

# *Pidgins and Creoles in Education (PACE)* *NEWSLETTER*

Number 3

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## FROM THE EDITOR

As more and more information comes in about the use of pidgins and creoles in education, this newsletter gets longer (and later!).

As usual, this issue includes reports and updates on programs from contributors working in a wide variety of locations (with the most contributions this time from the Solomon Islands!). It also contains summaries of some relevant publications, but for the first time, many of these publications were sent in by their authors.

Another new aspect of this issue is a feature article written especially for the newsletter by one of our readers, Peter Stein.

It's also encouraging to see several preliminary reports in this issue, giving evidence of some of the possible benefits of using pidgins and creoles in education – in Papua New Guinea, the Caribbean and the USA.

Thanks again to all the contributors. Please keep sending in information or short articles for future issues and passing the word (and the newsletter) on to others who may be interested.

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## REPORTS

### USA

From: Katherine Fischer  
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[The Caribbean Academic Program (CAP) at Evanston Township High School was described in the last issue of this newsletter. (See also FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION on page 9.) The figures given below may illustrate the positive affect of the program. They show how a large proportion of the students have moved up into classes at a higher academic level since being in the program.]

“The following are figures for 51 students who were in the CAP program for all or part of the 1991 and 1992 school years. They reflect placements for the 1992 and 1993 school years. (There are a few students for whom information is not available.)

“Of these students, 14, or roughly 27%, were initially in for 2-level courses; the remaining 73% were in 1-level courses [the lowest level]; none were initially in honors courses.

### Placement of CAP Students 1992-93

<u>level</u>	<u>number</u>	<u>percent</u>
1-level:	7	14%
2-level:	28	55%
Honors:	14	27%
Advanced Placement	2	4%

“Of 37 students initially eligible for 1-level [in 1991-92], 7 remain in that track [in 1992-93]. Of 14 students initially eligible for 2-level, 6 remain in that track. The remaining students – 75% – have moved ahead at least one level. 12 students, or 24%, have moved ahead two or more levels. 31% of the total students are and/or will be enrolled in at least one honors class.”

From: Albert Valdman  
Creole Institute, Indiana University  
Ballantine Hall 602  
Bloomington, IN 47405 USA

[The Creole Institute is a research oriented unit, dealing mainly with French-based creoles, especially Haitian Creole.]

“[O]ur pedagogical role is limited to the teaching of Haitian Creole [HC] as a foreign language. However, between 1979 and 1983, we did hold summer institutes for the training of bilingual education teachers involved in the education of Haitian children in the main US Haitian diaspora communities. Many of our graduates are still active in the Boston, Miami, and New York City areas. At present we are engaged in two research projects in French-based creoles: (1) the preparation of a bilingual English - HC dictionary; (2) a historical and general dictionary for Louisiana Creole.” [See PUBLICATIONS below.]

### *Seychelles*

From: M.T. Choppy  
Kreol Institute  
Anse aux Pins  
Mahé, SEYCHELLES

“In Seychelles, Creole is used as a medium of instruction and also taught as a language in schools. For some teaching materials, contact L. Barbé, Creole Section, National Institute of Pedagogy, Seychelles.”

### *Australia*

From: Margaret Dean (formerly Allan)  
PO Box 718  
Katherine, NT 0851 AUSTRALIA

“In Term 3 1991, I taught a 10 x 2 hours/week introductory course in Kriol at Katherine’s Northern Territory Open College. Most of the seven participants are involved with Kriol speakers in their line of work or community involvement, plus one is involved in the tourism industry.”

From: Rob Amery  
Faculty of Education  
Northern Territory University  
PO Box 40416  
Casuarina, NT 0811 AUSTRALIA

“I am involved in language revival/resurrection work in the Wunga languages of the Adelaide region. I am particularly interested in J.D. Powell’s (1973) work, ‘Raising Pidgins

for Fun or Profit’, and the application of these ideas and methods in the Australian context (Sandefur 1983; Thieberger, forthcoming). Sandefur refers to ‘relexification’ whilst Thieberger refers to ‘language recreation’, but they both draw on Powell’s original idea of constructing what he calls an artificial pidgin to facilitate acquisition of a language in situations of severe language loss.

