Today

• Theories accounting for Creole origin: European input

-- theories that place creole origins in European or European-derived languages

-- theories that stress the transformation of European language structures

• But first, what is meant by ‘creole genesis’?

_Creole Genesis (def.):_ the emergence of a creole language/family of creole languages

-- identify the key force serving as a catalyst in creole genesis
-- genetic relatedness
-- pidginization
Types of Theories

1. Theories focusing on European input
2. Theories focusing on non-European (African) input
3. [Gradualist approaches (not theories, per se)]
4. Universalist Theories

Classes of theory (regarding approach to creole genesis issue):

1. Simplification theories
   -- theories focusing on what a creole does not have
   -- interested in how forms are reduced and borrowed

2. Universalist theories
   -- theories focusing on speakers’ ability to “build languages”
   using raw materials of cognition and learning

3. Learning theories
   -- draw comparisons to processes in L1 acquisition and L2 learning
Timeline: An overview

1. **Relexification or Monogenesis (1880s):** relexified Portuguese proto-pidgin of nautical origin.

2. **Universalist (1880s):** similarities due to cognitive features of the human species, reflected in adult second-language learning.

3. **Substratist (1880s):** borrow words from lexifier but retain grammar and phonology of the substrate (creole as hybrid).

4. **Baby-talk/Foreigner simplification (1930s):** imperfect second language learning plus simplification of input.

5. **Polygenesis (1950s):** substrate influence combined with superstrate influence (focus on features, not source languages).

6. **Bioprogram Model (1970s):** (Bickerton) humans have a built-in biological propensity for Language (not "a language") with certain universal features.
Monogenisis Theories

I. Tenets of the Monogenesis Theory:
   A. single origin for (both pidgins and) creoles
      1. In its strictest version, this predecessor language is a West African Portuguese Pidgin (WAPP)
      2. A second version claims that this language was derived from Lingua Franca

II. Emergence of the theory
   A. In vogue in the 1950’s, 60’s
   B. Various forms:
      1. Monogenesis and WAPP
         -- spoken in forts and trading settlements from the 15th - 18th century
         -- WAPP as precursor for Portuguese pidgins that formed on the West African Coast
         -- Relexified WAPP as precursor for French and English creoles
I. Tenets
A. Origins of creoles lie in local dialects of the lexifier language
B. Tend to deny more than trivial influence from substrate
   1. Krapp vs. Turner

II. Emergence of the theory
A. Took hold in the 1930s
B. Dialect lexicography literature provides uneven geographical coverage
   1. Role of Scots in English-lexifier creoles is overplayed
C. Contributed emphasis that there is varying influence of dialects of the same language on creoles
   1. E.g., Dutch

III. A different twist: English in Africa
   1. Late 16th century
   2. Location: Sierra Leone and Gambia rivers, southerly coasts
   3. Evidence: Krio-like creole in several locations
European Dialect Origin Theories

III. A different twist: English in Africa
A. Hancock (1985): Domestic Origin Hypothesis, continued
   4. Racially mixed population developed this Krio-like PE
   5. It was this pidgin that was transported to the Caribbean
   6. Smith’s “Ingredient X”
      -- fixed set of lexical items from Wolof (Senegal) to
         Kimbundu (Angola)
      -- e.g. njam ‘eat’,
         bakra ‘European’ (<Efik)
B. Influence from nautical pidgin (Gulf of Guinea Creoles)
   1. Nautical terms
   2. Sabir
   3. Means of transference:
      -- acquired by mixed population of Gambia-Sierra
         Leone coast
      -- acquired by slaves during coastal travel in Africa
      -- acquired by slaves in African forts
      -- acquired by slaves during the Middle Passage
      -- spoken by colonial whites living in coastal forts
European Dialect Origin Hypotheses

C. Influence from English in the Americas
   1. Again, variable influence of European dialects
      -- variants of two dialects in Saramaccan
      -- r-ful Bajan
Gradualist Theories

1. **Historical assumption in Creole Linguistics:** Creoles emerge out of pidgin languages through a process of nativization.

2. Nativization assumed to be “abrupt” (occurring within one to two generations).

3. Gradualist theories are an alternative view to the traditional assumption of abrupt change:
   - **Claim:** Creolization is not instantaneous, but rather extends over a number of generations of speakers.

