

St. Lucian Kwéyòl on Saint Croix

St. Lucian Kwéyòl on Saint Croix:
A Study of Language Choice and Attitudes

By

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P U B L I S H I N G

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I shall begin with a brief summary of the classification and names that have been given to the creole language which is the subject of this study. From a historical-comparative linguistic perspective, the world's French-lexifier creoles are divided into two groups, those of the Indian Ocean region (including the islands of Réunion, Île de Maurice, Île de Rodriguez, and the Seychelles) and those of the Atlantic Ocean region. This latter group is then generally divided into island and continental varieties. Of these last there are but two: Guyanese French-lexifier Creole spoken in French Guiana and Louisiana French-lexifier Creole, the only French-lexifier creole in North America. Turning to the Atlantic Ocean region island French-lexifier creoles, these are generally divided into two groups: Haitian Creole (Kreyòl) and Lesser Antillean Creole French. It is to this last group that St. Lucian French-lexifier Creole (Kwéyòl) belongs. Historically, Kwéyòl has been spoken on the islands of Guadeloupe and its dependencies, Dominica, Martinique, St. Lucia, St. Thomas, Grenada, and Trinidad (Holm, 2000; Chaudenson, 2001). While in Grenada, St. Thomas, and Trinidad there are few if any remaining Kwéyòl speakers, today this language is widely spoken on the islands of Guadeloupe, Dominica, Martinique, and St. Lucia. To its speakers it is known as Patois (or Patwa), from the French *Patois*, meaning non-standard (inferior) dialect.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, especially after gaining independence in 1979, there arose on St. Lucia feelings of national pride associated with Patois. It is at this time, in 1981, when an official orthography is created for the language which is given the name Kwéyòl, making use of the new Kwéyòl orthography (Frank, 1993). Thus, Kwéyòl and Patois refer to one and the same language. The dialect of Kwéyòl spoken on St. Lucia most closely resembles the Kwéyòl of Dominica, due to the common influence of English; similarly, Martinican and Guadeloupean Kwéyòl share more common features with each other due to the continued influence of French.

The nature of the study reported in Chapters Four and Five is socio- and ethnolinguistic. The objective of this study was to interview Kwéyòl-

speaking St. Lucians residing on the island of St. Croix in the U. S. Virgin Islands in order to shed light on their use of and attitudes towards Kwéyòl and its role in the ethnolinguistic identity of this immigrant community. The research questions appear at the end of the present chapter.

In Chapter Two, I describe in detail the socio-economic, political, historical, demographic, and geographic conditions that constituted the matrix of creolization from which St. Lucian Kwéyòl developed and evolved. I then apply the creolization models of Chaudenson (2001), Mufwene (2001), Dalphinis (1985), Alleyne (1996), and Faraclas et al. (2007) to the islands of St. Lucia and Barbados and comment on the resulting similarities and differences in linguistic output.

In Chapter Three, I lay out the theoretical framework for this sociolinguistic study on Kwéyòl on St. Croix, beginning with definitions of all terms used in the research questions, citing sources for both the theoretical framework and methodology of the investigation. Then, I review the work of twelve scholars (linguists and anthropologists of various stripes) who have published studies on St. Lucian Kwéyòl, along with one relevant study on Haitian Kreyòl. Grouped according to discipline and methodology, first, there are linguistic and sociolinguistic studies, which include those of Alleyne (1961), Carrington (1968), Dalphinis (1985), LePage & Tabouret-Keller (1985), Allen (1994), Frank (1993), and Jean-François (2006). Next, there are the studies with a focus on language planning and education; here, we have Carrington (1983b), Simmons-McDonald (1996), and Nwemely (1999). From the discipline of psychological anthropology, there are the two studies by Lieberman (1975, 1978), which are quantitative in nature, making use of a matched guise test. Then, there are the studies within the discipline of linguistic anthropology, those of Midgett (1970) and Garrett (2000, 2003, 2005). Lastly, I review a study of attitudes towards Haitian Kreyòl by Jean-François (2006). Like Lieberman (1978), Jean-François (2006) uses quantitative statistical analysis to analyze the results of a matched guise test to reveal language attitudes.

In Chapter Four, I define the methodology and research questions, citing studies relevant to each question. This study of Kwéyòl on St. Croix seeks to shed light upon the following research questions, presented and discussed in Chapter Five:

1. Language choice

Section 5.1 is dedicated to questions of language choice. Some of the questions include: Who speaks to whom in Kwéyòl? When is Kwéyòl spoken? What is the place of Kwéyòl in parent/child communication? Which social groups use Kwéyòl most everyday? Which use it the least?

2. Language attitudes

Section 5.2 examines language attitudes. Questions include: feelings about Kwéyòl, consideration of Kwéyòl as a language, language most comfortable speaking now, attitudes towards Crucian English-lexifier Creole and Spanish, children's attitudes, attitudes towards speaking Kwéyòl in public, feelings of regret for not speaking the language or teaching it to children, and the perceived status of Kwéyòl on St. Lucia, as seen from the diaspora on St. Croix.

3. Ethnolinguistic identity

Section 5.3 looks at ethnolinguistic identity among St. Lucians on St. Croix. Some questions include: To what extent is Kwéyòl seen to be an important part of St. Lucian identity on St. Croix? Whether and when any participant perceived discrimination on St. Croix for being St. Lucian, the draw of immigration to the continental U.S., along with the loss of Kwéyòl, and the importance of *Jouné Kwéyòl*, a pan-Creole holiday, celebrated simultaneously on St. Lucia, Martinique, Dominica, Guadeloupe, and Guyane for a week in October every year.

4. Bilingualism

In section 5.4, I look into questions of bilingualism, mapping out the ranges and dynamics of bilingualism among the 26 participants in this study. Questions in this section include: language used most everyday, parent-child communication, first language spoken as a child, ability to read Kwéyòl, the importance of speaking a second language, and speaking Kwéyòl in public.

