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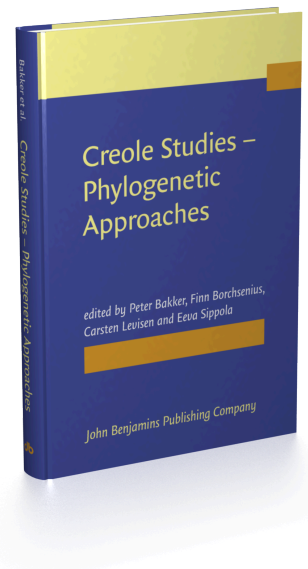
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CHAPTER 14

Lexicalization patterns in core vocabulary
A cross-creole study of semantic molecules

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The study of semantic domains is important for creolistics, given the complex label-meaning configuration in creoles vis-à-vis the European lexifiers. Due to the lexical semantic creativity in the creolization process as well as the subsequent developments and contacts with lexifiers, substrates, and other contact varieties, each domain seems to have its own history, its own configuration. Comparing words in four different semantic domains, we contrast the labels and lexicalizations of social concepts, body-part terms, environmental concepts, and abstract categories, with an anchor in core categories in conceptual semantics. Based on findings from cross-linguistic investigations into core vocabularies: semantic molecules and semantic primes, we study the lexicalizations of the following meanings in creoles: 'children', 'women', 'men', 'mother', 'father', 'wife', 'husband' (social molecules), 'head', 'eyes', 'ears', 'mouth', 'nose', 'hands', 'legs' (body-part molecules), 'sun', 'sky', 'ground, 'water', 'fire', 'day', 'night' (environmental molecules), and 'not', 'maybe', 'can', 'because', 'if', 'very' and 'more' (semantic primes – abstract concepts). We utilize phylogenetic networks to compare and contrast lexicalization patterns between domains. Our study suggests that these core semantic-conceptual constructs tend to cluster with their lexifiers, but that there are important differences across domains – the label-meaning configurations of the social domain stand out as the most diverse, and the environmental domain as the most homogenous.

Keywords: Semantic domains, semantic molecules, cross-creole comparison, creole-lexifier relations

14.1   Introduction

Recent work in cross-linguistic semantics, areal semantics, and lexical typology has made new inroads into the study of semantic domains (see e.g. Wierzbicka 1999; Enfield 2003; Matisoff 2004; Vanhove 2008; Newman 2009; Goddard & Wierzbicka 2014a; Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2015). These studies seem highly relevant

to the discipline of creolistics, where new inputs from cognitive semantics and contemporary lexical studies are much needed. Following the cognitive turn in semantics, our approach is conceptual (i.e. non-referentialist) and synchronic. We see words as reflective of shared conceptualizations, shared ideas and shared ways of interpreting the world through language (for conceptual theories of words and meanings, see e.g. Wierzbicka 1992, 2013a; Fauconnier 1999; Sharifian 2011; Goddard & Wierzbicka 2014a).

One of the key insights emerging from areal semantics is that semantic conceptualizations and lexicalization patterns can cut across "language" boundaries. Different semantic domains in a language might reflect different histories. Some domains of a language might be almost identical to those of another language, whereas others might be radically different. Based on this premise, our study sets out to explore how lexicalization patterns of different semantic domains vary across creoles and lexifiers. Using phylogenetic networks, we trace the lexicalization patterns for basic and universal (or near-universal) semantic-conceptual categories in different domains across a selection of creoles. Our aim is to explore the potentially distributed histories of lexicalization patterns across creoles. We look at basic concepts in four different semantic domains: human social concepts, body-part terms, environmental concepts, and abstract logical terms. In our research design, we work with an etic grid of non-arbitrary semantic categories, i.e. with meanings that are globally lexicalized (universals, or near-universals), and our aim is to find out how these concepts have been lexicalized across creoles. We are informed by two types of semantic research, firstly, on semantic molecules, and secondly, on semantic primes (see Goddard & Wierzbicka 2014a, 2014b; Goddard in press; Levisen & Bøegh, this volume, Chapter 13). These two new aspects of semantic theory seem particularly useful in semantic fieldwork (Goddard & Wierzbicka 2014b), as well as in lexical studies of creoles and beyond.

14.2   Creoles, lexifiers, and semantic domains

The development of creole lexicons was, historically speaking, a series of big-scale trial-and-error experiments, where speakers took over, adapted, regurgitated, invented and reassembled meanings, structures, and pairings of meanings with available labels. In our research, we are especially interested in these new pairings of lexical labels with meanings. What is sometimes lost in creolists' discourse of "substrate" and "superstrate" influences, is the core insight that lexical structure (i.e. labels) and semantic-conceptual configurations can point in different directions in terms of "influence". In other words, labels derived from European words by no means guarantee "European semantics".

In creolistics, lexical structures and word forms have often taken priority over meaning. Consider for instance the traditional take on "*pequenino* research" (see e.g. Huber 2013: 436), where the primary question is whether "a word derived from *pequenino* exist or does not exist in the language" and on whether the *pequenino*-like word is disyllabic, trisyllabic, or tetrasyllabic (*pikni*, *piknini*, *pikinini*). Our study differs in that it takes a meaning-first approach. We ground our study in basic semantics, and we ask how universally lexified concepts, such as 'children', are expressed across creoles. For example, the two look-alikes Bislama *pikinini* and Trinidadian *pikni* are not equivalents. Only Bislama *pikinini* means 'children'. The Trinidadian word *pikni* means something like 'black children (offensive term)', and thus, the two words *pikni* and *pikinini* stand for two different semantic conceptualizations. From a meaning-first perspective, the lexically comparable words are: Bislama *pikinini* and Trinidadian *chirren* (for *pickaninny* as a racist concept in the Americas, see also Hill 2008: 59).

