The relevance of Arabic-based Pidgins-Creoles for Arabic Linguistics

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INTRODUCTION

Since the early seventies creole and pidgin studies have become a very productive field of general linguistics. The fashion became so great that many linguists are tempted to use the terms *pidgins* and *creoles* for any case of language contact, language mixing or language acquisition. On the other hand well-known creolists are still arguing and quarreling when trying to provide clear definitions and categorizations of pidgin/creole languages.

Strangely enough, Arabic-based pidgins/creoles (P/Cs) are still on the margin of both Arabic linguistics and pidgin/creole studies. However Arabic-based P/Cs appear to be of particular interest for both creole studies and Arabic linguistics and this for a number of reasons:

- The Arabic language has a very long history and spread in many parts of the world. This long historical process gave birth to many different types of language contact and language shift. Therefore Arabic displays a huge spectrum of varieties from the most classical varieties to the most pidginized varieties. It provides interesting elements of information concerning how different types of contact languages emerge according to the various sociolinguistic settings.

- Language shift from a non-Arabic vernacular to an Arabic vernacular and in some case pidginization/creolization is still taking place (cf. Southern Sudan). The linguistic, historical and social factors leading to pidginization/creolization can thus be observed *in situ* which is rarely the case.

- Contemporary Arabic-based P/Cs can bring additional information to Arabic linguistics by shedding light on the historical processes of language shift to Arabic.

Thanks to the work of Versteegh (1984) the latter issue has been lengthily discussed in Arabic Linguistic circles. But since Versteegh's book, studies on P/Cs and contact languages have experienced important theoretical developments. In this paper I would like to present an update of our knowledge on

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contemporary Arabic-based pidgins/creoles in order to investigate their relevance for comparative and historical studies. The paper will be divided into three parts. I will first review the main criteria used for defining and categorizing pidgin and creole languages and outline the difficulties raised by such categorization. I will then describe the historical and sociological context that led to the emergence of contemporary Arabic-based P/Cs. Lastly, I will present a brief sketch of the main structural characteristics and discuss the role of the African substratum languages. In conclusion, I will try to analyze if the contemporary context may have any similarities with the historical context of language shift that led to the emergence of Arabic dialects within the conquered territories of the Arab Empire. In short, can we agree with Versteegh (1984) that pidginization and creolization - conceived here as specific cases of language contact – were the decisive processes that led to the emergence of new Arabic (i.e. "modern dialects").

A few preliminary remarks concerning the definition and categorization of pidgins and creoles

If we want to talk about Arabic P/Cs as discrete linguistic entities we must first ask ourselves a basic question: "what are the determining criteria that make it possible to distinguish between pidgins/creoles on the one hand, and other types of contact languages (such as lingua francas, koinés, mixed

languages) and other natural languages?" We must also distinguish between different types of language contact that led to different linguistic outcomes (Thomason and Kaufmann 1988). For three decades an enormous literature on this topic has been written and the criteria used for the definition of P/Cs have evolved. The situation might appear quite confusing for non-specialists but let us say shortly that specialists are more and more reluctant to consider pidgin/creole languages as a typologically discrete class. The most important point is that linguistic criteria alone do not suffice to define P/Cs. As pointed out by Winford (1997:1), "the identification of pidgins and creoles is based on a variety of often conflicting criteria including function, historical origins and development, formal characteristics, or a combination of these". It is the convergence of a number of linguistic features and of non-linguistic factors (historical context of emergence, type of contact, processes of acquisition, etc.) that may help to define P/Cs. But in many instances there is no clear-cut delimitation between pidgins, creoles, koinés, vehicular languages, etc... Therefore not all authors agree on the relevance of the terms *pidgins* and *creoles* and there is a recent tendency to use instead the more neutral term of contact language (Mufwene 1997).

I will not detail the endless debate concerning the definition and categorization of P/C languages but just summarize some of the main points that are relevant for the Arabic domain.[1] For this short review I rely mainly on Lefebvre (2000) and Winford (1997) who provide interesting syntheses of the on-going debate.

Pidgins/Creoles: a typologically discrete class?

To what extent can structural characteristics be used as criteria for distinguishing pidgins from creoles and from distinguishing them from other kinds of contact language? A number of linguistic features or properties have been proposed in the past to be diagnostic of pidgin/creole status such as lack of inflectional morphology, parataxis, serialization, use of unmarked case, transparency and various analytic rather than synthetic strategies. It has been noted however that these structural properties are to be found in languages other than presumed pidgins and creoles and do not set the latter apart as a special class, nor indeed as a unified class. Many languages have a reduced morphology or are isolating languages without

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1 Readers interested in an update on this debate can refer to the last issues of the *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* and to the volumes of the *Creole Languages Library* published by J. Benjamins as well as a number of major contribution such as Arends et al. (1995); Chaudençon (1979); Mühlhaüsler (1986) and Romaine (1988).

being classified as *creoles*, like Chinese or Vietnamese for instance. Moreover, the detailed grammatical descriptions of the numerous creole languages, spread across all continents, show considerable structural differences (Muysken 1988). The claim of typological unity has been mainly advocated by the "universalists" (D. Bickerton 1981, 1984) who consider that creole grammar exhibits the 'bioprogram' or basic features of a Universal Grammar. But many authors have criticized the concept of a typological unity of the creole languages. Critics come mainly from the "superstratists" (Chaudençon 1986) or the "substratists" (Holm 1988, Lefebvre 1998), i.e. those who consider that the grammar of creole languages has been influenced either by the superstratum (or target language) or by the substratum language.