4. Evidence from historical documents:
   - a. records of early linguistic forms
   - b. demographic information regarding the rate at which locally-born slaves outnumbered African-born slaves
Extent of Substrate Influence:

A. *Phonological Influence* – now undisputed

B. *Lexical Influence*
   1.) Typically, ‘cultural’ words: lexical domains connected to religion, kinship, customs, traditional implements, cooking, fishing, hunting if a productive morphological process)

   e.g., **nye yi** (Ewe)
   eye water (Jamaican Creole)
   “tears”

D. *Syntactic Influence, cont.*
   1.) Serial Verb Constructions: typologically rare, attested in Sino-Tibetan, Papuan, and Niger-Congo
   2.) passive constructions:

   **Di wata sik mi** (Guyanese, Jamaican, Bajan, etc.)
   “The water made me sick.”
Polygenesis/Mixed European Source Hypotheses

I Tenets
A. Stated to explain complex cases, such as Saramaccan, which appear to have more than one lexifier language
   1. Dju-tongo -- mixed creole from which Saramaccan is derived
Foreigner / Baby-talk Hypotheses

I Tenets: Foreigner Talk
A. Creolization is a direct reflection of simplification processes in speech to foreigners.
   1. Accommodation
   2. Imitation
   3. Telegraphic condensation
   4. Adoption of conventions

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>speech rate</td>
<td>sent struct.</td>
<td>prevalence of INF b/w constit.</td>
<td>pauses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   1. Accommodation  
      (✓)  (✓)  (✓)  (✓)

   2. Imitation
      (✓)  (✓)  (✓)

   3. Telegraphic condensation
      (✓)

   4. Adoption of conventions
Second language acquisition:

**Similarities to First Language Acquisition (L1)**

1.) Learners show a common morpheme order in learning English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>-----&gt;</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Farsi (Iran)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>morpheme order in learning English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**easiest**

| PROGRESSIVE-ING | going, thinking, driving |
| PLURAL -S | trees, cars, brains |
| “TO BE” COPULA | he is, they are, I am |

**↓**

| AUXILIARY VERBS | I am going, I will go, |
| ARTICLES | I would go |
|            | the trees, an apple, a friend |

**↓**

| IRREGULAR PAST | I went, he threw the ball |

**↓**

| REGULAR PAST | It rolled, I jogged |
| 3RD SINGULAR -S | his car, her apple, its voice |
| POSSESSIVE | |

**most difficult**

(from Romaine, 1988)
The Role of the Substrate

A.) Was controversial in the 1900s

B.) Is vexed by the same kinds of problems that vex superstrate theories:
   1.) Dillard (1970) “The Cafeteria Principle”-- the problematic practice of arbitrarily attributing a creole’s features to superstrate (or substrate) influence; “keep looking just till you find something that fits”

C.) Is vexed by unique problems:
   1.) In many cases, determining the substrate language is difficult
   2.) Determining the structure and forms of the substrate in the appropriate period of history
   3.) If substrate influence can be traced to a language family only, how homogeneous or heterogeneous was the family/language?
The Role of the Substrate

Alternative explanations (or weaker or restricted substratist theories)

4.) Bickerton: The role of universal grammar
   -- (1979) The Language Bioprogram Model
   -- (1988, 1989) Lexical-learning Hypothesis of Language Acquisition

5.) Lefebvre: Relexification Hypothesis
.... on to the Substrate theories
Extent of Substrate Influence

A. *Lexical Influence*

1.) Typically, ‘cultural’ words: lexical domains connected to religion, kinship, customs, traditional implements, cooking, fishing, hunting
   a. Gullah Creole retentions (Mende)
2.) Some flora and fauna
3.) Calques (*particularly of interest if a productive morphological process)*
   e.g., *nye yi* (Ewe)
   *eye water* (Jamaican Creole)
   “tears”
4.) Exception: Berbice Dutch
B. *Phonological Influence*

1.) Syllable structure
   a. e.g., open syllables in Gbe (CV, CV), Kikongo (CV, CVV, CVVN)
      Early Sranan, Saramaccan, Ndjuka, also open syllables only
      -- Phonetically, present-day Sranan exhibits:
         closed syllables < syncope of unstressed V’s
         complex onset clusters
         medial nasal clusters

2.) Lexical tone
   -- words of European origin in Saramaccan represent the original main stressed V with a H tone

3.) Double-articulated stops
C. Morphological Influence
1.) Affixational morphology in Berbice Dutch
   -- plural -apu -- aspect suffixes -te*, -are
   -- nominalizer -ye -- causative morpheme -ma
(*note: conflation with Dutch past imperfective -t´ possible)
2.) Aspect markers: EI forms are suffixed; BD:
   -- suffixes for imperfective and perfective
   -- preverbal markers for tense and irrealis

D. Syntactic Influence
1.) Serial Verb Constructions: typologically rare, attested in Sino-Tibetan, Papuan, and Niger-Congo
D. *Syntactic Influence, cont.*

1.) Serial Verb Constructions: typologically rare, attested in Sino-Tibetan, Papuan, and Niger-Congo

2.) passive constructions:

Di wata sik mi \( (\text{Guyanese, Jamaican, Bajan, etc.}) \)
“The water made me sick.”

