

LNGT0101 Introduction to Linguistics



Lecture #23
Dec 1st, 2014

Announcements

- HW 4 sent to your inboxes. Average score is 46.5/50 and median is 47.5/50. So, great job everyone!
- HW 5 will be sent to you by Monday of next week.
- Any questions on your paper?

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Announcements

- The Linguistics Club students are having a pizza dinner this Wed at Carr Hall at 5-7pm. I hope some of you can make it.
- Course response forms on Wednesday. Please be there to fill them out!
- Photo?

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Today's agenda

- Discussion of pidgins and creoles.

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Language contact

Creating language out of thin air:
The case of Pidgins and Creoles

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How about we listen to this English-based speech variety?

- [English-based speech variety](#)
- How much did you understand?
- Maybe we can try reading. Not sure it'll help, but let's try.

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How English is it now?

- L:** Ahm, wanpela sit i stap lo fotint.
Hmm, there is a seat on the 14th.
- D:** Oke, putim mi lo dispela.
OK, put me on that one.
- Ating bihain long apinun o tumora mi ...
Perhaps later this afternoon or tomorrow I ...
- ... mi gat wanpela tiket bai mi...
... I've got a ticket that I ...
- ... mi no bin yusim from Lae kam long hia.
... I haven't used it from Lae to here.

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How English is it now?

- L:** OK. Em i bilong go long we? Lae o Mosbi?
OK. What's its destination? Lae or Port Moresby?
- D:** No, long hia i go long Mosbi.
No, from here to Port Moresby.
- L:** Oke.
OK.
- D:** So tiket mi toktok long en, mi holim long Mosbi,
So the ticket I'm talking about, I had it from Port Moresby,
... i kam bilong Kavieng tasol mi bin wokabout long narapela rot.
... to Kavieng, but I've come here by another way.
- L:** Ah, oke, oke.
Ah, OK, OK.
- D:** Iya. Bai yumi senisim, tasol.
Yeah, we'll just change it.

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How English is it now?

- L:** So yu holim tiket i stap? Tasol em i...?
So you've got a ticket? But it...
- D:** Ti... tiket i stap ... mi no karim i kam, mi raunraun tasol...
I've got a ti... ticket ... I didn't bring it, I was just out...
- ... na mi tok orait, bai mi paimin dispela wanpela ... sit ...
... and I thought I'd go get this ... a seat ...
- ... na bai i redim i stap
... and they can prepare it.
- Ating apinun o tumora bai mi kam kism.
Maybe this afternoon or tomorrow I'll come and get it.
- L:** OK, bai mi givim yu kopi long buking. Yu weit.
OK. I'll give you a copy of the reservation. Just a minute.
- D:** Yes. Oke.
Yes. OK.

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Emergence of Pidgins and Creoles

- A **pidgin** is a system of communication used by people who do not know each other's languages but need to communicate with one another for trading or other purposes.
- By definition, then, a pidgin is not a natural language. It's a made-up "makeshift" language. Notice, crucially, that it does not have native speakers.

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Pidginization areas



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The lexicons of Pidgins are typically based on some dominant language

- While a pidgin is used by speakers of different languages, it is typically based on the lexicon of what is called a "dominant" language in the area where it is spoken.
- Dominant languages were typically those of the European colonialists, e.g., French, English, Dutch, etc.
- The dominant language is called the **lexifier**, or the **superstratum** language. The native languages of pidgin users are called **substratum** languages.

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Pidgins are linguistically simplified systems

- As you should expect, pidgins are very simple in their linguistic properties.
- Lexicon:
 - a. Words from lexifier languages;
 - b. Words belong to open classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives);
 - c. No or few closed class words (prepositions, conjunctions, determiners, etc.)

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Pidgins are linguistically simplified systems

- Since pidgin vocabulary is pretty limited, meanings are extended (remember semantic broadening?)
- So, *stick* is not only used for sticks, but also for trees, in Solomon Islands Pidgin.
- In Korean Bamboo English, *grass* is used in “*gras bilong head*” to mean “hair”, and in “*gras bilong mouth*” to mean “moustache”.
- Compounds are also frequent, e.g., *dog baby* for “puppy”, or
 “*Him cow pig have kittens?*”

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Pidgins are linguistically simplified systems

- Phonology:
 - a. Phoneme inventory: Consonants and vowels that are phonetically easy.
 - b. Syllable structure: Typically CV or CVC.
 - c. Stress: fixed stress location.
- Morphology:

Pretty much none. No plural, tense or aspect marking. No agreement, either.
- Syntax:
 - a. Variable word order, influenced by the user’s native language.
 - b. Sentences are simple and short with no embedding.

