



Jamaican patois  
[ˈdʒɑmiəkən pɑtɔɪs]



# Pidgins, Creoles

- Collision of different languages- a clear need for „lingua franca“
- Language undergoes process of pidginization only in a multilingual situation.
- Pidginization- process of simplification, mixture and reduction+ loss of redundancy.
- Pidgin which acquires native speakers and takes on a full range of social functions is called creole.
- Reduction that took place during pidginization has to be repaired by a process of expansion-creolization.

# J.Creole (Patois/Patwa), Standard JE

- Socially dialectal continuum, some variables are stigmatized and perceived as the means for distinction. P. and SJE are grammatically and syntactically different.
- Jamaican Creole (Patwa)- mesolectal and basilectal form of the continuum, the grammar shows creole-like features, resulting from the process of simplification (part of the pidginization). Written form-phonetic
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nKMDGyRBFY>  
Dr. Seuss' ABC read in Patwa
- Standard JE- acrolectal form, „well educated urban professional, the phonology resembles RP, /h/ occurs, as well as vowel distinction: bud- bird, pat-pot, etc.

# J.Creole (Patois/Patwa), Standard JE

- „The ability to use JC is considered a necessary element in the complex of sociocultural characteristics that define a Jamaican identity“ (Irvine 2).
- Monoglot speaker is viewed as either socially inferior, if they only use JC, or foreign and pretentious if they only use JE.
- „The monolingual JC speaker is associated with little or no education, low income and traditionally rural provenance- has low status in a social context that sees an inability to speak English as moral failure“ ( Irvine 1).
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icy6iKN7jDM> Ian Salmon on how to use Patois as a stress reliever
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6syBXasM-8> Jamaican English used in a context of Patois teaching

# Rastafarian English

- „The Rastafarian language is actually much easier to learn than Jamaican Patois because it's mostly a play on English words“ ( such as „**overstand** [ˈɔ:vʌˌstʌnd]“ for „*understand*“, because you do not have to go under to understand something. „**Downpression** [dʌʊnˈpreʃʌn]“ for „*oppression*“ to indicate that it is pushing you down).“
- **I and I** [aɪˈlɪnaɪ]- the unity of J. people- I am in consciousness of the others of my kind- therefore it is not only me, its I and I
- **Give tanks** -Thank you
- **Jah** [ˈdʒʌ]- Jehova, God and also (Etiopian) emperor Haile Sellasie I
- **Yaman**- substitute for simply saying „yes“
- **Bredrin**- brothers, derived from „brethren“
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feGUNTQhG04> All of the phrases above used in an interview with Julian Marley (yes, he is Bob's son)

# Phonological and morphophonemic features of Patois

- **Missing copula**-resembling African American vernacular
- **Palatal glides**- can't ['kʏʌnt] baby ['biɛbi] care [kʏʌ] don't[dʊɒn]
- Some word of different (**african**) origin: **pikni**- child, **nyam**- eat
- **Plural**- plural form „**unu**“ for you, form „**dem**“ used as a substitute for –s suffix, or as a general plural form: **buk dem**- books, **pikni dem**- children
- **Overcorrection**- **initial glottal fricative /h/**, around Kingston-*owning* [hɔɒŋ], *out* [hʌʊt], *egg* [heg]- opposite situation can be found throughout Jamaica, where /h/ is lacking- *hous* ['ʌʊs], *hill* ['il]
- **Gerundium**: **mi a go**- I am going, **mi ben/bin waak**- I was working
- **fi- for/ to** – in basilect widely used: *ebribadi en glad fi si wi* 'everybody was glad to see us'
- **Interdental fricatives**- *thick* [tɪk], *think* ['tɪnk], *that* [dʌt]
- **Absence of 3rd person**- *she like dat*

# Phrases

- **Wha gwaan mi bredren!** *Hello, how are you?*
- **Im a gwaan bad, iing?** *He is behaving badly, isn't he?*
- **Wen mi kom, mi wi gi yu som.** *When I come, I will give you some.*
- **Jan a haid fram di poliisman.** *John is hiding from the policeman'*
- **Di buk de pan di tiebl ina ruum.** *the book is on the table in (my) room'*
- **Dem kyari di sik biebi a dakta.** *they took the sick baby to the doctor'*
- Peculiar expressions:  
<http://jamaicanpatwah.com/dictionary/category/jamaican-expressions>



# Quiz

- Jan yu si de, im no kya bout moni.
- Im beri di siem die wen Plomi go-we.
- Mi a go bak a di plies go si ef di yai-dem a luk.
- Fieba se mi no fi se so.
- Mi no hafi go luk fi mi pikni-dem fi si we  
Mievis a du wid dem!
- Dem lik im.

# Quiz

- Jan yu si de, im no kya bout moni. John (whom) you see there, he doesn't care about money
- Im beri di siem die wen Plomi go-we. He was buried the same day on which Plumie left.
- Mi a go bak a di plies go si ef di yai-dem a luk. I am going back to the place to see if the eyes are looking.
- Fieba se mi no fi se so. It seems that I should not say so.
- Mi no hafi go luk fi mi pikni-dem fi si we Mievie a du wid dem! I have to go to see about my children, (to see) what Mavis is doing with them!
- Dem lik im. They beat him.

# Bibliography and interesting web pages

- *Alison Irvine, Contrast and Convergence in Standard Jamaican English: the Phonological Architecture of the Standard in an Ideologically Bidialectal Community.* Italy, 2008. Print.
- Bell, Allan. *The Guidebook to Sociolinguistics.* Chichester, UK: Wiley, 2013. Print.
- <https://debate.uvm.edu/dreadlibrary/herbold.html>
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