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WS 09/10

Pidgins and Creoles

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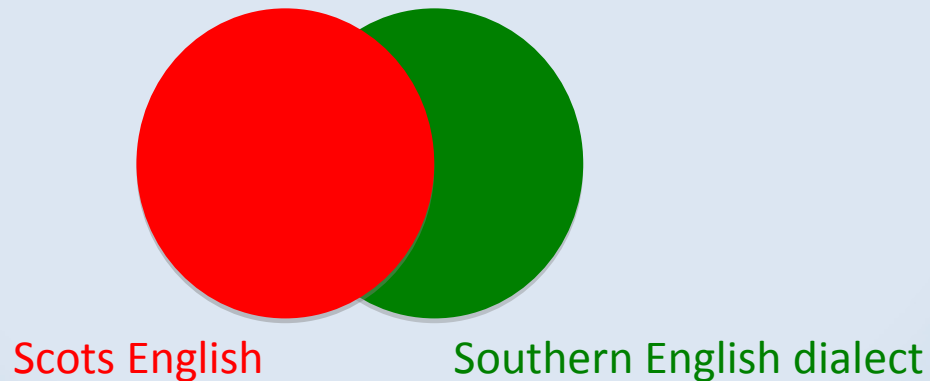
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What are Pidgins and Creoles?

Repetition: Koinéization

- Contact between two dialects of the same language



Pidgins and Creoles

- Evolve from language contact between two different languages, i.e. they are *languages in contact*



Superstrate or Lexifier

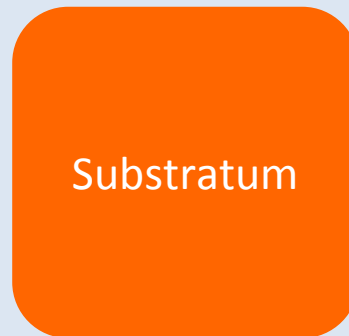
- Language spoken by the (European) explorers, colonists, and merchants
- Contributes words
- Seen as more prestigious (by the native speakers of this language)



English

Substratum

- Language spoken by the indigenous population
- Contributes syntax
- Generally perceived as inferior



Indigenous language,
e.g. Algonquian

Contact Language

- The contact language is something new: It is neither a variety of the lexifier nor the substratum
- Pidgins are used by both groups in the contact situation
- They use simplified syntax, pronunciation and morphology, e.g.
 - Loss of 3rd person singular {s}
 - Reduction of consonant clusters, h-dropping

What is the difference between Pidgins and Creoles?

- **Pidgins**

- Always a second language
- Only suitable for communication in certain limited contexts, e.g. trade

- **Creoles**

- Vernacular and native or first language of a community
- Can then be elaborated and admit new registers such as lyric and poetic forms, e.g. reggae

Origin

- Pidgins and creoles in West Africa show great similarity, even in the case of different lexifiers
- Three hypotheses:
 - Monogenetic Hypothesis
 - Parallel Development Hypothesis
 - Hypothesis of Universals of Language Acquisition

American Indian Pidgin English (AIPE)

AIPE

- Origins of AIPE in the contact of British settlers and traders with Native Americans on the east coast
- AIPE spread due to trade and colonial expansion
- Later used by various native peoples all over the continent
 - AIPE contains words from different Native American languages / language families

AIPE

- Used to communicate with English-speaking Europeans as well as other tribes
- There were also contact languages with Indian lexicons, e.g. Mobilian Jargon based on Muskogean languages.

[...]An anecdote of an aged Indian who had spent much time among the white people of Pennsylvania and New Jersey: 'One day, about the year 1770, he observed that the Indians had a much easier way of getting a wife than the whites, and were much more certain of getting a good one -

"for," said he, in his broken English, "white man court – court, may be one whole year! – may be two year before he marry! Well! – may be he then get very good wife – but may be not! – may be very cross! – Well now, suppose cross, scold as soon as get awake in the morning, scold all day, scold until sleep, – all one; he must keep him. [...] White people have law forbidding throwing away wife, be he ever so cross! – must keep him always. Well! how does Indian do? – Indian, when he sees industrious squaw, which he like, he go to him, place his two forefingers close aside each other, make two look like one, look squaw in the face – see him smile – which is all one he say yes! so he take him home – no danger he cross throw him away and take another! Squaw love to eat meat! No husband, no meat! Squaw do everything to please husband, he do same to please squaw; live happy."[...]

