

The phonology of contact: Creole sound change in context

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- (1) “Immunity to contact”
 - a. Nothing is immune: lexicon, phonology, syntax, morphology (Thomason & Kaufman 1988)
 - b. Social conditions trump linguistic constraints, e.g. structural transfer in language shift

- (2) “Contact as simplification”
 - a. Bickerton’s (1981, 1984) bioprogram, refuted by Siegel (2006; 2007) etc.
 - McWhorter’s (1998; 2011) creole prototype hypothesis: “the world’s simplest grammars”
 - Not for phoneme inventories and syllable templates (Uffmann 2009; Klein 2011)
 - b. Larger population → Simpler morphosyntax, *larger* inventories (Hay & Bauer 2007; Atkinson 2011; Wichmann *et al.* 2011; Donohue & Nichols 2011)
 - c. But how much simplification do we expect in the phoneme inventory?

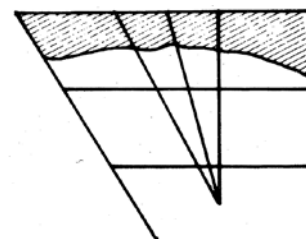
- (3) “Contact as perception”
 - a. Emergent patterns: too-many-solutions, divergent repairs, unnecessary repairs (Kang 2011)
 - Japanese /kannu/ < *Cannes*, but /pen/ from *pen* (Peperkamp *et al.* 2008)
 - b. Underlying phonology vs. phonetics/perception
 - Mexican Spanish /bitɛr/ < *bitter* [birɛɾ] (LaCharité & Paradis 2005)
 - c. Who is borrowing, naïve non-native listeners, or competent bilinguals?

- (4) Contact as sound change
 - a. Phonological constraints, social interactions, phonetic precursors
 - b. Phonetic effects unique to L2 → Sound changes unique to language contact?

(5) Three case studies		Creolisation	Other contact	L1 transmission
a. Front rounded vowels (phoneme merger)	Unrounding • $y > i$	✓	✓	✓
	Backing • $y > u$	rare	✓	rare
b. Vowel assimilation (stress-dependent)	Unstressed trigger • búke > býke	unknown	✓	✓
	Stressed trigger • búke > búku	✓	✓	✓
c. Word-final epenthesis (vs. other repairs)	Epenthesis • big > bigi	✓	✓	rare
	Others • big > bik	✓	✓	✓

- (6) **Overwhelming pattern: French /y/ > creole /i/ (e.g. Holm 1988: 120)**
- | | |
|--|---|
| a. Haitian [mi] ‘wall’ < <i>mur</i> | b. Martinique [ime] ‘mood’ < <i>humeur</i> |
| c. Guadeloupe [kime] ‘to foam, skim’ < <i>écumer</i> | d. St. Lucia [fimen] ‘to smoke’ < <i>fumer</i> |
| e. Mauritius [dite] ‘tea’ < <i>du thé</i> | f. Réunion [sirtu] ‘mainly’ < <i>surtout</i> |
| g. Seychelles [liniform] ‘uniform’ < <i>l’uniforme</i> | h. New Caledonia [tribi] ‘tribe’ < <i>tribu</i> |
- (7) **Minority patterns (e.g. Valdman 1973; Klingler 2003; Carrington 1984; Parkvall 2000: 29)**
- /u/ in some Haitian words, e.g. /bule/ ‘burn’ < *bruler* (cf. Louisiana, Mauritius *burle*)
 - [y] in acrolect: Nearly all French creoles, e.g. hypercorrect Louisiana [klarynet] < *clarinette*
 - /y/ in several words: rural St Lucian /kōsy/ ‘council’ < *consulter* (cf. basilectal rural Haitian)
- (8) **/u ~ i/ in West African indigenised French varieties**
- Asante Twi speakers in Ghana (Haggis 1975: 65)
 - Ewe speakers in South Togo (Lafage 1985: 165)
 - Bassa speakers in coastal Cameroon (Wamba & Noumssi 2004: 46)
- (9) **Gradual creolisation (e.g. Arends 1989; Selbach *et al.* 2009)**
- Homestead → Plantation (Singler 1995; Chaudenson 2001)
 - Target shift during successive waves of adult L2 acquisition
- (10) **Early but reduced acquisition of L2 contrasts (Flege *et al.* 2003; Flege 1993; Flege 1980)**
- Quality of /ei/ vs. /e/, duration of *beat-bead* and /p t k/ vs. /b d g/
 - /y/ could go in two directions: /u/-like (advanced [u⁺]), or /i/-like (less rounded [y])
- (11) **Loanwords (Paradis & Prunet 2000; Parkvall 2000; Dohlus 2008; Kenstowicz 2003)**
- /i/ only: Kikongo, Kituba
 - /u/ only: “Bantu speakers in Congo-Kinshasa”
 - /i/ and /u/: Kinyarwanda, Fula, Lingala, Mandinka, Wolof, Moroccan Arabic
 - Others: /wi/ in Fongbe, Vietnamese; /ju/ in Japanese
- (12) **Phonological bias hypothesis**
- More bilingualism early in the transmission process will tend to favour outcomes with the closest phonological match rather than the closest acoustic match.
 - All else being equal, major place of articulation is privileged in phonological matching.
- (13) **Findings from this case study**
- Phonetic mechanism for ‘phonological’ adaptation
 - Creole exceptionality within language contact (cf. Russell Webb & Anderson 2010)
- (14) **L2 phonetic effects**
- Early but reduced acquisition of L2 contrasts (Flege *et al.* 2003; Flege 1993; Flege 1980)
 - Consonant cluster timing: CC → C^oC (e.g. Zsiga 2000; Davidson 2006)
 - Speech planning in shorter chunks (e.g. Pienemann 1998)
 - Hypercorrection and self-monitoring (e.g. Jaeger 2005: 82; Eckman *et al.* 2013)
 - Overcompensation for apparent phonetic reduction or weak perceptual salience?
 - ▶ Haitian /piti/ < French *petit*
 - ▶ Bazaar Malay /ampat/ < Malay /əmpat/

Realization of /y/
by Asante Twi speakers in Ghana



Haggis (1975: 65)

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