

# Roots of language

*Roots of language* was originally published in 1981 by Karoma Press (Ann Arbor).

It was the first work to systematically develop a theory first suggested by Coelho in the late nineteenth century: that the creation of creole languages somehow reflected universal properties of language. The book also proposed that the same set of properties would be found to emerge in normal first-language acquisition and must have emerged in the original evolution of language. These proposals, some of which were elaborated in an article in *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* (1984), were immediately controversial and gave rise to a great deal of subsequent research in creoles, much of it aimed at rebutting the theory. The book also served to legitimize and stimulate research in language evolution, a topic regarded as off-limits by linguists for over a century. The present edition contains a foreword by the author bringing the theory up to date; a fuller exposition of many of its aspects can be found in the author's most recent work, *More than nature needs* (Harvard University Press, 2014).

ISBN 978-3-946234-10-4



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