Pidgins and Creoles in Education (PACE) NEWSLETTER

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SHORT REPORTS

USA

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[I am] Librarian at Green Library, Stanford, responsible for several collections including language and linguistics. In addition to purchase, we would be happy to receive as gifts pidgin/creole material that would be catalogued in union catalogues such as OCLC and RUN, and that could be borrowed by other libraries through interlibrary loan.

Papua New Guinea

from: Edward Wiruk
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PAPUA NEW GUINEA

I am coordinating the PIM literacy programme and work as an Elementary and Literacy Trainer Coordinator. My job is basically training literacy and elementary school teachers, coordinating programmes, supervising teachers and producing materials for both programmes.

This year we have 26 prep schools in operation (using Tok Pisin). One of them is a literacy centre to train teachers for literacy schools in the Hunstein Range area where there is no existence of formal primary education. We are planning to start literacy classes in other areas as well.

Elementary schools [using vernacular languages] are sprouting like mushrooms everywhere but there is a great need to produce necessary materials and secure support to keep them going.

I will be training 15 trainers from 13 March 2000. The purpose is to have supervisors and trainers in the literacy programmes in the Ambunti district.

With assistance from the World Wide Fund for Nature, we will be focusing on the literacy programme within the next five years. I am very glad that something will work out well to assist the bulk of our people.

Netherlands

from: Jacques Arends
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Although my main interest in creoles is their historical development, I'm also interested in applied issues. In January 1999, Eithne Carlin (Leiden University) and I organized a semi-popular symposium on “The languages of Suriname”. This one-and-a-half day event, which took place at Leiden University, was specifically designed to be of interest both to academics and non-academics (especially persons with a Surinamese background). The symposium, during which all (ca 15) Surinamese languages were addressed, drew an audience of well over 100 participants and was widely covered in both local and national media. The organizers are currently editing a book based on the presentations, which is also specifically directed at an academic and non-academic readership. This will be the first book in which all Surinamese languages are dealt with, including the three major creoles (Sranan, Ndyuka and Saramaccan) and their sub-varieties (Boni, Paramaccan, Matawai and Kwinti).

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FROM THE CREOLIST

In February, the editor posted an enquiry to the CreoList about the use of pidgins/creoles in education, requesting the following information:

1. Name of country
2. Name of pidgin/creole
3. Is there a standardized orthography? If so, what kind? And is it widely used?)
4. Is the pidgin/creole used at all in literature? If so, how?
5. Is the pidgin/creole used officially in formal education? If so, how?
6. Is the pidgin/creole used in informal education? If so, how?

The following replies later appeared:

Haiti

from: E Vedrine <evedrine@hotmail.com>

Through a 3-year intensive bibliographic research (covering publications on Haitian Creole from Colonial times to the end of the 20th century), I have documented a great deal of published books, articles, and theses/ dissertations, but there are more publications on HC than in HC.

In terms of KREYOL IN EDUCATION, that still remains something theoretical in Haiti where the state and the elite still consider French to be more important in this aspect (and it's also more economical for them to use materials published in French 50 years ago rather than to spend $ producing new materials in Kreyol).

Also, keep in mind that most of the research on Kreyol are not supported by the Haitian government (such a shame!). In other words, you can ask yourself this question: how much does the Haitian government invest in linguistic research? The answer is ZEWO!

I also discovered that (from the late 1970s up to now) there are materials in Kreyol that cover up to junior high level. That means students up to this level could have an education only in Kreyol while taking French as a "second language" [but, this will still remain something theoretical unless there will be a group of concerned Haitian educators/ intellectuals to found a particular school as a model where these theories can be put into practice]. But, even people working for the state don't realize what's available to them in terms of teaching materials (and those that have been producing in the diaspora also)…

The question is: who really cares about KREYOL IN EDUCATION IN HAITI? And so far, most Haitian leaders prove clearly that EDUCATION is not an important issue for them; it's rather a question of getting to power and how to fill their pockets as quickly as possible because "*ou pa janm konnen, Ayiti se té glise*" ('you never know what will happen in Haiti the next day').

So, it's very nice that we can jot down nice ideas, spend time writing very nice research but in reality, what? Will that change the mind of those in power? Of the well-to-do? Our corrupted elite who love things the way they have been? Hell no! Nice questions to consider, Hmm! Are we going to keep up with our research? R - Of course yes! That's part of our intellectual hobbies and most importantly for many of us, our pay checks depend on it, our grants depend on it, that's the way we make a living. BUT, a big but, the real change remains in the hands of the government and laws (which in the case of Haiti are well written but never observed).

from: Hugues St Fort <Hugo274@aol.com>

2. The name of the creole spoken by Haitians is "Kreyol". However, there is a tendency on the part of some Haitians based in the diaspora (mainly those living in The US and Canada) to call the language "Haitian". My own research about this tendency shows that the Haitian speakers use this denomination only when speaking English; they do not call the language *ayisyen* (Haitian) when speaking creole.

