

San Andres-Providencia Creole

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Introduction to San Andres Creole

- Native to San Andres, Colombia
- Called Saintandrewan, Islander
- <20,000 speakers
- Diglossia
- Related to other Caribbean English-based creoles



Historic Facts

1627: English Puritans settle

1631: Slaves arrived to cultivate cotton

1641: Spanish arrived

1730: Arrival of colonists from other parts of the British Caribbean, especially Jamaica, as well as from West Africa.

San Andres Creole develops then

1822: San Andres and Providencia become part of Colombia

1902- 1926: "Hispanization"

1953: San Andres becomes a Free Port

1991: San Andres Creole is an official language in Colombian constitution



Linguistics

- English= lexifier, recreolization with Spanish.
- African languages: Kwa and Igbo
 - plural marker dem '-s' as in di bway dem 'the boys', the progressive marker deh 'to be + -ing' as in dem deh bliid 'they are bleeding', and the locative marker deh 'here/there' as in di rabit deh 'the rabbit is there'.
 - Unu 3rd person plural
 - Dopi ghost
- Spanish
 - Borrowing, word order, prepositions

Table 3. Personal pronouns and adnominal possessives

	subject	object	adnominal possessives	reflexive pronouns
1SG	<i>mi, A</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>fi mi</i>	<i>miself</i>
2SG	<i>yu</i>	<i>yu</i>	<i>fi yu</i>	<i>yuself</i>
3SG	<i>ihn, (h)im</i>	<i>(h)im</i>	<i>fi ihn/him</i>	<i>(h)imself</i>
3SG.N	<i>ih</i>	<i>ih</i>	<i>fi ih</i>	<i>ihself</i>
1PL	<i>wi</i>	<i>wi</i>	<i>fi wi</i>	<i>wiself</i>
2PL	<i>unu</i>	<i>unu</i>	<i>fi unu</i>	<i>unuself</i>
3PL	<i>dehn, dem</i>	<i>dem</i>	<i>fi dem</i>	<i>demself</i>

Examples

- Sentences

- So aal di animal neva kuda flai op
- So all art.def animal neg.pst could fly up
- Alma dem
- 'Alma and her friends/folks'

- Borrowing

- La fruta de pan es un producto típico de las islas
- 'Breadfruit is a typical product from the islands'
- Native Speaker: Di breadfruit dah one typikal fruit from de island.
- Non-native speaker: Di fruta de pan es un product tip.. typic in de island.

“Bad Lucky Goat”

2017- First film in San Andres Creole



Present

Islander vs. Mainlander Identity

Creole: the language of the home and some social interaction in public places.

Spanish: the language of business and government.

- While many politicians are Native Islanders who accommodate to Spanish in meetings, Spanish-speaking officials will not switch to English or Creole.

English: the language used in most Protestant churches and Spanish in the Catholic churches.



Education

The government enforces Spanish as the medium of instruction.

Most teachers are Spanish-speaking mainlanders.

Christian University of San Andres: “Bilingual Ethnocultural Education” to begin with Creole, then transition to English, not Spanish.

- Challenge: San Andres creole is not standardized and is used in oral tradition rather than academic writing, learning, etc.



Future

Threats:

- Continuing trends in migration could lead to further abandonment
- Considerable social pressure to conform to and join with the rest of the Spanish-speaking people of the country.

Language Maintenance:

- Governmental support for language maintenance
- Commitment of the Christian University to the revival of Creole speech

Sources

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