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Creole Languages in a World-Wide Perspective

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1. Towards a systematic comparison of pidgin and creole language structures

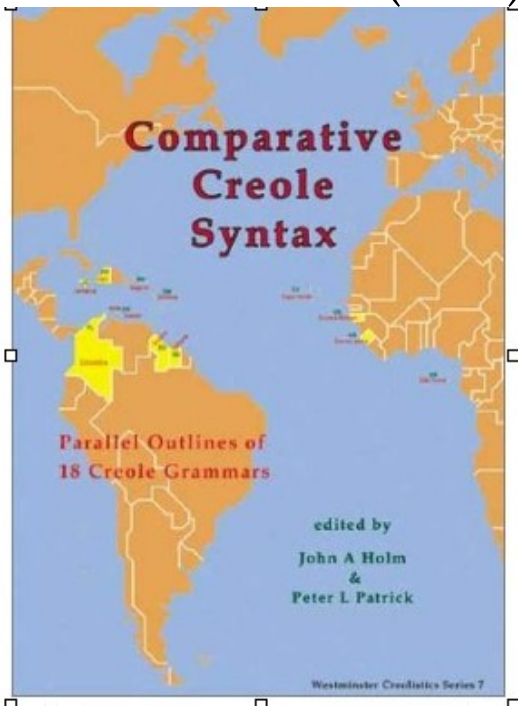
• Creole studies have seen various ambitious attempts at explaining the grammatical features of creole languages (substrates, superstrates, and universal principles)

• BUT: many of these claims were often based on a relatively small amount of merely suggestive data of only one or a few languages (e.g. Bickerton 1981, Chaudenson 1990); even McWhorter (1998, 2001) does not base his claims on a solid systematic database.

Some earlier comparative creole studies, e.g.

- Ivens Ferraz (1987) for Portuguese-based creoles
- Goodman (1964) for French-based creoles
- Hancock (1987) for Atlantic English-based creoles
- Baker (1993) for Pacific English-based pidgins/creoles

Holm & Patrick (2007), *Comparative creole syntax* (London: Battlebridge)



• the first collaborative project: 18 creole languages are described with respect to a questionnaire of 97 morphosyntactic features

• limited to morphosyntax, to 18 languages, and to a book publication without automatic search options
• no summarizing tables for all creoles, no synopses
• features are Atlantic-biased
• some mixing of synchronic and diachronic features, e.g. 8.5 Subordinator from superstrate 'that'; 15.3 Definite article (from superstrate deictic)

2. The *APiCS* project

• large-scale collaborative project gathering grammatical information on 75 pidgin, creole and mixed languages, for 120 grammatical features plus phonological segments and some 25 sociolinguistic features

• each language is the responsibility of a single author (or small author team)

• the four editors (Susanne Michaelis, Philippe Maurer, Martin Haspelmath, Magnus Huber) put the data together and publish them in three forms:

• a printed atlas with 140 maps showing the geographical distribution of features (structural, phonological, sociolinguistic)

• publication of an easily searchable electronic version (freely available online)

• 3 survey volumes of survey chapters giving a concise outline of the structures and sociohistorical profiles of these languages.

• the data were gathered by means of a very detailed, technically sophisticated questionnaire (using FileMaker Pro software)

• authors come from many different countries, and include both leading specialists and junior linguists

