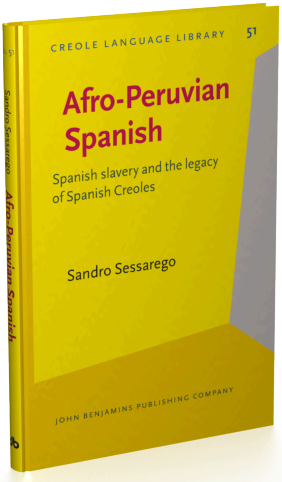
Creole Language Library
51

Chapter 4. The status of Afro-Peruvian Spanish

https://doi.org/10.1075/cll.51.04ch4



Pages 63–78 of
Afro-Peruvian Spanish: Spanish slavery and the legacy of Spanish Creoles
Sandro Sessarego
[Creole Language Library, 51] 2015. xvi, 184 pp.

CHAPTER 4

The status of Afro-Peruvian Spanish

4.1 Introduction

When we look at contemporary APS, we can certainly note some distinctive grammatical deviations from standard Spanish; nevertheless, if we had to place APS on a "creole thermometer" (cf. Lipski 2008: 183), we would probably classify this variety as something closer to a Spanish dialect, rather than a Spanish creole, to use McWhorter's (2000: 10) terminology.

According to McWhorter's (2000) Afrogenesis Hypothesis, if APS is not a creole, it is because Spain did not have slave castles in Africa, since the conditions for a creole to emerge in colonial coastal Peru would have been optimal. In his view, creoles developed out of pidgins, and since a Spanish pidgin could not be introduced on the American plantations, a creole could not possibly form. On the contrary, the supporters of the decreolization model would suggest that APS might well have been a creole in colonial times, and that due to more recent contact with local varieties of Spanish it would have approximated to it over time, thus decreolizing. Indeed, at a couple of recent linguistic conferences some creolists from the audience have pointed out to me that the communities under discussion are not geographically isolated, so that when the hacienda system ended in the 1960s, Afro-Peruvians acquired more mobility and could engage in extensive sociolinguistic contact with monolingual Spanish speakers from surrounding areas. For this reason, it could be possible that APS might have been more restructured/creolized than what it is today. This is a valuable point and it could very well describe what happened in these Chincha communities. In fact, since no written diachronic linguistic data for these specific villages are available, we know virtually nothing about the earlier phases of Chinchano speech. For this reason, we may never be completely sure that a creole language was not used in this region centuries ago. Nevertheless, I remain of the view that clear sociohistorical and linguistic evidence should be provided to build a convincing theory of (de)creolization. The reconstruction of historical facts is always an approximation; it is never exact. The best way to proceed is to try to make sense of the data we have. For this reason, I do not pretend that my version of the story is perfect or the correct one; rather, I attempt to build a story that appears to be the most

likely one, based on the *available* information, and the available information we have, as we will see in Chapter 5, does not appear to back either the Afrogenesis Hypothesis or the Decreolization Hypothesis.

What I would like to propose is that APS, as well as many other Afro-Hispanic vernaculars, can actually be seen as an *advanced conventionalized second language* (cf. Sessarego 2013b). This proposal breaks with the traditional creole life-cycle adopted by some authors according to whom pidgins become creoles and then eventually decreolize. On the other hand, I wish to stress that the aforementioned path (pidginization → creolization → decreolization) is only one of many potential forms of contact-induced restructuring. Indeed, if we look at the contact varieties that emerged in the Americas due to the contact among African and European languages, we may observe a wide variety of linguistic outputs. Alleyne (1980: 181) reminds us that:

> Afro-American dialects can be plotted on a scale representing different degrees of transmission of West African elements, and differentials in degrees of transmission that are to be explained by differences in sociolinguistic circumstances in each area.

Alleyne's words can be rephrased by saying that these dialects may be placed on a continuum ranging from close approximations to the lexifiers to radical creoles.

While the fact that contact-induced restructuring operates on a cline is well-known in Creolistics (cf. Thomason & Kaufman 1988; Siegel 2008), oftentimes people tend to assume that a vernacular currently found on the left side of the spectrum (see Figure 4.1) must have ended up there after an incremental leftward shift, thus suggesting that in the past it was more radical. This assumption, which pictures a gradual decreolization path, is somewhat misleading and, in several cases, clearly goes against the documented historical evolution of some present-day creoles, which appear to have become more 'radical' during the last couple of centuries; i.e. Haitian French (Lefebvre 1998) and Sranan Tongo (Migge 2003).