The above questions were analyzed for four variables: gender, age, educational attainment, and number of years residing on St. Croix. Each one of these questions has relevance to language maintenance and language

shift. To quote from Joshua Fishman, who has spent a career studying these questions, language maintenance is,

the process and pursuit of inter-generational linguistic continuity, [which] is a reflection of sufficient indigenous control over and delimitation of ongoing inter-group interaction processes so that they do not overpower the indigenous ethnocultural system” (Fishman 1989, p. 177).

St. Lucians constitute a minority community on St. Croix where Kwéyòl is but one of numerous languages spoken, including Caribbean English, Crucian Creole, several other Caribbean creole languages, Spanish, and Arabic. In this linguistic environment, certain factors favor the maintenance of Kwéyòl among the St. Lucian community on St. Croix. Such factors include strong social networks within the community, close ties to and frequent contact with family and friends on St. Lucia, along with keen feelings of national pride and ethnolinguistic identity.

Other powerful factors, on the other hand, favor a shift towards English. These latter factors include the complete dominance of English on St. Croix on the societal level, the high prestige and utility of English, and the complete absence of Kwéyòl in public media (unlike on St. Lucia, where Kwéyòl is used regularly in both broadcast and print media). Additional factors are ideological, including what Dorian (1988) calls, “The ideology of contempt,” the belief that bilingualism is onerous, even on the individual level” (p. 11). Learning English does not necessitate giving up one’s native tongue, yet among the participants interviewed for this study there was widespread belief to the contrary, eloquently expressed by one of the participants: “Patwa destroys your English!” This idea, that proficiency in English is negatively affected by the use of Patois, leads many speakers to give up speaking Patois in favor of English monolingualism.

Hand in hand with the ideology of contempt is the ideology of the superiority of standardized European languages and its antithesis, the inferiority of non-standard languages. Dorian, once again, (1988, p. 3) has observed: “. . . it’s fairly common for a language to become so exclusively associated with low-prestige people and their socially disfavored identities that its own potential speakers prefer to distance themselves from it and adopt some other language.” All of these factors can be seen at work in the results from this study.

In section 5.6, I turn to text-based analysis in order to interpret participants’ stories. In their responses to certain questions, the speakers occasionally told a story. These stories offer a rich source of data, even in cases in which a story may not directly respond to a specific research

question. In the analysis of these stories, I considered each according to its function (i.e. its role within the discourse) as an aid in the discovery of commonalities and metanarratives.

This research is relevant to the practical matters of language planning and policy and the maintenance of threatened or endangered languages, as well as their relative importance in the ethnolinguistic identities of the speakers, whose languages and cultures are under threat due to globalization, urbanization, and the forces of cultural assimilation. Underlying these questions are the topics of migration and population movement. The question of language maintenance is a fundamental issue in all global population movements. Socio- and ethnolinguistic research of this nature will ultimately serve to help us better understand the linguistic and social consequences of the global phenomenon of population movement and displacement.

In many ways, the more the speaker is invited to shape the record, the richer the documentation of the language, and the more we will learn about the extent to which languages can vary (Mithum, 2001).

One of the greatest rewards of this research for me personally comes from the appreciation of many participants for the opportunity to tell me their stories about their language and what it means to them. These stories emerged spontaneously during the interview and offer a rich source of qualitative data apart from the pleasure the participant takes in telling me the story and mine in listening and recording it. It is my hope that this research will contribute to the understanding of language choice and attitudes in multilingual speech communities, not only within the pages of this publication and the realm of academia, but also within the communities themselves.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIOHISTORICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DEVELOPMENT OF KWÉYÒL ON ST. LUCIA

2.1 Historical Overview of St. Lucia

Kwéyòl, the French-lexifier creole spoken on the Caribbean island of St. Lucia, is said to have its origins on St. Kitts (Hazaël-Massieux, 1996), which was the seat of the French Lieutenant General in 1642. It was from this island that French expeditions set forth to colonize Martinique, Isle de la Tortue, and Saint Domingue (now Hispaniola). After the conquest of St. Christophe by the English, who renamed it St. Kitts (short for Christopher), the French settlers along with their slaves fled to Saint-Domingue, Martinique, and Guadeloupe, bringing their language with them. It was from Martinique and Guadeloupe that later French expeditions set forth to colonize the islands of St. Lucia, Dominica, and Grenada. In the centuries that followed, the creolization process continued and Kwéyòl developed and evolved on Guadeloupe, Dominica, Martinique, and St. Lucia according to the specific matrix of socio-economic, political, historical, demographic, linguistic, and geographic conditions of each island.

In this chapter, I begin by identifying and analyzing these conditions on the island of St. Lucia. Next, I compare current creolization models for the French-lexifier Caribbean creoles, including those of Dalphinis (1985), Chaudenson (2001), Alleyne (1996), Mufwene (2001), and Faraclas et al. (2007) and apply them to the development of Kwéyòl on St. Lucia. In the final part of the chapter, I present the history of Barbadian Creole (Bajan) on the neighboring island of Barbados in order to compare and contrast the conditions that constituted the matrix of creolization there with those of St. Lucia. The resulting linguistic outputs of the two islands, Kwéyòl on St. Lucia and Bajan on Barbados, stand in stark contrast to one another precisely due to the different ecologies within which each evolved. While Kwéyòl shows evidence of both African and Amerindian substrate features typical of Caribbean creoles, Bajan is considered by most creolists

to be a variety of non-standard English, rather than a creole, due precisely to the relative absence of such features.

