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Mobilian Jargon in Historiography: An Exercise in the Ethnohistory of Speaking

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Patricia Galloway (2006: 225-244) made Mobilian Jargon the subject matter of a chapter in her recent book *Practicing Ethnohistory* – with several challenging conclusions about its structure, functions, and sociohistorical contexts that call for a response. My essay addresses fundamental misconceptions about this Muskogean-based pidgin language, while raising some broader issues of documentation and analysis relevant to the historical sociolinguistics of greater Louisiana.

More to a Name Than Meets the Eye

Throughout her essay, Galloway refers to the pidgin as “Mobilian” without the modifying attachment of “Jargon.” The use of the short form would seem a minor terminological difference, were she not to use the same name in reference to Mobilian proper when discussing the Mobilian Indians’ language. This leads to a fundamental confusion of the vernacular and the pidgin by the same name. As I pointed out (Drechsel 1997: 52, 205, 234), it is imperative to differentiate “Mobilian Jargon” from “Mobilian” (like other pidgins and their source languages such as “Chinook Jargon” versus “Chinook” and “Delaware Jargon” versus “Delaware”) because of fundamental extralinguistic as well as grammatical differences between them (Silverstein 1996, 1997). Mobilian Jargon was a Muskogean-based pidgin with a morphologically reduced, analytical grammar; Mobilian proper a Native American vernacular of so far unidentified provenance, with a full-fledged, synthetic or possibly even polysynthetic grammar and a complex morphology of inflections and/or affixations. To imply that Mobilian Jargon directly related to Mobilian proper misrepresents linguistic and historical facts.

If the name of Mobilian Jargon suggests a direct historical tie to the Mobilian Indians, its actual origin and etymology have remained uncertain; the pidgin’s name could just as well have derived from the French colonial post of Mobile in what is Alabama today. This conclusion holds true even if we were to assume – as Galloway does without drawing on any supporting *linguistic* evidence

– that the Mobilians spoke a variety of Western Muskogean (closely related to Choctaw). However, Muskogean-derived glottonyms, ethnonyms, and place names of southeastern North America, including those of “Mobilian” and “Mobile,” do not provide evidence for linguistic identification, for there were numerous non-Muskogean groups with Muskogean names (Drechsel 1997). Notwithstanding alleged clues for an apparent Muskogean source, the Mobilians likely were non-Muskogean (Drechsel 1997: 205), counter to Galloway’s claims. Any historical references to Choctaw could likewise have been to Mobilian Jargon instead, because the glottonym “Choctaw” extended also to Mobilian Jargon because of its *lexical* similarity to Western Muskogean (Drechsel 1997: 206). Antoine Simon Le Page du Pratz, the earliest authority on Mobilian Jargon, similarly referred to it as “la Langue Tchicacha” or ‘the Chickasaw language’ (Crawford 1978). The Tunica-Biloxi Indians of central Louisiana knew Mobilian Jargon by yet another glottonym, the Houma language (Haas 1975: 219, 320). Historical references to Mobilians as Choctaw Indians or as speaking Choctaw have thus proven most unreliable without confirmation by actual linguistic data.

These sociolinguistic circumstances were by no means unique to the Mobilian Indians; they applied to many other Native American communities of southeastern North America (Drechsel 1997: 318-319; see also Booker *et al.* 1992 and Goddard 2005: 35-41). Historical and linguistic records indicate that numerous Southeastern Indian groups spoke diverse indigenous languages, several of which did not belong to the Muskogean language family; but they adopted the Muskogean-based pidgin Mobilian Jargon no later than the early eighteenth century, as reliably attested in various historical records (Drechsel 1997: 215-232). The only conclusive way to sort out native languages and Mobilian Jargon in historical documentation then is by: (1) actual linguistic, specifically syntactic data; (2) names reserved exclusively for the pidgin such as *anōpa ēla* ‘other/different/strange language’, *yoka anōpa* ‘servant/slave language’, or *yam(m)a* ‘yes, right, alright, indeed; this, that’; or (3) sociolinguistic clues that clearly specify the pidgin as opposed to a vernacular (Drechsel 1997: 205-206).