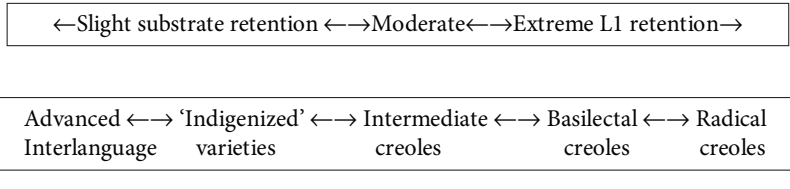


Figure 4.1 A continuum of outcomes involving degrees of substrate and L2 input (Winford 2000: 216)

4.2 Creoles as Interlanguages

Schumann (1978) and Andersen (1980, 1983) were among the first scholars to identify a link between Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Creole studies. They hypothesized that pidginization may be seen as the early stages of SLA. In more recent years, Creolistics and SLA have developed stronger connections leading to a very productive interdisciplinary dialogue (cf. Kouwenberg & Patrick 2003; Lefebvre et al. 2006; Siegel 2008).

One of the latest attempts to build a theory of creole genesis based on an SLA framework is Plag's (2008a, b; 2009a, b) Interlanguage Hypothesis of Creole Formation, which relies on Pienemann's (1998, 2005) Processability Theory. What is interesting about this approach is that it tries to account for the fact that there seems to be a common universal path in the development of second languages, independently of the speaker's L1. The model relies on psycholinguistic accounts of speech production such as those designed by Kempen and Hoenkamp (1987) and Levelt (1989). The central claim of Processability Theory is that the processing procedures follow a hierarchy of activations in language generation, which, in turn, drives their sequence of acquisition. Plag adopts this model to account for certain aspects of creole languages (e.g. loss of inflectional morphology, the unmarked nature of many syntactic structures, the conflation of phonological categories, circumlocutions, etc.). His Interlanguage Hypothesis of Creole Formation goes as far as to state that creoles can be seen as *conventionalized interlanguages of an early stage*. Plag (2008a) also points out that SLA processes in creolization do not necessarily imply substrate transfer, as it has often been suggested in the literature. On the other hand, there may be transfer without SLA as, for example, in cases of early bilingualism (Kouwenberg 2006), and there are SLA processes involved in creolization that cannot be labeled as 'transfer', but rather they should be analyzed as gradual interlanguage evolutions, which obey hierarchical chronological steps (Siegel 2008). In the present chapter, I will not go into the details of Plag's model, since the author developed it to account for 'radical' creole varieties. However, I want to acknowledge its importance by highlighting the idea that there is a clear universal hierarchy of second language acquisition and that it plays a crucial role in shaping the grammar of all contact languages.

The present chapter will analyze some cross-linguistic similarities that can be found in Afro-Peruvian Spanish and in the rest of the Afro-Hispanic varieties spoken in the Americas, which have been traditionally seen as the residue of a previous creole stage. I will propose that these features are, indeed, common traces of *advanced SLA strategies* (rather than of *early ones*). In so doing, I hope to convince the reader that – at least from a linguistic perspective – the grammatical elements encountered in these varieties should not necessarily be seen as the

result of decreolization; rather, they can be explained as the expected byproduct of advanced SLA processes. This, however, does not imply that decreolization is impossible. My personal opinion is that it might well have happened for certain languages, but to support such a claim we need to provide clear socio-historical and linguistic evidence, since the presence of advanced SLA features in these contact varieties does not support *per se* any previous (de)creolization hypotheses.

4.3 The proposal

I would like to propose that APS, as well as several other Afro-Hispanic contact varieties, can be seen as *the result of L1 acquisition (nativization) of advanced L2 grammars.* This statement is based on the assumption that L1 and L2 acquisition are driven and constrained by Universal Grammar (UG). During childhood, first language acquisition develops naturally and instinctively – provided the child is exposed to enough linguistic input. L2 development operates somewhat differently. L2 speakers have access to UG, but biological and social factors conspire against the full mastery of the target language (TL). In fact, the loss of spontaneity of acquisition and incomplete command of the L2 morpho-lexicon are two inevitable consequences of biological age maturation. Moreover, certain social aspects of L2 acquisition, such as lack of motivation, acculturation and free time, often contribute to the incomplete mastery of the L2 (Herschensohn 2000: Ch. 3).

