

The semantic extension of genitive *d?* and the semantic shift of *s? nãw* ‘if not, otherwise’ in Daman Creole Portuguese

Although the gradualist hypothesis for creole genesis is sometimes used to the exclusion of the hypothesis of abrupt creolization or vice versa, in some situations we can see both at work. For example, the abruptly formed creole Daman Creole Portuguese (DCP) has recently developed a creole-like trait long after it has become a creole: DCP *d?* ‘from, of’ is found in the children’s speech but not in that of older DCP speakers (cf. [1b, 1c]).

- (1) a. Ti? ã galiñ ki puzan 2 Y d? oyr, I el ti?
 EXPS one hen REL laying egg of gold and 3SM COP-LPS
 b. d? ã farmhouse. S?nãw ã Om fiko saben
 LOC one farmhouse and one man became knowing
 c. ki ak?l galiñ te d? ã farmhouse. (...) I d?p?y
 REL that hen COP-LPR L one farmhouse
 d. abriw dil barrig. Nad nu acho ali dent. (MAR4:1-3,8-9)
 opened his belly nothing NEG found there inside

‘There was a hen that laid golden eggs and it lived in a farmhouse. And one man came to know that this hen was living at the farmhouse. (...) And then [he] cut her belly open and found nothing inside.’

Another change found in the DCP children’s speech is the semantic shift of *s? nãw* ‘if not, otherwise’ to ‘and/then’. The excerpt in (1) illustrates that *s? nãw* ‘and/then’ does not replace the existing coordinate conjunction *i* ‘and’ (in [1a]) or the sequential conjunction *d?p?y* ‘then’, but is used in addition to these. The question then becomes: what is the distribution of *s? nãw*? Apart from only being found in children’s speech, it is only found in the community that tends to speak the more basilectal variety of DCP. (There are two geographically separated speech communities in Daman: the more basilectal Big Daman and the more acrolectal Small Daman.)

This study focuses on the distribution of *s? nãw* in discourse. Given that phrases (NPs, APs, etc.) are always coordinated with *i* ‘and’, we collected tokens of coordination of sentences. The use of *i* or *s? nãw* seemed to be sensitive to the nature of the NP subject in the second sentence. Because of this, four syntactic environments were coded for in the slot after the conjunction: [1] full NP subject, [2] deictic, possessive, or quantifier pronoun, [3] personal subject pronoun, and [4] null. The speech of four children young people from 10 to 14 years old was used for the study. Table 1 shows that the use *s? nãw* is much more frequent when there is a full NP subject in the second sentence. In fact, overall *s? nãw* is used 77% of the time before full NPs. By contrast, the conjunction *i*, has a more even distribution across the different realizations of subjects, but is still found almost half of the time before unexpressed subjects (i.e. Ø).

Table 1. Distribution of *i* v. *s?nãw* among the speakers in Big Daman. Degrees of freedom: 3. Chi-square = 57.636; *p* is less than or equal to 0.001. The distribution is significant.

	full NP	deictic/poss/quant pronoun	subject pronoun	Ø	TOTAL
<i>i</i>	31	14	33	75	153
<i>senaw</i>	41	1	6	5	53
TOTAL	72	15	39	80	206

Although more data are needed, the data so far suggest that the conjunction *s?nãw* may be developing to coordinate sentences with full NP subjects, consonant with its syntactic distribution as ‘if not, otherwise’. Were this the case, *i* would then remain as a conjunction for phrasal categories and for sentences in which the second contains a pronominal or an unexpressed subject.