In contrast, Galloway presents the Gulf region of southeastern North America as an area dominated by Western Muskogean and especially the Choctaw – with Eastern Muskogean (such as the Alabama,¹ Apalachi, Koasati, and Muskogee) and many unnamed non-Muskogean presumably lurking on the distant margins. Not only does Galloway fail to support her claim with actual linguistic evidence, but she identifies this Western Muskogean heartland specifically with the pre-European Moundville peoples – a questionable endeavor in light of the upheavals (including the social fragility of paramount chiefdoms and the spread of epidemic diseases) that Southeastern Indians experienced since their first contacts with Europeans. In an earlier article, Galloway similarly thought that the interpreters of the eastern part of greater Louisiana “had to do with only one major language family” (Galloway 1987: 113), presumably Muskogean or Western Muskogean, and against established linguistic evidence considered Mobilian Jargon as a koiné. In short, a highly skewed perspective on Southeastern Indian languages, distorted by

a focus on Choctaw history, has made Galloway substantially underestimate the linguistic diversity of southeastern North America, the linguistically most diverse area after native California and the Pacific Northwest (see Goddard 2005).

Interpreters do not preclude the existence of a pidgin

Another dubious argument that Galloway presents in her essay on Mobilian Jargon is the contention that historical attestations of the use of interpreters preclude the existence of a pidgin such as Mobilian Jargon and moreover serve as evidence against it. She draws this conclusion on a misguided notion that for their tasks, interpreters relied on vernaculars at the exclusion of a pidgin (Galloway 2006: 226-234).

Galloway criticizes Crawford (1978) for using the presence of native interpreters among various indigenous groups of the Gulf Coast, including Western Muskogean, as an argument against the pre-European existence of Mobilian Jargon, while recognizing the pidgin next to interpreters in colonial Louisiana. Galloway rejects this inconsistency of argument, which in turn supports her line of reasoning against the presence of Mobilian Jargon in early colonial times. But her argument presumes the mutual exclusiveness of interpreters and Mobilian Jargon, as if they were sociolinguistic phenomena that could not exist side by side. Yet historical documentation demonstrates not only the co-existence of interpreters and Mobilian Jargon (Drechsel 1997), but also the actual use of the pidgin by interpreters in Louisiana throughout the entire eighteenth century, as Crawford (1978) recognized. In short, the existence of interpreters was complementary and synergetic with Mobilian Jargon, because interpreters themselves had a need for the pidgin as a medium in the linguistically highly diverse area of the Gulf of Mexico – a fact that also undermines Crawford’s argument against the pidgin’s pre-European existence (Drechsel 1979: 275-282).

The historical documentation that Galloway cites, consisting of a few references to French youngsters learning local vernaculars (Galloway 2006: 233), does not strongly support her argument because it does not provide any actual linguistic or other irrefutable historical evidence against these youngsters learning Mobilian Jargon. On the contrary, her argument fails again on the recognition that glottonyms based on Western Muskogean could have referred to the pidgin in its place. This very situation is relevant in the case of Jean Baptiste Le Moyne (whom Galloway uses as a prime example), who had learned “Bayougoula” from his native guide in less than six weeks and served as interpreter to his older brother, Pierre Le Moyne, in their early explorations of Louisiana in 1699. By speaking “Bayougoula” or actually Mobilian Jargon, the younger Le Moyne could talk not only with the Bayougoula, but also with other linguistically diverse groups (Drechsel 1997).

