the west of India , and along Southeast Asia up to Indonesia , Singapore , Macau , Hong Kong , the Philippines , Malaysia , Mauritius , Reunion, Seychelles and Oceania. Atlantic Creole languages are based on European languages with elements from African and possibly Amerindian languages. Indian Ocean Creole languages are based on European languages with elements from Malagasy and possibly other Asian languages. There are, however, creoles like Nubi and Sango that are derived solely from non-European languages. Social and political status[edit] Because of the generally low status of the Creole peoples in the eyes of prior European colonial powers, creole languages have generally been regarded as "degenerate" languages, or at best as rudimentary "dialects" of the politically dominant parent languages. Because of this, the word "creole" was generally used by linguists in opposition to "language", rather than as a qualifier for it. This controversy of the late 19th century profoundly shaped modern approaches to the comparative method in historical linguistics and in creolistics. They are increasingly being used in print and film, and in many cases, their community prestige has improved dramatically. In fact, some have been standardized, and are used in local schools and universities around the world. They now use the term "creole" or "creole language" for any language suspected to have undergone creolization , terms that now imply no geographic restrictions nor ethnic prejudices. The controversy surrounding AAVE in the American education system, as well as the past use of the word ebonics to refer to it, mirrors the historical negative connotation of the word creole. Phylogenetic classification traditionally relies on inheritance of the lexicon, especially of "core" terms, and of the grammar structure. However, in creoles, the core lexicon often has mixed origin, and the grammar is largely original. For these reasons, the issue of which language is the parent of a creole – that is, whether a language should be classified as a "Portuguese creole" or "English creole", etc. However, the meaning of these terms is reasonably well-defined only in second language acquisition or language replacement events, when the native speakers of a certain source language the substrate are somehow compelled to abandon it for another target language the superstrate. The substrate may survive as a second language for informal conversation. As demonstrated by the fate of many replaced European languages such

as Etruscan , Breton , and Venetian , the influence of the substrate on the official speech is often limited to pronunciation and a modest number of loanwords. The substrate might even disappear altogether without leaving any trace. This decreolization process typically brings about a post-creole speech continuum characterized by large-scale variation and hypercorrection in the language. Phylogenetic or typological comparisons of creole languages have led to divergent conclusions. Similarities are usually higher among creoles derived from related languages, such as the languages of Europe , than among broader groups that include also creoles based on non- Indo-European languages like Nubi or Sango. French-based creoles in turn are more similar to each other and to varieties of French than to other European-based creoles. It was observed, in particular, that definite articles are mostly prenominal in English-based creole languages and English whereas they are generally postnominal in French creoles and in the variety of French that was exported to what is now Quebec in the 17th and 18th century.

Creole genesis[edit] There are a variety of theories on the origin of creole languages, all of which attempt to explain the similarities among them. Theories focusing on European input Theories focusing on non-European input Gradualist and developmental hypotheses Theories focusing on European input[edit] Monogenetic theory of pidgins and creoles[edit] The monogenetic theory of pidgins and creoles hypothesizes that they are all derived from a single Mediterranean Lingua Franca , via a West African Pidgin Portuguese of the 17th century, relexified in the so-called "slave factories" of Western Africa that were the source of the Atlantic slave trade. This theory was originally formulated by Hugo Schuchardt in the late 19th century and popularized in the late s and early s by Taylor, [39] Whinnom, [40] Thompson, [41] and Stewart.

Domestic origin hypothesis[edit] Proposed by Hancock for the origin of English-based creoles of the West Indies, the Domestic Origin Hypothesis argues that, towards the end of the 16th century, English-speaking traders began to settle in the Gambia and Sierra Leone rivers as well as in neighboring areas such as the Bullom and Sherbro coasts. These settlers intermarried with the local population leading to mixed populations, and, as a result of this intermarriage, an English pidgin was created. This pidgin was learned by slaves in slave depots, who later on took it to the West Indies and formed one component of the emerging English creoles.

European dialect origin hypothesis[edit] The French creoles are the foremost candidates to being the outcome of "normal" linguistic change and their creoleness to be sociohistoric in nature and relative to their colonial origin.

