Creole Typology – Sociolinguistic and Structural Issues

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Creole typology has been of interest to linguists ever since contact languages acquired a special status in linguistic research from the 1960s onwards. Several attempts have been made to describe the presumed nature of Creoles as a special class of languages. However, none of the early classification models – e.g. Stewart’s Sociolinguistic Typology of Languages (1962, 1968, 1971), Bickerton’s Language Bioprogram Hypothesis (1981) remained without criticism and continue to spark debates (McWorther 1998, 2001, DeGraff 2001, 2003) about Creole exceptionalism. A large-scale collaborative project in the 2000s, the *Atlas of Pidgin and Creole Structures* (APiCS) which describes the structural features of 76 Pidgin and Creole languages around the world, can therefore be seen as an attempt to clarify some of the myths that have surrounded scholarly debates on Creole languages and to throw light on whether or not they should be grouped as a special class of languages. In this talk, we will use APiCS to compare some general features of Creole languages with those of other languages described in the *World Atlas of Language Structures* (WALS). A special case will be made of Trinidadian English Creole and of pronouns of address in Creoles in comparison with other languages.

Literature:


