An Exploration of Teachers' and Pupils' Attitudes and Beliefs about the Role of an English-based Creole in Secondary English Language Classrooms:

The Case of the British Virgin Islands

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Declaration

I, the undersigned Eleanor Creque, declare that this thesis was authorised by me under the supervision of Professor Catherine Wallace, and is entirely my own work.

Signed …………………………………………

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Emogene Creque, in memory of my father, Henry Osmond Creque, (OBE) and to Reuben and Lucas.

Abstract

This thesis investigates teachers' and pupils' attitudes and beliefs about the role of an English-based creole in relation to standard English in BVI secondary English Language classrooms. Set against the backdrop of a post-colonial context, it employs a qualitative case study approach of two English Language classrooms. The primary source of data consisted of audio-recorded interviews, which were conducted with pupils and teachers, in order to derive an understanding of their perceptions and attitudes. Classroom observations also served as a supplementary source of data, and as a backdrop to the interview data.

Drawing on concepts from critical pedagogy and sociolinguistics, the study reveals that language instruction in the English Language classroom is dominated by a 'standard language ideology', that is, a view of language that sanctions standard English at the expense of non-standard varieties like BVI Creole, which is consequently marginalised in the education system. Findings derived from the data suggest that teachers are constructed or 'interpellated' in discourses, inscribed in language classroom teaching practices, which implicitly devalue BVI Creole in relation to the hegemonic status of standard English. Furthermore, pupils may be internalising and unconsciously propagating the 'common sense' assumptions that teachers make about BVI Creole and, as a result, both teachers and pupils may be 'complicit' in the 'misrecognition' of standard English as the 'legitimate' variety.

The study proposes the inclusion of a critical language awareness component in BVI English Language classrooms to raise pupils' and teachers' awareness of the dominant ideologies underpinning language teaching. This may enable teachers to create spaces for a new kind of pedagogy in their classrooms in which they can assist pupils in questioning and challenging the hegemonic assumptions about language use, which are currently perpetuated in English classrooms. Finally, the thesis argues in favour of providing opportunities that may enhance pupils' metalanguage awareness, thereby enabling them to talk and reflect upon their language choices.

Chapter 1

Introduction: Framing the Study

1.1   Introduction

This chapter offers a historical and socio-political overview of the context of the study, and a brief outline of the education system in the British Virgin Islands, henceforth BVI. It then introduces the rationale of the study or the research problem that led to my interest in researching the role of creole in the BVI secondary classroom. Finally, the chapter addresses the research questions, that were developed in order to assist in achieving the aims of the study, and outlines the structure of the thesis. The forthcoming section addresses the socio-historical background in which the study is situated.

1.2   Socio-Historical Background of the Study

The British Virgins Islands, which belong to the Leeward Islands chain of the Caribbean, are an archipelago consisting of forty-five islands with a total area of fifty-nine square miles. (Dookhan, 1975, p.ix). They were discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1493 during his second voyage to the New World and on account of their numbers he named the islands, "Les Once Mil Virgenes" in honour of the mythical Saint Ursula and her eleven thousand martyr virgins (Harrigan and Varlack, 1975, p.73). For a century after their discovery the Spanish virtually neglected the islands in favour of the larger Caribbean islands and the South American mainland where there were large sources of mineral wealth and arable land. Later, the Spanish monopoly came under siege by the Dutch, English and subsequently the French, but by the beginning of the seventeenth century, after decades of struggle for supremacy, Spain was in sole possession of the islands (Pickering, 1983, p.36).

The islands were occupied intermittently during the 16th and 17th centuries by the Dutch, Spanish and British who fought for control of them. After a period of strenuous and vehement attacks on the Spanish, the Dutch involvement eventually waned due to their interests in trade rather than the establishment of colonies. Over a period of many years, the islands eventually acquired immense economic value due to commodities such as sugar, rum and cotton. As a result of this, the struggle for

sovereignty was bitterly contested between the French and British, who unlike the Dutch, were interested in forming colonies (Pickering, 1983, p.73). Eventually the capture of Tortola by the British, whose occupation was protracted, led to the official colonization of the islands in 1692 (Harrigan and Varlack, 1975, p.53). The inclusion of a brief socio-historical sketch is important as the history of the islands directly impacted on the linguistic situation in the territory and on its socio-political make-up. The following section examines the extent to which the socio-historical landscape has helped to influence the linguistic variety that is known among linguists as BVI Creole.

1.3 The Linguistic Situation: British Virgin Islands English-Based Creole

Given its history of Dutch and Spanish occupation during the colonial era, it is to be expected that BVI Creole, which has strong affinities to West African languages, also has some lexical features that are derived from Dutch and Spanish. Indeed some of the names of the islands that constitute the BVI archipelago are of Spanish and Dutch origin. Despite the minor linguistic influence of Dutch and Spanish on BVI Creole, it has derived a substantial number of its lexical traits from English. This is elaborated upon in chapter three.

Linguists or creolists in the Caribbean region are generally in agreement that the English-based linguistic variety, varyingly referred to as 'Creole English' (Roberts, 1988) or creole, is not an impoverished version of standard English, but rather it is a separate linguistic entity. Furthermore, although creole is regarded in some academic circles as the first language of the majority of Caribbean people, including British Virgin Islanders, the term is rarely used among lay-persons in the society to describe this linguistic variety

While among the more educated segment of BVI society, the BVI Creole linguistic variety is likely to be referred to as a local dialect or vernacular, in the wider BVI society, as is common in other post-colonial contexts, a number of perjorative terms are used to describe the linguistic variety that is spoken in the territory, including 'bad English', 'incorrect English', 'improper' English, 'raw talk' and so forth. However, 'these social biases are the result of the stereotyping which has been fostered by the education system and the wider social structure' (Christie, 2001, p.8). While this form of stereotyping is generally taken-for-granted, the origins of these social judgements are deeply rooted in BVI colonial history.

The linguistic situation in the Caribbean is a highly complex one, and this resonates in the education system as well as in the wider society. Simmons-McDonald (2001) alludes to this complexity when she points out that children in the Caribbean fit into three main linguistic profiles:

- Those who acquire English as their first language and who probably have some receptive (and productive) competence in the vernacular variety;

- Those who acquire an English lexicon-based Creole or a vernacular as a first language;

- Those who acquire a Creole with a lexical base different from English (for example, French Creole) and who are learning English as L2 in the classroom (Simmons-McDonald, 2001, p.43).

Evidently, the first two apply to children in Anglophone Caribbean territories. However, the perception of creoles as an impoverished form of English is pervasive and most people in the Caribbean region find it difficult to perceive of this variety as a real language (Christie, 2001, p.7). Furthermore, because Caribbean creoles originated in the socio-historical context of slavery these linguistic varieties 'have remained the language of the undereducated and the unlettered, unfit for any but the basest function' (Robertson, 1996, p.113). Implicated in the notion of 'real' languages are issues related to the socio-political and historical integrity of linguistic varieties like creoles. Having looked briefly at the linguistic situation in the British Virgin Islands, the next section offers a brief overview of the socio-economic, political and historical circumstances of the BVI and, specifically, the extent to which these may have impacted on the social class structure in the territory.

1.4   Socio-Political and Economic Overview

The political status of the British Virgin Islands could be described as an ambivalent one. Apart from having a semi-autonomous system of government, it is still a British protectorate and is among the few remaining United Kingdom Overseas Territories in the Caribbean which include Anguilla, Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos and Monsterrat. These territories, along with the remaining four United Kingdom Overseas Territories, (UKOT), which fall outside the Caribbean region were all awarded UK citizenship in 2003 (Business BVI, 2004, p.52).

The British Virgin Islands attained a ministerial system of internal self-government in 1967 (Dookhan, 1975, p.226), and ten years later, in 1977, the territory assumed constitutional responsibility for its internal financial affairs (National Development Plan, 2003, p.8). The Governor, who is the Queen's representative, is appointed by the Head of Foreign Office and Commonwealth and his responsibilities include external affairs, defence, internal security, and the administration of the courts and public service (Dookhan, 1975, p.26). His role complements, to a large extent, the locally appointed Deputy Governor. The unicameral House of Assembly is the highest law making body, and the Premier/Prime Minister and other locally elected ministers of government are responsible for trade, production, tourism and finance, public health, education and all other areas of local government (Business BVI, 2003, p.187). However, despite the territory's legal and political affinities with Britain there is still an obvious lack of emotional ties with the United Kingdom, and closer links to the United States.