The distinction between pidgins and creoles is even more difficult. Pidgins have usually been distinguished from creoles by using two criteria: a) the degree of simplification and reduction in linguistic structure and b) their use as a second language or mother tongue. Pidgins are supposed to show a more reduced linguistic structure (drastic reduction in inner form) and to be used in a limited range of communicative functions; whereas creoles are supposed to present a more elaborate linguistic structure (expansion in inner form) and to be

used as mother tongue within a speech community. But a number of languages referred to as *pidgins* or *expanded pidgins* (Nigerian Pidgin, Tok Pisin, etc) cannot be distinguished on the basis of their genesis, development and synchronic structures from other languages referred to as creoles (Krio, Caribbean Creoles, etc.). The precise boundaries between pidgins and creoles are practically impossible to draw, as many situations reveal a kind of developmental continuum between relatively reduced and relatively expanded contact outcomes.

It appears that the features proposed in support of the view that P/C languages constitute a typologically discrete group of language are not uncontroversial, and attempts at establishing absolute criteria for defining pidgins and creoles in relation to other languages have been partly abandoned. Many linguists consider that one has to know the history of a particular language in order to identify it as a pidgin or a creole. What pidgin and creole languages share is the manner in which they are formed. Therefore linguists will tend to focus their analysis more on the formative process (when, how and why P/Cs emerge) rather than on the linguistic features to categorize and define P/C languages. This remark is important because, if a re-analysis of the supposedly historical pidginization/creolization process of Arabic has to be made, it must first consider detailed

historical information before looking for alleged traces of pidginization in contemporary dialects. But before turning to the sociological and historical factors I would like to add a last remark concerning the relevance of linguistic features in the definition of P/C languages. In my view, the fact that P/Cs do not form a typological distinct unit does not invalidate the fact that P/Cs are characterized by major restructuring compared to the target languages and emerge as 'new linguistic systems'. As we shall see in the case of Arabic, contemporary Arabic-based P/Cs show a degree of linguistic restructuring unknown in other Arabic varieties, even the more peripheral dialects.

Contexts of emergence: P/Cs considered as 'extreme cases of contact between languages'?

Many authors are now trying to define P/Cs in relation to other kinds of contact language. The processes of change or restructuring that give rise to a P/C are considered to be different only *in degree* rather than *in kind* from those that occur in many cases of language contact (Winford 1997). In the same way it has been proposed that P/Cs constitute particular cases of second language acquisition. A number of factors have been considered as conditions that may lead to pidginization/creolization.

P/Cs generally arise in areas with high degree of linguistic heterogeneity (more than two languages in contact) and result from specific historical situations leading to quick changes. Most of the languages that have traditionally been referred to as P/Cs arose from contact between typologically very different languages. This might be a *sine qua non* for the radical reshaping of linguistic resources and may help to distinguish between P/Cs and koinés for example.[2] P/Cs emerge in a context of social upheaval leading to a quick mixing of populations. The native speakers of the target language are supposed to be small in number compared to a huge number of people speaking different languages needing to quickly acquire a new variety, without much contact with the target language. Among the typical historical situations that led to the emergence of P/Cs are the slave camps and slave plantations of the Caribbean islands, the trade bases, the colonial military camps and work camps, etc.

To sum up: heterogeneity of the population, short span of time, small number of native speakers of the target language and social upheaval are among the required conditions for the emergence of pidgins and creoles. But again, these are only indications and cannot be considered as strict criteria. The idea

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[2] not all authors agree on this point , see Mufwene 1997

that both pidgins and creoles develop gradually and acquire their characteristic features over several generations is gaining in currency (Arends et al., 1995).

A related and still unresolved issue is the question of the genetic affiliation of P/Cs. There are four competing proposals in the literature. Some scholars classify P/Cs with their respective superstratum language (French, English, Spanish etc. from which P/Cs derived most of their lexicon). Others classify them with their substratum languages (African, Melanesian, etc. because of some semantic and syntactic properties). Others again consider P/Cs as mixed languages and some scholars even analyze P/Cs as genetically unaffiliated languages (Thomason and Kaufman 1988). Those genetic considerations have impact on the categorization of P/Cs among other contact languages. For the above authors the main distinction between P/Cs and other contact languages is that the grammar of P/Cs comes from different inputs and cannot be linked to one ancestor.

Processes versus outcomes

Since the early seventies, linguists (Hymes 1971) have constantly pointed out the necessity to clearly distinguish between pidginization and creolization as *processes* and pidgins and creoles as *end points* represented by specific varieties.