3. Yes, there is a standardized orthography for Haitian Creole. Since 1980, HC has been equipped with an official orthography. It is a phonemic orthography that has a relatively long history. This official and standardized orthography is widely used by the majority of Haitian and non-Haitian writers both in Haiti and outside of Haiti.

4. Yes, there is a relatively substantial Haitian Creole literature, comprised of works produced in different genres (novel, theatre, poetry, history). The most important novel written in Haitian Creole dates from 1975; it is called *Dezafi* and is written by Franketienne, a very prolific Haitian writer.

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5. Haitian Creole is used in formal education both in Haiti and in several bilingual English-Haitian Creole programs based in NY, Miami, Boston, maybe Chicago. Generally speaking, the information posted by E. Vedrine, two days ago about the state of education in Haiti is correct. But, I should add that in the past 20 years, Haitian Creole has penetrated into most institutions (church, schools, Parliament, media) in Haiti. In NY, there are more than a dozen radio programs operating in Haitian Creole and an equal number of TV programs. It is estimated that between 500,000 and 1,000,000 Haitians live in NY City. Both in Haiti and in the American diaspora, Haitian Creole is used as a medium of instruction and as a subject of study. I have taught HC for several years to native and non-native speakers at City College of New York.

6. As the language spoken by all Haitians, HC is used everyday to teach basic literacy to adults and kids. There used to be in the late 1980s and early 1990s an excellent weekly published in Haiti and written entirely in HC, called *Libete.* I don't know if it is still published.

Guadeloupe

from: Emmanuel Faure
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2. Name of creole: Gwadloupéyen/créole guadeloupéen (dialect of Lesser Antilles Creole).

3. (The following also applies for Martinique and St. Barts varieties of the Lesser Antilles Creole, though based mainly on personal fieldwork on Guadeloupe). There are basically two current proposals for orthography: (1) one by Jean Bernabé (in the GEREC publication *Mofwaz* no. 1&2, 1977; no. 3, 1980; also presented in Bernabé, *Fondal-Natal*, 1983), which is strictly phonetic/phonologic and, when facing two possibilities, generally prefers the "less French" one (*écart maximum*): e.g. *gannyé* rather than *ga(n)gné*, *chyen* rather than *chien.* The notation of nasalized vocals is more phonetic than phonologic: the transcription of (systematic) regressive nasalization could be avoided. Another problem is the phonemic status of [y] and [ø], as in [duri] (Les Saintes subvariety – not necessarily acrolectal!) vs. [diri] ("Mainland" Guadeloupe Creole), both spelled *diri* according to the GEREC orthography.

Hence (2) the proposals of Marie-Christine Hazaël-Massieux in *Écrire en créole* (1993). She tries to find a compromise between phonological principles and reading habits of Creolophones whose language of literacy is French. She would for example adopt the spellings *gagné*, *chien* (nasal è is normally spelled *in* in her system, except in the trigraph *ien*), and proposes to note systematically the difference between rounded and non-rounded vowels (*duri, laru*), although she admits that most speakers do not make any phonic difference. Note that her orthography is NOT a basically etymological one…

It seems to me that the GEREC orthography is more common. It is particularly used by groups close to the independence movements, as well as in the experimental creole schools/classes (Lamentin, Capesterre Belle-Eau), sometimes with slight changes (*ky* and *gy* instead of *tj/dj* for instance). I never came across a Creole text written in the Hazaël-Massieux orthography. However, when Creole is written in "mainstream" newspapers, ads etc., the spelling is subject to a considerable amount of variation – no wonder, given that the majority of speakers has never been taught how to write their language.

4. Scarcely used in literature: some short dialogues in (Gwadloupéyen writer) Maryse Condé's works for example, but there is a creole language literature. Best-seller novelist Raphaël Confiant from Martinique, himself a member of GEREC, started writing novels in creole, Hector Poullet from Guadeloupe has published poetry in Creole. The problem is that it doesn't sell as well as (Regionalized) French literature!

