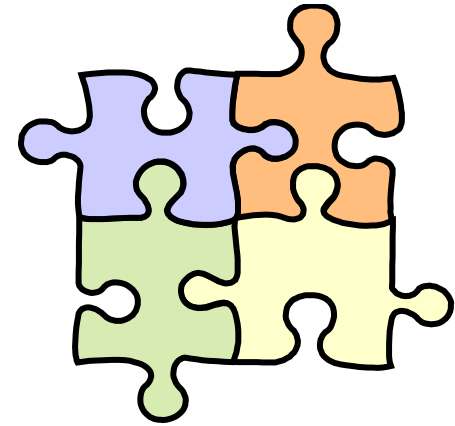


Language Contact
Véronique & Tracy



Development of creole languages



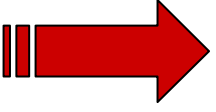
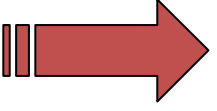
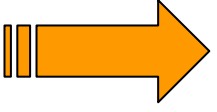
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Goals:

Discuss some of the **theoretical issues** involved in the study of the development of creole languages.

A follow-up of the course on contact languages

AGENDA for today

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-  0. Terminology
-  1. Theories of creole development II
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-  2. About the role of the substratum
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-  3. About the role of the superstratum
-
-  4. Creole as BV
-
-

0. Terminology

Defining creole languages

- i) Should the definition of creole languages be restricted to those languages that emerged during Arabic and European colonial expansions? What about pidgins and creoles in Australia (Siegel 2009)?
- ii) Are there typical linguistic properties of creole languages such that the term may be broaden to apply to any emerging language which exhibit the the same properties?

0. Terminology

Linguists who favour a sociohistorical definition of creole languages (Chaudenson, Mufwene) are, as a rule, also in favour of i) the graduality of the creolization process ii) of the dominant role played by the superstrate language in the feature pool of variants available to the creole creator

0. Terminology

Siegel (2009) is in favour of defining **pidgins** by their **morphological simplicity** resulting from applying **specific** cognitive, linguistic and sociolinguistic processes to L2 input and **creoles** by their **morphological expansion** resulting mainly from **substrate influence** (functional transfer) and **convergence**

1. Theories of creole development

II

Theories or models of creole development try to answer one or more of the following questions:

- What are the factors that motivate the emergence of creoles (social? cognitive? linguistic?) and what are the factors (linguistic and cognitive) that shape these languages?

1. Theories of creole development

II

- Where do the linguistic properties of creole languages as contact languages come from? Is there a way to identify the donor languages?
- What is the respective share of the linguistic and social context and of the agency of the creole maker (cognitive, sociosymbolical etc.) in creole emergence?

1. Theories of creole development

II

(reminder)

Questions formulated by Myers Scotton 1996
about Creole genesis

- i) Why do creoles 'look like' the languages of the superstrate where they were formed?
- ii) Why are most creoles not mutually intelligible with their superstrates?
- iii) Why are some creole elements from the superstrate more intelligible than others from superstrate speakers?

1. Theories of creole development

II

Theories of creole development may be based on:

- i) a universalist perspective, e.g. D. Bickerton's language Bioprogram Hypothesis (LBH)
- ii) the contribution of the « substratum »:
Lefebvre's relexification theory

1. Theories of creole development

II

- iii) Choice (mixture & levelling) in a feature pool comprising substrate & superstrate features (Mufwene, Chaudenson)
- iv) On the inception of an L2 basic variety and its subsequent evolution (Becker & Veenstra 2003)
- v) Two targets perspective (Myers-Scotton)

1. Theories of creole development II

D. Bickerton's universalist perspective

The **Language Bioprogram Hypothesis** requires *inter alia* that the following features be present for the emergence of creoles: i) the specific – non specific distinction be marked on NP, ii) a minimal TMA system comprising the following dichotomies \pm anterior, \pm irrealis \pm punctual), iii) the marking of a difference between existence, ownership / possession.

