

ABSTRACT

The data for this study were the written English compositions of 448 Trinidadian secondary school students. Each student wrote two compositions, controlled for discourse function. The sample population, at two grade levels, represented a variety of sociolinguistic groups.

After a review of the historical and current language situation in Trinidad, the relationship between a creole and a related standard language was examined, and the implications for language learning in creole situations were discussed.

A comprehensive error analysis scheme was developed. All errors in the corpus were coded on several criteria, including error type and attribution of error source. Statistical tests of variance were used to determine the nature and extent of between groups differences.

Results of the analysis showed significant levels of negative transfer from Creole to English. Significant differences between some sociolinguistic groups, for several types of error rates, were found.