

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

Number 5

October 1994

## FROM THE EDITOR

As promised in the last issue, this issue includes a special report on creoles and education in the UK, where a lot has been going on for a long time! Also, for the first time we have a report from Belize, and from the other side of the globe, detailed information on the situation in Réunion (in an article by Leila Caid-Capron).

Once again there was actually too much information to include in this issue (even though it's a page longer than the last one). There's especially a lot on Australia after the workshop on Pidgins, Creoles and Non-standard Varieties in Education held in Melbourne in July (reported on p.10). So, Australia will be the focus of another special report in the next issue.

Thanks for all the valuable contributions that have got us to issue number 5! 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

### *Australia*

From: Rosalind Berry  
PO Box 144  
Kununurra, WA 6743

"Since 1991 I have been working with Joyce Hudson and other TESOL Resource Teachers from the Catholic Education Office in the Kimberley on preparing and delivering the Professional Development course *Fostering English Language in Kimberley Schools* (FELIKS) to teachers in Catholic schools in the region.

"In conjunction with the course, I've trialed games and activities in primary classrooms aimed at enabling the children to understand that two languages (SAE and Kriol/Aboriginal English) are involved in their social and school interactions and to be able to differentiate between them. A number of the games involve consciously switching between the languages."

[FELIKS is mentioned under Publications below.]

From: Jan Branson  
National Institute for Deaf Studies and  
Sign Language Research  
La Trobe University  
Bundoora, VIC 3083

"Interests include pidgins and creoles used by the deaf community."

From: Peter Mühlhäusler  
University of Adelaide  
Adelaide, SA 5005

"Working on a book on linguistic imperialism in the Pacific Area, which contains a chapter on this topic [pidgins and creoles in education]."

From: Toni Familiari  
PO Box 100  
Broome, WA 6725

“In my work as the Aboriginal Studies Curriculum Adviser for Kimberley Catholic schools, the use of pidgins and/or creoles is part of the knowledge teachers must have to be effective in working with Aboriginal children who employ this type of language for communication. I work with a language team that offers people who can in-service staff to identify the language type employed by Aboriginal students so they can be aware of this in their roles as teachers.”

From: Lindsay Parkhill  
PMB 138  
Katherine, NT 0853

“I work as a lecturer for Batchelor College in a Kriol-speaking community, Ngukurr, and am interested in literacy, particularly visual literacy as in writing.

“Ngukurr is an interesting educational environment in that Kriol is the language of instruction in a school with an all-Aboriginal staff and *no* bilingual program.”

From: Lee Hammond  
Kimberley District Education Office  
PO Box 304  
Kununurra, WA 6743

The following is taken from a description of the “Critical Steps Program” in English as a Second Language (ESL):

“Purpose:

The ESL program is designed to facilitate the learning of Standard Australian English (SAE) by Aboriginal students who have an Aboriginal language or Kriol or Aboriginal English as their first language. Aboriginal students should acquire both oral and written competency in SAE and develop a positive attitude towards learning SAE.

“Program description:

This is a new program to the Aboriginal Education Operational Plan. It is a response to recent research indicating the extent of the problem, and the Ministry’s commitment to social justice though catering for the linguistic needs of non-English speaking background (NESB) students.

The program will extend and develop projects already operating in the Kimberley and Kalgoorlie Districts. Schools will be grouped into cells and receive support from

visiting support teachers. Students in a transitional phase of schooling (ie K-Yr 1, Yr 4-5, Yr 7-8, Yr 10-11, Yr 12) will be targeted in particular to receive support. The support teachers will utilise First Steps and Stepping Out strategies and developmental continua in implementing programs in each involved school. The emphasis of each school-based program will be in providing direct classroom support for teachers and students.

A research component will be included in this program and the findings of the research will be disseminated to all schools with Aboriginal ESL students.”

### *Pacific*

From: Heather Lotherington-Woloszyn  
School of Humanities  
University of the South Pacific  
PO Box 1168  
Suva, FIJI

“I am interested in the provision of basic literacy skills in a community language to children in the Pacific. In the complicated linguistic demography of Melanesia, vernacular literacy is not always feasible. I would like to see Melanesian Pidgin [MP] being promoted as a vehicle for literacy (as well as oral communication).

