

Fundamental Concepts in Sociolinguistics
Doctor Om Prakash
School of Humanities and Social Science
Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida
Lecture 23
Pidgin and Creole


Hello everyone, welcome. Today we are going to talk about two very interesting phenomena called Pidgin and Creole. So, we will talk about Pidgin and Creole in this video. Can you imagine a situation where let us imagine a situation where what will happen when two different sets of people happen to meet in a particular time and space where they have no language in common, and if this contact sustains for a longer period of time how do they carry out their everyday transactions? What will happen? When there is no language common, right?

How they will be able to meet their communication needs? And if we look at the mobility history of mobility and migration for various factors and regions, it may be war, it may be trade, it may be the process of colonization, and this entire idea of the age of discovery when European forces reached different non-European shores. What could have happened when there was no language in common for communication?

So, for any transaction, they require to communicate, and perhaps this is the reason or this is the fact that because there was no language in common among these two sets of people something new emerged. A linguistic code had to emerge to fulfill and meet the requirements of communication, interaction, right, and their everyday transactions. So Pidgin and Creole are the results of such situations in history, where two sets of people came together in contact, and this contact sustained for a long time, but there was no language common for communication.


So in order to meet their communicative needs and carry out everyday transactions a common code emerged, right, out of the two sources, so community A speech community A, and speech community B come in contact with nothing common between the two no language common between the two communities and so language X emerges with a blending of language A and language B. So, this is how a new code emerges.

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Pidgin

- Pidgin is a type of simplified language which came into existence as a result of contact between two or more languages.
- This situation mostly occurs in trade, plantation and colonization processes.
- Pidgin is a language with simplified syntax, word order etc.




That code was called pidgin. So, pidgin is a type of simplified language, which came into existence as a result of contact between two or more languages. So, when you say contact between two languages of course where we mean that two sets of people speaking those languages came in contact. And the situation mostly occurs in trade plantation and colonization processes.


Now I told you that no language was common, right, so two sets of people where set one will have, so this relationship was asymmetric where one will have power status and control on resources, so dominating community or set of people so dominant variety this they spoke and that was considered dominant variety or you know the superposed variety, the others who were controlled, you know, another set of people and their languages. So, it was the blend or the mixture of these two varieties and because it has something from language A and something from language B, it was not at all a completely new language but it drew from A and B sources.

So, it will have a very simplified syntax word order because it will serve only restricted purposes. So bare minimum restricted purposes it served, a common code that was negotiated and acceptable to both, so they could both transact in that particular newly negotiated code which was which emerged out of this compulsion of communication. So, this is called pidgin.

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- It is constructed in an unplanned way, or it is given birth or been developed by unintelligible languages, Bickerton (1984).
- It is not a native to anyone but learnt as a second language by many.
- Pidgin and creole are emerged languages in need of communication among people who didn't have single language to use – for example, among plantation labourers who came from different geographic origins [Jeff (2008)].




As Bickerton mentions it is constructed in an unplanned way because this emerged to meet the needs of communication with the two sets of people of speaker A and speaker B. So, it was not planned it simply evolved and emerged right so it is constructed in an unplanned way or it is given birth or been developed by unintelligible languages.

That means nothing was common totally unintelligible and it is not the native language to any of the community, any of the set of people, neither of set A nor of set B. Because they had language X as the native language native tongue mother tongue and language b as the mother tongue of the other group. But this newly emerged language or code; let us not call it a language but of course a code that served the restricted purpose of communication and interaction and socialization to carry out trade and business and other works.

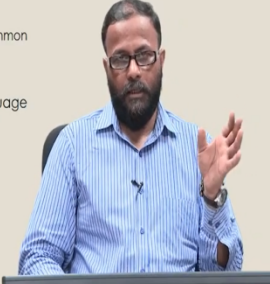
It served a very limited purpose with simplified sentences and very selective minimally required words. Pidgin and Creole are the immersed languages in need of communication among people who did not have a single language to use. And for example, among plantation laborers who came from different geographic origins, I quote from Jeff 2008.

So, this is Pidgin, a very restricted simplified, and very fundamentally very simple and restricted variety that emerged out of a compulsive situation where no language was common between two sets of people for transaction and trade. Okay, that is Pidgin for you.

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- "A pidgin is a marginal language which arises to fulfill certain restricted communication needs among people who have no common language". Todd (1974 pp.1)
- When we critically examine any pidgin, we find two factors:
 - circumstances for its development (i.e. the contact situation).
 - the purpose of its development as a common language in the case of no common language for contact and communication
- Onuigbo (1999: 200) claims that "What began originally as a trade language gradually grew into a compromised language for wider communication".