Our approach bears somewhat more resemblance with Borges' (2013) phylogenetic study of the semantics of kinship in Surinamese creoles. The main difference to this study is that our approach targets natural semantic categories, i.e. we do not make use of any speaker-external categories such as "-1 generation", "alter-dependent", "relative age", but take our point of departure solely in natural language categories such as 'father', 'mother', 'men', 'women', 'children'. These words are examples of semantic molecules, configurations of meanings which are central in language, and which function as building blocks in semantic concept formation (for semantic molecules, in kinship semantics, see Wierzbicka 2013b).[1] In English for instance, words like *toy* or *tummy* are semantically dependent on the molecule 'children'. Semantic molecules like 'father', 'mother', 'men', 'women', and 'children' appear to be universal or near-universal. They play a role in the concept formation of any language (Goddard 2011: 375ff.). Some semantic molecules are culture-specific or area-specific, such as 'God' [m], 'country' [m], and 'money' [m], which have played an important role in the semantics of European languages. Other molecules are presumably universal or near-universal. In our study, we will rely on the latter group, the universal or near-universal semantic concepts. We have chosen molecules from three different domains: the social domain, the domain of the human body, and the environmental domain. We have selected seven molecules from each of these domains,[2] choosing the best candidates for universally shared meanings.

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1.   Semantic molecules are comparable with "intermediate concepts" in the Moscow School of Semantics (see e.g. Apresjan 1992, 2000).

2.   In molecule theory, the set of social molecules include also 'to be born' [m]. Body-part molecules include also 'face' [m], 'teeth' [m], 'breasts' [m], 'fingers' [m], 'fingernails' [m], 'skin' [m], 'blood' [m], and 'poo' [m].

In addition to our selection of social molecules, body-part molecules, and environmental molecules, we have added seven semantic primes. These seven primes are all highly "abstract". They relate to important discourses in linguistics: 'not' to "negation", 'maybe' to "potentiality", 'can' to "possibility", 'if' to "conditionals", 'because' to "causation", 'very' to "intensification" and 'more' to "augmentation". Taken together, these four series of word meanings in natural language make up the etic grid for our cross-domain lexicalization analysis. The total list of concepts, is summarized in Table 14.1.

Table 14.1 Selected semantic molecules and semantic primes.

Social molecules	'children', 'women', 'men', 'mother', 'father', 'wife', 'husband'
Body-part molecules	'head', 'eyes', 'ears', 'mouth', 'nose', 'hands', 'legs'
Environmental molecules	'sun', 'sky', 'ground', 'water', 'fire', 'day', 'night'
Semantic primes – abstract concepts	'not', 'maybe', 'can', 'because', 'if', 'very' and 'more'

Where there were several possible contenders, contexts of use had to be examined to determine the candidate that had the prime meaning found in other languages. Careful examination was also necessary since in some cases the words that are primes and molecules also have other meanings. The aim was to locate the exponents of semantic primes and the best representatives of semantic molecules.

14.3   Words and coding

Our study includes 15 creole languages and 5 European languages (see Table 14.2). Our material comes from a variety of sources, primarily from research on the lexicalization of semantic molecules and primes, from the APiCS database (*Atlas of Pidgin and Creole Structures*; Michaelis et al. 2013), from experts (see acknowledgments), and various reference grammars, dictionaries, and Bible translations. The European languages in our sample are English, Dutch, French, Spanish and Portuguese – the five main lexifier languages in the history of European colonialization.

Our coding is based on MESS values, which stands for "meaning equivalence and structural similarity" (on MESS values, see Levisen & Bøegh this volume, Chapter 13). The advantage of MESS values is that they are based on the relation between meaning and labels, rather than on purely structural, or etymological principles. Consider the following "test sample" in Table 14.3 of Trinidadian, Nigerian Pidgin, Portuguese, Bislama, and English lexicalizations of the concept of 'children'.

Table 14.2 The sample.

Name	Lexifier relation	Associated places/ nations/areas	Consulted material
Ayisyen	French	Haiti	Fattier (2013); Hall (1953); Valdman et al. (2007); Vilsaint & Berret (2005).
Bislama	English	Vanuatu	Crowley (1990, 2004).
Chabacano	Spanish	Philippines	Escalante (2005); Forman (1972); Lipski & Santoro (2007); Llamado (1969); Sippola (2011, 2006); Steinkrüger (2013).
Dutch	–	Netherlands/ Belgium	Levisen & Bøegh (this volume, Chapter 13).
English (Anglo)	–	Britain, USA, Australia, etc.	Goddard & Wierzbicka (2014a).
French	–	France	Peeters (2006).
Jumiekan	English	Jamaica	Blair (2013); Durrleman-Tame (2008); Farquharson (2013); Yakpo (2012).
Kabuverdiano	Portuguese	Cap Verde	Baptista (2002, 2013); da Silva (1987); Lang (2013); Swolkien (2013).
Morisyen	French	Mauritius	Baggioni (1990); Baker & Kriegel (2013); Grant & Guillemin (2012); Hearn (1885); Carpooran (2011).
Nigerian Pidgin	English	Nigeria	Faraclas (1996).
Palenquero	Spanish	Colombia	Hualde & Schwegler (2008); Moñino & Schwegler (2002); Schwegler (2013).
Papiamento	Spanish	Aruba, Curacao	DeBose (1975); Dijkhoff (1993); Goilo (1962); Kouwenberg (2013); Kouwenberg & Murray (1994); van Putte & García (1990).
Papiá Kristang	Portuguese	Malacca, Malaysia	Baxter (1988, 2005); Baxter & de Silva (2004).
Portuguese	–	Portugal	Peeters (2006); Levisen & Bøegh (this volume, Chapter 13).
Spanish	–	Spain	Travis (2002); Peeters (2006); Levisen and Bøegh (this volume, Chapter 13); Aragón (2016, 2017).
Tayo	French	New Caledonia	Corne (1997); Ehrhart (1993); Ehrhart & Revis (2013).
Tok Pisin	English	Papua New Guinea	Bajao & Dicks (1991); Smith & Siegel (2013); Turégano Mansilla (2002); Verhaar (1995).
Trinidadian	English	Trinidad	Mühleisen (2013); Winer (1993).
Virgin Islands Dutch Creole	Dutch	Danish Virgin Islands	Hesseling (1905); Josselin de Jong (1926); Sabino (2012); Sluijs (2013); van Rossem & van der Voort (1996).
Yumplatok	English	Australia	Shnukal (1988).

Table 14.3 Lexicalization of 'children' in five languages.

Pikinini	(Bislama)
Children	(English)
Piknini	(Nigerian Pidgin)
Crianças	(Portuguese)
Chirren	(Trinidadian)

In our analysis, these five languages conform to three basic lexicalization types, as in Table 14.4.

Table 14.4 Lexicalization types – 'children' in five languages.