“Presently Melanesian children in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are expected to become literate in English (or French in Vanuatu). However, teachers are often found to be using MP as the de facto medium of communication in the classroom. It would be far more beneficial to children already conversant in MP to use the language for the acquisition of literacy, too. This would confirm and build on community learning, decrease the dislocation between community and school learning and reaffirm cultural identity.”

From: The Editor

A pilot project is under way to evaluate the teaching of initial literacy in Bislama (Melanesian Pidgin) in a Vanuatu preschool. Two teachers at Lawa Preschool (Southwest Bay, Malakula) attended Literacy Training workshops run in Port Vila by Nick Faraclas of UPNG in 1993. They have been using some of the methods they learned back in their school. The children’s progress will be monitored when they begin primary school next year.

The project is being overseen in Vanuatu by Enikelen Netine, of World Vision, who already has wide experience in the Melanesian Literacy Project's work on adult Bislama literacy in Vanuatu.

### **South America**

From: Maria Carlota Amaral Paixão Rosa  
Universidade Federal do  
Rio de Janeiro  
R. Esmeraldino Bandeira, 29-A casa 1  
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"I am involved in research on linguistic contact in Brazil from the 16th to 18th centuries. I am interested in the way *lingua geral* was transmitted by the missionaries. Recently I found an 18th century 'specimen' written in Latin by a German Jesuit priest to teach *lingua geral*. It is interesting because he was following the *Janua Linguarum* model of teaching almost 150 years later."

### **Caribbean and Central America**

From: Kennedy Samuel  
Folk Research Centre  
PO Box 514  
Castries, ST LUCIA

"Our centre has LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT as one of its main program areas. This focuses specifically on the development of the St Lucian French Creole: Kwéyòl. It is the first language of a majority of St Lucians and one of our primary objectives is to ensure that it assumes its rightful place as a foundation language and a language of instruction within the education system. We already use it quite extensively in popular and community education processes. In addition, we have succeeded in developing an orthography that is standardized with the systems in other kwéyòl-speaking countries."

From: Ken Decker  
SIL  
PO Box 2286  
Belize City, BELIZE

"We have recently begun a project here in Belize Creole to assist in the development of a written form of the language. As in most Creole situations, there are people here that have favourable attitudes towards the promotion of Creole, and other people who won't even admit that they speak it. Generally,

the attitudes are positive.

"Belize Creole is an English-lexicon creole spoken as a first language by about 60,000 people and is the second language for at least another 60,000 people in the country. A number of Belizeans have made attempts over the last 30 years at writing Creole but there is no accepted standardization for the orthography at this time. We are planning an orthography workshop for June 1994 to begin the process of standardizing the orthography.

"Up to this time there has been no coordination of activities to promote the use of the language or to promote Creole culture. Several attempts have been made in recent years to begin Creole promotional societies. SIL is now in the process of developing a formal relationship with the University College of Belize to coordinate efforts for the development of Belize Creole as a written language.

"There is growing interest in the promotion of the use of the Creole language. There have been Creole radio talk programs for several years and now the first Creole television talk show has begun. There are people in the Department of Education that are interested in the possible use of Creole in education. There is occasional informal use of Creole for giving explanations. We've even heard unconfirmed reports of a few teachers that have encouraged students to try to write in Creole.

We have positive hopes for the possibilities for the development of Creole as a written language and for the use of Creole in Education."

### **North America**

From: Bambi Schieffelin  
Anthropology, New York University  
25 Waverly Pl  
New York, NY 10003 USA

"I am interested in education in Tok Pisin and vernacular language socialization, discourse analysis, language ideology and code-switching between Tok Pisin/vernacular as part of language acquisition."

From: Cindy Ballenger  
2067 Massachusetts Ave  
Cambridge, MA 02140 USA

"I worked for a number of years as a teacher in a bilingual pre-school program for Haitian Creole-speaking children. In that context I

began to explore various issues related to language and literacy. I am presently part of a project looking at science-learning in bilingual classrooms. I am working in a Haitian-speaking classroom (5th-8th grades) where the children are studying ants. They develop investigations, do observations, analyse their data and theorise all in Haitian Creole.”

