

## ABSTRACT

Beckford (1976) substantiates that every society is a product of the particular historical forces that give it shape and form. His thesis is that modern Caribbean Society displays structural forms that are a direct legacy of the slave plantation. He feels that this legacy provides the single most important clue for an understanding of contemporary Caribbean Society. There have been modifications and extensions (Best and Levitt, 1970) of his view relevant to the situation today. The main legacy however, is that of structural dependency which supports social, educational and linguistic distances among other factors. Research today documents the dependency structure in Trinidad and in the Caribbean. (Girvan 1970, Craig 1974, Farrel 1973 et al.).

The failures of West Indian Civil Services to meet the challenges of development are viewed. The majority of the encoders of this study are in the Civil Service of Trinidad and subject to the same constraints, problems and prejudices. The institutional structure in a context of structural dependency reinforces underdevelopment and the society's social, educational and linguistic distances inherited from history.

Discrimination in educational facilities in Trinidad began early because of class differences within the social structure of the society and the dependency on colonial and elitist values and dictates. With some social mobility and democratization causing modifications more education was made available to the masses but the situation of neglect

and discrimination in the provision of technical, vocational and agricultural education indicates that there still exists a serious dichotomy of values, aims, language and educational levels between the two classes in Trinidad society. Neglect of worker education on the whole has been a legacy of colonialism and of the structural dependency of today.

There is linguistic distance between the upper/middle classes and the lower classes. This is supported by a wide range of "areas of interference" between Standard English (S.E.) used in speaking and writing by the upper and middle classes (encoders) and Trinidad Vernacular (T.V.) which is used by the lower classes (decoders) and a language in its own right with its own structural patterns. These areas of difference are documented by Carrington, Borely and Knight 1969 et al. The child when he enters school (later the farmer) is speaking a language which is structurally different from the language he is expected to learn and read i.e. S.E. Innumerable problems exist as a result both for the teaching and the learning process. A communications gap exists between these two languages unless specific material is prepared with the problems involved in mind. The printed matter in agricultural education now in the field does not take these problems into consideration and so is unuseable by most farmers similar to those analysed in this study.

This study established that farmers face two main problems in reading the printed matter when it is available to them. First is connected to the educational level of the farmers who come from the lower and working class (and are speakers of Trinidad Vernacular) with educational levels of about Standard Three from the Primary Schools. Analysis

of a sample of printed matter showed that this material is of a much higher reading level than Standard Three.

For example, a sample from "Methods for Corn Production" (Crop Bulletin) was found suitable for Grade 8 which is the equivalent of Form 3, Secondary School. This analysis is according to the Flesch Formula for Reading Ease, used in the Computer Program TEX 2 as part of the Instrument of Readability developed by this study. A segment from Orange Grove Sorrel (Trinidad Guardian) was for the 6th Grade; extracts from the Journal of Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago were for University level readers.

Second to the educational level of farmers and reading levels of material and not unallied, is the problem farmers who are T.V. speakers face, when asked to read Standard English which is the language of all printed matter. The Instrument of Readability also measured these areas of linguistic interference and reading difficulties.

Research begins to emerge to meet the social, economic, political and educational crisis in the West Indies. Work, not only on language use and social structure synchronicity is necessary and urgent. Trinidad and the Caribbean could also benefit immensely from (1) the empirical work on use of media and non-formal education techniques and (2) from the conceptualizing and communication theorizing and the development of communication strategies taking place today in many areas of the Third World to meet their problems in agricultural and worker education.