

Re: Related languages (Re: A China–Sumer connection)

Source: <http://sci.tech–archive.net/Archive/sci.anthropology/2005–03/1275.html>

From: Richard Herring (*junk_at_[127.0.0.1]*)

Date: 03/17/05

Date: Thu, 17 Mar 2005 11:12:45 +0000

In message <FG9_d.10842\$oO4.3945@newsread3.news.pas.earthlink.net>, Comm <tjsrno@spampost.com> writes

>

> "*Neeraj Mathur*" <neemathur@hotmail.com> wrote in message

> news:d1af19\$7ig\$1@news.ox.ac.uk...

>>

[snip]

>>

>> *I'm a bit confused here, because the definition of 'creole' that I gave,*

>> *which you agree with, was based entirely on grammar and structure (note*

>> *phrases like 'simplified languages', 'grammatical complexity'). Vocabulary*

>> *has nothing to do with that definition of creole.*

>

> *Hmm, not to my ear.*

Then you're **dis**agreeing with the given definition.

> *I hear what happens when Mexicans, Anglos, Haitians and*

> *Jamaicans have to work together. Not too long before they speak a language*

> *in everyday use that heh, no one ELSE understands. Then the words I used*

> *before "contact and blending" (Martin also said blending, I think) is more*

> *appropriate.*

[...]

>>

>>> *Imo word order doesn't matter that much in spoken English. You can wreck*

>>> *the language and still communicate fine. "I'm a leave out." "He left*

>>> *out." (it means, "I'm going to go" and "He is gone.") Do you understand*

>>> *that?*

>>

>> *To be perfectly honest, I didn't understand either! Are there regions*

>> *where that is normal or acceptable?*

>

> *It's everyday speech and no, it's not regional at all!*

Of course it's regional, or Neeraj wouldn't have asked. If I said "I'm a

leave out" to anyone I know, they wouldn't have a clue what I meant.

> *I just said to the
> handyman before, when he asked me "Where you were?" I answered, "I left
> out to th'store, missed ya." He's a bilingual Puerto Rican from NYC and he
> had no problem understanding what I said – and I talk very fast. He said
> what he was going to do to a room (which I can't quote verbatim). I said,
> "ged." Normal English! Now, is "where you were?" a Spanish grammer thing?
> I don't know. He speaks English with a NY accent, not a Spanish accent. He
> was born here. I'm also phonetically spelling out the conversation here,
> verbatim. This is normal interactive conversation, everyday mundane stuff.*

Only in *your* region. QED.

[...]

>
> *This means that: 1) English
>> speakers have an intuitive knowledge of a grammar that is psychologically
>> real to them;
>
> I doubt it. They are corrected as kids when they often say things, and they
> say things as if they are using that creole grammar (I read one paper on
> that, which was astonishing). Some kids, not all, are constantly being
> corrected by their parents due to wrong grammer. And if they are not – ??
> Many are not. But in comes school to do it. What if, as in the old days,
> there was NO school? Public school, or teaching what the esoteric and/or
> elite schools (two separate things) knew to the public was unheard of in
> every society at one time. Public school is a very new idea. I know a lot
> about esoteric schools of thought – I'm from one culturally, shadow language
> and all that. There is nothing innate about how we speak a language. It's
> learned – from home, school and then from peers, TV and etc.*

Grammar isn't just the formal stuff you learn at school.

Ever would you everydayly conversationally sentence this like out with come?

No? Why not? Because you "just know" there's something wrong with it, even if you can't explain what. Ergo, you have an intuitive knowledge of a grammar in which that isn't an acceptable production.

[...]

>
> *2) this grammar involves various rules and processes;
>
> See above – kids often speak like creole speakers speak and have to be
> corrected – and they are corrected early on – IF they get corrected at all.
> Then school, TV, and etc. normalize the way they speak, sort of (a BIG sort
> of). Do the experiment.*

How the rules are acquired is not the issue here. How would any of that contradict the statement that "English speakers have an intuitive knowledge of a grammar ... [which] involves various rules and processes?"

>

>3) *there*

>> *are more rules and processes in the grammar than are strictly necessary*

>> *for basic communication.*

>

>*No, there are more rules and such imposed on people at an early age, either*

>*at home, school, or from TV.*

What do you mean, "No"? There are more rules than are strictly necessary. Where they come from is not the issue. If you can break the rules and still be understood, then those rules are not strictly necessary.

[...]

>>

>>> *"Compliments, courtesy of the chef – poultry fillets." How much of that*

>>> *last one is Anglo Saxon/Germanic? It means you are going to be given*

>>> *some free chicken to eat.*

>>

>> *Mmm, I wish! I don't think I've ever gotten such sumptuous treats! But I*

>> *agree with you that the vocabulary (except 'of' and 'the') is not Germanic*

>> *in origin. It is also true that communication is achieved. Nevertheless,*

>> *the example is probably not a grammatical sentence in English.*

>

>*It's not?*

It's not a sentence at all, by some people's definition.

>*Someone said that to me! And yes, mmmm. They were really little*

>*fillets, tho :)*

>

>*I'm sure you will*

>> *also agree that, statistically, the two words in that phrase that are most*

>> *common, that is, most likely to appear in any given text of any particular*

>> *length, are precisely the two non–borrowed ones. Is this not an important*

>> *fact when describing English?*

>

>*I'm not sure. I gave you real life examples above – now and before.*

If you want to know about the roots of a language, the place to look is not the lexical words but the grammatical ones. Expand your fragment about chicken into a complete grammatical sentence, and look at the origin of the words you had to add.

[...]

sci.anthropology: Re: Related languages (Re: A China–Sumer connection)

>>

>>> *By the time a few hundred years past in England with Normans and AS*

>>> *speaking to each other easily – would Normans that never went to England*

>>> *and had no contact with them or other Normans be able to understand each*

>>> >> *other? I doubt it.*

>>

>> *This is hard to say – especially considering that the Normans in England*

>> *abandoned French after a few centuries anyway.*

>

>*Heh, they abandoned it in Norway too!*

When was that?

[...]

--

Richard Herring