ABSTRACT
        This paper examines the differences between second
language learning and pidginization to better understand the
mechanisms involved in each process. Current research suggests
similarities between the two. Both are characterized by reduction and
simplification. Grammatical transformations tend to be eliminated,
along with inflectional markers of tense and plurality. Articles and
gender/case distinctions are usually omitted, as well as the copula.
Both are characterized by an extremely reduced lexicon and a
simplified phonological system. Generally, they represent an attempt
by speakers of a "source" language to approximate the rules and usage
of a "target" language. Based on data obtained from a number of
pidgin and creole languages, a theory viewing a pidgin language as
merely a simplified form of a superstrate target language, or as the
result of incomplete learning of a second language, is rejected. Due
primarily to the extreme social conditions under which pidginization
takes place and the resulting limited linguistic contact between
native and target language groups, the formation of a pidgin language
undergoes processes of development which are independent of the
target language and which do not represent attempts to approximate
the rules and usage of the target language. (Author/CLK)

SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING VS. PIDGINIZATION

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Carbondale. To be read at TESOL Convention, New York City, Americana Hotel,
March 1976. Manuscript completed February 23, 1976.

0. Introduction

        This paper aims to clarify the differences between second language learn-
ing and pidginization in order to understand better the mechanisms that are
involved in each process. Current research by John Schumann and David Smith
would suggest strong similarities between these two processes. Smith (1972)
distinguishes three functions of natural language: the communicative, inte-
grative, and expressive functions. While the integrative and expressive func-
tions pertain to the individual's social and psychological needs, the communi-
cative function is restricted to the exchange of information. Smith's claim,
enlarged upon by Schumann (1974; 1975), is that pidgin languages and the early
stages of second language learning are primarily restricted to the communica-
tive function, the integrative and expressive functions being fulfilled by
the native language of the individual.
        Schumann (1975) refers to the "pidginization hypothesis." According to
his view, pidgin languages are seen as fossilized "approximative systems"
(Nemser 1971), or "interlanguages" (Selinker 1972), corresponding to develop-
mental stages in the second language learning process. Finally, the implication
is that an examination of pidgin languages and the pidginization process will
shed light on the strategies and processes by which a second language is
acquired.
        Admittedly, the two processes are similar in certain ways. They are
both characterized by reduction and simplification. Thus, for example, gram-
matical transformations tend to be eliminated, along with inflectional markers
of tense and plurality. Articles and gender/case distinctions are usually
omitted, as well as the copula. Both processes are characterized by an ex-
tremely reduced lexicon and a simplified phonological system. Generally, they
represent an attempt by speakers of a "source" language to approximate the
rules and usage of a "target" language (cf. the distinction made in Gilbert
ms. a; ms. b; Baron ms.).
        Recent studies in the area of pidgin languages, however, reveal a number
of differences between the learning of a second language and pidginization,
which makes the analogy between the two processes more limited than the above
research would suggest. These differences are related to the social conditions
under which each process takes place; they reflect fundamental differences in
the degree to which the second language learner and the potential pidgin
speaker attempt to approx: ite the target language.

1. The Individual vs. the Group

        The usual second language learning situation is a bilingual situation.
It normally consists of a monolingual speaker attempting to learn a second
language. However, as Whinnom (1971) points out, a pidgin language does not

usually develop out of a simple bilingual situation. If there is only one source language, there will usually arise a kind of transitory bilingualism (cf. Jack Richards "immigrant variety of L_T" 1972: 174). A case in point is Cocoliche, an interlanguage that developed in Argentina between the Spanish speaking Argentinians and Italian immigrant workers. This contact language was characterized by numerous features of simplification and reduction, but a pidgin language never developed. The Italian workers eventually learned Standard Spanish. As Richards indicates, a similar phenomenon occurred in the United States; mixed languages developed among European immigrants, but pidgins failed to arise. The immigrants' descendents learned a standard form of English.