From: Mary Holbrook  
University of Illinois  
4080 Foreign Languages Building  
707 S Matthews  
Urbana, IL 61801 USA

“My interest in this area began with an interest in the use (or the lack of use) of native American languages for literacy education – specifically Mayan languages for elementary schooling and adult literacy. From there I learned more about languages in contact and began to examine contact between the Mayan and Spanish languages. I would like to put this all together and the topic of pidgins and creoles in education seems to be an appropriate direction to follow.”

### *Europe*

From: Morgan Dalphinis  
Hackney Education Directorate  
Edith Cavell Building  
Enfield Rd, London N1 5AZ UK

“I am at present carrying out a research project into the language needs of bilingual pupils, including Creole speakers, for the Hackney Education Directorate.

“I have also initiated Creole Studies at a Black Supplementary School in London and meet with a group of Afro-Caribbean linguists on a regular basis to discuss the current issues in Creole and Education in Britain.”

[See the special report on the UK below.]

From: Rebekka Ehret  
Institute of Cultural Anthropology  
University of Basle  
19, Münsterplatz  
4058 Basle, SWITZERLAND

“[I am undertaking] sociolinguistic/anthropological fieldwork in Freetown (Sierra Leone) on Krio in the educational system (questions of varieties, standardization, orthography, etc.) among primary and secondary school children.”

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Some journal articles which have recently appeared include the following.

“Curriculum for Jamaican creole-speaking students in New York City” by Yvonne Pratt-Johnson in *World Englishes* 12/2, 1993 (pp. 257-64) discusses the situation in New York City with regard to the education of Caribbean immigrants, similar to that in the UK and Canada (see the reports in this issues and in *PACE Newsletter* 4). Here is the abstract of the article:

Jamaican students constitute a significant segment of the New York City public school population. Many Jamaican students have a solid grasp of Standard American English (SAE) at the time they enrol in the New York City public school system, but others speak only Jamaican Creole (JAC), a variety of English spoken in everyday conversation. Many New York teachers claim that JAC is incomprehensible. Moreover, classroom teachers who are newly exposed to the spoken and written forms of JAC are not familiar with Jamaican culture or trained to handle the linguistic and cultural differences. Consequently, they may refer these students to English as a second language and/or special education classes. This paper outlines some of the problems encountered by JAC students in New York City public schools and by the teachers who instruct them; it argues the need for a specialized curriculum and instruction for these students, and it offers recommendations and suggestions for a model program which will accommodate those needs.

In their article, “The ‘real’ Haitian orthography, ideology, metalinguistics, and orthographic choice (*American Ethnologist* 21/1, 1994, pp.176-200), Bambi B. Schieffelin and Rachele Charlier Doucet present a detailed picture of the debates concerning the orthography to be used for Haitian Creole (kreyòl). They also give an excellent summary of typical negative attitudes towards creole languages in general (pp.181-2). Here is the abstract:

This article analyses competing representations of kreyòl and the symbolic importance of decisions taken in standardizing a kreyòl orthography. Kreyòl, which educated Haitians claim to share with the masses, is an enduring symbol of Haitian identity, yet the image of this language is deeply contested in several arenas. Linking language ideology, in particular metalinguistic terms that refer to varieties of spoken kreyòl, to orthographic choice, we view the debates as part of a

nationalist discourse about Haitianness – what is authentic and legitimate – and examine the role of language in national identity formation.

An article in French by Vinesh Y. Hookoomsing, “Langues et législations en pays créolophones” appeared in a special issue of *Universités* on the topic of languages and legislation in French-speaking countries: *La langue, la loi et la Francophonie* (15/2, 1994, pp.42-4). The article gives a comprehensive overview of the use of varieties of French-based creole in the Seychelles, Haiti, St Lucia, Dominica and Mauritius. Only in the Seychelles and Haiti does the creole have status as an official language and as a language of education.