1. Theories of creole development

In 1986, D Bickerton opted for the *lexical learning hypothesis* which posits that some morphemes are reproduced / replaced if lost, while others are not.

This process endows creole language with their specific features

Morphemes reconstructed if lost	Morphemes which are not reconstructed if lost
Articles	Gender Agreement
TMA Markers	Number Agreement
Interrogative Words	Verbal Inflection
Plural marker	Derivational Morphology
Personal pronouns	The Case of pronouns and gender morphology
Oblique Case marking	Most morphemes
One locative preposition	
An irrealis complementizer	
Relative pronoun marker	
Reflexive and reciprocal markers	

2. About the role of the substratum

Remember Y. Matras (2009: 276 et ff.)
definition of contact languages: “[...] a collective interlanguage with a population of bilinguals learning and sometimes shifting to a second language [...]. The key feature defining a contact language is [...] the absence of direct continuity from a single, identifiable predecessor variety [...]”

2. About the role of the substratum

- Lumdsen, J.S. 1999. Language Acquisition and Creolization. In M. De Graff (ed.) *Language Creation and Language Change. Creolization, Diachrony and Development*, pp. 129-157, Cambridge (Mass.), MIT Press.
- “**Relexification** is a mental process that builds new lexical entries by combining new phonological forms with the syntactic and semantic information of lexical entries that are already established (...). It is argued that relexification applies only to lexical categories”. (p.129)

2. About the role of the substratum

- I. Van de Craats. 2000. *Conservation in the Acquisition of Possessive Constructions. A Study of Second Lanaguage Acquisition by Turkish and Moroccan Learners of Dutch*. Ph D. thesis, Tilburg University.

2. About the role of the substratum

- “Initially learners are guided by their L1 grammar only (the Conservation hypothesis) and that, in later stages, UG guides learners in (i) identifying mismatches between the derivational output expressions and the primary linguistic input they get, and (ii) restructuring their initial grammar in such a way that, for them, there is a (better) match between the output expressions and the environmental input”.

2. About the role of the substratum

Among aspects of **linguistic knowledge conserved in the initial L2 language**:

- knowledge of morphology and morphological realization rules (e.g. realization of case)
- knowledge of lexical items: (i) formal features (e.g. categorical values) (ii) semantic-conceptual values;
- pragmatic knowledge of information-related grammatical encodings (e.g. the encoding of such pragmatic primitives as topic and focus).
- Van de Craats's predictions are to be compared with the Klein/ Perdue (1997) 'Basic Variety' Model

2. About the role of the substratum

Myers Scotton The dual targets model

5 hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. The **substrate varieties** contribute to creole formation by supplying the ‘invisible’ **morphosyntactic frame** of the creole

Hypothesis 2. **Both substrate- and superstrate-content morphemes** can be the target of surface forms that are also **content morphemes in the creole**

Hypothesis 2a. Superstrate-content morphemes are much more frequent in the creole than substrate ones

2. About the role of the substratum

- Hypothesis 3. Content morphemes from the superstrate can be reconfigured as system morphemes to satisfy requirements of the abstract morphosyntactic creole frame that is based on a composite Matrix Language from the Substrates

2. About the role of the substratum

- Hypothesis 4. Early system morphemes from the superstrate are only available to satisfy creole requirements when they are accessed along with their heads e.g *la table* > *latab*
- Hypothesis 5. Late system morphemes from the superstrate are not available to satisfy the requirements of the creole morphosyntactic frame.