Apart from the BVI's geographical proximity to the USA several factors serve to buttress the long history of close relations with the USA and its adjacent territories. Among the salient factors are: the legal tender, which is the US dollar, and the fact that the BVI trades extensively with the US mainland and its territories including, the United States Virgin Islands and the associated state of Puerto Rico. Enhancing these relations is the fact that over a period of many years a relatively high percentage of British Virgin Islanders have emigrated to the US mainland and its territories, for both academic as well as economic reasons. Paradoxically, the vast majority of BVI citizens are opposed to independence as there is the underlying concern that independence could become a metaphor for the economic decline and political instability, of the kind that some other Caribbean nations have experienced.

A soaring influx of immigrants inflated the territory's population in the 1980s, many of whom immigrated primarily from other Caribbean nations, the United Kingdom and, to a lesser degree, the United States of America (Population Affairs and Social Statistics Division, 1994, p.3). The trend of British Virgin Islanders from the lower echelons of society travelling abroad in search of employment and economic advancement, which began in the 1930s, continued throughout the 1970s. However, the reversal of this trend which occurred during the 1980s was due, to a large extent, to increasingly favourable economic circumstances in the BVI.

Contributing to these circumstances was the fact that in the 1980s, the United States abrogated the USA- BVI double Taxation Treaty which endowed the territory with the status of a low-tax haven. As a result of this treaty the BVI implemented the

International Business Company Legislation in 1984 in order to facilitate the establishment of offshore companies, and to secure the burgeoning financial services sector (Myers, 1994, p.21). A direct result of the implementation of the International Business Companies Act in 1984, was that the BVI has become one of the world premier centres for international business and finance (National Development Plan, 2003, p.12).

In addition to tourism, substantial revenues arising from the financial services industry dominate the fiscal revenue status of the BVI, and the revenues derived from the two principal industries generate more than a third of the total government revenue (Myers, 1994, p. 8). Furthermore, a significant percentage of this revenue is responsible for the large scale infrastructural development that the territory has witnessed during the last several decades. Unlike most developing countries, and as a result of the aforementioned factors, the British Virgin Islands are not faced with the burden of a large external debt and the territory receives no financial aid from Britain.

The territory's economic climate, its political status and the stability of the government, have all contributed to the high standard of living that is evident in the territory, in relation to some of the larger Caribbean nations. Supporting this are the findings of the Human Development Index (HDI), that is the broad measure of social development, which has claimed that the BVI falls within what has been described as a 'high development average range of (0.800), and that there is very little evidence of extreme or dire poverty (National Development Plan, 2003, p.21). This is not to say that poverty does not exist; however, dire poverty is not a pervasive characteristic of the BVI as is evident in other nations of the Overseas Eastern Caribbean States like Jamaica and Trinidad, which have significantly larger populations and considerably higher levels of extreme poverty. Having looked at the socio-political and the socio-economic circumstances of the British Virgin Islands, the following section addresses the social class landscape in the BVI, both traditional and contemporary, and the extent to which these factors may have exerted their influence.

1.5 Social Hierarchy in the BVI Context: Traditional and Contemporary Issues

1.5.1 Traditional BVI Society

A stringent form of social stratification which was one of the legacies of the British colonial era, was a marked characteristic of BVI society throughout the period of

slavery and for centuries beyond its abolition. This form of stratification was markedly inflexible during the second half of the 18th century. In common with the rest of the British West Indian colonial society, the Virgin Islands were made up of clearly differentiated categories of people: whites, free negroes and slaves on the basis of colour, wealth and education (Harrigan and Varlack, 1975, p.74).

As a result of these factors traditional BVI society was more rigidly stratified than it is today, and this was manifested by a distinct demarcation between rich and poor on the basis of land-ownership and economic wealth. However, contemporary BVI society has evolved into a less rigidly stratified society than was evident in the past, and in the period following the emancipation of slaves and the ending of slavery. Circumstances that led to shifts in the BVI social class landscape were attributed to increased opportunities for educational advancement, and to the overall socio-economic growth and development of BVI society. Over time, these factors led to the emergence of a larger middle class which was the result of a gradual 'shifting' of individuals from the lower echelons of society. The next section addresses this issue more fully.

1.5.2   Contemporary BVI Society

In the face of economic decline in the 19th century, the highly socially stratified BVI society became considerably diluted. The reduction of the planter class by absenteeism and emigration prepared the way for the upward mobility of 'lower whites', 'free negroes' and 'coloreds'. Furthermore, the demarcation separating the so- called 'planter class' from 'free negroes' and 'coloureds' became less rigidly defined as a result of their relative economic prosperity (Harrigan and Varlack, 1975, p.74).

Twenty-first century BVI society manifests a much more fine-grained form of social stratification which reflects complex social divisions, and which is less straightforward and clear-cut than is evident in British society. To some extent, arguably, BVI society has experienced a gradual inclination towards a quasi-egalitarian society. As Winford observes the shifting that is evident in some creole speaking societies where a continuum purportedly exists, is the result of 'the breaking down of a previously highly stratified society and the creation of a more open and egalitarian society' (Winford, 1988, p.350).

A relatively small upper class segment of society still exists in the BVI social class hierarchy. However, a socio-economically and politically dominant post-colonial elite which was an inherited characteristic of the colonial era, that is evident in many Caribbean nations today, is absent in the social class hierarchy of contemporary BVI society. In the forthcoming section, I suggest that a Weberian perspective of social class may offer a plausible explanation for contemporary BVI society. To this I now turn.

1.6   Weber's Perspective: A Reflection of Modern-Day BVI Society?

In this section I am proposing that Weber's more flexible notion of 'status' seems to be in some respects, more applicable to contemporary post-colonial societies like the BVI than traditional Marxist views of social class.

Marx's (1938) theory of social class, which is premised on an economistic stance, makes a distinction between those individuals who are involved in the production of capital or resources, and those individuals who control the production of capital, that is the dominant class. However, in Weber's (1947, 1968) theorisation, classes are constituted of different groups which have differing 'life chances' and opportunities leading to a differentiation in 'styles of life'. He asserts that the notion of "status" that is, the privileges conferred on an individual 'are based on 'styles of life,' and that "status" is not necessarily determined by social class' (Weber, 1968, p.305). While the individual's economic position may be a characteristic in defining social class, Weber also accounts for the influence of the individual's 'styles of life', that are manifested in 'housing, dress, manner of speech, and occupations' (Giddens, 2001, p.285).

In addition, Weber saw individuals as having 'life chances', that is, favourable circumstances such as goals and aspirations which may enable the individual to enhance his/her quality of life and, in his view, these components help to define or constitute the individual's social status. Weber's perspective seems to recognise and account for more complex social class divisions that are largely absent in Marx's (binary) view of social class. One of the key defining differences between Marx and Weber is that, while in Marx's view class relationships are grounded in exploitation and domination within production relations, for Weber class situations reflect differing life chances in the market' (Crompton, 2010, p. 35).

In the previous section, I briefly examined the notion of the social class hierarchy as it relates to traditional and contemporary BVI society. In the forthcoming section, I address the rationale for the present research, which has two-dimensions: a personal and a professional one.

1.7   Personal Perspective

I received my secondary education at the Virgin Islands Secondary School which was a small grammar school whose curriculum attempted to emulate the traditional British grammar school system. This was typical of the school systems which were established in post-colonial territories, and throughout the Anglophone Caribbean many of these were dismantled as they were regarded as too elitist and selective, as they excluded many pupils from different social-class backgrounds. I have vivid recollections of being instructed by teachers who overtly and rigidly discriminated against the BVI Creole linguistic variety, and who worked fervently to obliterate it from their classrooms and from pupils' speech.

During my secondary schooling British Virgin Islands society was still steeped in colonial traditions, and negative attitudes towards the vernacular were pervasive. At home, the notion that the vernacular was 'incorrect' was instilled, although not with the same rigidity and intensity as in the classroom. Dialect plays and lively anecdotes were marginally introduced in the classroom but their purpose was strictly to entertain. BVI Creole had no serious functions as its features were not permitted in our writing, or indeed in classroom discourse.

