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Lexical Retentions in Diego Martin, Trinidad

By

July Emmalyn Joseph

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

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of
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TITLE OF THESIS:

A Case Study of Lexical Retentions in Beausejour, Diego Martin, Trinidad

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Abstract

Case Study of French Creole Lexical Retentions in Beausejour, Diego Martin, Trinidad

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The University of the West Indies

French Creole studies in Trinidad have attempted to explain the grammatical features. Different scholars have variously focused on the syntactic, morphological and phonological features of French Creole such as Goodman (1958). Even though, there have been attempts to create a table glossary of French Creole lexical items, there has been no attempt to explain the distribution and use of these lexical items in Trinidad. Additionally, there have been some studies that have focused on the language revitalization such as the factors necessary for the possible revival of the language, Ferreira and Holbrook (2002). While these studies are stimulating, they tend to focus on areas where French Creole is currently spoken. Still it is necessary to explore the idea of language revitalization in those areas where French Creole is not spoken as it is crucial to garner the support of the entire community.

In this study, we would like to use a table glossary to describe the use and retention of French Creole terms in a non-French Creole speaking community. Additionally, their language attitudes will be explored and the implications this may have on any possible language planning initiatives aimed at the revitalization of French Creole in Trinidad.

Once the language of Diego Martin, French Creole has largely been displaced. This is evidenced in other areas where French Creole is currently speaking. The number of French Creole speakers has decreased and continues to do so due mainly to the social mobility afforded to English. Furthermore, French Creole was once the language of many different domains, from

Folklore to Folk Medicine, Flora to Carnival, in addition to Fauna. By exploring these domains that were once dominated by French Creole, we can determine the extent to which French Creole has died in a community. Moreover, the exploration of these attitudes in addition to the lexical retentions, can aid in the shaping of language planning initiatives in terms of whether there would be support from the community.

This is a mixed methodology study consisting of interviews of fifteen persons living in Beausejour, Diego Martin. The sample was determined through first snowball sampling and then purposive sampling to ensure that the interviewees adhered to certain social variables such as age and gender. It was found that overall, Carnival and Folklore had the highest number of retentions, however there was variation according to age group. Also, the researcher found that the language attitudes of the respondents while positive suggested that few of the respondents would support a proposal for the teaching of French Creole whether in schools or as an activity in the community centre.

This study, while it does not present any solutions, provides an overview of the current use of French Creole outside of the French Creole speech community. This provides a base for future researchers when determining the right method to be used in future language revitalization projects. In addition, the study provides a sample of the current use of certain French Creole terms as well as the language attitudes of a section of the population.

Keywords: French Creole, Trinidad, language revitalization, language planning, lexical retentions

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Chapter One

Introduction

French Creole has been explored through a large number of studies over the last couple of years. A number of these studies have dealt with the overall structure of the language such as the phonology (Goodman 1958). Various articles have also been written on the sociolinguistic context (Ferreira and Holbrook 2002, Ferreira and Braithwaite 2013 & Ferreira 2015). Issues associated with language revitalization have been explored as well. The majority of these studies have been done on Paramin, an area known for French Creole, or other areas where known French Creole speakers reside such as Arima and Talparo. However, there have not been any studies that looked at French Creole outside of these areas. It is necessary however, to examine language revitalization from this perspective, however, as the speakers of the dominant language, that is, the language spoken by the majority of the population and the language of prestige, can be influential in the establishment of language revitalization efforts.

Studies agree that language attitudes are a major cause of language shift, particularly when discussing French Creole in the Trinidadian context. That is, older French Creole speakers refused to speak the language with the younger generation. It would be facile, however, to declare that French Creole speakers are the only responsible parties for transmitting their languages from generation to generation. “The intergenerational transmission process is closely linked to a number of historical, social, political, economic, and sociolinguistic factors that constitute serious barriers that work to the detriment of indigenous languages.”

(Coronel-Molina). These factors can include the prejudice towards French Creole speakers, the lack of socioeconomic mobility and a lack of language planning on the part of governmental and non-governmental organizations. It is crucial therefore, to understand these language attitudes in order to determine the language planning proposals that would best benefit not only the speech community, but those outside the community as well.

The use of table glossaries to measure lexical retention, while widely used in second language (L2) learning, has not been fully explored in determining the results of language loss. This study focuses on an area that is not part of the French Creole speech community. It aims to address aspects that can be instrumental in determining the most effective methods of language revitalization such as the level of language loss through an investigation of lexical retentions. Furthermore, along with these retentions, language attitudes will be considered to better determine their impact on language planning geared towards language revitalization. As French Creole has specific domains in which it is used, the study will evaluate the extent to which lexical retentions still exist in these domains namely, Carnival, Folklore, Medicine, Fauna and Flora and the impact language attitudes may have on language revitalization. This will aid in nationwide language planning, as the study would provide a sample of the population that is neither part of the French Creole speech community, nor zealous researchers reviving a language for their own aims.

The paper proceeds as follows: Chapter Two outlines the sociolinguistic context of French Creole in Trinidad. It presents research done by linguists and discusses some of the factors relates to language loss. Chapter Three presents the methodology that includes sampling as well as the method of data collection and data analysis. Chapter Four shows the lexical

retentions within the five domains. This is further analysed according to age range and gender, as well as proposes some of the reasons for these retention or lack thereof. Chapter Five highlights language revitalization, and in particular, language loss, which leads to language planning. It also discusses some of the language attitudes that can be detrimental to language revitalization. Chapter Six revises all that has been discussed in the previous chapters and presents more areas of research to be considered.

Chapter Two

A Sociolinguistic Context of Trinidadian French-lexified Creole

In the Caribbean region, French Creole is the most widely spread language, after Spanish. Although never officially French, Trinidad has been home to French Creole since 1783. Trinidadian French Creole, hereafter referred to as TFC, has a long history as a living community language and as an island-wide lingua franca, though it has been largely displaced by English and Trinidadian English Creole (Ferreira and Holbrook 3). The language is similar to the varieties spoken in Martinique, Grenada and Venezuela. It is the language of culture and heritage. Now, it is associated with hard to access rural areas due to “the terrain or because of the distance from urban centres or both” (Ferreira 115), as currently TFC faces language death.