The island of St. Lucia, affectionately known as “Helen of the West,” is located between the French island of Martinique to the north, the British island of Barbados to the east, and to the south, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, another British possession.¹ St. Lucia was bitterly disputed between Britain and France for over 150 years; according to some, for the natural beauty of her geography, and according to others for the geopolitical advantage. Alleyne (1961, p. 2) sums it up well:

[From the arrival of the first French colonists in 1651] There followed 150 years of struggles for the possession of the island by the English and the French, during which time it changed hands 14 times. The settled European population was quite predominantly French; the English seem to have been interested in St. Lucia for its strategic importance: its geographical position and its natural deep water harbour at Castries. So that when the island was captured by the English Navy and ceded definitively to England by the Treaty of Paris in 1814, it was French in ‘language, manners and feeling.’

2.1.1 History

In 1651, forty French settlers (*colons*) and their slaves arrived on St. Lucia from Martinique, which had been colonized by France sixteen years previously in 1635. While this was not the first to attempt to colonize St. Lucia (there had been two previous attempts by the British to settle the island in 1605 and 1639 - both expeditions were massacred by the indigenous Arawak inhabitants), the French expedition of 1651 survived repeated attacks by the Arawak inhabitants as well as disease and succeeded in forming a settlement, dedicated to the cultivation of ginger, cotton, and tobacco. From this point on until 1814, the island’s sovereignty was disputed between Britain (based on Barbados) and France (based on Martinique) both of which repeatedly invaded and took over colonial administration. St. Lucia ultimately changed hands between the two European powers 14 times.

In the first half of the 18th century, settlement increased as did production of coffee and cocoa by mostly French *colons* from Martinique. Beginning in 1765, sugar plantations were being established on St. Lucia by both French and British settlers. This shift to an industrial production model based on plantation slavery led directly to an enormous increase in demand for African slave labor. By 1789, four years after the establishment of an important French sugar estate in Vieux Fort, the vast majority of the

population consisted of imported African slaves: “By 1789 the population was estimated at 2,198 white, 1,588 coloured, 17,992 black, a total of 21,778, with a number of Maroon settlements whose population was unknown” (LePage & Tabouret-Keller 1985, p. 57).

With the abolition of the slave trade acts by Britain in 1807, the slave trade was prohibited in all British colonies, including St. Lucia. In 1835, Britain abolished slavery, whereupon all the slaves on St. Lucia and other British possessions were freed. Four years later, in 1838, St. Lucia was incorporated into the British Windward Islands administration, headquartered on Barbados. From 1958 to 1962 St. Lucia was a member of the short-lived West Indies Federation and in 1967, St. Lucia became self-governing for internal affairs, leading to independence from Britain in 1979. Today, St. Lucia remains a member of the British Commonwealth.

2.1.2 Geography

The mountainous terrain of St. Lucia provided a great temptation for slaves as well as European *engagés* (indentured servants) for escape from the plantation regime. In the 18th and 19th centuries, roads into the interior of the island were non-existent and access remained extremely difficult up to the mid 20th century. St. Lucia’s steep mountainsides sheltered fertile valleys, which allowed for subsistence farming and self-sufficiency. Dalphinis (1985, p. 34) summarizes:

. . . the terrain of St. Lucia, which even in present times is difficult, high mountains and deep forested valleys in most areas, with the exception of areas near the coast where the deltaic alluvial deposits of rivers have created areas of flat land. This was probably definitely [sic] a defendable or inhabitable haven for the slaves who managed to run away into these valleys within St. Lucia, and, on the theory that nothing succeeds like success, it is not surprising that slaves from other islands, among them Martinique and Trinidad, would take a chance for survival’s sake and go to where at least the fable of an alternative to slavery was said to originate – St. Lucia.

Both the geographic isolation and lack of communication between the coastal plantations and the interior of the island would turn out to be significant factors in the development of Kwéyòl.

2.1.3 Maroons

LePage & Tabouret-Keller (1985) are not alone in mentioning the maroon communities on St. Lucia; Roberts (2008) and Dalphinis (1985) also emphasize the influence of maroon communities on the development of the Kwéyòl language. Roberts, citing Breen (1844), recalls the period from 1834, when Britain abolished slavery and 1848, when it was abolished by France. During this time thousands of slaves from Martinique and Guadeloupe fled to St. Lucia, Dominica, and St. Vincent in search of freedom under the British flag. These slaves, known as *Nèg mawon* [*nègres marrons*] in the French colonies, came from Martinique in canoes at night to the northern part of St. Lucia and made for the mountainous interior, where they joined existing maroon communities.

. . . it is no unusual occurrence to see twelve or fifteen men and women [from Martinique] land on the coast of St. Lucia, from a canoe in which five persons could not sit at their ease. We know that numbers perish in the attempt . . . and that many, upon being closely pursued by the guard-costas, plunge into the deep, never to rise again, preferring death and a watery grave to the life and labour of bondage. (Breen, 1844)

If this quote is accurate, at a rate of 12-15 new arrivals at a time for a period of fourteen years, the numbers quickly add up to the thousands.

For his part, Dalphinis (1985, pp. 23-39) documents the high incidence of *marronage* on St. Lucia in the 18th and 19th centuries. Citing the reports of the Protectors of Slaves, Dalphinis discovers that, “[r]unning away was also the ‘crime’ committed by the most slaves between the 30th of June and the 31st of December of 1827, during which 97 male and 13 female slaves absconded and ran away; as well as for the period between the 1st of January and the 30th of June in which 83 male and 13 female slaves ran away.” He points out that *marronage* was often short-term and that contact between plantation slaves and maroon culture and language was bidirectional. To plantation slaves, the maroons represented successful resistance to enslavement and were considered to be speakers of the ‘authentic’, ‘original’, ‘African’ creole. On other islands with maroon communities, such as Jamaica, convincing evidence exists for their influence on the developing creole language (c.f. Alleyne, 1996, p. 46). As for St. Lucia, in light of the above evidence, the linguistic contribution of the maroons to Kwéyòl was potentially significant.

