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INDIGENOUS PIDGINS OF NORTH AMERICA IN THEIR SOCIOHISTORICAL CONTEXT

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0. AN ENIGMA OF LANGUAGE CONTACT. Over the years, research on language contact in the native languages of North America has demonstrated some surprising parallels in Native American pidgins. Delaware Jargon of northeastern North America, Mobilian Jargon of the central South, and Chinook Jargon of the Northwest Coast have exhibited comparable typological features such as analytic sentence structures in contrast to the synthetic and polysynthetic grammatical patterns of their source languages. These pidgins also operated in similar kinds of linguistically highly diverse environments such as interregional native trade, intertribal alliances and chiefdoms, and contact with European explorers and colonists (Drechsel 1981).

Delaware Jargon, Mobilian Jargon, and Chinook Jargon have also raised a major enigma: Why have no comparable indigenous pidgins developed in other areas of equal or even greater linguistic diversity in North America, particularly in southwestern North America and native California? This question calls for an answer if we assume that the parallels among the three American Indian pidgins are not simply historical accidents. The present essay explores the issue of pidginization in native languages of North America from a bird's eye view and with special attention to an apparent contrast between coastal and interior areas. The following also expands the discussion of the necessity to presume European colonization as trigger for the development of Native American pidgins.¹

1. MAJOR INDIGENOUS PIDGINS OF NORTH AMERICA. Through the 1970s, linguists and anthropologists recognized Chinook Jargon as the only major indigenous pidgin in North America for which there also existed some substantial descriptive-analytical evidence. At the time, most Americanist linguists considered pidginization an insignificant process of language change, if not an abnormality, in the history of Native American languages — hardly in need of further attention.² Students of pidgin and creole languages, long preoccupied with Africa-focused theories of origin, were no more sympathetic to recognize American Indian instances or to assign a central role to native languages in its subject matter. A few scholars went so far as to try and fit Chinook Jargon into a Pacific model of pidginization and creolization; what appeared like an extraordinary case of Native American pidginization had supposedly developed from the relexification of an English-based pidgin of the Hawaiian Islands, which monogeneticist creolists have attempted to integrate into a global scheme with a proposed world-circling medium of West African or Mediterranean origin.³

Yet for decades, we have known of several other indigenous contact languages or area-wide *lingue franche* in North America. Some were true pidgins, i.e. structurally and functionally reduced second languages that developed from multilingual contexts with fairly stable grammars of their own (Reinecke 1937: 635-76; Silverstein 1973 MS, Drechsel 1976, Taylor 1981). When

anthropologists and linguists first paid closer attention to Native American pidgins in the late 19th or early 20th century, they were implicitly accepted as indigenous institutions of pre-Columbian origin. At the time, there existed little reason to believe that these media had developed from contact with Europeans. As the study of pidgins and creoles emerged as a distinct area of specialization in linguistics, especially as a result of Hugo Schuchardt's pioneering work, social scientists came to consider Native American pidgins as products of European colonialism like other pidgins, and related the origin of the apparent prototype Chinook Jargon to the fur trade.

Over the past years, historical-sociolinguistic research has assembled a fairly elaborate set of comparative data for Algonquian-based Delaware Jargon on the Atlantic Coast (Thomason 1980, Goddard 1995) and Muskogean-based Mobilian Jargon on the Gulf of Mexico (Crawford 1978, Drechsel 1996a,b). These pidgins as well as Chinook Jargon incorporated what probably were interrelated varieties in the form of Pidgin Massachusetts and Powhatan Jargon, the Muskogean-based *lingue franche* Creek and Apalachee, and Nootka Jargon respectively. Still others consisted of distinct if poorly documented instances such as Eskimo Jargon (Stefánsson 1909, Van der Voort 1995).

2. BASIC ISSUES OF ORIGIN. Indigenous grammatical patterns and well-established functions of Delaware Jargon, Mobilian Jargon, and Chinook Jargon in traditional native contexts provide strong sociolinguistic suggestions for their pre-European origins (Drechsel 1984, 1994b, Hymes 1980, Thomason 1980, 1983). Nonetheless, this hypothesis has not gone unchallenged (for counterarguments in the cases of Mobilian Jargon and Chinook Jargon, see Crawford 1978:21-29 and Samarin 1986 and 1988 respectively⁴). Particular arguments against the pre-European existence of Native American pidgins have relied on the following points:

- the absence of any mention of a *lingua franca* in the documents of the earliest European explorers, especially in conjunction with observations of great native linguistic diversity;
- repeated attestations of wide-spread bilingualism, multilingualism, and the use of interpreters or even hand signs in interlingual situations, the latter presumably comparable to the Plains Indians' sign language; and
- lacking records of any regular or systematic interactions among alloglossic native peoples that would have warranted such intertribal media.