While there has been, extensive research done in recent years on TFC, the majority of research has been done in the village of Paramin. This is because Paramin remains, to this day, a relatively large stronghold of TFC. However, even in this community, there are issues of language endangerment. Research is also being done on other areas in Trinidad where TFC is spoken and used, such as Arima, Blanchisseuse and Talparo, but this often seems to be now beginning or generally limited. Furthermore, on a language description basis, there is a great deal of data and research on the phonological, phonemic and even morphological aspects of TFC. One such study includes Goodman's work which deals exclusively with the phonemic structure of TFC.

As stated by Ferreira and Holbrook, TFC is a dying language spoken only by the elderly. In 1983, it was estimated that the number of TFC speakers, both native and second language learners, was lower than 3% (qtd. in Ferreira and Holbrook 3). In a country where English is seen as the language of power, prestige and social mobility, TFC and other minority languages were not transmitted to other generations, either as a result of parents hiding the language from their children and using it as a secret language, or as a result of a continued disinterest of children to learn or speak TFC.

As a result, there is some debate as to whether TFC is a dead language. Ferreira and Holbrook stated that TFC was dying with only second hand interest by non-native speakers. As stated by Mohan in Ferreira and Holbrook, “living languages do not die when the last trace of memory has vanished. They are actually dead much before this, but may be lent an artificial semblance of life by sympathetic post-users from outside its system” (16). Therefore, a language is considered dead when there are no more children who are first language speakers. When a language acquires second language learners, it may be living, but in fact it is not. That is, since there are few native speakers of TFC, and the majority of the fluent speakers are second language learners, we can conclude that TFC is a dead language. That being said, this may have been a hasty conclusion as there are still speakers of this language fourteen years after this study. Additionally, there are “a greater number of people, in a greater number of villages and by a wider range of age groups than commonly held” (Ferreira 113).

Language death can be demonstrated in the Diego Martin area of Trinidad and Tobago. Once a large stronghold for TFC, there has been a sharp decrease in the number of speakers with limited research concerning the current number of speakers. TFC developed as the lingua franca

from the arrival of the French in the 1780s and was furthered by the settling of free slaves in areas such as Sierra Leone. As a result, Diego Martin, among others, was “said to be mainly patois (sic) speaking areas” (Brereton qtd. in Warner-Lewis 51). However, as with other areas where TFC was and is spoken, language attitudes and indifferent, at times discriminating language policies, reduced the number of speakers. According to Ferreira on the RDIFund website, in 1845, attorney-general Charles William Warner declared that “English rights and privileges should only be given to those who would take the trouble to learn English and to bring up their children in an English way. This may have resulted in parents and grandparents refusing to speak their language with the younger generations and the number of speakers gradually reducing. Today, there is relatively little knowledge about the size of the TFC speech community. Additionally, there is little research done on the area of Diego Martin, outside of the work of Anthony de Verteuil. These works focus mainly on the historical aspects.

Studies agree that language policies are the main factors for the disappearance of this language (Ferreira 119), while others argue that the attitudes of the speakers and non-speakers of TFC, are contributing influences on the decline of this language. In order to promote TFC, it is necessary that the language is documented firstly and then described in various regions where it is spoken so as to ascertain the level of competence of its users. This is essential in the demand for more effective language policies, as the level of competence and performance of the speakers reveals the necessary intensity of language policies and the subsequent funds that must be provided. As stated by Ferreira, most of the written records of TFC are not widely circulated and are mainly produced for academic circles. This can severely reduce the amount of data available for review and analysis and this can be detrimental to the development of effective and necessary

language planning initiatives. Also, for those who consider TFC dead, there is room for language revitalization. This can only be obtained through documentation of the language across the country, with specific areas such as Paramin used as an area of ideal speakers, i.e., fluent and semi fluent speakers.

This study aims to aid the language planning and revitalization efforts by describing the knowledge and use of TFC lexical items in Diego Martin. This addresses some of the gaps of previous research by approaching an area outside of Paramin and other areas where TFC is still widely spoken today. Additionally, by focusing on a single area, it is hoped that the data gathered would be more productive, as suggested by Fishman. Furthermore, this study aims to show variation in the lexical storage and perhaps lexical retrieval across generations as well as across gender. There is also the factor of domain. TFC was the language of Carnival, folk tales, folk medicine, flora and fauna. This researcher attempts to evaluate the retentions of TFC in these domains. One of the main questions that will be asked is, is there variation in different domains of daily life, i.e., Is there a higher retention of TFC lexical items in folk medicine as opposed to fauna? As language attitudes constitute a significant factor in the disappearance of the language, it is critical to consider the ramifications of different language attitudes on these retentions.

Chapter Three

Research Activities

The research methodology is qualitative in nature, and procedures and techniques are taken from the case study research orientation. It is a single instrumental case study where one issue, Trinidadian French-lexified Creole, is described in only one community in Diego Martin. There are clearly identifiable social parameters that will be tested and the researcher aims as well as to report on the importance of the use of TFC in relation to language policies and how the retention of TFC of one speech community is instrumental in language revitalization policies.

3.1. Case Sampling

The case study includes interviews were conducted with fifteen participants of varying ages of both genders in Diego Martin. First, snowball sampling provided access to the community. It was necessary to equip a cultural informant with a participant recruitment guide for selecting participants for the project. Then purposive sampling ensured that participants were adhered to the appropriate categories of age and gender. This type of sampling achieved diversity across the required variables within the case. Participants were told that only those who wished to be part of the research project would be contacted and their anonymity would be protected. The participants ranged in age from 20 to 70.

3.2. Data Collection

Questions in the interview included the participants' knowledge of French Creole, their experience in using the language, and their retention of French Creole lexical items, as well as their meanings. The researcher recorded all data, transcribed them and coded emergent themes. Any relationships between themes, as well as characteristics were also noted and discussed with the participants. A pre-interview preceded the actual interview, as a review of the research project, a response to questions and for ensuring ethical consent from the participants. Each pre-interview lasted fifteen (15) to thirty (30) minutes. The actual interviews ranged from thirty minutes to an hour.

All interviews took place in the participants' homes. Each interview began with a request for demographic information such as age, gender, ethnicity and education level. The questions which followed were open-ended and allowed the participants to discuss the meaning of French Creole language, locally known as Patois, their experience using the language as well as their attitudes towards possible teaching of TFC at schools or at the community centre. A series of questions followed which accompanied a table glossary compiled from Patricia Allum's *Macafouchette*. This was chosen as it was more concise than other books on Trinidadian French Creole. Whereas other texts such as Lise Winer's *Dictionary of English/Creole of Trinidad & Tobago: On Historical Principles* provided a more general overview of the Creole used in Trinidad, Allum focused on those items that were of French Creole origin. These were pointed questions that aimed to determine the level of retention of TFC terms and meanings. After each interview, the researcher noted both the content and the process of the meeting and documented any themes that emerged, as well as the researcher's impressions. Each participant was identified

with a code symbol.