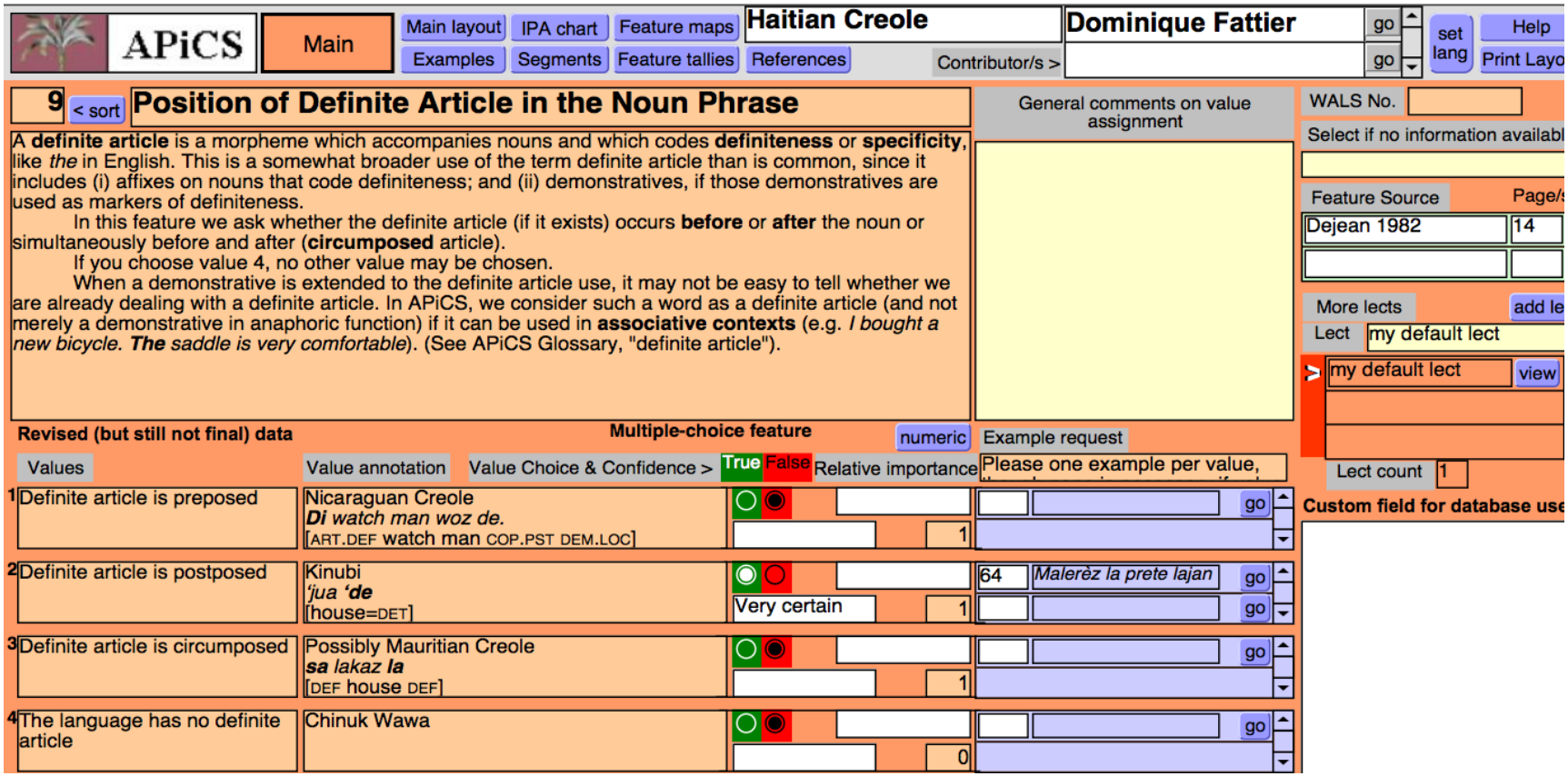
• the project setup was discussed in detail in a series of workshops in Leipzig and at a number of creolist conferences (Gießen, Amsterdam, Cayenne, and

elsewhere)

For more information and questionnaire download,
see **http://apics-online.info**

3. The final *APiCS* questionnaire (released in 2008)

Main layout, here for feature 9 ("Position of Definite Article in the Noun Phrase"):



• For each of the 120 features, a set of between two and nine possible values has been formulated among which the contributors have to choose.