On the other hand, as has been repeatedly noted, pidginization pre-supposes multiple source languages. This is the case in New Guinea, with over seven hundred native languages, and in the Caribbean Islands, where pidgins arose in a situation that brought together slaves from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Furthermore, whereas the typical second language learner is monolingual, the future speaker of a pidgin, coming from an area where several languages are already spoken, is usually a multilingual (Bickerton 1975: 174). Thus, the future pidgin speaker will bring to the task of language learning a different type of learning strategy than that of the monolingual; he will have more general hypotheses based on those features common to all the languages he knows.

Another point brought out by Bickerton's argument and suggested by our previous discussion is that second language learning is an individual phenome-non; by contrast, pidginization is a group phenomenon. This is emphasized by John Reinecke (1969) when he talks of the distinction between "makeshift lan-guages of groups" and "makeshift languages of individuals."

What are the consequences of this basic difference? Firstly, second language learners do not form a closed linguistic community, as pidgin speakers normally do (i.e., second language learners seldom speak to each other in the target language). Secondly, the learning of a second language is a "conscious and consciously directed process" (Bickerton 1975: 176-178). We might add that it is consciously directed toward the target language, whereas a pidgin is only directed at several steps removed, if at all, toward any target language.

The second language learner's interlanguage represents a relatively transient stage in the learning process that undergoes continual "correction" and development until some close approximation of the target language has been reached. A pidgin language, representing a closed linguistic community, is continually under the influence of other factors, is much less affected by the corrective influence of the target language, and undergoes a process of inde-pendent development.

A good example of this difference is provided by Bazaar Malay, a pidgin which arose in the Dutch East Indies. It is not a simplified form or an incom-plete learning of Dutch, the "target" language, but rather it is a simplified form of Malay. When it expanded into present-day Indonesian, it followed a completely independent course of development, not at all in the direction of Dutch (Wurm 1971a).

2. Relations between Social Groups

This tendency of pidgin languages to undergo some form of independent development is one of their essential features. It is due to the nature of the contact situation, specifically to the degree of social distance between the native and target language groups (cf. the interesting interpretation of Schermerhorn 1970 in Schumann 1975). The typical contact situation favorable to pidginization involves a relatively small, transient, and dominant minority group representing the target language, and a large subordinate native language group representing a wide variety of language backgrounds.

Pidginization presupposes great social distance between the source language and target language groups. Consequently, the language and culture of the dominant group is largely inaccessible to the future pidgin speaker. However as Richards (1972) points out, in the typical second language situation social assimilation is at least theoretically possible.

The two situations thus differ widely in the type and frequency of language contact, in the degree of exposure to the corrective influence of the target language (what Bickerton 1975: 173 calls the "correction cycle"), and in the motivation and attitude of the learner toward the target language. Although these same factors also obviously affect the second language learner (see Schumann 1975 and the literature cited there), we would like to argue that the difference is more than a mere matter of degree. The relations between the contact languages in the two situations are fundamentally different and produce radically different results.

3. Relations between Source Language and Target Language

In a recent study at the Center for English as a Second Language at Southern Illinois University, sixteen native speakers of Spanish were interviewed and an error analysis was performed on their English. It was found that even among beginning students, whose ratio of errors to words utteredwas 33 percent, the number of unintelligible utterances was less than 1 percent (Flick ms.). A pidgin language on the other hand is unintelligible to the speakers of the target language (Whinnom 1971: 106; Wurm 1971b). In fact, as Wurm (1971b) notes, native speakers of English experience considerable difficulty in learning the New Guinea pidgin.

The essential point is this: In a second language learning situation, the target language never ceases to be the model for approximation; the interlanguage of the second language learner represents a transient, unstable stage in a series of successive approximations to the target language. In the situation of pidgin formation, with extreme social distance between the groups and severely limited linguistic contact, the target language is used as a model of approximation only to a very limited extent. Thus, as mentioned earlier, Bazaar Malay of the Dutch East Indies was a closer approximation to Malay than to Dutch (Wurm 1971a).

