

(1) **Creolization vs. second language acquisition (SLA)**

- Similar outcomes and constraints (Wekker 1996; Winford 2002; Lefebvre, White and Jourdan 2006)
- So why does French /y/ develop differently in creoles and SLA?
(Valdman 1984: 228-9; Rochet 1995; Russell Webb & Anderson 2010)

1. The facts

(2) **SLA /y/ → /u/**

- American college students produce /y/ and /u/ with completely overlapping F1 and F2, even after a year's immersion in France (Flege & Hillenbrand 1984)

(3a) **Creole /y/ → /i/ in all four major groups of French creoles**

- Haitian (Lefebvre 1998: 401)
- Lesser Antilles: Martinique (Funk 1953: 37), Guadeloupe (Cérol 1991: 59), St. Lucia (Carrington 1984: 18)
- Indian Ocean: Mauritius (Baker 1972: 43), Réunion (Baggioni 1990: 371), New Caledonia (Ehrhart 1993: 94)
- Louisiana Creole (Klingler 2003: 143)

(3b) **Faithful /y/ does occur in creoles**

- Most creoles: /y/ in educated speech (Valdman 1978: 50; Ehrhart 1993: 94; Baggioni 1990: 371; Klingler 2003: 150), with hypercorrect /i/ → /y/ (Klingler 2003: 150; Valdman 2004: 45)
⇒ Simplest explanation is /y/ → /i/, followed by decreolization.
 - Except St. Lucia: "The use of /y/ is limited to a few words in the speech of a minority of speakers, usually in rural areas ..." (Carrington 1984: 18)
⇒ Probably *not* decreolization because:
 - St. Lucia's rural interior is especially inaccessible: mountainous with few roads
 - /y/ doesn't occur in all etymologically appropriate contexts, only in a few words, e.g. /kōsyt/ 'council', /laritym/ 'habit', /ʒys/ 'just' (Carrington 1984: 18-19)
 - St. Lucia's prestige language is English, not French (the British took over in 1814)
- ⇒ Practically universal /y/ → /i/ *except* for this conservative creole.

2. Previous proposals

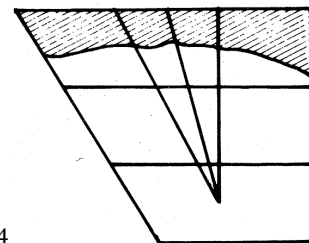
(4) **French /u/ → /y/ shift was incomplete at time of creolization (Tinelli 1981: 122)**

- Incorrectly predicts modern French /y/ alongside creole /u/, not /i/. But anyway:
 - French 'u' already likened to /i/ and English *ew* in the late 16th century (Posner 1997:250ff)
 - Large-scale slave movements to French colonies only in the 17th century (Holm 1989: 356ff)
- ⇒ Native-speaker input to creoles did include /y/.

(8b) Predictions of Rochet's L1 influence hypothesis

- Since francophone Africa has similar L1 influence, it should have categorical /y/ → /i/ too
 - But in fact, /y/ has /i/-like and /u/-like realizations
 - Asante Twi speakers in Ghana (Haggis 1975: 65)
 - Ewe speakers in South Togo (Lafage 1985: 165)
 - Bassa speakers in coastal Cameroon (Wamba & Noumssi 2004: 4)
- ⇒ L1 influence can't be solely responsible for the creole/SLA split.
- If it were, francophone Africa should have categorical /y/ → /i/ like the French creoles.

Realization of /y/
by Asante Twi speakers in Ghana



Haggis (1975: 65)

3. Proposal: Creole and SLA findings applied to this problem

(9a) Creolization differs from SLA

- The very early stages of SLA tend not to be fossilized in creoles (Siegel 2006: 38)
- Untutored SLA by a group, not an individual in a classroom (Mufwene 2008: 133ff)
- Aim is intelligibility among learners, not with native speakers (Thomason and Kaufman 1988)
- Gradual creolization model: Target shift during successive waves of (adult) SLA
 - Historically documented (Arends 1989) and applied to syntax and the lexicon (Véronique 1994; Mather 2000; Selbach *et al.* 2009), but less to phonology (Kramer 2009).

(9b) Gradual creolization in French colonies?

- In Martinique (a hub of the slave trade) free and slave populations only equalized after thirty years, and after fifty years the ratio was only 2:1 (Holm 1989: 365; Chaudenson 2001: 97)
- Two stages of settlement (Chaudenson 2001: 95ff)
 - *Homestead stage*: Fewer slaves, less sharp social distinctions ⇒ Access to native-speaker French
 - *Plantation stage*: Adult males, short life expectancy ⇒ Target shift: L2 French of previous arrivals.

(10a) Early but reduced acquisition of L2 contrasts

- Contrasts are acquired early
 - L1 Chinese speakers distinguish English *beat-bead* (after only one year in America: Flege 1993)
 - L1 Italian speakers distinguish English /eɪ/ and Italian /e/ (Flege *et al.* 2003)
 - L1 Arabic speakers distinguish English /p t k/ and /b d g/ (Flege 1980)
- But contrasts were reduced in all cases, even by experienced speakers
 - Speakers 'average' between L2 category and most similar L1 category (Flege & Hillenbrand 1984).