The basic idea behind the nature of several Afro-Hispanic dialects is that African slaves had relatively good access to Spanish (the TL), which allowed them to achieve a certain degree of mastery in it. Thanks to UG, each individual internalized one grammar out of a set of possible grammars (G1, G2, Gn). Their linguistic outputs (x, y, z) served as the primary linguistic data (PLD) for the following generation, which acquired this language natively. This model can be schematically represented in (71), where Grammar 1 (G1) and Grammar 2 (G2) represent two possible grammars with different parametric configurations:[10]

(71) a. Individual from Generation 1:
TLy → UG driving L2 acquisition → G1 → set of outputs X
b. Individual from Generation 2:
PLDx → UG driving L1 acquisition → G2 → set of outputs Z

10. Cf. Pires & Thomason (2008) and Pires & Rothman (2009) for a similar account of cross-generational language change. The main difference between their accounts and the present one lies in the fact that example (71) pictures a case of contact-induced change, where SLA processes are involved. See also Veenstra (2008: 234–235) for a similar yet different account of nativization in creole genesis.

In this model, the L1 acquisition of Generation 2 represents the process of nativization. The result of this is an L1 grammar (G2), built on L2 inputs. G2, therefore, will present crystallized aspects of an L2, which are acquired as an L1.

4.4 The Afro-Hispanic varieties of the Americas

There are regions of Latin America where Afro-Hispanic people represent the majority of the population. Perl (1998) provides a report of the geographical distribution of black communities across this area. He includes Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, parts of Northern Colombia and Venezuela, the coastal regions of Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, the Pacific coastal regions of Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, as well as some small minorities in Mexico, Belize, and Trinidad and Tobago. The Bolivian region of Los Yungas, home of an Afro-Hispanic group recently brought to the attention of the linguistic community by Lipski (2008), should also be added to this list. Klee and Lynch (2009: 6) offer an updated version of Perl and Schwegler's (1998: 3) map to account for these geographic regions (Figure 4.2).

In the rest of this section, I will focus on some common features that have repeatedly been reported for the vast majority of these Afro-Hispanic dialects (e.g. Afro-Venezuelan Spanish (Megenney 1999); Afro-Bolivian Spanish (Lipski 2008); Afro-Caribbean Spanish (Álvarez Nazario 1974; Lorenzino 1998; Álvarez & Obediente 1998); Afro-Peruvian Spanish (Lipski 1994a); Afro-Mexican Spanish (Mayén 2007); Afro-Panamanian Spanish (Lipski 1989); Chocó Spanish (Ruiz-García 2009); Chota Valley Spanish (Lipski 1987); etc.) and in some cases have been identified as potential indicators of a previous creole stage.

The goal here will be to show that these features can actually be explained as advanced SLA phenomena, which do not necessarily imply any previous (de)-creolization phase for the languages presenting them. In particular, I will discuss: (a) use of non-emphatic, non-contrastive overt subjects; (b) invariant verb forms for person and number; (c) lack of nominal gender and number agreement; (d) presence of bare nouns in subject and object position; and (e) non-inverted questions. Table 4.1 reports such features with examples taken from some of the Afro-Hispanic dialects presenting them.

All of the features reported in Table 4.1 as potential indicators of a previous creole stage for the Afro-Hispanic dialects of the Americas are also encountered in APS (cf. Chapter 3). Table 4.2 provides a summary of such morpho-syntactic phenomena in APS.

Figure 4.2 The Afro-Hispanic regions of Latin America (Klee & Lynch 2009: 6, adopted from Perl & Schwegler 1998: 3)

The second column of Table 4.2 not only offers examples extracted from my corpus, it also includes data provided by Lipski (1994a), Gálvez Ronceros (1975), and Cuba (2002). Indeed it is of interest to see how these grammatical features appear in a variety of historical Peruvian literary texts reproducing *bozal* speech (cf. Lipski 1994a), in Gálvez Ronceros' novel (1975) *Monólogo desde las tineblas*, which consists of a collection of stories depicting contemporary Afro-Peruvian

Table 4.1 Five commonly reported Afro-Hispanic features traditionally ascribed to a previous creole stage