So, Todd 1974, I quote from him, "A Pidgin is a marginal language which arises to fulfill certain restricted communication needs among people who have no common language." That is what we are talking about, I unquote. When we critically examine any Pidgin, we have two factors to consider or to ponder upon, number one circumstances for its development.

So, we have to understand the circumstances under which this Pidgin emerged and that was a contact situation between two distinct languages which were mutually nonintelligible and no language common so this emerged as a restricted code. And number two, the purpose of his development of course to meet the communication needs because no common language was not used, not available for the two sets of people to use any common language so it had to emerge.


So Onuigbo 1999 claims that what began originally as a trade language gradually grew into a compromised language for wider communication.

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Sebba (1997) labels the reduced structural system into four structures in attribution to pidgin grammar. According to his suggestion some of them are also usable for creoles:

- Lack of surface grammatical complexity
- Lack of morphological complexity
- Preference for semantic transparency
- Reduction in vocabulary




So Sebba 1997 labels the reduced structural system into four structures in attribution to pidgin grammar. As I told you the grammar of pidgin will be very simple definitely because they are not going to this variety was not used for you know higher social functions, this variety was used for very limited essential and restricted purposes. And there was no choice because you know nothing no language was common so they contacted and they communicated and they transacted only in terms of limited social contacts. He characterizes four structure; he attributes four structures, a lack of surface grammar, and grammatical complexity. That means language; the code will not have very complex sentences very simple sentences sometimes even monocausal sentences. Lack of morphological complexity refers to the fact that you would not have a lot of creativity in deriving words that were simply borrowed from the other language.


So, the dominant language will retain its structure and the lexical category will be borrowed from the words will be borrowed from the other language just to make a common negotiated code where both of them have this opportunity to own and use it. Preference for semantic transparency and reduction in vocabulary, very limited words very limited options for sentences the sentences are very simple, not complex, multi-causal, not long sentences, so these are the basic characteristics of pidgin, the variety that we are talking about.

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Creole



- As a consequence of colonial European trade patterns, most of the known European-based creole languages arose in coastal areas in the equatorial belt around the world.
- A creole is a naturalized stable language that came into existence through mixed parent languages.
- It is a language that developed or derived from pidgin.
- Creole is an extended Pidgin with elaborate social functions and native speakers of the variety who constitute a speech community.
- Unlike pidgin it is the first language to children of the community.




Creole is a subsequent development of Pidgin. So Creole is an extension of Pidgin. So as a consequence of colonial European trade patterns most of the known European based Creole languages arose in the coastal areas in the equatorial belt around the world. If you look at the spread of Creole, it is on the seashores around the world, and why because through navigation, through the sea route these colonizers reached, these shores they contacted they came in contact with the host community the local community no language common so this emerged. Creole is an advanced and neutralized, naturalized, stable language that arises out of Pidgin. So, pidgin which emerged as a very restricted code in such a contact situation when this sustains for a long time this Pidgin also expands its scope, and it goes beyond everyday small and trade transactions. And we start we see the expansion of pidgin when this Pidgin is expanded to such a level and sustains for a long time then the next generations or coming generations acquire this particular variety as their mother tongue.

That means because at the time of birth they are exposed to this variety and they acquire it as their mother tongue. So, when the Pidgin expanded Pidgin is acquired by children of the next generation as the mother tongue it is called Creole. So, a Creole is a nativized variety of extended Pidgin expanded Pidgin all right. So, it is a language that developed or derived from Pidgin of course that you just talked about, Creole is an extended Pidgin with elaborate social functions and native speakers of the variety who constitute a speech community.


So now what we see as something that emerged as a necessity a necessary outcome to serve the purpose of communication between two sets of people who had nothing in common now extends and expands to a level where this minimal contact is expanded in other social domains. And then the pidgin expands to such a level that it starts functioning as a code for different social functions.

So unlike Pidgin, it is the first language of children of the community, so I just told you that after sustained Pidgin after a sustained period of time this Pidgin extends expands its social functions and its vocabulary, and we notice complexity in the grammar structures. And then in a few years, the next generation of children acquire this variety as their mother tongue and the moment this extended pidgin is acquired as their mother tongue it is called Creole okay.

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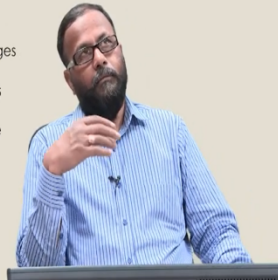
- It has a grammatically structured form and many of its vocabularies are derived from the superstrate language.
- Literally, superstrate means any stratum or layer superimposed on another, and linguistically is the major language in which pidgins are based and has large number of vocabularies i.e. dominant language.
- Thus, a creole is a consequent development out a Pidgin that becomes stable and learnt by next generation as its mother tongue.