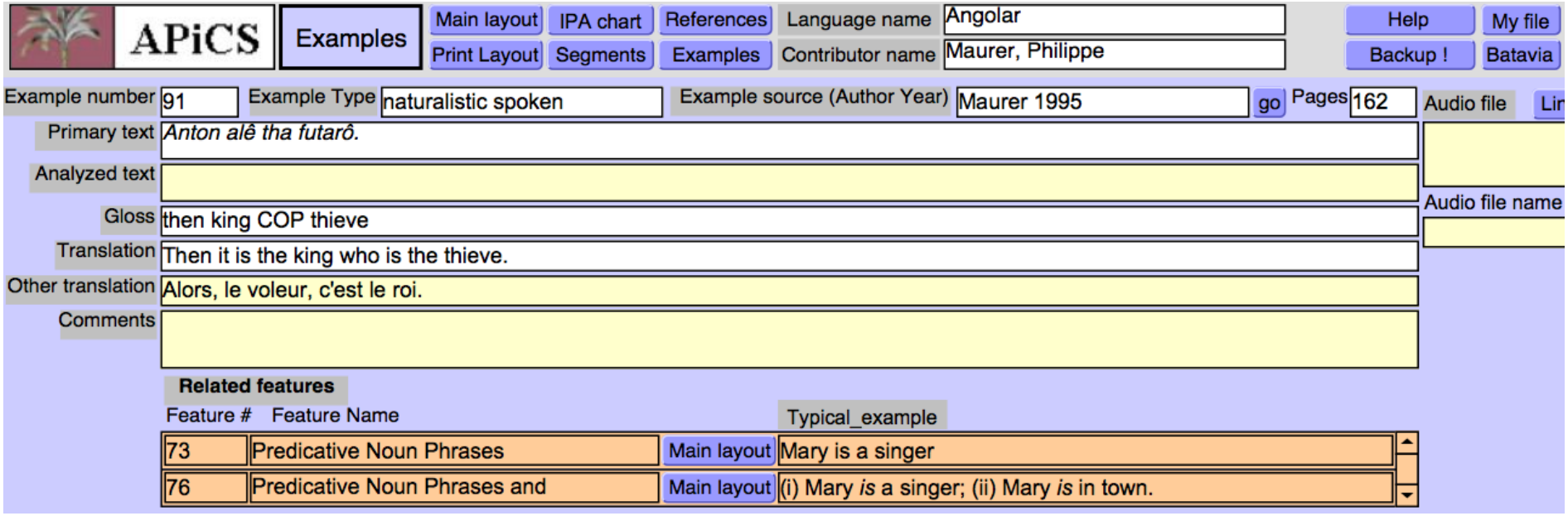
• For example, for Feature 9 "Position of Definite Article in the Noun Phrase" the four permitted values are:

1. Definite article is preposed
2. Definite article is postposed
3. Definite article is circumposed
4. The language has no definite article

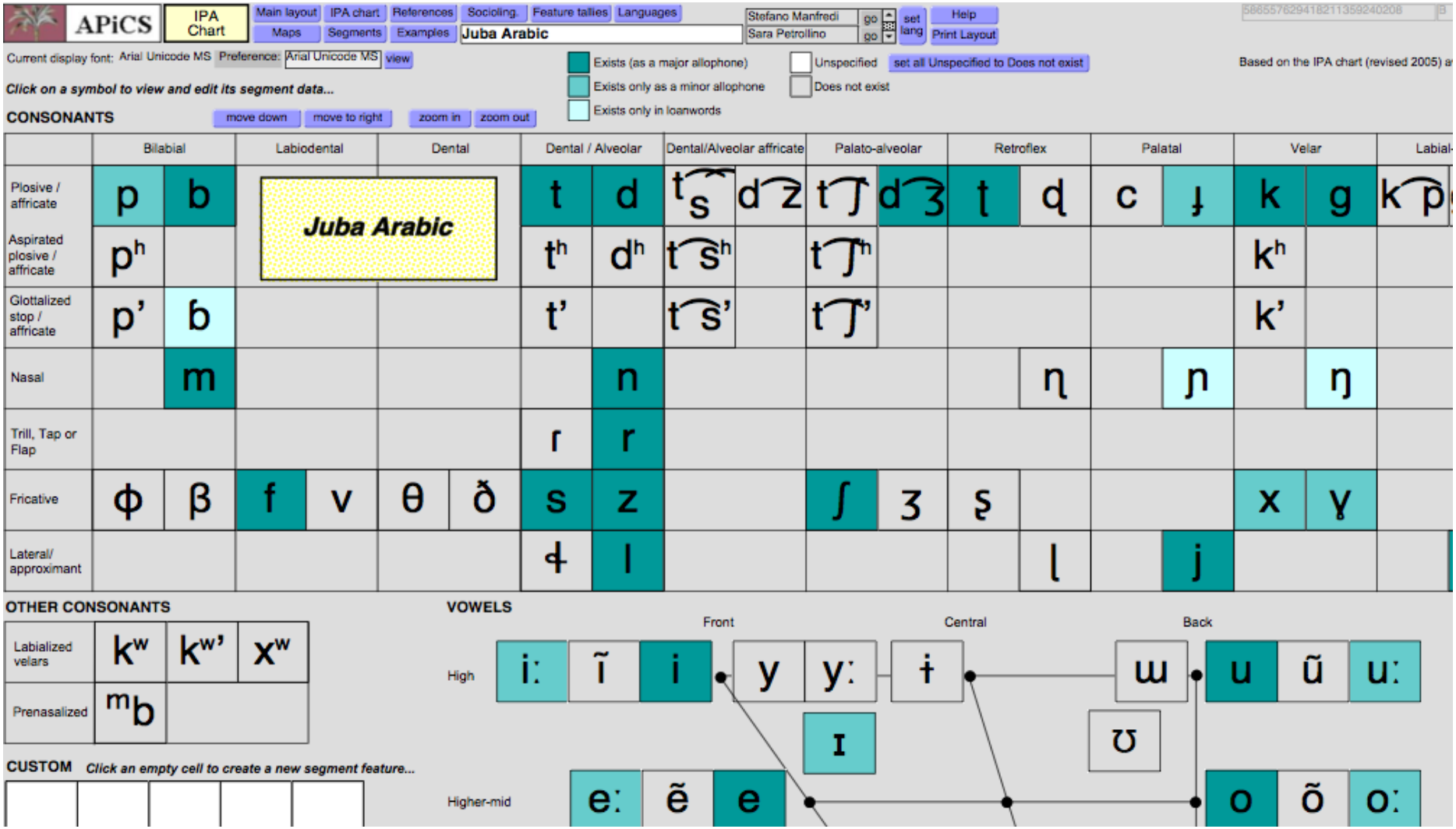
• For those features where this makes sense, the contributors may choose several values.