5. There is an experimental (non governmental) elementary school run by Dany Bébel-Gisler at Lamentin (Basse-Terre). As far as I know (I haven't visited this school yet), education is primarily in Creole, and French is taught as a foreign language from third (?) grade. There is also a very interesting experiment at the *collège* (junior high school? Age 11-15) of Capesterre-Belle Eau. It was launched by Hector Poullet, a pupil of Gérard Lauriette (who had run such an experiment during the 70s), and has been now continued by Sylviane Telchid. Creole language and culture are a subject of study in approx. grades 8 and 9 (*quatrième* and *troisième*), on a weekly 2 hrs. basis. Pupils are all volunteers and study this subject additionally to their 'normal' curriculum. I have heard of other experimental classes at *lycée* (senior high school?) level, e.g. in Petit-Bourg (Windward coast of Basse-Terre) but I haven't been able to collect more information about them.

6. I don't know about pre-elementary education. As for the attitudes of speakers towards instruction medium, I just happened to hear a radio interview of discontented parents from Bouillante (Leeward coast) last fall. Their main concern was that the teachers of the first year came from the Métropole (France) and as such, they did NOT speak Creole, which the parents thought to be such a problem that they went on strike to have the educational authorities change their decision.

In addition, Hector Poullet and Sylviane Telchid published a Creole Handbook in the popular Assimil Series (the French Berlitz) in 1990 (*Le créole sans peine*), and a small pocket introduction (*Le créole de poche*) with the same publisher in 1998. Both books are primarily intended for tourists visiting the island. I don't know about adult courses.

Jamaica

from: Peter Patrick <patrickp@essex.ac.uk>

2. Name of creole: Patwa (to speakers); Jamaican Creole (to linguists).

3. Yes; phonemic orthography, developed by F. G. Cassidy in the 1960s. Widely used by linguists, rarely by anyone else.

4. Widely used in literature as dialogue; more recently (1990s) as voice of 1st- or 3rd-person narration. Much poetry, including regular use in newspapers ("dialect" poetry) since the 1940s. Also widely used in cartoons and comics – probably the single most visible use of written Patwa for most Jamaicans – ads, etc.

5. As far as I know it is still not used in formal education, though reading of literature may have changed this.

Belize

from: Ken Decker <ken_decker@sil.org>

2. Name of creole: Belize Kriol.

3. Orthography: Somewhat Phonemic and Compromise. It is used in a weekly newspaper column and in the Bible translation project and most anything else that anybody is writing in Kriol; it's just that not many are writing anything.

4. Either the entire document is in Kriol or used for dialogue only in some documents

5. Subject of study in grades 5-6, etc).

6. Re the written form, I doubt that it is used much, but it is growing. At least one of the teachers at the university teaching "Teaching Methods" includes material on how to write Kriol and how to include Kriol in teaching methodology.

Colombia (San Andres Island)

from: Ron Morren <ron_morren@gial.org>

Name of creole: San Andres Creole, sometimes referred to as Islander Creole or just Creole. (There are other names as well, but not as frequently heard.)

Stage of Orthography: An orthography committee has been formed, but only two members of the committee are actively working in the language and following the guidelines that the committee established. It is a modified English orthography. It is becoming more widely used since a tentative glossary has been begun and educational materials are being developed using this orthography.

Use in Literature: Yes, see above. Also, a small number of other Creole speakers have written stories and poems in the Creole language, but have not followed a standardized orthography. (All such written materials that I am acquainted with were written before the orthography committee made some standardization decisions.) Sometimes such literature is completely in Creole while other authors have chosen to use Creole only in dialogue, etc; the rest of the story being written in "standard" English

Creole used in Formal Education?: Yes, as an experiment. Three schools are experimenting with Creole language educational materials. To date such materials have been developed for Preprimary and First Grades. The plan is for some use of Creole in second grade for certain subjects, but also for instruction to be given in English for other subjects. Creole use (not necessarily study) would be allowed to continue through 5th grade. Spanish would be introduced in grade three. By grade six instruction could be continued in either Spanish or English, whichever is available and/or chosen by the students and his/her parents.

Suriname

from: Jacques Arends <arends@mail.hum.uva.nl>

2. Name of creole: Sranan.

3. Yes, there is an official, (largely) phonemic orthography; however, in practice some people stick to older practices, eg (Dutch spelling based) *oe* for /u/.

4. Yes, extensively, especially in poetry; some short stories, one novelette, some drama.

5. No (Dutch is the (only) official language, including in education.)

6. Sranan is often used unofficially in formal education, because many pupils do not know Dutch upon entering primary education. I know this happens (at least) in lower grades in primary education, especially in the interior; for other groups I have no information.