Participants received a copy of their transcribed interview after undergoing a recorded interview which was transcribed, and clarified any further information from this that pertained to them. Some participants opted to do an additional interview to add information.

3.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis began with reviewing field notes many times for themes, patterns and insights in addition to the notes made after each interview. When this process was completed, the researcher further labelled and sorted information from all fifteen participants in files. Data were tabulated to render analysis easier. A further review of data in each file was followed with the creation of summaries where the researcher took note of data that were unique, markedly dissimilar or contradictory in each summary.

Chapter Four

Lexical Retentions

The table gloss, developed using *Macafouchette*, provided twenty-five words with each category having five lexical entries. The fifteen respondents were divided into the three main age groups where there was five persons per age range. With relation to gender, of the fifteen persons questioned, eight were female and seven were male.

4.1. Across Generations

The respondents were divided into three main age ranges: 18-25, 25-50 and 50+. This allowed for a closer examination of the retentions of all respondents. Also, the age ranges were the best representation of generations. It is important to discuss variations along generation lines as the literature indicates that the elderly are the most likely to speak Creole. By examining different generations, it can be determined if this trend is maintained in lexical retentions. There were five respondents in each age range.

4.1.1. Age Range: 18-25

Within this age range there were five respondents, three females and two males. All had attained some level of tertiary education, whether currently attending or having finished. They declared themselves either African or Mixed, with three of the respondents stating that they were Africans and two identifying themselves as of Mixed origin. The respondents tended to know

between 48% and 72% of the words elicited from the table glossary as seen in table 4(a). This table shows the total number of lexical retentions within this age group.

Respondents	Respondent 1	Respondent 3	Respondent 6	Respondent 4	Respondent 12
% of lexical retentions	64%	64%	72%	52%	48%

4(a) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS WITHIN THE AGE RANGE 18-25

Across gender

As with the other age ranges, there was not any distinction found between gender. Although there was variation among the responses gathered, gender was seen to have little to no impact on these variations. One such example can be seen through a comparison of respondents 1 and 3 in table 4(a), where respondent 1 is female and respondent 3 is male. Both respondents were 21 and 20 respectively, and both knew 16 of the words from the table glossary. Therefore, it can be deduced that gender had no great role to play. This can also be seen with respect to Respondents 4 and 12, where respondent 4 is male and respondent 12 is female that they knew 12 and 13 of the words from the word list respectively. Therefore, it can be deduced that although there was variation within this age range, the variation was not due to gender. Respondents 6 and 12, both female had the highest and lowest retentions respectively.

Across Domains

Among the five main categories used for this study, folk medicine, Carnival, flora, fauna and folk tales, folk tales had the highest number of lexical retentions as seen in table 4(b). The percentage was calculated by adding all instances where the respondents indicated that they knew the word, then this was divided by the number of words in the category multiplied by the number of respondents. Folk tales had 96% whereas folk medicine had the least number of lexical retentions at 44% each.

Domain	Carnival	Folk Medicine	Folklore	Flora	Fauna
% of lexical retention	92%	44%	96%	52%	68%

4(b) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS ACCORDING TO DOMAIN IN 18-25 AGE RANGE.

Within the folklore category, persons could identify all of the words except for one lexical entry “Mama Glo”. This can be seen in table 4(c). It was suggested, by the respondent that this may have been a result of a lack of storytelling on this character. Storytelling was a major source of entertainment of the respondents in this category where their parents or grandparents would share supernatural experiences. This may account for the high number of retentions in this category.

	Soucouyant	Lajablesse	Lagahoo	Papa Bois	Mama Glo
% of lexical	100%	100%	100%	100%	80%

retentions					
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4(c) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FOLKLORE IN 18-25 AGE RANGE.

The second highest domain was Carnival which had 86.67%. All words were identified except for “Canboulay” which proved problematic for more than one respondent as seen in Table 4(d). No reason was given for the lack of knowledge except for one respondent who indicated that “Canboulay” was a specific event whereas other terms were used throughout Carnival with some lexical items such as “fete” being used outside of the domain of Carnival itself. Additionally, Carnival forms a fundamental part of Trinidadian culture. This can account for the number of retentions that occur in this category.

	Canboulay	Fete	Jab-Jab	Jouvert	Santimanitay
% of lexical retentions	60%	100%	100%	100%	100%

4(d) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN CARNIVAL IN 18-25 AGE RANGE.

Third in ranking is Fauna. In this category persons were asked to the local names of French creole origin for some animals. The results were then tabulated (4(e)).

	Shinny	Jep	Jashwa	Zandoli	Cobo
% of lexical retentions	100%	100%	0%	40%	100%

4(e) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FAUNA IN 18-25 AGE RANGE.

In this domain, “Jashwa” proved to be the most difficult for all persons within the 18-25 age range with none of the respondents being able provide the definition or plausible example of use. Respondents indicated that “Jashwa” had other local names that could be used such as “fry dry”. Another term which proved problematic was “zandoli” which referred to a ground lizard. Only 2 of the respondents retained this term. Respondents who had no knowledge of this word stated that they were unaware that that animal had a specific name. All other terms were retained by the respondents in this category.

Flora followed fauna in ranking with 52%. “Tamradayzan” and “Ti-Marie” proved the most problematic for the respondents in this category with none of the respondents being able to provide a definition for the former and 1 respondent for the latter (4(f)).

	Zaboca	Torchon	Tamradayzan	Ti-Marie	Topitamboo
% of lexical retentions	100%	100%	0%	20%	40%

4(f) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FLORA IN 18-25 AGE GROUP

With regards to “Tamradayzan”, most respondents were unable to identify the plant even after a definition was provided, showing that this plant name has, for the most part, been eradicated from the lexicon of young Trinidadians in Diego Martin. The opposite was true with “Ti-Marie”. In this case, after a definition was given all respondents could identify the plant with one respondent saying a local rhyme “Mary, Mary/close yuh door”. This can suggest that the

French Creole term “Marie” has been replaced with the anglicized “Mary”. Another problematic lexical item was “Topitamboo” where 2 of the five respondents had retained the term. All other terms were retained by all the respondents.