Phenomenon	Examples
Use of non-emphatic, non-contrastive overt subjects.	*Yo tando muy pequeña yo conocí a una señora.* 'When I was young I met a woman.' (Barlovento Spanish; Megenney 1999: 117). *Claro yo como fue chico yo no acorda vela.* 'Obviously since I was I child I do not remember candels.' (Afro-Bolivian Spanish; Lipski 2008: 101).
Invariant verb forms for person and number.	*Yo sabe [sé]* 'I know'; *yo tiene [tengo].* 'I have'; *yo no pue [puedo]* 'I cannot.' (Afro-Puertorican; Álvarez Nazario 1974: 194–195). *Tú jabla [hablas] y no conoce [conoces].* 'You speak and you do not know.' (Afro-Cuban Spanish; Guirao 1938: 3).
Lack of nominal gender and number agreement.	*Tán chiquito puej mij nene[s].* 'My kids are so little.' (Afro-Mexican Oaxacan Spanish; Mayén 2007: 117). *Gente branco [blanca].* 'White people.' (Cuban Bozal Spanish; Álvarez Nazario 1974: 189).
Lack of subject-verb inversion in questions.	*¿Onde tú taba, mijito?* 'Where were you, my son?' (Barlovento Spanish; Megenney 1999: 118). *¿Qué tú comes?* 'What do you eat.' (Caribbean Spanish; Lorenzino 1998: 36).
Presence of bare nouns.	*Me metía en [el] pueblo con [los] trabajadores.* 'He put me in the village with the workers.' (Chocó Spanish; Ruiz-García 2009: 45). *Porque [el] próximo pueblo puede ser Salinas.* 'Because the next town could be Salinas.' (Chota Valley Spanish; Lipski 1987: 163).

communities in Chincha, and have also been reported in Cuba's (2002) linguistic survey of the area. These examples confirm that traditional APS is an Afro-Hispanic dialect quite divergent from standard Peruvian Spanish and that derived from the Spanish spoken by the black slaves in colonial times. Nevertheless, the features found in this language should not be taken as indicators of a previous

Table 4.2 Common Afro-Hispanic features found in Afro-Peruvian Spanish

Phenomenon	Examples
Use of non-emphatic, non-contrastive overt subjects.	*Cuando yo ta la congreso, yo neglo, yo va dicí …* 'When I go to the congress, I am black, I am going to say…' (Lipski 1994a: 208).
	Mauricio fue también. Él se tomó una botella de cerveza y después él se fue de fiesta. 'Mauricio went too. He drank a bottle of beer and afterwards he left to have fun.' (current book, Chapter 3).
Invariant verb forms for person and number.	*Yo compró un pedazo de tierra.* 'I bought a piece of land.' (current book, Chapter 3).
	Muy esclavizado el trabajo. Y en verano llega visitas. 'The work is much enslaved, uu! And visits come during the summer.' (Cuba 2002: 38).
Lack of nominal gender and number agreement.	*La mula esta flacucho.* 'The female mule is skinny.' (Lipski 1994a: 192).
	Santa María tiene sus ola como un río. 'St. Mary has waves like a river.' (Cuba 2002: 37).
Lack of subject-verb inversion in questions.	*¿Ves cómo tú no crees?* 'Do you see that you do not believe?' (Cuba 2002: 37).
	¿Qué ella dijo? 'What did she say?' (current book, Chapter 3).
Presence of bare nouns.	*Niño no responde nara.* 'The kid does not say anything.' (Lipski 1994a: 209).
	Susijos no repetan [la] gente mayó. 'His sons do not respect old people.' (Gálvez Ronceros 1975: 20).

creole stage. In fact, these grammatical elements appear to be frequently encountered in a number of advanced L2 varieties, thus indicating that they should not be necessarily accounted for by postulating a creole hypothesis (cf. Sessarego 2011b, 2013b).

4.5 Afro-Peruvian Spanish as an advanced conventionalized second language

I will now proceed with a closer analysis of these commonly recurring features to show that not only are they not diagnostic of creoleness; rather, they often can be found in quite advanced interlanguages.

Use of non-emphatic, non-contrastive overt subjects is a linguistic phenomenon related to the acquisition of the null-subject parameter (cf. Camacho 2013 for a review). Subject expression in null subject languages like Italian or Spanish requires the mastery of the syntactic/pragmatic interface, since both structural and discourse features are involved. In fact, the null subject (*pro*) is usually used in topic and non-contrastive focus contexts. An example of the use of *pro* in Spanish is provided by Montrul et al. (2009: 303) in (72), where it expresses old information.