Netherlands Antilles

The following story also appeared on the CreoList:

Perils of Papiamento

by DAN PERRY

WILLEMSTAD, Curaçao, April 29 (AP) – For years Roxanne Tore has pushed the use of Papiamento, arguing that for dignity's sake the local language should be taught in Curaçao's schools instead of Dutch. Now, with her 6-year-old boy at a linguistic crossroads himself, she finds herself strangely undecided.

She could send Denzel to the sole private school that teaches in his mother tongue. Or there are the regular schools, where he would suddenly be immersed in the language of the Dutch colonizers who enslaved his African ancestors -- but who currently provide the elite of the island with nearly free university education in the Netherlands.

"Emotionally I've decided for Papiamento," said Tore, a radio producer in her 30s. "But intellectually, I haven't yet made the leap!"

As elsewhere in the Caribbean – where African-descended populations often retain emotional ties to former colonial powers – language has become a symbol of national identity in Curaçao. The use of Creole and dialects at the expense of an arguably more practical colonial tongue is a matter of pride…

But Papiamento remains a largely spoken language – by perhaps 300,000 people in the Dutch Caribbean, the former colony of Suriname in South America and the Netherlands itself – and many here fear that abandoning Dutch-language schooling is unwise considering the reliance on Dutch universities.

The Netherlands basically subsidizes about 350 students from this autonomous Dutch territory who go to Holland annually for various levels of higher education, said Yvette Michel of SSC, the quasi-governmental foundation that administers scholarships.

Could Dutch be sufficiently mastered if studied merely as a foreign language? Curaçao's government thinks so, and is pushing to convert the island's schools -- especially the Roman Catholic schools that educate most pupils -- from Dutch to Papiamento.

Charine Isabella, permanent secretary in the Ministry of Education, said a government committee is preparing to begin shifting schools to Papiamento next year. The change will be made one grade at a time, over 12 years.

Parents will be allowed to choose Dutch or bilingual schooling, too, but the government plans a publicity campaign on "why they should choose for their own mother tongue."

The debate has divided and unsettled a normally placid society.

The teachers union supports Papiamento, blaming difficulties with Dutch for relatively high dropout rates.

"We think Dutch had its time here in Curaçao and now it's time to move on," said union president Bicho Justiana. "You have to let a child feel himself at home."

"I cannot agree with this," said Ingrid de Maayer, director of Amigoe, a Dutch-language newspaper with a Papiamento name. "I already speak Papiamento at home to my kids. We have to be sensible. Who will pay for all those new books?"

Isabella said one possibility is the Netherlands itself, but there's a certain lack of enthusiasm from that quarter.

Frank Wassenaar, spokesman for Gijs de Vries, the undersecretary for kingdom relations in The Hague, the Dutch capital, said Papiamento "is a matter for the Netherlands Antilles to figure out."

But he cautioned that "someone who speaks only Papiamento will not be able to get along very well in the labor market" and that Antillean arrivals under 25 must take a "naturalization course" in which Dutch language classes are central.

The Catholic school system also is lukewarm.

"Papiamento isn't developed enough for secondary education," said Ronald Statia, superintendent of Curaçao's 103 Catholic schools, noting the language lacks many scientific terms. "Papiamento will always have its limitations."

Still, the Catholic schools are offering a compromise: They would teach pupils in Papiamento for the first four years, then switch to Dutch.

Tore's husband, an Internet buff, dismisses the university issue as irrelevant in tomorrow's virtual world.

But Tore has trouble with this concept. As she struggles with her choice, she condemns

her conservative instinct for sticking with Dutch.

"It's a matter of how you think of yourself, your self-worth. It's thinking more of the colonizer, looking up to the Dutch, considering them in some way superior."

Her boss, radio station owner and prominent local commentator Orlando Cuales, is more upbeat about the prospects for Papiamento. "This place moves in Papiamento," he says. "Dutch is dead here."

Outside the 19th century mansion housing the station lies the main route for the annual carnival, an explosion of color and revelry and thumping local "tumba" music. The songs are in Papiamento. The signs are in Papia-mento.

The beer – Amstel and Heineken – comes from Holland.