When examined closely, these arguments are on weak sociolinguistic and historical grounds.

Absent recognition of indigenous pidgins in early colonial documents may simply be due to a lack of linguistic sophistication by early European explorers and colonists in distinguishing the first language of a Native American community from an indigenous contact medium, i.e. a second language. Early observers frequently confused indigenous *lingue franche* with the speakers' first languages, just as they mistook Mobilian Jargon as Choctaw or Chickasaw proper. What early Europeans understood to be a vernacular has proven to be a contact

medium in many cases, as we can now demonstrate with reconstructable linguistic evidence.⁵

Attestations of bilingualism, multilingualism, and the use of interpreters or even hand signs offer no better counterargument, for they do not preclude the concurrent existence of an indigenous pidgin, as is evident from both historical and modern ethnographic records for Mobilian Jargon and other cases. In addition to their mother tongue, many Native Americans customarily learned two or more languages — usually those of neighboring communities — plus the pidgin; the latter came into use primarily in multilingual situations and in encounters with distant peoples, who did not speak any of the local languages, and was a convenient medium for native interpreters as well. Moreover, when speaking Mobilian Jargon, stereotypically stoic Louisiana Indians could turn quite animated, and often used extensive hand signs for enhancement, as observed in both historical documents and with the last speakers.

Claims to the absence of regular or systematic interactions among native peoples of different areas of North America are unfounded in the light of substantial archaeological evidence for interregional pre-Columbian trade across the entire North American continent (Baugh and Ericson 1994). From a sociolinguistic perspective, such long-distance networks of trade and other interregional relations would have been most suitable contexts for the development of contact languages or pidgins. The sociohistorical and sociolinguistic environment of pre-European North America with its great linguistic diversity may well have been more favorable for the use of indigenous contact media than the colonial period with a rapid decline of native languages which the immigrants never replaced in either number or diversity.⁶

3. COASTAL LOCATIONS OF NATIVE AMERICAN PIDGINS. There is a potentially more serious counterargument to the proposed pre-European origins of Delaware Jargon, Mobilian Jargon, and Chinook Jargon, all located in coastal areas. Proponents of global schemes of pidgin and creole diffusion, whether monogeneticist or not, might interpret this fact as suggestive evidence for contact with peoples from overseas, specifically European explorers and colonists. Their interpretation would seem to gain strength when one searches for evidence of indigenous pidgins in the interior of North America — with few promises for success.

In trade and other intertribal encounters, Indians of the Great Lakes made area-wide use of several Algonquian-based *koinés*, drawing on Eastern Ojibwe (Algonquin), Ottawa, Southwestern Ojibwe, and Cree (Rhodes 1982). They may well have been mutually intelligible varieties of a single wider Algonquian-based *lingua franca* in the area. It is not clear how these Algonquian *koinés* related to their standards in either structure or function or whether true pidginization occurred in these instances. 'Broken Oghibbeway [Ojibwe]' (Nichols 1995) reveals considerably less grammatical reduction or restructuring than Algonquian-based Delaware Jargon; its retention of much inflectional verb morphology characteristic of Ojibwe does not warrant the designation of a pidgin. Some Cree *koiné* must also have been the basis for a form of Cree with French noun phrases variously known as Métis, Métchif, or Michif, which had undergone some form of creolization in the speech of Métis people in the upper Plains. Although a mixed

language with a Cree substrate, Michif is neither a pidgin nor a true creole (Crawford 1985, Rhodes 1986, Thomason and Kaufman 1988:228-33). These considerations have led George Lang (1991) to make a case arguing for the absence of indigenous pidgins in interior Canada, which he attributes to the *coureurs de bois* in their roles as intermediaries and interpreters.

The closest form of interlingual communication comparable to coastal Native American pidgins was the *functionally* equivalent sign language of Plains Indians, whose discussion of origin happens to reflect a similar history with recent suggestions returning to an interpretation of a pre-European existence (see Wurtzburg and Campbell 1995 in response to Samarin 1987). Nonetheless, the use of hand signs rather than speech leaves uncertain its true typological comparability with Delaware Jargon, Mobilian Jargon, or Chinook Jargon.