(72) *Juan llegó a su casa del trabajo. Primero [pro] se*
Juan arrive.PAST.3.SG to his house from the job. First REFL
cambió de ropa y luego [pro] decidió
change.PAST.3.SG of clothes and after decide.PAST.3.SG
ponerse a preparar la cena.
begin.PRES.3.SG to prepare the dinner
'Juan came home from work. First he changed his clothes and then he decided to make dinner.'

SLA studies on the acquisition of such a parameter have long reported the overproduction of overt subjects in contexts requiring a null realization (White 1985, 1986; Phinney 1987). In particular, recent findings have suggested that even advanced L2 learners tend to show a surplus of overt subject pronouns because topic features are complex to acquire and therefore a native-like use of overt and covert pronouns is not likely to be obtained (Sorace 2000, 2003, 2004). In fact, according to Grimshaw and Samek-Lodovici (1998), the subject *pro* in a pro-drop language would come with a [+topic shift] feature, while such a category – and its correspective feature specification – would not be available in non-pro-drop languages, where all subject pronouns must be spelled out.

These data are perfectly in line with the idea that some aspects of Afro-Hispanic contact varieties should be seen as advanced second language phenomena. In fact, given that the correct use of *pro* in Spanish implies the simultaneous proficient knowledge of syntactic and pragmatic features, encountering an overuse of non-emphatic, non-contrastive overt subjects in these dialects is not completely unexpected.

Another aspect of natural languages which involves the interaction of two different linguistic dimensions (syntax and semantics) has to do with the acquisition of uninterpretable phi-features (gender, person, number). In fact, current syntactic theory (Chomsky 1995) distinguishes between interpretable and uninterpretable features. Certain features have an interpretation at Logic Form (LF), thus they are semantically interpretable elements. Other features, on the contrary, lack such semantic import and are present in the system to trigger necessary syntactic operations during the derivation. One such operation is *Agree*. Chomsky (2000, 2001) argues that *Agree* consists of a relation between two elements within a syntactic domain: a probe and a goal. Chomsky suggests that agreement is the consequence of a situation in which an unvalued instance of a feature F c-commands another instance of F. The probe consists of an unvalued set of phi-features on a functional head, which is uninterpretable as such and must receive a value from some other syntactic constituent (Béjar 2008: 133–134). According to this view, *Agree* serves the purpose of deleting uninterpretable features, which are unreadable at the syntax/semantic interface and – if not eliminated – would cause the derivation to crash. Deletion takes place in a cyclical fashion at the end of each phase. As uninterpretable phi-features do not contribute to the semantic interpretation of phrases, the complete mastery of such elements occurs late in L2 acquisition and often times is not obtained (Franceschina 2002). As far as Spanish L2 grammars are concerned, the slow acquisition of phi-feature specifications results in Spanish interlanguages presenting varying degrees of morphological marking incompleteness across their nominal and verbal domains.

For this reason, invariant verb forms for person and number are frequent among L2 varieties of Spanish and in child language (Bybee 1985). In these cases, the use of 3rd person singular as the default form is common. In addition, recent studies on the evolution of creole languages have ascribed the use of this form to its high frequency in natural speech and to its consequent higher learnability in language acquisition processes (Clements 2009; Clements & Koontz-Garboden 2002; Pinharanda Nunes 2013). The Afro-Hispanic dialects found in the Americas display variable levels of subject-verb (dis)agreement, which in turn reflect an aspect of their degree of restructuring (cf. Figure 4.1). In some varieties, 3rd person singular default forms can be commonly encountered (e.g. Afro-Bolivian Spanish), while in others, they are very rare (e.g. Chota Valley Spanish).

Cases of variable subject-verb agreement can be formally captured by postulating that in these dialects two different Tense Heads (T) are potential candidates to enter the lexical numeration: T1 and T2 (cf. Adger & Smith 2005 for a similar account for Buckie English). T1 bears tense, case, number and person features, like in standard Spanish; while T2 lacks number and person features. The result of the operation *Agree* (and *Merge*) between a subject pronoun and T1 will be a

verb form conjugated for tense, number and person. On the other hand, the same operation involving T2 will result in a verb form conjugated for tense, but showing default features for number and person. These operation can be schematically represented for the verb *bailar* 'to dance' and the pronoun *nosotros* 'we' in examples (73) and (74).