Type 1: *Children* (English), *chirren* (Trinidadian)
Type 2: *Pikinini* (Bislama), *piknini* (Nigerian Pidgin)
Type 3: *Crianças* (Portuguese)

The implication for the creation of a phylogenetic network is that English and Trinidadian are given the same MESS value for the feature 'children', Bislama and Nigerian Pidgin are seen as different values, and Portuguese yet a different value. To further illustrate our coding practice, consider the five colonial languages, and their solution to the lexicalization of the semantic concepts of 'children' and 'women', as Table 14.5 illustrates.

Table 14.5 Lexicalization of 'children', and 'women' in five European languages.

'children'	'women'
Kinderen (value 1)	*Vrouwen* (value 1)
Children (value 2)	*Women* (value 2)
Les enfants (value 3)	*Les femmes* (value 3)
Crianças (value 4)	**Mulheres (value 4)**
Niños (value 5)	**Mujeres (value 4)**

As we can see, all these European languages have different lexicalization strategies for the concept of 'children'. For the concept of 'women', Portuguese and Spanish are similar in lexical labels, which means that they will receive the same coding value.

14.4   Results

Having illustrated our method, we will now present four phylogenetic networks based on the pairings of labels and meanings in four different domains.

14.4.1   Abstract concepts

To recap, the abstract concepts selected for the study were the semantic primes 'not', 'maybe', 'can', 'because', 'if', 'very' and 'more'. In the following, we will present the lexicalization patterns one by one, and visualize with a phylogenetic network how the exponents of these primes relate to each.

The lexicalization of 'not' is diverse in the sample, but there is a tendency towards a *no* or *no*-like lexical label across different languages (1). Another recurring lexicalization structuration of the same prime is a *pa* or *pa*-like label (2). Finally, there are some lexicalizations in the sample that stand out (3).

(1) **No-type labels**
Chabacano *no*
Bislama *no*
Jumiekan *no*
Nigerian Pidgin *no*
Palenquero *nu*
Papiamento *no*
Spanish *no*
Tok Pisin *no*
Yumplatok *no*
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *no*

(2) **Pa-type labels**
Ayisyen *pa*
Morisyen *pà*
Tayo *pa*

(3) **Other solutions**
French *ne…pas*
Kabuverdiano *ka*
Papiá Kristang *ńgka*
Trinidadian *eh*

The lexicalization of 'maybe' is also very diverse in the sample. Lexical structures like *talves* (4), *mebi* (5), *petet* (6) and *ating* (7) are the major candidates for semantic primes across creoles and lexifiers, but there are other solutions (8).

(4) **Talves-type labels**
Kabuverdiano *talves*
Papiamento *talbes*
Portuguese *talvez*
Spanish *tal vez*

(5) **Mebi-type labels**
English *maybe*
Nigerian Pidgin *mebi*
Trinidadian *maybe*

(6) **Petet-type labels**
Ayisyen *petèt*
French *peut-être*

(7) **Ating-type labels**
Bislama *ating*
Tok Pisin *ating*

(8) **Other solutions**
Chabacano *sigúro*
Morisyen *kikfwa*
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *tumes*

The lexicalization of 'can' is also diverse in the sample, with *pode*-like (9) and *kan*-like (10) lexicalizations as the most salient. We also see language-specific solutions (11).

(9) **Pode-type labels**
Chabacano *pudi*
Kabuverdiano *pode*
Papiá Kristang *podi*
Portuguese *poder*
Spanish *poder*

(10) **Kan-type labels**
Dutch *kan*
English *can*
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *kan*

(11) **Other solutions**
Bislama *save*
Morisyen *kapav*
Tayo *kone*
Tok Pisin *inap*

The lexicalization of 'because' is diverse in the sample, with many *bikos*-like (12), *paske*-like (13) and *porque*-like lexicalizations (14), but there are a number of other ways attested as well (15).

(12) **Bikos-type labels**
English *because*
Nigerian Pidgin *bìkọ̀s*
Trinidadian *because*
Yumplatok *bikos*

(13) **Paske-type labels**
Ayisyen *paske*
French *parce que*
Morisyen *paskì*
Tayo *paske*

(14) **Porque-type labels**
Portuguese *porque*
Spanish *porque*

(15) **Other solutions**
Bislama *from*
Chabacano *kasí*
Jumiekan *kaa*
Kabuverdiano *pamodi*
Tok Pisin *long dispela*
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *fa*

Compared with the other abstract concepts, the lexicalization of 'if' is not diverse in the sample. *Si*-like (16) and *if*-like (17) structures are common, and *sapos*-like structures in Melanesian creoles (18).

(16) **Si-type labels**
Ayisyen *si*
Chabacano *si*
French *si*
Kabuverdiano *si*
Morisyen *si*
Palenquero *si*
Papiamento *si*
Portuguese *se*
Spanish *si*
Tayo *si*

(17) **If-type labels**
English *if*
Jumiekan *ef*
Nigerian *if*
Trinidadian *if*
Yumplatok *ip*

(18) **Sapos-type labels**
Bislama *sipos*
Tok Pisin *sapos*

The lexicalization of 'very' is extremely diverse in the sample. For starters, the modern European languages have five different labels for this prime:

(19) **European solutions**
Dutch *heel*
English *very*
French *très*
Portuguese *muito*
Spanish *muy*

Only a few European-like pairings are found in the creoles (20), the tendency being that creoles vary greatly in their lexicalizations of this prime (21).

(20) **European-type solutions**
Ayisyen *trè*
Kabuverdiano *mutu*
Palenquero *mu*

(21) **Other solutions**
Bislama *tumas*
Chabacano *bung/byen*
Jumiekan *bad*
Morisyen *bukù*
Nigerian *wèlwèl*
Papiamento *masha*
Papiá Kristang *bomong*
Tayo *tro*
Tok Pisin *tumas*
Trinidadian *rel*
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *mushi*
Yumplatok *mata*

By contrast, the lexicalization patterns for the augmenter 'more' are much less diverse. These largely follow colonial lines with either a Germanic base (22), or an Iberoromance base (23), or a French base (24). The French-related creoles are, (at least in a fine-grained coding sense), all somewhat different from contemporary French.