My teachers, who were either Caribbean or British nationals, worked assiduously to instil and reinforce the notion that the vernacular features in speech and writing were to be obliterated from the classroom context, by using the most rigid means. BVI Creole was perceived as 'bad' or 'broken English,' and I grew up believing this. I was aware that my academic and 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1991) were not dependent upon the mastery of the local Caribbean dialect, in which I had receptive and productive competence (Simmons-McDonald, 2001), but in being able to master written and spoken standard English. I did not learn BVI Creole as a first language, but rather as the language of the community; however, I was able to switch with ease between the two linguistic varieties. At the time, as far as I knew, I only spoke one language, which was English. Like my classmates, friends and siblings I regarded BVI Creole as 'broken English.'

Nevertheless, the misconception that one should speak 'properly at all times was virtually impossible, and could neither be neither strictly adhered to nor maintained, as I inevitably spoke the BVI vernacular among siblings and friends. Admittedly, I reserved the use of Standard English for addressing teachers, adults and my parents, in the home environment, as it seemed almost 'irreverent' to do otherwise. I certainly was not aware that I was using different registers to meet the demands of specific social situations; thus, I unconsciously learnt my first lessons in communicative competence (Gumperz, 1982; Hymes, 1977; Saville-Troike, 2003), that is, the individual's ability to adjust to the linguistic requirements and demands of the context, and to develop the ability to use language effectively in different situations for different audiences.

This section examined the ways in which my personal experiences may have shaped my early understandings and perceptions of the role of BVI Creole in relation to the monolithic standard English. The implications of these early personal experiences also resonate on a professional level as the following section indicates.

1.8   Professional Perspective: Pedagogic Concerns and the Rationale of the Research

As a former teacher of creole-speaking pupils in BVI English Language secondary classrooms for a period of eighteen years, commencing in the early 1980s, my interest was generated by my concerns for those pupils who were experiencing difficulties in making the transition from creole to written standard English. Motivated by this interest, the purpose of this study is to explore teachers' and pupils' perceptions of the role of creole in BVI secondary English Language classrooms, in a post-colonial context, where creole and standard English coexist. English Language was traditionally taught based on the requirements of the British education system, and on the assumption that this linguistic variety was regarded as the students' first language (Robertson, 1996, p.113). This language policy had implications in the classroom as it meant that the preferred oral language of most pupils', an English-based creole, was not fully acknowledged and was generally regarded as an impoverished version of English, at that time.

Both Craig (2001, 2006) and Warrican (2006) reiterated the view that standard English continues to be taught, to a large extent, as the native language of its speakers with little regard for the creole vernacular. As a result of this, English-based creoles continue to be perceived in the education system, albeit implicitly, as an

interference in the written language development of Anglo-phone Caribbean students. The 'error correction' model is still a pervasive approach that is used to teach English in many Anglophone territories, such as the British Virgin Islands. This practice has implications in the English Language classroom as teachers tend to 'correct' features from the creole vernacular as though they were grammatically 'incorrect' while reinforcing forms of standard English. The approach also helps to tacitly foster a standard language ideology or monolingual ideology (Milroy and Milroy, 1999, 2007), that is, the misconception of the linguistic superiority of dominant languages, such as standard English in relation to marginalized varieties. In addition, this perspective perpetuates the view among educational policy-makers and educators in the region that an English-based creole is an interference in the development of written standard English in the classroom.

A number of Caribbean researchers including Craig (1999, 2006) and Warrican (2006) concur with the view that the acquisition of written standard English may present challenges to the written language development of some creole-speaking pupils in the Anglophone Caribbean region. Craig (1999) also suggests that some of the factors which may further contribute to pupils' difficulties in the development of written language include the lack of effective and consistent pedagogical approaches, which address language issues for vernacular speakers, and more in-depth teacher training that addresses the unique needs of creole-speaking children (p.ix).

Reports which have been put forward by the Caribbean Examinations English Panel, a branch of the Caribbean Examinations Council, continually express concerns about the 'deteriorating' levels of written language performance among Caribbean students. With reference to the results of the Regional Caribbean English Language Examinations, Craig (1999) examined test results from students who sat the examinations, and concluded that 'the vast majority of the 'Creole-influenced' student population experienced, to a large extent, difficulties in attaining adequate language and literacy' (Craig, 1999, p.29).

Craig's findings on the Caribbean Examinations Council's (CXC) results of the Caribbean–based English Language examinations also suggest that the problem is so acute that the University of the West Indies has recently found it necessary to implement, a programme of remedial English for first year university students who have failed a proficiency test (Craig, 2006, p.225). These complaints also encapsulate sentiments expressed among educators and employers which further support the view

that, many creole-speaking pupils experience difficulties in applying the structures of written standard English in their writing.

I initially found myself falling into the same 'trap' as generations of teachers had fallen into, where I grappled with notions of 'correctness' with respect to creole structures which were evident in pupils' writing, and which were treated as though they were grammatical 'errors' or 'bad' grammar. In my attempts to extend their linguistic repertoires, I experienced a tension between 'correcting' the features of pupils' oral language at the expense of negating their cultural identities. Unlike my predecessors, I did not attempt to denigrate pupils' speech nor eradicate creole from the classroom; however, I was unaware that my pedagogic practices were implicitly undermining the status of BVI Creole in the classroom. At the time, it did not occur to me that I needed to be offered opportunities to question and reflect upon the 'common sense' assumptions which I made about language, and how these may have impacted on my language teaching practices.

Like my colleagues, I wanted to enhance the linguistic repertoires of the pupils, thereby enabling them to use different registers appropriately, in an environment 'where two linguistic systems diverge on morphological, phonological and syntactic levels' (Roberts, 1988, p.59), as the contexts and situations demanded. Although notions of 'appropriateness', which are also fraught with assumptions about language use, are seeping into teachers' consciousness in BVI classrooms, and slowly replacing traditional notions of 'correctness,' teachers' ambivalent perceptions towards BVI Creole may continue to influence English Language teaching practices.

The assumption that grammar drills, based on standard English grammatical structures, enhance the writing abilities of creole-speaking pupils is still a widely held belief among English teachers. Like my colleagues, in the early stages of my teaching, I also thought that by teaching specific grammatical skills, pupils' 'errors' derived from the structural features of BVI Creole would somehow be 'automatically' obliterated from their writing, thus enhancing their writing abilities. Implicit in this traditional approach to pedagogy is a deficit model of language which may be implicitly constructed in BVI classroom discourses. In relation to Trinidad and Tobago, where an English-based creole is spoken, London (2003) points out that the 'grammar syndrome' was regarded as one of the central tenets of the curriculum which pervaded all subject areas. As a result, grammar teaching was emphasized to such a degree that:

> *Acquisition became a feature in the classroom agenda of the day, and the classroom became one of those places in the local society where tainted grammar was not tolerated. Sub-standard English had to be eradicated (London, 2003, p.104).*

Roberts makes a similar point when he states that English Language teaching was dominated by the workings of prescriptive grammar, and that its installation into the West Indian school system had certain consequences. He puts it this way:

> *The introduction into West Indian schools of English grammar, its monolithic uniformity prescribed by educated but narrow-mindedly British teachers and editors influenced by the grammars of dead classical languages, put West Indian varieties into sharp contrast and gradually relegated them to the dung-heap (Roberts, 1997, p.276).*

Implicated in the teaching of grammar in an English-based, creole-speaking environment are ideologies of language which position dominant varieties like standard English, as a monolithic entity which measures, unfavourably, the intrinsic worth of socially stigmatised varieties of language whose grammatical structures are also bound up with pupils' cultural identities. Ivanic (1997) observes that children's identities are shaped and constructed by literacy activities which are largely associated with writing, and with the linguistic choices they make. She puts it this way, 'Literacy practices are both shaped by and shapers of people's identity' (Ivanic, 1997, p.73).

