

In much of the West Indies, Standard English is the language of administration and education, but there are also distinctive local varieties. Because of emigration, some of these varieties have become established in Britain as well (for example **London Jamaican**). These local usages are sometimes referred to as **creoles**.

### Pidgins and creoles

These creoles are descended from **pidgin** English, which is a simplified form of English used for basic communication between groups of speakers with different origins. Pidgins emerged when slaves were brought to the plantations of the West Indies from the seventeenth century onwards. These forms of language were used not only between slaves and slave-owners but also between groups of slaves brought from different parts of Africa.

A pidgin becomes a creole when it becomes someone's first or only language rather than a second one. A creole also differs from a pidgin in that it becomes a complete language, for use in all situations and not just for basic communication between people with different first languages.