Although linguistically as manifold as eastern North America, the Southwest (including Coahuiltecan, Kiowa-Tanoan, Keresan, Athapaskan, Uto-Aztecan, and Hokan languages plus the isolate Zuni) offers little evidence for linguistic compromises analogous to Delaware Jargon, Mobilian Jargon, or Chinook Jargon, as already noted in a survey of pidginization in the area (Brandt and MacCrate 1982:201).⁷ Hints for indigenous contact media remain few and meager. Charles Voegelin (1959) argued for Hopi (Uto-Aztecan) to have undergone expansion as a result of contact with English, and described the process as creolization without prior pidginization. George L. Trager interpreted the language of the Tewa Pueblo Indians (Kiowa-Tanoan) as a pidgin-creole, but did not develop this idea further (Trager 1971:27; see Brandt 1982:32). One can also find incidental references to Apache and Navajo, closely related dialects or languages of Southern Athapaskan, to have served as interlingual media in contact with the alloglossic Pueblo and Plains Indians from 1598 through the 19th century (Ford 1983:719-20; Gunnerson 1974:86; Taylor 1981:179). Attestation exists especially for Yavapai Indians (Yumans) of Arizona speaking Apache as a *lingua franca* with a smaller number of consonant phonemes when compared with Apache proper (Mierau 1963). Non-Indian traders among the Navajo used reduced, grammatically idiosyncratic varieties of Navajo known as Trader Navajo with their native customers; but the Navajo apparently did not respond to the traders' one-sided linguistic advances. Significantly, speakers of Trader Navajo could discuss little else than trade, and did not understand Navajo proper (Werner 1963, Voegelin, Voegelin, and Schutz 1967:442-44, Silverstein 1973 MS:59-64).⁸ In place of an area-wide indigenous pidgin, the prime contact medium of Southwestern Indians apparently was Spanish.

Linguistically the most diverse area in North America, native California (including Hokan, Penutian, Utian, Athapaskan, Uto-Aztecan, and Yukian languages as well as Yurok and Wiyot) presumably would have provided especially fertile grounds for the pidginization of native languages. There exist incidental references to Hupa (Athapaskan) as a *lingua franca* among native communities of northern California; but in contact with alloglossic neighbors, California Indians relied primarily on individuals with multilingual skills, and did not develop widespread forms of societal bi- or multilingualism (Miller 1978:611-12, 614). Nor did California become the home of any pidginized contact medium comparable to those of the Northwest Coast or eastern North America (see Hinton 1994 for a

recent linguistic survey of native California). Instead, the principal medium of California Indians in contact with outsiders during colonial times was Spanish in one form or another, and apparently included a pidginized variety introduced by Chilean sailors in the mid-nineteenth century and known as Chileno (Bartelt 1992).

4. 'COLONIALIST' EXPLANATIONS FOR THE ABSENCE OF INDIGENOUS PIDGINS IN SOUTHWESTERN NORTH AMERICA AND CALIFORNIA. By currently available indications, why then did no Native American pidgins develop in interior North America, especially the Southwest, or in native California?

One response could draw on proposed differences in the policies of Spain, the earliest colonizer of the Southwest and California, from those of other colonial European powers in eastern and northwestern North America. Native American languages under Hispanic influence borrowed substantially more European vocabulary than those under French or English influence, an observation sometimes interpreted as the result of a more benevolent colonial policy by Spain as compared to that of France, England, or the United States (Brown 1994). By the same reasoning, Indians of the Southwest and California supposedly were more inclined to adopt Spanish as a *lingua franca* rather than use one of their own languages. Yet Spain's colonial policy with forced labor (slavery) and an extensive mission system was no less repressive than that of other European powers (see Dobyns 1988). On this ground, the absence of indigenous pidgins in these areas might serve as a reflection of Spain's very power in early colonial North America; indigenous pidgins presumably developed only in regions where European colonists exerted less political control such as Dutch and Swedish settlers in northeastern North America, the French in the Mississippi valley, and Russians on the Northwest Coast. Yet these answers, too, encounter complications with conflicting evidence from southeastern North America. Spain's hold over southern North America was not as firm or certain in early colonial times as it might appear retrospectively; nor was its colonial policy consistent across the area to warrant the assumption for a single form of linguistic acculturation or major sociolinguistic differences from other areas of North America. Significantly, Spaniards 'embraced' Mobilian Jargon-speaking Indians in the greater Mississippi valley, and in Florida used the *lingue franche* Apalachee and Creek, which possibly were eastern varieties of Mobilian Jargon. In early colonial times, Spanish colonists also explored both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts northwards right into the territories of Delaware Jargon and Chinook Jargon speakers.