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A pidgin example

- Hawaiian Pidgin English (HPE), ignoring pronunciation:
 - You see, I got wood there; plenty men here no job, come steal.
 - Honolulu come; plenty more come; too much pineapple there.
 - No can. I try hard get good ones. Before, plenty duck; now, no more.
 - All 'ight, all 'ight, I go; all same, by'n bye Honolulu all Japanese.

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Kids?

- Suppose you’re a child born in a speech community where a pidgin is spoken (either by your parents or by the other kids in the neighborhood).
- The pidgin utterances are your primary linguistic data (PLD).
- But remember that a pidgin is not a natural language. So, what language are you going to end up learning on the basis of these PLD?

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Creole: The birth of a language

- As it turns out, kids impose **structure** on the language input they receive, ending up with a language that has prepositions, articles, tense marking, aspect morphology, embedded sentences, etc.
- When a pidgin is acquired as a first language by a generation of children, it becomes a **creole**. A creole thus, unlike a pidgin, is a natural language.

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HPE vs. HCE

a Pidgin:

No, the men, ah-pau [finished] work—they go, make garden. Plant this, ah, cabbage, like that. Plant potato, like that. And then—all that one—all right, sit down. Make lilly bit story.

b Creole:

When work pau [is finished] da guys they stay go make [are going to make] garden for plant potato an' cabbage an' after little while they go sit down talk story ['shoot the breeze'].

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When a pidgin becomes a creole, ...

- Compare the linguistic properties of Hawaiian Pidgin English (HPE) and Hawaiian Creole English (HCE).
- Word order:
HPE: S is always before O, but position of verb varies.

HCE: SVO, and allows other orders for pragmatic use.

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When a pidgin becomes a creole, ...

- Articles:

HPE: definite/indefinite articles, if existent at all, are used fairly randomly.

HCE: Definite *da* used for all and only known specific references. Indefinite *wan* used for all and only unknown specific references. Other NPs have no article.

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When a pidgin becomes a creole, ...

- HCE: *bin* marks tense, *go* marks modality, *stei* marks aspect.

Wail wi stei paedl, jaen stei put wata insaid da kanu—hei, da san av a gan haed sink!

“While we were paddling, John was letting water into the canoe—hey, the son-of-a-gun had sunk it!”

As tu bin get had taim reizing dag.

“The two of us used to have a hard time raising dogs.”

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When a pidgin becomes a creole, ...

- HCE: complementizers *fo* vs. *go*, where the former is used with hypothetical events, and the latter with events that actually happened. Notice the embedding as well.

a. Mo beta a bin go hanalulu fo bai maiself.

“It would have been better if I’d gone to Honolulu to buy it myself.”

b. Ai gata go haia wan kapinta go fiks da fom.

“I had to hire a carpenter to fix the form.”

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What happens after a creole is born?

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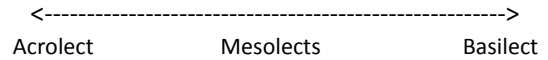
The post-creolization situation

- Creoles tend to co-exist with their lexifier languages in the same speech community. Since they are based on these languages, at least lexically, they come to be viewed as “nonstandard” varieties of the lexifier language.
- As we noted a couple of weeks ago, under desires for overt prestige, some speakers start to move away from their own creole to the standard lexifier language, in what is often called **decreolization**.

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The post-creole continuum

- As a result of decreolization, a range of creole varieties exist in a continuum. The variety closest to the standard language is called the **acrolect**, the one least like the standard is called the **basilect**, and in between these two is a range of creole varieties that are called **mesolects**:



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What does that mean?

Mɪ bɪn gi: æm wan.

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The post-creole continuum

The sentence 'I gave him one' in Guyanese

Pidgin and Creole Languages
 Table 3.1 A Guyanese continuum

1	ai				w/ɔn
2				him	
3		getv		ɪm	
4				i:	
5				him	
6	a	gɪv		ɪm	
7					
8		dɪd	gɪv	i:	
9		dɪ	gɪ		wan
10		dɪd	gɪ		
11			gɪ:		
12					
13		dɪ	gɪ	hi:	
14					
15	mɪ			ɪ:	
16		bɪn			
17			gɪ:		
18				æm	

Source: Bell (1976, p. 136)

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The post-creole continuum

- Samples of Hawaiian Creole about President Obama and Thanksgiving (should be a piece of cake compared to Tok Pisin):
- <http://www.mauimagazine.net/Maui-Magazine/January-February-2009/Dear-Prezadent-Obama/>
- <http://www.mauimagazine.net/Maui-Magazine/November-December-2012/Tanks-Eh/>

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An exercise on Cameroon English Pidgin

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Next class agenda

- Language and thought.
- Language endangerment.
- Course response forms.

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