Creoles by parent languages:



- Arabic based creoles
- Assamese based: Nagamese
- Chinese based: Tangwang
- Dutch based creole languages
- English based creole languages
- French based creole language
- German based creole languages
- Hindi-based: Andaman Creole Hindi
- Japanese-based: Yilan creole Japanese, Kanbun Kundoku
- Kongo-based: Kituba
- Malay based creole languages
- Ngbandi based : Sango
- Portugese based creole languages
- Spanish based creole languages
- Sinhala based: Vedda language




If you look at the number of Creoles that survive today across the globe you can find some Creoles some of them have become extinct after this post-colonial period some of them disappeared, and some of them were standardized and renamed. But we can find the parent language Creoles based on their parent language across the coastal areas in the world like Arabic based Creoles are exist still they exist still exist.

One interesting example of Creole is in the northeast of India which is a very vibrant dynamic and you in use right it is called Nagamese, Assamese based Creole. And when you look at the name Nagamese Naga plus Assamese two distinct sets of people they came in contact with in due course of history and this Creole emerged based on Assamese. Chinese based Creole like Tang-Wong, Dutch-based Creole languages still exist, English-based Creole languages, French-based Creole languages German-based Creole languages.


There may be a debate, but another broadly speaking Creole that we find in Andaman and Nicobar Islands of India which is Andaman Creole that is Hindi and I know Creole Hindi, Japanese based Yilan Creole, Japanese Kanbun Kundoku, Kongo based Creole like Kitubo, Malay base Creole languages based Ngbandi based Sango, Portuguese based Creole languages Spanish-based Creole languages Sinhala based Vedda languages. They are some examples of Creole right some of them still survive and they are flourishing and used across the globe as spread to the coastal areas of the world.

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Common Factors

- Both varieties (languages) are a natural outcome of a contact situation.
- Lack of common language leads to emergence of a *lingua franca*.
- "Pidgins and creoles arise from a basic need that people who speak different languages have to find a common system of communication. Such a common system is often called a *lingua franca*." [Wardhaugh]
- Wardhaugh referred to the definition of *lingua franca* by UNESCO in 1953. "A language which is used habitually by people whose mother tongues are different in order to facilitate communication between them" (pp. 56).




Now, what are the common factors between Pidgin and Creole? So, we have to understand both varieties of languages are a natural outcome of contact situations as we understood that when two sets of people with no language in common come in contact it happens and it happened in history. Then lack of common languages leads to emergence of a *lingua franca* right a contact language where they can carry out basic communication needs transactions, right.

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- It can expand and be used by other communities not necessarily only by the people who were involved in the contact situation, while at the initial stage of pidgin it is restricted to only those who were involved in the contact situation.
- Creole is derived from pidgin but the pidgin is a secondary language which developed by speakers of unintelligible languages in a contact situation for the purpose of communication. [Bickerton (1984)].




Then it can expand and be used by other communities not necessarily only by the people who were involved originally in that context situation because it can be learned by other people and can be used so other people also joined. While at the initial stage of the Pidgin it is restricted to only those who were involved in contact situations, but you can expand. Creole is derived from pidgin but pidgin is a secondary language, not a primary language as I told you which was developed by speakers of unintelligible languages.

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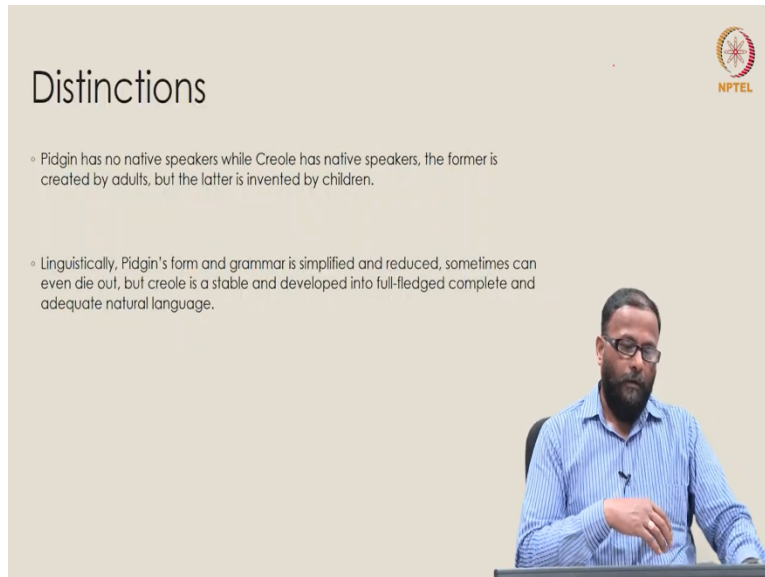
◦ Pidgin is fully adequate (adequate in the sense that able to fulfil the need for communication among the people of different languages) language, it is derived from the process of pidginization, and it is evolved from trade, colonization and plantation areas, that involves many languages but no one is predominant, and creole often evolve from pidgin, through the creolization or nativization process.