The formation of maroon communities in the islands of the Caribbean is to a large extent geographically determined. Maroon communities were found only on the mountainous islands such as Jamaica, Hispaniola,

Martinique, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent. On islands such as Barbados, where there are no mountains, there is simply no place to hide. As I show in the last section of this paper in which I examine creolization on Barbados, the absence of a maroon community can be as significant as its presence in the development of a creole.

2.1.4 Slave imports

Slave trading records from the 18th and 19th centuries indicate that the slave trade on St. Lucia was controlled from Martinique, even in times of British rule:

. . . it seems likely that Martinique would have been able to supply St. Lucia's slave needs to a large extent and that established slave merchants in Martinique would have tried to keep the St. Lucian trade in their hands. In the latter part of the eighteenth century Martinique was the third largest slave exporter listed in the British returns, after Barbados and Jamaica . . . But during this period neither Barbados nor Jamaica exported to St. Lucia." (LePage & Tabouret-Keller, 1985, p. 60)

The significance of this is that slaves arriving to St. Lucia (be it by force to a plantation or clandestinely to the mountainous interior) were Kwéyòl speakers² from Martinique. Furthermore, there was never any great influx of English-lexifier creole speaking slaves from Barbados or Jamaica to St. Lucia.

Of great interest to creolists are the African languages spoken by the slaves. According to records cited by Dalphinis (1985, p. 43), "The main source (1600-1700) of Africans in St. Lucia was from Senegambia [West Africa]." Further on, he reports that the slaves from the Senegambia region were used mainly as house slaves, while the Ewe/Fon-speaking slaves were favored as field slaves. This ethnolinguistic predominance of specific groups in specific domains of work would certainly have played a considerable role in the development of the creole. If this were the case, one would expect that basilectal syntactic features found in Kwéyòl could be traced back to Fongbe or related Ewe/Fon languages as Lefevbre (1998) and Lumsden (1999) have shown for Haitian Kreyòl.

The great difficulty lies in identification of the different languages spoken by Africans of this region in the 17th and 18th centuries. Senegambia itself is a huge territory whose ethnolinguistic communities include speakers of literally hundreds of distinct languages, including English and Portuguese-lexifier pidgins and creoles. To complicate matters further, slaves would have been multilingual and many would

have also already been speakers of contact languages, some with European lexifiers.

In the next section, I review the different theories regarding this and other questions with a comparison of the creolization models of Robert Chaudenson, Salikoko Mufwene, Morgan Dalphinis, Mervyn Alleyne, and Nicholas Faraclas. I then apply them to the genesis and evolution of Kwéyòl on St. Lucia, in order to shed light on both its origins and continued vitality.

2.2 Creolization models applied: Kwéyòl on St. Lucia and Bajan on Barbados

2.2.1 Introduction

From the historical, political, socio-economic, linguistic, and demographic data outlined above, we can begin to model the matrix of creolization from which Kwéyòl emerged and developed. Early written records from the 17th century by French missionaries and explorers attest to *baragouins* [jargons] spoken by both the indigenous Arawak and African slave populations. Unfortunately, this term is used indiscriminately and loosely, so it is difficult to say if and how the *baragouin* of the indigenous Arawak inhabitants of the Caribbean differed from that of the Africans. Hazaël-Massieux (1999, p. 68-69) cites the following French priests' accounts:

Père Pelleprat (1656) reports, “une façon de parler vulgaire” [a vulgar manner of speaking] (Translation by present author)

Père Jean Mongin (1672) reports, “Les nègres ont appris en peu de temps un certain jargon français . . .” [The Blacks have learned a certain French jargon in little time] (Translation by present author)

Père Labat (1742) reports, “Les Caraïbes savent . . . assez de mauvais français pour se faire entendre et pour comprendre ce qu'on leur dit.” [The Caribs know enough bad French to be understood and to understand what is told them] (Translation by present author).

Was the creole spoken by the Africans the target for the indigenous Arawak peoples involved in the contact situation, or vice-versa? Chaudenson (2001, p. 11) notes that the variety used by the indigenous Arawak peoples of the Antilles was more likely a pidgin, due to the nature of contact (which was sporadic and short-term), while the variety used by

the Africans developed into a creole from the beginning due to the “constant and intense contact” and interaction between the African slaves and the French *petits blancs* or *engagés* [indentured servants], alongside whom they lived and worked.

2.2.2 Chaudenson

The history of both colonization and mode of production on St. Lucia coincides well with Chaudenson’s two phase model of creolization presented in *Creolization of Language and Culture* (2001). Following this model, a first generation creole emerges from the early period of colonization, known as *société d’habitation* [homestead]. The second period, known as *société de plantation*, is marked by a change in the mode of production to a capitalist industrial production model requiring the massive import of African slaves. It is in these *sociétés de plantation* that a second generation creole emerges and replaces the first generation creole. For Chaudenson, the key difference between first and second generation creoles is the target for language acquisition by the slaves. In the first phase, the target language for the slaves is the koiné spoken by the French *colons*, composed chiefly of *Langue d’Oil* dialects; while for the newly arrived *bozals*³ slaves in the second phase, the target is the language of the creole slaves of the first phase (the first generation creoles).

On St. Lucia, the *société d’habitation* would have lasted from 1651 to 1765, a period of over 100 years. Coinciding with Chaudenson’s model, in this first phase the proportion of Blacks to Whites was relatively stable did not generally exceed 2 to 1 and, more importantly, there was little difference in the socio-economic status of the African slaves and the French *petits blancs* or *engagés* [indentured servants] who lived in similar conditions and worked alongside one another in the fields: “The initial period is characterized by two important features that might be thought incompatible: the total domination of Blacks by Whites and their nearly identical daily lives, marked by total interaction between the two communities” (Chaudenson, 2001, p. 98).