(73) T1 [tense:present, *u*case:nom, *u*num:, *u*pers:] … pronoun [num:pl, pers:1, *u*case:] →
→ T1 [tense:present, *u*case:nom, *u*num:pl, *u*pers:1] … pronoun [num:pl, pers:1, *u*case:nom]
Result: *Nosotros bailamos*
we.NOM dance.PRES.1.PL

(74) T2 [tense:present, *u*case:nom]… pronoun [num:pl, pers:1, *u*case:] →
→ T2 [tense:present, *u*case:nom] … pronoun [num:pl, pers:1, *u*case:nom]
Result: *Nosotros baila*
we.NOM dance.PRES.3.SG

The processing challenges held responsible for the slow acquisition of subject-verb agreement also apply to the mastery of gender and number features within the nominal domain. In fact, a variety of studies have reported the systematic presence of masculine/singular default values across the L2 Spanish determiner phrase (White et al. 2004; Sagarra & Herschensohn 2008, 2011). Recent research in Creolistics has suggested a clear hierarchy of gender/number agreement acquisition, where the development of agreement begins on determiners (in particular, on definite articles) and then, eventually, spreads to other grammatical categories (cf. Sessarego & Gutiérrez-Rexach 2011, 2012; Gutiérrez-Rexach & Sessarego 2014; Sessarego 2013e).

This is in line with previous findings in SLA in Romance. In fact, Hawkins (1998) showed that English students speaking French as a second language presented more agreement on definite articles than on indefinite ones, and also more agreement on determiners than on adjectives. Similar findings have also been reported for English speakers of Spanish by Bruhn de Garavito and White (2000), and more recently by Franceschina (2005) who tested advanced speakers of Spanish coming from a variety of backgrounds (Italian, Portuguese, English, Arabic, German and French). Moreover, it must be said that APS and the Afro-Hispanic dialects reported here do not lack gender/number features. Rather, the main distinction between them and standard Spanish concerns the nominal elements agreeing with the noun. In fact, while in standard Spanish, adjectives, articles, demonstratives and quantifiers all agree in gender and number with the noun, nominal concord in these Afro-Hispanic dialects is restricted to a sub-group of categories, depending on the dialect. Most importantly, the fact that only some

grammatical categories present gender agreement implicitly attests to the presence of 'gender' as a grammatical feature in these varieties, thus showing a contrast with the majority of the Romance-based creoles, in which such an agreement feature is not usually found. This fact further suggests that this aspect of the Afro-Hispanic dialects of Latin America should be seen as an advanced interlanguage phenomenon. It must be said that, if corrected through formal instruction, advanced L2 students may present stronger agreement patterns. However, given that the sociohistorical scenarios in which these dialects emerged have never been characterized by formal education, it is not completely surprising to encounter gender, number and person default forms in several Afro-Hispanic varieties.

In line with the computations represented in (73)–(74) for cases of subject-verb agreement, examples (75)–(76) depict agreement processes involving gender and number features in the DP. In example (75) we can observe the determiner (D1) and the noun (N1) coming from the lexicon with the standard specification for gender and number features, while in (76) some of those specifications are missing from D2 and N2, thus leading to a different surface result characterized by impoverished agreement.[11]

(75) D1 [*u*gen:, *u*num:] … Num[num:pl] … N1 [gen:f, *u*num:] →
→ D1 [*u*gen:f, *u*num:pl] … Num[num:pl] … N1 [gen:f, *u*num:pl]
Result: *Muchas* *gatas*
many.F.PL cat.F.PL

(76) D2 [ ] … Num[num:pl] … N2 [gen:f] →
→ D2 [ ] … Num[num:pl] … N2 [gen:f]
Result: *Mucho* *gata*
many.M.SG cat.F.SG

Bare nouns, deprived of an overt article, have often been reported in relation to creole languages (cf. Baptista & Guéron 2007). Nevertheless, a variety of studies in second language acquisition have shown that mastering the article system of a foreign language may be very challenging, especially if the learner comes from an L1 presenting an article system typologically different from the one encountered in the L2 (Sánchez & Giménez 1998; Leonini 2006; García Mayo & Hawkins 2009). The Afro-Hispanic dialects of the Americas may present article systems that diverge from standard Spanish. In traditional APS, for example, there are