PUBLICATIONS

Pidgins and creoles

The latest book by the French author, Marie-Christine Hazaël-Massieux is *Les Créoles: L'indispensable survie* ['Creoles: Their vital survival'] (Editions Entiente, Paris, 1999). This book consists of an introduction (defining creoles and endangered languages), 11 chapters and a conclusion. Chapter 1 locates French creoles in geographic space and Chapter 2 describes some of the linguistic features of these creoles. Chapter 3 answers the question of whether French creoles are merely reduced forms of French. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 discuss French creoles in the context of language endangerment. Chapter 7 talks about the use of French creoles in education, Chapter 8, their use in the media, and Chapter 9 their use in literature. Chapter 10 discusses problems of language planning and development for French creoles. The final chapter briefly discusses other creoles. Following the short conclusion are several appendixes with useful information about French creoles as well annotated lists of references.

A new textbook, *Pidgins and Creoles; An Introduction* by Ishtla Singh (Arnold, London, 2000) has a section on language planning and deals with the use of creoles in education in Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti, Seychelles, Hawai'i and Australia.

Two recent journal articles have appeared with information about the use in education of **Sranan**, the English-based creole of Suriname (sometimes spelled as Surinam), formerly a Dutch colony. In "Orthography and ideology: Issues in Sranan spelling" (*Linguistics* vol.38, no.5, pp.925-48, 2000), Mark Sebba mentions that in 1844, missionaries were given permission by the government to teach slaves to read (but not write) in Sranan. From 1856 they were allowed to teach writing in the language. However, from 1877, Dutch became the only official medium of instruction.

Aonghas St-Hilaire's article, "Language planning and development in the Caribbean: Multi-ethnic Suriname" (*Language Problems and Language Planning* vol.23, no.3, pp.211-31, 1999), includes a historical account of educational language planning in the country. In the late 1950s, literature published in Sranan improved the status of the language and from 1959 to 1962, it received some official recognition. Parliament approved a second stanza in Sranan for the national anthem, and passed a resolution giving it an official spelling. However, Dutch remained the sole educational language. In the 1980s, there was some discussion of implementing mother-tongue instruction in Sranan (and other vernaculars), but, as the author reports (p.219), "this idea was never formally adopted despite the historical difficulty of many Surinamese children in the schools due to limited mastery of Dutch". However, during this period a Sranan-only FM radio station was established, a new modern orthography was developed, and some print material in Sranan was produced. Nevertheless, up till now, no provisions have been made for Sranan to be used in education, and there seem to be no prospects of this occurring.

Minority dialects

Since the last issue of the *PACE Newsletter*, several new books have appeared which deal with **African American Vernacular English** (AAVE) (or Black English or Ebonics). The first is *Out of the Mouths of Slaves* by John Baugh (University of Texas Press, Austin, 1999). This is a collection of mostly previously published articles. Part 1, "Orientation", has two chapters, one on common misconceptions about AAVE and one on language and race, and the implications of bias in linguistics. Part 2, titled: "The relevance of African Vernacular English to Education and Social Policies". is made up of four chapters, three on education and one on the legal system. Part 3 has two chapters under the heading of "Cross-cultural communication in social context". Part 4 contains four chapters on the linguistic dimensions of AAVE. The first two look at specific linguistic features; the third describes "hypocorrection"

among second dialect learners of AAVE; and the last discusses a study of attitudes to AAVE. The final section, "Conclusions" consists of a single chapter on future research on AAVE in anthropology, education and linguistics.

The best book on the topic that we've come across is *Spoken Soul: The Story of Black English* by John Russell Rickford and Russell John Rickford (John Wiley, New York, 2000). This is an engaging account of the use of AAVE in religion, literature, the performing arts, and everyday life, with an illuminating description of the Ebonics debate. An introductory Part 1 sets the scene. Then Part II, titled with a quote from Paule Marshall "This passion, this skill, this incredible music", has four chapters describing the use of AAVE by writers; preachers and "pray-ers"; comedians and actors; and singers, toasters and rappers. Part 3, "The living language", consists of three chapters on vocabulary and pronunciation, grammar, and the history of the language. Part 4, "The Ebonics firestorm" has three chapters. The first, "Education", provides an unusually detailed analysis of the Oakland school board's resolution, in both its original and revised forms. It also has a very useful section summarizing research on taking the vernacular into account when teaching standard English and reading. The second chapter in Part 4 describes the unbalanced and sensationalized media coverage of the Ebonics debate. The third chapter presents many examples of Ebonics "humor" found in the media and circulating on the internet – ranging from clever to racist. The authors conclude (p.218): "In short, 'Ebonics' became a new slur, a 'nigger' upon whom one could inflict a Rodney King-style beating while wearing a helmet of 'wit'." Part 5, "The double self" concludes the book with a short chapter, "The crucible of identity". This is followed by 28 pages of notes, containing valuable references.