• Since the different choices are often not equally important in terms of usage frequency, the contributors have the chance to indicate a quantitative weighting of the alternative possibilities.

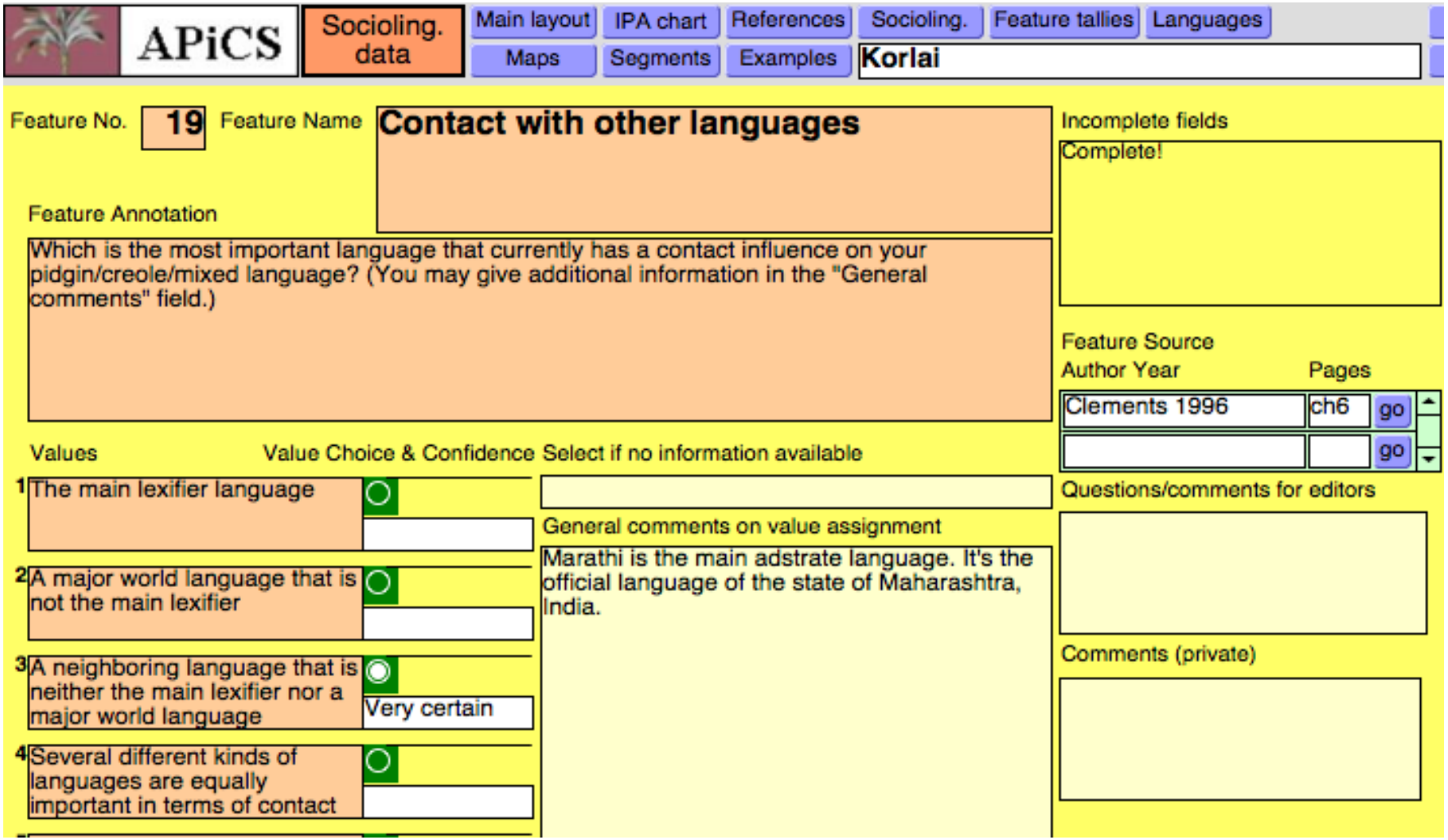
- Example layout (15,240 glossed and translated examples)



