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**Title of Thesis:**

The Revitalization of Trinidad Patois: A Case Study into the Strategies Used at  
Talparo R.C. School

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## **ABSTRACT**

Education is a powerful tool that shapes our linguistic realities. As was the case in 19th century Trinidad, education served as the main vehicle in displacing Patois as the lingua-franca, thus constituting its status as an endangered heritage language within the 21st century. Within the past decade, interest has been resurgent regarding revitalization. However, there has been no conclusive proposal on how this ought to actualize. The staff and the students of Talparo R.C. School have risen to the challenge of revitalization within their community by conducting Patois classes since 2017. Through a combination of data attained in interviews, participant observations, and questionnaires, the case study of Talparo R.C. School effectively demonstrated that educational programmes add value to revitalization campaigns but must not be used by themselves. Instead, other social and political factors must be used in tandem to secure true revival.

Keywords: Creole languages, education, language and education policy, revitalization, endangered languages

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The rationale of this thesis is to influence policy change in education so that schooling may serve as a contributing factor to the preservation of endangered heritage languages. Trinidad faces a serious socio-linguistic reality in the context of a wider global issue. According to Austin and Sallabank, “it is generally agreed by linguists that today there are about 7,000 languages spoken in the world; and about half of these may no longer continue to exist after a few more generations” (1). In the case of Trinidad, the death of Patois is imminent. The preservation of our heritage languages like Patois is necessary because “languages are often seen as symbols of ethnic and national identity. When a language dies out, a unique way of looking at the world also disappears” (Austin and Sallabank, 8). Furthermore, this matter is urgent to the entire Caribbean given that “maintaining regional identity is seen as increasingly important in the era of globalization. Language is one of the ways in which people construct their identities” (Austin and Sallabank, 9). Patois is undoubtedly part of Trinidadian culture and identity, and therefore must be protected.

This thesis aims to lobby for the active participation and involvement of the Ministry of Education in revitalization efforts, along with any other stakeholders involved in curriculum planning. At present, one revitalization effort underway in the field of education can be found at Talparo R.C. School where Standard 4-5 teacher Michelle Mora-Foderingham is leading the way.

Talparo R.C. School has been chosen as the focus of this study given that it is one of only two primary schools in Trinidad (the second being Paramin R.C. School) where Patois lessons have been introduced. This study will focus primarily on the teaching methods and strategies used throughout the 2020-2021 academic year. Patois as a heritage language serves an immense purpose

in Talparo given that it is one of the few remaining communities in the country where the language can still be found.

The thematic concerns of this study are the importance of heritage language preservation, revitalization through education, language acquisition in children, and pedagogical strategies which in turn can be used to create a model for introducing Patois into other primary schools. Through the close examination of these themes, this study will argue for the inclusion of Patois in education as Creole linguists strive continuously to dismantle the colonial legacy which has decimated indigenous languages and constituted supremacy of European tongues over the vernaculars found in the Caribbean.

This study begins with a review of past literature attained in books, articles, journals, theses, lectures, documentaries, and dissertations found through online databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and UWlinC. The literature review is then followed by three chapters that present the findings obtained through a variety of primary data collection methods and both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The first chapter discusses the interview conducted with the school's teacher, Michelle Mora-Foderingham whereas the second chapter analyses the data attained during two months of participant observation of the school's Patois classes. The third chapter discusses the possibility of introducing Patois to other primary schools. This chapter summarizes the findings of a questionnaire administered to two private schools: St. Andrew's Private School and Maria Regina Grade School, in addition to two public schools: Belmont Boys' R.C. Primary School and Patna/River Estate Government Primary School. Questionnaires were administered to both private and public schools to ensure diversity in the demographics of respondents to minimize possible biases.

Methodologically, this study employs a relativist approach guided by the hypothesis that education can promote language revitalization. This hypothesis will be proven by a case study of Talparo R.C. School and deem if their initiative is an effective means of language revitalization. This case study will entail a description of the background of the classes, an examination of the pedagogical tools employed, an investigation of the current attitudes of primary school students towards Patois, and finally an elaboration on the implications and complexities in developing a well-rounded revitalization plan.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The past and present of Patois must be analysed to successfully propose initiatives in pursuit of its future revitalization. The literature underscores the factors that contributed to Patois' endangerment, the historical circumstances which lead to its total exclusion from the education system, the possible benefits of its inclusion, examples of teaching methods and strategies to incorporate Creole languages into the learning environment, the importance of governmental support and the age group which would be most susceptible to Patois acquisition.

The factors contributing to language death must first be explored. In "Language Death: When languages disappear", Viktor Höhn describes different types of language death, one being through population loss. This is undoubtedly the case concerning the death of Amerindian languages across the region. Dixon notes:

When the Europeans invaded the Americas and the Caribbean, they, on one hand, murdered the native inhabitants in to seize their lands and on the other hand, unknowingly brought with them lethal epidemic diseases like smallpox to which the indigenous people had no immunity. As whole speech communities died, due to diseases and warfare, numberless languages died with them. (qtd. in Höhn 107-108)

In contrast, the language decay of Patois in Trinidad is not due to the aftermath of a genocide, but rather a political and educational structure that favoured English following the cession of Trinidad to Britain in 1802. This created a new socio-linguistic situation, as Ferreira explains:

Trinidad under Spanish rule appeared to have been linguistically tolerant, possibly because of the weakness of Spanish control over the island, but this was decidedly not the case

under British domination. When the British came into power, they challenged the domination of the French at all levels, especially at the level of language and religion. As language is the chief culture marker for most groups, the French language was targeted, and it began to be slowly stripped away from the French Creoles. (“The Sociolinguistic History” 3)

Therefore, the decay of Patois aligns with alternating theories of language death in which a language shift occurs due to the cultural, political, or economic dominance of one group over another (Austin and Sallabank 5). Höln elaborates:

If a speech community comes into economic, cultural, or political contact with another population speaking a different language and being economically stronger and more advanced, culturally aggressive, or politically more powerful...they can have substantial effects on the attitude of the community towards its own language resulting in collective doubts about the usefulness of loyalty to their own language. (5)

This was undoubtedly the case with Patois when the British government began to develop what Brereton describes as “full-scale policy of Anglicisation” as “the colonial government sought after the collapse of French (and the lingua franca French Creole) and its replacement by that of English” (“The Sociolinguistic History” 4). As Leps explains, “the language was forbidden from being spoken, and parents did not see any economic value in the need to teach it to their children for continuity. English became the preferred language” (5). “By 1923, within a century, French Creole was finally displaced as the lingua franca,” (“The Sociolinguistic History” 5) and consequently, the population of Patois speakers diminished. There has never been an official census by the government or a survey in past research to estimate the present-day number of speakers. However, Leps states that recent estimates indicate that only 3,800 speakers remain (8) while other sources

provide an even lower estimate of between 1,000 to 2,000 speakers (“Trinidad & Tobago Endangered Languages”).

In *The Young Colonials: A Social History of Education in Trinidad and Tobago*, Carl C. Campbell confirms that the language shift was a systematic effort by the British colonial government through “the establishment of the English-language schools in every ward of the colony” (“The Sociolinguistic History” 4). Campbell maintains:

At the insistence of Charles Warner and Governor McLeod, the colonial government declared itself in favour of a non-negotiable monopoly for the English language as the vehicle of teaching in all schools aided by the government. (229)

The precedence and prestige awarded to English over Patois as both a language of instruction and a language of communication in the classroom is rooted in the foundation of education in Trinidad. As a result, the process of Anglicization discriminated against children whose mother tongue was Patois, as Aub-Buscher notes, “As a teacher, J.J Thomas inevitably came into contact every day with the problems posed to children whose native language was French Creole by a school curriculum taught entirely in English. The monolingual Patois speaker was at a disadvantage in the Trinidad of Thomas’ day” (5-6). Aub-Buscher adds that the spread of education which enforced English as the modus operandi is one of the contributors to the imminent extinction of Patois (10).