By the first half of the 18th century, French settlers are firmly in control and the indigenous Arawak inhabitants have largely abandoned the island. LePage & Tabouret-Keller (1985, p. 56-57) summarize the demographic situation at that time:

In the 1730s, planting of coffee and cocoa was extended by settlers, predominantly French, and their slaves, from Martinique, St. Vincent and Grenada . . . By 1745 there were fairly well-established French settlements in the island and it had been divided for administrative and parochial

purposes into *quartiers* . . . The island at this time was administered mostly from Martinique or by a local French civil or military commandant. Most of the Caribs seem to have withdrawn to the more northerly islands or into the interior of the island. We hear no more about them.

Unfortunately, there are few reliable demographic data which provide information on the number and origin of African slaves imported to the Caribbean in the 16th and 17th centuries. One early record, a census taken on Martinique in 1680 cited by Alleyne (1996, p. 44), indicates that at that time, speakers of Benue-Kwa languages such as Akan and Ewe-Fon were predominant. Since almost all slaves on St. Lucia arrived from Martinique, the same ethnicities would have predominated on St. Lucia.

Chaudenson's model minimizes the contribution of African languages to the creole in the first phase (*société d'habitation*), maintaining that the slaves learned to speak a very close approximation of the koiné spoken by the French *colons*. Mufwene (2001, p. 50) concurs: "It appears that during the initial homestead phase of each colony's development . . . approximations of European speech are likely to have been the trend among the non-Europeans living fairly closely with the European colonists . . . All the non-native speakers must have spoken approximations of the local colonial koinés." Even Alleyne (2000, p. 133), known for his opposition to Chaudenson's model, concurs that the creoles during the first phase of colonization were, in essence, restructured popular French: "[t]he process which yields the French-based [creole] languages therefore has the character of the evolution of a language (popular French)."

After 1765, with the increase in production of sugarcane and the corresponding increase in slave imports, the *bozal* slaves soon greatly outnumber both the white population and the creole slave population. In the switch from small scale production to a plantation economy (*société de plantation*), the segregation (both physical and psychological) between Whites and Blacks grows, with the result that the *bozal* slaves, unlike their predecessors, have no access to the language spoken by the French. For Chaudenson, the language of the creole slaves becomes the target for acquisition by the *bozal* slaves. It is at this phase that the inventory of basilectal features (those features which can be traced to substrate languages⁴) begins to increase. For Chaudenson, this basilectalization is a gradual process and represents a series of evolutions of French. He critiques Alleyne for failing to account for features in creoles which cannot be ascribed to any African substrate influence, and which Chaudenson ascribes to superstrate (French) influence.

The key question regarding the *bozal* slaves is their contribution to the linguistic feature pool of Kwéyòl. It is difficult to reconcile Chaudenson's

assertion, on the one hand, that an increased basilectalization occurred due to the influence of the *bozal* slaves; while on the other hand, that their linguistic influence was minimal. One problem is that the creole slaves whose speech was purportedly the acquisition target of the *bozal* slaves very quickly became a minority. Additionally, there is the question of status. Which group had greater status and prestige within the slave community? Was it the “seasoned” creole slaves, already fluent in Kwéyòl and savvy to the ways of plantation life, yet relatively few in number; or the masses of *bozal* slaves, having just arrived to an alien world with their African languages and cultures? Furthermore, among the *bozal* slaves, was there any one ethnolinguistic group that dominated, either numerically or politically? This is the group that would have the greater linguistic influence, *ceteris paribus*.

2.2.3 Mufwene

Mufwene (2001) largely incorporates and builds Chaudenson’s framework outlined above into his “complementary hypothesis” model. Following Chaudenson’s sociohistorical and sociolinguistic approach, Mufwene’s “Founder Principle” emphasizes the importance of the two phases (homestead/plantation) of creolization and how each produces different linguistic outcomes based on ecological variation. On the question of basilectalization, both Mufwene and Chaudenson maintain that basilectal features were always present, even in the homestead phase; what changes over time is the proportion of basilectal features relative to those of French origin. Mufwene (2001, p. 53) further proposes a sort of basilectal continuum with, at one end, a loose inventory of basilectal features, and “clearly identifiable sociolects” at the other. Thus, while basilectal features were present from the earliest period, the category of a basilectal speaker is a social construction which arose following the massive import of *bozal* African slaves during the second phase of creolization, or *société de plantation*.

Perhaps the biggest bone of contention between Chaudenson and Mufwene is the question of African languages in *sociétés de plantation*: to what extent, for how long, and to whom did the *bozal* slaves continue to use their African languages on the plantations? Chaudenson insists that since slave masters deliberately mixed Africans of different ethnolinguistic communities in order to prevent communication, these slaves immediately abandoned their African languages and became monolingual creole speakers. Mufwene (2001, p. 51), for his part, maintains that Africans of specific ethnolinguistic communities had differing degrees of influence in

critical phases of creolization: “In the history of each creole, there is a particular period during which the most significant part of basilectalization must have taken place under the dominant influence of speakers of some languages, typically those speaking Kwa languages in the case of the Atlantic creoles.

2.2.4 Dalphinis

Dalphinis (1985, pp. 100-101) traces Kwéyòl back to a Senegambian Creole (Kriul), hypothesizing that Kwéyòl developed as a result of the process of relexification: “Patwa developed from a French lexical input into a Senegambian language mould . . . coupled with the general influences of other African languages and of Island Carib, the language of the St. Lucian inhabitants prior to and during the period of African immigration.” Further on, he elaborates,

Wolof (and Mandinka) have provided the main synchronic reinforcement . . . and French the new lexical input, for Kriul. These same African languages, by contrast, were the main diachronic sources of the Patwa structural mould . . .