“I have not used these methods (sometimes referred to as the Quileute approach) but I’m particularly interested in their application and outcomes.

“Also acquisition of languages in an additive sense (eg Jamaican Creole in Britain) is potentially very interesting in terms of language resurrection, revival and maintenance of traditional Aboriginal languages.”

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- Thieberger, Nicholas. forthcoming article. In *Can Aboriginal languages survive?* ed. by P. McConvell and R. Amery.

### *Papua New Guinea*

From: Beverley Sundgren  
Christian Brethren Churches  
Anguganak  
Via Wewak, ESP  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

“The Kisim Save Tok Pisin Literacy programme has been operating since 1970. SIL, Lutherans, Christian Brethren, and Catholic Mission personnel involved and interested in literacy met and commissioned Ruth and Wally Sim (my colleagues) and me to produce the *Kisim Save* [literally ‘get knowledge’] series of four primers using an eclectic method – phones, syllable drill, lots of meaningful and relevant story material. After the completion of *Kisim Save* Buk 1-4, I wrote a *Teachers’ Guide* which has a training section of 50 pages at the front followed by 74 lessons each presented on a double page layout with instruction on left and related chalkboard work on right. Reading, writing and numeracy are included in the programme.

“I train teachers in 3-4 week sessions and then they go to remote villages to teach. It has

proven effective. Christian Books Melanesia publish the *Teachers' Guide* (retail K4.00 [approximately US\$4.00]) and the pupil's kitset (retail K2.00). Each self-sealing plastic bag contains 4 readers teaching all phonemes, grammatical things, etc, a pre-reading activity book; 3 exercise books and two pencils. Our aim is to sell at cost to enable as many as possible to learn to read."

From: Bob Litteral  
Department of Education  
Box 5587  
Boroko, NCD  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

"In 1991 PNG had Vernacular Prep Schools (Pre-Grade 1) operating in at least 91 languages. Tok Pisin was 3rd in the number of students in classes from a single language. Enga and Kuanua languages had over 1800 students and Tok Pisin had over 1600. There may be more Tok Pisin students since we may not have received data from every school since Tok Pisin is so diffuse. The Enga and Kuanua numbers are fairly reliable since they were collected by provincial governments. Tok Pisin schools that were not aware of the education data base may not have sent in information."

From: Edward Wiruk  
PO Box 41  
Ambunti, ESP  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

[The Tok Pisin Prep-school Program was featured in earlier issues. The following latest information comes from the 1992 Annual Report.]

"There are now 23 prep-schools in the program, an increase of 9 from the 1990 total reported in the last *PACE Newsletter*. There are 39 teachers, 5 of these being supervisors.

"This year we have experienced disappointments and challenges, especially with the flood and financial problems that forced most of our schools to be suspended for five months. Anyway, the classes for all 23 schools resumed on the 14th September..."

"The Melanesian Tok Pisin preschool program was first started with two schools in 1985. The program moved slowly at a snail's pace when there was opposition from other church groups. Not only that, many teachers opposed the use of Tok Pisin. They thought that the children's learning to read and write first in Tok Pisin would interfere with their learning English. But the growing general

opinion seems to be that Tok Pisin Preschool...actually helps rather than hinders learning of new concepts and ideas as well as other subjects in the English language. In fact, the popularity of the preschools is mainly due to the success of their 'graduates' in the community schools. The recognition and demand for this type of program grows rapidly. Parents, teachers, education authorities in the district, local community leaders and the public at large all agree to the effectiveness of the program."

From: The PNG *Post Courier*  
(Thanks to Geoff Smith)

"Illiterate women of Banz in the Western Highlands will now be able to read and write in pidgin.

"This follows the launching of a literacy school at Banz...It is being sponsored by the United Nations Education and Scientific Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)."