Arguably, some progress has been made in more recent years with respect to attitudes to the role of creole in the education system. In keeping with its current philosophy the Caribbean Examinations Council's (CXC) English Language Syllabus authorises the inclusion of English-based creoles in the classroom, to some degree. As result of this, the BVI vernacular has found an official route into contemporary English Language classrooms in the form of proverbs, dialect poetry or Caribbean short stories, and its inclusion is further endorsed in the form of dialogue in pupils' narrative/story writing and in comprehension exercises. The Caribbean Examinations Council's (CXC) Literature Syllabus also prescribes texts written by Caribbean novelists, many of whom use creole freely in narrative discourse, in an attempt to challenge the dominant literary canon. However, the Examinations Council does stipulate, unequivocally, that in all other genres of writing pupils are required to use the dominant variety, standard English.

In contemporary BVI English language classrooms pupils speak BVI Creole, the 'unmarked choice,' (Myers-Scotton, 1988 1993) with teachers' tacit consent during the

classroom 'literacy event' (Heath, 1983; Hymes, 1977), that is, language use is socially situated and ingrained in everyday communicative contexts. Although English teachers generally speak standard English for instructional purposes in order to maintain their authoritative role or 'authoritative footing', (Goffman, 1981, p.128) they may occasionally draw on the creole end of the continuum depending on the topic of discussion. Pupils also have their own beliefs about the 'expected' choice of language that their English teachers should employ during English lessons. In addition, the pupils also hold views on the linguistic variety that their teachers, from other subject areas, should draw on in the classroom. This issue is discussed later on in the thesis.

Despite the progress relative to the apparent acceptance of the role of creole in the classroom, this linguistic variety continues to be implicitly negated in relation to standard English in pedagogic discourses, and there is a great deal of tentativeness and uncertainty regarding its role in education. As Simmons-McDonald notes, 'the perception that Creoles are 'inferior' to English and unsuitable for the purposes of education is still pervasive in many spheres, including among teachers and educators in the Caribbean region' (Simmons-McDonald, 2001, p.119).

Having looked at the pedagogic concerns that motivated the research, the forthcoming section addresses the Caribbean Examinations Council's (CXC) position, and the extent to which dominant ideologies of power may continue to be perpetuated in the discourses of English Language teaching. The section also explores the implications of the colonial legacy and the ways in which it manifests itself, albeit implicitly, in the English Language Syllabus.

1.9   English Language Teaching in a Post-Colonial Context

Although many Caribbean nations have long been granted their independence from Britain since the 1960s, these former British territories all share a colonial legacy and, like its Caribbean counterparts, the BVI was part and parcel of the colonial experience. As a result of this, the story of the popular struggle for secondary education in the BVI bears striking similarities to those of neighbouring post-colonial Caribbean territories.

The emergence of schools in the West Indies, up to the point of the Emancipation Era, was a strong indicator of the way in which societies evolved from oral to literate societies. Furthermore, British norms, 'introduced initially into what was virtually an educational void, gradually evolved to become 'absolute standards' (Roberts, 1997, p.233). This translated into the fact that educational materials produced by British

authors essentially reflected the doctrines of the Anglican Church and the inherent biases and ideologies of the British Empire. This further meant that formal education was British-oriented, the syllabus, teaching materials, text books and qualifying exams were all British and, 'British concepts, views, values and prejudices were thus transmitted to the West Indies through printed material' (Roberts, 1997, p.273).

Crucially, one aspect of the imported syllabus in which the British 'blue print' was particularly evident was in the teaching of English (Roberts, 1997). Thus, English acquired the status of the official language of these territories and this stemmed from the British policy of introducing formal education after the abolition of slavery in 1834 (Drayton, 1990). This influenced the way in which English was taught, and the pivotal role it played in the education system to the exclusion of linguistic varieties like creoles. As a result of this, the hegemonic and authoritative position which standard English occupied, which was deeply saturated with the ideological assumptions of the British rulers, remained unquestioned in relation to indigenous linguistic varieties like BVI Creole. The next section examines the extent to which these assumptions helped to play a role in shaping the discourses of English Language teaching.

1.10   The Construction of Creole in the Caribbean Examinations Council's English Language Syllabus

The BVI secondary school system, like other Anglophone Caribbean territories, follows the Caribbean-based Examination Syllabus, which was implemented in 1973, in Literature and English Language. Upon completion of their secondary schooling, BVI school children sit the Caribbean-based examinations which are prepared by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), at either Basic or General Level proficiencies. On the one hand, the General Level proficiency examination is usually intended for more advanced students of English whose goal is to pursue a university degree. On the other hand, the students who sit the Basic Level proficiency examination are generally less advanced, but may later pursue the advanced level examination or enter the workforce. Sixteen territories, including the BVI, participate in the Caribbean Examinations Council regional examinations, and in all of these participating territories 'an English-based Creole is spoken with the exception of St Lucia, Dominica, and parts of Grenada where French-based creoles are spoken' (Craig, 2006, p.19).

A number of developments in the Caribbean region have contributed to the tentative acceptance of creole in the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) English Language Syllabus. Prior to the establishment of the University of the West Indies in 1963 as an

autonomous institution, Caribbean intellectuals owed their tertiary education to institutions in Britain and North America. However, the emergence of an increasing number of Caribbean scholars and a burgeoning post-colonial identity resulted in a change of educational policy in the Anglophone Caribbean territories. Furthermore, the early development of creole studies introduced at the University of the West Indies was related to the movement towards independence in the British West Indies, and this 'helped to shift the perspective on language from that of the colonizer to the colonized' (Holm, 1985, p.45).

That aspect of the syllabus which dealt with English Language teaching and a broad spectrum of subjects was restructured to meet the needs of pupils in the newly developed and independent nations. Creole slowly began to appear in the writing of post-colonial literatures, as a bold assertion of their burgeoning nationalism and 'new' identities, in an effort to challenge the dominant view that literature had to be written in standard English. In the context of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), English Language Syllabus there has been a tentative acceptance of the use of creole in the classroom, in territories/nations where the examinations are taken. To a large extent, this is attributed to the position that the Caribbean Examinations Council has assumed with respect to the teaching of English Language.

One of the marked differences between earlier versions of the Caribbean Examinations Council's, (CXC) English Language Syllabus and revised versions, is that explicit references to 'good' and 'proper' English derived from the grammatical structures of standard English, which were previously stressed and explicitly emphasised, have been replaced by notions of 'communicative competence' and 'appropriateness' of language use (Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Revised English Language Syllabus, 2006, pp.102-103). However, with respect to the teaching of grammar, the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) English Language Syllabus unequivocally states that candidates are expected to use the language 'with precision, clarity and grammatical 'correctness' (Caribbean Examinations Council, Revised English Language Syllabus, 2006. p.1). Bound up in the notion of 'correctness' are hegemonic ideologies which position non-standard grammatical structures as inferior in relation to the structures of standard English.

Despite the ostensible acceptance of creole in classroom activities and in some aspects of classroom writing, its role in the English Language Syllabus is only tentatively conveyed, and it is largely unaccounted for as an intellectual resource. On a superficial level, the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) English Language Arts

Syllabus offers an outline which guides the teaching of grammatically 'correct' English to pupils in a creole-speaking environment. However, underlying the ostensibly 'natural' and common place discourses of English Language teaching, are entrenched assumptions about the relationship between the dominant languages and vernaculars like creoles. Moreover, 'many of the ideas about language that we accept as 'natural', which are unconsciously conveyed and accepted, constitute what has been described as 'common sense' (Fairclough, 2001, pp.70-71). This implicit and unconscious assumption sheds light on the notion of hegemony as postulated by (Gramsci, 1971), who maintains that hegemony is a form of power that is implicitly exercised by the dominant group, and which is most effective when it is not acquired by means of coercion, but by consent. In other words, based on this perspective these are largely naturalised beliefs that come to be regarded as 'common sense'.

Gramsci's conceptualization is useful in post-colonial contexts as it helps to explain the extent to which language was used as a powerful mechanism in which colonial powers covertly exercised and maintained power. From this standpoint the assumption of a superior variety of language, whose hegemonic status negates the social and linguistic value of non-standard varieties of language, was pervasive and accepted without question. Consequently, linguistic varieties like BVI Creole were relegated to an inferior position within the wider society, and the colonial bias against the vernacular which was then established continues to resonate in 21st century BVI secondary classrooms. Moreover, the marginalisation of creoles was largely attributed to a colonial ideology in which their social inferiority, vis-a-vis the superiority of standard English, was naturalised and regarded as self-evident.