- Segments/IPA-chart layout



- **sociolinguistic features layout**



4. The languages in *APiCS*

Ambon Malay	Creole
Angolar	Creole
Batavia Creole	Creole
Belizean Creole	Creole
Berbice Dutch	Creole
Cape Verdean Creole of Brava	Creole
Cape Verdean Creole of Santiago	Creole
Cape Verdean Creole of São Vicente	Creole
Cavite Chabacano	Creole
Creolese	Creole
Diu Indo-Portuguese	Creole
Early Sranan	Creole
Fa d'Ambô	Creole
Guadeloupe Creole	Creole
Guinea-Bissau Kriyol	Creole
Gullah/Geechee	Creole
Guyanais	Creole
Haitian Creole	Creole
Hawai‘i Creole	Creole
Jamaican	Creole
Kinubi	Creole
Korlai	Creole
Krio	Creole
Kriol	Creole
Louisiana Creole	Creole
Martinique Creole	Creole
Mauritian Creole	Creole
Negerhollands	Creole
Nengee	Creole
Nicaraguan Creole English	Creole
Norf'k	Creole
Palenquero	Creole
Papia Kristang	Creole
Papiamentu	Creole
Principense	Creole
Reunion Creole	Creole
San Andrés Creole	Creole
Santome	Creole
Saramaccan	Creole
Seychelles Creole	Creole

Sranan	Creole
Sri Lanka Portuguese	Creole
Tayo	Creole
Ternate Chabacano	Creole
Trinidad English Creole	Creole
Vincentian Creole	Creole
Zamboanga Chabacano	Creole
Gurindji Kriol	Mixed
Ma'a/Mbugu	Mixed
Media Lengua	Mixed
Michif	Mixed
Chinese Pidgin English	Pidgin
Chinese Pidgin Russian	Pidgin
Chinuk Wawa	Pidgin
Eskimo Pidgin	Pidgin
Fanakalo	Pidgin
Pidgin Hawaian	Pidgin
Pidgin Hindustani	Pidgin
Singapore Bazaar Malay	Pidgin
Yimas-Arafundi Pidgin	Pidgin
Bislama	Pidgincreole
Cameroon Pidgin English	Pidgincreole
Ghanaian Pidgin English	Pidgincreole
Juba Arabic	Pidgincreole
Kikongo-Kituba	Pidgincreole
Lingala	Pidgincreole
Nigerian Pidgin	Pidgincreole
Pichi	Pidgincreole
Sango	Pidgincreole
Tok Pisin	Pidgincreole
African American English	Semi-Creole
Afrikaans	Semi-Creole
Bahamian Creole	Semi-Creole
Singlish	Semi-Creole
Sri Lankan Malay	Semi-Creole