### *Solomon Islands*

From: Bernie O'Donnell  
Nazareth Apostolic Centre  
PO Box 197  
Honiara, SOLOMON ISLANDS

"There has recently been formed a Non-Government Organization to look after Literacy Work. This will initially handle funds from CODE (Canadian Organization for Development through Education). A name [for the organization] will be selected from a competition...There have been several names submitted with Pidgin titles.

"A co-ordinator has been selected for this NGO and he has just started work. This is Mr Jack Rekzy, who has experience as a school teacher and in non-formal education. He will initially supervise projects already operating, some of which are in Pidgin, and some in the vernacular.

"It is hoped that the new co-ordinator will be prominent in advertising literacy in the various districts and sell the idea. He himself has ideas of working in Pidgin and promoting it as something national.

"The need to have an NGO in the Solomons shows that the literacy work, with a strong emphasis on Pidgin, especially among adults, is going ahead despite some set backs. A government survey, not officially released yet, showed some disturbing results of post-school literacy and general illiteracy in the country.

“There have been statements made that people are “hungry for literacy”, so any efforts at this time will be well rewarded.”

From: Ernest W Lee  
Solomon Islands Translation  
Advisory Group  
PO Box 242  
Honiara, SOLOMON ISLANDS

“The New Testament in SI Pijin is in the final stages of preparation for printing by the Bible Society of the South Pacific. It is expected to be available for distribution in 1992. The work was finalized by the Pijin Commission of the Solomon Islands Christian Association.

“Funding has been received from CODE (Canadian Organization for Development) for producing 4 Pijin study booklets.

“Pijin literacy series with basic literacy skills book and story track book have been prepared under the direction of Janice Allen (SIL) under the auspices of SILAC. I'm not sure how soon these will be published.

“I also recently talked to Tancious Ogamauri an RC catechist in the West Kevato area of Malaita. He has trained some people to teach Pijin literacy with apparently very good results among young Kwaio people.”

From: John J. Roughan  
Solomon Islands College of Higher  
Education  
PO Box G23  
Honiara, SOLOMON ISLANDS

“A number of literacy programs are springing up and many of them are using Pijin-English, especially those going on in town...[A] recent literacy training program [the Women's Literacy Training Group, aided by teachers of the Bishop Epalle School]...has been in operation almost two years now. The remarkable thing about it is the fact that almost a third of the 59 women are 40 years old or more. That fact underlines the hunger [for literacy] these women feel in an urban setting.”

From: Rex Stephen Horoi  
Solomon Islands College of Higher  
Education  
PO Box G23  
Honiara, SOLOMON ISLANDS

“The Solomon Islands National Literacy Committee under the guidance of Lesley Mosely, who is the consultant to the committee, has been carrying out a National

Survey of all the major languages in the Solomon Islands.

“Solomon Islands is a multi-lingual society with Solomons Pijin as its lingua franca, English as the official language and between 60-100 different vernaculars. The aim of the survey is to gather the necessary linguistic data upon which to design and develop an appropriate language and literacy policy for Solomon Islands. The absence of a language policy is a policy! We hope to do better when the data is available.”

### **Britain**

From: Philip Baker  
137 Queen Alexandra Mansions  
Judd Street  
London, WC1H 9DL UK

“You may be interested to know that there is some adult literacy teaching of creole languages in London. The creoles concerned are Antillean (St Lucia and Dominica) and Mauritian.”

[If anyone has more information on the use of creoles in education in the UK, please write to the editor.]

### **ARTICLE**

#### **The Beginning of Creole Writing and Teaching in the 18th Century on the (formerly Danish) Virgin Islands St Thomas, St John and St Croix.**

by Peter Stein  
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Creole teaching and the use of Creole for written purposes began much earlier than is known normally. In at least one case, slaves were taught to read and to write Creole already before the midst of the 18th century. We owe this linguistic situation to the Moravian Missionaries who arrived on the formerly Danish Virgin Islands (St Thomas, St John, St Croix) in 1732. After a few years only, they discovered that the Dutch Creole spoken on these islands was much better suited for their missionary purposes than Dutch itself. They started to learn it themselves and they used it not only as an oral language, but also for written purposes.