Folk Medicine had the lowest number of retentions in this age group with “Cousin Mahoe” and “Ditay Payee” proving the most problematic. None of the respondents could define these lexical items as seen in 4(g). This was followed by “Zebapeak” where only 1 respondent defined the term. However, not mentioned in the table, 2 of the respondents indicated having heard of the term before. Despite this, they were unable to define the term or give an example of its use. “Shandilay” and “Shado Beni” were the lexical items that were retained by all the respondents. General lack of knowledge of Folk medicine was blamed on the increasing use of pharmaceuticals. As stated by one of the respondents “people don’t use ‘bush medicine’ anymore, is only tablet we does use.”

	Cousin Mahoe	Ditay Payee	Shandilay	Zebapeak	Shado Beni
% of lexical retentions	0%	0%	100%	20%	100%

4(g) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FOLK MEDICINE IN 18-25 AGE RANGE

4.1.2. Age Range 25-50

Within this age range there were five respondents, three females and two males. Three had attained some level of tertiary education, while two of the respondents indicated that

although they had not attended a tertiary institution, they had attended other courses that allowed them to learn technical skills. They declared themselves either African or Mixed, with two of the respondents stating that they were Africans and three identifying themselves as of Mixed descent. The respondents tended to know between 76% and 84% of the words elicited from the table glossary as seen in table 4(h) which shows the total number of lexical retentions within this age group.

Respondents	Respondent 2	Respondent 5	Respondent 9	Respondent 11	Respondent 13
% of lexical retentions	76%	72%	76%	80%	84%

4(h) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS WITHIN THE AGE RANGE 25-50

Across gender

Within this category, no distinction could be found according to gender. Although there was variation among the responses gathered, gender may have had little to no impact on these variations. One such example can be seen through a comparison of respondents 2 and 9 in table 4(h), where respondent 2 is female and respondent 9 is male. Both respondents were 30 and 32 respectively, and both knew 19 of the words from the table glossary. Therefore, it can be deduced that gender had no great role to play. This can also be seen with respect to Respondents 11 and 13, where respondent 11 is male and respondent 13 is female that they knew 20 and 21 of the words from the word list respectively. Although there was variation within this age range, the

variation was not due to gender. The lowest and highest number of retentions was held by Respondent 5 and Respondent 13 respectively, both females.

Across Domains

Fauna had the highest number of lexical retentions as seen in table 4(i). The percentage was calculated as aforementioned in 4.1.1. Fauna had 84% whereas folk medicine had the least number of lexical retentions at 64% each. The remaining categories had 80% each.

Domain	Carnival	Folk Medicine	Folklore	Flora	Fauna
% of lexical retention	80%	64%	80%	80%	84%

4(i) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS ACCORDING TO DOMAIN IN 25-50 AGE RANGE.

Within the Fauna category, persons could identify all words except for “Jashwa” and “Zandoli” as can be seen in 4(j).

	Shinny	Jep	Jashwa	Zandoli	Cobo
% of lexical retentions	100%	100%	20%	20%	100%

4(j) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FAUNA IN 25-50 AGE RANGE.

As with the younger respondents in the 18-25 age range, Respondents indicated that “Jashwa” had other local names that could be used such as “fry dry”. Zandoli was also problematic. With regards to both lexical items, only 20% of the respondents had retained them. All other terms were retained by the respondents in this category.

Within the folklore category, persons could identify all the words except for one lexical entry “Mama Glo”. This can be seen in table 4(k). Storytelling is a main source of entertainment for this generation as they relate supernatural experiences. However, none of the respondents had retained “Mama Glo” suggesting that this supernatural creature is not as well-known as the other folklore characters in this age group. Furthermore, 1 of the respondents indicated that they had heard of the term but could not properly define the lexical item.

	Soucouyant	Lajablesse	Lagahoo	Papa Bois	Mama Glo
% of lexical retentions	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%

4(k) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FOLKLORE IN 25-50 AGE RANGE.

Carnival had 80%, the same as Folklore. All words were identified except for “Canboulay” and “Santimanitay”. Canboulay was problematic for more than one respondent as seen in Table 4(l), however, after being given a definition, one respondent indicated that they

knew the word but had simply forgotten the formal term. “Santimanitay” was difficult for 1 respondent.

	Canboulay	Fete	Jab-Jab	Jouvert	Santimanitay
% of lexical retentions	20%	100%	100%	100%	80%

4(l) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN CARNIVAL IN 25-50 AGE RANGE.

Flora also had 80% “Tamradayzan” proved the most problematic for the respondents in this category with none of the respondents being able to provide a definition as seen in 4(m). With regards to “Tamradayzan”, most respondents were unable to identify the plant even after a definition was provided, showing that this plant name has, for the most part, been eradicated not only from the lexicon of young Trinidadians in Diego Martin but from the older generation as well.

	Zaboca	Torchon	Tamradayzan	Ti-Marie	Topitamboo
% of lexical retentions	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%

4(m) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FLORA IN 25-50 AGE GROUP

Unlike the younger age range, “Ti-Marie” was not problematic. All respondents could identify the term suggesting that although it seems like the French Creole term “Marie” has been

replaced with the anglicized “Mary” in the younger generation, this age range was able to retain the ‘original’ French Creole term. All other terms were retained by all the respondents.

Folk Medicine had the lowest number of retentions in this age group similar to the younger age range with “Cousin Mahoe” and “Ditay Payee” proving the most problematic, however the percentage of retentions in this category, 64% is higher than that of the younger age range, 44%. None of the respondents could define “Cousin Mahoe” while only 1 respondent was able to define “Ditay Payee” as seen in 4(n). All other lexical items were retained by all the respondents. General knowledge of Folk medicine was due to parental influence through education on the different uses of plants

	Cousin Mahoe	Ditay Payee	Shandilay	Zebapeak	Shado Beni
% of lexical retentions	0%	20%	100%	100%	100%

4(n) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FOLK MEDICINE IN 25-50 AGE RANGE

4.1.3. Age Range 50 +

Within this age range there were five respondents, two females and three males. Three had attained some level of tertiary education, while two of the respondents indicated that they had not attended a tertiary institution. They declared themselves either African or Mixed, with two of the respondents stating that they were Africans and three identifying themselves as of

Mixed descent. The respondents tended to know between 76% and 100% of the words elicited from the table glossary as seen in table 4(o) with one respondent knowing 100% of the words.