APiCS languages by world region

Juba Arabic	Africa-Central
Kikongo-Kituba	Africa-Central
Kinubi	Africa-Central
Lingala	Africa-Central
Ma'a/Mbugu	Africa-Central
Sango	Africa-Central
Afrikaans	Africa-Southern
Fanakalo	Africa-Southern
African American English	Atlantic-New World
Bahamian Creole	Atlantic-New World
Belizean Creole	Atlantic-New World
Berbice Dutch	Atlantic-New World
Creolese	Atlantic-New World
Early Sranan	Atlantic-New World
Guadeloupe Creole	Atlantic-New World
Gullah/Geechee	Atlantic-New World
Guyanais	Atlantic-New World
Haitian Creole	Atlantic-New World
Jamaican	Atlantic-New World
Louisiana Creole	Atlantic-New World
Martinique Creole	Atlantic-New World
Negerhollands	Atlantic-New World
Nengee	Atlantic-New World
Nicaraguan Creole English	Atlantic-New World (America)
Palenquero	Atlantic-New World
Papiamentu	Atlantic-New World
San Andrés Creole	Atlantic-New World
Saramaccan	Atlantic-New World
Sranan	Atlantic-New World
Trinidad English Creole	Atlantic-New World
Vincentian Creole	Atlantic-New World
Angolar	Atlantic-West Africa
Cameroon Pidgin English	Atlantic-West Africa
Cape Verdean Creole of Brava	Atlantic-West Africa
Cape Verdean Creole of Santiago	Atlantic-West Africa
Cape Verdean Creole of São Vicente	Atlantic-West Africa
Fa d'Ambô	Atlantic-West Africa
Ghanaian Pidgin English	Atlantic-West Africa
Guinea-Bissau Kriyol	Atlantic-West Africa
Hawai'i Creole	Atlantic-West Africa

Krio	Atlantic-West Africa
Nigerian Pidgin	Atlantic-West Africa
Pichi	Atlantic-West Africa
Principense	Atlantic-West Africa
Santome	Atlantic-West Africa
Mauritian Creole	Indian Ocean-Islands
Reunion Creole	Indian Ocean-Islands
Seychelles Creole	Indian Ocean-Islands
Diu Indo-Portuguese	Indian Ocean-South Asia
Korlai	Indian Ocean-South Asia
Sri Lanka Portuguese	Indian Ocean-South Asia
Sri Lankan Malay	Indian Ocean-South Asia
Chinuk Wawa	North America
Eskimo Pidgin	North America
Michif	North America
Bislama	Pacific/Australia
Chinese Pidgin English	Pacific/Australia
Gurindji Kriol	Pacific/Australia
Kriol	Pacific/Australia
Norf'k	Pacific/Australia
Pidgin Hawaiian	Pacific/Australia
Pidgin Hindustani	Pacific/Australia
Tayo	Pacific/Australia
Tok Pisin	Pacific/Australia
Yimas-Arafundi Pidgin	Pacific/Australia
Chinese Pidgin Russian	Russia
Ambon Malay	SE Asia
Batavia Creole	SE Asia
Cavite Chabacano	SE Asia
Papia Kristang	SE Asia
Singapore Bazaar Malay	SE Asia
Singlish	SE Asia
Ternate Chabacano	SE Asia
Zamboanga Chabacano	SE Asia
Media Lengua	South America

5. First *APiCS* maps

Feature 1: Order of Subject, Object, and Verb

Feature 51: Unmarked stative and dynamic verbs

Feature 18: Politeness Distinctions in Second Person Pronouns

Feature 12: Position of Interrogative Phrases in Content Questions

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Appendix

APiCS questionnaire by Feature number

- 1 Order of Subject, Object and Verb
- 2 Order of Possessor and Possessum
- 3 Order of Adjective and Noun
- 4 Order of Adposition and Noun Phrase
- 5 Order of Demonstrative and Noun
- 6 Order of Cardinal Numeral and Noun
- 7 Order of Relative Clause and Noun
- 8 Order of Degree Word and Adjective
- 9 Position of Definite Article in the Noun Phrase
- 10 Position of Indefinite Article in the Noun Phrase
- 11 Order of Adverb, Verb and Object: 'Often'
- 12 Position of Interrogative Phrases in Content Questions
- 61 Order of Recipient and Theme in Ditransitive Constructions
- 62 Expression of Pronominal Subjects
- 63 Expletive Subject in 'Seem' Construction
- 64 Expletive Subject of Existential Verb
- 65 Raining Constructions
- 66 Experiencer Constructions: 'Headache'
- 67 Experiencer Constructions: 'Like'
- 68 Experiencer Constructions: 'Fear'
- 69 Instrumental Expressions
- 70 Comitatives and Instrumentals
- 71 Noun Phrase Conjunction and