Significantly, Galloway (2006: 235) acknowledges “repeated complaints in the French records that both missionaries and officers were failing to learn the Indian languages.” She also provides an answer: “the missionaries tended to be subject to transfer at more frequent intervals than the adequate learning of a specific language

would require,” a situation that likewise applied to officers (Galloway 2006: 235) and that again favored the use of Mobilian Jargon. Predictably, “in spite of their acknowledged competence in specific languages, some of these very officers were reported as having used interpreters on important occasions” (Galloway 2006: 236). From the perspective of second-language studies recognizing fundamental grammatical differences between European and Native American languages, we cannot plausibly expect speakers of French to have acquired a full-fledged Native American vernacular within a few months; but within such a period they could certainly have learned at least the basics of Mobilian Jargon (Drechsel 1997: 257-259).

Instead, Galloway prefers to pursue another line of arguments: [Drechsel] assumed without detailed analysis of ethnohistorical sources that Native diplomatic conventions would accept the *informality* of a pidgin [emphasis added], when in fact their seriousness and emphasis on conventions of diplomatic speech by proxy speakers present serious problems for such an interpretation. He also failed to take into account the tremendous upheavals in Indian life that took place as a result of sustained contact with Europeans, especially after the end of the European colonial period. (Galloway 2006: 228)

To make her case, Galloway (2006: 230) repeats another specious argument against the early existence of Mobilian Jargon, namely that “the early French explorers and settlers remarked on no such pidgin.” The answer to this claim is straightforward: The first European explorers and settlers simply were not in a position to observe any such pidgin, because lacking a comparative understanding of the pidgin and its source languages, they could not make any suitable observations. It is for this very reason that Europeans often referred to Mobilian Jargon by the name of its speakers’ first languages rather than a glottonym of its own and missed recognizing basic sociolinguistic realities. Although these European newcomers inadvertently shared linguistic and social clues about its true role, in their minds the Indians spoke the pidgin as their first language rather than as a second one or as an intertribal medium (Drechsel 1997: 204-206, 215-220).² A differentiated understanding of Mobilian Jargon in relation to the vernaculars would come about only with the first descriptions and analyses of indigenous languages, as Le Page du Pratz generated it (see Drechsel 1997: 145-149 and Galloway 2006: 97-108).

Galloway (2006: 230) also suggests that the institution of *fani mingo* or ‘Native ombudsman,’ as observed among the Choctaw and Chickasaw in the early eighteenth century, would speak against the existence of Mobilian Jargon or at least its wide use: While recognizing that a *fani mingo* adopted from a neighboring tribe did not necessarily speak the language of the tribe whom he represented, the author infers that there existed several instances *implying* such linguistic skills – again without providing any supportive evidence. Still, Galloway concludes without hesitation that the existence of native institutions such as the *fani mingo* “demonstrates

the fact that Native cultures, like the cultures of their European contemporaries, provided quite adequate formal mechanisms for linguistic accommodation without the development of interlanguages or pidgins" (2006: 230).

I would not want to question the need for formal adequacy in the institution of *fani mingo*; but I fail to see the logic behind Galloway's reasoning *unless* one assumes that Mobilian Jargon or for that matter any other well-established pidgin by its very nature cannot meet the position's formal requirements, as seems to be the case when she speaks of "the informality of a pidgin" (Galloway 2006: 228). Such an understanding draws on a substantial misperception of Mobilian Jargon in both linguistic and sociohistorical terms: In spite of its extended lexical variation, the pidgin revealed regularity in syntax and an extended grammar over space and time; it exhibited standards of speech, and unlike European pidgins did not display any obvious negative connotations. By *anōpa ēla*, speakers of the pidgin recognized it as 'other/different/ strange language' rather than as a poor or corrupted version of Choctaw or some other Muskogean language, as Galloway would have it. The author thus appears to confuse absent negative connotations with a lack of grammatical standards, for which my extended description (Drechsel 1997: 57-156) has offered no indication.