Respondents	Respondent 7	Respondent 8	Respondent 10	Respondent 14	Respondent 15
% of lexical retentions	100%	92%	72%	76%	88%

4(o) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS WITHIN THE AGE RANGE 50+

Across gender

As with the other age ranges, there seemed to be no distinction according to gender, however, it can be seen that respondents 8 and 15 both female had higher retentions than two of their male counterparts. Nevertheless, gender did not seem to have a great impact on the variation of retentions gathered in this age group. This can be seen in 4(o) where respondents 7 and 8 have the highest retentions where the former is male and the latter is female. The lowest and highest number of retentions was held by Respondent 10 and Respondent 7 respectively, both males. Therefore, it can be said that, although there was variation within this age range, the variation may not have been due to gender.

Across Domains

Carnival had the highest number of lexical retentions as seen in table 4(p). The percentage was calculated as aforementioned. Flora as well as Folklore had 92% whereas folk medicine had the least number of lexical retentions at 64%. Fauna had 80% in lexical retentions.

Domain	Carnival	Folk Medicine	Folklore	Flora	Fauna
% of lexical retention	96%	64%	92%	92%	80%

4(p) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS ACCORDING TO DOMAIN IN 50+ AGE RANGE.

Carnival had 96%. All words were identified except for “Canboulay” . Canboulay was problematic for one respondent as seen in Table 4(q). When compared to the previous age ranges we can see that there has always been a steady number of lexical retentions in terms of Carnival lexical items. This suggests that Carnival has been and continues to be an important part of the culture of Trinidad allowing for a consistently high number of retentions.

	Canboulay	Fete	Jab-Jab	Jouvert	Santimanitay
% of lexical retentions	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%

4(q) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN CARNIVAL IN 50+ AGE RANGE.

Folklore and flora had the second highest number of retentions with 92% each. Within the folklore category, persons could identify all the words except for one lexical entry “Mama Glo”. This can be seen in table 4(r). Storytelling remained a main source of entertainment for this generation similar to other age ranges. “Mama Glo” continues to be problematic for all age

groups suggesting that this supernatural creature is not as well-known as the other folklore characters in all age groups.

	Soucouyant	Lajablesse	Lagahoo	Papa Bois	Mama Glo
% of lexical retentions	100%	100%	100%	100%	60%

4(r) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FOLKLORE IN 50+ AGE RANGE

With regards to Flora, which also had 92%, “Tamradayzan” and “Ti-Marie” proved the most problematic for the respondents in this category with Respondent 14 being unable to provide a definition for the former and Respondent 10 for the latter, as seen in 4(s). Unlike the former age groups, the majority of respondents were able to identify and define the both of the terms. Therefore, although this plant name may have been eradicated from the lexicon of young Trinidadians in Diego Martin, it remains for the older generation. The same can be said for “Ti-Marie”. All other terms were retained by all the respondents.

	Zaboca	Torchon	Tamradayzan	Ti-Marie	Topitamboo
% of lexical retentions	100%	100%	80%	80%	100%

4(s) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FLORA IN 50+ AGE GROUP

Within the Fauna category, persons could identify all words except for “Jashwa” and “Zandoli” as can be seen in 4(t).

	Shinny	Jep	Jashwa	Zandoli	Cobo
% of lexical retentions	100%	100%	20%	80%	100%

4(t) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FAUNA IN 50+ AGE RANGE.

“Jashwa” had other local names that could be used such as “fry dry” which may account for the lack of lexical retentions, not only in this age range, but across all. Zandoli was also problematic, however, only 1 respondent did not retain this lexical item. All other terms were retained by the respondents in this category. Compared to the other ranges, the age range had more lexical retentions than the 18-25 age group, but had less than the 25-50 age range.

As with all the other age ranges, Folk Medicine had the lowest number of retentions. Similar to the younger age groups, “Cousin Mahoe”, “Zebapeak” and “Ditay Payee” proving the most problematic, and the percentage of retentions in this category, 64% is equal to the younger age range, 25-50. Two of the respondents could define “Cousin Mahoe” while only 1 respondent was able to define “Ditay Payee” as seen in 4(u). Concerning Zebapeak, one respondent had not retained this lexical item. All other lexical items were retained by all the respondents

	Cousin Mahoe	Ditay Payee	Shandilay	Zebapeak	Shado Beni
% of lexical retentions	40%	20%	100%	80%	100%

4(u) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS IN FOLK MEDICINE IN 18-25 AGE RANGE

4.2. Across Domains

Carnival and Folklore had the highest number of lexical retentions at 89.3% as seen in table 4(v). Fauna followed with 77.3%, then Flora at 69.3%. Folk Medicine had the least number of retentions at 58.7%. Overall, total retentions varied between 40% and 100%.

Domain	Carnival	Folk Medicine	Folklore	Flora	Fauna
% of lexical retention	89.3%	58.7%	89.3%	69.3%	77.3%

4(v) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS ACCORDING TO DOMAIN.

All words in the Carnival domain were identified except for “Canboulay” and “Santimanitay” which proved problematic across all age groups and gender. The main reason given for this, was the fact that “Canboulay” is a specific event whereas all other terms could be used generally throughout the Carnival season. In terms of “Santimanitay”, this proved problematic for 1 respondent in the 25-50 age range and showed that “the younger generation

had no time for the older traditions” according to Respondent 8 from the 50+ age range. The lack of interest of the younger generations in local culture may impact their retentions.

Within the Folklore category, which had the same number of retentions as Carnival, persons could identify all the words except for one lexical entry “Mama Glo”. This continued to be problematic for all age groups. Storytelling remained a main source of entertainment for this generation similar to other age ranges. “Mama Glo” continues to be problematic for all age groups with one respondent not retaining lexical item in 18-25 age range, none in the 25-50 age range and two from the 50+ age range. According to the respondents, storytelling and supernatural tales form an integral part of leisure time, which can be indicative of the number of retentions in this category. However, with regards to “Mama Glo”, respondents seemed to have little to no stories about her, even in the 50+ category, which may be a reason that this folk creature is not as well-known as the others.

In the Fauna category, persons could identify all words except for “Jashwa” and “Zandoli”. “Jashwa” had other local names that could be used such as “fry dry” which may account for the lack of lexical retentions, this was indicated across all age groups. This term was the most problematic of the two with thirteen of the respondents not able to define the term, five in 18-25, four in 25-50, and four in 50+. “Zandoli” was also problematic, however, it was not as problematic as “Jashwa” with eight of the respondents having not retained this item, three from 18-25, four from 25+ and one from 50+. All other terms were retained by the respondents in this category. One reason for this level of retention was the assumption of many respondents that this animal had no name other than “ground lizard”.