Pidgins and Creoles are relatively rare outcomes but the mechanisms associated with pidginization and creolization are quite widespread and can occur in varying degrees in other contact languages. Pidginization is a *transitory* phenomenon that may led to various linguistic outcomes while pidgins and creoles are more or less stable varieties that have achieved autonomy as norms. Identity factors may play an important role in this matter. It seems that what can help to distinguish between creolization leading to the production of creoles and other processes of selective adaptation (cf. second language acquisition) is the relationship to the 'target language' and the wish to reproduce or not to reproduce the target language. An immigrant worker arriving in a foreign country may pass trough a pidginization phase while learning the foreign language in an untutored context. However this does not necessarily mean that a stable pidgin representative of all migrant workers will develop. Migrants will soon use a non-standard or more or less deviant variety that will exhibit some 'deviant features' from the target language but still this 'deviant variety' will remain genetically related to the target language. It is only if migrants from different linguistic backgrounds outnumber the speakers of the target language and 'create' their own variety in a short span of time, and if this variety in its turn stabilizes, that one may speak of a pidgin or a creole. In the case of Arabic it seems

particularly important to distinguish between pidginization and creolization as processes and pidgins/creoles as end points.

In conclusion.

We have seen that creoles and pidgins cannot be defined by relying on one type of criteria only (linguistic criteria or historical criteria). It is the convergence of a number of linguistic and non-linguistic criteria and features that may help to define P/Cs. Most linguists agree that P/C languages do not constitute a typologically discrete group. Therefore, the idea of a radical structural difference between P/Cs and other languages is questioned. The differences among the contact languages are due primarily to difference in combinations of essentially the same ingredients. P/Cs are extreme cases of contact between languages. In the case of Arabic I do think that the concept of 'extreme case of contact' is useful, because it may help to distinguish from other types of Arabic varieties used as lingua franca or contact languages among non-native Arabic speakers. Finally most authors recognize "that there are limits to the usefulness of labels and that it is futile to try to fit every product of language contact into definite classes, since the criteria for doing so are by no means clear-cut" (Winford 1997:11).

ARABIC-BASED PIDGIN-CREOLES.

A short review

Reinecke seems to be one of the first creolists to mention and discuss Arabic-based P/Cs (Reinecke 1937). Many other creolists briefly mention them,[3] but usually without details and some reference books still confuse Arabic P/Cs with dialects. For instance, some lists of P/Cs wrongly categorize the Nigerian (Shuwa) Arabic dialect as a P/C [4] but a number of specialized works have studied Arabic-based P/Cs.[5] The categorization of Arabic P/Cs versus other types of Arabic is still controversial. Linguists speak, alternatively, of *trade jargon, patois, vehicular variety* or *koiné in the making.* This variation in terminology reflects different geographical or social contexts but also different analyses of a complex reality. Not all vehicular varieties can be considered as P/Cs and it seems here that linguistic criteria may help to distinguish between P/Cs and other types of contact languages.

Mentions of Arabic P/Cs, *trade-jargons* or *vehicular varieties* have been mainly cited in Sub-Saharan Africa including

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[3] e.g. Bickerton 1981&1984; Holm 1988, Romaine 1988, Thomason and Kaufmann 1988
[4] e.g. Hancock 1981; Smith, 1995
[5] see Owens 1997 for a comprehensive bibliography

Ethiopia, the Chadic Basin (Chad, Eastern Nigeria, Central Africa), present-day Southern Sudan, Uganda and Kenya. There is also mention of Arabic pidgin varieties spoken between the native population and foreign workers in the Gulf countries since the sixties. Finally mention has been made of a pidginized variety called *Maridi Arabic*, dating back to the 11th century. I will set apart Maridi Arabic, the Ethiopian 'trade jargon' and Gulf Pidgin Arabic because their status is questionable until we get more data and I will rather focus on the genesis of the other P/C varieties (*Turku* in Chad, *Juba-Arabic* in Sudan, *Ki-Nubi* in Uganda-Kenya) which share a common history and are closely related.

Non-Sudanic Arabic P/Cs

Maridi Arabic, presented and analyzed by Thomason and Elgibali (1986) is considered as the oldest attestation of an Arabic pidgin. It's historical interest lies in the fact that it shows that some kind of 'bad Arabic', very near to a rudimentary pidgin, was spoken almost one thousand year ago in the Saharan belt. But we don't know how far it expanded and stabilized. This 'pidgin' has been described by the Andalusian geographer Al Bakri in the 11th century. It is a short text of 50 words which is said to represent 'a very bad form of Arabic'. It was recounted to Al Bakri by a trader from Aswan. The geographical area of

this pidgin is not clear (Mauritania, North Sudan , Southern Egypt?). It appears more like a caricature than a real description and the limited data are not sufficient to establish if a stable pidgin was used as a trade language in the Saharan belt or if this variety reflects a kind of transitory phase of acquisition.

In Ethiopia, Ferguson (1971) distinguishes between three Arabic varieties: *dialect, lingua franca* and *trade jargon*. One also has to recall that in Ethiopia, contact between Arabic and the Ethiopian Semitic languages is very old and that Arabic loanwords are numerous in these languages (Leslau 1990). The dialect is spoken by the former Arab immigrants from Yemen or Sudan (a small minority of about 10 000 people). The Arabic *lingua franca* functions as a communicative medium between Ethiopian Muslim communities and seems to be structurally close to the Yemeni and Eastern Sudanese dialects. The *trade jargon* is used between the Arab traders and the local non-Arab population. Ferguson describes it very briefly as a 'rudimentary pidginized form of Arabic with the usual features of pidginized Arabic, such as the m. sg. for all persons of the verb, and so on". No update information is available about this trade jargon and it is not sure that it developed into a stable pidgin. A recent study on the Arabic vehicular variety spoken in Eritrea indicates that the Eritrean Arabic vehicular is close to Ferguson's lingua

franca, i.e. close to Yemeni and Eastern Sudanese dialects. It shows some cases of interference from the local languages (Afar, Saho) or reduction at the phonological level (Simeone-Senelle 2000) but nothing like a drastic restructuring of the language.