Although Dalphinis cites numerous examples of common features in Kwéyòl, Kriul, and African languages including Igbo, Ewe, Mandinka, Hausa, Wolof, Kikongo, and Twi/Fante, he does not explain how and why these particular features were selected. Thus, his analysis is open to the charge of employing the “cafeteria principle” since he seems to have chosen features to compare willy-nilly, with neither rhyme nor reason. To his credit, his historical research into African slave imports for the period in question (from 1639 onwards) indicates that the majority of the slaves imported to St. Lucia were indeed taken from the Senegambian region.

Finally, Dalphinis does not neglect the influence of Island Carib speakers. Following up on the research of Taylor (1971) in Dominica, Dalphinis identifies several grammatical convergences between Kwéyòl and Island Carib, including:

ka (habitual and progressive marker)
li (he/she 3rd singular masculine pronoun)
ma, maa (1st singular negative marker.)

Both Roberts (2008) and Dalphinis (1985) place emphasis on the contact between indigenous Arawak peoples and the maroons. According to Roberts, it was common for both the indigenous Arawak peoples of the

Antilles and maroon slaves to travel by canoe from island to island, evading the European coast guards and navies. These historical data support the linguistic evidence of Island Carib features in Kwéyòl identified by Taylor and Dalphinis.

While the indigenous Arawak inhabitants of St. Lucia disappeared around mid 18th century, maroon communities continued to exist well into the 19th century: “. . . even as late as 1832, the Privy and Executive Council [records] still indicate the problem of the tradition of the Martinico-St. Lucian Marronage in St. Lucia” (Dalphinis 1985, p. 27). For Dalphinis, their influence was significant and he cites as evidence the present day dominance of Kwéyòl in rural areas of St. Lucia:

[g]iven the prominence of St. Lucia as a runaway catchment area, the Maroon *mawan* influences upon St. Lucian Patwa by groups of slaves living in the forest is not to be underestimated; possibly the present-day predominance of Patwa in rural areas, (*hòtè*), as opposed to its slow death in the urban area of Castries, has been influenced by this situation . . . (p. 34)

2.2.5 Faraclas, Corum, Arrindell & Pierre

In a paper presented at the 24th Meeting of the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics in Amsterdam in June of 2007, González-López (2007) introduced the concept of *société de cohabitation* to describe the indigenous and maroon communities that co-existed with both the early proto-capitalist *sociétés d’habitation* and the later capitalist *sociétés de plantation*. These communities of cohabitation existed outside of the political economies of the European-dominated *sociétés d’habitation* and *sociétés de plantation*, as defined by Chaudenson. In her paper, “Creoles as Languages of Resistance: The Role of Cultural Resistance in the Genesis and Development of Creoles,” González-López argues that:

Pirates and Maroons play a central role in Caribbean history and they can be said to form of what we have called the *sociétés de cohabitation* and that, together with a research group at the University of Puerto Rico, I contend that preceded and co-existed with Chaudenson’s (1992) *sociétés d’habitation* and *sociétés de plantation* and which began to take shape from the very first moment of European invasion of Africa and the Caribbean in the 15th Century until well after the abolition of slavery in the 19th Century.

At the same conference, Faraclas and his research group develop this concept further in a critique of Chaudenson’s binary model of *sociétés*

d'habitation and sociétés de plantation:

The extremely intimate nature of interethnic contact in *sociétés de cohabitation* far surpasses that of either *sociétés d'habitation* or of *sociétés de plantation*. Because so many *sociétés de cohabitation* functioned as extensions of Indigenous American and/or African egalitarian political economies of subsistence, people of European descent as well as their languages and cultures did not automatically predominate as they did in both *sociétés d'habitation* or *sociétés de plantation*. (p. 3)

This is consistent with the arguments of Dalphinis (1985) and Roberts (2008), cited above, regarding the oft-ignored influence of the maroon communities on St. Lucia on the Kwéyòl language and culture. These *sociétés de cohabitation* existed on St. Lucia from the earliest European settlement until well into the 19th century and their influence contributed to the vitality of Kwéyòl, which remains widely spoken on St. Lucia to this day.

2.2.6 Alleyne

In *Syntaxe Historique Créole* (1996), Alleyne presents arguments and evidence in support of his substrate model of creole genesis. With a focus on the French-lexifier creoles, in many ways this book is a response to Chaudenson. Alleyne begins by noting that the Caribbean French-lexifier creoles have evolved along opposite trajectories compared to the English-lexifier creoles:

. . . les créoles à base lexicale anglaise parlés dans la zone caraïbe font preuve d'un processus historique d'évolution qui est l'inverse du processus subi par les parlers créoles à base lexicale française (p. 11). [The English-based creoles spoken in the Caribbean zone underwent a historic evolutionary process which is the inverse of that undergone by the French-based creoles] (Translation by present author).

This fact sets the French-lexifier creoles apart from the English-lexifier creoles and greatly complicates any universal theory of creole genesis. Like Chaudenson and Mufwene, Alleyne emphasizes the importance of the sociohistorical and sociolinguistic conditions in which creole languages developed. All three creolists agree that the period after the shift to a *société de plantation* mode of production in the colonies was critical in the development of these new languages. Alleyne (1996, p. 27) summarizes:

C'est dans les années 1660 que commence cette révolution socio-économique. Elle change les relations entre les deux groupes (maîtres et esclaves), et désormais, les Africains dépassent progressivement les Français du point de vue numérique [It is in the 1660s that this socio-economic revolution begins. It changes the relations between the two groups (masters and slaves), and from that point onward, the Africans progressively outnumber the French] (Translation by present author).

He notes that during this new phase the separation between masters and slaves was codified in the (in)famous *Code Noir* (1685) which governed relations between masters and slaves in all the French colonies. This concomitant segregation of the slaves placed them into a situation in which their communicative needs forced the accelerated restructuring of Kwéyòl.