(22) a. **Me-type labels**
Dutch *meer*
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch*me*

b. **Mo-type labels**
Bislama *moa*
English *more*
Jumiekan *muo*
Nigerian Pidgin *mÒa*
Tok Pisin *moa*
Yumplatok *mo*

(23) **Mas-type labels**
Chabacano *mas*
Kabuverdiano *más*
Palenquero *má*
Papiamento *mas*
Portuguese *mais*
Spanish *más*

(24) a. **Ply-type labels**
French *plus*

b. **Plis-type labels**
Ayisyen *plis*
Morisyen *plis*
Tayo *plis*

These results take us to the following network in Figure 14.1, based on a shared semantic core of "abstract concepts" and their different lexicalizations.

The first interesting result emerging from the phylogenetic analysis is that the MESS values of only seven features based on primes show a very similar pattern to that of 65 features (for a featurization of all semantic primes, see Levisen & Bøegh, this volume, Chapter 13) – from a big picture perspective, the creoles team up with their lexifiers. At the same time, none of the languages have similar values in all categories, which would have been the case if we had measured the lexicalization of the same semantic concepts in Mexican Spanish v. European Spanish, or Australian English v. British English (see Levisen et al., this volume, Chapter 13). The implication is that all languages in our sample are substantially different in the pairing of lexical structure and these basic concepts.
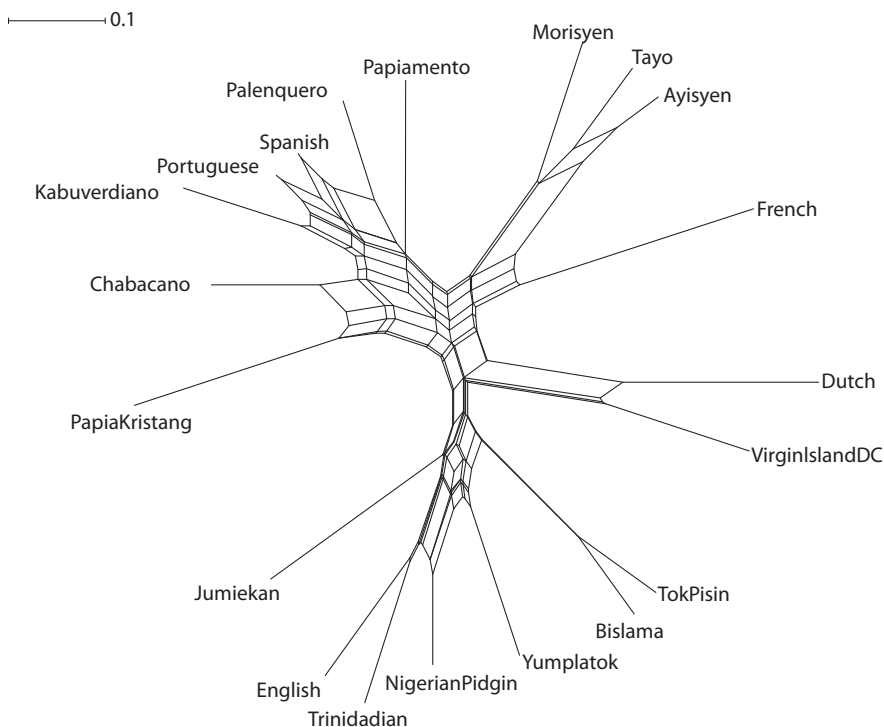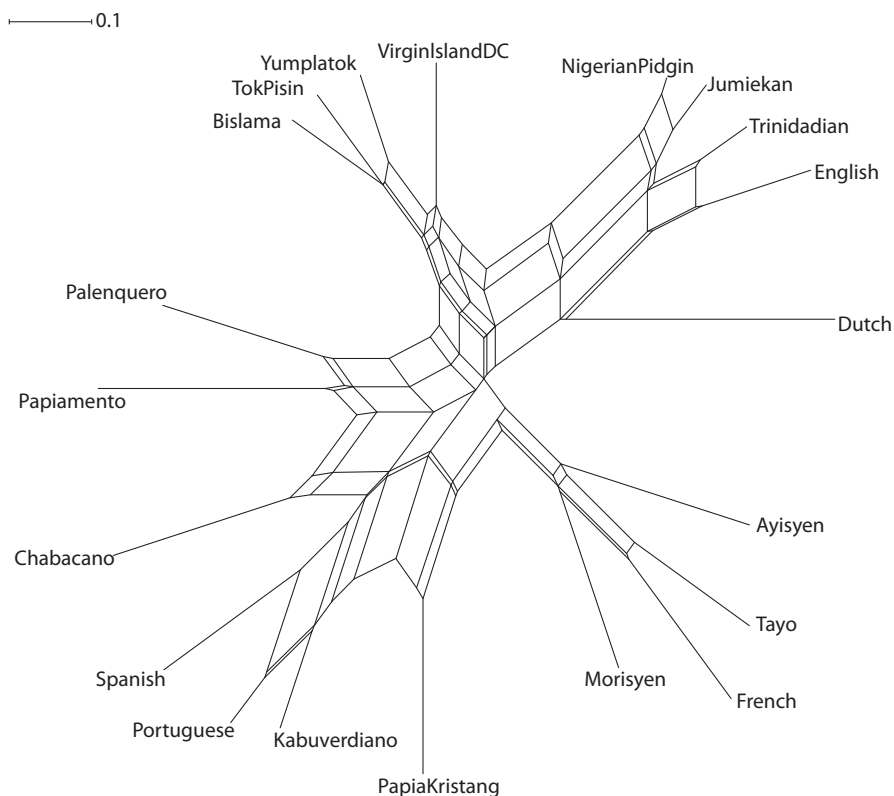
Figure 14.1 Phylogenetic network for the lexicalization of abstract concepts.

What the network also reveals is that Morisyen is the creole in the sample which is most different from French in this core lexical domain, and Tok Pisin and Bislama (along with Jumiekan) are the creoles which are furthest from English. We can also see that Spanish and Portuguese stand out from the group of those with European lexifiers, in that they belong to the same cluster. If we look at the internal split in the Iberoromance/Iberoromance-related creoles, we find an interesting picture: there is a division between Spanish/Spanish-related creoles and Portuguese/Portuguese-related creoles, but Spanish and Portuguese (the modern languages), are relatively closer to each other than the Spanish-related creoles and the Portuguese-related creoles are to each other.

14.4.2 Social molecules

We now move to a different aspect of semantics, namely basic social semantics. How do speakers of creoles construe labels for basic concepts in this semantic domain, and does the network differ from the abstract domain? In this subsection, we will first present the results in the form of a phylogenetic network, and then we will discuss the similarities and differences.