Alternatively, it is tempting to consider the issue of absent indigenous pidgins in southwestern North America simply as a matter of lacking historical documentation. Spanish accounts conceivably omitted to record instances of Native American pidgins, just as the Hispanic documents of 18th century Louisiana that I have examined for evidence of Mobilian Jargon so far have been remarkably silent about it when French observers had already attested it in some detail since 1700. This explanation appears no more satisfactory than the preceding one, when one considers the great geographic range of influence by Spain as a colonial power. It extended from Florida to California over a greater area in North America than that of other colonial powers except Great Britain or eventually the

United States (Dobyns 1988). This fact would lead one to expect an occasional reference to a Native American pidgin here and there if such indeed existed, whereas the absence of mentionings of Mobilian Jargon in Spanish records of Louisiana conceivably reflects Spain's lesser interest in that part of North America than either Florida or southwestern North America.

However, the absence of documentation for indigenous pidgin in native California also puts a damper on any hypothesis of colonial origin for Native American pidgins on grounds of their coastal location, including any suggestions for an initial stimulus from overseas. By that logic, an indigenous pidgin should have developed in this area of great linguistic diversity as well.

5. CONSIDERATIONS OF PRE-COLUMBIAN SOCIOLINGUISTIC-SOCIOHISTORICAL CONDITIONS. Problems with 'colonialist' models and the absence of a Native American pidgin in California require an alternative explanation. The coastal locations of Delaware Jargon, Mobilian Jargon, and Chinook Jargon offer a likely clue to the enigma of absent indigenous pidgins in the Southwest and native California by pointing to other sociolinguistic and sociohistorical circumstances of language contact, especially the indigenous political economies.

A continental perspective of North American Indian languages confirms the greatest diversity in the coastal areas where the three major pidgins occurred other than in native California. Besides this area, the Northwest Coast (extending from southern Alaska to the Oregon-California border) was the linguistically most diverse area in North America including numerous mutually unintelligible and unrelated languages that belong to several distinct language families (Eyak-Athapaskan, Tlingit, and perhaps Haida; Penutian; Chimakuan; Wakashan; and Salishan). While hardly matching western North America, the Southeast has come to be recognized as a linguistically more complex area than conventionally described (Crawford 1975; for a recent attempt at sorting out sociolinguistic complexities of southeastern North America, see Booker, Hudson, and Rankin 1992); the Northeast has been subject to a similar revision for greater linguistic diversity (see Ives Goddard in Murray 1992:406). Eastern North America has been the home of not only Algonquians, Iroquoians, and Muskogean, but Siouans, some Caddoans, various distantly related and unrelated isolates, and numerous unidentified languages, leaving virtual blanks in major areas such as the Ohio River valley.

Major routes of native expansion were the very rivers along which Delaware Jargon, Mobilian Jargon, and Chinook Jargon extended. The Delaware, Mississippi, and Columbia Rivers as well as their tributaries, supplemented by a network of land trails, were part of an extensive indigenous infrastructure that linked coastal areas with their interiors and that permitted fairly easy and efficient movements of people and goods by boat (such as log rafts, dug-outs, birchbark canoes, plank canoes, and skin boats). These river systems were the prime arteries that brought native peoples of great distances and different linguistic backgrounds into contact with each other in recent history, just as they had already functioned as main routes for earlier migrations leading to growing populations and greater linguistic diversity in coastal areas. Major attractions of coastal areas were rich natural environments, which supported larger and more diverse communities with