With regards to Flora, “Tamradayzan” and “Ti-Marie” proved the most problematic for the respondents. “Tamradayzan” was the most difficult as there was some level of a lack of retention in all age ranges. Five respondents, in both the 18-25 and 25-50 age range and one in the 50+ category, giving a total of eleven respondents, unable to define this term. This can indicate that this plant name may be disappearing from the lexicon Trinidadians, particularly in Diego Martin. “Ti-Marie” was not as difficult Tamradayzan, with only five respondents unable to define this term, four from the 18-25 age range and one from the 50+. All other terms were retained by all the respondents. This can be a result of the anglicization of French Creole terms, where “Marie” is replaced with “Mary”.

In all age ranges, Folk Medicine had the lowest number of retentions. “Cousin Mahoe”, “Zebapeak” and “Ditay Payee” proved the most problematic. Zebapeak was the least difficult of all these lexical items with ten of the respondents having retained this item, one from the 18-25 age range, five from 25-50, and four from 50+. The second least difficult term was “Ditay Payee” with thirteen respondents not retaining this term. “Cousin Mahoe” was the most difficult: fourteen of the respondents were unable to define this term. All other lexical items were retained by all the respondents. General lack of knowledge of “Folk Medicine” was blamed on the increase of the use of pharmaceuticals, as well as a mix of elderly not sharing information and the young having no interest in the elderly’s knowledge.

4.3. Across Gender

Generally, there seemed to be no correlation between gender and the number of retentions in any of the age groups. Both genders were able to give either the highest or lowest number of

retentions in each category. As can be seen in 4(w), however, women had the highest percentage of retentions overall. It is unclear why this is so. The literature indicates that men are more likely to speak French Creole when compared to women. Therefore, it was expected that men would have the highest number of retentions, which would correlate with the literature. As a result, it is surprising that women had the highest number of retentions. This could have been due to the fact that more women than men were interviewed. However, this explanation may not be likely since the difference, in terms of the number of male and female respondents, is one.

Gender	Male	Female
Number	7/15	8/15
% lexical retentions	77.1	78.5

4(w) PERCENTAGE OF LEXICAL RETENTIONS ACCORDING TO GENDER

Chapter Five

Language Loss, Language Planning, Language Revitalization

According to Coronel-Molina, language revitalization, refers to “the restoration or strengthening of a particular language in regions where they prevailed before being displaced by other, more powerful and prestigious languages.” Furthermore, it involves those areas where the language is no longer used in everyday contexts or to areas where the language has been confined to certain contexts. In terms of Beausejour, language revitalization is a viable concept that can be used. Once a French Creole speaking community, Diego Martin now has few to no first language or second language speakers of French Creole. While it is true that some cultures have been some irremediable language shift, as some of the respondents consider the case of French Creole in Diego Martin, there are “enough case studies of revitalization from around the world to show that language loss is not always inevitable” (Crystal 91).

When discussing language revitalization, it is also essential to analyse the importance of lexical retentions. Low lexical retentions can be indices of language loss as well as language attitudes can be influential in language retention (Weltens & Grendel 145), and in turn language revitalization. Lexical retentions can be used to as a method to determine language attitudes as a

negative language attitude towards a language can result in lower lexicon retention. Therefore, low lexical retentions can imply negative support for language revitalization initiatives.

Language revitalization can be achieved through language planning. In his book *Language Death*, Crystal proposes some necessary criteria for the successful revitalization of language which can be tied to language planning policies. These policies are often described as deliberate efforts to influence the function, structure, or acquisition of languages or language varieties within a speech community. The policies are divided into three types: status planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning. These types of language planning can be further explored, with relation to the language attitudes of the respondents and their lexical retentions, to better examine the possible impacts on language revitalization efforts.

5.1. Status Planning

Status planning deals with “the standing of one language in relation to another” (Crystal 268). Thus, status planning is the allocation or reallocation of a language or variety to functional domains in society. Researchers such as Kloss have proposed four qualities of a language that can determine its status. These include: language of origin, degree of standardization, juridical status, and the vitality of the language. All of the above can affect the status of a language.

In terms of the status of French Creole in Beausejour, there is few variation in the language attitudes of the community. Twelve of the fifteen respondents indicated that French Creole or Patois was an indigenous language that should be protected. However, when asked to define the term “Patois” as French Creole is locally know, all fifteen stated that it was a “broken” language, resulting from an attempt to speak French. As a result, they stated, that there were no

developed norms that could be used to define its usage. This was expounded by one of the respondents, respondent 11, who referred to the variation in terms of orthography and at times phonology that exists among French Creole speakers in Trinidad. Additionally, in terms of juridical status, the majority of the respondents declared that French Creole, while acknowledged as an indigenous language, was neither promoted nor condemned. While it was commendable that persons could speak French Creole, persons were not encouraged to speak Patois in the household. This in turn affected the vitality of the language, as the majority of the respondents, nine, indicated that they did not know of any person who spoke French Creole. Those who knew French Creole speakers communicated that those who spoke “Patois” were elderly. This is evidenced by two respondents in the 50+ age range, Respondents 7 and 10, brothers who stated that their mother, deceased, and aunt often spoke French Creole to each other, but never with the younger generation.

In language revitalization, it is important to establish the status of the language before attempting to improve the status. The language attitudes expressed by the respondents showed that French Creole occupies a low status. Additionally, few respondents indicated that they would be open to French Creole being used in other domains such as a school subject or an activity in the gathering places such as the community centre. To revitalize French Creole, the prestige of the language must be increased within the dominant community (Crystal 130). Therefore, initiatives must be put in place to promote the importance of French Creole so that it is not regarded as a tolerated language. Instead, it should be developed into a national language. It would be impossible to simply begin to teach French Creole if the dominant community, the monolingual Trinidadian English Creole speakers, are not aware of the language and its

importance. Furthermore, because of the status of French Creole, there is no economic benefit in knowing and speaking French Creole. This is reflected in the low lexical retentions of the younger generation.

5.2. Corpus Planning

Corpus planning refers to the intervention in the forms of a language, where decisions are made to engineer changes in the structure of the language. It deals with the way language “norms are chosen and codified” (Crystal 269). These planning activities are often the result of the beliefs about the inadequacy of a language to serve desired functions. Unlike status planning, corpus planning is generally performed by linguists. There are three recognized types of corpus planning: graphization, standardization and modernization.