Figure 14.2 Phylogenetic network for lexicalizations of social molecules.

It is obvious that the phylogenetic network for basic social meanings is different from the network for abstract semantics. We can still see a basic divide between Romance-related and Germanic-related languages, and especially the French/French-related branch stands out clearly. However, there is no longer a Dutch/Dutch-related v. English/English-related divide, and generally there is a more "interactive" structure to network. On the individual language level, we can see that Yumplatok forms a unit with Bislama and Tok Pisin – and somewhat surprisingly, also with Virgin Islands Creole Dutch – in its basic social language. This group of languages has branched out even more decisively from the group of English-related creoles. The most closely related languages in the social-semantic network are: Tok Pisin and Bislama, Nigerian Pidgin and Jumiekan, Portuguese and Kabuverdiano.

One of the most interesting words in our sample is the semantic molecule 'children'. The molecule is the collective socio-biological concept expressed in English via a plural form *children*. The lexicalization of this concept is interesting even within European lexifiers, given that all five languages differ:

(25) **European solutions**
Dutch *kinderen*
English *children*
French (*les*) *enfants*
Portuguese *crianças*
Spanish *niños*[3]

Within the creoles, there are numerous *pikinini*-type lexicalizations (26). The word figures on Baker and Hubers' list of "world-wide" lexical features in creoles (2001: 208) and ultimately, this label goes back to a Portuguese word that meant 'small' or 'very small'. In Ayisyen and Tayo we find a comparable lexicalization pattern in *peti* 'small' (27), but if we compare the two Melanesian creoles Bislama and Tayo, we see that only Tayo maintains a polysemy pattern: *peti*$_1$ 'small' and *peti*$_2$ 'children', whereas Bislama, has *smol* for 'small' and *pikinini* for 'child'.

(26) **Pikinini-type solutions**
Bislama *pikinini*
Jumiekan *pikni*
Nigerian Pidgin *pìkín*
Tok Pisin *pikinini*
Yumplatok *piknini*

(27) **Pitit-type solutions**
Ayisyen *pitit*
Tayo *piti*

Apart from *pikinini*, there is a great variety of different lexicalizations across creoles, some of which have been regurgitated, shortened, reduplicated, borrowed, or in other ways display differences to the solutions of lexicalization in the European lexifier.

(28) **Other solutions**
Chabacano *kriyatúra*
Kabuverdiano *fidju*
Morisyen *zanfan*
Palenquero *moná*
Papiamento *muchanan*
Papiá Kristang *krenkrensa*
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *kin*

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3. The Spanish molecule is expressed via the lexical structure *niños* which covers the collective socio-biological irrespective of gender, but Spanish also has an elaborate gender-driven lexical semantics with a wealth of lexical structures, including *niños* (collective, males) *niñas* (collective, females), *niño* (individual, male) and *niña* (individual, female).

At a first glance, the labels for the two collective socio-biological meanings 'women' and 'men' seem closer to the European labels than 'children'. However, when we take a closer look at the labels, they cluster together in ways that make the creoles group closer together with each other than with the colonial languages.

(29) a. **Men-type solutions**
English *men*

      b. **Man-type solutions**
Jumiekan *man*
Nigerian Pidgin *man*
Tok Pisin *man*
Trinidadian *man*
Yumplatok *man*

(30) a. **Women-type solutions**
English *women*

      b. **Uman-type solutions**
Jumiekan *uman*
Nigerian Pidgin *uman*
Yumplatok *oman*

(31) a. **Mulheres-type solutions**
Portuguese *mulheres*
Spanish *mujeres*

      b. **Muhé-type solutions**
Chabacano *muhér*
Palenquero *muhé*
Papiamento *muhé*
Papiá Kristang *muhé*

When we talk about the difference in lexical structure between English *men* (collective) and Jumiekan *man* (collective), or Portuguese *mulheres* (collective) and Papiamento *muhé* (collective), an objection could be made, of course, that this can be explained via difference in the reduction of structures and labels which is characteristic of creoles vis-a-vis non-creoles. In our view, all differences should all be modelled, and this is better done if we take a holistic lexicogrammatical perspective, rather than one that leaves out the grammatical facts from the analysis.

Semantically, the pairs 'mother' and 'father', as well as 'wife' and 'husband', are relational concepts, which means that they differ from the collective and socio-biological concepts 'children', 'women', and 'men'.

In some languages, speakers have invented elaborate ways of encoding endearment or age-relational aspects in addition to such basic words, but in this study

we are only after the most basic concepts.[4] We have attempted to locate the most basic relational category for "someone's mother", "someone's father", "someone's husband", and "someone's wife". It appears that the labels *mama* (for mother), and *papa* (for father) are widespread as the lexical structuration for this molecule. This means that there are many false friends of a subtle nature that one needs to be aware of. In English translation, the Bislama phrase *mama blong mi* does not mean my 'my mama', but 'my mother'.

(32) **Mama-type solutions**
Ayisyen *māmā*
Bislama *mama*
Morisyen *maman*
Palenquero *mama*
Papiamento *mama*
Tok Pisin *mama*
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *mama*
Yumplatok *ama* (*mama*)

(33) **Papa-type solutions**
Ayisyen *papa*
Bislama *papa*
Morisyen *papa*
Palenquero *papá*
Tok Pisin *papa*
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *popa*
Yumplatok *papa*/*baba*

With regards to the final pair, 'wife', and 'husband', it seems clear that these terms might only be near-universals, given that culturally-specific components of meaning may have spilled over into the word meaning. The claim here is simply that the core components in 'wife' and 'husband' are cross-linguistically lexicalized.

One potentially interesting finding emerging from our sample is that the 'woman'-'wife' polysemy is much more prevalent that 'man'-'husband' polysemy. In our sample, the latter appears exclusively in English-related creoles in the Australia-Pacific region.

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4. In English, for instance, words like *dad,* and *daddy* provide quite different conceptual takes on relational semantics, than *father*. Likewise French *maman* encodes a different semantics than the basic concept of *mère*, etc.