Since the early beginnings of their missionary work, they taught the members of

their community, i.e. the slaves, to read to enable them to read the gospel, the catechism, prayers, hymns and other religious texts. Consequently they published in 1765 the first Creole booklet ever printed: *Gebeden en Liederen voor die swart Broeder-Gemeenten na S. Thomas, S. Croix en S. Jan* (40pp.). Some of the slaves also were taught to write, so that they would be able to communicate with their Moravian "Brethren and Sisters" in other parts of the world. This teaching had started in Dutch, because only Dutch written texts did exist and Dutch was more similar to *Negerhollands*, the so-called Creole of these islands, than any other language spoken there.

When Count Zinzendorf visited the young community on St Thomas in January/February 1739, he addressed to them a *Farewell Letter*, which three years later was printed in Germany, among many other texts and documents, in its original version in the so-called *Büdingische Sammlung*. On his way back, Zinzendorf took with him two petition letters addressed to the Danish King resp. the Danish Queen, both letters written by the slaves themselves in their (Dutch) Creole language. During the following years these letters were followed by about 150 others, which the slaves wrote in Creole to the Moravian Brethren in Germany or in the United States, where meanwhile existed a few Moravian communities among the Indians, mainly in Pennsylvania. An edition of these letters, which are preserved in the Archives of the Moravian Brethren at Herrnhut (Germany), is in preparation.

The School Ordinance of December 21, 1787 stipulated for the first time in history the introduction of public education for slaves. Moreover, Free Negroes were selected as schoolmasters, and better yet, Creole was to be the language of instruction.

*Negerhollands* thus could have become the first standardized Creole language, if it (as well as Dutch) had not been superseded by English for reasons of slave migration and changing political influence since the beginning of the 19th century. There already existed a grammatical description of the language and a German-Creole Dictionary with more than 3,400 entries, both prepared by C.G.A. Oldendorp, as well as many translations. Moreover, when the Danish missionaries noticed the success the Moravians had by using Creole, they followed them in this way, preparing also translations and a grammar. Their grammar, written by J.M. Magens in the Danish language,

appeared in Copenhagen in 1770 and was thus the first grammar ever printed of a Creole language, whilst the Moravian grammar and dictionary have remained unpublished up to now; only a summary of the grammar was printed in 1777 as part of Oldendorp's *Missionsgeschichte*. Editions of these documents are in preparation.

The first to publish a primer book were once more the Danish whose *ABC-Boekje* appeared in 1770, whilst the Moravian counterpart appeared only in 1800, followed by another one in 1825. These booklets of a dozen pages contain lists of letters, numbers and words, as well as short prayers, following the primers in use in Europe at that time.

Sometimes, the translators or authors of these Creole works present their theoretical reflections in the preface. They are conscious of the problems with which they are confronted and make reflections on how best to arrive at a standardized, normalized written Creole. They prefer an etymological, 'dutchified' orthography to a merely phonological one, they discuss possibilities for the enrichment of the vocabulary, they discuss the existence of different sociolects and so on. The publication of all these documents thus will offer rich materials for further research on the extremely well documented early history of this now extinct Creole language.

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## PUBLICATIONS

Following on from the last issue, here is more information on some recent (and some not so recent) publications about **Haitian Creole**. *Haiti—today and tomorrow*, edited by Charles R. Foster and Albert Valdman (University Press of America, Lanham, MD, 1984) contains three articles focusing on the debate about the introduction of Creole as the language of instruction in the first four years of primary school. In “The linguistic situation of Haiti”, Albert Valdman presents a general overview, discussing the functional distribution of Creole, variation, and issues concerning standardization and modernization. The social and cultural implications of institutionalizing literacy in Creole are dealt with by Ulrich Fleischmann in “Language, literacy, and underdevelopment”. Finally, in “Basic education in Haiti”, Jacomina P. de Regt describes the problems of the Haitian education system, plans to deal with these problems (including the use of Creole in formal education) and constraints on carrying out these plans.