Deeply ingrained in these 'common sense' beliefs about language are ideologies of power that continue to implicitly position standard English as the 'legitimate' and 'correct' variety in relation to marginalized linguistic varieties like creole. Further, these seemingly innocuous and taken-for-granted assumptions 'help to sustain the status quo and the dominant relations of power in the society' (Tollesfon, 1991, p.11). In the classroom context these 'common sense assumptions which seep into teachers' classroom practices, may be unconsciously internalised and perpetuated in classroom discourses and practices. This will be discussed more fully in chapter six.

While there is some evidence of an acceptance of the English-based creole in the Caribbean Examinations Council's, (CXC) English Language Syllabus, it nevertheless remains allocated to a marginal and tokenistic role which is only addressed in very general terms. Although there is little to suggest an outright rejection of the creole

vernacular, the Caribbean Examinations English Language Syllabus reveals subtle and implicit ambivalences regarding its specific role in education. Based on findings derived from her study conducted in Trinidad and Tobago, several years ago, Winer (1990) suggested that while there has been a nascent acknowledgement of English-based creoles in schools they are not fully and whole heartedly accepted. This position is still true in today's contemporary English Language classrooms in Anglophone Caribbean territories, including the British Virgin Islands.

The Caribbean Examinations Council's (CXC) position as it relates to the status of creole in the English Language Syllabus is vague and unclear. Rather, **it** is cautiously and tentatively expressed and its position, as conveyed in the syllabus, is far from explicit. Furthermore, the Caribbean Examinations Council's (CXC) stance on the status of English-based creoles in education is couched in carefully guarded and vague language which is illustrated in the phrase, 'to promote lasting appreciation of the diversity of purposes for which language is used' (Caribbean Examinations Council's, English Language Syllabus, 2006, p.1).

A further aim of the syllabus, as it relates to English-based creoles, is to 'promote an understanding and appreciation of a range of dialects' (Caribbean Examinations Council's, English Language Syllabus, 2006, p.2). There is, arguably, a need for greater acknowledgement and inclusion of the linguistic variety that pupils speak in the classroom which goes beyond a mere 'appreciation'. As creoles have been traditionally perceived as impoverished reflections of dominant varieties like standard English, their position in education challenges the status quo and the dominant ideologies that are inherent in the creole vis-à-vis standard English relationship.

Apart from the lack of a full acknowledgement of the vernacular, the Caribbean Examinations Council's, (CXC) English Language Syllabus makes no allowances for raising pupils' awareness of the socio-political and socio-historical relationship of language varieties that converge in the classroom, nor does it provide opportunities for pupils to question or challenge the hegemonic status of English. With respect to the teaching of standard English, the Caribbean Examinations Council's position further implies a monolingual ideology. In other words, this ideological stance has pedagogical implications in a creole–speaking environment as pupils' oral language is continually measured against a criterion of standard 'correctness' and, as a result, creole continues to be perceived as deficient when measured against the 'legitimate' and monolithic status of standard English. As Lemke (1990) reminds us 'The English curriculum/ syllabus, more than any other subject, adheres to an ideology about

language' (p.63). In short, language teaching is not situated in a socio-political and ideological vacuum, but rather it is a socially constructed mechanism in which assumptions and values of the dominant groups are embodied and propagated.

Creole, 'the unmarked choice' (Myers-Scotton, 1993), that is, 'the expected choice', among the pupils in BVI classrooms is an inherent part of their cultural identities, and it also serves as an emblem of solidarity. I shall later argue in the thesis that this linguistic variety needs to be accounted for in English Language classroom discourses, and to be fully acknowledged as a separate and discrete linguistic system in relation to standard English. Furthermore, the taken-for-granted assumptions that pupils and teachers make about the role of BVI Creole, and the implications of these for classroom pedagogy remain unanswered in BVI classrooms. Against this backdrop, the genesis of the questions for my thesis emerged. Drawing on Creswell's (2003) approach to qualitative research, I chose a single overarching research question. This, and the related sub-questions are presented as follows:

1.11   Research Questions

What assumptions about the status of BVI Creole in the English Language classroom are evident in teachers' and pupils' discourses about language use in BVI English Language classrooms?

This question is supplemented by the following by sub-questions:

- What are teachers' views and attitudes to the role of BVI Creole in English Language teaching?

- What are pupils' understandings of the role of BVI Creole in the classroom?

- In what ways are these views implicated in the discourses of English Language teaching in the BVI context?

- What are the pedagogical implications of these views for the teaching of English Language in BVI classrooms?

During the course of this exploratory research I hope to provide some answers to the preceding questions, which may enable me to offer insights into the current teaching practices in BVI secondary English Language classrooms. I also hope to be able to

offer recommendations for BVI educational policy and practice that could be meaningful and applicable to the improvement of the teaching of English in a BVI sociolinguistic environment. Having presented the research questions, the forthcoming section outlines the structure of the thesis.

1.12   Organisation and Structure of the Thesis

Chapter one introduces the socio-historical and socio-economic background of the study and the education system as it relates to the teaching of English Language in the BVI secondary classroom. Here I have argued that the status of **Standard** English in the Caribbean Examinations Council's (CXC) English Language Syllabus, in relation to **Creole**, occupies a monolithic position. Moreover, the inclusion of **Creol**e in the classroom is largely tokenistic and not fully acknowledged as a separate linguistic entity in the discourses surrounding English Language teaching in the British Virgin Islands.

The chapter then outlines the research problem/the rationale of the study, the research questions that led to my interest in researching the status of BVI Creole in the English Language secondary classroom. This is examined from a personal and professional perspective. The chapter also addresses the research questions and the overall structure of the thesis.

Chapter two offers a brief description of the origins of pidgins and creoles, in order to offer an explanation for their lowly status in the wider society and in the post-colonial classroom. It also considers the implications of a continuum and diglossic relationship and argues in favour of a combination of continuum and semi-diglossic traits in order to explain the BVI sociolinguistic situation.

Chapter three argues in favour of a social view of language as conceptualised by Bakhtin and Voloshinov, in order to account for the socio-political underpinnings inherent in the relationship between an English-based creole and standard English. It considers the implications of a social perspective of language, as explicated by a Bakhtinian view of language, and how this plays out in a creole-speaking environment. Additionally, the chapter examines the ideological perspectives underpinning language use, and draws on Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony in order to explain the 'common sense' assumptions that teachers and pupils make about language use in the English Language classroom.

Chapter four addresses the philosophical assumptions that underpin the methodology and justifies the methods and data collection procedures that were employed in order to find answers to the research questions.

Chapter five explores the ways in which teachers' implicit devaluations of BVI Creole, inscribed in classroom discourses, are implicated with their 'common sense' assumptions about the role of creole in relation to the hegemonic status of standard English. This chapter further argues that these assumptions implicitly relegate creole to an inferior position in relation to standard English in the classroom, and this may help to foster deficit views of learning.

Chapter six, which focuses on the interviews with the pupils, argues that the 'common sense' assumptions which teachers make about BVI Creole, in relation to standard English, that may seep into their teaching practices may be internalised by pupils who may be 'complicit' in the devaluation of BVI Creole. Despite its marginalisation in the classroom, BVI Creole continues to be a strong symbol of cultural identity and solidarity for the pupils in the study. In addition, this chapter also accounts for the shifting dimensions of power and solidarity between pupils and teachers, depending on the linguistic variety which teachers employ during English Language lessons.

Chapter seven addresses the pedagogical implications of the continual and implicit devaluation of BVI Creole in the English Language classroom. Finally, it offers recommendations for policy and practice which may lead to the enhancement of language teaching. It also argues that in the absence of a critical dimension of language use in English language teaching practices, both pupils and teachers may be implicated, perhaps unconsciously, in the process of propagating hegemonic ideologies about language in BVI classrooms.

Chapter eight reflects on the study in light of the findings and the extent to which the research questions have been answered. It then considers how the study contributes to knowledge and discusses the limitations and merits of the study. Finally the chapter makes suggestions for directions of future research.