Wan trii kot.
“A tree was cut.”
Extent of Substrate Influence

E. Semantic Influence
   1.) Ndjuka lexico-semantics appear to be substrate (and not UG) related

F. Adstrate Influence
   1.) e.g. Jamaican Creole
      manioc  “cassava”  (Arawak)
      kanu    “canoe”
      dasheen “callalloo” (type of vegetable)
      Xaymaca “Jamaica”
Gradualist Approaches

• *Issues:*
  - Speed of creolization
  - Differentiating creolization from language change
  - Grammaticalization

...focus is centrally upon the nature of language change.
Gradualist Theories

1. **Historical assumption in Creole Linguistics:** Creoles emerge out of pidgin languages through a process of nativization.

2. Nativization assumed to be “abrupt” (occurring within one to two generations).

3. Gradualist theories are an alternative view to the traditional assumption of abrupt change:
   - **Claim:** Creolization is not instantaneous, but rather extends over a number of generations of speakers.

4. Evidence from historical documents:
   - a. records of early linguistic forms
   - b. demographic information regarding the rate at which locally-born slaves outnumbered African-born slaves.
Linguistic Evidence

A. Sranan:
1. Diachronic changes in the copula, 1700-1950
   - pre-1800: *da* expresses both attribution and identification
   - post-1800: *da* subdivided into *de* for attribution; *da* for identification:

**Pre-1800:**

- *Hoe fassi joes man da granman vo joe?*
  - what-way 2SG man COP boss of 2SG
  - ‘Your husband doesn’t own you, does he?’ (Van Dyk, c1765)

- *Mie no sabie o sama da em.*
  - 1SG NEG know what person COP 3SG.
  - ‘I don’t know who he is.’ (Weygandt, 1798)

**Post-1800:**

- *Mi wefi de wan bejari soema toe.*
  - 1SG wife COP an aged person also.
  - ‘My wife is old, too.’ (Anon. 1829)

- *Mi da Gabriel, disi de tanapoe na Gado fesi alatem.*
  - 1SG COP Gabriel REL ASP stand LOC God face always.
  - I am Gabriel, who is always standing before God. (Anon. 1829)
Demographic Evidence

A. Sranan, cont.:
2. Unclear that sufficient population was in place for nativization to have occurred during the first one to two generations

Also, unclear how many children are required to carry out process of nativization.

B. Roles of superstrate and substrate languages
   *continuity*: processes at work no different from normal language change
1. Creoles as continuities of African languages plus gradual acculturation (Alleyne, 1971; Lefebvre, 1986)
2. Creoles as continuities of the lexifier language (Chaudenson, 1992)
3. Creoles as reflecting the sharp discontinuities at work in social disruption = change at a fast rate (Thomason and Kaufman, 1988)
4. Creoles as reflecting sharp discontinuities arising from imperfect L2 learning (Bickerton, 1981)
definition: the process by which a lexical element becomes part of the grammar of a language (i.e., becomes part of the system of inflectional or derivational morphology). e.g., Creation of morphosyntactic markers.

1. Tok Pisin baimbai:
   sentential time adverbial ‘afterwards’ > preverbal particle > verbal prefix

2. Grammaticalization accompanied by phonological reduction, and

3. Semantic generalization (“bleaching”)

4. Sources vary: adverbs “baimbai”, full verbs “go”,

5. …but again, there is also widespread similarity. Substrate relation or (semantic) universal?
   e.g.: form for “there” > progressive marker (d)e/(d)a
   e.g.: preposition > clause-introducing morpheme
Grammaticalization

6. Similar to or different from languages with a longer history?
a. Motivations for Grammaticalization:
   In cases of disrupted linguistic transmission, communicative need may be a major force motivating development of grammatical categories where none previously exist.
   e.g., Pidgin Samoan ‘ol’
   Subject forms | Object Forms
   mi | mi ol | bilong mi | bilong as
   yu | yu ol | bilong yu | bilong yu ol
   em, him | emol, himol | bilong em | bilong dem

   e.g., Early Tok Pisin ‘-pela’
   Subject forms
   mi | mipela (exclusive),
   yumi | yu | yu-pela
   em | emol

b. Presence of other languages introduces language-external pressures to change -
   e.g., use of a lexical content word from the lexifier as a grammatical form (ben/bin)