(34)   **'Woman'-'wife' polysemy in creoles**
        Bislama *woman*
        Chabacano *muhér*
        Kabuverdiano *mujer*
        Morisyen *fam*
        Palenquero *muhé*
        Tayo *fam*
        Tok Pisin *meri*
        Yumplatok *oman*

(35)   **'Man'-'husband' polysemy in creoles**
        Bislama *man*
        Tok Pisin *man*
        Yumplatok *man*

Label-sharing is a notoriously treacherous field, when we search for "cultural information" in language. From a cognitive semantic perspective, it is important to maintain that polysemy patterns do not necessarily carry any cultural message – or more often, they merely reflect historical pathways which are not or no longer a part of speakers' linguistic worldviews (for discussion, see Wierzbicka 2007: 50–51; Deignan 2003). In English, "my woman" (in reference to 'my wife') is inherently sexist, or at least "macho", but this is not so in the creoles. The Bislama phrase *woman blong mi* does not mean "the woman who belongs to me", but "my wife".[5] What is more, all the European languages, except for English, display a similar polysemy pattern, and Dutch even has a 'man'-'husband' polysemy.

14.4.3   Body-part molecules

The human body is one of the most intensely studied semantic domains. In fact, human languages have been called "body-centric" because of the tendency to use body words in concept building, either via polysemy or via phraseology (for the semantics of the human body, see Andersen 1978; Senft 1998; Enfield & Wierzbicka 2002; Majid et al. 2006; Wierzbicka 2007, 2013a; Majid 2010; Zouhair & Yu 2011; Kraska-Szlenk 2014; Levisen 2015). We will now go through the major findings in the lexicalization of the following fix points: 'Head', 'eyes', 'ears', 'nose', 'mouth', 'hands', 'legs'.

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5.   In Urban Bislama *waef blong mi* is now widespread. This change might reflect the ongoing contact with English, and perhaps an accommodation to the avoidance of the English problem term *my woman*.

All seven words are conceptualized as "parts of the body". Note that the molecules reflect natural semantics. This means that we are studying the concept of 'nose' (not 'noses'), and the concept of 'eyes' (not 'eye'). It is well-known that the word for 'hands' can sometimes mean something else in addition to 'hands' – in many languages the same word can also be used to talk about something like "arm", but although "hands" as a semantic unit is clearly delineated, "arms" are not a cross-linguistically conceptual universal or even near-universals (Wierzbicka 2007, for discussion see also Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2008). Apart from the selected seven molecules, the list of body-part molecules also includes 'face', 'legs', 'teeth', 'fingers', 'fingernails', 'breasts', 'skin', 'blood', and 'poo',[6] concepts which will not be taken into consideration in the present study.
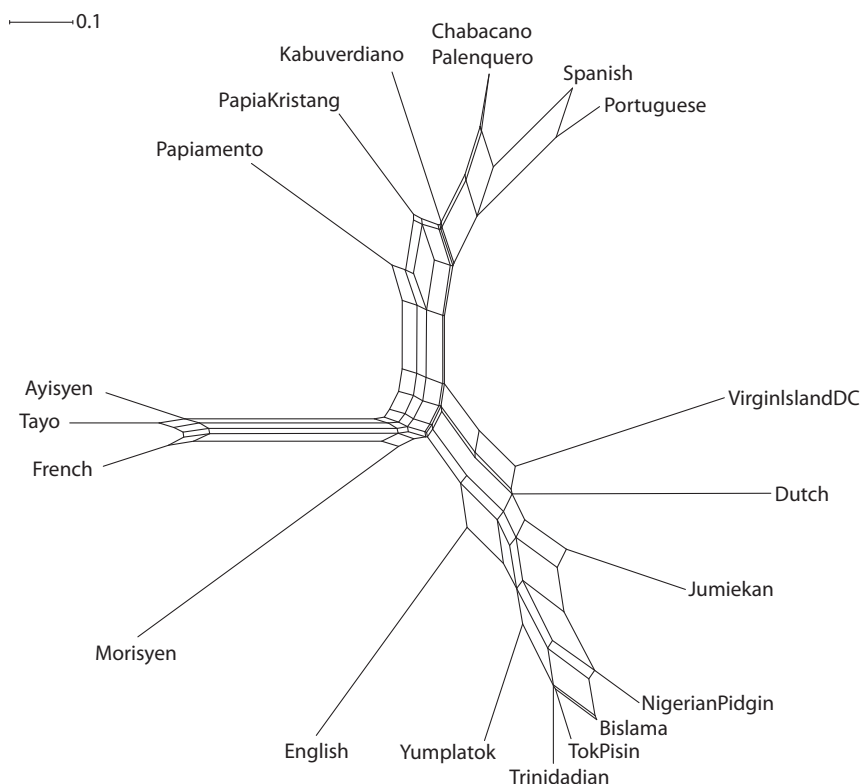
The body network unfolds in the following way:

Figure 14.3 Phylogenetic network for lexicalization of body-part molecules.

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6. The English word *poo* has an attitudinal semantic component, which is not universal.

On first impression, the body network provides a middle ground between logical concepts and social concepts in the way the languages relate to each other. The clear-cut grouping of creoles with their "lexifiers" has been restored, but with a slightly boxier structure, and therefore a less sharp overall distinction than in the network for logical concepts.

Perhaps the most interesting difference can be found inside the clusters. English and Jumiekan are outliers in the body network, and, the Australian/Melanesian creoles are now located together with Trinidadian and Nigerian Pidgin as part of the core cluster of the English-related creoles. In the French/French-related cluster, Morisyen again stands out as the most different from the other members of the group. Spanish and Portuguese are again closer to each other than to the Iberoromance creoles, and Papiamento is the most peripheral member. There is a truly "world-wide" effect at play: Palenquero (Colombia) and Chabacano (Philippines) have identical values – and Tok Pisin (Melanesia) and Trinidad (Caribbean) are very closely related in the lexicalization of basic body meanings.