Graphization refers to the development, selection and modification of the orthographic conventions of a language. The use of writing can have lasting effects, which include the easier intergenerational transmission, communication with larger number of people and a standard against which varieties can be compared. This is essential when one considers the language attitudes of the respondents. A lack of a standard orthography is one of the main reasons that respondents believed that French Creole was not a real language. When compared to Trinidadian English Creole, one of the other languages used in the community, French Creole was often found lacking. In establishing a writing system for a language, corpus planners have the option of using an existing system or creating a new. Luckily, for Trinidadian French Creole, there are other French Creole varieties such as the one found in Haiti, which has an established orthographical system which can be used when developing its own writing system.

Standardization often involves one variety of a language taking precedence over other social and regional dialects of a language. In this case, standardization has already occurred in that Standard English has been established as the language of Trinidad. When asked about the speakers of English and French Creole, ten of the respondents stated that English was spoken by the better educated. This belief along with the standardization of English reinforces the dominance of English and makes it necessary for social and economic mobility. Modernization occurs when a language needs to expand its resources to meet function. Charles Ferguson (1968) defines this form of language planning as “the process by which (a language becomes) the equal of other developed languages as a medium of communication; it is in a sense the process of joining the world community of increasingly intertranslatable languages recognized as appropriate vehicles of modern forms of discourse”(qtd. Sridhar 351). The most significant force in modernization, is the expansion of the lexicon, which allows the language to discuss modern topics. With technological expansion comes the introduction of new terms associated with the internet. For the youngest generation, they found that French Creole lacked the necessary lexical items that allowed them to communicate these advancements. Rapid lexical expansion is needed via the use of new terms, developed perhaps from English, in glossaries and dictionaries. This can pose new problems such as the belief that these new terms are eroding the language. Furthermore, when languages are written, they can become static and reduced in form especially compared to the stories oral tradition, which is important in French Creole societies, that “are typically dynamic in character, varying between retellings, relying greatly on a lively interaction between speaker and listeners, and using an array of communicative effects of a non-verbal kind” (Crystal 139).

Language attitudes of the respondents indicate that corpus planning is necessary to establish French Creole as a language. Through graphization, standardization and modernization, French Creole can be revitalized and considered as a language to be used in everyday communication. In *Language Death*, Crystal explores the necessity of having an established writing system. He states that “an endangered language will progress if its speakers can write their language down” (138). The future of a language can be assured if written down as it can be easier transmitted from generation to generation. Also, the process of writing allows for an intense analysis of the sound and orthographic system, as well as the preparation of learning aids.

5.3. Acquisition Planning

Acquisition planning is a type of language planning in which a government system or a non-governmental organization aims to influence aspects of language, such as language status through education. It is often integrated into a larger language planning process in which the statuses of languages are evaluated, corpuses are revised and the changes are introduced to society on a national, state or local level through education systems, ranging from primary schools to universities. It is often used to promote language revitalization which can change a language’s status or reverse a language shift.

In the education sector, the education ministry is typically in charge of making national language acquisition decisions based on state and local evaluation reports. Although acquisition planning can be useful to governments, there are several problems that need to be considered. Some proposed acquisition changes could also be too drastic or instituted too suddenly without proper planning and organization. Acquisition planning can also be financially

draining, so adequate planning and awareness of financial resources is essential. A lack of support in the community can discourage any plans to promote the language. In addition to the education sector, there are non-governmental sectors or organizations that have a significant effect on language acquisition. These organizations often create their own dictionaries and grammar books, thus affecting the materials which students are exposed to in schools. Although these organizations do not hold official power, they can influence government planning decisions, such as with educational materials, affecting acquisition.

All respondents indicated that they would not support any initiative, be it governmental or otherwise, to introduce French Creole in schools as a second language or subject. It can be inferred that the low status and weak corpus of French Creole resulted in a negative response concerning the use of French Creole in an education domain. This is also true in areas where French Creole is spoken. In Paramin, a French Creole language course was not introduced until 2001.¹ Therefore, it is necessary for organizations to aid in the development of programs that can improve the status of French Creole as well as standardize this variety and expand the lexicon. Only after the status and corpus of French Creole has been improved can this language be present in the education system. A presence in the education system is crucial for the progress of the language (Crystal 136). The school setting provides a wide range of opportunities for children to listen and speak, as they learn to use the language in school-mediated social occasions such as cultural gatherings. If their only experience of speech and writing in school is

¹ For more information on this and other educational attempts in Paramin, please consult Ferreira, Jo-Anne, and David Holbrook. "Are They Dying? The Case of Some French-Lexifier Creoles." *La Torre* 7.25 (2002): 367-97., November 2001.

through the medium of the dominant language, English, then it is not surprising that French Creole fails to thrive.

Language planning is essential when dealing with language loss.

5.4. Language Loss

Based on his study of minority languages worldwide, Fishman postulated in *Reversing Language Shift*, a continuum of eight stages of language loss with stage eight being the closest to total extinction and stage one being the closest to dynamic survival.² One of Fishman's stages can only roughly approximate the real situation of an indigenous language. French Creole in Trinidad is at the eighth stage. That is only a few elderly persons speak the language as a first language. Perhaps a method to increase the number of speakers is to implement Hinton's "Language Apprentice" Model where fluent elders, from Paramin for example are teamed one-on-one with young adults who want to learn the language.³ However, this solution can pose problems. There are few fluent speakers of French Creole, and these persons often live in the isolated areas where French Creole is spoken such as Paramin. It would be difficult to establish a connection between those living in Paramin and those living in Beausejour.

The lexical retentions of the respondents in Beausejour suggest that language loss is still ongoing. That is, there are still some intergenerational use of the language, through storytelling and the sharing of experiences. This is stage six of Fishman's continuum of language loss. A

² For a more extensive look at the 8 stages of language loss, please consult Fishman, Joshua A. *Reversing language shift: theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to threatened languages*. Clevedon, Eng., Multilingual Matters, 1997.

³ For more information on this model, please refer to <http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com/content/books/b9789004261723s018>

possible way to combat language loss at this stage is the development of places in the community where French Creole is encouraged, perhaps, specific events or days dedicated to the use of French Creole. This poses its own challenges such as the lack of interest of the younger generation in a language that is perceived to have no economic or social value.