1.13 Conclusion

In this chapter I have addressed the socio-historical and socio-political circumstances of the BVI, and I have maintained that its socio-historical past has played a crucial role in shaping the present-day BVI linguistic situation, and the socio-political character of

the islands. The chapter has also offered an account of the education system, as it relates to English Language teaching, and it suggests that language teaching is dominated by a standard English ideology, that is, it legitimises standard English, at the expense of vernacular languages like BVI Creole. The chapter has also outlined the aims of the research and the rationale/ research problem, which is framed by personal and professional perspectives. Finally, the chapter has addressed the research questions and the overall structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2

Creole and Standard English:
A Socio-historical Perspective

2.1   Introduction

This chapter begins by offering a brief overview of the definitions and origins of pidgin and creole language varieties, many of which emerged in the context of colonialism, in order to explain their present-day status in the wider society and in post-colonial classrooms. It then relates the BVI linguistic variety to the broader Atlantic Creoles, in terms of their structural characteristics, in order to shed light on the socio-historical influences that shaped these linguistic phenomena.

It considers both continuum and diglossic models of language evolution and suggests that rather than conceptualise the BVI linguistic situation as a strictly diglossic context as some have suggested (see Holm, 1988), there is some evidence to suggest that both continuum and diglossic models coexist in this environment. Drawing on Tabouret and Keller's notion of 'Acts of Identity', which draws on a multidimensional model, it suggests that this paradigm may be more relevant than a linear model (De Camp, 1971) in a BVI linguistic environment. In this view the individual situates himself/herself within a 'multidimensional space' which reflects patterns of linguistic behaviour that is bound up with 'Acts of Identity. Following this the chapter argues that any discussion of language use in an environment where (H) high and (L) low varieties co-exist needs to account for the blurred distinctions between a 'language' in relation to a 'dialect'.

Next, the chapter draws on the 'markedness model' (Myers-Scotton, 1983, 1993, 1995) and it suggests that this can be fruitfully applied in the BVI linguistic environment as a tool to explain language use in interpersonal relationships. This model highlights and offers an explanation of individuals' use of a particular variety in preference to another, relative to the symbolic value it may hold for its speakers. The chapter also argues in favour of an interactional model of language use (See Gumperz, 1982; and Blom and Gumperz, 1972) and maintains that this model offers plausible explanations for language use in light of the BVI linguistic situation.

In the final section, I argue in support of a theoretical perspective that goes beyond Schmidt's (1990, 1993) notion of 'consciousness' in second language learning. This view suggests that in order for second language 'input' to become 'intake' which is assimilated into the learner's language system, the individual needs to 'pay attention' or 'notice' the subject matter under investigation. As I argue, while Schmidt's 'noticing hypothesis' may have implications for learning a second language variety, I suggest that teachers in a BVI sociolinguistic environment need to go beyond this in order to assist pupils in developing a metalanguage for talking about and reflecting upon their use of language, and this may enhance their language repertoires. The next section begins by considering the varying definitions of pidgin and creole language varieties.

2.2   Genesis/Origins of Pidgins and Creoles

Although the genesis of pidgins and creoles has been vigorously debated over a period of several decades, there is no unanimous agreement among creole linguists regarding their origins. As De Camp noted more than three decades ago, 'there is no real consensus relating to the origins of these linguistic varieties' (De Camp, 1977, p.3), and this situation still remains largely unchanged. The debate on the origins and genesis of creole languages is vast and too complex to be fully addressed in this chapter; however, in this section I attempt to provide a summary of the broad theoretical stances and debates in the field. I begin by addressing one of the earliest theories, the 'Baby-Talk Theory.

2.3   Definitions: Pidgins and Creoles

2.3.1   Pidgins

One of the earliest definitions of pidgins that still has currency today was originally put forward by Hall (1966, 1972) who pointed out that a pidgin is determined by its significantly restricted syntactic features, morphology and lexicon, and which is not indigenous to its users. He succinctly states: 'A pidgin is a contact vernacular, normally not the native language of any of its speakers….a creole, on the other hand, is a pidgin that has evolved into the first language of a new generation/ group of speakers' (Hall, 1966, p. xii). However, the 'nativisation theory, which is the process of evolution from a pidgin to a creole, has been regarded as misguided by some creole scholars (eg Mufuwe, 2008) on the grounds that 'Neither the geo-graphical distribution of Creoles nor the respective socioeconomic histories of the territories where Creoles developed support this position' (Mufwene, 2008, p.79).

Pidgins are generally defined as supplementary languages that normally emerge among individuals in the absence of a common language, under unique linguistic and social circumstances. Furthermore, they are lexically derived from source/dominant languages, and are characterized by unstable and rudimentary forms of grammar, in order to facilitate communication (See De Camp, 1971; Holm, 2000; Sebba, 1997).

A pidgin is also sometimes regarded as a 'reduced' variety of a 'normal' language with simplification of the grammar and vocabulary of that language and considerable phonological variation (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 61). Although there is some disagreement in the field of creole studies regarding the number of languages that are required to produce a pidgin, it is commonly agreed that at least two or more languages are required for their development. As Romaine observes, 'a pidgin has been stripped of everything but the bare essentials necessary for communication' (Romaine, 1988, p. 22). These language varieties are not mutually intelligible with the languages from which they originate or with the sources from which their vocabulary is derived. In addition, their grammatical features which are significantly restricted, are not as highly developed as the grammar of their 'source' languages' (Sebba, 1997, p.36). Equally as contentious are the varied definitions of creoles, and this issue is addressed in the next section.

2.3.2   Creoles

Despite the ongoing debate on the precise definition of creole language varieties, most creole scholars generally concur with the view that 'Creoles, like pidgins, emerge as a result of language contact; they have a community of native speakers and they are more syntactically complex than pidgins' (Siegel, 2008, p.43). Like pidgins, creoles have evolved as a result of a close linguistic association involving two or more varieties of language, among people who were deprived of a mutually intelligible means of interaction.

However, unlike pidgins, which are regarded as provisional languages, creoles are defined as stable and autonomous linguistic systems which have significantly developed syntactic and morphological features, and which have speakers of their own. It is generally accepted that creoles are off-shoots or descendants of pidgins, which have evolved into the first language of a new generation of speakers (Sebba, 1997; Wardhaugh, 2006). Having looked at the definitions of pidgins and creoles the next section addresses the ongoing issues whieh relate to the origins of these linguistic varieties.

2.3.3 Baby-Talk Theory

One of the earliest explanations for the genesis of creoles is the 'Baby-Talk' theory which was originally introduced by Schuchardt (1914) in the early 20th century. The notion of 'baby-talk'was further developed by Bloomfield (1933) who described it as the masters' emulation of the 'subjects' language who 'deprived of the correct model, can do no better than to acquire the simplified 'baby-talk' version of the upper language' (p.472). According to the model, these rudimentary forms of speech supposedly formed the structural basis of both pidgins and creoles. I argue that underpinning this theoretical formulation are deficit views of language which undermine the value of supposed inferior linguistic varieties, and which question the cognitive abilities of the speakers of these varieties. Wardhaugh also maintains that, 'There are too many structural similarities among pidgins and creoles associated with very different European languages to make such a theory of origin plausible' (p.74). Closely related to the 'Baby Talk theory, is the 'Foreigner Talk' theory and this is discussed in the next section.

2.3.4 Foreigner-Talk

An off-shoot of the 'Baby-Talk theory' is the notion of 'Foreigner-Talk', which was proposed by Ferguson (1971). This is regarded as a simplified version of a language that is employed by speakers of a linguistic variety who have a limited understanding or have very rudimentary knowledge of a particular language. In this view, 'foreigner talk' is regarded as 'an imitation of the way the person addressed uses language' (Ferguson, 1971, p.143), and it is essentially a '...simplified register of a language which is used for communication with 'foreigners' (ie non-speakers of a language) (Sebba, 1997, p.84).

 The native speaker might also draw on 'foreigner talk' to make themselves understood, and hence it is employed as 'a term for a special style in which native speakers talk to foreigners' (Sebba, 1997, p.85). This theory of pidgin/creole genesis, the 'foreigner talk' theory, draws on a universalist approach to the origins of pidgins and creoles, that is, it is a theory which claims that the structural similarities among these linguistic varieties are a result of innate universal strategies for simplification (Sebba, 1997).