We will now present two case studies based on two molecules 'head', and 'eyes'. These two molecules have been selected because they show differences in their lexicalization patterns. The universal status of 'head' is not fully agreed on in the literature. Burenholt (2006: 169), for instance, has claimed that there is no word for 'head' in Jahai, a Mon-Khmer language spoken in Malaysia (see also Majid 2010: 64). Wierzbicka, not convinced by the evidence provided for the Jahai case, criticized that the lack of a systematic polysemy analysis and the exotisizing nature of the claim (Wierzbicka 2013a). Based on linguistic and comparative analysis, Wierzbicka found in her metastudy (2007) on body-part semantics, that 'head' is indeed a universal – or rather a near-universal concept, and she also provided a convincing re-analysis the Jahai case (2013a: 40–42). To clarify Wierzbicka's claim, consider her definition of the word *head*, phrased in semantic primes and molecules:

[A] Semantic explication for *head*
    a. one part of someone's body
    b. it is above all the other parts of the body
    c. it is round [m]
    d. when someone thinks about something,
        something happens in this part of this someone's body

The key idea is that the first three components (a–c) are shared and universal aspects and her hypothesis is that in all languages there is a head-like concept meaning "a body part, which is above the other parts of the body and which is round" (for further evidence on the 'roundness' factor, see also Majid 2010: 59). At the same time, she contends that component (d), 'when someone thinks about something,

something happens in this part of this someone's body' is a European idea, which is not necessarily shared across languages and cultures (Wierzbicka 2007).

Evidence from creoles suggests that Wierzbicka's hypothesis is plausible. We have had no difficulty in localizing 'head'-meanings in text materials and descriptions. At the same, we also found a minor variation in the configuration of 'head' concepts. Take for instance *hed* 'head', which in traditional Melanesian creoles relates to 'wanting', rather than 'thinking' (for instance Bislama *stronghed* lit. 'strong head' means 'someone who does as he or she want's, and not 'someone who thinks well'. For a study on *hed* in Tok Pisin, see also Kulick (1992). Despite these minor differences in conceptualization, *head* and *head*-like semantic configurations tend to be "superstratally" oriented. We find the following seven types of lexicalization patterns in our language sample:

(36) **Hoofd-type labels**
Dutch *hoofd*

(37) a. **Hed-type labels**
Bislama *hed*
English *head*
Nigerian Pidgin *hed*
Trinidadian *head*
Tok Pisin *hed*

b. **Ed-type labels**
Jumiekan *ed*
Yumplatok *ed*

(38) **Kabesa-type labels**
Chabacano *kabésa*
Kabuverdiano *kabésa*
Spanish *cabeza*
Palenquero *kabesa*
Papiamento *kabes*
Papiá Kristang *kabesa*
Portuguese *cabeça*

(39) a. **Tet-type labels**
Ayisyen *tèt*
French *tête*
Tayo *tet*

b. **Latet-type labels**
Morisyen *latet*

(40) **Kop-type labels**
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *kop*

Consider now the concept of 'eyes'. To our knowledge, there are no claims against the universality of 'eyes' in the literature. Wierzbicka's (2007: 9) definition for this allegedly shared human meaning unfolds as follows:

[B] Semantic explication for *eyes*
   a.   two parts of someone's body
   b.   they are on one side of the head [m]
   c.   because people's bodies have these two parts, people can see

The concept of 'eyes' not only relies semantically on the concept of 'head', but also on the semantic prime 'two'. In English, this inherently dual concept is realized with the label *eyes*. When we look at the lexicalization patterns across creoles and lexifiers, we find a richer diversity than with regards to 'head'.

   (41) **Ogen-type labels**
         Dutch *ogen*

   (42) **Eyes-type labels**
         English *eyes*
         Trinidadian *eyes*

   (43) **Ai-type labels**
         Bislama *ae*
         Nigerian Pidgin *ay*
         Tok Pisin *ai*
         Yumplatok *ai*

   (44) **Oi-type labels**
         Kabuverdiano *ói*

   (45) **Yai-type labels**
         Jumiekan *yai*

   (46) **Zye-type labels**
         Ayisyen *je/zye*
         French *yeux*
         Tayo *sje/sjø*

   (47) **Lyzye-type labels**
         Morisyen *lyzye*

   (48) **Ojos-type labels**
         Chabacano *óhus*
         Portuguese *olhos*
         Spanish *ojos*

   (49) **Oho-type labels**
         Palenquero *oho*

(50)   **Wowo-type labels**
Papiamento *wowo*

(51)   **Ólu-type labels**
Papiá Kristang *ólu*

(52)   **Hogo-type labels**
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *hogo*

Etymologically speaking, the labels all seem traceable back to European words. From a contemporary cognitive perspective, the interesting thing is to see how some labels have very similar or identical labels, whereas others are marginally more European-like.

14.4.4   Environmental molecules

The semantics of environmental concepts links with the study of ethnogeography, but meanings which we will explore in this section have a semantic importance that goes way beyond landscape terms (Bromhead 2011a, 2011b). We are researching the lexicalization of the concepts of 'sun', 'sky', 'ground', 'fire', 'water', 'day', and 'night', which are usually termed 'environmental molecules' (Goddard & Wierzbicka 2014b). As with the concept of 'head', we acknowledge that there might be minor differences in the full semantic conceptualizations of 'sun', 'water', 'fire' etc., across linguistic communities because of differences in cosmologies and worldviews in speakers. We do not want to disregard such differences, but it appears that at least all the core components in the lexicalized concept are shared and therefore these molecules remain optimal for cross-linguistic semantic studies.

The environmental network (see Figure 14.4) tells a new story. It sharply distinguishes Germanic-type and Romance-type lexical structures, but the most significant difference is the role of English/English-related languages in the network. English, it seems, is much closer to its related creoles in environmental language than in the other domains. Also, taken as a whole, the English-related creoles cluster closer together than the other clusters in the network. Generally speaking, there is much less variety in the lexicalization of environmental molecules, than say, in logical concepts, social molecules or even body-part molecules. The concept of 'sun', for instance, has very few lexicalizations:

(53)   **Son-type labels**
Bislama *san*
Dutch *zon*
English *sun*
Jumiekan *son*
Nigerian Pidgin *son*

Tok Pisin *san*
Trinidadian *sun*
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *sun*
Yumplatok *san*

(54) **Sol-type labels**
Chabacano *sol*
Kabuverdiano *sol*
Portuguese *sol*
Spanish *sol*