11. Examples (75)–(76) should be seen as oversimplifications of the actual agreement processes taking place in several Afro-Hispanic languages. A more detailed account of such phenomena can be found in Sessarego & Gutiérrez-Rexach (2011, 2012); Delicado-Cantero & Sessarego (2011); Sessarego (2013e, 2014a); Gutiérrez-Rexach & Sessarego (2014); Sessarego & Ferreira (in press).

four definite articles (*el, la, los, las*), presenting overt number and gender agreement, and two indefinite ones (*un, unos*), agreeing only in number. Their use parallels – for the most part – that of standard Spanish, even though bare nouns can appear in argument position. The semantic interpretation of such bare nominals may vary depending on the pragmatic context (e.g. plural/singular, specific/generic). In this respect, Afro-Peruvian Spanish resembles Afro-Bolivian Spanish to a great extent (cf. Gutiérrez-Rexach & Sessarego 2011 for a detailed account).

APS, in line with several other Afro-Hispanic dialects and with Caribbean Spanish varieties, allows for constructions in which a fronted wh-operator (wh-op) is followed by preverbal subjects when the wh-operator is an argument (77), thus giving rise to both wh-S-V and wh-V-S questions.

(77) Afro-Hispanic/Caribbean varieties
a. *¿Qué tú comes?*
what you eat.PRES.2.SG
'What do you eat?'
b. *¿Qué comes (tú)?*
what eat.PRES.2.SG you
'What do you eat?'

Conversely, wh-S-V constructions are not generally grammatical in Mainland Spanish dialects, so that only the wh-V-S pattern is allowed (78).

(78) Mainland Spanish
a. **¿Qué tú comes?*
what you eat.PRES.2.SG
'What do you eat?'
b. *¿Qué comes (tú)?*
what eat.PRES.2.SG you
'What do you eat?'

Within the generative SLA tradition, several studies have been carried out to understand how wh-movement and subject-verb inversion are acquired and to test whether UG is available during L2 development. The conclusions on the accessibility of UG during L2 acquisition have been variable but results have suggested that the mastery of such structures may be difficult to obtain, especially if the learner's L1 does not present such constructions (e.g. in Chinese, Korean, and Japanese; cf. Birdsong 1992; Johnson & Newport 1989; Martohardjono & Gair 1993; White 1992; White & Juffs 1998; etc.).

Since the co-occurrence of fronted wh-operators and preverbal subjects is a common feature of Spanish creoles (cf. Holm & Patrick 2007), a potential creole origin for the Spanish dialects showing this characteristic has often been

suggested (e.g. Perl 1998). There are at least two facts that seem to weaken such a hypothesis. First, SLA studies have shown that non-inverted questions also appear cross-linguistically in very advanced stages of SLA (Pienemann 1998, 2005), thus indicating that they are not necessarily indicative of "creoleness". Secondly, it should be pointed out that while Afro-Hispanic and Caribbean varieties show *wh-S-V* constructions (cf. (77)), the *wh-V-S* order is also commonly used and quantitative studies indicate that it is actually the most frequent one for Dominican Spanish (cf. Gutiérrez-Bravo 2008: 227). Nevertheless, traditionally, the analysis of Caribbean *wh-S-V* interrogative constructions has been contrasted with the *wh-V-S* structures found in Mainland Spanish. A recent account by Gutiérrez-Bravo (2005, 2007, 2008) stresses the importance of keeping in mind that (77a) and (77b) should not be analyzed as equivalent constructions in two different dialects; indeed, he shows that both of them co-exist in Caribbean Spanish and are based on different structures used in diverse pragmatic contexts. Conversely, in Mainland Spanish, (78a) is not a grammatical option. Its equivalent is (79), where the subject is a sentence topic displaced to the left-peripheral position.

(79) *Tú ¿qué comes?*
you what eat.PRES.2.SG
'What do you eat?'