Two important publications have come out in Australia this year, both to be reviewed in a Special Report on Australia in the next issue of this newsletter. The first is *Bridging two worlds: Aboriginal English and cross-cultural understanding* by Jean Harkins (University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1994).

The second is *Fostering English language in Kimberley schools (FELIKS): Professional development course for primary schools* (Catholic Education Office, Kimberley Region, Broom, 1994), developed by the Language Team including Joyce Hudson and Rosalind Berry. This is actually a whole kit including a manual for presenters, overhead transparencies, handouts, and audio and video tapes. (If you can't wait for the next issue to find out more about this course, contact the Catholic Education Office, PO Box 1451, Broom, WA 6725; Tel (091) 922 275 Fax (091) 022 559.)

[More publications are described in the report below on the UK.]

## THESES/REPORTS

“Literacy practices in a small rural ni-Vanuatu village” by Helen Lobanga Masing (thesis of MA in TESOL, University of Technology, Sydney, 1992) contains a chapter on the language and education situation in Vanuatu. Some of the problems of lack of standardization are discussed. The thesis clearly shows the importance of the use of Bislama in all literacy activities at the village level. It recommends that the government

articulate a clear language policy for Vanuatu, with special attention to Bislama and vernacular languages, and that Bislama be encouraged as the medium of instruction at the primary level. It is also recommended that the Pre-Service Teachers' Program should have a unit on Bislama studies, as well as one on indigenous languages.”

“A survey of use and attitudes towards Melanesian Pidgin of the *Wantok* student population at the University of the South Pacific, Laucala campus” by Rosalyn Wale is the report on a survey of Solomon Islands and Vanuatu students, done for postgraduate study at USP. Here are some extracts from the conclusion (p.20):

...[T]he myths surrounding Pidgin languages still persist among educated speakers of Pidgin. For example, the statistics show that Pidgin is still regarded as an inferior variety of English and that it is [regarded as] unsuitable to be used as the language of instruction as well as a subject to be studied in the schools. However, we can also predict from these statistics that those who believe in Pidgin as a language in its own right and that it is suitable for use in education will increase in numbers in the future. It is already evident that attitudes towards Pidgin are going to get better.

...It is encouraging to note that the majority of the subjects, 79 percent, regard Pidgin as a Melanesian language. Also, with the question of whether or not Pidgin interferes with the learning of English, the number of those who believe that Pidgin does facilitate the learning of English are unexpectedly higher. It also pleases me to note that 87 percent of the respondents said that they are proud to be Pidgin speakers.

Jeff Allen has completed two graduate theses at the Université Lyon, France:

“Sainte-Lucie: Description sociolinguistique d'une île antillaise” (Département des Sciences du Langage, 1992)

“Sainte-Lucie: Relexification, décréolisation, recr olisation ou adlexification” (Centre de Recherches Linguistiques et S miologiques et D partement des Sciences du Langage, 1994)

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## ARTICLE

### The use of Creole in Teaching in Réunion

by: Leila Caid-Capron  
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REUNION

As an Assistant Lecturer in Linguistics in the Department of Sciences of Education at the Faculty of Arts in Réunion, I try to give the students<sup>1</sup> the tools in lexicology, syntax and sociolinguistics which should help them to suppress the linguistic problems they encounter in the pedagogic experience. These are often caused by the voluntary rejection of Creole as the mother tongue in the school system. Réunion, like the three other French *départements*<sup>2</sup>, follows the national program, generally without consideration for the local languages and cultures.

With the help of an "IPR-IA" (Regional Teaching Inspector, Inspector of Academy), commissioned in the area of language acquisition and mastery as well as for regional cooperation, we are going to specify what is done on an institutional level, then concretely consider Creole as a mother-tongue in Réunion.

At the Rectorate of Réunion, the educational district council of programs is responsible for the adaptation of the national program to the local cultural realities. There exist commissions in geography, history, botany, and language which take into account the Reunionese culture and language. In the commission which is interested in language teaching, a workshop has been constituted, guided by an "IDEN"<sup>3</sup>.

Since the creation of the "ZEP" (*Zone d'Education Prioritaire*<sup>4</sup>), and their articulation with the operations of the "DSQ" (*Développement Social des Quartiers*<sup>5</sup>), the emphasis is laid on how to take into account the Reunionese linguistic facts.