(10b) Acquisition of /y/

- /y/ is intermediate between /i/ and /u/, therefore it could be 'attracted' by both (Bunta 2005)
 - Two 'clusters' in South Togo French: /i/-like [y] with reduced rounding vs. /u/-like advanced [u⁺]
 - Which one would persist among experienced speakers?
 - The /i/-like variant (reduced [y]) is a perfect match in terms of features
 - Would /y/ be an exception to early acquisition?
 - Monolinguals produce recognizable /y/ on first imitation trial (Borden *et al.* 1981: 115)
 - Little difference between experienced and inexperienced learners' /y/ (Flege & Hillenbrand 1984)
 - Experience improves /u/: maybe this is the new category for AmEng speakers (Rochet 1995)
- ⇒ Prediction: early acquisition of /y/ with reduced lip rounding.

(10c) Acquisition of French /y/ in creolization?

- Contrast acquired early: attested in conservative rural St. Lucian (and Louisiana Creole)
 - But contrast reduced
 - › Rural St. Lucian: “The lips are less spread approaching a rounded position but by no means as for French front rounded /y/ as in *jus*.” (Carrington 1984: 18-9)
 - › Louisiana Creole: /y/ is “rarely as fully rounded as in French” (Klingler 2003: 150)
- ⇒ The /i y u/ contrast was successfully acquired in early creolization, but probably reduced.

(11) Summary

- Homestead stage: /y/ was successfully acquired, but probably with reduced lip rounding
 - Plantation stage: Each wave of immigrants acquired /y/ with less and less lip rounding
- ⇒ The /y/ → /i/ shift was completed only at a late stage of creolization.

4. Conclusion

(12) Typology

- Both /y/ → /i/ and /y/ → /u/ attested in most types of language contact, depending on L₁
 - › Non-native perception: Brazilian Portuguese/French, American English/French
 - › SLA: Serbian/German, American English/French
 - › Loans: Indonesian/Dutch, Japanese/French
 - › Nativized varieties: South Togo French, Taiwanese Mandarin
- But only /y/ → /i/ in the special circumstances of creolization
 - › Initially enough exposure to acquire the /i y u/ contrast, but reduced
 - › Further reduction with each wave of immigrants due to target shift.

(13) Different outcomes, different processes

- Similar outcomes in language contact are interesting, but so are different outcomes
- Clues to what creolization and SLA have in common, and where they diverge.