In the preceding sections I outlined two related theories, 'baby-talk' and 'foreigner-talk'. The forthcoming sections discuss monogenetic and polygenetic theories of pidgin and

creole genesis which offer different theoretical explanations. I begin by addressing the monogenetic theory which claims that creoles originated from one source.

2.3.5   Monogenetic Explanations

Early proponents of the model, Whinnom (1965, 1971) and Thompson (1961) postulate that all pidgins and creoles have a common source of origin, and are genetically related and derived from a 16th century Portuguese 'proto-pidgin' during the Atlantic slave trade. In this perspective, pidgins and creoles are associated either with an early medieval Mediterranean Pidgin, possibly Sabir, or a subsequent derivative. At the heart of this theory is the notion of relexification, that is, pidgins and creoles derive the majority of their lexical features from dominant European languages (See Sebba, 1997; Mulhausser, 1986).

Although the notion of relexification may have some bearing on creole genesis, 'it needs to be viewed in the context of a pidgin developing over time, under particular circumstances' (Sebba, 1997, p. 75). In short, although the hypothesis has some merits, 'the relexification hypothesis is inadequate 'as an all-embracing explanatory parameter for pidgin and Creole formation' (Mulhausser, 1985, p.113). While the monogenetic theory proposes one source of origin for pidgins and creoles, the polygenetic theory of genesis focuses our attention on multiple sources of origin. The next section examines this issue.

2.3.6   Polygenetic Theory

Contrasting with monogenetic theories of pidgin/creole genesis, is the polygenetic theory which attempts to offer universal explanations about the structural similarities of pidgins and creoles. Rather than propose one source of origin, that is a 'proto-pidgin,' the polygenetic theory proposes myriad sources. According to the claims of early proponents of the model (Hall, 1966, 1974), pidgins and creoles had multiple independent starting points, which supposedly led to similar results or outcomes. In other words, in this view the structural similarities are the result of parallel, but autonomous developments. Despite these claims, there is still room for dispute regarding 'the exact mechanism whereby' different starting points' lead to 'similar outcomes' (Sebba, 1997, p. 77). Given that the formation of these linguistic varieties needs to account for a range of factors including, geographical, linguistic, socio-cultural and historical factors, it seems questionable whether the precise circumstances was indeed replicated globally.

Unlike the polygenetic theory of the genesis of pidgins and creoles, which proposes multiple sources of origin, the forthcoming 'language bioprogram' model is underpinned by universalist approaches to language learning that draws on Chomsky's (1965) language acquisition theory. That is to say, this theoretical model emphasises 'the intervention of a specific general process of the transmission of language from generation to generation and from speaker to speaker' (Arends et al., 1994, p.11).

2.3.7   The 'Language Bioprogram Model'

The 'language bioprogram' hypothesis proposed by Bickerton (1981) which deals exclusively with the origins of creoles attempts to explain the structural similarities among creoles by claiming the existence of a 'language bioprogram' mechanism, that is, an innate, biological 'blue print'. Bickerton's model posits the view that creoles were 'invented' or created by children who grew up in plantation colonies where pidgins where spoken, and who used an intrinsic 'blueprint' device to transform pidgins to fully-fledged creoles. As he puts it, '...the child born of a pidgin speaking parent would seldom have had any options than to learn that rudimentary language, however inadequate for human purposes it might be' (p. 5).

Creolists like Singler (1986, 1992) and Mufewe (2008) have cast doubts on Bickerton's language bioprogram model. In this perspective, Mufwene (2008) argues that Bickerton's (1981) hypothesis does not offer a sufficiently plausible explanation, which supports the view that children possessed the abilities to transfer characteristics of substrate languages or indigenous languages into creoles, 'because they had no prior knowledge of a language before the one they misguidedly claim to have created for their communities' (p.81). Criticisms against the 'language bioprogram' hypothesis also come from Mulhausser (1986) who argues, among other things, that the model does not account for the syntactic similarities among creoles, nor 'the qualitative distinctions between creoles such as Hawaiian Creole English and their pidgin predecessors' (p.221). Other criticisms also include the view that the 'language bioprogram' model does not account for the social and historical realities of Creole development' (Sebba, 1997). In addition, I argue that Bickerton's model does not consider the socio-cultural perspectives of learning which draw on a Vygotskean model (see Wertsch, 1985), and the role of social interaction in language learning. In addition, Bickerton's 'language bioprogram' model, that is, the purported cognitive 'blue print,' does not account for individual differences in language learning.

Despite these theoretical postulations, no single theory seems to fully account for the genesis of pidgins and creoles. Today competing versions of the origins of these linguistic varieties which are still being debated, are the substrate hypothesis which focuses on the structural influences derived from African substrate languages on creoles, and the superstrate hypothesis which stresses that the structural traits of pidgins and creoles are derived from dominant languages like standard English. Other competing theories include the Universalist Language Bioprogram Hypothesis (Bickerton, 1981), described above, and the so-called imperfect second language acquisition hypothesis. The latter theory claims that 'Pidgins are primarily the results of imperfect L2 learning of the dominant lexifier languages by slaves' (Mufwene, 2007, p. 90).

Having briefly examined the origins of these linguistic varieties, the forthcoming section examines the linguistic characteristics of BVI Creole in light of its socio-historical influences, and the possible traits which it may have in common with English-based Atlantic Creoles. A description of this group of creoles and their bearing on BVI Creole is discussed in the following section.

2.4   Atlantic English -Based Creoles

In order to offer a description of the structural characteristics of the English-based creoles such as the variety which is found in the BVI, one needs to examine them in light of the socio-historical circumstances that helped to shape these linguistic varieties. Holm (2000) differentiates between two principal groupings: Atlantic-group creoles and Pacific-group creoles, based on historical, demographic and linguistic traits. The Atlantic group varieties or so-called plantation creoles, which were established in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries during the colonial era, are spoken in West Africa and the Caribbean. However, unlike the Atlantic-group varieties the Pacific-group creoles, which emerged during the nineteenth century, demonstrate different typological traits and consist primarily of pidgins.

While there are marked distinctions between the Atlantic and Pacific Creoles, 'based on input from different African substrate languages, which need to be taken into consideration' (Holm, 2000, pp. 91), the English-based Atlantic Creoles structurally resemble other Atlantic Creoles like the Spanish, Dutch, French and Portuguese Creoles, because of their typological affinities to Niger-Congo languages. Furthermore, the strong resemblances that are apparent in different types of English-based Atlantic Creoles are attributed to socio-historical and linguistic situations which included the

establishment of British plantation colonies in the seventeenth century, where pidgins and creoles evolved simultaneously in the Caribbean and in West African outposts among the slaves. More specifically, the English-based creoles of the Lesser Antilles, emerged in the mid-seventeenth century (Holm, 2000), and historical evidence informs us that during the seventeenth century slavery was already an established institution in British West Indian territories like the BVI, which is situated in the Lesser Antilles. After the 1730s cotton production declined, it was replaced with large scale sugar production and, as a result, planters resorted to the direct importation of slaves from Africa. This was also supplemented by slaves from other West Indian colonies (Harrigan and Varlack, 1975, pp.71-72).

In some ways BVI Creole, as an English-based creole, conforms to the linguistic 'ideal' of English-based, Atlantic Creoles. Many of these creoles have various grammatical traits in common, and their phonological, and morpho-syntactic features, which diverge substantially from English, are derived from African substrate influence (Roberts, 1988). Across English-based Atlantic Creoles or 'Creole Englishes', to use Roberts' (1988) term, there are some linguistic peculiarities and variations especially in relation to accents, word choice/vocabulary, and phonology. Notably, the Jamaican Creole, in particular, has a couple of salient features in the areas of morphology and syntax that diverge from the other English–based creoles (Roberts, 1988).

One of the phonological traits that is common to the majority of pidgins and creoles is the 'simplification' of consonant clusters. Another typical linguistic characteristic among Caribbean English-based creole speakers is 'conflation, where speakers combine /d/ with voiced dental fricative, and /t/ with voiceless dental fricative' (Jenkins, 2003, p. 56). While 'Creole English' generally does not mark the plural of nouns, in contrast to standard English, it shows little morphology in the verb; however, it is in the area of syntax that it demonstrates salient characteristics, many of which diverge significantly from features in standard English. Furthermore, it shows much less reliance on word endings to convey meaning, and many of the grammatical inflections which characterize standard English are not evident in 'Creole English' (Roberts, 1988).These grammatical features, which are derived from creole, are generally perceived as inferior derivatives of the dominant language, and these structural features are regarded as an interference in pupils' written language development language This issue is discussed more fully in chapters five and six.

