The Acquisition of Creole Languages

How do children acquire a Creole as their first language? This relatively underexplored question is the starting point for this first book of its kind; it also asks how first language acquisition of a Creole differs from that of a non-Creole language. Dany Adone reveals that in the absence of a conventional language model, Creole children acquire language and go beyond the input they receive. This study discusses the role of input, a hotly debated issue in the field of first language acquisition, and provides support for the nativist approach in the debate between nativism and input-based models.

The Acquisition of Creole Languages will be essential reading for those in the fields of First Language Acquisition and Creole Studies. Adone takes an interdisciplinary approach, and uses insights from the acquisition of language in the visual modality, making this of great interest to those in the field of Sign Linguistics.

Dany Adone is a Professor of Applied English Linguistics, Director of the Australian Studies programme and Director of the Language Lab at the University of Cologne. She has also served as President of the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics.
The Acquisition of Creole Languages
How Children Surpass Their Input

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University of Cologne
Pu tu ban dimun ki fin kit zot pei ek ki pa fin bliye zot langaz kreo
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In some way this voyage of discovery started when I left my small island of Mauritius to study in Germany. I am very grateful to my parents, Karelina and Claude Adone, for constantly encouraging me over time and distance and for always believing in me, even when they wished I had never left my island.

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Abbreviations

Object language is italicised in the text with a translation in English in single quotation marks. Additionally, italics are used for emphasis. To highlight parts of examples I use underscoring.

Technical terms are in small capitals. Grammatical categories are printed in full capitals, usually in abbreviations. Indications of children’s ages have the following format: (years; months).

ABBREVIATIONS

A   Adjective
AP  Ambiguous passives
ASL American Sign Language
AsPP Aspect phrase
AsPe Aspect (eventive)
AT  Active transitive
AUX Auxiliary
BT  Binding Theory
C(OMP) Complementiser
CP  Complementiser phrase
CT  Computed tomography
D[ET] Determiner
DOC Double-object construction
DP  Determiner phrase
FVP Full verbal passives
GB Government and Binding framework
I[NFL] Inflection
IP  Inflectional phrase
**List of Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>Interlanguage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>First language acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second language acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAD</td>
<td>Language acquisition device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLH</td>
<td>Lexical learning hypothesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Minimal default grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>Noun phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPET</td>
<td>Positron emission tomography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Passive morpheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Op</td>
<td>Empty operator</td>
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<tr>
<td>OV</td>
<td>Object verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>Prepositional ditransitive construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLD</td>
<td>Primary linguistic data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Prepositional phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEC</td>
<td>Specifier</td>
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<tr>
<td>SVC</td>
<td>Serial verb construction</td>
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<td>t</td>
<td>Trace</td>
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<tr>
<td>TP</td>
<td>Tense phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Universal grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V2</td>
<td>Verb second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VO</td>
<td>Verb object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Verb phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XP</td>
<td>X phrase (X=N, V, A, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y/NJ</td>
<td>Yes/No judgment</td>
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**Abbreviations Used in Interlinear Glosses**

<table>
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<td>1pl</td>
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<tr>
<td>1pos</td>
<td>First person possessor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1sg</td>
<td>First person singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl</td>
<td>Second person plural</td>
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## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>2POS</td>
<td>Second person possessor</td>
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<td>3PL</td>
<td>Third person plural</td>
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<td>Plural</td>
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<td>Adverb</td>
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<td>Aspect</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMP</td>
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<td>Progressive aspect</td>
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<td>Reduplication</td>
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<td>Reflexive</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL</td>
<td>Relativiser</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Singular</td>
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<tr>
<td>TMA</td>
<td>Tense, mood, aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNS</td>
<td>Tense</td>
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<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Verb</td>
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List of abbreviations xvii

An asterisk (*) before an example indicates that the example is not grammatical. Furthermore, when the asterisk is used with children's sentences, it indicates that the sentences are not correct according to the adult grammar. A question mark (?) before an example indicates that the example is marginally acceptable.