The case of Eritrea and Ethiopia indicates that Arabic can function as a vehicular variety among non-Arabic native speakers without necessarily being a pidgin. As a vehicular variety it may exhibit some trend toward simplification or some degree of interference from the local languages but without losing the fundamental structure of the grammar. This seems also to be the case in other areas like Mali or Niger where a variety close to the Hassaniyya dialect is spoken as a vehicular, as well as in Chad and Western Sudan as well shall see.

Mention of a Gulf Pidgin Arabic is due to Smart (1990). It is mainly "foreigners' talk" used by native speakers vis à vis foreigners. It exhibits many pidginized features such as reduction of the morphological rules of the verbal stem (the imperfect third masc. form is used with all persons -- cf. *win yaruuh inta* "where are you going"). The preposition *fi* "in" is used in many contexts including the expression of progressive -- *ana fi sawm* "I am fasting", *ana fi hamiil* "I am pregnant", etc..

It seems to be widely used by both locals and foreigners and displays local variation according to the local dialects.

All the above examples indicate that pidginization trends can take place without the emergence of a stabilized autonomous variety. On the other hand, three varieties (Turku, Nubi and Juba-Arabic) emerged as distinctive P/Cs. They originated from the same place, the Southern Sudanic Region (present Southern Sudan), at the same period, somewhere between 1854- 1888 and had different fates. The question to be analysed here is why Arabic-based P/Cs have been recorded only in this specific area.

Expansion of Arabic in the Sudanese belt (8th to 18th cent. AD)

From the 8th cent. AD up to the end of 18th cent. the southern boundaries of the expansion of the Arabic language in Africa lay in the Sudanic region stretching from Central Sudan to Lake Chad. Arabic did not spread further South due to geographical physical borders. Throughout this period Arabic expanded progressively and became the ruling and religious language of the Muslim Sudanese kingdoms and the trade language for the entire region. Arabic was the mother tongue for the Arab groups and spread to non-Arab groups through Islamization. Hence a number of former non-Arab groups became progressively

Arabic speaking in both present-day Sudan and Chad. We have no testimony of this process, nor of the variety/ies used as trade language, and we don't know if at some time some P/Cs emerged and disappeared (cf. the problematic case of Maridi Arabic above). What we know is that language shift must have been a progressive phenomenon because bilingualism is attested at a later period even within the ruling circles of the two main Sudanese kingdoms (Funj and Fur, cf. O'Fahey and Spaulding 1974). The present situation in Western Sudan, Chad or Nigeria indicates that this process of language shift led to specific colloquial varieties usually considered as 'peripheral Arabic dialects' showing some characteristics, such as lack of emphatic or pharyngeal consonants, development of a tonal stress, borrowing of non-Arab lexical elements and the like, but nothing like a radical restructuring of the language.[6] Contemporary reports of an Arabic vehicular language used as a trade language in Chad or Central Africa provide contradictory records on the linguistic status of this vehicular variety (see below).

The genesis of the Sudanic P/Cs in the 19th century

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[6] Amadou 1982; Bouquet and Caprile 1976; Decobert 1985; Jullien de Pommerol 1999; Miller and Abu Manga 1992; Owens 1993 & 1996, Roth 1979

Radical political and economical changes occurred in the course of the 19th century in the Southern part of Sudan with the conquest of this area between 1839-1841 by the army of Muhammed Ali, the then ruler of Egypt, and the subsequent establishment of trade and military camps in this area not previously touched by language shift to Arabic and characterized by high linguistic heterogeneity (more than a hundred languages belonging to different language families, cf. Miller 1984). Those camps collected a huge population of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds that became detribalized through enslavement or incorporation into the army. The establishment of these camps and the development of a large-scale slave trade is quite well documented through the testimony of European travelers (Mahmud 1982, Owens 1997). The year 1854 marks the establishment of the first permanent trading settlements known as *zeriba* ("camps") in the provinces of Equatoria and Bahr al Ghazal. Those settlements were established all over Southern Sudan at a close distance with frequent inter-camp contacts. Schweinfurth (1873) gives a detailed account of the trade camps, their population and their impact. It is believed that the Arabic speaking population (Northern Sudanese Arab and Nile Nubians) was in the minority compared to soldiers from Western Sudanese groups and local Southern groups speaking Arabic as a second language and to

indigenous slaves. Very quickly Southerners outnumbered the Northerners (native Arabic speakers did not exceed 10%). Trading and military camps became kinds of city-states with a population rising up to 10,000 people, and in Bahr al Ghazal almost 25% of the population belonged to the trade camps.

It is probably within those *zeriba* that an Arabic P/C stabilized, and became the main language among the members "of a class of detribalized Southerners who no longer belonged to indigenous southern groups but who were also not part of the ruling northern elite" (Owens 1997). We have no accurate description of this earlier Arabic P/C whose target language seems to have been a mixture of Egyptian and Sudanese military colloquial Arabic. The first records [7] indicate a mixture of pidgin features (invariable verbal stem, no gender and number agreement, parataxis etc.) and classical features. It is not clear if only one variety developed in all the Southern Sudanese *zeriba* or if a number of Arabic P/C varieties had parallel development (the *monogenesis* versus *parallel development* hypotheses). First known as *Bimbashi* Arabic (the Arabic of the soldiers) this Arabic military P/C developed into three further varieties: *Turku* in Chad, *Ki-Nubi* in Kenya and Uganda and *Juba-Arabic* in Southern Sudan. Therefore it appears that present-day Arabic

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[7] Jenkins' ms analyzed by Kaye and Tosco 1993, Meldom 1913

P/Cs emerged in a specific historical context (the upheaval of the military and slave camps, the *zeriba*), in a highly linguistically heterogeneous region (Southern Sudan) and in a short span of time, (the thirty years from 1854, date of the first camps, up to 1888, date of the departure of the Nubi).

The development of Nubi, Turku and Juba Arabic

(a) Nubi in Kenya-Uganda

During the 19th cent. the term Nubi was originally designating the black soldiers of the Turkish-Egyptian army in Sudan. In 1888, following the fall of the Equatoria Province into the hands of the Mahdist uprising, part of the Turkish-Egyptian battalion of Amin Pasha retreated to Uganda. A number of those Nubi soldiers and followers stayed in Uganda and Kenya and became a new ethnic group known as the East African Nubis with ki-Nubi as their mother tongue and Islam as their religion.[8] Nubi speakers are estimated to be about 10,000-15,000 in Kenya and many more in Uganda (no statistic available). The linguistic characteristics of Ki-Nubi have been principally described by Heine (1982), Musa Wellens (1994) and Owens (1977, 1980, 1985b, 1990). Ki-Nubi is considered as a creole language, it represents drastic restructuring compared to

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[8] Heine 1982, Johnson 1991, Soghayroun 1981

any other Arabic dialect and is not mutually intelligible with either colloquial Arabic or literary Arabic but is intelligible with Juba Arabic.

The date of 1888, date of the arrival of the Nubi soldiers in Kenya-Uganda is important because since this date the Nubi soldiers were mainly cut off from their Sudanese roots and their language developed independently in a dominantly Swahili environment. Being Muslims, the Nubis had contact with Qur'anic Arabic but it did not influence their own vernacular. Ki-Nubi did not undergo a de-creolization process. Their relationship with Classical Arabic could not have been very different from that of other African Muslims. In any case contact with other colloquial Arabic varieties were loose if existent at all. The present-day structural similarities between ki-Nubi and Juba Arabic raise the question of the structural stage of development of the earlier Arabic military P/C at the time of the split. It may indicate that the earlier Arabic P/C developed as an expanded pidgin or a creole in a very short time, between 1854 and 1888. It may also indicate parallel development of the two varieties (Miller 2001). In any case, Juba-Arabic and ki-Nubi reached a structural development unknown in Turku with grammaticalization processes such as embedding of subordinate clauses, serialization, etc.

(b) Turku in Chad.

Clashes between the main traders of Bahr al Ghazal (cf. the revolt of Zubeir Pasha in 1877-79) and the Turkish-Egyptian Government led to the move of a group of soldiers and followers headed by Rabeh (Zubair's lieutenant) from Bahr al Ghazal to Chari-Longome (present Chad). It is this group which was responsible for bringing an Arabic pidgin called Turku to the Chari River basin in the beginning of 1900 (Carbou 1912). The name Turku refers to *turuk*, the name given to the non-Arab Sudanese troops of Rabeh. We have no information about the number of speakers at this time. Turku is also believed to have been used as one of the trade languages in Central Africa and Northern Cameroon. As far as we know Turku remained a stable Pidgin and did not undergo the grammatical expansion of Ki-Nubi and Juba-Arabic. The available linguistic data come from a collection of short phrases/texts by Gaston Muraz (1932) which has been discussed by Tosco and Owens (1993).

At the present time the picture is rather confusing. The Arab population represents about 10% of the Chadian population and Chadian Arabic dialects (both nomadic and sedentary dialects) are structurally close to Western Sudanese and Nigerian Arabic

dialects.[9] Arabic is also one of the broadcast Chadian national languages (Amadou 1983). As far as it is known the situation of Arabic in Chad is closer to Western Sudan than to Southern Sudan or Uganda-Kenya, i.e. different Arabic varieties coexist, ranging from the more conservative Nomadic varieties to the vehicular varieties spoken by the non-Arab population

The linguistic status of this/these vehicular variety/ies is problematic. No present-day Turku variety in Chad or central Africa seems to exist, at least not under this label and we don't have detailed description of present-day Chadian Pidgin Arabic. Hagège (1973) briefly mentions a variety of a rudimentary Arabic vehicular which seems structurally very close to a pidgin (use of an invariable verbal stem, no gender and number agreement, independent TMA markers, etc.) but we have no indication of its extension of use. Most authors (Jouannet 1978, Jullien de Pommerol 1997) indicate that Arabic is now the first lingua franca in most parts of Chad (before Kanembou and Bagirmi). This vehicular variety seems to be an adaptation of the local colloquial varieties (Jullien de Pommerol 1999, Roth 1979) with a few linguistic features similar to those of Turku and of

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[9] Decobert 1985; Kaye 1976; Owens 1985a; Roth 1994; Tourneux and Zeltner 1986

Juba Arabic and a number of restructuring processes.[10] But this Arabic vehicular keeps the bases of the colloquial Arabic system (such as grammatical inflexion, use of personal and TMA affixes with the verbal stem, etc). and is no more "reduced" or "restructured" than many other peripheral Arabic dialect. As far as we know it does not seem that in Chad a specific P/C variety functions as a distinctive identity marker for non-Arab groups as is the case in Sudan.

