

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

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From: John Atkinson (johnacko_at_bigpond.com)

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"Peter T. Daniels" <grammatim@worldnet.att.net> wrote in message news:423F339B.1D9B@worldnet.att.net...

> *John Atkinson wrote:*

>>

>> *"Peter T. Daniels" <grammatim@worldnet.att.net> wrote :*

>>>

>>> *No, creoles do not reflect the grammar of one of their source*

>>> *languages. It used to be thought that the similarity among all creoles*

>>> *resulted from their all developing from a Portuguese substratum and a*

>>> *local superstratum -- until many, many creoles were discovered in parts*

>>> *of the world that had never been visited by Portuguese advenrturers,*

>>> *traders, whatever.*

>>

>> *OK, I know only one creole well enough to comment on -- Tok Pisin.[...]*

>>

>>> *Some version of Bickerton's hypothesis that absence of "whole"*

>>> *linguistic input causes the "underlying" linguistic capacity of an*

>>> *infant to shape its emergent language must be closest to the facts.*

>>

>> *I believe it has some influence, but doubt that it is the **major** causative*

>> *factor in producing (most?) creole grammars. (As I said though, I don't*

>> *really know what I'm talking about when it comes to the Atlantic creoles.)*

>>

>> *I'd be interested to hear whether Guy and Ross agree with what I say*

>> *above -- they're the local experts on Melanesian creoles and Austronesian of*

> > *course.*

>

> *The point is to get _out_ of the 'Nesias and look at the Arabic–based
> creoles inside Africa, for instance; check on Ki–Nubi. Holm's Green
> book(s) is the fullest resource (the Red is a summary with additions).*

OK. The substrate for Nubi and its close relation Juba Arabic would be one or more languages of southern Sudan, viz, Nilo–Saharan, likely Dinka or Nuer I'd guess, or perhaps more likely Fur (Owens "demonstrates that many of [JA's] phonological features come from ... Western Sudan"). I know buggerall about any of these. OTOH, Nubi speakers formed the backbone of the Kings African Rifles in Uganda, and Swahili was the language used by the Brits with their black troops, so Swahili would have been an adstrate -- the prefix *ki* in Ki–Nubi is of course Swahili.

> *From the scrap of information in Holm's green book (vol 2, p 574), the kind of compounds in Nubi ("belly of hand" for palm, etc) certainly sound very like those typical of Swahili (where palm = kitanga cha mkono), or other Bantu languages. The word order and constructions in the four lines of text quoted are very similar to those of pidginised Swahili (Swahili sans prefixes).*

FWIW, Nubi, like Dinka, Nuer, Swahili, and Arabic are VO, while Fur is strongly SOV. Which may suggest that Nubi does *not* get most of its syntax from a Fur substrate.

Course, these remarks, being based on minimal data, don't mean a thing. I need a Fur grammar!

John.

> --

> *Peter T. Daniels grammatim@att.net*