population figures as much as ten times higher than those of interior areas (Murray 1992: 403-4). According to early European observers, the Indians of eastern North America were enthusiastic, fast, and wide-ranging travelers, who roamed hundreds of miles, sometimes more than a thousand; they were the same people who came to serve as guides leading European explorers, traders, and colonists across much of the continent (see Rountree 1993 and Tanner 1989) and in whose very footsteps followed the *coureurs de bois* and *voyageurs* (independent and official traders).⁹ Other evidence for long-distance interregional interaction is available in archaeological evidence for regular pre-Columbian trade of exotic natural resources and manufactured goods from the Atlantic coast to the Rocky Mountains. The Northwest Coast shows similar evidence of extensive interregional trade, although the study of potlatch has overshadowed that of trade; the native institution of redistribution or ostentatious destruction of surplus valuables for the purpose of gaining social or political status would not have been possible without an extensive network of interregional trade (see Baugh and Ericson 1994). Most importantly, the rivers along which the three major pidgins spread provided the natural resources for the subsistence of larger groups than local communities or tribes — fish in the case of the Northwest Coast and fertile deposits along with water for horticultural and agricultural societies of eastern North America. Both fishing on the Northwest Coast and food-growing in eastern North America produced substantial surpluses that permitted socioeconomic specialization and the development of fairly complex socio-political organizations in the form of chiefdoms and paramount chiefdoms respectively. Although rather fragile, these sociopolitical institutions tied together linguistically diverse groups into regional political associations, reduced or devastated by epidemic diseases in the greater Mississippi River valley shortly after the Europeans' arrival in North America.

People of native California and the Southwest differed from those of the Northwest Coast and eastern North America in important ways. Rivers did not assume the same significance as either sources of food or means of transportation. With access to rich and diverse natural resources all around, California Indians relied on hunting and gathering, and did not come to depend primarily on rivers for their subsistence as did fishermen to the north. Although densely populated, native Californians remained economically independent hunters and gatherers until contact with Europeans, and rarely developed communities larger than small villages or area-wide sociopolitical integration (see Heizer 1978). California Indians also exhibited little enthusiasm for traveling (William Bright, personal communication). On the other hand, food growers of the Southwest with its arid and semi-arid environment could rely much less on rivers as a reliable source of water or easy means of year-round transportation than Indians of eastern North America. Frequently, Southwestern rivers other than the Rio Grande dried up during hot seasons, and turned rough during peak flow, making travel by boat difficult, if not impossible. Notwithstanding archaeological evidence for intertribal contacts in the form of a network of trails, southwestern North America apparently did not maintain close-knit regional networks of the same intensity or geographic range as those of eastern North America during late pre-Columbian times; nor did their chiefdoms assume the sociopolitical complexity of eastern or

even northwestern North America due to the ecological limitations of a predominantly dry environment. Since about 1150, the Southwest has actually suffered from regular droughts (as manifestly evident in the pre-Columbian ruins of Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde), and supported only smaller communities without *area-wide* integration in the form paramount chiefdoms (see Gumperman 1994).

6. SUMMARY. A contrast of North American areas speaking indigenous pidgins with the Southwest and native California suggests that differences in colonial policies offer unsatisfactory answers and that great linguistic diversity is an insufficient condition for the pidginization of native languages. Another major requirement would seem to have been an infrastructure for easy travel and transportation (such as by boat along coastal areas and on major river systems), which permitted fairly easy gatherings of alloglossic peoples from remote areas — a condition in the Southwest discouraged by its dry environment for some eight hundred years. This argument does not imply that pidginization necessarily depended on navigable rivers; but boats assume a greater significance in the absence of some other efficient means of transportation (such as carrying animals or carriages), as was the case in pre-Columbian North America. The development and institutionalization of a pidgin further depended on regular interactions among diverse speech communities as in an established interregional trading system and alloglossic political alliances (chiefdoms and paramount chiefdoms) — a requirement absent in native California. As indicated by the Southwest, the presence of an infrastructure for easy long-distance travel and transportation and the condition of sociopolitical integration into chiefdoms or paramount chiefdoms may be interrelated, because political control by some central authority would have been difficult without a suitable infrastructure. In their sociolinguistic adaptability, Native American pidgins such as Delaware Jargon, Mobilian Jargon, and Chinook Jargon may in fact have been sociolinguistic analogues of political organizations larger than tribes, but still smaller than states or civilizations; with multiple sources and considerable structural adaptability, pidgins made ideal interlingual media in the chiefdoms and paramount chiefdoms of eastern and northwestern North America, characterized by changing loyalties and alliances.