Foreigner talk and baby talk[edit] The Foreigner Talk FT hypothesis argues that a pidgin or creole language forms when native speakers attempt to simplify their language in order to address speakers who do not know their language at all. Because of the similarities found in this type of speech and speech directed to a small child, it is also sometimes called baby talk.

Accommodation Telegraphic condensation Conventions This could explain why creole languages have much in common, while avoiding a monogenetic model. However, Hinnenkamp , in analyzing German Foreigner Talk, claims that it is too inconsistent and unpredictable to provide any model for language learning.

Grammatical simplification can be explained by other processes, i. Pidgins are more often used amongst speakers of different substrate languages than between such speakers and those of the lexifier language. Another problem with the FT explanation is its potential circularity. Bloomfield points out that FT is often based on the imitation of the incorrect speech of the non-natives, that is the pidgin. Therefore, one may be mistaken in assuming that the former gave rise to the latter.

Imperfect L2 learning[edit] The imperfect L2 second language learning hypothesis claims that pidgins are primarily the result of the imperfect L2 learning of the dominant lexifier language by the slaves. Research on naturalistic L2 processes has revealed a number of features of "interlanguage systems" that are also seen in pidgins and creoles: Imperfect L2 learning is compatible with other approaches, notably the European dialect origin hypothesis and the universalist models of language transmission. These features are often assumed to be transferred from the substrate language to the creole or to be preserved invariant from the substrate language in the creole through a process of relexification: Bickerton argues that the number and diversity of African languages and the paucity of a historical record on creole genesis makes determining lexical correspondences a matter of chance. Dillard coined the term "cafeteria principle" to refer to the practice of arbitrarily attributing features of creoles to the influence of substrate African languages or assorted substandard dialects of European languages. For a representative debate on this issue, see the contributions to Mufwene ; for a more recent view, Parkvall

Because of the sociohistoric similarities amongst many but by no means all of the creoles, the Atlantic slave trade and the plantation system of the European colonies have been emphasized as factors by linguists such as McWhorter. Gradualist and developmental hypotheses[edit] One class of creoles might start as pidgins, rudimentary second languages improvised for use between speakers of two or more non-intelligible native languages. Keith Whinnom in Hymes suggests that pidgins need three languages to form, with one the superstrate being clearly dominant over the others. The lexicon of a pidgin is usually small and drawn from the vocabularies of its speakers, in varying proportions. Morphological details like word inflections, which usually take years to learn, are omitted; the syntax is kept very simple, usually based on strict word order. If a pidgin manages to be learned by the children of a community as a native language, it may become fixed and acquire a more complex grammar, with fixed phonology, syntax, morphology, and syntactic embedding. Pidgins can become full languages in only a single generation. The vocabulary, too, will develop to contain more and more items according to a rationale of lexical enrichment. The process invoked varies: Around them, they only heard pidgins spoken, without enough structure to function as natural languages; and the children used their own innate linguistic capacities to transform the pidgin input into a full-fledged language. The alleged common features of all creoles would then be the consequence of those innate abilities being universal. Recent studies[edit] This section may be too technical for most readers to understand. Please help improve it to make it understandable to non-experts, without removing the technical details.

Chapter 8 : Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics

A creole language, or simply creole, is a stable natural language that develops from the mixing and simplifying of different languages at a fairly sudden point in time: often, a pidgin transitioned into a full-fledged language.