In the last issue of the *PACE Newsletter* (no.10, 1999, p.14), we reported on John McWhorter's views on AAVE and education in his book, *The Word on the Street: Fact and Fable about American English* (Plennum Trade, New York & London, 1998). In his latest book, *Losing the Race: Self-sabotage in Black America* (Free Press, New York, 2000), the author also briefly discusses the Ebonics debate. He mentions twelve studies on the use the Ebonics approach and says that in the majority, it had little positive effect. McWhorter's position is that the reason African-American children do poorly in school is not because there is a gap between AAVE and standard English, but "because there is a psychological barrier between them and school in general" (p.191).

Three recent journal articles are relevant to the use of AAVE in education. The first is "TOEFL to the test: Are monodialectal AAL-speakers similar to ESL students?" by Anita Pandey (*World Englishes* vol.19, no.1, pp.89-106, 2000). The article reports on research which makes use of the well-known Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) to test the standard English language skills of pre-college and first-year students raised in the inner city and basically monodialectal in AAVE (or what the author refers to as African American Language [AAL] or Ebonics). To quote the abstract (p.89):

> The findings of two longitudinal studies are cited to demonstrate that, for many Ebonics-speakers, SAE [standard American English] is much like a second language. The students' performance on the TOEFL, particularly in the listening comprehension and grammar sections, suggests that both comprehension and production of 'Standard English' can be problematic for transitional students whose first language is AAL.

The author notes that these results support "the validity of the Oakland School Board's resolution on Ebonics and the value of ESL-based approaches to the teaching of 'Standard American English to speakers of other dialects…". She also illustrates the benefits of using a contrastive approach to the teaching of SAE to Ebonics speakers.

The second study is "Teaching elementary students who speak Black English Vernacular to write in Standard English: Effects of dialect transformation practice" by Howard Fogel and Linnea C. Ehri (*Contemporary Educational Psychology* vol.25, pp.212-35, 2000). Here is part of the text of the abstract (p.212):

> Although nonstandard dialects of English are legitimate forms of spoken language…, students in US schools must acquire *writing* competence using Standard English (SE). Participants in this study were 3rd- and 4th-grade African-American students who exhibited Black English Vernacular (BEV) features in their written work. Six syntactic features differing in BEV and SE were targeted. Students received one of three treatments to increase their use of SE features in their writing: (1) exposure to SE features in stories; (2) story exposure plus explanation of SE rules; and (3) story exposure, SE rule instruction, and guided practice transforming sentences from BEV to SE features. The third treatment proved most effective in enabling students to translate BEV sentences into SE

> forms and to employ the targeted SE features in their free writing. Results indicate that having students practice translating nonstandard sentences that typify their own writing and providing corrective feedback are effective for teaching them to use SE forms in their writing.

It is interesting to note, however, that the effectiveness of the third treatment might actually have to do with the same factors that make the contrastive approach effective. The authors point out (p.231): "Very likely this practice proved effective because it clarified for students the link between features in their own nonstandard writing and features in SE and how the two forms were similar and different."

A very different point of view is taken by Signithia Fordham in "Dissin' 'the Standard': Ebonics and guerrilla warfare at Capital High" (*Anthropology & Education Quarterly* vol.30, no.3, pp 272-93, 1999). This article analyses the discourse styles and linguistic practices of a group of African American high school students. The author found that the use of AAVE rather than standard English is both a promotion of Black identity and an unconscious act of resistance against the White establishment. In a reversal of what is normally thought of as the usual pattern, the use of AAVE has high prestige among the students, while the use of standard English is stigmatized or "dissed" (dis-respected) because it is considered "acting White". Students who want to achieve academic success (which involves the use of standard English) must have strategies that will allow them to do so without being ostracized by their peers, such as being skilful in AAVE. Thus, the author argues that trying to repair or alter students' use of AAVE is largely counterproductive. She concludes:

> Indeed, instead of trying to repair the linguistic practices of Black American adolescents, successful policy makers will redirect their energies toward minimizing the linguistic warfare inherent in the ongoing convention of marginalizing and stigmatizing the Black self…

Resources for teachers

Two books on general language awareness and teaching in multicultural schools may be of some interest to teachers. The first is *Teaching and Learning in Multicultural Schools* by Elizabeth Coelho (Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, 1998). (This is the same author of the excellent two books on teaching speakers of Caribbean creoles in Canada, described in *PACE Newsletter* 4, 1993.) The focus of this book is on teaching in schools where there are many immigrant children of different nationalities. It discusses sources of diversity, attitudes towards immigration and the immigrant experience in general. Then it goes on to describe an "inclusive" approach to the school environment, the community, classroom instruction and the curriculum. Also included are chapters on an anti-racist approach to education and on assessment. A short section (pp.87-9) deals specifically with teaching speakers of creoles and minority dialects. Part of this is worth quoting:

> The students often receive the message that their own language is "wrong" or "bad English", and this can have negative effects on self-esteem. Also, teachers who lack information about language and language variety often regard these students not as learners of standard English but as English speakers who are careless, lazy, or of limited intellectual capacity.
>
> It is important to recognize and validate the linguistic systems that students bring to school, and all languages and varieties of languages should be viewed as equally valid forms of communication.

The second book is *Language Exploration and Awareness: A Resource Book for Teachers* (second edition) by Larry Andrews (Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah NJ, 1998). The book defines the language exploration and awareness approach and gives the rationale for it. Then it looks at the various "elements" covered in the approach, including the properties of communication; words and lexicography; grammar, spelling and "good English"; discourse routines and conventions; regional, social and historical variation; meaning and semantics; language intolerance and discrimination; and second language learners. There is a brief description of AAVE (pp.198-200), but no mention of pidgins or creoles.

BOOK REVIEW

Teaching Language and Literacy: Policies and Procedures for Vernacular Situations

by Dennis R. Craig

(Education and Development Services; Georgetown, Guyana; 1999) xii + 331 pp.

Dennis Craig is highly regarded for his long list of publications on the use of creole languages and minority dialects in education. In this book, he consolidates many of his ideas with recent issues and useful, practical

suggestions for teachers.

As noted in the Preface (p.ix): "This book is concerned with situations where a vernacular coexists with an official language with which the vernacular shares a common vocabulary base." Such situations occur with creoles such as Jamaican Creole and Hawai'i Creole English, as well as with minority dialects such as African American Vernacular English (AAVE, or Ebonics) and Australian Aboriginal English. "[T]he book presents a case study of the interplay between the sociolinguistic characteristics of the population, goals for language education, and necessary pedagogical approaches in the schools."

In general organization, the book starts off by presenting a theoretical framework for classroom procedures in language and literacy teaching. Then it presents suggestions for detailed curricula and classroom activities. It is divided into 8 chapters and a large section on syllabus resources.

Chapter 1, "Relevant situational characteristics" paints a sociolinguistic portrait of situations covered by the book (as described above). The problem in such situations is called "Teaching English To Speakers Of a Related Vernacular" or TESORV. Chapter 2, "The language and literacy education of vernacular speakers", describes the development and implementation of various teaching approaches, gives a review of their current effectiveness in the Caribbean region, and outlines some "constraints on efficacy".

Chapter 3 reevaluates and redefines "Learners' needs and the components of school programmes". The needs include continuity in cognitive growth and the development and use of language awareness. The author advocates a new orientation of teaching and learning and specific classroom procedures that implement this orientation. In Chapter 4, "The background of language-teaching perspectives", various established approaches are examined in light of the advocated orientation. These include the audio-lingual, situational, communicative and natural approaches. In Chapter 5, "Literacy in TESORV", the author advocates an "Augmented Language Experience Approach" (ILEA), pointing out in detail the differences from the usual Language Experience Approach.

The next three chapters present detailed examples of possible school programmes, Chapter 6 for the primary level, Chapter 7 for post-primary (especially those situations characterized by inadequate primary level achievement), and Chapter 8, secondary level.

The 14 Syllabus Resources that follow include things like linguistic comparisons between creoles and standard English, outlines of various programmes and activities and excerpts from the Caribbean Examinations Council English Syllabus. There is also a long list of references and an index.

Although this book focuses on the Caribbean, it is very relevant to both teachers and language education students in countries with similar situations. Each chapter has notes, questions and suggestions for practical study or research activities, making it quite suitable as a textbook.

In summary, *Teaching Language and Literacy* is a valuable resource, not only for teachers but for anyone interested in the education of speakers of creoles and minority dialects.