(c) *Juba-Arabic* in Southern Sudan

After 1888 and the departure of a number of Nubi soldiers to Kenya and Uganda, Bimbashi Arabic continued to spread in Southern Sudan. Part of the former Southern soldiers of the Turkish-Egyptian regime stayed in South Sudan. Some joined the Mahdy movement, others created private armies. With the Egyptian-British re-conquest of the Sudan in early 1900 (the Condominium), those former soldiers were incorporated into the military battalions and a number of military centers were established in former trade or military camps. Juba, the new headquarters of Equatoria was established near the previously Mahdist centers of Gondokoro and Rejaf. Those soldiers became the nucleus of the Juba-Arabic speakers and came to be known

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[10] loss of emphatic and pharyngeal consonants, loss of vowel length, predominance of analytic constructions, use of an invariant determiner /de/,

as '*Maleki*' (detribalized) in Juba. In spite of a linguistic policy hostile to Arabic during the British Condominium − Southern Sudan was designed as a closed district and administratively cut from Northern Sudan from 1930 to 1947 and Arabic and Islam were officially prohibited − Juba-Arabic spread as a vehicular language first in the urban and military centers and then in most parts of Southern Sudan. It became the mother tongue of many urban dwellers due to high linguistic heterogeneity, inter-ethnic marriage, urbanization etc. (Mahmud 1982; Miller 1984,1985,1987).

Today Juba-Arabic is considered as the 'Arabic of the South' by both Southerners and Northerners. It functions either as a first language or a second language. As such the term Juba-Arabic includes a lot of sub-varieties, such as geographical and sociological variations (between the different Provinces of Southern Sudan, between urban and rural speakers, between educated and non-educated, etc). Since Independence, Southerners have been increasingly in contact with both Sudanese Arabic dialects and Literary Arabic through education, migration, displacement and urbanization. Therefore Juba Arabic is no more an 'isolated variety' and contact with other types of Arabic has given birth to a continuum from the more

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no gender agreement, use of the verb *futu* "to go" for comparison, etc

pidginized varieties (spoken as L2 by isolated rural populations) to the more dialectalized varieties. But this situation did not lead to the expected de-creolization trend. In fact, because of the civil war and the tense relations between the North and the South, Juba-Arabic plays now an important role as an identity marker and its autonomy is well established. It can be categorized as an 'expanded pidgin' or a 'pidgin-creole', structurally very close to ki-Nubi.[11] It is often used by southern Sudanese to distinguish themselves from northern Sudanese in Radio, churches, theatrical plays, etc. (Miller, forthcoming). Therefore, even students educated in literary Arabic and who can perfectly well speak Northern Sudanese Colloquial may shift to Juba-Arabic in certain contexts in order to mark their southern identity.

In Conclusion.

The emergence of Arabic P/Cs in the Sudanese belt seems to be linked with a specific historical context: the social and economic upheaval created by the trade and military camps during the Turkish-Egyptian conquest of Southern Sudan in the 19th century and the formation of a southern military class. Only two Arabic P/Cs are still acknowledged: Ki-Nubi and Juba-Arabic. In both areas it corresponds to the emergence of a

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[11] cf. see in particular Mahmud 1979; Miller 1984,1993 & 2001; Nhyal 1984, Tosco 1995, Watson 1989

'speech community' and an 'act of identity': the Nubi ethnic group of Kenya-Uganda; the Southern Sudanese of Sudan. The identity factor appears very important in both their development and maintenance. In Chad, Central Africa and Northern Cameroon it is not clear that an Arabic Pidgin is still in use. In Chad, like in Western Sudan but also in Mali, Niger, Eritrea and Ethiopia, the vehicular Arabic (lingua franca), seems to be close to the local colloquial varieties with some trend toward simplification, reduction and interference. This indicates clearly that the use of a language as an inter-ethnic lingua franca does not necessarily lead to the emergence of distinctive P/Cs. It led to less radical changes or evolution, such as the use of analytical constructions instead of genitive ones, weakening of morphological agreement, etc. And again those features can be found in various degrees in many dialects, urban or rural, central or peripheral. We are therefore faced with the traditional problem of drawing boundaries and establishing categories within a continuum. In theory or in artificial speech those boundaries can be drawn easily and the presence or absence of a number of features can be selected as 'isoglosses'. In practice however, those boundaries are fluid and the categorization of a speech-act within this or that category is rather a matter of degree.

Moreover each Arabic P/C variety exhibits features common to all Arabic P/Cs (such as a very reduced derivational system) but also local features which indicate the influence of the local Arabic dialect that acted as the lexifier/target language. For instance, Owens (1997) classifies the 3 Sudanic P/Cs in two regional groups: the Western group represented by Turku and the Eastern group represented by Ki-Nubi and Juba-Arabic. Turku exhibits some typical Western Sudanese Arabic (WSA) features and lexical items (such as the particle *ana < hana* 'of'', *yatu* "who"), whereas JA and KN exhibit features and lexical items close to Egyptian or Eastern Sudanese Arabic (ESA) such as particle *ta <bitaa'* "of", *minu* "who".