Wurm (1971a) maintains that in the formation of New Guinea pidgin, English has played a relatively minor role. This is due to the fact that in a typical pidgin situation the most prevalent use of the pidgin is not for communication between the native groups and the socially dominant target group, but between the linguistically diverse native groups themselves. In the case of New Guinea pidgin Wurm (1971a) clearly shows that it arose and developed primarily as a means of inter-group communication between the natives. In this

light, Smith's (1972) claim that pidgin languages are restricted solely
to the communicative function seems extremely doubtful (as was noted
already by Alfred Opubor and A.B. Hudson in their commentary to Smith's
paper, printed in the same volume).

The result of limited linguistic contact and limited use of the
target language as a model for approximation is the tendency for pidgin
languages to undergo a process of development which is largely independent
of the target language. Some examples:

Jay Edwards (1974) noticed a tendency in pidgin formation to
select elements not in an attempt to simplify or approximate the target
language, but in order to incorporate into the pidgin common elements
from the native languages of the future pidgin speakers, regardless of
the degree of complexity. Thus, it has been noted that most of the Mela-
nesian languages of New Guinea have a distinction between the inclusive
and exclusive in their pronoun systems; and this distinction exists in
the pidgin as well (Dutton 1973). A separate form for dual and trial number
in the pronouns is also common in New Guinean languages (Wurm 1971b), and
these have been adopted into the pidgin.

Thus, for the one personal pronoun 'we' in English, New Guinea
pidgin has the "complicated" array of forms:

mipela	'we' (exclusive)
yumi	'we' (inclusive)
mitupela	'we two' (exclusive)
yumitupela	'we two' (inclusive)
mitripela	'we three' (exclusive)
yumitripela	'we three' (inclusive)

(This can be extended to indicate four, five, etc.)

The direction here is not toward simplification or approximation of
the target language. In this case, second language learning is not taking
place at all; it is an example of borrowing, in which the lexical items
are burrowed from English and incorporated into a structure and function
which is Melanesian.

Another example of the mechanism of independent development is re-
vealed by recent changes that are occurring in the tense system of New
Guinea pidgin. In line with the expansion and development that character-
izes the change from a pidgin to a creole language, New Guinea pidgin is
in the process of developing a future tense marker for the verb. This par-
ticle, originally from the English time adverb <u>bye and bye</u>, is becoming
an obligatory verbal prefix (Sankoff and Laberge 1974). A direct approxi-
mation to English is unlikely.

Peter Muhlhausler, in a large-scale study of the processes of word
formation in New Guinea pidgin (ms. 44), rejects the view that pidgins are
simplified versions of the target language. According to him, "there is
a substantial difference in the systems underlying word formation in the
two languages which cannot be explained exclusively in terms of simplifi-
cation" (ms. 44). More generally, he concludes that "the data do not sup-
port the view that the structure of English and New Guinea pidgin are

identical or even very similar. There is also no support for the view that lexical structures of New Guinea pidgin are a simplification of English structures" (ms. 52).

Even superficially, pidgin languages contain many characteristics which seem to be infrequently used by second language learners, such as reduplication and multifunctionality of lexical items. Note for example the use of the word gras 'grass' in New Guinea pidgin:

gras	'grass'
gras bilong hed	'hair'
gras bilong fes	'beard'
gras bilong maus	'moustache'
gras nogut	'weeds'

(Hall 1966)

4. Summary

In light of such evidence we would reject a theory which views a pidgin language as merely a simplified form of a superstrate target language, or as the result of incomplete learning of a second language. Due primarily to the extreme social conditions under which pidginization takes place and the resulting limited linguistic contact between native and target language groups, the formation of a pidgin language undergoes processes of development which are independent of the target language and which do not represent attempts to approximate the rules and usage of the target language. A pidgin is not a fossilized stage in the process of second language learning; it involves processes of formation radically different from those of the second language learning process.