These considerations do not demonstrate the hypothesis of pre-European origin for Delaware Jargon, Mobilian Jargon, or Chinook Jargon, but solely provide arguments consistent with it and an alternative to unsatisfactory 'colonialist' models. By the present historical scenario, pidginization was a linguistic and sociohistorical process not exclusively associated with European expansion or colonialism, but occurred in indigenous peer polities. This conclusion does not imply that Delaware Jargon, Mobilian Jargon, or Chinook Jargon failed to serve European colonialist purposes as well; quite to the contrary, once Europeans arrived in North America, they made use of indigenous pidgins and other native contact media as part of an already existent infrastructure. Disassociating the pidginization of indigenous languages from European colonialism ultimately does not provide a revisionist argument for a reduction of the historical debt by any of America's former colonial powers or the United States to the native population;

the present explanation only argues for a greater historical and linguistic significance of pidginization in the study of Native American languages.

7. A CONTRASTIVE NOTE ON ESKIMO PIDGIN. Another Native American pidgin, Eskimo Jargon, constitutes a special case in that it is similar to Chinook Jargon, Delaware Jargon, and Mobilian Jargon by its reduced linguistic structure, suggesting a pidginization of Inuit (Stefánsson 1909, Van der Voort 1995; see Drechsel 1981); but it apparently differed in important sociohistorical ways, worthy of mention if for no other reason than typological contrast. Unlike the three major American Indian pidgins, Eskimo Jargon apparently developed as a result of contact with Europeans, specifically whalers, in the northern Atlantic, and may have a history going back as far as the Norse explorations of Labrador in 900 (Van der Voort 1995:138-139). The prime argument against aboriginal development is the absence of a great linguistic diversity among Inuit and their southern neighbors, Algonquian and Athapaskan Indians. In fact, Loucheux or Kutchin Indians (Athapaskans) on the Mackenzie River used instead of Eskimo Jargon a more complex Inuit-based medium that was unintelligible to European speakers of the pidgin (Stefánsson 1909: 218-219). Eskimo Jargon also differed from the other Native American pidgins geopolitically in that, in spite of the Arctic's harsh environment, the Inuit on both their eastern and western borders (eastern Greenland and eastern Siberia) were never as isolated from Asia or Europe as their neighbors to the South. Still, Eskimo Jargon possibly had a history as long as, or even longer than, the other indigenous pidgins of North America.

NOTES

¹ I presented this paper in an early form as 'Indigenous Pidgin Languages, Coastal Chiefdoms, and the Pre-Colonial History of North America' at the *Second International Conference: 'Oceans in World History' and 'Indigenous Peoples in World History'*, Honolulu, on 26 June 1993. I gratefully acknowledge helpful comments by William Bright, Patricia Gilman, Paul Minnis, and William Samarin, none of whom holds any responsibility for the ideas expressed here.

² An Americanist linguist as sympathetic to the study of language contact as William Bright (1984:21) assigned little significance to pidginization in Native American languages, and has recognized only short life spans for Chinook Jargon and Mobilian Jargon, although the latter has a longer recorded history than many other, better known instances of pidginization and creolization. A recent review of studies of American Indian languages by another prominent scholar in the field (Mithun 1990) does not even mention any such process of linguistic convergence or a single instance, although one would expect a major publication such as Sarah G. Thomason's and Terrence Kaufman's *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics* (1988) to have drawn her attention for the survey.

³ Samuel V. Johnson (1975:1) observed that 'CJ [Chinook Jargon] is generally considered to be a non-European based pidgin, however evidence suggests that it may in fact be an off-shoot of the general world pidgin. Most of the available data indicate that CJ was not spoken in the NWC [Northwest Coast] before white contact[,] but it was initiated by 18th century European traders

who purchased furs in the NWC, sold these furs in China and spent the winters in Hawaii.' Johnson (1975:17) related Chinook Jargon to either Chinese Pidgin English or American Indian Pidgin English by relexification.

There indeed exists linguistic evidence for historical ties between the Hawaiian Islands and northwestern North America in early colonial times — in the form of Hawaiian loanwords in Chinook Jargon as well as in Eskimo Jargon. The Hawaiian Islands served as a major way station for the European-American exploration and settlement of western North America by sea. Yet these data demonstrate neither that Chinook Jargon or — for that matter — Eskimo Jargon developed from Hawaiian Pidgin nor that the latter was an English- or European-based medium (Drechsel and Makuakāne 1982). Recent historical research suggests as the likely medium of transmission a pidginized form of Polynesian that Hawaiian and other sailors used on ships throughout the Pacific during the 19th century and that they apparently employed also in their initial contacts with native peoples on the West Coast (Drechsel 1995 MS).

