

**CAS LX 533      Syllabus**  
**Creole Linguistics      Spring 2013**

Prerequisite: CAS LX 250

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**Class schedule**

Mon – Wed – Fri: 3–4PM  
CAS 237

**Office and office hours**

621 Commonwealth Ave, B08  
617 358-4642

Th: 11AM–1PM & Fr: 4PM–5PM  
(or by appointment)

## General overview of the course

Overview of pidginization and creolization. Evolution, typology, and area characteristics of creole languages. Role of contact languages and other substrata. Classroom research with creole languages.

## Course and learning objectives

Develop the ability to recognize the alleged characteristics of creoles and gain knowledge of the main hypotheses explaining their convergence. Gain basic working knowledge of at least one creole.

## Readings

### Required textbook

- Sebba, Mark. 1997. *Contact Languages: Pidgins and Creoles*. Macmillan Press.

Other readings will be assigned as the semester progresses, depending on the language interests of the group.

## Course requirements

- Regular attendance and participation: 5 %  
Participation includes asking relevant questions in class and using my office hours wisely.
- Assignments 1-4: 5% ~ 10% X 4 = 30%  
Each assignment consists of a set of problem-solving questions. Collaboration (up to two students per team) is encouraged for assignments.

- In-class quizzes 1-2: 15% X 2 = 30%  
Quiz 1 will test the material reviewed in Chapters 1–3. Quiz 2 will test the material from Chapters 4–6.
- Short paper: 10%  
A short paper written on some aspect of a creole language you have studied and investigated.
- Final exam: 25%  
Questions on the final exclusively testing material from Chapters 7–9 will count for 15% of the course. The other 10% can test anything we have covered during the semester.
- You are expected to notify me by email as early as possible of any exceptional circumstance justifying your absence from class and, again under exceptional circumstances, to obtain prior permission for late submission of an assignment. Otherwise, absences will be considered unexcused and late assignments will not be accepted.
- You are expected to abide by the CAS Academic Conduct Code:  
<http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/undergrad-resources/code/>  
Plagiarism in any form (including online sources), cheating and other academic misconduct will not be tolerated.

## **Bibliography**

- Michel deGraff (ed.). Language Creation and Language Change: Creolization, Diachrony and Development. MIT Press. 1999.
- Poplack, S. & S. Tagliamonte. 2001. African American English in the Diaspora. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Poplack, S. (ed.). 2000. The English History of African American English. Oxford: Blackwell.
- John R Rickford & Suzanne Romaine (eds.). 1999. Creole Genesis, Attitudes and Discourse: Studies Celebrating Charlene Sato. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Sarah Grey Thomason, Terrence Kaufman. 1991. Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics. University of California Press.
- A Valdman & A. Highfield (eds.). 1980. Theoretical orientations in Creole studies. New York: Academic Press.
- A Valdman & A. Highfield (eds.). 1981. Historicity and variation in Creole studies. Ann Arbor, MI: Karoma Press.

## Schedule

(potential changes will be announced in class)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Evaluation
1	W 1/16	Basic notions		
	F 1/18			
2		Types of contact languages	Sebba, Ch. 1	
	W 1/23			
	F 1/25			
3	M 1/28	Pidgin characteristics	Sebba, Ch. 2	
	W 1/30			
	F 2/1			
4	M 2/4	Origins of pidgins	Sebba, Ch. 3	Assignment 1 due
	W 2/6			
	F 2/8			
5	M 2/11	Controversial cases of pidginization		
	W 2/13			
	F 2/15			Quiz 1
6		Transition from pidgins to creoles	Sebba, Ch. 4	
	W 2/20			
	F 2/22			
7	M 2/25	Creolization	Sebba, Ch. 5	
	W 2/27			
	F 3/1			
8	M 3/4	Case studies	Read on your creole	Assignment 2 due
	W 3/6			
	F 3/8			
3/9 – 3/17		<b>Spring Break</b>		
9	M 3/18	Case studies	Read on your creole	
	W 3/20			
	F 3/22			
10	M 3/25	Shared features of creoles Historical perspective		
	W 3/27			
	F 3/29			
11	M 4/1	Hypotheses on the origins of creoles	Sebba, Ch. 6	Assignment 3 due
	W 4/3			
	F 4/5			
12	M 4/8	Decreolization, recreolization, etc.	Sebba, Ch. 7	
	W 4/10			
	F 4/12			Quiz 2
13	W 4/17	Status issues	Sebba, Ch. 8	
	Th 4/18			
	F 4/19			
14	M 4/22	Mixed languages and controversial cases	Sebba, Ch. 9	Assignment 4 due
	W 4/24			
	F 4/26			
15	M 4/29	Review and classroom exercises		Hand in short paper
	W 5/1			
Date TBA		<b>Final exam</b>		