- 13 Gender Distinctions in Independent Personal Pronouns
- 14 Dual in Independent Personal Pronouns
- 15 Inclusive/Exclusive Distinction in Independent Personal Pronouns
- 16 Person Syncretism in Independent Personal Pronouns
- 17 Special Dependent Personal Pronouns
- 18 Politeness Distinctions in Second Person Pronouns
- 19 Interrogative Pronouns
- 20 Pronoun Conjunction
- 21 Indefinite Pronouns
- 22 Occurrence of Nominal Plural Markers
- 23 Expression of Nominal Plural Meaning
- 24 The Associative Plural
- 25 Nominal Plural Marker and 3rd Person Plural Pronoun
- 26 Functions of Reduplication
- 27 Anti-Dual of Paired Body Part Terms
- Comitative
- 72 Nominal and Verbal Conjunction
- 73 Predicative Noun Phrases
- 74 Predicative Adjectives
- 75 Predicative Locative Phrases
- 76 Predicative Noun Phrases and Predicative Locative Phrases
- 77 Predicative Possession
- 78 Existential Verb and Transitive Possession Verb
- 79 Motion-to and Motion-from
- 80 Going to Named Places
- 81 Coming from Named Places
- 82 Transitive Motion Verbs: 'Push'
- 83 Transitive Motion Verbs: 'Pull'
- 84 'Come' and 'Go' Serial Verb Constructions
- 85 'Take' Serial Verb Constructions
- 86 'Give' Serial Verb Constructions
- 87 Reflexive Constructions
- 88 Intensifiers and Reflexive

- 28 Definite Articles
- 29 Indefinite Articles
- 30 Generic Noun Phrases in Subject Function
- 31 Cooccurrence of Demonstrative and Definite Article
- 32 Pronominal and Adnominal Demonstratives
- 33 Distance Contrasts in Demonstratives
- 34 Distributive Numerals
- 35 Ordinal Numerals
- 36 Numeral Classifiers
- 37 Marking of Pronominal Possessors
- 38 Marking of Possessor Noun Phrases
- 39 Independent Pronominal Possessor
- 40 Gender Agreement of Adnominal Adjectives
- 41 Comparative Adjective Marking
- 42 Comparative Standard Marking
- 43 Position of Tense, Mood and Aspect Markers in relation to the verb
- Pronouns
- 89 Reciprocal and Reflexive Constructions
- 90 Passive Constructions
- 91 Applicative Constructions
- 92 Subject Relative Clauses
- 93 Direct Object Relative Clauses
- 94 Instrument Relative Clauses
- 95 Complementizer with Verbs of Speaking
- 96 Complementizer with Verbs of Knowing
- 97 'Want' Complement Subjects
- 98 Complements of 'Think' and 'Want'
- 99 Temporal Clause Verb Doubling
- 100 Negative Morpheme Types
- 101 Position of Standard Negation
- 102 Negation and Indefinite Pronouns
- 103 Polar Questions

- 44 Internal Order of Tense, Mood, and Aspect Markers
- 45 Tightness of Link between Past Marker and Verb
- 46 Tightness of Link between Progressive Marker and Verb
- 47 Uses of the Progressive Marker
- 48 Uses of the Habitual Marker
- 49 Tense-Aspect Systems
- 50 Negation and Tense-Aspect-Mood Marking
- 51 Unmarked Stative and Dynamic Verbs
- 52 Aspect Markers and Inchoative Meaning
- 53 Aspect Change in Verb Chains
- 54 Suppletion according to Tense and Aspect
- 55 Ability Verb and Epistemic Possibility
- 56 The Prohibitive
- 57 Marking of Patient Noun Phrases
- 58 Alignment of Case Marking of Full
- 104 Nominal Cleft Construction
- 105 Verb Doubling and Focus
- 106 Focus Particle 'Also'
- 107 Vocative Marker
- 108 Para-Linguistic Usages of Clicks
- 109 Pequeninho
- 110 Save
- 111 Tears
- 112 Hand and Arm
- 113 Finger and Toe
- 114 Body Hair and Feather
- 115 Hear and Smell
- 116 Green and Blue
- 117 Female and Male Animals
- 118 Syllable Onsets
- 119 Syllable Codas
- 120 Tone

Noun Phrases

- 59 Alignment of Case Marking of Pronouns
- 60 Ditransitive (‘Give’) Constructions