A SKETCH OF LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF SUDANIC P/Cs

In order to clarify the situation let us try to briefly outline the main characteristics of Ki-Nubi/Juba-Arabic (KN/JA) *vis à vis* other Arabic varieties. In fact many of these features are to be found in other Arabic varieties in various degrees but it is the coexistence and the convergence of all these features that may be characteristics of KN/JA. The Sudanic P/Cs share many features summarized in Nhyal 1975, Miller 1993, Owens 1990, 1997, such as:

- The velar /kh/ realized as glottal /k/ : *muk* "brain";

- Lack of emphatic and pharyngeal consonants : *gata* "to cut";

- s ~ sh : *shems ~ sems* "sun";

- Lack of geminates: *kutu* "put";

- Vowel length non-distinctive: *kebiri* "big", *fil* "elephant";

- Distinctive stress in KN and JA distinguishing between transitive verb, verbal noun and passive constructions:

úwo ásurubu móya de "he drinks the water"
móya ta asurúbu "drinking water"
móya de yau kán asurubú "this water has been drunk";
úo kúruju "he farms"
kurúju dé sókol ta náse jídu ta nína "farming is our traditional activity (farming is the work of our ancestor)
maal de kurujú "this place has been farmed";

- Productive lexical compounding:

bakan-turubá "cemetery",
dubán-asal "bee",
móya-éna "tear",
abu kalam "talkative",
éna-séder "fruit",
laám-gaba "game",
jobur-wáta "mushroom",
abu ida "one-handed",
abu singit "hunch-backed";

- Use of analytical constructions to enrich the semantic level:

jól ta dugu laám "one of beating meat = hunter",
jól ta kurúju "one of farming = farmer",
kútu nári "put fire = to burn",
soo kuungú "make song = to sing"

- A very reduced derivational system. No productive

nominal affix category (gender, persons) except for number:

a in KN, *-a, -at, -in,* in JA:

júa "house"– *juá* "houses (KN);
nyerkúk "child" – *nyerkukát* "children"(JA).

However not all nouns have separate sg./pl. forms and

number agreement is optional for adjectives:

úmon mabsút ~ mabsutín "they are happy";
kebir "big", *kubár, kubará, kubarín* "big (pl.)";

- No difference between subject and object pronouns :

ana bi durubu ita / ita bi durubu ana "I will beat you / you

will beat me", but use of a specific possessive pronoun

suffixed to the genitive particle ta (bta): *tayí, táki, tó, ténna,*

tákum, tómwon "mine, yours, his, our, yours, theirs";

- Analytical possessive construction with a relational marker *ta* in KN/JA and *ana* in Turku:

sila ta ragi de "the weapon of this man",

bagara tayi/bagara taki "my cow";:
bagara anaki "your cow" (Turku);

- Use of a single post-posed demonstrative *de* :

bágara de "the, this cow",   *bágara táki de* "your cow";

- Single segmental verb form with independent TMA markers (bi, gi, kan):

ana gi asurubu "I am drinking"
ana kan asurubu "I was drinking, I drank"
ana bi asurubu "I drink, I will drink"
ana asurubu kalas "I have drunk";

- Reduplication has an intensive or distributive meaning:

úwo bi gáta-gata lahám de "he cut the meat in small pieces", *bagará de ge mútu-mutu* "cows are dying one by one",
kamán úo bi búlu-bulu fi júa "she is urinating regularly inside the house";

- Use of the verb *futu* "to go" as a non-verbal particle "than" for expressing comparison:

úo kebír fútu ána   "he is bigger than me",
asade ána jére sedíd fútu ita "Now I run quicker than you";

- *fi* used in existential sentences, with all locative predicate, and with verbal noun to indicate progressive action:

úwo fí fi bét "he is at home",
grús fi le ána "I have money",
úwo fí fi asurúbu "he is drinking";

- *yá, yaú* used as focus marker:

wóle de yaú takyán "the child is tired "
úmon yaú wósolu "they arrived",
dugú ta mara yaú batál "beating women is bad"

- Complement clauses are introduced either by Ø, *gal*

(za/ja), keli (kede) :

úwa fékir gále imkin asset de áwuju ákulu úwa "He thinks that maybe the lion wants to eat him",
ana asuma gal sultan kelem gal keli nas ma karabu moya "I heard that the Sultan said that people should not spoil the water",
ana azu kede baba arija "I want my father to come back",
inta dayer keli nina sibu mederesa "you want us to leave school";

Sudanic P/Cs versus colloquial Arabic versus African languages.

As is always the case for all P/Cs, there has been quite a lot of discussion concerning the role of the contact languages in the formation of the Arabic-based Sudanic P/Cs (Owens 1990, 1991,1997, Miller 1993, 2001). The influence of colloquial Arabic is clear at the lexical level with almost 90% of Arabic lexical entries. The influence of local African substratum languages (Bari, Mamvu, Moro-Madi, etc.) is perceptible at the phonological level and at the syntactic level. Here are a few examples:

- Presence of non-Arabic consonants *ny* and *ng* in non-Arabic lexical entries cf. *nyerkúk* 'child'.

- Variation between *z ~ j* and *sh ~ s* as well as lack of geminates which could be due to Bari influence;

- Presence of a tonal stress;

- Form of the pronouns: In JA/KN like in Bari there is no difference between subject and object pronouns but possessive pronouns have a different form : (JA) *ana* 'I' vs *tayi* "mine", (Bari) *nan* "I" vs *lio* "mine";

- Reduplication:

(Bari) *kijakwa jore jore* "game many-many",
(JA) *nás ketír ketír* "people many many";

- Grammaticalization of the verb 'say' (*adi* in Bari, *gale* in JA) to introduce indirect reported speech:

(Bari) *lopen jambu **adi** lado a lo'but*
(JA) *uwa kelem **gale** lado jole kwes* "He-talk-say-Lado-person-good" (He said that Lado was a nice guy) ;
(Bari) *do kan rerenya **adi** nan ti tu*
(JA) *eta aba **gale** eta ma masi* "You-refuse-say-you-Neg-go" (You refused to go);

- Indirect passive clauses. According to Bureng (1986), the same processes are used in Bari and Juba Arabic to create

indirect passive clauses by changing the word order and introducing the agent with a particle (*ma* in JA, *ko* in Bari) :

(JA) *Wani áyinu bágara,* / (Bari) *Wani a mét kiteng* "Wani saw the cow"
(JA) *Bágara ayinú **ma** Wani* / (Bari) *kiteng a méta **ko** Wani* "The cow has been seen by Wani";

- ▪ Proclitization of the relative marker to mark adjectives. In JA and KN the relative marker *al* / *abu* is frequently used to mark the adjective such as *bágara ábu-ábye de* "the white cow", *dé jówju al-adíl* "it is a regular marriage". In Bari, adjectives are formed from a verbal or nominal root "with the proclitization of the relative markers /lo/ (masc.), /na/ (fem.) to a verbal or numeral root" (Spagnolo 1933):

Layak "to speak freely"/ *lú-layak* "he who speaks freely",
'but busan "be good"/ *ló 'but* "good",
kóka "leopard"/ *ló-kóka* " leopard-like".

Many more examples could be provided. It is important, however, to underline that in most of the cases there is no direct transfer from the substratum African languages to the Arabic P/Cs but a re-analysis of the substratum features in the P/Cs. How far the grammar of these P/Cs relates more to colloquial Arabic or to local African languages, or is innovative is still a matter of speculation. In many instances one notes a phenomenon of convergence: i.e. the selected features are common to both colloquial Arabic and local African languages.

This is the case, for example, with reduplication which has a stylistic function in colloquial Arabic; also with analytical possessive constructions very frequent in colloquial Arabic and with the verb "go" to express comparisons, etc.....However, one should not forget that there are significant structural differences between the Arabic P/Cs and other Arabic varieties. The most important difference concerns the central role that the consonant-based root plays in the morphology of, not only Arabic, but also all Semitic languages. In all these languages the verb has two paradigms (prefix and suffix) and is marked for person, number and gender of the subject. This is no more the case in Arabic P/Cs and this phenomenon suggests that the linguistic restructuring of these P/Cs went further than a regular process of simplification. This feature should be considered as one of the key structural characteristic that may help to categorize Arabic-based P/Cs from other types of Arabic contact languages.

CONCLUSION.

What can we learn from present-day Arabic P/Cs for the analysis of the historical process of language shift to Arabic? How far can the historical context of 19th century Southern Sudan be compared with the historical context of the early period of language shift? In both contexts, the number of Arabic

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native speakers was small compared to the local population. But the degree of ethnic and linguistic heterogeneity might not have been that high and we know that in many cases language shift was a slow process. In Egypt for example, Greek continued to be used as an official language side by side with Arabic up to the 10th cent. and the Coptic language continued to be a spoken language until at least the 11th cent. Total language shift took place only when the number of native speakers of Arabic increased due to migration and settlement (Doss and Miller 1997). Therefore a long period of bilingualism may have prevailed. In the fist phase of language shift, i.e. during a period of language learning, pidginization trends would necessarily have played a role and K. Versteegh was right to point out that a number of features present in colloquial Arabic may have been the result of such pidginization trends. But we cannot ascertain that this pidginization process gave rise to a stable pidgin variety.

Another point is that it seems difficult to make generalizations for all the area conquered by the Arabs. There must have been different contexts according to the geographical and historical specificities of each area. Therefore detailed historical descriptions of the socio-economic situation in these early military and urban camps are needed before we are able to

make extrapolations. Finally, we have seen that the emergence of creole languages is associated with the formation of a specific speech community which becomes a model for subsequent learners of the language. I am not sure that we have records of such specific urban communities within the conquered territories.   Bearing in mind that: a) P/Cs shared many similarities with other contact languages and that the differences among the contact languages are due primarily to differences in combinations of essentially the same ingredients and that b) P/Cs are extreme cases of contact between languages, I do think that the theoretical debate about the more or less pidgin-nature of pre-contemporary dialects is not very useful. What we can agree with is that, indeed, Arabic dialects spread in a contact environment, and what we are looking for is detailed data on the historical process of language shift.

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