Two other more recent articles by Albert Valdman are concerned with the increasing status of creoles as they are developed and expanded in function: “The deminorization of Haitian Creole” in *Iberoamerican* 15/1(42), pp.108-26 (1991) and “Vers la déminorisation des créoles” in B. Py and R. Jeanneret, eds, *Minorisation linguistique et interaction*, pp. 187-206 (Université de Neuchâtel, Genève, 1989). This latter article deals with **Mauritian Creole** as well as Haitian Creole. Valdman (1991, 108) defines the term “deminorization” as follows:

This term refers to the process whereby a formerly depreciated vernacular speech variety with a strata of a speech community lacking in economic and political power (even though they may in fact comprise the majority of the population) gains prestige vis-à-vis the language variety (or varieties) formerly associated with political and economic power. Haiti represents a particularly interesting case of deminorization in that the language involved, Haitian Creole (HC), developed from an approximative variety of another language, specifically French, in the context of the plantocratic system of the 17th and 18th centuries. In fewer than three centuries after it emerged this language associated with the servile population of the colony has become a language in its own right: it is developing a standard form, it has been endowed with an officially recognized orthography, and, most importantly, it has been promulgated as the republic of Haiti's official language on equal footing with its lexifier language.

One of the important factors which led to the deminorization of Haitian creole was its use in the schools as a medium of instruction and subject of study.

Two publications on Haitian Creole are available from the Creole Institute, Indiana Uni., Ballantine Hall 602, Bloomington, IN 47405 USA: *Ann pale kreyòl: Elementary and Intermediate Haitian Creole* (books and cassette tapes) and *Haitian Creole - English - French Dictionary* (in 2 volumes).

Another work which describes the use of French-lexifier creoles in education to some extent is *Créoles et enseignement du français* by Robert Chaudenson (L'Harmattan, Paris, 1989).

Comparatively little work is available on the actual use of English-lexifier creoles in the Caribbean, or on associated issues such as standardization. However, one very important article by Lise Winer has recently appeared: “Orthographic standardization for Trinidad and Tobago: linguistic and sociopolitical considerations in an English Creole community” in *Language Problems and Language Planning* 14/3, pp.237-68 (1990). This article gives an overview of creoles in the Caribbean and discusses general aspects such as variation and attitudes. It reports that the

typical negative attitudes towards creoles in the past have recently given way to more positive attitudes to some extent:

In the English Caribbean, increased acceptance of “dialect” in schools, including writing of songs, poems, plays, and stories (especially dialogue) in Creole, and, significantly, the opportunity to write in Creole on the O-level English examinations set by the regional Caribbean Examinations Council, have given the vernacular an official educational legitimacy. Nonetheless, both educators and the public are concerned over the extent to which acceptance of vernacular might negatively affect students’ competence in standard English. (p.241)

With regard to writing, many Caribbean creoles have “increased efforts towards literacy” (p.242), with Papiamentu apparently having the widest range of functions.

The author then proceeds to focus on Trinidad and Tobago, presenting some very interesting information on the use of Creole there in education:

In 1975, the Ministry of Education officially recognized that the majority of children in the Trinidad and Tobago school system had a first, primary, and sometimes sole competence in the first language, the “vernacular” or “dialect” [ie **Trinidad and Tobago English Creole (TC)**]. The ministry’s 1975 syllabus called for the recognition of the vernacular as a real language and as a legitimate vehicle for oral and written expression. Educators were called on to use teaching strategies based on the differences between the two language varieties, and to incorporate spoken and written “dialect” in schoolwork and formal examination. (p.245)

The general reaction to the syllabus was predictable:

At the time, the syllabus drew a barrage of protest from parents and the general public. Many objections were based on the fear that acknowledging – much less using – an “inferior” and “useless” kind of speech would undercut the learning of “proper” English, thus limiting a child’s opportunities for successful education and employment. (p.245)

But, Winer concludes:

This attitude no longer generally holds...TC has a measure of officially sanctioned and even required educational use, and is widely available in written form...Although few would advocate the use of TC as the primary educational medium, even in primary education, there is a widely recognized need, from teachers and community, for its use in education as complementary, additive, and transitional to standard English (p.245)

The article goes on to talk about the need for orthographic standardization, presenting general information on writing in TC and problems with the traditional strategies for doing so. Seven principles to be considered in standardization are then outlined. The rest of the article details three possible systems for the TC orthography – the phonemic, the historical-etymological and the modified English – giving the advantages and disadvantages of each. On the basis of these, some guidelines are given for a standard orthographic system following an innovative continuum model.