This book is available from the author at:
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CONFERENCES

The Fifth International Creole Language Workshop was held at Florida International University on 31 March and 1 April. The theme of this workshop was "How the past can improve the future: Creole languages in the new millennium". The papers presented included the following:

Taking stock and moving (Pauline Christie)

Speak pidgin, think pidgin, write pidgin? Talk pidgin, don't eat tofu? (Suzanne Romaine)

Educating Creole children for the future using Creole based trilingual education: A Project description from San Andres, Providence, and Santa Catalina (Ron Moren)

Signs of the times (Ian Robertson)

From acquisition to learning: Insights on bi-varietal language acquisition with potential for classroom use (Valerie Youssef)

Lectal shifting and orthographical representation in creative writing: "Sonny Jim of Sandy Point" (Vincent Cooper)

Cameroon Pidgin English in the new millennium (Augustin Simo-Bobda)

Process reading in a predominantly Creole situation: Implications for the language teacher (Florence Fortibui)

A modified process approach to the teaching of writing in a creole-using community:

Implications for the language teacher (Gregory N. Ndikaka)

Language for education and standardization as factors in language attitude ratings: Survey findings on Anglo-Nigerian Pidgin from urban, southern Nigeria (Charles Mann)

From past imperfect to future perfect: Creole studies and the (mis-)education of the creole speaker (Michel DeGraff)

How a dying language can serve the future: The changing role of Creole in Louisiana (Tom Klinger)

French Creole orthography - A problem for Caribbean multilingual lexicography (Jeannette Allsopp)

The "basilect", the "mesolect", the "acrolect" in Haitian Creole (Yves Dejean)

Creole language instruction in Haiti (Rachelle Doucet)

Is there a need for monolingual Haitian Creole dictionaries? (Hugues St. Fort)

One small step for language technologies, one big step for implementing Creole language technologies into real-user environments (Marilyn Mason and Jeffrey Allen)

One of the papers given is of special interest: "The use of Belize Kriol to improve English proficiency" presented by Ken Decker, reporting on research done by Helen Rocke. In this research, Standard Three students in a test group were taught two half-hour weekly lessons for 20 weeks on four common areas of difficulty in standard English for Kriol-speaking students. First, the corresponding Kriol features were illustrated and discussed (using Kriol as the language of instruction) and students were given the opportunity to write in Kriol using these features. Then, instruction was given on how these features differ from those of English, first using Kriol as the medium and then English. Students were then encouraged to participate in discussion and games using English. The control group had normal lessons, predominantly in English.

The students in both groups were tested before and after the treatment. The results showed that the test group showed significant improvement in all four grammatical areas whereas the experimental group did not. The researcher concluded that "an understanding of the structure of Kriol enabled children to better understand the structure of English" and that this "led to improvement in the speaking and writing of Standard English"(p.7). She also reported "a marked improvement in the involvement and interest of the students of the test group in all of their classes".

While this study has some methodological flaws, it illustrates the potential of a contrastive approach using a creole in the classroom.

The Instituto Cervantes de Manila hosted a conference entitled "Shedding Light on the Chabacano Language" at the Ateneo de Manila on 19th-20th October, inviting creole speakers from Cavite and Zamboanga to hear and discuss papers by guest speakers. One of the speakers was Angela Bartens (University of Helsinki) who gave a paper entitled "The rocky road to education in creole".

The paper starts out with a discussion of corpus and status language planning involving creoles, especially with regard to education. Next, the author begins a thorough review of attempts at introducing pidgins and creoles in education in countries where Spanish or Portuguese-based creoles are spoken – the Netherlands Antilles (with Papiamento), Cape Verde (Kabuverdianu), Guinea-Bissau (Kriyòl) and Sao Tomé e Príncipe (where 3 different creoles are spoken). She then gives descriptions of attempts with French-based creoles (e.g. in Mauritius, the Seychelles, Guadeloupe and Haiti) and with English-based creoles in the Caribbean, Nigeria, Melanesia, Australia and Hawai'i. Finally, there is a useful review of the educational use of creoles based on languages of Africa: Sango, Kitúba and Lingala. The paper concludes with a discussion of what speakers and promoters of Chabacano can learn from the cases described earlier in the paper.

ON THE WEB

The renovated Language Varieties website has moved to http://www.une.edu.au/langnet. Its aim is to provide accessible information to non-linguists (especially teachers and students) about pidgins, creoles, minority dialects, regional dialects and indigenized varieties. (So an attempt as been made to keep it uncomplicated in both content and design.) The site contains definitions, tips for using such varieties in the classroom, references and links to other sites. At present, it includes descriptions of Hawai'i Creole English, African American (Vernacular) English, Aboriginal English, and Geordie (Newcastle English) Singlish (Singapore Colloquial English), Bislama, Tok Pisin and Kamtok (Cameroon Pidgin).

The new website for the Institut d'Etudes Créoles et Francophones (Aix-en-Provence, France) is at http://lpl.univ-aix.fr/iecf.