Qtd. In Leechman

Grammar

- no gender distinctions: *he, him* for *she her*
- rel. pron. with personal reference: *which*

Lexis

- *squaw* “woman”
- *suppose* “if”
- *all one* “always”

6 Distinct Features of AIPE

- Fricatives replaced by plosives,
e.g. *Philipp* → *Pilipp*
- Me pronoun used for object and subject:
“*Me so strong*”
- Only simple verb form used:
“*[...]he say yes*”
- Suffix /-ðm/, /um/:
“*Tie um all up*”
- Loss of articles:
“*white man court*”
- Equational predicate (= zero copula):
“*Well now, suppose cross[...]*”

Louisiana Creole French – Kreyol Lwiziyen

Grammar

- **N Det**, not **Det N** as we know it.
- No noun gender
- but: Plural → *yé* after the noun
- *Yé* is derived from *eux* in French

Articles and the plural

- nouns often incorporate French articles as part of the noun
latab (< French *la table* “the table”)
- indefinite articles appear before the noun
en - indefinite article
en latab = a table
- definite articles appear after the noun
 - **a** after words ending in a vowel
 - **la** after words ending in a consonant*latab la* = the table
- plural: *yé* (< French *eux* “them”) follows the noun
latab yé = tables; *latab-la-yé* = the tables

Origin

- French
- African
- Native American
- Spanish

Pronouns

	Singular	Plural
1st person	m'/mo	nous
2nd person	t'/to	' / vous
3rd person	l / li	y / yé

Adjectives

- no verb needed
- *to be* “appears” as zero

e.g.

malad = sick

Mwen malad. = I am sick.

Nou malad. = We are sick.

Negation

pa	not
jamen	never
pli	no more/longer
pa _ arien	not _ anything (nothing)
pa _ pèsonn	not _ anybody (nobody)

Negation

Examples:

M wa en nom. = I see a man.

M pa wa en nom. = I don't see a man.

Mo jamaen wa nom yè. = I never see men.

M pa wa aryen. = I don't see anything.

M pa wa pèsonn. = I don't see anyone.

wa < French: *voir* (to see)

Common expressions

Kreyol Lwiziyen	English
Bonjou	Hello
Koman sa va?	How are you?
Adyeu	Good-bye
Sa-ki to non?	What is your name?
To pale kreyol?	Do you speak Creole?
langle, franse/ franswa, spagnol?	... English?... French?... Spanish?
Wi, mo pale kreyol.	Yes, I speak Creole.
Mersi	Thank you
Mo chagren	I'm sorry
Ki le li ye?	What time is it?

Gullah

- African Americans speaking Gullah = Geechee
= Sea Island Creole English
- Ogeechee River in Georgia
- strong African culture

Based on English

Influenced by West and Central African languages:

- Mandinka
- Wolof
- Bambara
- Fula
- Mende
- Vai
- Akan
- Ewe
- Yoruba
- Igbo
- Hausa
- Kongo
- Umbundu
- Kimbundu

Spoken on the sea islands and near coast of

- South Carolina
- Georgia

Origins

Two hypothesis:

- African Slaves developed their own creole language combining English with West and Central African languages.
- Slaves were already speaking Guinea Coast Creole English (aka West African Pidgin English). Spoken with the Europeans and other African tribes (trade language).

Gullah influenced by African languages:

- sound system
- grammar
- vocabulary
- syntax
- semantics

(Turner)

Pronouns

Gullah	English
mi	I
yuh	you/your
'e	he/she/his/her/it/its

The personal pronoun system of **Gullah** (Turner 1949: 227)

Singular	subject	possessive	object
1st	mi (ɒɪ)	mi (mɒɪ)	mi
2nd	yu, unə	yu, unə	yu, unə
3rd m	i, hɪm	hɪm	hɪm, əm
f	i, hɪm	hɪm, ʃɪ	hɪm, əm, ʃɪ
n	ɪt	ɪt	ɪt
Plural			
1st	wi	wi	wi
2nd	unə	unə	unə
3rd	de/dəm	de/dəm	dəm

Tense

- Uh he'p dem -- "I help them/I helped them" (Present/Past Tense)
- Uh bin he'p dem -- "I helped them" (Past Tense)
- Uh gwine he'p dem -- "I will help them" (Future Tense)
- Uh done he'p dem -- "I have helped them" (Perfect Tense)
- Uh duh he'p dem -- "I am helping them" (Present Progressive)
- Uh binnuh he'p dem -- "I was helping them" (Past Progressive)
- (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gullah_language#Lorenzo_Turner.27s_research)

Expressions, sayings and what/how they say it:

English	Gullah
Hush, stop talking	Tie yuh mout'
He changes his mind	'E turn 'e head
I didn't open my mouth	Mi een crack muh teet'
She is Pregnant	'E fol'
He wants too much	'E long eye
She's angry with me	She tink much wid me

Expressions, sayings and what/how they say it:

English	Gullah
Why?	Mek so?
He left a long time.	'E clean gone.
No dope allowed here!	No happy-dus' yah!
Sing a song sister	Hice uh chune sistuh.
Think hard for the answer.	Study yuh head.
Where is it?	Weh 'e deh at?
Get in here and sit down!	In yah cah sid down!
Throw the ball here.	Chunk de ball yuh

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