References

- Antes, Theresa A. (2007). *Analyse linguistique de la langue française*. New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press.
- Arends, Jacques (1989). *Syntactic developments in Sranan: Creolization as a gradual process*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nijmegen.
- Baggioni, Daniel (1990). *Dictionnaire creole réunionnais/français*. Université de la Réunion, Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines.
- Baker, Philip (1972). *Kreol: A description of Mauritian Creole*. London: Hurst.
- Borden, G. J., Harris K. S., Hollis Fitch, & H. Yoshioka (1981). Producing relatively unfamiliar speech gestures: A synthesis of perceptual targets and production rules. *Haskins Laboratories Status Report SR-66*: 85–117.
- Bunta, Ferenc (2005). Reconsidering factors affecting the acquisition of novel second language phonemes: A study of Hungarian ESL learners. In *Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism*, James Cohen, Kara T. McAlister, Kellie Rolstad, & Jeff MacSwan, eds., Somerville, MA: Cascadia Press.
- Carrington, Lawrence D. (1984). *St. Lucian Creole: A descriptive analysis of its phonology and morpho-syntax*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag.
- Cérol, Marie-Josée (1991). *Une introduction au créole guadeloupéen*. SI: Jasor.
- Chaudenson, Robert (2001). *Creolization of Language and Culture*. Translated and revised by Salikoko S. Mufwene, with Sheri Pargman, Sabrina Billings & Michelle AuCoin. London; New York: Routledge.
- Dohlus, Katrin (2005). Phonetics or phonology: Asymmetries in loanword adaptations. *ZAS Papers in Linguistics* 42: 117–135.
- Ehrhart, Sabine (1993). *Le créole français de St-Louis (le tayo) en Nouvelle Calédonie*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag.
- Flege, James Emil (1980). Phonetic approximation in second language acquisition. *Language Learning* 30(1): 117.
- Flege, James Emil (1993). Production and perception of a novel, second-language phonetic contrast. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 93(3): 1589–1608.
- Flege, James Emil (2003). Interaction between the native and second language phonetic subsystems. *Speech Communication* 40(4): 467–491.
- Flege, James Emil & James Hillenbrand (1984). Limits on phonetic accuracy in foreign language speech production. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 76(3): 708–721.
- Funk, Henry Elwell (1953). *The French creole dialect of Martinique*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia.
- Gendrot, Cédric & Martine Adda-Decker (2005). Impact of duration on F1/F2 formant values of oral vowels: An automatic analysis of large broadcast news corpora in French and German. In *Interspeech 2005*, 2453–2456.
- Haggis, Bernard Murray (1975). *La phonie du français chez les trilingues twi*. Paris: SELAF.
- Holm, John A. (1988). *Pidgins and Creoles: Volume I: Theory and structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Holm, John A. (1989). *Pidgins and Creoles: Volume II: A reference survey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Klingler, Thomas A. (2003). *If I could turn my tongue like that: The creole language of Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Kramer, Marvin (2009). Gradualism in the transfer of tone spread rules in Saramaccan. In Selbach et al., 189–217.
- Kubler, Cornelius C. (1981). The development of Mandarin in Taiwan: A case study of language contact. Ph.D. thesis, Cornell.
- Labov, William, Sharon Ash & Charles Boberg (2006). *The atlas of North American English: Phonetics, phonology, and sound change*. Berlin; New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Ladefoged, Peter (2005). *Vowels and consonants: An introduction to the sounds of languages*. Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell, 2nd ed.
- Lafage, Suzanne (1985). *Français écrit et parlé en pays éwé (Sud-Togo)*. Paris: Société d'études linguistiques et anthropologiques de France.
- Lefebvre, Claire (1998). *Creole genesis and the acquisition of grammar: The case of Haitian creole*. Cambridge studies in linguistics, Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lefebvre, Claire, Lydia White, & Christine Jourdan (2006). Introduction. In *L2 acquisition and creole genesis: Dialogues*, Claire Lefebvre, Lydia White, & Christine Jourdan, eds., Language acquisition & language disorders, Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1–14.
- Levy, Erika S. & Winifred Strange (2008). Perception of French vowels by American English adults with and without French language experience. *Journal of Phonetics* 36: 141–157.
- Mather, Patrick-André (2000). Creole genesis: Evidence from West African L2 French. In *Languages in Contact*, Dicky Gilbers, John Nerbonne, & Jos Schaeken, eds., Amsterdam; Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 247–261.
- Mufwene, Salikoko S. (2008). *Language evolution: Contact, competition and change*. London; New York: Continuum, 133–159.
- Politzer, R.L. (1961). Auditory discrimination of French vowels by English speakers. *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* 7(1): 32–44.
- Posner, Rebecca (1997). *Linguistic change in French*. Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press.
- Rochet, Bernard L. (1995). Perception and production of second-language speech sounds by adults. In *Speech perception and linguistic experience: Issues in cross-language research*, Winifred Strange, ed., chap. 13, Baltimore: York Press, 379–410.
- Russell Webb, Eric & Anderson, Bruce (2010). Examining the role of perception in contact induced change: What can laboratory studies reveal? Presented at LSA 2010, Jan 7–10, Baltimore.
- Selbach, Rachel, Hugo C. Cardoso, & Margot van den Berg, eds. (2009). *Gradual creolization: Studies celebrating Jacques Arends*. Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Siegel, Jeff (2006). Links between SLA and creole studies: Past and present. In *L2 Acquisition and Creole Genesis*, Claire Lefebvre, Lydia White, & Christine Jourdan, eds., Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 15–46.
- Sneddon, James N. (2003). *The Indonesian language: Its history and role in modern society*. Sydney, NSW: UNSW Press.
- Strange, Winifred, Andrea Weber, Erika S. Levy, Valeriy Shafiro, Miwako Hisagi, & Kanae Nishi (2007). Acoustic variability within and across German, French, and American English vowels: Phonetic context effects. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 122(2): 1111–1129.
- Thomason, Sarah Grey & Terrence Kaufman (1988). *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*. Berkeley; Los Angeles; Oxford: University of California Press.
- Valdman, Albert (1978). *Le créole: structure, statut et origine*. Paris: Klincksieck.
- Valdman, Albert (1984). Review article: 'D'accord. La prononciation du français international et perfectionnement. Carduner, S. and Hagiwara, M. P. New York: Wiley. Méthodologie de l'enseignement de la prononciation. Callamand, M. Paris, CLE [Didactique des langues étrangères], 1981. Pp. 191. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 6(2): 226–232.
- Valdman, Albert (2004). L'influence de la norme émergente du créole haïtien sur les variétés vernaculaires régionales. In *Variation et francophonie*, Aidan Coveney, Marie-Anne Hintze, & Carol Sanders, eds., Paris: L'Harmattan France, 35–49.
- Vendelin, Inga & Sharon Peperkamp (2006). The influence of orthography on loanword adaptations. *Lingua* 116(7): 996–1007.
- Véronique, Daniel (1994). Naturalistic adult acquisition of French as L2 and French-based creole genesis compared. In *Creolization and Language Change*, Dany Adone & Ingo Plag, eds., *Linguistische Arbeiten* 317, Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 117–137.
- Wamba, Rodolphine Sylvie & Gérard Marie Noumssi (2004). Le français au Cameroun contemporain. In *Dynamique du français au Cameroun*, ed. Fosso, Pr. Yaoundé, Cameroon: Presses universitaire d'Afrique. 35–69.
- Wekker, Herman (1996). *Creolization and the acquisition of English as a second language*. Berlin; New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 139–152.
- Winford, Donald (2002). Creoles in the context of contact linguistics. In *Pidgin and creole linguistics in the twenty-first Century*, Glenn G. Gilbert, ed., New York: Peter Lang, 287–354.