



LANGUAGE CONTACT IN COLOMBIA: EXPLORING CRIOLLO SANANDRESANO THROUGH A PILOT STUDY

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate language contact in Colombia, specifically focusing on Criollo Sanandresano, a unique Creole language spoken on the island of San Andrés. Through a pilot study, we explore the linguistic features, sociolinguistic context, and patterns of language use and transmission within the community. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and language recordings, providing insights into the language's origin, development, and vitality. The findings shed light on the dynamics of language contact and its implications for the preservation and maintenance of Criollo Sanandresano in the face of external influences. This pilot study serves as a foundation for further research on language contact and the unique linguistic heritage of San Andrés.

INTRODUCTION

Language contact refers to the interaction between different languages in a particular geographic area, leading to the emergence of new linguistic varieties or changes in existing languages. Colombia, as a linguistically diverse country, provides a fertile ground for studying language contact phenomena. One such intriguing case is Criollo Sanandresano, a Creole language spoken on the island of San Andrés. Criollo Sanandresano emerged through contact between West African slaves, English-speaking settlers, and indigenous populations. However, despite its historical significance and cultural value, limited research has been conducted on this unique language. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the linguistic features, sociolinguistic context, and language vitality of Criollo Sanandresano.

Language contact refers to the interaction and mutual influence of different languages in a specific geographic area or social context. Colombia, a linguistically diverse country, is a prime example of a region where language contact has played a significant role in shaping its linguistic landscape. One

fascinating case of language contact in Colombia is the phenomenon of Criollo Sanandresano, a Creole language spoken on the San Andrés Archipelago.

Criollo Sanandresano has emerged as a result of the historical contact between African slaves, English-speaking settlers, and Spanish-speaking populations in the region. This unique linguistic variety incorporates elements from English, Spanish, and African languages, reflecting the complex cultural and historical dynamics of the archipelago.

This study aims to explore the dynamics of language contact in Colombia by focusing on Criollo Sanandresano through a pilot study. The research will investigate the linguistic features, sociolinguistic aspects, and patterns of language use among speakers of Criollo Sanandresano. Additionally, it will examine the language attitudes and perceptions of the community towards their language and its role in their identity.

The pilot study will involve data collection through participant observation, interviews, and language samples from a select group of Criollo Sanandresano speakers. The collected data will be analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods to gain insights into the linguistic features, language variation, and contact-induced changes in Criollo Sanandresano.

Understanding the dynamics of language contact and the characteristics of Criollo Sanandresano is crucial for comprehending the sociolinguistic context of the San Andrés Archipelago and shedding light on the broader study of language contact phenomena. This pilot study will serve as a foundation for further research and contribute to the documentation and preservation of Criollo Sanandresano as an important part of Colombia's linguistic heritage.

METHOD

To conduct this study, a pilot approach was adopted. The research involved a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to gather data on Criollo Sanandresano. Interviews were conducted with native speakers of the language, focusing on topics related to language use, language attitudes, and sociolinguistic dynamics. Additionally, observations of language use in natural settings, such as community gatherings and informal interactions, were carried out. Language recordings were made to capture the phonological, morphological, and syntactic features of Criollo Sanandresano.

The study also incorporated a sociolinguistic questionnaire to assess the language's vitality and the perceptions of its speakers regarding language maintenance and transmission. The questionnaire covered aspects such as language use in different domains, intergenerational language transmission, and attitudes towards the language within the community.

The collected data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The qualitative analysis focused on identifying patterns of language use, examining language variation, and exploring sociolinguistic factors influencing language vitality. Quantitative analysis involved statistical analysis of the survey responses to determine language vitality indicators, such as language proficiency, language preferences, and language attitudes.

Through this pilot study, we aim to provide initial insights into Criollo Sanandresano, its current state, and the factors shaping its usage and maintenance. The findings will inform future research endeavors in understanding the dynamics of language contact in Colombia and contribute to the broader field of sociolinguistics.

RESULTS

The pilot study on Criollo Sanandresano revealed several interesting findings. Firstly, the language continues to be spoken by a significant number of individuals on the island of San Andrés, primarily in informal and family settings. However, there is evidence of a gradual shift towards the use of Spanish, especially among younger generations. Language vitality indicators, such as intergenerational transmission and language preferences, suggest a potential decline in the long-term sustainability of Criollo Sanandresano.

The linguistic analysis of Criollo Sanandresano identified distinctive features that reflect its creole origins, including vocabulary borrowings from English and substrate influences from African languages. Additionally, the study shed light on the sociolinguistic factors that shape language use, such as the impact of tourism, economic development, and educational policies.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this pilot study contribute to our understanding of language contact dynamics and the sociolinguistic situation in Colombia. The exploration of Criollo Sanandresano provides insights into the complex interactions between English, African languages, and Spanish, highlighting the unique linguistic heritage of the San Andrés community. The study also emphasizes the need for further research to comprehensively assess language vitality and implement measures for language preservation.

The discussion further delves into the challenges faced by Criollo Sanandresano, including the influence of dominant languages, language attitudes, and limited institutional support. It highlights the importance of community efforts and educational initiatives to promote language awareness and revitalization.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this pilot study on Criollo Sanandresano serves as an initial exploration of language contact in Colombia. The findings suggest a complex sociolinguistic situation with indications of language shift and potential endangerment of Criollo Sanandresano. The study emphasizes the significance of documenting and preserving the linguistic diversity of Colombia, promoting community involvement, and fostering language revitalization efforts.

The pilot study's limitations, such as the small sample size and limited scope, call for future research with a larger and more representative sample, encompassing diverse sociolinguistic contexts. Longitudinal studies are needed to monitor language changes over time and understand the factors influencing language vitality in greater depth. Overall, this study provides a foundation for further investigations into language contact and the maintenance of linguistic diversity in Colombia.

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