It is within this framework (DSQ/ZEP) that an agreement has been concluded between the Rectorate and the town of Le Port on the area of Rivière des Galets – an underprivileged quarter – to struggle against school failure, a program entitled "*Réussir l'école*"<sup>6</sup>.

Four projects are led in this framework in conjunction with the actors in the field (teachers/parents) and one or two scientific

tutors. The projects – School, Family, Reading, and AFMC (Learning French in a Creole-speaking Area) – were laid out simultaneously two years ago. Another one, which has the theme "scientific study and entomology", was laid out this year.

The purpose is to use science in order to favour the pupils' success in school, in their natural environment and through the means of their mother tongue.

The group AFMC, for example, intervenes from kindergarten to primary school. The problems which are studied are strictly linguistic: phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical. Further more, the local cultural elements are integrated in the school programs throughout with relations of everyday life, counting rhymes, "*sirandanes*" (riddles).

In this quarter of La Rivière des Galets, a group of parents is represented in all the activities – they help with invigilation of studies, homework studies, reading – in order to help the creole-speaking children to succeed at school.

Provided for in the institutional framework, these actions remain, however, marginal. In everyday reality, on the other hand, the consideration of the fact of Creole is very limited. The debate remains coloured by its political character.

At the level of the headmasters, the positions are usually clear-cut: for some of them, French language must be the only one used and taught at school. For others, it is acceptable to allow the Creole-speaking children to speak Creole at school. In this second case, the ideology and the purpose remain, however, always the same: the usage of the Creole language to learn French. Learning Creole as a language to be studied in its entirety has never been contemplated.

What can be stated from this will to ignore the Creole language is that the twelve-year old children speak an interlanguage which is no longer Creole and which is not French either. We cannot deny the impact of such a policy on the acquisition of the French written language.

It follows from this study that French language is not taught with techniques which take into account the pupils' social language practice. The parallel with the neighbouring countries – the Creole speaking countries (Seychelles, Mauritius) and non-Creole-speaking countries (Madagascar, Comoro Islands) – would on the one hand open up new horizons in the understanding of

linguistic problems, with a view to removing them. As well, it would make it easier to determine the best techniques of learning in a Creole-speaking environment which would finally allow the acceptance of Creole as a **language** (as in the Seychelles where Creole is recognized as the official language).

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<sup>1</sup> Most of them are primary or secondary school teachers, educators or future teachers who sit for this examination to be able to enter the "IUFM" (Institute Universitaire de la Formations des Maîtres) (Training School).

<sup>2</sup> Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana.

<sup>3</sup> "IDEN": Inspectrice Départementale de l'Education Nationale (a primary teacher inspector).

<sup>4</sup> Area of Priority Education.

<sup>5</sup> Social Development of the Districts.

<sup>6</sup> Succeed in School.

## **SPECIAL REPORT:**

### **PACE in the UK**

The discussion of issues concerning pidgins and creoles in education that we find today in Australia, Canada and the USA has been going on for many years in the UK. Large-scale immigration from the West Indies to the UK began after World War II, and rose rapidly in the late 1960s. By 1971, there were over half a million West Indians in Britain, a large proportion speaking varieties of Caribbean Creole English.

Problems in the education system related to this immigration existed from an early stage, but they did not come to the attention of the general public until the early 1970s. Statistics were released showing that non-immigrants did much better than immigrants in the schools, and all other immigrants did better than West Indians. Also figures showed that West Indian children were highly over-represented in schools for the educationally sub-normal.

This information is detailed in an influential book by Viv Edwards: *The West Indian language issue in British schools: Challenges and responses* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1979). In the first chapter, the author considers factors which might be responsible for this poor performance, such as social adjustment and

educational expectations. But language – the Creole spoken by the students – is singled out as the most important factor, both in the problems of acquiring the standard used in the schools and the very negative attitudes of teachers towards any nonstandard variety. The general picture is described on page 14:

Language is a subject about which West Indians tend to be very defensive. Because they have been told repeatedly that Creole is "Broken language" and that those who use it must be very backward, their reaction is often to insist that they speak standard English and deny any knowledge of a distinct West Indian variety. Similarly, the British expect West Indians to speak English – they come, after all, from former British colonies where the official language is English. And the British reaction when they are confronted with speech which is clearly not standard English is often not favourable.