Critics of Warner and McLeod’s policies nevertheless existed during this era, although they were not necessarily in the favour of Patois. In 1869, Patrick Keenan, the chief inspector of schools in Ireland who was employed by the British government to investigate the system of education in the island, criticized the monolingual approach to education in the colony (Campbell 340). Keenan argued that French-speaking and Spanish-speaking children should first be taught to read their home language; afterward, they should be taught English (Campbell 231). Keenan disregarded

Patois as a legitimate language; his same position in respect to vernacular languages in other British colonies (Campbell 231). In the 1890s, the Chief Inspector of Schools, Lechmere Guppy argued that Patois should be discouraged in favour of European languages (Campbell 231). Keenan's and Guppy's undermining of the educational value of Patois raises the following questions: are Creole languages suitable for education? Is it an obstacle to learning in schools? Campbell's chapter on "The English Language and Education 1834-1930" never addresses these concerns. Moreover, it focuses on the use of the Hindustani (Bhojpuri) language by Canadian Presbyterian missionaries, implying that they did not receive the same level of discrimination as Patois in the classroom as they were considered a means of facilitating religious conversion.

However, these questions are answered by researcher Rachèle-Jeanie Delva in her journal, "Kreyòl Pale, Kreyòl Konprann": Haitian Identity and Creole Mother-Tongue Learning in Matènwa, Haiti". Delva argues that Creoles can be and is an effective language of instruction based on her comparative observations of three schools - two in which French was used as the LOI (Language of Instruction) and one in which French Creole was the LOI (119-120). Delva's hypothesis challenges the historical narrative propagated by Keenan and Guppy that French Creole is a "broken language" and cannot serve as a legitimate LOI. Their opinions were rooted in Eurocentric beliefs, control, and dominance as they "understood the imperial necessity to make English the official language of the entire British empire" (Campbell 231).

Delva observes numerous advantages of the adaptation of Creole languages into the pedagogy of post-colonial societies. The legitimization of Creoles fosters the creation of national and cultural identities as Freire explains that education should be the practice of freedom - as opposed to the practice of domination (qtd. in Delva 81). In other words, "a productive learning experience derives from a holistic combination of everything that surrounds a person" (Delva 94)

which would include Creole languages. The absence of Trinidad Patois from the curriculum of the Ministry of Education denies children of a holistic and culturally relevant education model since the legacy and influence of Patois is evidenced daily in Trinidadian society. Ferreira affirms that “most linguists agree that the vernaculars of the country are varieties of a Caribbean English-based (or English-lexicon) Creole...some even suggesting that it is a relexification of the country’s French-lexicon Creole” (6). In the presentation “Our French Creole Foundations: Trinidadian Speech in the 21st Century”, Ferreira proclaims that “Patois is in our linguistic DNA” (0:59) and further highlights that the legacy of Patois can be evidenced in our present-day grammar, vocabulary (such as in flora, fauna, festivals, food, and folklore) as well as place names (7:38 – 16:57). The inclusion of Trinidad Patois into the curriculum would be both linguistically and culturally relevant as it would employ “the necessity of cultural awareness within the learning experience to develop confidence in one’s identity” (Delva 115). Ladson-Billings and Hefflin add that:

Culturally relevant pedagogy addresses the reality of children’s communities and addresses the impact it has on their education. The theory places the responsibility on educators to encourage culture, diversity, and social justice in the learning space. As a teaching method, it relies on academic materials while making connections to social, cultural, and personal frameworks that their students can relate to. For example, teachers may use stories, arts, and history from the children’s backgrounds to help them learn in ways that are relevant to them. (qtd. in Delva 97-98)

Therefore, Delva advocates for the incorporation of Creole languages into syllabi. The educational capacity of Patois was seen as early as 1869 in J.J Thomas’ publication entitled *The Theory and Practice of Creole Grammar* in which he argued, “Creole is a dialect fully capable of

expressing all ordinary thoughts, provided that the speaker is a master of and understands how to manage, its resources” (Thomas 105). The publication of a local grammar book was historically a steppingstone in Creole legitimization as it awarded to Creole a measure of dignity which it had previously lacked in the eyes of the coloured and the black intelligentsia (Campbell 232).

Besides the utilisation of grammar books, Leps examines songs as an alternative method in language learning. Leps argues that while songs may be effective in dismantling the monotony of the traditional classroom setting (12); they would not be effective in revitalizing Patois in isolation (25). The disadvantages of an overfocus on songs are possible “language fossilization” (21), “the reduction of Patois to a ceremonial or a ritual language” (24) as well as learning the language by rote without achieving any actual competence in it (21). Leps presents these shortcomings without providing any suggestions of other teaching methods and strategies, which this paper will provide in Chapter 2.

Metallic & Sellier recommend the use of Creole literature in the classroom setting, for example, a Creole translation of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, stating that “if children use Creole to learn about world literature, they are exposed to an environment that does not restrict high learning to French” (qtd. in Delva 105). Delva herself adds, “such use of Creole normalizes the language by providing that it can play the same function as French” (105). This same incentive can be applied to schools in Trinidad which have historically negated the fully functional range of expression possible with Patois. Subsequently, Smith & McSherry note that this would “enable children to accept the language at their true value (qtd. in Delva 106) as well as “coincide with the theory that literary skills are transferable across languages by considering effective bilingualism in schools” (Delva 109).

However, none of these initiatives would be fruitful without government intervention. Lepslaments that “intervention is needed urgently by Government with input from the Patois speech community, as Trinidad does not have clear language planning nor a policy to address the use and revival of Patois in Trinidadian schools” (28). Regarding education, Professor Ian E. Robertson drafted a language policy for the Ministry of Education in 2010. Robertson pointed out:

For many persons acquainted with the education system in Trinidad and Tobago, there is no language education policy. There is no single coherent document that sets out such a policy. While it is to be acknowledged that there is no specific language policy document, there are some clear indicators of policy positions derivable from the ways in which the system is operationalised. (32)

These preconceived positions entail the choice of English as the language for education that all teachers are expected to use for instruction and the only language in which all students are expected to develop and demonstrate linguistic competence (Robertson 32).

Despite the lack of an official policy, Robertson recognizes the importance of not downplaying considerations towards Patois:

There are a few significant communities of speakers of this French-lexicon Creole language in locations such as Paramin, Lluengo, and Moruga. Though these communities are aging ones, there is renewed interest in this language, and it is possible to save it from becoming extinct in Trinidad. All these bear some relevance and significance for any language policy for Trinidad. (28)

A language policy must consider the demographic that would benefit most from being introduced to Patois. Regarding language acquisition, Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle indicate:

The critical period hypothesis as proposed by Lenneberg (1967) holds that primary language acquisition must occur during a critical period which ends at about the age of puberty with the establishment of the cerebral lateralization of function. One prediction of this hypothesis is that second language acquisition will be relatively fast, successful, and qualitatively similar to first language only if it occurs before the age of puberty. (1114)

Vanhove adds “the CPH states that the ‘susceptibility’ or ‘sensitivity’ to language input varies as a function of age, with adult L2 learners being less susceptible to input than child L2 learners” (1). Vanhove states “one strong prediction made by some CPH exponents holds that post-CP learners cannot reach native-like L2 competences” (2). Examination of the Critical Period Hypothesis is relevant given that “several recent studies have shown that the course of second language acquisition is similar to that of first language acquisition, in terms of the order in which rules and structures are acquired, of the learning strategies employed and of the errors made” (Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle 1114). As a result, a policy may argue that primary school students would be the perfect age group to target Patois revitalization efforts.