Gutiérrez-Bravo (2005, 2008) formulates the following Interrogative Clause Condition to explain the Extended Projection Principle (EPP)[12] (cf. Chomsky 1982) requirement associated with interrogative clauses: A clausal Extended Projection is interrogative if the head of the highest phrase in the Extended Projection bears the feature [Q]. After formulating this condition, Gutiérrez-Bravo claims that in sequences similar to (77b), TP is the highest projection, *wh*-op lands in [Spec, T], and T° acquires a [Q] feature from Spec-Head agreement with the *wh*-op. The presence of *wh*-op in [Spec, T] satisfies the EPP requirement instantiated by such a position, so that the subject remains in its VP internal position, as shown in (80). On the other hand, in (77a), the *wh*-operator lands in [Spec, C] so that C° acquires its [Q] feature. Since [Spec, T] is empty, a topicalized subject will be able to land there and satisfy the EPP requirement, as shown in (81).

(80) $[_{TP}$ Qué$_i$ comes$_j$ $[_{VP}$ tú t_j $t_i]]$?
wh T°
[Q] → [Q]

12. The Extended Projection Principle (EPP) states that all verbs require a subject (cf. Chomsky 1981, 1995, 2000; Lasnik 2001a, b).

(81) [CP Qué$_i$ Ø [TP tú$_j$ comes$_k$ [VP t_j t_k t_i]]?
wh C°
[Q] → [Q]

The presence of two diverse constructions to express two different types of questions may appear as an additional complexity incorporated by some Afro-Hispanic dialects. At first glance, this fact may seem counterintuitive from a second language acquisition perspective, since contact linguistic phenomena tend to favor the acquisition of less complex/unmarked structures. This is an issue that deserves more attention; it should be analyzed by considering the sociolinguistic and diachronic evolution of the *wh-S-V* construction in the dialects which present it. Nevertheless, for the moment, a highly speculative answer could be provided if we assume that, due to processability constraints on L2 production (cf. Pienemann 2005), the PLD of a certain generation may have been quite variable (including both inverted and non-inverted questions). Assuming such a scenario, it is not completely unreasonable to think that two different interpretations might have been assigned to such constructions by the acquiring children, so that in their L1 (77a) came to represent the topicalized subject question that would be normally expressed with (79) in other Spanish dialects.

4.6 A final note on the status of Afro-Peruvian Spanish and other Afro-Hispanic contact varieties

The linguistic evidence provided in this chapter has shown that certain aspects of the Afro-Hispanic dialects, often reported in relation to their potential creole origin, can be accounted for as the result of conventionalized advanced SLA strategies. APS, in this respect, fits perfectly with the rest of these vernaculars. This variety presents exactly those features that several scholars would see as symptomatic of a previous creole stage: the use of non-emphatic; non-contrastive overt subjects; invariant verb forms; lack of gender and number agreement across the nominal domain; non-inverted questions; bare nouns.[13] This study, however, has

13. Schwegler (p. c.) points out that some Afro-Hispanic and Afro-Lusophone languages (i.e. Popular Brazilian Portuguese, Palenquero, Chocó Spanish, Dominican Spanish, Annabón, São Tome, Principense, etc.) share double negation of the type *yo no como no* 'I do not eat'. He claims that this would be a construction modeled on Kikongo, which may indicate that these varieties would have developed from a single Afro-Portuguese pidgin/creole language spoken on both sides of the Atlantic in colonial times (Schwegler 1993: 76–77). APS does not present this feature; for this reason, the Afro-Portuguese link cannot be invoked to account for its origin. Moreover, as I have previously explained, I personally do not agree with Schwegler's

shown that such grammatical elements can be described as the byproduct of advanced second language acquisition phenomena, which do not necessarily imply any (de)creolization phase. The analysis here offered, therefore, breaks with the traditional creole life-cycle (pidginization → creolization → decreolization) that certain scholars would propose to account for the genesis and evolution of these dialects. The following chapter will corroborate this linguistic proposal for APS with socio-historical information concerning black slavery in colonial Peru.

monogenetic view on the evolution of the Afro-Hispanic dialects spoken across the Americas (Sessarego 2013c). Nevertheless, I must admit that this is an issue that deserves further attention. In fact, it would be important to understand to what extent all the above mentioned languages present exactly the same negative constructions. Unfortunately, as far as I know, a detailed comparative study of these constructions in such varieties has not been carried out yet. Schwenter (2005) has investigated the nature of such negation forms in Brazilian Portuguese to conclude that their grammatical function is to deny a discourse-old proposition (2005: 1453). As a note, it must be said that a similar function has also been identified for parallel negation forms in Italian and Catalan (Visconti 2009; Schwenter 2002), two Romance languages for which a Kikongo substrate cannot be invoked.