My 1997 review of Mobilian Jargon's syntax and semantics instead substantiates the claim that from a linguistic perspective the pidgin was sufficiently complex to serve in formal contexts, a conclusion that Galloway (2006: 243, fn. 56) summarily dismisses without linguistic review. As documented in several historical sources, Mobilian Jargon was used in extended negotiations and full speeches on almost any topic of the period, and served as a medium in both hostile and friendly encounters. The variety of topics addressed by its speakers indicates that there were few, if any, restrictions on Mobilian Jargon's use. By several reliable ethnographic-historical indications, the pidgin fulfilled this very formal function at intertribal gatherings such as intertribal dances, games, and religious meetings (Drechsel 1997: 257-264). The discussion of historical sources actually reviews several instances of the use of Mobilian Jargon in *formal* contexts as early as 1720 (Drechsel 1997: 149-156), and the nineteenth French traveler Claude C. Robin explicitly recognized Mobilian Jargon as the Indians' "langue publique et politique" (1807: II. 54-55). For sociohistorical as well as linguistic reasons, the pidgin could then also have served as a suitable medium for the *fani mingo* – a claim worthy of examination in historical documents. For Galloway to presume any less is to fall victim to prejudicial ideas about what Mobilian Jargon could or could not achieve.

The same conclusions of formal adequacy for Mobilian Jargon hold true for the eighteenth-century institution of placing French boys and young men among Indians of Louisiana to make them into interpreters. Galloway (2006: 231) argues to the contrary by drawing on historical evidence, interpretable as Mobilian Jargon, and by introducing yet another non-argument, namely that "so many of them [French boys and young men] also married within their adopted culture and founded métis families." The historical sources that Galloway cites as "Houma"

and “Chickasaw” could again be Mobilian Jargon for the already cited reasons of its identifications with glottonyms, as was true especially for the early colonial period to which Galloway refers. Any suggestion to Houma resembling Chickasaw or Choctaw, upon which Galloway relies following d’Iberville’s journal, proves no more satisfactory due to a lack of actual linguistic evidence. The only available and frequently cited body of Houma linguistic data of any size, by John R. Swanton (1911: 28-29, 291-292), is open to interpretation in terms of either a Western Muskogean language or Mobilian Jargon, and leaves unanswered any question of whether Western Muskogean, if actually confirmed, might be no more than *one* among several languages spoken in what clearly was a multilingual community (see Drechsel 1997: 206, fn. 2; Brown and Hardy 2000; Drechsel in Campisi and Starna 2004: 784-786, and Goddard 2005: 40). The other major instance of “Houma” by the French Jesuit priest Paul du Ru, going back to 1700, is clearly identifiable as Mobilian Jargon on morphological and syntactic grounds (Drechsel 1997: 139, 216-217, 262).

Marrying into native communities provided no better guarantee for European husbands to acquire the community’s vernacular, counter to Galloway’s assumption; instead, these men could have survived speaking solely the pidgin with their wives and children, as we know in fact for other interlingual media such as Cree-based Michif and Chinook Jargon (Bakker 1997, Zenk 1988). Nor does Galloway’s subsequent counterargument hold up: Louisiana Indians required interpreters at the officer rank to reflect their dignity status, whereas the interpreters employed by the French “were of low rank and lived by somewhat questionable trading practices” (Galloway 2006: 232). According to Galloway, the Indians expected their interpreters to be comparable to a chief’s speaker, which effectively excluded a pidgin such as Mobilian Jargon. That conclusion would apply only if again we were to maintain that Louisiana Indians viewed Mobilian Jargon as a “corrupt” or bad form of Choctaw, i.e. of low social ranking – an assumption that does not agree with either historical or ethnographic evidence. For many of the attested Native American speakers of Mobilian Jargon to have held high social ranks within their communities (see Drechsel 1997: 215-249) suggests that speaking Mobilian Jargon was without stigma and may even have carried some prestige.

Nor can Galloway (2006: 232-233) claim that Mobilian Jargon challenged official French colonial policy. Even if the French objected to Mobilian Jargon, they were in no position to determine language policy in a colony in which a few thousand French colonizers faced a majority of many more native peoples from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes; those calling the shots in greater Louisiana through much of the eighteenth century were not the French, but the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, and the Upper Creek, as Daniel H. Usner, Jr. (1992) has convincingly argued. The French could then do little or nothing without the approval by the Choctaw or other Indians of the area, whose power and influence in part was in the very use of Mobilian Jargon. Yet Galloway (2006: 234) maintains that the Louisiana Indians encouraged the instruction of their own vernaculars rather than a pidgin in order to distinguish themselves from other groups, and refuses to

recognize official French efforts “in the spread of Mobilian [Jargon] before 1763” (Galloway 2006: 234). Her conclusion fares no better than the previous arguments for a simple lack of actual historical-sociolinguistic evidence and against plenty of indications to the contrary (see Drechsel 1997: 215-249).

The key issue remains *what* specific media interpreters chose in their interlingual interactions. From a sociolinguistic perspective, there is no *a priori* reason – linguistic, sociohistorical, or other – to presume the exclusion of a pidgin in an interpreter’s linguistic utensils if bilingual situations called for the use of a pidgin, as might have been the case when the pidgin was the only common medium between two parties (including the interpreter) or when the interpreter addressed multiple participants in a multilingual context. That these arguments indeed are perfectly plausible derives from a surprising if revealing observation about the last Native American speakers of Mobilian Jargon: All were fully bi- or trilingual in two or three Native American languages, and in addition spoke fluent French and/or English (Drechsel 1997: 245-246). Mobilian Jargon survived in their linguistic repertoires notwithstanding their other multilingual resources.

Mobilian Jargon Beyond Triethnic “Sturm und Drang”

Instead of recognizing an extended history for Mobilian Jargon, Galloway prefers to view the pidgin as a phenomenon of recent upheavals in southeastern North America and as no more than a medium on the social margins (Galloway 2006: 234-238). In Galloway’s mind, only “Frenchmen who had to interact with Indians on a daily basis and in less rarefied ways than diplomacy” learned Mobilian Jargon, as did de Bienville; but she finds his use of an interpreter to be “clear evidence that the influence of Mobilian [Jargon] did not go very far” (Galloway 2006: 234-235). She ignores the possibility that de Bienville did not speak it fluently during the early periods of his explorations of Louisiana, to which her sources refer clearly, or that the interpreter himself might have used the pidgin as the medium of translation – again major leaps in argumentation without actual documentation! Galloway then decries Mobilian Jargon’s alleged inadequacy in teaching “spiritual subtleties” (Galloway 2006: 235), but once more provides no actual linguistic analysis for her claim. Whether or not Mobilian Jargon could serve as a medium to explain the gospel was not so much a problem of any linguistic limitation of the pidgin *per se*, as it was rather an issue of how well the speakers learned and used it. Complex constructions in Mobilian Jargon syntax and the comparative richness of its vocabulary (Drechsel 1996; 1997: 124-128) in fact undermine Galloway’s claim, as do the actual early example of “Houma” by the French Jesuit priest Paul du Ru – clearly identifiable as Mobilian Jargon by grammatical criteria – and numerous references to the use of Mobilian Jargon in missionaries’ proselytizing efforts (Drechsel 1997: 139, 216-217, 262). Most importantly, Galloway fails to recognize that the linguistic flexibility of pidgins, like Mobilian Jargon, permitted syntactic and lexical expansion, if demanded by the situations. Alas, she rejects such an idea, because du Ru did not expect his assignment in Louisiana to last long (Galloway 2006: 243, fn. 56).

Galloway (2006: 235-236) further argues against Mobilian Jargon on grounds that the French government discouraged its soldiers and young officers from learning an intertribal medium for fear of their desertion. She however does not seem to have thought through this argument, for the very same line of reasoning also applies to vernaculars, perhaps even more so. Whereas the pidgin had the obvious advantage of geographic range by being understood by many linguistically diverse groups, a native vernacular required greater depth in learning it, following Galloway's own earlier argument about missionaries. Except for a few trusted interpreters and spies, such a deeper understanding was hardly in the interest of the colonial government fearing desertion by those who attained an intimate knowledge of Native American languages and cultures. In some ways, European speakers of Native American vernaculars probably constituted a greater threat to colonial culture than Mobilian Jargon speakers, because they had gained an appreciation of indigenous language and culture that escaped some pidgin speakers. Finally, the Caesarean principle of *divide et impera* that Galloway (2006: 237) raises as yet another counterargument proves of little use in light of the fact that the French were not really in control (as already observed earlier) and that the Indians had access to a common medium outside of the French domain of influence.

Galloway (2006: 237) reluctantly recognizes that Africans might have learned Mobilian Jargon, but prefers to think that many spoke Indian vernaculars instead – again without adding specific documentation for support. From a linguistic perspective, there is no reason why Africans should have learned Native American languages in their pidginized or vernacular forms any more easily or faster than Europeans; conceivably, Africans could have done so when they became absorbed into Native American societies, which indeed happened among several Southeastern Indians (see Miles and Holland 2006). Galloway does not pursue that argument, and instead reminds the reader that the colonial government of Louisiana controlled trade and life much more strictly than its counterparts in the English colonies (Galloway 2006: 238) – ignoring the fact that by then Mobilian Jargon, already well attested, had spread widely (Drechsel 1997: 215-232).

Ultimately, Galloway (2006: 238) recognizes only less formal contexts of trade, especially food provisioning, as a single context for the use of Mobilian Jargon, as it occurred in a triethnic milieu between Native Americans, Frenchmen, and Africans, explicitly excluding métis families. If Galloway's reasoning were correct, we would expect the pidgin under the influence of French and African immigrants to have reflected a substantial influx of French and possibly African words in its lexicon and, with any such substantial relexification, some corresponding grammatical changes towards French. In reality, Mobilian Jargon adopted no more than eight words of French origin – less than one percent of the entire vocabulary – and no identifiable words of African derivation (Drechsel 1997: 325-327); it also remained thoroughly Muskogean in its grammar.

Nonetheless, this restrictive perspective of Mobilian Jargon leads Galloway (2006: 228) to accuse me of ignoring “the tremendous upheavals in Indian life that took place as a result of sustained contact with Europeans, especially after

the end of the European colonial period.” Regretfully, she neglects to describe any specific social upheavals related to Mobilian Jargon, until she draws her final conclusions and then does so only cursorily. Galloway’s focus on late upheavals in the lives of Louisiana Indians since “the end of the European colonial period” comes as a surprise in light of the many other social disruptions that they had already experienced as a result of the earlier introduction of epidemic diseases by Europeans (see, e.g., Kelton 2004). In reality, her claim presents a rather simplistic correlation between linguistic and social domains of history, which we do not find to hold true for pidgins because of their high range in linguistic variation and their great social adaptability (see Mühlhäusler 1997: 63-72). There is no doubt that speakers of pidgin languages, including those of Mobilian Jargon, experienced major upheavals; it would however be inappropriate to presume that the linguistic structures of pidgins correlate with particular social events (such as upheavals) or vice versa, for the simple reason that language-culture correlations beyond those of language selection vaguely reflecting political influence and power have proven thornier than anthropological linguistics had originally expected (see Philips 2004).

Questions of Data and Sources as well as Methods and Theory

Aside from bringing forth issues of sociolinguistic complexity, Galloway’s essay raises some broader questions of ethnohistorical methodology and theory.

Right from the beginning, Galloway (2006: 225-226) belittles the amount of linguistic information available, which she evidently takes as a justification for not addressing specific linguistic and historical data that Crawford and I have accumulated and analyzed over the years. Although Galloway (2006: 228) recognizes my book of some four hundred pages as “the most thorough study of Mobilian jargon (*sic*) now available,” she oddly does not use a single piece of linguistic data from it in her own essay; nor does she review the substantial amount of sociohistorical documentation that both Crawford and I assembled for what anthropologists and linguists had long thought lost. Instead, Galloway (2006: 240) has curiously drawn on a short, seven-page essay by Kenneth H. York (1982) for inspiration and “the insight of a sophisticated native speaker of Choctaw,” which demands a short appraisal.

Following early sources on Mobilian Jargon and drawing on linguistic data collected by Crawford, but analyzed by Mary R. Haas in a short article of her own (Haas 1975), York instead argues that Mobilian Jargon is little else than some variety of Choctaw, if highly deficient. Now we must also wonder whether Galloway trusts York’s judgment because of his intuitions as a native speaker of Choctaw and consequently is skeptical of Crawford’s and my analyses. However, such a predisposition proves at best a dangerous one, especially in the study of pidgin and creole languages. Unless York had learned Mobilian Jargon (for which neither he nor Galloway gives any indication), his linguistic expertise in fact did not qualify him for an analysis of the pidgin beyond the identification of single words. Choctaw

Indians of Oklahoma, fully fluent in their native language but without exposure to Mobilian Jargon, had great difficulty interpreting tape recordings of extended sentences in the pidgin because of its fundamental grammatical differences from their native language; they could make little sense of it beyond recognizing single words, and thought that Louisiana Choctaw had played a bad joke on me – a possibility that we can discard on grounds of ample historical documentation for the pidgin (Drechsel 1997: 248).

Speakers of a vernacular thus make poor analysts of a lexically related pidgin, just as for the same reason teachers of English have made poor students of English-based pidgins and creoles: They usually understand the pidgin as no more than as a “corrupted” version of their native language, and superimpose its grammar onto the pidgin instead of attempting to understand it in its own terms. Notwithstanding his “insight of a sophisticated native speaker of Choctaw,” York apparently has displayed unintentional prejudices in linguistic and historical analysis that ethnohistorians should avoid.

Galloway’s reliance on York’s outdated essay reveals a more fundamental problem: the lack of an explicit theoretical framework for understanding historical sociolinguistic data on Mobilian Jargon. Such a context stems from the study of pidgin and creole languages, which has emerged as a subfield of its own within linguistics with a history of no less than 125 years and a rich literature (see, e.g. Mühlhäusler 1997: 22-50 and Kouwenberg and Singler *in press*) and has presented the appropriate model for analyzing Mobilian Jargon. Yet the study of Mobilian Jargon also requires familiarity with issues in the study of language contact and contact languages, second-language learning, bi- and multilingualism, and the linguistic diversity of Native American languages, which along with sociohistorical factors lend the broader sociolinguistic context for a proper understanding of the pidgin.

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Notes

1. Oddly, Galloway (2006: 229, 230) considers Alabama almost as identical and mutually intelligible with Western Muskogean, whereas in fact the linguistic differences were large, i.e. to the point of mutual unintelligibility (see, e.g., Broadwell 2005 and Hardy 2005b). The differences between Alabama and Choctaw also implied a much greater time depth for their historical separation than Galloway is willing to recognize (see Hardy 2005a for a recent review of the Muskogean language family).

2 For further illustration of this point, note the telling example of another non-European pidgin mistaken as its related vernacular. The recorded sentences in this case prove to be not Hawaiian as erroneously claimed by historians (see Barman and Watson 2006: 24, 446, fn. 15), but Pidgin Hawaiian, spoken in the Pacific Northwest of North America and Mexico in 1790 (*sic*) and identifiable as such with comparable instances throughout eastern Polynesia by their lack of grammatical markers, a few Spanish loanwords, and especially their word order of SVO (as opposed to VSO in Hawaiian).

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