In order to fully revitalize a language, the problems associated with language loss must be combatted through careful language planning.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

Using table glossaries to measure lexical retention, this study focused on a community in Trinidad that is not a part of the French Creole speech community. It aimed to address instrumental factors that are used to determine the most effective methods of language revitalization such as the level of language loss. As French Creole has specific domains in which it is used, the study evaluated the extent to which lexical retentions still exist in these domains namely, Carnival, Folklore, Medicine, Fauna and Flora. The interviewees were divided into three age ranges, 18-25, 25-50, 50+. Furthermore, along with these retentions, language attitudes were explored to better determine their impact on language planning geared towards language revitalization. This can be influential in nationwide language planning, as the study provided a sample of the population that is neither part of the French Creole speech community, nor zealous researchers reviving a language for their own aims.

It was found that overall, Carnival and Folklore had the highest number of lexical retentions followed by Fauna followed then Flora, and finally Folk Medicine had the least number of retentions. However, there was variation among the age ranges. Within the 18-25 age range, Folklore had the highest number of retentions, in 25-50, Fauna had the highest number of retentions. The 50+ age group had Carnival as the highest number of retentions. In all age groups, Folk Medicine had the least number of retentions. The 50+ age range also had the highest number of lexical retentions when compared to the other age ranges. For gender, women

had more lexical retentions than men. This is important especially when discussing language loss.

The lack of lexical retentions highlight the language loss that has occurred in this community. Only one of the respondents knew 100% of the table glossary used. Anglicization has created several problems with lexical retentions. Words such as “Ti-Marie” and “Jashwa”, which was problematic across generations, have English names that are used more often within the community. This language loss was also affected by the language attitudes of the community.

Language attitudes are tied with the types of language planning policies which are status planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning. In terms of status planning, many the participants did not regard French Creole as its own language. Furthermore, a lack of prestige associated with the language has produced a negative attitude towards the language, especially in terms of economic and social mobility. For corpus planning, as French Creole, in the Trinidadian context has no standard form, there is often orthographic variation. This variation has further deteriorated the attitudes of persons regarding the language. Often compared with Standard English, French Creole was often discussed as lacking. Finally, for acquisition planning, none of the respondents stated that they would support the implementation of French Creole in schools as a subject or otherwise. Steps need to be taken to reverse language attitudes at each step of the language planning process so that language revitalization will be plausible not only at a community level, but also on a nationwide scale.

Future research is needed on other areas of Trinidad to gauge a more comprehensive nationwide reaction to language planning. More research is also needed when discussing the

methods to combat language loss. There are many different stages of language loss. Therefore, the level of language loss needs to be evaluated, followed by the usage of carefully calibrated responses to reverse language loss. Although Hinton's "Language Apprentice" Model is good solution for language loss, it needs to be explored and better adapted to fit the Trinidadian French Creole context. As stated in Ferreira and Holbrook, a permanent revival may be unlikely, but if there is a wave of interest in the language, this can lead to a possible resurgence in the community (Ferreira and Holbrook 4).

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview questions

Good Day. I am a third-year student of the University of the West Indies. This interview is part of a research paper that is needed to complete university. Information given will be included in the research paper, however confidentiality will be protected as all personal information will not be submitted. I will be the only person to listen to recordings to protect your anonymity. A transcription of the interview will be provided so as to ensure that information given is correct. Thank you for your participation.

1. Age :

20-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61-70

1. Ethnicity:

mixed 2 african indian chinese caucasian

other

1. Education :

primary secondary tertiary other

1. Gender:

male female

1. What is Patois?

1. Do you speak Patois? How would you describe your proficiency?

1. Why/Why not?

1. How would you describe Patois speakers/ English speakers?

1. Do you know anyone, including family members, who speaks Patois?

1. Is Patois important in Trinidad culture? How?

1. Should more be done to protect it? If “yes” what can be done?

1. Would you support an initiative by the government to reimplement Patois in society through school/community centers? Why/Why Not?

1. Give the meaning of the following words

- Table glossary

1. Are you surprised by knowledge (lack) of certain Patois terms?

Appendix 2: Table glossary used

Word List

	Word	Meaning
Flora	ZABOCA	Avocado pear
	TORCHON	A naturalized climbing plant with long oval fruit that is dried and used for cleaning
	TAMRADAYZAN	Species of Tamarind where the fruit which is brown when ripe and has a sour sweet taste.
	TI-MARIE	Local name given to a sensitive plant
	TOPITAMBOO	Edible white-fleshed tubers, white flowers, long greyish leaves
Fauna	SHINNY	A type of worm whose hairs cause a burning and irritation of skin when touched.
	JEP	Any of several types of large, brownish wasps. Most make mud nests and are often found near houses.
	ZANDOLI	Ground Lizard
	JASHWA	Any species of small marine anchovy such as fry-dry, zanchoi
	COBO	Black vulture. Scavenger bird
Carnival	CANBOULAY	Pre-carnival procession with flambeau, recalling the work of former slaves to fight bushfires.
	FETE	Celebration; Party
	JAB JAB	Traditional carnival devil mas where a character wears knee breeches, horns, breastplate and carries a rope.
	JOUVERT	Official start of Carnival Weekend.
	SANTIMANITAY	Last word in extempo compositions of old time calypsonians often full of picong.
Folk tales	SOUCOUYANT	a shape-shifting character who appears as a reclusive old woman by day. By night, she strips off her wrinkled skin and puts it in a mortar. In her true form, as a fireball she flies across the dark sky in search of a victim.

	LAJABLESS	Usually appears at night and wears a long white dress to hide her cloven hoofs
	LAGAHOO	A person who takes the form of an animal generally at night.
	MAMAGLO	A half woman, half snake with long flowing hair which she combs constantly. Her upper torso is a naked, beautiful woman.
	PAPA BOIS	Papa Bois, also called Maitre Bois, lives in the forest and he is the father or protector of the animals that live there. He is often seen by hunters and other people who live near the forest.
Folk medicine	COUSIN MAHOE	Slender shrub or small tree with dark red hairy stems, small pink delicate flowers used in treating fever.
	DITAY PAYEE	Erect bushy plant with white bell shaped flowers used in the preparation of an eye-wash.
	SHANDILAY	Used for bush tea.
	ZEBAPEAK	Medicinal Herb with a bitter taste juice from crushed leaves are used to cure fevers.
	SHADO BENI	A medicinal herb used to cure gas pains, sprains, colds and fevers.