⁴ Similarly, Ives Goddard (1995:142-143, 148-149) has expressed little enthusiasm for a pre-European origin of Delaware Jargon, but has not entered the debate.

⁵ For example, the French Jesuit priest Paul du Ru reported in 1700 a sample of 'Houma,' which has often been identified as Western Muskogean, but presents the first unquestionable historical attestation of Mobilian Jargon: 'Jeheno, Yno, Nanhoulou toutchino atchota.' or †*šno eno nāholo to čeno ačofa* 'You [the Great Spirit], I, and the white man, [we] three [are] one.' (Drechsel 1994a:57)

⁶ For further discussion of these issues, see Drechsel 1996, Chapter 11, as they apply especially to Mobilian Jargon, but are equally applicable to Delaware Jargon and Chinook Jargon (see Hymes 1980:405-18, Thomason 1980, 1983).

In another argument against the pre-European hypothesis, pidginization of major Native American languages could have come about as the result of a rapid decline of smaller, highly diverse speech communities that under the threat of European colonization adopted the language of a numerically and sociopolitically stronger alloglossic neighbor for lack of a better alternative. This scenario would seem feasible for several small communities of eastern North America endangered by epidemics in the early colonial period, when Europeans had not yet gained the upper hand; but that explanation relies on the presumption that these smaller communities were isolate monolingual societies suddenly subjected to an entirely new sociolinguistic situation brought about by contact with Europeans. This model seems unlikely in the light of substantial archaeological, ethnohistorical, and ethnographic evidence for original intertribal affiliations and traditional forms of bilingualism and multilingualism. Also, such a pidgin would hardly have survived for long; it would either have undergone creolization with the next generation of speakers in small multilingual communities, or would have been replaced by the language of the larger, dominant society. For these reasons, I do not pursue this option further.

⁷ What Elizabeth Brandt and Christopher MacCrate (following Ian F. Hancock in Drechsel 1976:70) have listed as an Indian-Spanish-English along the Brazos Trail for an apparent exception actually has proved to be but a sample of Mobilian Jargon with a few Spanish words: 'No, Qshaw, papeshillo; plata, plata, shocke me fina.' or †*no, (e)kšo, papešel(l)o; plata, plata, čokama fena*. 'No, (that is) not(hing), friend; silver, silver [is] very good.' (see Drechsel 1994a:56).

⁸ The use of Navajo as a secret code by the U.S. Army in World War II is no better indicator for an earlier role of the language as a contact medium. Although reduced in structure and func-

tionally limited, the Navajo code was in use only among native speakers in communication with each other by telephone or radio to transmit secret military messages, which they translated to and from English for their superiors. The function of the Navajo code was quite opposite to that of a contact medium. Significantly, speakers of Trader Navajo did not qualify to serve as Navajo code talkers in World War II, as explained by Jimmy King, a native Navajo:

We had a hard time with some of the white boys that thought they knew the Navajo language ... They were born out here on the trading posts. Their parents were Indian traders. And they were brought up among the Navajos, with the Navajos. They played with the Navajos during their childhood. They picked up the language so well, but never well enough that they could pass the tests to be one of the Code Talkers. They spoke the language like coffee, sugar, and flour and counting of money. They knew how to say that. But there also was always a fraction of a syllable that they could not pronounce exactly as well and precise as it should be so there would be no maybe and if about it ... There were [some] words that they'd never heard. All they knew was what was known as trading-post language — trading with Indians, a pair of gloves, a pair of shoes — they knew that, all that, well. But they could not carry on a conversation outside of the Navajo trading post language. (Bixler 1992:69)

There is no better support for a Navajo contact medium by the analogy of Choctaw and Ojibwe, two other Native American languages that served as cryptographic military codes and that had also provided the foundations for Mobilian Jargon and the Algonquian contact medium of the Great Lakes area. These two languages came into use as military codes because a sizable number of Choctaw and Ojibwe bilinguals enlisted in the U.S. armed forces in World War I (Walker 1983) rather than as a result of their former functions as *lingue franche*.

⁹ Prime examples are Algonquians of the Great Lakes area guiding French explorers down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico and Iroquoians of the Northeast leading European traders across the Rocky Mountains to the Northwest Coast.

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