Another article by Lise Winer examines the popular view that the use of a creole language will have a negative effect of the acquisition of the standard lexifier language. This article is “Variation and transfer in English Creole - Standard English language learning” in *The dynamic interlanguage: empirical studies in second language variation*, ed. by Miriam R. Eisenstein, pp.155-73 (New York, Plenum Press, 1989). Early in the article, she points out that learning standard English is a priority in the Trinidad education system, but students’ performance, especially on standardized examinations, is poor. Winer’s detailed research on students’ errors in standard English showed a large proportion of transfer errors – that is, errors caused by the influence of the first language (in this case, Trinidad English Creole). These findings seem to back up fears of using creoles in the education system.

However, the article implies that at least part of the problem may be due to classroom attitudes and teaching methods both connected with perceptions that Creole is not a distinct language:

Attitudes toward TEC [Trinidad English Creole] are now very different from the total rejection of even 1 years ago, but it is still common to hear teachers or other native TEC speakers talk about the language as “bad” or “broken” English, or to state that you can “mix up” the language any way you want because it “has no rules”. Although the recognition of the vernacular is much greater now, there is still a widespread lack of understanding of the language and, especially on the part of teachers, tremendous insecurity about language use and a lack of conscious awareness and understanding of the ways in which TEC works...(p.156)

Consequently, Winer comes to the following conclusion (p.170):

[T]wo approaches to the teaching of "language arts" should be seriously considered in this situation: (1) an overtly contrastive method of comparing TEC and English and (2) the development of true TEC L1 literacy.

With regard to the first point, she notes (p.171):

Much language now considered "error" is in fact a result of what might be considered inadequate or inappropriate code-switching. A teaching approach which consciously used positive transfer and focused on areas of overlap which are difficult for learners to disentangle on their own should serve to decrease hypercorrections and negative transfer in English by increasing the perception of language distance and by facilitating recognition of difference as well as true similarities between the two languages.

With regard to the second point, Winer refers to the "strong support amongst many educators...for literacy in L1 vernacular as crucial to educational, social, and political development". However, she notes that there has been very little work done in first-language literacy in English Creole:

Kephart's (1987) preliminary work in Carriacou, Grenada, is the only example of a study of the use of a phonemically based orthographic system used to teach reading and writing to native speakers of a Caribbean English Creole who were otherwise taught in English. He found that L1 literacy was accepted, understood, and like by the students and was accepted by parents and teachers once they were assured that it would not hamper their children's educational progress in English, which it apparently did not. A stronger position to investigate is that L1 literacy would in fact develop general reading skills *more easily*, without the burden of concurrent L2 learning, and that the skills could be transferred to L2 literacy as well.

Contact address:

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A revised version of Kephart's (1987) paper, referred to by Winer, is soon to be published (see FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION below). The abstract of his PhD dissertation on the topic follows.

## DISSERTATION

### **"It have more soft words": A Study of Creole English and Reading in Carriacou, Grenada**

[Ann Arbor, University Microfilms, 1985]

by: Ronald F Kephart  
Department of Language & Literature  
University of North Florida  
Jacksonville, FL 32224-2645 USA

#### ABSTRACT

Children in the officially English speaking West Indies have two major problems in learning to read. They must adjust to the multiple patternings and irregularities of traditional English orthography, a hurdle they share with all people learning to read English. They must also deal with a grammar which differs significantly from their native Creole English. This makes it difficult to develop an internal model of the reading process. The result is that few West Indian children attain true literacy in English.