Contrarily, Vanhove is critical of Lenneberg’s notion suggesting that previous research lacks conciseness in establishing an exact age range in which brain lateralization occurs, whether the hypothesis applies to full immersion or formal L2 instruction as well as whether the scope of study equally accounts for the acquisition of phonetics, phonology, morphology, and syntax. In fact, “it has been observed that adult learners proceed faster than child learners at the beginning stages of L2 acquisition” (Vanhove 2). Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle additionally point out that:

A few studies have shown that older children are faster than younger children in acquiring second language morphology and syntax and listening comprehension. Studies of age difference in the acquisition of second language pronunciation have produced conflicting

results. Ekstrand and Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle (1978) found better pronunciation in older subjects, whereas Fathman (1975) and Seliger, Krashen and Ladefoged (1975) found a negative effect on age. However, Seliger et al. did report on a few post-pubertal second language learners who had achieved accent-less pronunciation in their second language, as well as some cases of prepubertal learners who maintained foreign accents. (1115)

Nonetheless, Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle maintain that it would be premature to reject CPH based on these studies (1115). Their methodologies of determining native likeness in L2 research may not be fully applicable to Trinidad bearing in mind that Patois is a language native to the island. To fill the gap of this inconclusive data, Chapter 2 will not only discuss the pedagogical strategies employed by Mora-Foderingham but will also investigate the degree of retention evidenced in the students during observations.

In essence, there is a rich variety of literature explaining the evolution of language towards its present-day status. The ostracization of Patois within the education system served as one of the greatest stimuli of the language shift from French Creole to English in Trinidad. Despite the lack of a conclusive language policy in post-independent Trinidad, the attitudes towards language entrenched through the colonial education system remain subconsciously intact. Nevertheless, the literature does reveal positive implications of the inclusion of Creole languages into education, as was evidenced through the case study of Haiti. Delva's case study did provide some examples of teaching methods and strategies that can be incorporated into the classroom, however, there is generally an absence of discussion concerning an ideal plan or model for the introduction of Creole languages at schools. Therefore, future studies must evaluate what constitutes a successful model in revitalization practices. Ultimately, revitalization through education remains at the discretion of the government, significantly the Ministry of Education. However, if any future proposal is

successful, the literature showed that the age group whom classes should be targeted remains debatable due to conflicting arguments on the Critical Period Theory.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **Background of Patois Classes**

On November 17th, 2020, an interview was conducted with Michelle Mora-Foderingham via Zoom. Mora-Foderingham is a standard four and standard five teacher at Talparo R.C. School who began an initiative to introduce her students to Patois in 2017.

However, the idea of teaching Patois to students at primary schools in Trinidad is not a new concept as it was previously introduced to students of Paramin R.C. School according to Mora-Foderingham. Mora-Foderingham's initiative which began as a lunchtime activity in 2017 has evolved and formalized into weekly classes with students of every grade level. Initially, her efforts did receive some criticism from a few staff members who viewed it as an added burden to an already demanding workload. Nowadays, many staff members have fully embraced the Patois classes as part of their schedule; some have become active participants and auxiliary teachers during Mora-Foderingham's sessions.

Mora-Foderingham's motivations are both personally and socially driven by the value she places on her family and community heritage. Her late father who was a fluent Patois speaker did not pass down the language to her. This highlights one of the key issues that Patois has faced in its vitality: the lack of intergenerational transmission. Ransau speaks of the “widening of the domains occupied by English as we can say that, for creolophones, the use of Creole has been reduced to specific contexts...informants in Paramin and Carenage confess to the use of Creole as a secret code in the presence of children and non-creolophones” (“Are They Dying” 23). Generations of children were not taught the language due to it being employed as “secret code”. As a result, there

is a disconnect between children and their heritage as Mora-Foderingham observed her students' confusion when first encountering Patois at school while being taught a song about the "jab jab".

It is worth mentioning that Talparo is one of the few rural communities where Patois is still being spoken by elders. In the interview, Mora-Foderingham stated that there is no official census of the number of Patois speakers, but she estimates at least thirty live in Talparo.

Mora-Foderingham spoke of techniques used to teach Patois at the school. During its lunchtime phase, there was a heavy emphasis on the use of songs, storytelling as well as games to expose the students to Patois. The students have furthermore been exposed through a functionalist approach with their participation in the annual Patois mass at the local parish, in addition to their staging of the concert "Sé Yon Bagay Patwa". The teachers also surround the students with the language using Patois inscribed signage placed strategically around the school such as the bathrooms, cafeteria, entrance. There is also a display called the "Creole wall" that highlights Creole heritage, the language's alphabet, and useful vocabulary.

Foderingham believes it is important to first familiarise the students with words that they may be unaware have Patois origins yet are used in daily speech. Examples she gave included *chadon béri*, *ponmsité*, and *zabòka*. Afterwards, Mora-Foderingham attempts to introduce the students to themes that incorporate a broader vocabulary. Mora-Foderingham's efforts have garnered public attention, as media houses such as Newsday and the Express have visited the school and have published articles showcasing the students' efforts (Gittens et al.).

The continuation of this initiative has inevitably been hindered by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. This resulted in the cancellation of typical events that the students would participate in during Creole month as well as an absence of Patois classes in Term 1 of the 2020-2021 academic year as the school began making the transition to online learning. On a positive note, in term 1 of

the 2020/2021 academic year, this period saw the commencement of discussions at the school to introduce formal Patois classes at all levels. In February 2021, this was finally put into place through the online platforms of Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

Mora-Foderingham emphasized in her interview the necessity of implementing a national curriculum to preserve the language. At present, there is no official syllabus being employed at the school, nonetheless, Foderingham believes that the Spanish primary school curriculum guide can be adapted to teach Patois. She added that any proposed syllabus must incorporate aspects not solely of language but must equally make connections between the language, history, heritage, and culture. Foderingham believes it is more effective to first introduce Patois classes at primary schools rather than secondary schools as she has personally witnessed children acquiring the language faster than adults.

According to Mora-Foderingham, obstacles to implementation include many public misconceptions about the language, some of which are: the belief that Patois is not a real language, the language is completely dead, it is not a Trinidadian language, it does not have an alphabet, orthography and therefore cannot be written. By extension, Mora-Foderingham noted that many Trinidadians are unaware of the Patois words that we use in our daily TrinEC and the Patois origins of many of our most famous sayings and proverbs.

To overcome these obstacles, Mora-Foderingham recommends the following: the creation of a standardized syllabus, the use of a pilot school where this syllabus can be administered, as well as the incorporation of ICTs and social media into class delivery. Mora-Foderingham also stresses the need for national recognition of Creole Day, stating that Trinidad does belong to the Créolophonie. She believes that collaboration with stakeholders like the Alliance Française and the village councils of Talparo and Paramin is essential to revitalize the language on a national

level. She also suggests the establishment of a national committee or an association responsible for Patois revitalization.

She concluded by stressing the urgency of this matter reporting that the generational gap is widening between the elderly generation of Patois speakers and youth. Ferreira affirms the urgency of this matter stating:

It can be safely said that TFC has been dying or struggling to survive for a long time since there are no young native speakers...In sum, there are no monolingual speakers of TFC, at least in Paramin, no young people under twenty have learned the language as an L1, and while there is great enthusiasm for the language as a community, heritage and ancestral language, the language is little used in daily life at the community level. English and TEC are the languages of vitality in Paramin and no doubt in other villages where Patois is still spoken. (“Are They Dying” 17, 12)

This poses greater challenges to revitalization efforts as it raises the question of vitality if Patois remains an L2 as is similarly the case with Talparo.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Outline of Patois Classes**

Classes for Patois at Talparo R.C. School began online in February of the second term of the 2020-2021 academic year via Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Classes lasted for 25 minutes on average as Mora-Foderingham believes that short concise classes assist in keeping the attention of young students, especially when lessons are being delivered through an online platform. Classes consisted typically of 10-15 students and were kept small purposefully to be manageable and maximise interaction, participation, and engagement. This chapter builds upon the need for discussion in the literature regarding a model for Patois classes. A sample lesson written by Mora-Foderingham herself plan is available for reference in Appendix 10. The following observations were made of Mora-Foderingham's classes between Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February to Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

### **Aims**

Mora Foderingham's classes aim to:

- Encourage student participation by allowing each student an opportunity to respond to a question in Patois.
- Develop an understanding of the spoken form of Patois and its sound systems more so than its written form.
- Foster an appreciation for their community, Trinidadian culture as a whole, and by extent the language's associated history.

## Objectives

The objectives of Mora-Foderingham's classes can be divided into the following categories: knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Knowledge:

- Students learn different greetings appropriate to various times of day, including *bonjou* (good morning), *bonnapémidi* (good afternoon), *bonswè* (good evening), *kouman ou yé* (how are you) and *ayo* (goodbye).
- Classes are fully centred around *mwen* (myself) as students learn to talk about themselves and their families, state their origins and where they presently reside.
- Students learn the copula *sé* (to be) and the verb *ni* (to have).
- Students learn to count from 1-10 and ideally are all given a chance to count for the teacher. Students should learn to count beyond 10 in case their age corresponds with that number.
- Students learn the names of the members of the nuclear family unit: *manman* (mother), *papa* (father), *sésé* (sister) and *fwè* (brother).

Skills:

- Students merge the vocabulary taught and subconsciously build an understanding of the syntax of the language. For example, they combine the vocabulary of members of the family with that of counting and can state their number of siblings.
- Students can manipulate the pronoun “mwen” in both its subjective and possessive pronoun form. For example, *non mwen sé* (my name is), *mwen ni x lanné* (I am x years old)

- Students can formulate simple SVO sentences in the present tense and substitute different subjects, verbs, and objects to express themselves.
- Students can build their lexicon as the school term progresses by gradually adding to the vocabulary and grammar taught in previous lessons.

Attitudes:

- Students develop an awareness of Patois place names and foods in Trinidad along with an appreciation of other elements of culture which incorporate Patois words like Carnival and folklore.
- Students observe the usage of French Creole words in their daily lives, such as when a family member calls them *doudou* (sweetheart).
- Students adopt a functionalist approach to the language by using what they learn outside of the classroom in informal social situations like on the playground. The physical school may facilitate this by using signage and extracurricular activities or clubs that utilise Patois and therefore would further sensitize the students to the language.

Mora-Foderingham always concludes lessons through song. Students are taught the lyrics orally and are asked to repeat them. Songs may be accompanied by students playing easily accessible instruments such as drums and tambourines to encourage participation. The inclusion of instruments is only feasible for in-person classes as different internet connections create a delay. Despite this, songs being taught online may be accompanied by various objects appropriate to the song. For instance, Mora-Foderingham allows the students to use rulers to mimic stick-fighting when singing songs about Calinda, or brooms in the case of the physical classroom. The list is

non-exhaustive and summarises the purpose that each song serves in a lesson plan. Additional songs in French Creole can be found in *Patois and English Folksongs of Trinidad and Tobago*, compiled by Augustus “Junior” Howell in 2003 (Leps 7) and *Vini Chanté an Patwa* compiled by Florence Blizzard and Nnamdi Hodge in 2009 (“Patois brought back”).

The following songs can complement a lesson plan:

- i. *Ba Mwen on Ti Bo* (Give Me a Little Kiss) – The lyrics of this song can be used to introduce basic counting.
- ii. *Manman Mwen I Bouwi Diwi Dou* (My Mother She Made Sweet Rice) – The lyrics of this song can be used to practice the titles of different family members, introduce the theme of food and introduce grammatical topics. This song also introduces children to a traditional Trinidadian dish thus fostering an appreciation for local culture.
- iii. *Mwen Sòti Anho* – This song is appropriate during the Carnival season and can be accompanied by a lesson on the history of stick-fighting and “Canboulay”. This song can be used to encourage role-play as students can act as stick-fighters and learn the relevant vocabulary associated with the art, for example, *bwa* (stick).
- iv. *Vini dansé bélé* - Similarly, this song may be incorporated into a lesson to teach cultural appreciation. Teachers can allow students to get up and do the dance, in turn forming an enjoyable group activity. Students also will be exposed to the imperative and the infinitive forms of verbs through the lyrics.

Christian denominational schools, such as those like Talparo R.C School, may benefit from the inclusion of the following hymns into the Patois lessons as it would facilitate learning during religious instruction.

iv.            *Vini alé épi mwen lakay papa mwen* (Come and Go with Me to My Father's House)

v.            *Jézi Kwis mò asou kwa-a pou péché mwen* (Jesus Christ Died on the Cross for My Sins)

### **Discussion:**

This discussion of the outline presented above will analyse the teaching methods and strategies that Mora-Foderingham has incorporated into the classroom, as well as address limitations and provide possible suggestions.

Fundamentally, most classes took an auditory-oral approach to language learning. The classes predominantly focused on spoken language through listening and repetition. This included the use of visual cues and body language to enhance the learning process, such as when Mora-Foderingham would do an action and then would ask the students to guess the verb. Arguably, strict adherence to auditory-oral language learning may undermine reading comprehension and written expression. On the contrary, this approach is appropriate in the context of Talparo, where the elders are not necessarily literate in Patois as they acquired the language primarily through speech according to Mora-Foderingham. Ferreira alludes to a similar phenomenon in Paramin (“Are They Dying” 9 & 15) and as a result Patois classes in Trinidad have made use of the St. Lucian orthography as it was found to be adequate (“Are They Dying” 8). Nonetheless, Mora-

Foderingham plans to incorporate a degree of written expression into future classes and has expressed plans in curating a Patois workbook to be used at the school. Features such as the virtual whiteboard on platforms like Zoom may also assist in this component.

Limitations were mostly technological due to the challenges of online learning. Both teachers and students experienced connectivity issues which resulted in delays in the relay of information, thus hampering the auditory-oral strategy. They additionally experienced background noise along with audio feedback and echo. Given that the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has mandated the adaptation to distant learning, a suggestion is that an auxiliary teacher is always present where possible and is likewise familiar with the lesson plan. This auxiliary teacher may substitute in instances where the main teacher experiences challenges in internet connectivity, and evidently, maximise productivity within the short delivery time of the class. Moreover, a classroom policy should be developed for microphones to be disabled unless a student is responding thus eliminating background noise. Students can also use platform tools such as the “raise your hand” and “applause” features in cases where microphones are switched off. This policy should include the enablement of cameras to ensure students’ presence and attention.

In all, the online classroom is not fully conducive to language instruction yet there are means to maximise its potential. Undoubtedly, these are all subject to the teachers’ and students’ computer literacy as well as the availability of efficient devices and resources.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Attitudes Towards Patois**

The following chapter analyses the current attitudes towards Patois at other primary schools to investigate if Talparo R.C. School's incentive is feasible in other schools. The questionnaires were administered to students who attend schools within Port of Spain and environs to question if a gap exists in Patois awareness when urban areas (in this case, Port of Spain, Diego Martin, Maraval, and Belmont) are contrasted with rural areas like Talparo. The language has unarguably remained alive to an extent in communities like Talparo and Paramin given their history of isolation (Figuera). On the other hand, Anglicisation policies throughout history and rapid urbanisation have impeded its leverage in urban areas such as Port of Spain and environs, despite its former status as lingua-franca of these same communities. This in turn would affect if the students at St. Andrew's Private School, Maria Regina Grade School, Belmont Boys' R.C. School, and Patna/ River Estate Government Primary School would have any familiarity with the language.

Notably, 56.4% of the 165 respondents were aware of Patois as a language, yet the majority (62.4%) had never heard it spoken, and an even greater percentage had never seen it written (84.8%). This disparity may correlate with the fact that Patois was historically a verbally transmitted language and only recently efforts have been made to provide unified orthography and written form. Only 35.2% of respondents can trace Patois-speaking relatives, either living or deceased which directly corresponds to the 35.8% of students who indicated that they have heard the language spoken. In her interview, Figuera underscored the strong influence of familial collections on the value placed in learning the language; it can either be generationally scorned

due to its history of marginalisation or in some instances embraced as a form of ancestral connection. Figuera states that children would be more inclined to learn the language if they can some degree of personal connection to it, whether that be through communal, or family bonds.

Regarding community, many students (62.4%) were unaware of places like Talparo and Paramin where Patois remains spoken. Nonetheless, the majority had some degree of awareness of the over 260 places in Trinidad that have Patois names: the most popular being Petit Valley, Blanchisseuse, and Pointe-à-Pierre. Various teachers at the schools attributed this to the emphasis placed on learning about Trinidad's geography in social studies class.

Interestingly, nearly all respondents (95.8%) desire to learn a second language underscoring that children do place value on bilingualism. Despite this, not all saw value in learning Patois as a second language, with 16.4% viewing it as not useful while 27.3% felt no need to learn Patois. Nevertheless, more than 70% of respondents show interest in the idea of having Patois classes taught at their schools, underlying that Talparo R.C. School's mission may be warmly received if introduced at other primary schools.

When tested in their knowledge of Patois words or phrases, there appears to be the greatest appreciation for idiomatic expressions used within Trinidad English Creole, many of which are transliterations of idioms that were originally in Patois. Examples of the responses given by students include, "Who doh hear does feel", "Call it George", "Dog doh make cat", "Every bread have its cheese", "Better belly buss than food waste", "Yuh fadda is a glass maker awuh?", "All skin teeth eh laugh" and "Any time is Trinidad time". The most recurrent response in terms of idiomatic expressions was "Crapo smoke yuh pipe". Many students also had an awareness of many additional words with Patois origins that were not mentioned in the questionnaire, giving examples such as "papa bondyé", "papayo", "bachac,", "mamaguy", "soucouyant", "mamaguy", "tanti",

“lagahoo”, “papa bois”, “dwen”, “jab-jab” and “battymamzelle”. Three of the most well-known words were “pomerac”, “fig” and “zaboca” indicating great familiarity with foods with Patois names as they are part of the daily lexicon of Trinidadians. There does seem to be a line blurred between identifying what comes from Trinidad French Creole versus Trinidad English Creole, as many recurrent responses were otherwise, “mash up”, “bless up”, “wah gwaan”, “waz d scene” and “backchat”. Many students also identified phonetic qualities present in TEC, mostly concerning the word “the” which is [di] in TEC in substitution for [ði:] in Standard English. In all, students at these schools did not appear completely isolated from the cultural impact of Patois, instead, they were simply unaware of how they already use it daily. This simply highlights that Trinidadian children have a connection to Patois, whether consciously or subconsciously.

This connection with Patois thus exemplifies, “A language is not just words. It’s a culture, a tradition, a unification of a community, a whole history that creates what a community is. It’s all embodied in a language” (Chomsky). This quote came from *We Still Live Here - Âs Nutayuneâñ*; a documentary showing the revitalization of the Wampanoag language through the efforts of linguist Jessie Little Doe Baird. Whether Patois can be revived like Wampanoag is left to numerous variables which Figuera discussed during her interview. Figuera argues that while there is value to the revitalization of Patois through education, it is not an entirely effective method if used alone as it would not reverse language death. She emphasized that language death occurs once the last generation of speakers disappears, and no children are acquiring the language. Figuera likewise questioned whether Patois would have a functional use outside of the classroom as it would fail to coexist in a naturalistic setting if it lacks this functionality. Consequently, Patois’ absence in a naturalist setting would hinder revitalization efforts.

Mora-Foderingham is not ignorant of the challenges that Figuera discussed. In a follow-up interview conducted in April 2021, Mora-Foderingham mentioned her ongoing effort in drafting a proposal to assist in this revitalization campaign. This proposal is intended to be published in the fourth quarter of 2021 with the support of the recently established Talparo Community Upliftment Group. The proposal will depict a long-term sustainable development plan for the language and would involve the following ten propositions: (1) The installation of traffic signs translated into Patois, as well as Patois signage in public spaces such as the Talparo Health Centre and government offices. In the context of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, translations of “please wear your mask” and “sanitize” can be written in Patois. This proposition would be achievable if the support of the local MP Foster Cummings is received (2) In the private sector, the installation of Patois signage in spaces such as groceries, supermarkets, and restaurants (3) Recognition from these companies in celebrating Creole Heritage Month in October. For example, restaurants can make use of Creole themed décor such as madras tablecloths and incorporate Patois translations or Creole dishes into their menus (4) Recognition of Creole Heritage Month by the Talparo Village Council and in turn support for associated events such as the Patois mass and concert (5) Consistent pen pal correspondence between students of Talparo R.C. and Paramin R.C. so that the students would have incentive to practice Patois, in addition to future collaborations between the two schools (6) Creation of a Patois club for secondary school students who are past pupils of Talparo R.C. and have expressed interest in improving their proficiency in the language (7) Involvement of active stakeholders within the community to incorporate Patois into their practices (such as in agriculture, healthcare and education) in addition to a representative from each of these sectors in the Talparo Community Upliftment Group (8) Planned collaboration with Tamana Mountain Chocolate following the company expressed interest in incorporating Patois into the signage at

their museums and into their labels (9) Promotion of Creole fashion at public and community events, such as the mass (10) The inclusion of multiple Christian denominations into the revival efforts, thus not restricting Patois to the mass. Sunday schools of different sects may make use of the translations of Christian hymns in their teachings.

Through consistent and simultaneous teamwork by these different stakeholders, Mora-Foderingham anticipates a possible resurgence of the language within the next 5-10 years, thereafter, protecting their heritage, bridging the gap between elders and the younger generation, and ideally fostering pride in Talparo residents concerning their identity through language, subsequently developing a sense of community building and a desire to give back.

## **CONCLUSION**

Language revitalization is a complex issue that requires a multi-faceted approach in its execution. Insight of their objective of breathing life back into Patois in their community, Talparo R.C School has made significant progress. Furthermore, other schools that wish to introduce Patois can adopt their framework. The implementation of Patois into the primary school curriculum would undoubtedly promote the language, cultivate an appreciation for heritage and culture and close the gap between generations of speakers. Notwithstanding, revitalization efforts must not rely solely upon education because language revival would be futile if it cannot be functionally employed within a natural environment. In recognition of this, Mora-Foderingham has begun drafting a proposal to be presented to the village council.

The methodology filled a gap that was present in previous research that failed to provide recommendations for the practical implementation of Patois into the curriculum. The observations produced a functional strategic outline that provides a foundation for Patois' implementation in the primary school curriculum. On the other hand, the questionnaires showed that students outside of Talparo are intrigued by the language and would be interested in learning it if given the opportunity.

A suggestion for future research is the need to explore the effectiveness of revitalization methods outside the confines of education. A comparative study may explore how advantageous alternative strategies would be in comparison. In any case, the work of Talparo R.C. School is a steppingstone in gaining recognition of Patois as a fully expressive language that can be used in a classroom with the same prestige as English.

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## **APPENDIX A: QUESTIONS FOR THE FIRST INTERVIEW WITH MICHELLE**

### **MORA-FODERINGHAM**

1. What inspired you to start this initiative at Talparo RC School?
2. How long ago did you start it?
3. Are you aware of any other primary schools that are currently engaged in similar programmes?
4. If not, what steps would you say need to be taken to influence other primary schools to introduce patois programmes?
5. What efforts has Talparo RC School made in preserving Patois?
6. At what age do you start teaching the children Patois? Which year groups at school do you primarily focus on and why?
7. What learning strategies do the school employ to teach the language to students?  
What learning strategies do you currently employ?
8. Do you currently have a curriculum or syllabus to guide your teaching of this language?
9. Which of these techniques have you seen to be most effective? What do you think makes them effective? (whether it be the songs, the mass, the signs around the school, theatre, games, etc.)
10. What has the feedback been like regarding your efforts at both the parental (parents of the students) and school level (other members of staff/administration/principal)?
11. What are your plans for this initiative? What teaching strategies/techniques are you considering employing in the future?

12. How has the Covid-19 pandemic and the move towards online learning impacted this outreach?
13. How do you think the Ministry of Education can improve the outreach of Patois in primary schools?
14. You said in an interview with Newsday last year, “People have developed a disconnect. If we do not teach this language it will die.” What do you think is the biggest misconception of Patois among the public and what can we do to change this?

**APPENDIX B: QUESTIONS FOR THE SECOND INTERVIEW WITH MICHELLE  
MORA-FODERINGHAM**

- 1) Michelle, you previously mentioned to me privately that you have plans in drafting a proposal to supplement your work at the school. Can you elaborate on what this proposal entails?
- 2) Dr. Renée Figuera emphasized in my interview with her that introducing Patois in schools would not be by itself to fully revitalize the language. What are your thoughts on this?
- 3) I spoke a bit in the thesis about the importance of a functionalist approach (meaning that people would have reason to use the language) rather than it only being taught at school). Dr. Renée Figuera said that if the language is being taught in the classroom but not being used in external environments, it would not be fully revitalized. What other strategies do you think can be employed to achieve revitalization?
- 4) How do you think what is happening in the school affects the rest of the community? What does the language mean to the community?
- 5) You have also mentioned to me your ideas on collaborating with businesses and restaurants to spread Patois awareness. Have you gotten any responses from any of these businesses?
- 6) When do you think this proposal will be up and running by? How long do you think it would be before it takes full effect?

- 7) Do you see Talparo as being a possible mecca for other French Creole speakers or even language and linguistics students? Do you think this proposal would consequently promote domestic and regional tourism?
- 8) What future do you think lies ahead for Talparo?

## **APPENDIX C: QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW WITH DR. RENEE FIGUERA**

- 1) In my secondary research, I have read conflicting theories on the critical period theory of language acquisition. Which theory do you believe is the most accurate?
- 2) Are first language and second language acquisition most successful when attained during childhood?
- 3) What are the differences in how language is acquired in children versus adults?
- 4) What is the difference in how adults learn a second language in comparison to children?
- 5) Who do you think would be the best group to focus this revitalization programme on?
- 6) Do you believe that there is any value in introducing Patois at primary schools to slow down the process of language death?
- 7) Would Patois always remain a heritage language or is there a possibility to revitalize it to the point of being the lingua-franca again?
- 8) Do you think students would find reasons to use Patois outside of the classroom or would it evolve into simply another school subject?
- 9) One of the greatest examples of language revitalization was seen in Israel with Hebrew. What factors made Israel successful in revitalizing Hebrew?
- 10) What types of environments or settings are necessary for successful language revitalization?

## APPENDIX D: COPY OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Patois in Primary Schools

### Patois in Primary Schools

Patois is a language that used to be widely spoken in Trinidad. The language is still spoken in certain areas of Trinidad.

Required

Have you ever heard of the Patois language? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No

Have you ever heard anybody speak Patois? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No

Have you ever seen anybody write Patois? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No

Do you have any family members (relatives, grand-parents etc.) living or deceased who speak/spoke Patois? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No

Do you know any places in Trinidad that still speak Patois? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

There are more than 260 places in Trinidad with Patois names. Which of these do you know? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

Champs Fleurs

Blanchisseuse

Petit Valley

Grande Rivi re

La Romaine

Pointe- -Pierre

Lopinot

Do you want to learn to speak a second language? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

Would you like to learn how to speak Patois? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

In Paramin RC School and Talparo RC School, Patois classes are being given to students. Would you like this at your own school? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

Do you think it would be useful to learn Patois? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

There are many Patois words that we use in Trinidad on a daily basis. Tick the words below that you already know. \*

*Tick all that apply.*

zaboca

fig

pomerac

pommecythere

macco

macafouchette

keskidee

fete

Papa Bois

Mama Dlo

crapaud

corbeaux

Do you know any other Patois words or phrases? \*

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## APPENDIX E : RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE

### Patois in Primary Schools

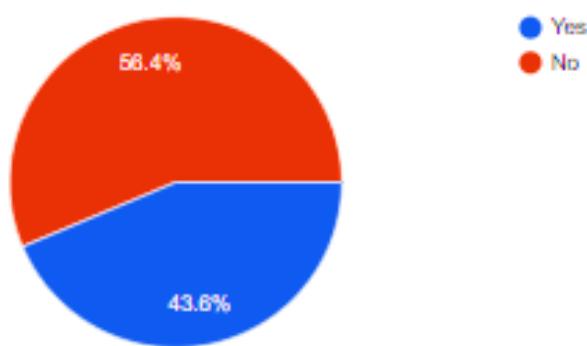
165 responses

[Publish analytics](#)

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Have you ever heard of the Patois language?

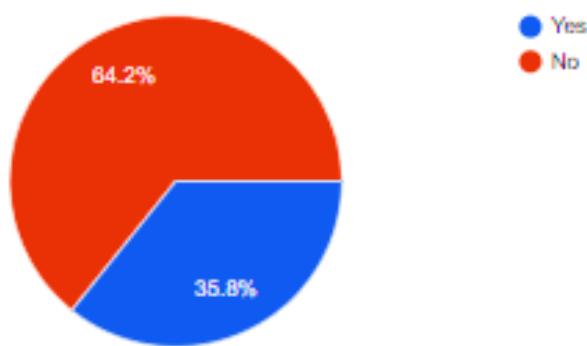
165 responses



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Have you ever heard anybody speak Patois?

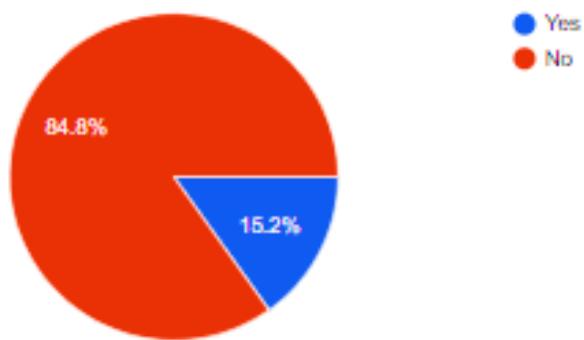
165 responses



Have you ever seen anybody write Patois?

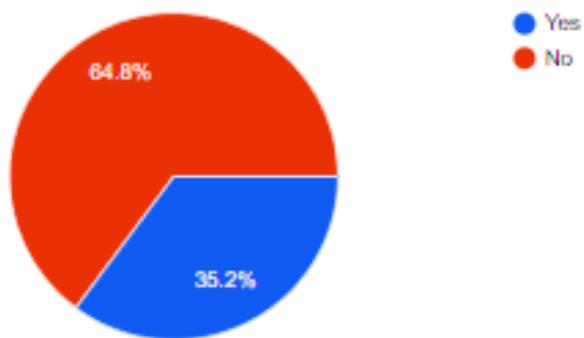


165 responses



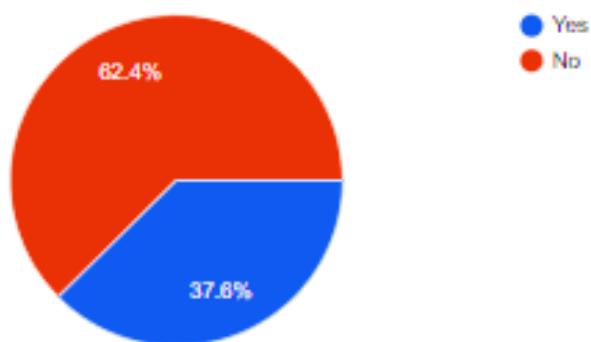
Do you have any family members (relatives, grand-parents etc.) living or deceased who speak/spoke Patois?

165 responses



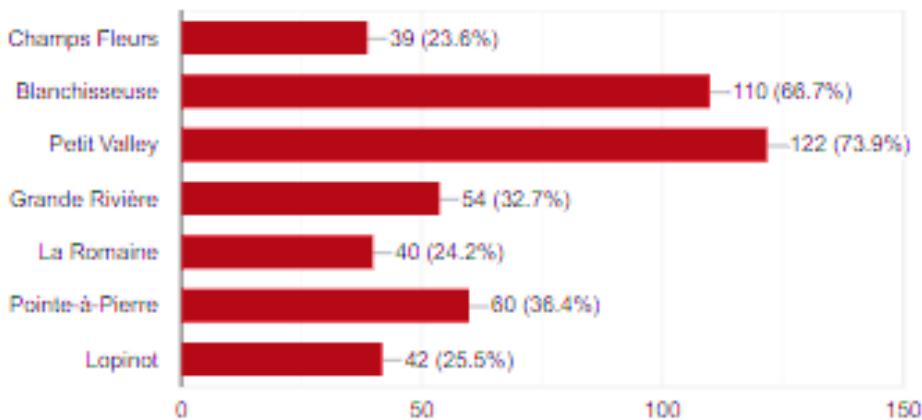
Do you know any places in Trinidad that still speak Patois?

165 responses



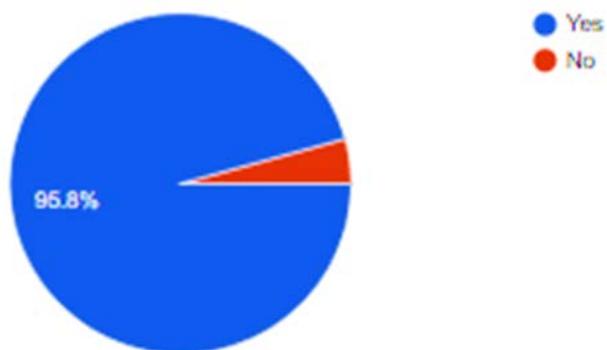
There are more than 260 places in Trinidad with Patois names. Which of these do you know?

165 responses



Do you want to learn to speak a second language?

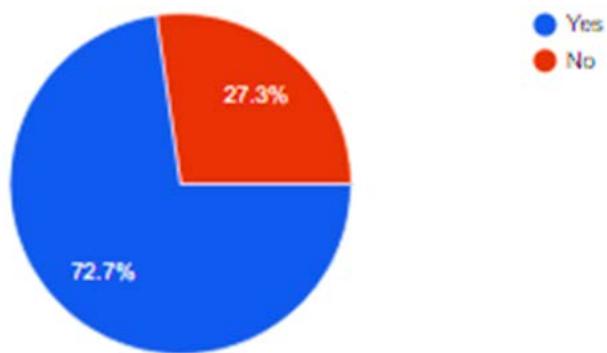
165 responses



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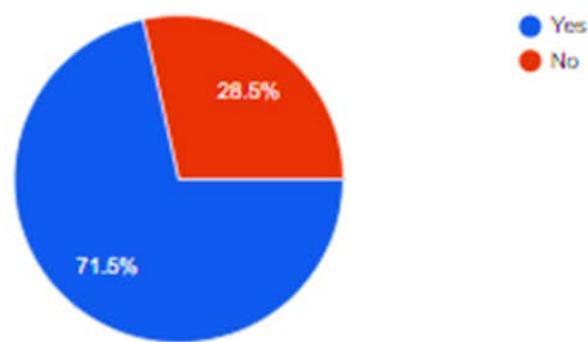
Would you like to learn how to speak Patois?

165 responses



In Paramin RC School and Talparo RC School, Patois classes are being given to students. Would you like this at your own school?

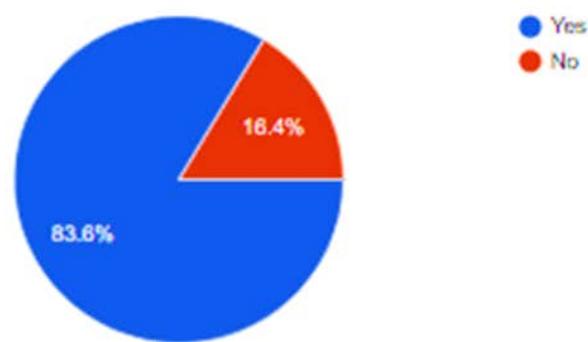
165 responses



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Do you think it would be useful to learn Patois?

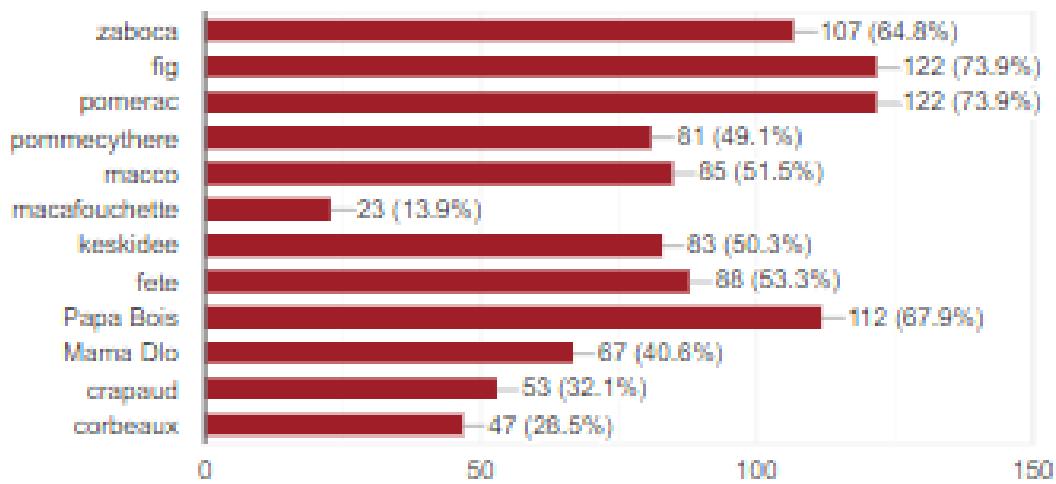
165 responses



There are many Patois words that we use in Trinidad on a daily basis. Tick the words below that you already know.



165 responses



## APPENDIX F

### Consent to Administer Questionnaires

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1 Braemar Road, Cascade.

St. Andrew's Private School  
16 Valletton Avenue, Port of Spain.

16 March 2021

Dear Mrs. Moses,

My name is Jake Salloum and I am a third year student at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. I am currently reading a BA in Spanish, French and Linguistics. As a final year student, I am required to conduct a Caribbean Studies research project in order to graduate. My theme is The Revitalization of Trinidad Patois through its introduction into the primary school curriculum. This thesis is being supervised by Dr. Joanne Ferreira at the university.