◦ Creole is developed out of pidgin (pidgin is the antecedent of creole). Todd (1974) referred to the two languages as "Popularly, they are thought to be inferior, haphazard, broken, bastardized version of older, longer established language."



Pidgin is a fully adequate language it is derived from the process of Pidginization and it evolved from trade colonization and plantation that involves many languages but no one is predominant. Creole often evolved from Pidgin through the creolization or nativization process. So, I told you that when pidgin expands and starts functioning as an elaborate code for other social functions. And when it is acquired by the next generation as the mother tongue it becomes Creole right. Creole is developed out of Pidgin and you know Todd 1974 it is a hybrid language basically.

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Distinctions

- Pidgin has no native speakers while Creole has native speakers, the former is created by adults, but the latter is invented by children.
- Linguistically, Pidgin's form and grammar is simplified and reduced, sometimes can even die out, but creole is a stable and developed into full-fledged complete and adequate natural language.

NPTEL

The slide features a video inset of a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a blue striped shirt, sitting at a desk and speaking. The NPTEL logo is in the top right corner.

What are the distinctions, distinctions that pidgin has no native speaker while Creole has native speakers the former is created by adults but the latter that means Creoles are invented by children? Linguistically pidgin's form and grammar are simplified and reduced and sometimes can even die out but Creole is a stable and developed code and it can develop into a full-fledged complete and adequate natural language.

And we call it natural language because it is acquired by next generation children as a normal mother tongue often. Creole often exists in post-colonial areas of course because you know these European forces reached different shores of the world, they came in contact with the local community and this is how it all happened. You all may not have elaborate grammatical structures as the older languages do but however Creole has definitely more complex syntax and more elaborate vocabulary as compared to Pidgins so Pidgin is an antecedent of Creole.



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Developmental Stages of Pidgins and Creoles

The developmental stages of Pidgin and Creole are categorized into four, which usually appear in two contexts: social situation and linguistic correlation.

Social Situation	Linguistic Correlation
Marginal contact	Restricted pidgin
Nativization	Extended pidgin
Mother tongue development	Creole
Movement towards standard language (not necessarily input language)	Decreolization

Pidgin has a life-cycle and generally agreed that it is characterised into restricted and extended, it is obvious that pidgin start as a restricted variety of language which used in a contact situation for the purpose of trading.



Now let us look at the developmental stages of pidgin and Creole because they are related and one is an antecedent of the other the latter is an outcome of, you know, others' process of development. So let us correlate these two varieties and see if you know the linguistic correlation so situation social situations and linguistic correlation. If you look at the if you want to understand the process of development let us look at this table.

So, on the left you have a social situation on the right you have linguistic correlation so when you say marginal contact refers to the very limited occasion when these two sets of people meet without any language in common to use for their linguistic transactions, so marginal contact and it gets you a very restricted non-elaborate Pidgin that is the linguistic correlate.

But we know that in due course of time this Pidgin develops expands and starts functioning as an elaborate code for other social functions. And in due course, this extended variety is acquired by the next generation of children as language mother tongue. So, when it is nativized then you find the next vision right. And then so after nativization when the generation says start next generation and then the next generation, they start acquiring it as mother tongue and also the older resource languages fade away.

And the generation is left with this newly immersed extended Pidgin which is being acquired as the mother tongue it becomes Creole. So Creole is a nativized extended version of pidgin so the

correlate is Creole and then after due course of time you might see in the history there were movements and initiatives so you know institutionally support you know codify and elaborate deliberate attempt to standardize these Creoles.

And that is that process is called the process of decreolization that means. Now it is no more a Creole but it becomes a full-fledged standard developed codified language. So, this is the ultimate development of the process that is started with marginal contact and blooms into flourishes as a full-fledged language.

So, in social linguistics, if you want to understand the contact situations and the outcome of certain contacts Pidgin and Creole remain a very significant concept, and today as we are talking there are standard Creoles available and you can find you know, in the world map atlas right. So that is it on Pidgin and Creole and I hope that you understand the distinction between the two and also the common origin of the two. So, thank you very much.