One final point should be mentioned here. Once a pidgin language becomes stabilized, it sometimes undergoes an expansion and development resulting ultimately in a creole language. The latter is usually due to the appearance of a generation of speakers for whom the pidgin represents a first, or native, language (Sankoff and Laberge 1974). Under certain conditions, involving a decrease in the social distance between the creole speakers and the dominant target language group, a series of inter-languages may develop which represent successive approximations to the target language. DeCamp (1971) and Taylor (1971) refer to this phenomenon as the "post-creole continuum,"a situation which more closely resembles that of second language learning (Bickerton 1975:176). It would be a mistake however, for the reasons we have discussed, to view the native languages, the pidgin/creole language, and the target language as being on the same continuum. Jan Voorhoeve (1971) points out that once a creole develops and comes into contact with the standard (target) language, we must no longer think in terms of contact between native and standard languages. A new and different type of situation has arisen.

We can represent the relations between native languages, pidgin/creole, and standard language as indicated in Figure 1.
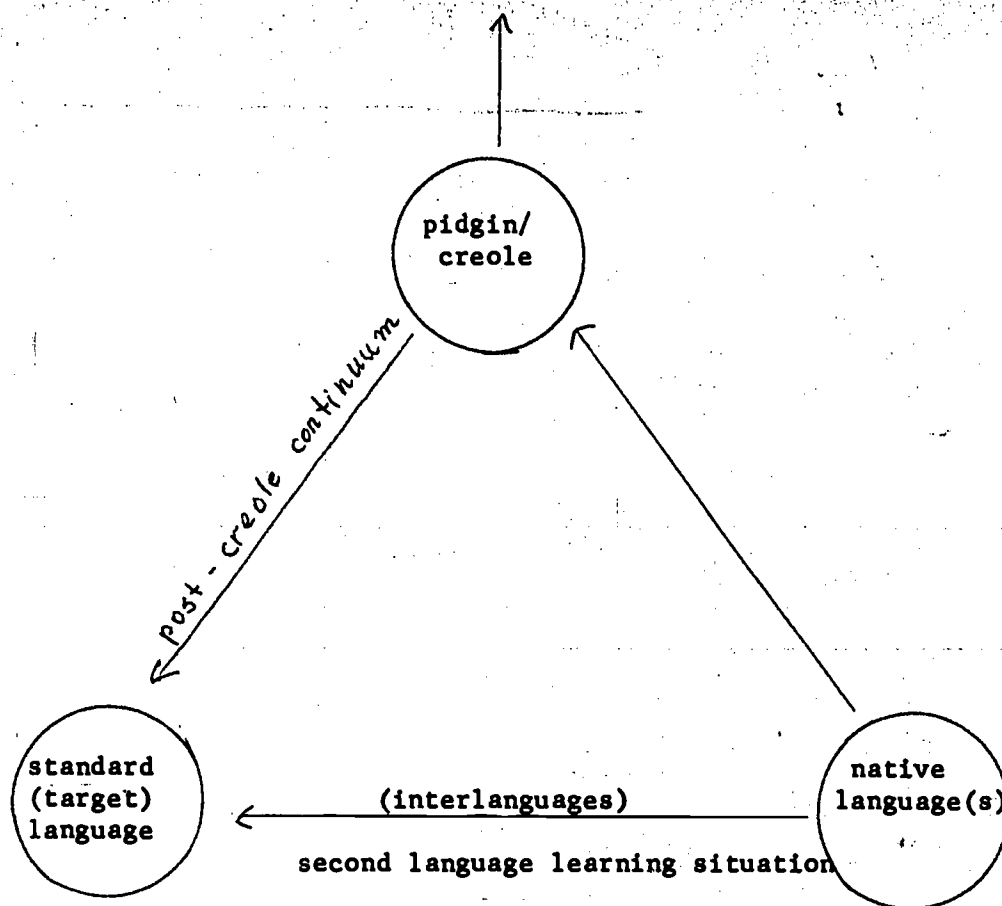
Figure 1

As the arrows indicate, a pidgin language, whether or not it eventually becomes a creole and enters a post-creole continuum, does not proceed along a straight-line continuum in the direction of the target language. Without recognizing this fundamental difference between the two processes, any attempt to draw an analogy between them is likely to be misleading.

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