Alleyne also notes that the high mortality rate of slaves, both infants and adults, would have been a significant factor in the evolution of the creole. Due to this fact, during the *société de plantation* period imports of *bozal* slaves greatly exceeded birthrates among the slave population in the colonies. For Alleyne, arguing against Chaudenson's gradualist model, the second phase represents a break in transmission and an abrupt restructuring of the creole:

Il y a eu donc discontinuité linguistique et transmutation linguistique ("language shift") . . . Il ne s'agit pas d'une évolution lente et graduelle, imperceptible . . . (p. 25-26) [There is thus linguistic discontinuity and language shift . . . it is not a matter of a slow, gradual, and imperceptible evolution.] (Translation by present author).

While the paucity of records makes it difficult to establish the origin of African slaves imported to the Caribbean during the 16th and 17th centuries, by the 18th century records become both more numerous and reliable. Citing Richardson (1989), Alleyne (1996, p. 44-45) reports that 1700-1799 slave export records show that a predominance of African slaves were speakers of Benue-Kwa languages, such as Akan and Ewe-Fon. He remarks,

La documentation historique suggère, donc, une légère prédominance éwé-fon dans la période formative de ces sociétés de plantation de la Caraïbe [The historic documentation suggests, thus, a slight Ewe-Fon predominance in the formative period of the plantation society in the Caribbean] (Translation by present author).

As to the role of the *bozal* slaves in the formation of the creoles, Alleyne differs sharply with Chaudenson. Rejecting Chaudenson's hypothesis that the *bozal* slaves would have given up their native languages, having no use for them and no opportunity to speak them, Alleyne (1996, p. 46) argues:

Chaudenson omet de citer le corpus aussi volumineux de citations qui suggèrent que, loin de rester dans un état d'alinguisme jusqu'à ce qu'ils aient appris assez de français pour communiquer entre eux, les Africains, parmi lesquelles d'ailleurs le bilinguisme ou le multilinguisme étaient courants, pouvaient retrouver leurs compatriotes dans une île et sur une plantation particulière. [Chaudenson omits citing from a voluminous corpus of citations which suggest that, far from remaining in a state of "alingualism" until they had learned enough French to communicate among themselves, the Africans, among whom, by the way, multilingualism was common, could meet up with their compatriots on an island or on a particular plantation.] (Translation by present author).

In *Syntaxe Historique Créole* (1996), Alleyne provides abundant evidence of substrate influence, effectively challenging the superstrate hypothesis. To cite one example, Alleyne raises serious doubts about a French origin for the zero marker completive form in relation to the creole past marker *té*:

Il est important de constater que l'on ne peut pas proposer une évolution de l'accompli et du passé de la langue française . . . il est . . . évident qu'à cet égard les langues créoles ne continuent ni la forme ni les distinctions sémantiques du syntagme verbal du français" (p. 112) [It is important to note that one cannot propose an evolution of completive and the past tense forms from the French language . . . it is . . . evident that in this regard creole languages contain neither the form nor the semantic distinctions of the French verb phrase.] (Translation by present author).

Having presented arguments and evidence supporting African substrate influence in the French-lexifier creoles, including predicate clefting and serial verb structures, Alleyne concludes,

. . . malgré toute l'opposition qu'on y a faite, la fameuse influence du substrat est la solution la plus directe et la plus simple à un grand nombre de «problèmes» syntaxiques créoles (p. 183) [despite all the opposition that has been made, the famous substrate influence is the simplest and most direct solution to a great number of creole syntactic "problems."] (Translation by present author).

After responding to Chaudenson, Alleyne turns to Mufwene, critiquing his creolization model for his vague definition of markedness, upon which Mufwene bases his theory of the selection of features. Alleyne (1996, p. 18) remarks,

Mufwene dilue tellement la notion de “moins” ou “plus marqué” qu’elle en devient tout à fait inopérante [Mufwene dilutes the notion of “marked” and “unmarked” to such an extent that it becomes completely inoperative.] (Translation by present author).

What is clear is that none of the creolization models can account for every feature in any one creole language, and much less every creole language. While the ecological factors that influence the selection of features and lead to creole genesis are generally agreed upon, the specific processes by which these selections occur remain a mystery. Creolists such as Mufwene (2001, p. 57) openly confess to being “haunted by the ‘cafeteria principle’,” the *bête noire* which has plagued theories of creole genesis for decades, including that of Dalphinis (1985). Yet, these difficulties aside, the creolization models described above do not differ so greatly. All four models emphasize the importance of socio-economic factors, especially mode of production. More significantly, together they can be fruitfully applied to the evolution of Kwéyòl on St. Lucia.

2.2.7 Creolization on St. Lucia

In the early phase of colonization (*société d’habitation*), I have shown how demographics, politics, history, and socio-economic factors on St. Lucia contributed to the development of a first generation creole that was, to use Chaudenson’s term, an “approximation” of the popular French spoken by the *colons* and *engagés*. Due to the geography of St. Lucia, this first generation creole would have varied between settlements and the isolated maroon communities, or *sociétés de cohabitation*.

It is in the second phase (*société de plantation*) in which the massive restructuring takes place to produce what is present-day Kwéyòl. As Alleyne (2000) points out,

It seems . . . that the French-based languages took an evolutionary path which is the reverse of the path taken by the English-based creoles. Maximum restructuring takes place, for the French-based languages, at the end of the historical process through cumulative **divergent** changes in the course of time” (p. 132, bold in original).

During this period, significant contributing factors to the matrix of creolization on St. Lucia were: the maroon population, demographics (proportion of *bozal* slaves to creole slaves and Whites), socio-economic changes resulting in the segregation of Africans from Europeans, and perhaps the most elusive factor of all, the African languages spoken by the slaves. Roberts (2008) has provided evidence of large numbers, perhaps thousands, of maroon slaves escaping from the French island of Martinique and arriving clandestinely in canoes to St. Lucia, while Dalphinis (1985) has documented the presence of significant maroon communities on St. Lucia and maintains that their influence upon Kwéyòl language and culture on St. Lucia can be seen to this day.