In Chapter Two, the author gives a detailed description of West Indian Creole and its patterns of use. Following the work of William Labov in the USA, she then devotes a chapter to verbal skills of West Indians. The next chapter details how Creole may actually interfere with the acquisition and use of Standard English, thus disadvantaging children in the schools.

In Chapter Five, Edwards discusses research findings on negative attitudes of teachers towards Creole-speaking children. She concludes (pp.97-8):

The interrelationship between language differences and attitudes to these differences can now be seen to be a highly complex one. The teacher who does not or is not prepared to recognize the problems of the Creole-speaking child in a British English situation can only conclude that he is stupid when he gives either an inappropriate response or no response at all. The stereotyping process leads features of Creole to be stigmatized and to develop connotations of, amongst other things, low academic ability. The teacher is then more likely to allow the stereotype to determine her behaviour towards the child, and low teacher expectation will very probably lead to low pupil performance. The child, for his part, feels threatened, especially in the early stages, by comprehension difficulties. These and the teacher's behaviour towards him produce a state of linguistic insecurity and he is very likely to seem inarticulate as a result. This reinforces the teacher's preconceived ideas and so the cycle is perpetuated.

Chapter 6, "Practical approaches to language", shows the undesirability (and impossibility) of dialect eradication, and

describes two other approaches: the bidialectal approach and dialect appreciation. It concludes with descriptions of more innovative approaches. The final chapter argues for a curriculum change for a multicultural society.

Another book by Viv Edwards covers the issues of multicultural education more generally: *Language in multicultural classrooms* (Batsford Academic and Educational, London, 1983). But it does contain a chapter specifically on language in the British Black (ie West Indian) community.

*Caribbean and African languages: social history, language, literature and education* (Karia Press, London, 1985) was written by Morgan Dalphinis, a speaker of St Lucia Kwéyòl who migrated to England at the age of 11. Part IV of the book (pp.187-280) is on Creoles and Education. After an introduction in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 presents the arguments for and against teaching English as a second language to speakers of creole languages. These revolve around differing points of view as to whether English-based creoles are separate languages or merely dialects of English. According to the author, the main problem is lack of recognition of Creoles as distinct varieties which are learned like any other.

Chapter 3 analyses the different approaches to creole languages both in the Caribbean (focussing on St Lucia) and in England, keeping in mind the issue of political power with regard to development of these languages. In the Caribbean, the change of status of Patwa (Kwéyòl) to a written language is described, and the work of the Folk Research Centre and the Society for Caribbean Languages is outlined. In England, three organizations dealing with Creole speaking immigrants are discussed. The first two were within the educational system: the West Indian Supplementary Service (WISS) and the English Language Service, both of the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The third is outside the educational system: the Caribbean Communications Project.

WISS was established in 1971 in reaction to the large number of Caribbean students being sent to schools for the educationally subnormal. It was finally realized that the low intelligence attributed to Caribbean immigrants and their children was largely the result of differences in Caribbean uses of English. Dalphinis points out (p.214):

“WISS, in its initial stages was, therefore, an organisation mainly geared to providing supplementary educational help to Caribbean pupils, as well as to make schools in which their numbers were high, more sensitive to their special needs as people from a different culture.” WISS teachers aimed to teach Standard English, but by supplementing rather than trying to replace students’ home languages. In other words, they emphasized appropriate language use in different contexts in British society.

The English Language Service began teaching English as a second language to immigrant students in 1965. However, this organization dealt mainly with Asian immigrants because Caribbean Creoles were not considered to be separate languages.

The Caribbean Communications Project was established in 1975 to promote literacy among adults. It organized literate Caribbean people to teach adults to read and write and provided input into training programs run by established institutions.