3. About the role of the superstratum

Choice in a feature pool comprising substrate & Superstrate features (Chaudenson, Mufwene)

- Superstrate features may reinforce substrate influence (convergence) – see TMA markers for instance.
- Hence, the claim that creole languages are dialects of their lexifier language
- LC processes involved are SLA (hence possibly BV), mixing and levelling

3. About the role of the superstratum

(reminder)

Mixing and Levelling

In a contact situation, “individuals come up with their own linguistic strategies for communicating with speakers of other languages they do not know, and this **mixture of features form the ‘pool of variants’** (Siegel 2008). “Focussing” because of the emergence of a new speech community leads to leveling. According to Siegel (2000), “While particular variants used in the early stages of language contact may be the result of transfer or simplification by individuals, only some of these end up in the contact variety (if one develops). **The elimination of some variants and the retention of others is a sociolinguistic or community-level process known as leveling, which occurs in the contact environment”**.”

4. BV as the core of creole languages

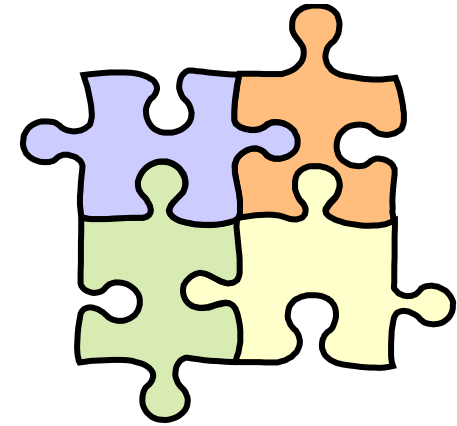
Some properties of BV

- NPs + semantics of agency
- Uninflected VP
- Temporality expressed through Adverbials & Calendaric Expression
- Prominence of Aspect
- Personal pronouns but no relative pronouns
- Topic- Focus Organization

Conclusion

Shared features in BV and fully fledged creoles

- articles marking NPs with specific reference + bare NPs
- preverbal free TMA morphemes
- serial verbs
- predicate clefting
- bi-morphemic question words
- no special passive constructions
- a single morpheme for existential (there is) and possession / ownership (to have)
- a copula for locative but not for equative predicates



Language Contact: Questions for discussion

Questions

1. How to account for processes of LC at the **individual** (psycholinguistic / sociosymbolical / attitudinal) level and at the **societal/ community level** (Interference/ transfer/ reanalysis vs levelling)? Is the « Individual vs Collective » dichotomy the proper one? Status of processes like simplification or borrowing? How does this relate to « formal » vs « functional » as used in the literature?
2. What is the status of such explanatory constructs as: transparency, saliency, iconicity? Do they apply at the individual level? Are they collective procedures?

Questions

3. Time and LC.

Time spans involved in the study of different cases of LC are quite different. In LA, the basic 'Child Grammar' or the basic 'learner' Variety in L2 is developed in a period of 1 to 3 years (36 months). The emergence of a stabilized pidgin takes some years, less than for a creole language to emerge. The development of creole languages spans over some 50 years (3 generations of speakers?). In Convergence and Attrition, this is also what seems to be the case: some 50 years.

How are linguistic phenomena with so different time spans to be related ?

Questions

4. How to relate the temporal and spatial dimensions of LC that as involved at the individual (psycholinguistic / sociosymbolical / attitudinal) level, at the family or equivalent level, and at the societal/ community level?

Questions

5. **Fostering social nexus**, through the interplay of sociosymbolic processes as *focussing* and *We-coding*, bridges the space and time gap across LC phenomena. How do we assess the contribution of the establishment of social nexus to LC?

Questions

5. Degree of similarity of linguistic phenomena in CS, SLA, bilingual acquisition, emergence of Contact languages etc.?
6. Does similarity / identity lie in a) the processes *per se* (i.e transfer or simplification)? b) the principles or factors underpinning the processes (factorization, iconicity etc.)? c) the products or output (morphological simplification, periphrasis etc.)

Questions

7. Are different linguistic categories (Lexical items, function words, discourse markers etc.) processed differently in LC?

The answer seems to be Yes. Then what are the implications of this type of finding for: i) theories of Language Making Capacity or UG? ii) Language Typology?