As for demographics, records cited above show that after 1789 the ratio of Blacks to Whites was over 8 to 1. This massive influx of slaves contributed to the restructuring of Kwéyòl. It is at this stage that the TMA (tense, mood, aspect) pre-verbal particles *ka*, *kay* are normalized and nativized on the plantations; however, these forms may well have existed in the Kwéyòl spoken in the *sociétés de cohabitation*, and subsequently spread to the Kwéyòl of the plantations.

The socio-economic changes that resulted from the change to a *société de plantation* model greatly impacted the lives of the slaves and racial relations on the plantations. In the French colonies, this change was formalized in the *Code Noir*. Segregation of the slaves from the white population meant that the linguistic influence of the latter on Kwéyòl would essentially end. From this point onward, the slaves would rely on one another as models as they took on an expanded role as agents in the creation of a new Caribbean creole language. Historical records cited by Dalphinis (1985) and Alleyne (1996) establish that the majority of slaves arriving to Martinique and St. Lucia during the *société de plantation* period were Ewe-Fon speakers. Predictably, syntactic features common to these African languages and Kwéyòl such as predicate clefting and serial verb constructions are well documented (v. Alleyne (1996)). The existence of these basilectal features in Kwéyòl is due in no small part to the continued influence of Maroon populations documented by Roberts and Dalphinis.

These, then, were the conditions that formed the matrix from which Kwéyòl evolved on St. Lucia. Widely spoken on St. Lucia as well as in the diaspora, Kwéyòl has persisted despite over 150 years of continuous British rule and over twenty-five as a member of the British Commonwealth. While the English language took root early in Castries, St. Lucia's capital, its spread to rural areas was slow due not only to the difficult access but also to a lack of schools. Seeking to explain Kwéyòl's

strong vitality when compared to Grenadian French-lexifier creole and Trinidadian French-lexifier creole, both of which are virtually extinct, LePage & Tabouret-Keller (1985, p. 61-62) cite many of the same factors that contributed to its evolution, including:

1. Geography of St. Lucia
2. Communication with the French colony of Martinique
3. The slave trade controlled from Martinique
4. Roman Catholicism and Kwéyòl syncretism
5. Maroon populations

The authors elaborate on the importance of the fourth factor:

On the whole, however, Roman Catholicism and French Creole Patois, contributing to a creole oral culture and a pantheon which could accommodate both African and French aspects, united most people in the island to the exclusion of the urban Anglican and Barbadian-dominated administrators who had replaced their French opposite numbers for good by 1803.

So, while Castries has been predominantly English-speaking and Protestant for over two centuries, St. Lucian villages and rural areas have remained Kwéyòl-speaking and Catholic. Today, the majority of St. Lucians are bilingual in English and Kwéyòl.

2.2.8 Creolization on Barbados

I now turn to the island of Barbados, located approximately 100 miles to the east of St. Lucia, to examine the ecological conditions there that resulted in the Barbadian English-lexifier contact variety commonly known as Bajan, so as to compare and contrast them with those of St. Lucia.

The neighboring British island of Barbados serves as an exemplary contrast to St. Lucia considering the linguistic output brought about by variations in socio-economic, political, historical, demographic, linguistic, and geographic conditions. Barbadian Creole (Bajan) stands out among the English-lexifier Caribbean creoles as having the fewest creole features as well as the absence of anything resembling a basilect, leading many creolists to question whether it ought to be classified as a creole or not. Throughout the West Indies, Barbados is known as “little England” and Barbadians are said to be, “more British than the British.”

Barbados was first colonized in 1627 by 50 British male settlers and their slaves. Unlike St. Lucia, Barbados was uninhabited at the time of colonization. Early settlers cultivated tobacco, cotton, and indigo in small scale production (*société d'habitation/homestead*). In 1639, a House of Assembly was formed, which continues to act to this day. Sugar was introduced in the 1640s and soon transformed the economy of the island to a plantation economy. As the size of sugar plantations increased, these plantations became consolidated into the hands of fewer and fewer white farmers, leading to the exodus of over 30,000 landless Barbadians between the years of 1650-1680. While the white population was decreasing due to emigration, the African slave population began rising: in 1645 the African population was estimated to be 5,680 and by 1667 it surpassed 40,000. During the 18th century, with the drop in the price of sugar, European wars, the American revolution, and numerous destructive hurricanes, the economy of Barbados collapsed. Little changed in the 19th century, as a handful of white families continued to control the island's wealth while the majority black population remained landless and impoverished. From 1800 to 1885 Barbados served as the main seat of Government for the former British colonies of the Windward Islands. During that period of 85 years the resident Governor of Barbados also served as the colonial head of the Windward Islands. Barbados gained its independence in 1966.

As for geography, the contrast between St. Lucia and Barbados cannot be greater. Unlike St. Lucia, which arose from the sea as a volcano, Barbados is non-volcanic and composed of limestone and coral. Essentially flat, with no mountainous and forested interior, the island of Barbados provided no havens for escaped slaves, the majority of whom were forced to take to sea in search of freedom on neighboring islands such as indigenous-controlled St. Vincent. With the absence of geological barriers, intra-island communication was excellent, which helped to increase the rate of normalization of Bajan throughout the island. The flat terrain proved ideal for the cultivation of sugarcane, which was planted on over 80% of Barbados.

It is these factors which can help us to understand why Bajan differs so radically from other English-lexifier creoles, such as Jamaican. However, questions remain: Is Bajan the result of semi-creolization, such as some claim for African American Vernacular English and Brazilian Portuguese? Or, rather, is the lack of basilectal features the result of decreolization?

Williams (1985), responding to this question, emphasizes the importance of demographics on Barbados in order to explain differences between Bajan and Jamaican Creole: