

University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus
College of Humanities, English Department

INGL 3249: Introduction to the Creole Languages of the Americas (P)

Professor:

Name: Dr. Patrick-André Mather

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Office Hours: by appointment

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Credits: 45 Hours/3 Credits

Schedule: Monday & Wednesday 1:00 – 2:20 pm

Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Other Requirements: None.

Course Description. The Caribbean has been one of the global epicenters for the development of creole languages since the beginning of the era of colonial plantation slavery. In this course, students will use linguistic studies, spoken and written texts, and field data to explore the dynamic and creative processes of cultural and linguistic synthesis that typify Caribbean societies, with a specific focus on the languages of social contact and social contract that have developed in the West Indies over the past five hundred years. Articles expounding the different theories regarding the origin of plantation era creoles will be compared to get a sense of the key debates among creolists and the features that typify the vocabulary, grammar, and sound systems of Caribbean creoles will be studied in some detail so that students can gain a deeper understanding of these fascinating languages.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, the students will be able

- 1) To understand, manipulate, and critically question the basic concepts and categories used by creolists in their work.
- 2) To identify and describe the different processes involved in language contact in general and creolization in particular.
- 3) To recognize and understand the wide variety of political, social, historical, and linguistic contexts that have given rise to creole languages.
- 4) To conduct descriptive research on some aspect of creole linguistics.
- 5) To explain and question the theories of creole genesis and to begin to situate themselves in relation to these different competing frameworks.

- 6) To analyze the dynamics of how dominant languages and cultures are propagated and of how this process is resisted through pidginization and creolization.
- 7) To critically analyze how linguists, sociolinguists, and creolists do their work
- 8) To recognize and analyze the different lexicosemantic, phonological, and morphosyntactic structures that typify the creole languages of the colonial era.
- 9) To critically question the language that underpins such concepts as 'language', 'culture', 'race', 'civilization', 'development' and 'globalization' as they are generally understood and used in the Caribbean and beyond.
- 10) To make the process of the lifelong cultivation of the practice of critical questioning of discourses an ongoing one in their daily lives.
- 11) To contribute in an effective way to the integration of fellow students with special challenges and needs into the learning environment.
- 12) To participate in teamwork designed to make necessary adjustments for the inclusion of students with special challenges and needs.

Course Content and Calendar (approximate, subject to adjustment).

Unless specified otherwise in Moodle, All readings are from the required Textbook: [Kouwenberg, S. & J. Singler \(Eds.\), 2008. The Handbook of Pidgin and Creole Studies. London: Wiley-Blackwell.](#)

In addition to the weekly readings, students must do all quizzes & assignments (in Moodle) before the next meeting.

Week 1 – Reading: Kouwenberg & Singler – Introduction (p. 1-17)

Week 2 - Reading: Atlantic Creole Syntax (p. 19-48, by Winford)

Week 3 - Reading: Pidgin and Creole Morphology (p. 74-97, by Crowley)

Week 4 - Reading: Creole Phonology (p. 98-129, by Smith)

Week 5 - Reading: Pidgins versus Creoles (p. 130-157, by Bakker)

Week 6 - Reading: Second language acquisition and creolization (pdf article by Mather, 2006)

Week 7 - Reading: The Impact of the Language Bioprogram Hypothesis (p. 219-241, by Veenstra)

Week 8 - Reading: Pidgins/Creoles and Historical Linguistics (p. 242-262, by Thomason)

Week 9 - Reading: The sociohistorical context of creole genesis (p. 332-358, by Singler)

Week 10 - Reading: Pidgins/Creoles in Education (p 593-614, by Craig)

Week 11 - Reading: Language Planning in Pidgins and Creoles (p. 615-636, by Devonish)

Week 12 - Reading: Literary Representations of Creole Languages (p. 637-665, by Buzelin & Winer)

Week 13 - Reading: Diglossia and Language Conflict in Haiti (pdf article by Valdman, 1988)

Week 14 – Class Presentations by students

Week 15 – Class Presentations by students (continued)

Week 16 – Written version of research project due. This is a 4 page essay based on your class presentation. You may also work in pairs, in which case the essay will be 8 pages. All work is to be uploaded in Moodle, NOT sent via e-mail.

Teaching Strategies: As much as possible a participatory, student centered pedagogy will be used in this class, with students actively engaged in learning processes whereby they can use their existing knowledge to shed light on areas of understanding about language which they may not have previously explored, through the use of such methods as discussion, group work, active research, lectures, textual analysis, critical analysis of audio visual materials, etc.

Resources and Equipment Required:

- 1) A computer with a high-speed Internet connection.
- 2) A camera and microphone
- 3) Basic word-processing software.

Methods of Evaluation: Evaluation procedures will be adjusted for students with special needs.

Class participation	10%
Moodle quizzes & assignments	70%
1 Research Project (including class presentation)	20%
TOTAL	100%

Grading System: A=90-100%; B=80-89%; C=70-79%; D=60-69%; F=0-59%

Ground rules for the course:

- 1) Attendance: 4 unexcused absences will lower the course final mark by 10%.
- 2) Tardiness: 4 arrivals 15 minutes or more after class begins=1 unexcused absence.
- 3) Makeup examinations: No make-ups for unexcused absences or tardiness.
- 4) Late assignments: Late assignments must be handed in before the next class after the due date, in which case 5 points will be deducted from the mark.
- 5) Plagiarism: After an investigation, serious cases of plagiarism will result in a mark of zero.
- 6) Languages of instruction: English, but Spanish may be used for clarification.

Additional Bibliography:

Dawson, Hope and Michael Phelan, eds. *Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics*. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, **2016**.

Fromkin, Victoria et al. *An Introduction to Language*, 11th ed. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, **2018**.

O'Grady, William et al. *Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction*, 7th ed.. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, **2017**.

Rowe, Bruce M. and Diane P. Levine. *A Concise Introduction to Linguistics*, 5th ed. New York: Routledge, **2018**.

Siegel, Jeff. *The Emergence of Pidgin and Creole Languages*, New York: Routledge, 2008.

Vilupilai, Viveka. **2015**. *Pidgins, Creoles, and Mixed Languages: An Introduction*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 626 pages.

Reasonable Accommodation:

The University of Puerto Rico complies with all state and federal laws and regulations related to discrimination including "The American Disabilities Act" (ADA) and Law #51 from the Puerto Rico Commonwealth (Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico). Every student has the right to request and receive reasonable accommodation. Those students with special needs that require some type of particular assistance or accommodation shall explicitly communicate it directly to the professor. Students who are receiving VRS services shall communicate that to the professor at the beginning of the semester to facilitate appropriate planning and the necessary equipment according to the Students with Disabilities Affairs Office (Oficina de Servicios a Estudiantes con Impedimentos (OSEI), administered by the Dean of Students Office. Any other student requiring assistance or special accommodation shall also communicate directly with the professor.

Academic Integrity:

The University of Puerto Rico promotes the highest standards of academic and scientific integrity. Article 6.2 of the UPR Students General Bylaws (Board of Trustees Certification 13, 2009-2010) states that academic dishonesty includes,

but is not limited to: fraudulent actions; obtaining grades or academic degrees by false or fraudulent simulations; copying the whole or part of the academic work of another person; plagiarizing totally or partially the work of another person; copying all or part of another person answers to the questions of an oral or written exam by taking or getting someone else to take the exam on his/her behalf; as well as enabling and facilitating another person to perform the aforementioned behavior. Any of these behaviors will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary procedure established in the UPR Students General Regulations.

To ensure the integrity and security of user data, all hybrid, distance and online courses must be offered through the institutional learning management platform, which uses secure connection and authentication protocols. The system authenticates the identity of the user using the username and password assigned to their institutional account. The user is responsible for keeping his password safe, protecting, and not sharing this password with other people.

Institutional Policy against Sexual Harassment:

“The University of Puerto Rico prohibits discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in any of its forms, including that of sexual harassment. According to the Institutional Policy against Sexual Harassment in force at the University of Puerto Rico, any student subjected to acts constituting sexual harassment, may turn to the Office of the Student Ombudsperson, the Office of the Dean of Students, or the Coordinator of the Office of Compliance with Title IX for an orientation or filing a formal complaint”.

Contingency Plan:

If an emergency or an interruption of courses occurs, course offerings will take place with the support of distance learning modalities, as established in the official syllabus. In compliance with official communications and institutional guidelines, the professor will make efforts to communicate with students via institutional email or other available communication outlets to coordinate the continuity of course work.