As part of my study, I need to conduct primary research. I have chosen to administer a questionnaire in order to evaluate the current attitudes of primary school students towards Patois. Therefore, I ask for your consent to administer my questionnaire via Google Forms. The responses of the students will be completely anonymous as no student will be required to provide their name, email address or any other personal information. The data will be used solely for the discussion of findings in the thesis after it is automatically tabulated by Google Forms.

If you require any further information about this study, or would like to speak to me personally, please call or message 752-8629 or email me at jake.salloum@my.uwi.edu.

I thank you for your time in considering St. Andrew Private School's participation in my research.

Yours respectfully,  
Jake Salloum.  
Student

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I have read the above information regarding this research study on the Revitalization of Trinidad Patois, and I consent to questionnaires being administered via Google Forms to students at St. Andrew's Private School.

Paula Moses (Printed Name)  
Moses (Signature)  
15/04/2021 (Date)

ST. ANDREW'S SCHOOL  
16, VALLETON AVENUE  
MARAVAL, TRINIDAD, W.I.  
622-2630

1 Braemar Road, Cascade.

Maria Regina Grade School  
103-107 Abercromby St, Port of Spain.

16 March 2021

Dear Mrs. Seow,

My name is Jake Salloum and I am a third year student at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. I am currently reading a BA in Spanish, French and Linguistics. As a final year student, I am required to conduct a Caribbean Studies research project in order to graduate. My theme is The Revitalization of Trinidad Patois through its introduction into the primary school curriculum. This thesis is being supervised by Dr. Joanne Ferreira at the university.

As part of my study, I need to conduct primary research. I have chosen to administer a questionnaire to evaluate the current attitudes of primary school students towards Patois. Therefore, I ask for your consent to administer my questionnaire via Google Forms. The responses of the students will be completely anonymous as no student will be required to provide their name, email address or any other personal information. The data will be used solely for the discussion of findings in the thesis after it is automatically tabulated by Google Forms.

If you require any further information about this study, or would like to speak to me personally, please call or message 752-8629 or email me at jake.salloum@my.uwi.edu.

I thank you for your time in considering Maria Regina Grade School's participation in my research.

Yours respectfully,  
Jake Salloum.  
Student

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I have read the above information regarding this research study on the Revitalization of Trinidad Patois, and I consent to questionnaires being administered via Google Forms to students at Maria Regina Grade School.

KATHRYN SEOW (Printed Name)  
Kathryn Seow (Signature)  
18-MAR-2021 (Date)



1 Braemar Road, Cascade.

Patna River Estate Government Primary School  
North Post Road & Fuller Street, Diego Martin.

18 March 2021

Mrs. Caren Persad-Khan,

My name is Jake Salloum and I am a third year student at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. I am currently reading a BA in Spanish, French and Linguistics. As a final year student, I am required to conduct a Caribbean Studies research project in order to graduate. My theme is The Revitalization of Trinidad Patois through its introduction into the primary school curriculum. This thesis is being supervised by Dr. Jo-Anne S. Ferreira at the university.

As part of my study, I need to conduct primary research. I have chosen to administer a questionnaire in order to evaluate the current attitudes of primary school students towards Patois. Therefore, I ask for your consent to administer my questionnaire via Google Forms. The responses of the students will be completely anonymous as no student will be required to provide their name, email address or any other personal information. The data will be used solely for the discussion of findings in the thesis after it is automatically tabulated by Google Forms.

If you require any further information about this study, or would like to speak to me personally, please call or message 752-8629 or email me at jake.salloum@my.uwi.edu.

I thank you for your time in considering Patna River Estate Government Primary School's participation in my research.

Yours respectfully,  
Jake Salloum.  
Student

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I have read the above information regarding this research study on the Revitalization of Trinidad Patois, and I consent to questionnaires being administered via Google Forms to students at Patna River Estate Government Primary School.

CAREN PERSAD-KHAN (Printed Name)  
Caren Persad-Khan (Signature)  
22/03/21 (Date)



1 Braemar Road, Cascade.

Belmont Boys' RC School  
119 Belmont Circular Road, Belmont,  
Port of Spain.

17 March 2021

Mr. Stephen Gooding,

My name is Jake Salloum and I am a third year student at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. I am currently reading a BA in Spanish, French and Linguistics. As a final year student, I am required to conduct a Caribbean Studies research project in order to graduate. My theme is The Revitalization of Trinidad Patois through its introduction into the primary school curriculum. This thesis is being supervised by Dr. Jo-Anne S. Ferreira at the university.

As part of my study, I need to conduct primary research. I have chosen to administer a questionnaire in order to evaluate the current attitudes of primary school students towards Patois. Therefore, I ask for your consent to administer my questionnaire via Google Forms. The responses of the students will be completely anonymous as no student will be required to provide their name, email address or any other personal information. The data will be used solely for the discussion of findings in the thesis after it is automatically tabulated by Google Forms.

If you require any further information about this study, or would like to speak to me personally, please call or message 752-8629 or email me at jake.salloum@my.uwi.edu.

I thank you for your time in considering Belmont Boys' RC School's participation in my research.

Yours respectfully,  
Jake Salloum.  
Student

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I have read the above information regarding this research study on the Revitalization of Trinidad Patois, and I consent to questionnaires being administered via Google Forms to students at Belmont Boys' RC School.

STEPHEN GOODING (Printed Name)  
Steph Gooding (Signature)  
15/4/2021 (Date)

## **APPENDIX G**

### **Sample Lesson Plan**

**SUBJECT :** Patois

**TEACHER:** Ms. M. Mora

**DATE:** Thursday, 18th. February 2021.

**CLASS:** First Year

**CLASS TEACHER:** Ms. R. Sharma

**NO. OF STUDENTS:** 4 boys, 4 girls, 8 in total.

**UNIT:** 'Mwen'(me, I, my, mine)

**TOPIC:** Lesson 1

Fami-mwen épi mwen.

(My family and me).

#### **PREKNOWLEDGE:**

Students already know that Patois is a language that is spoken by some of the elders in their community and by some family members.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Students will be able to:

- 1) Recall and use correctly the Patois words for me/I, immediate family members and words of the song.
- 2) Pronounce correctly all the Patois words for the family members and words of the song.

- 3) Develop an appreciation for our Creole heritage in Trinidad through language and song.

### **SET INDUCTION:**

Teacher greets students in Patois and initiates discussion on Patois in Talparo. She also encourages students to speak about family members who can speak Patois and any Patois words they may already know.

### **CONTENT:**

- 1) Introduce 'Mwen', allow students to point to themselves everytime 'Mwen' is mentioned.
- 2) Names to refer to different members of the family: Papa-mwen, mama-mwen, sésé-mwen, fwè-mwen.
- 3) Song and the vocabulary words associated with it.

### **METHOD:**

#### Teacher Strategy

- Pronouncing 'Mwen' and the other words for students to repeat.
- Asking for the Patois/English words for vocabulary in the lesson.
- Focus on pronunciation practice and meaning of words.

(Use of hand signs and body language to aid in meaning of words.)

### **STUDENT ACTIVITY:**

- Listening to teacher's pronunciation and repeating 'Mwen' while pointing to oneself.
- Stating the Patois words when given the English and vice versa.

- Using hand signs to remember meanings of some words.

## **TEACHER RESOURCES:**

- M.O.E.'s Primary School Curriculum Guide for Spanish (Infant 1 to Std. 5)
- Patwa (Kwéyòl) Basic Level 1 by Nnamdi Hodge.

## **CLOSURE:**

- Recap of words Patois learnt and their meanings.
- Pupils listen and repeat words, lines and melody of the following song and use body language for certain words.

Vini épi mwen

Lakay Papa-mwen x3

Vini épi mwen

Lakay Papa-mwen

Koté ni lajwa, lajwa, lajwa.

## **EVALUATION:**

- Oral evaluation through pronunciation and recall.
- Each student tells class, in Patois, which family member/s is at home with them.