(55) **Soley-type labels**
Ayisyen *soléy*
French *soleil*
Morisyen *soley*
Tayo *solej*
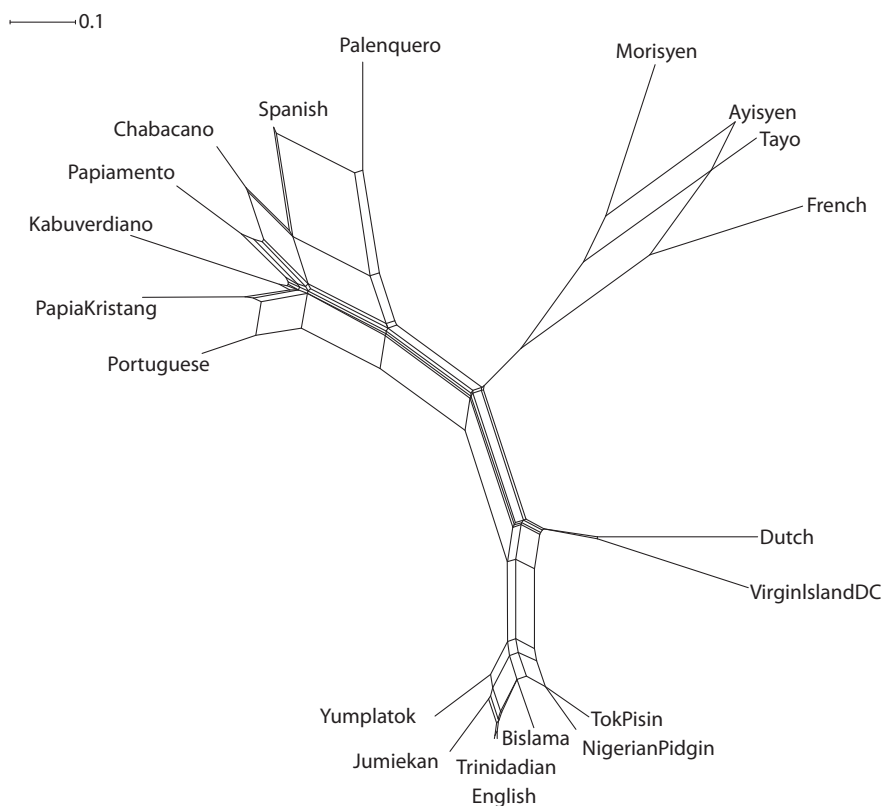
(56) **Solo-type labels**
Papiamento *solo*

Figure 14.4 Phylogenetic network for environmental meanings.

The concept of 'night', which semantically speaking, roughly means 'the time where people cannot see the sun, and where (most) people sleep', also has few lexicalization patterns, and again, the English-related creoles cluster around the same label.

(57) **Nacht-type labels**
Dutch *nacht*

(58) **Nayt-type labels**
Bislama *naet*
English *night*
Jumiekan *nait*
Nigerian Pidgin *nayt*
Tok Pisin *nait*
Trinidadian *night*
Yumplatok *nait*

(59) **Nuí-type labels**
French *nuit*

(60) **Noche-type labels**
Kabuverdiano *noti*
Portuguese *noite*
Spanish *noche*

(61) **Anoti-type labels**
Chabacano *anoche*
Papiamento *anochi*
Papiá Kristang *anoti*

(62) **Lanwit-type labels**
Ayisyen *lannwit*
Morisyen *lanwit*
Tayo *lanwi*

(63) **Dungku-type labels**
Virgin Islands Creole Dutch *dungku*

14.5   Discussion

Every study has its limitations, and especially studies that seek to break new ground. We would like to address two important potential objections to our approach and analysis, one criticism which could be raised by semanticists, and one criticism which might be raised by creolists.

Firstly, there might be an objection to our focus on pairing (i.e. pairing of lexical structure with semantic meaning), and the use of MESS values. We move in an area where cognitive semantics and structural lexicology overlap, and an anti-structuralist semanticist might find our attempt to reconcile meaning and structure in this way somewhat provoking. Our reply would be that semantic concepts are not just concepts of the mind, but embodied in the concrete speech practices of various groups of people. As Enfield (2015: 176) contends: "Linguistic meaning is causally grounded in the making-public of concepts. To be linguistic concepts, they have to be aired, and shared." Also, the real-life "contact potential", is governed to a high-degree by the actual labels, and the semantic (re) interpretation of these. However – and this is important – we do not claim that semantics *is* structure, only that semantic categories are linked to structure and structures. We also acknowledge that MESS values have a limited scope and use for semanticists, in that that they can only be applied in cases where there is semantic equivalence. All languages, including all creole languages, have numerous cultural keywords, and culture-specific semantic categories, which have emerged through the discourse and history of the particular community, and these cannot meaningfully be compared within the design of our current research. In Bislama for instance, there is a rich discourse of *kastom*, roughly 'traditional culture', a "celebratory" concept and a cultural keyword which is used to talk about the past as a vital part of modern life (Levisen & Priestley 2017). It would be plainly wrong to equate this concept with English *custom* (the etymon), since the two words differ considerably in both semantic meaning and discursive functions. Culture-specific words make up of one of the unresolved (and possibly irresolvable) issues in phylogenetic approaches to natural language semantic in general. How to meaningfully do cross-linguistic semantics in domains where there may be no etic grid (i.e. no shared meaning-base to rely on), requires a different way of measuring than MESS values. Given the rapid progress in current conceptual semantics, our prediction is that that phylogenetic methods *can* be used in the future when we have better semantic descriptions of semantic domains in many lects and languages. What we need is careful semantic explications of creole word meanings, which can then be compared, contrasted, and eventually brought into large-scale phylogenetic analysis.

Creolists might say: What about dialects other than the ones represented in this study? And what about historical varieties? Here, the answer is more straightforward and positive. It is possible, at least theoretically, if the evidence is available, to apply MESS values to any kind of "dialect of French", or to any historical variety of, say, "Melanesian Pidgin", etc. We could add these languages/varieties to make a more advanced and sophisticated network of domains. In the chapter

on Englishes and Creoles in the Pacific (Levisen et al., this volume, Chapter 15), the question of languages, dialects and varieties will be discussed in more detail, with the assistance of the phylogenetic network technique.

14.6   Concluding remarks

With regards to basic concepts, creoles cluster around the European lexifiers in core vocabulary of all semantic domains: social concepts, body-part terms, environmental concepts, and abstract terms, but there is a domain effect: the social domain is least European-like, and the environmental domain is the most European-like in terms of the labelling of basic concepts. The differences in the networks across domains suggest that semantic domains reflect different contact histories and relations to not only lexifiers, but also in creole-creole relations. We have made advances in the application of phylogenetic techniques to the crossover between lexical studies and conceptual semantics, in a way that has yielded new results and new understandings.

Notes

The datasets for this chapter can be found here: https://phylogenetic-creole-studies.blogspot.com

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