However, some linguists who assume that creoles are erstwhile pidgins that were nativized and expanded by children tend to lump both kinds of vernaculars as creoles. A more plausible explanation for the distinction is the fact that in their origins, the term was coined in the colonies that Spain and Portugal founded in the Americas, creole was originally used in the 16th century to refer to locally born individuals of Spanish, Portuguese, or African descent as distinguished from those born in Spain, Portugal, or Africa. By the early 17th century the word was adopted into French and, to some extent, English usage to refer to people of African or European descent who had been born in the American and Indian Ocean colonies. It was also used as an adjective to characterize plants, animals, and customs typical of the same regions. The meaning of creole, when applied to people, is not fixed; rather, its use has varied with speaker and place. It applied to locally born people of full European and mixed indigenous-European descent in Argentina and Uruguay but only to locally born people of full European descent in Mexico and Panama. In Louisiana the descendants of Africans refer to themselves and to those descended from French and Spanish colonials who were resident in the region before the Louisiana Purchase as Creole, but the latter use the term in reference to themselves exclusively. As a linguistic term, creole may not have been applied to other languages until the late 18th century, and it was not widely used in English until after 1800, although the term patois was often used. The practice of labeling these new vernaculars as distinct from their European parent languages seems to have coincided with the increasing colonial disenfranchisement of non-Europeans. That disavowal of the vernaculars was in part due to the fact that educated Europeans who traveled abroad found the new forms unintelligible. Those visitors incorrectly concluded that the European parent languages had been corrupted into complete aberrations through contact with non-European languages and their speakers, a situation that was believed to reflect the presumed mental inferiority of the enslaved. However, creoles are in fact normal, full-fledged languages that may hold the key to better understanding the evolution of language. Theories of creolization Since the 1960s some linguists have claimed that creoles emerged from pidgins, languages with very reduced vocabularies and grammars that are typically seen where otherwise mutually unintelligible groups come together intermittently. That hypothesis is controversial, in part because the plantations on which creole languages emerged started as small homestead communities in which non-European slaves, European indentured labourers, and European masters lived fairly intimately. Typically, all three of these groups spoke similarly until a colony shifted from subsistence to plantation agriculture and institutionalized segregation. Scholars have proposed three major hypotheses regarding the structural development of creole vernaculars—the substrate, superstrate, and universalist hypotheses. In this context, substrate signifies non-European languages, and superstrate signifies European languages. According to substratists, creoles were formed by the languages previously spoken by Africans enslaved in the Americas and the Indian Ocean, which imposed their structural features upon the European colonial languages. There are three main versions of this position. The first invokes influence from diverse African languages without explaining what kinds of selection principles, if any, operated in the process. This view has been criticized for overlooking several features that Haitian Creole shares with nonstandard varieties of French, downplaying features that Haitian Creole also shares with several other relevant African languages, and failing to account for those cases where Haitian Creole has selected structural options that are not consistent with those of Ewe-Fon languages. According to the third version of the substrate hypothesis, a set of substrate languages may impose its structural features on the new, contact-induced vernaculars if they share several structural features among themselves. Otherwise, substrate influence mostly determined which of the alternatives in the European colonial languages would become part of the creole systems. Universalists claim that creoles developed according to universals of language development. According to the version of this hypothesis called the language bioprogram hypothesis, which was later revised and became known as the lexical learning

hypothesis, children who were exposed to a pidgin at an early age created a creole language by adopting only the vocabularies of the pidgin. They developed new grammars following the default specifications of the biological blueprint for language, known as universal grammar or bioprogram. In comparing cases where the lexifier language that from which most of the vocabulary has been inherited is the same, cross-creole structural differences are thought to arise from the variable amount of substrate influence retained by each creole from its pidgin stage. Other universalist hypotheses claim that creoles were developed by adults according to universals of second language acquisition, which allow substrate influence under specific conditions. Few contemporary creolists subscribe to one exclusive genetic account. The complementary hypothesis, which integrates the strengths of the above views, has emerged as a more plausible alternative, with its proponents trying to articulate the linguistic and nonlinguistic conditions under which the competing influences of the substrate languages and the legacy of the lexifier may converge or prevail. In this view, the hypothetical features of a universal grammar or language bioprogram are generalized as a body of principles that regulate the restructuring of linguistic features from diverse competing sources into new natural grammatical systems. More research is still needed before the development of creole languages can be fully understood. Information on the vernaculars spoken by European colonists remains limited, which makes it difficult to assess how much restructuring was involved in the formation of creoles. Because there are few extensive linguistic descriptions of creoles, it is impossible to make comprehensive comparisons between them or to understand the nature and extent of divergence undergone by the lexifiers. Very few linguistic facts have been correlated with the conclusions suggested by the specific sociohistorical backgrounds of individual creoles, and little is understood about how creoles differ evolutionarily from other vernaculars apart from the special circumstances of their development.

Chapter 9 : Pidgins and Creoles | educational research techniques

Creole languages have a curious status in linguistics, and at the same time they often have very low prestige in the societies in which they are spoken. These two facts may be related, in part because they circle around notions such as "derived from" or "simplified" instead of "original."

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