**ER 10.1 *Portuguese and pidgins***

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There is a theory that pidgins all came from the same root. The ‘theory of monogenesis’ gives their source as the lingua franca which was used in the Mediterranean area from the 11th century on, and was said to be the language of the Crusaders. It was called ‘Sabir’, and it has strong links with Portuguese: Portuguese traders were active in the Mediterranean basin for centuries. Evidence for the theory comes from the fact that words – like *pikinini* and *saber,* mentioned in the text – have made their way into pidgins worldwide in various forms, and the same has been said about some grammatical structures.

The German linguist, Hugo Schuchardt seems to have been the first to moot the monogenesis idea, in the late nineteenth century. In the twentieth century the case was argued in Thompson (1961), and Todd (1990) shows a family tree with pidgins in Europe and elsewhere leading back to the Sabir root. The monogenesis theory has its critics, among whose arguments is that similarities among pidgins can be explained by universal processes of simplification and reduction, without it being necessary to suggest a shared historical origin.