Since the skill of reading is not language-specific, a possible solution is to give children access to literacy first through Creole English. In 1982-84 this was attempted with a small group of twelve year olds who had failed to learn to read competently. A phonemic orthography was used to represent the children's speech. Reading materials were based on stories, anecdotes, etc. contributed by the children. The children were tested at regular intervals in English and these results were compared with a control group.

The research showed that reading Creole English neither confused nor impaired the children's reading of English, as predicted by some educators. While it was not possible to prove conclusively that reading Creole English helped the target population's reading of English, the enjoyment and enthusiasm displayed by all children in reading the Creole materials strongly imply that West Indian children should be allowed to read and write Creole as part of their language arts programs. Other children and adults who were already relatively literate were able to read the materials with no difficulty. Finally, the reading materials were prepared at very low cost with technology available to most schools, refuting the claim that provision of materials in minority languages such as Creole English is too expensive.

## FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION

*Pidgins, Creoles and Nonstandard Dialects in Education* edited by Jeff Siegel (Applied Linguistics Association of Australia)

### CONTENTS

ANNA SHNUKAL:

"The case against a transfer bilingual program of Torres Strait Creole to English in Torres Strait schools"

JOSEPH ALFRED NIDUE:

Summary: "A survey of teachers' attitudes towards the use of Tok Pisin in Community Schools in Papua New Guinea"

IAN G. MALCOLM:

"English in the education of speakers of Aboriginal English"

MARGARET MICKAN:

"Kriol and education in the Kimberley"

JEFF SIEGEL:

"Teaching initial literacy in a pidgin language: a preliminary evaluation"

RONALD KEPHART:

"Reading creole English does not destroy your brain cells!"

GARY OVINGTON:

"Teaching English to Kriol speakers: the Kartiya Game"

JOYCE HUDSON:

Summary: "Fostering English language in Kimberley Schools: an in-service course for teachers"

KATHERINE FISCHER:

"Educating speakers of Caribbean English Creole in the United States"

Most of the contributions to this volume were first presented as papers in the workshop, "Pidgins, Creoles and Non-standard Dialects in Education: Issues and Answers", held at the 16th Annual Congress of the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia at James Cook University in October, 1991. The aims of the workshop were to examine the question of using pidgins, creoles and nonstandard dialects within formal education; to discuss

his question from different academic perspectives: linguistic, sociological, and educational; and to take a more practical look at already established programs using these varieties of language.

The papers fall into two groups: first, those discussing some of the issues involved, and second, those describing some practical answers. The first paper by Shnukal takes up the arguments for and against using Torres Strait Creole as a formal medium of instruction, concentrating on the attitudes of Torres Strait Islanders. The summary of Nidue's paper which follows indicates similar negative attitudes among Papua New Guinean teachers towards the use of Tok Pisin (the PNG dialect of Melanesian Pidgin) in primary schools. Malcolm's paper then discusses the use of Aboriginal English in the schools according to the traditional and a revised model of bidialectal education. Also in the Aboriginal context, Mickan's paper deals with the issues of Kriol in education in the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

Some preliminary answers about the use of pidgins and creoles in formal education are found in the second group of papers. Siegel reports on the initial results of a study which show that using Melanesian Pidgin to teach initial literacy in a preschool program has educational and social benefits and, contrary to popular attitudes, does not interfere with the acquisition of standard English. In the following paper, Kephart presents similar results from an earlier study done with Creole English in the Caribbean. Another kind of answer has to do with using creoles in "awareness" programs in formal education rather than as languages of instruction. Awareness programs teach how creoles are legitimate languages, different from English, and concentrate on pointing out the formal and pragmatic distinctions. Referring to previous work on such programs with Kriol in Western Australia, Ovington's paper describes one successful teaching technique. The summary of Hudson's paper outlines an in-service course for teachers to make them more aware of Kriol. Finally, Fischer's paper describes an awareness program developed quite independently in America, but with teaching methods and positive results similar to those in Australia..

[This collection will be available early in 1993. For more information, please contact the editor.]