The chapter ends with some recommendations for the use of Creole literature in the schools and the teaching of some grammatical aspects of Creole languages. Creoles should be accepted as part of the culture of Caribbean people and should become part of mainstream education in Britain and St Lucia.

The fourth chapter examines how features of Creole languages affect the oral and written English of adult learners. Finally, Chapter 5 relates some educational methods for overcoming the problems of Caribbean students in British schools. These include using Creole languages in story telling, teaching language awareness, and running courses specifically about Creole languages.

The situation in the UK has been complicated by three other factors. First, in the Black community there has been large-scale language shift away from Creole. But the shift has been to nonstandard varieties of English, such as London working class English, rather than to standard varieties. Second, many Blacks of West Indian descent are still learning Creole as a badge of social identity, but they are learning it as a second language (or second dialect), often in their adolescent years. Third, many Whites are also learning Creole from mixing with their Black peers.

The Language and Literacy Unit of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), aware of these complications as well as the

issues pointed out earlier by educators such as Viv Edwards, started the Afro-Caribbean Language and Literacy Project in Further and Adult Education in 1984. The culmination of this project was the publishing of a book of language materials for students in multilingual and multi ethnic classrooms: *Language and power* (London, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990). The teachers involved in the project, such as Roxy Harris, took a wide ranging approach, aiming at all students who speak nonstandard varieties of English. They point out (p.iv):

...[T]he issues surrounding the use of Standard English are of concern to all students, not just those of Caribbean descent. Standard English is the language of education and authority but it is not the first language of the majority of population.

A key aspect of the book is "language awareness". This is described as follows (p.v):

The book is based on the belief that a key part of the language curriculum for all students should be an outline of the social and political factors which helped to determine the development of Standard English. It is also necessary to make available to both students and teachers as much information as possible about languages in general and about the history and development of Caribbean Creole languages in particular. This includes an understanding of their grammatical structure, pronunciation patterns, vocabulary and idiom. The students themselves can contribute a great deal of this information, and their confidence will grow when their expertise in this area is acknowledged. Students' own knowledge and understanding of different languages and language varieties are an invaluable resource for language teaching. It is in this context that progress on the language issue in the multilingual classroom can be achieved, not just for students of Afro-Caribbean origin, but for students of all races and backgrounds.

The book is divided into three sections: (A) The history of Standard English (with four chapters), (B) Language in the world (six chapters) and (C) Caribbean Creole languages (six chapters).

A useful earlier book that came out of the project is *My personal language history* compiled by Roxy Harris and Fou-fou Savitzky (London, New Beacon Books, 1988). This is a collection of students' narratives about their language:

The book aims to allow students to express their perceptions of their own linguistic

situation with all their uncertainties, ambiguities and pain. The book is intended to be read and enjoyed and to provide discussion and writing among students in their classes and amongst teachers in an in-service training context.

Another publication produced for the Afro-Caribbean Language and Literacy Project is *Language writing and publishing: Working with Afro-Caribbean students* by Irene Schwab and Jud Stone (Hackney Reading Centre – City and East London College, London, 1986).

The ILEA was abolished in 1990, but a scaled down Afro-Caribbean Education Project continues, primarily working in the classroom with teachers and students, and in the training of teachers. Also, more use is being made of Afro-Caribbean literature.

Three chapters dealing with creole and education in Britain are found in *The language of Black experience* edited by David Sutcliffe and Ansel Wong (Blackwell, Oxford, 1986), described in *PACE Newsletter* 2(1991). [Please note that the author of one of the chapters, John Richmond, was incorrectly given as John Richard.] A chapter by Roger Hewitt in another book (1989) is also described in that issue.

A more recent book chapter by Morgan Dalphinis appears in *Multilingualism in the British Isles* edited by S Alladina and Viv Edwards (Harlow, Longman, 1991) [not available to the editor].

Mark Sebba's book, *London Jamaican* (Longman, London, 1993), is the most recent detailed description of the language of London's Black community. The book shows how most adolescents are now actually bilingual, speaking a type of London English, similar to that of their White peers, as well as a type of Creole (London Jamaican), based on Jamaican Creole, but not identical to it. This Creole is spoken by Caribbean adolescents even if they are not originally from Jamaica. Detailed conversational data show frequent code-switching between the two varieties in everyday interactions.

The book also contains a short chapter on Creole as a language of education (pp.138-45). Some of the past controversies are described as follows (p.141):

In the early 1980s it was possible to discern two largely separate groups who favoured the introduction of some sort of Creole element in classroom work. On the one hand some teachers, in a spirit of multiculturalism and linguistic liberalism, sought to provide black

pupils with a positive view of “their own” language, by discussing its historical background and encouraging the use of Creole in creative writing....On the other hand, some parents, perhaps influenced by black consciousness ideology, wanted Creole to become a school subject.

The author describes some of the problems with the idea of introducing London Jamaican as a subject, like the mother tongues of other ethnic minorities. First, it is not the mother tongue of a large proportion of the Caribbean population. Most of those born in the UK speak London English, and of those born in the Caribbean, many are not from Jamaica but from other countries such as Guyana and Dominica, where different creoles are spoken. Second, there is no accepted written standard in Britain for the English-based creoles.

However, Creole is being introduced into the schools in other ways (p.144):

An increasing interest in “language awareness” in English lessons in the 1980s, and especially the emphasis on linguistic knowledge in the Kingman Report (1988), together with the introduction by some Examining Boards of new A-level examinations in English Language as an alternative to the existing English Literature A-levels, made it possible for teachers to include units on Creole as part of a wider study of “language varieties” aimed at all pupils. A number of textbooks for use at GCSE or A-level have responded to this possibility.

The *Language and Power* materials, described above, are also discussed. But the author concludes that the future of Creole in the UK lies with its use as a spoken language, not a language of education.

Finally, the entry in *The encyclopedia of language and linguistics* (Pergamon, Oxford, 1994) on “Black English in Education: UK”, written by Morgan Dalphinis (pp.366-8), is a good summary of the historical trends, educational issues and cultural and identity factors with regard to Creole and education in Britain.

## CONFERENCES

### Past:

A workshop on “Pidgins, creoles and nonstandard varieties in education” was held on 6-7 July 1994 as part of the Australian Linguistic Institute, at La Trobe University, Melbourne. The aims were

- to discuss some of the issues concerning the use of these often lowly regarded varieties of language in formal education,

- to describe some strategies and activities involving these varieties which have actually been used in teacher education and classroom teaching, and
- to present some research findings on the effectiveness of such activities.

Presentations were made by Jeff Siegel (on general background issues, teaching initial literacy and research findings), Charlene Sato (political aspects, teacher training and classroom discourse management with regard to Hawaiian Creole English), Diana Eades (Aboriginal English) and Joyce Hudson (the FELIKS in-service course for teachers of Kriol-speaking students). In addition, Denise Angelo spoke about Kriol in Katherine and Geoff Smith about Tok Pisin in Papua New Guinea.

Some lively discussion also took place among the more than 60 participants.

Four papers relevant to PACE were given at the conference of the Society for Caribbean Linguistics in association with the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics, held in Guyana on 24-27 August 1994:

- C. Albino: “The use of Cape Verde Creole in Portuguese schools.”
- Dennis R. Craig: “Language education revisited in the Commonwealth Caribbean.”
- Monica E. Taylor: “The economics of English language teaching and learning in Jamaica – ‘dead’ stock on dusty shelves?”
- Hubert Devonish: “Caribbean vernacular languages, technology, and the emergence of an alternative national consciousness.”

According to one correspondent, Hubert Devonish gave his presentation in Jamaican Creole, which caused quite a stir!

### Coming up:

The conference of the Society of Pidgin and Creole Linguistics, in association with the Linguistics Society of America: 6-7 January 1995 in New Orleans, USA. Further information from Armin Schwegler, Dept of Spanish and Portuguese, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA 92717 USA; fax (714) 856-6901 email [aschwegl@uci.edu](mailto:aschwegl@uci.edu).

The first meeting of the proposed Association for Pidgins and Creoles in the Pacific in association with the Second International Conference on Oceanic Linguistics: 3-7 July 1995 in Suva, Fiji.

Further information from:

The Editor, *PACE Newsletter*.