Having looked briefly at some of the theories relating to the definitions and genesis of pidgins and creoles, in the next section, I examine the notion of the 'Life Cycle'

hypothesis, as originally put forward by Hall (1966, 1974). Following this, I then explore the hypothetical creole continuum, from the perspectives of both linear and multidimensional models, and its relevance for the BVI linguistic environment.

2.5   The Transition from Pidgin to Creole: Life Cycle Hypothesis

The 'Life Cycle' hypothesis as proposed by Hall (1966), one of its earliest proponents, is one of the most common and widely disseminated hypotheses in creole studies, and perhaps one of the most contentious. In this perspective pidgins go through four stages or 'cycles' which relate to the evolution of a pidgin to a creole. It includes the following stages:

- 'Marginal Contact' in which the most basic and elementary forms of communication are implemented

- This is followed by a period of 'Nativization' whereby the pidgins undergo a further development or expansion and acquire native speakers.

- At this stage there are varying degrees of influence from the dominant language.

- Finally, there is the hypothetical 'post-creole continuum', in which a spectrum of varieties purportedly exist (Todd, 1990, pp. 53-69).

Todd succinctly describes the process of a 'life cycle' as one in which the pidgin evolves, under certain conditions, 'into the native language of a community of speakers thus becoming a 'normal' language' (Todd, 1990, p.126). The process is not always a straightforward one, and although both the expanded or 'extended pidgins' and creoles are autonomous linguistic varieties, the line demarcating the functional and structural characteristics from each is blurred.

By the time it reaches this stage of maturity, the 'extended' or 'expanded pidgin', to use Todd's (1974, 1990) term, is a relatively short step from becoming a fully-fledged creole, whereby it becomes a native language for a group of speakers. During this phase there is a significant increase in the communicative functions of pidgins, and further changes reflect the structural complexity of 'extended' or 'expanded pidgins' which are evident in phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical traits (Mulhausser, 1986). Based on Todd's 'life cycle' hypothesis, the post-creole

continuum (De Camp, 1971) commonly known as the creole continuum is the final and inevitable step of the ''life cycle'' of a creole.

However, the phase between 'extended' pidgin and creole can become truncated or it can assume contradictory and unpredictable traits that do not rigidly adhere to the pattern of a 'Life Cycle'. Succinctly put, not every pidgin evolves into a creole. A striking example of this linguistic trait has been demonstrated in the 'expanded pidgin' or the Melanesian Pidgin English which includes as its main off-shoots Bislana in Vanuatu, Pijin in Solomon islands, and in particular, the Tok Pisin of Papua New Guinea (Holm, 2000). The traits exhibited by Melanasian Pidgin clearly pose an outright challenge to Hall's (1966) 'Life Cycle' hypothesis, and one of the points of contradiction which defies Hall's definition is that 'a pidgin can undergo expansion without being nativized' (Holm, 2000, p.7). In other words, its structural and functional features can be significantly increased without acquiring native speakers or a new community of speakers.

In the case of Tok Pisin, there is a considerable amount of linguistic ambivalence whereby the variety could simultaneously fulfil the dual purpose of both a creole and a pidgin. On the one hand, it operates as a 'lingua franca' or a common language in a linguistically heterogeneous setting consisting of 860 languages and, on the other hand, it serves as a home language to a relatively small group of inhabitants in Papau New Guinea (Mulhausser, 1986; Holm, 2000). Despite its co-existence with standard English, and its speakers' access to the dominant language through education, Tok Pisin has not undergone a process of 'decreolization', that is, the loss of creole traits in a creole linguistic variety which is a direct consequence of contact with a dominant language. In other words, 'the development of a (post-creole) continuum does not seem to have taken place inspite of the ideal sociolinguistic conditions for this next phase of the proposed life cycle' (Siegel, 2008, p.256).

I suggest that the 'Life Cycle' hypothesis does not seem to account for contexts where elements of both continuum and diglossic models operate simultaneously as is evident in some English-based, creole-speaking environments, such as the BVI. Having looked briefly at the notion of 'life cycle', the next section examines the hypothetical continuum which, according to Hall's model, is final stage of the 'Life Cycle'. I argue that the BVI linguistic situation is partially based on the creole continuum model, and in what follows, the model is examined from both linear and multidimensional perspectives.

2.6   Creole-Continuum: A Uni-dimensional/Linear Model?

The hypothetical creole continuum model, originally proposed by De Camp (1971) focussed on the Jamaican linguistic situation, and is largely regarded as the final stage in the 'Life Cycle' of a creole (Todd, 1975). This process involves 'the merger of a creole, with its lexifier language, resulting in what has been described as a 'post-Creole speech continuum' (Arends et al., 1994, p.61).

This model presupposes that the interaction of a creole and dominant variety like standard English yields a range of varieties from the basilectal variety, to the acrolectal variety. In this perspective, at one end of the spectrum is the 'acrolectal variety that most resembles or approximates the standard variety. At the other end of the continuum is the basilect, that is, the variety which reflects the most fundamental or 'deepest' creole-like traits, and midway between these spectrums is situated the mesolectal or intermediate variety (De Camp, 1971; Todd, 1974; Singh, 2000).

A key strand of the creole continuum debate involves questions which relate to its linear or multidimensional nature. In the classical view of the creole continuum model, variation exists in a unidirectional manner, that is, 'linguistic varieties are organised on a single (uni) dimensional manner consisting of 'lects' in a continuum model' (Singh, 2000, p.82). Proponents of this view (eg. Rickford, 1987) maintain that variation is situated in a linear fashion, progressing from creole to standard English. However, this model has been contested by Bailey (1971) and Lawton (1980) who argue that the creole/standard English relationship consists of two 'coexistent' systems, that is, the relationship implies a diglossic relationship which will be taken up in section (2.8) of this chapter.

In arguing in favour of a linear model De Camp's (1971) position encapsulates the view that the linguistic variation in the continuum occurs along a single dimension. He puts it this way:

> *…there is no sharp clevage between Creole and standard. Rather, there is a linguistic continuum, a continuous spectrum of varieties, ranging from 'bush' Talk or 'Broken Language' to the educated standard of Phillip Sherlock (DeCamp, 1971, p.121).*

The linear/unidirectional model has some limitations for the BVI sociolinguistic environment as it appears to create a dichotomy between 'good' and 'bad' language, thereby perpetuating the hegemonic status of standard English in a post-colonial

setting. The extent to which the speaker wishes to identify with the person who is being addressed may be based on the tacit understanding of the 'expected choice' to be employed in the conversation. Furthermore, the speakers' social status, and the range of their linguistic repertoire can influence their choices of a particular register or linguistic variety in a given social situation. Thus, I suggesting that the linear model may not be sufficiently elaborate or complex to account for these factors and, 'While an approach that treats 'Standard' and 'Creole' as separate language systems is incompatible with a unidirectional continuum, it can be accommodated within a multidimensional approach' (Sebba, 1997, p.222).

Having addressed the linear model, the next section explores the notion of the continuum from the perspective of the multi-dimensional model, I argue that the latter model holds more relevance for the BVI environment. This is followed by a discussion of the diglossic model as it relates to the BVI linguistic situation.

2.7   The Multi-Directional Model

Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985), whose research was conducted in Belize and St. Lucia, argue in favour of a multidimensional model. They claim that 'speakers use linguistic resources to locate themselves at a particular point in a multidimensional space' (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985, p.60), relative to situations they encounter. In their words, the speaker's 'linguistic behaviour is perceived as a series of 'acts of identity' in which people display both their personal identities, and their quests for social roles' (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, 1985, p.14). In challenging the linear model, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) argue that a multidimensional model is a more appropriate description of linguistic behaviour in multilingual contexts, as it can account for complexities that are not represented by the classical linear continuum model. Further, in multilingual settings it seems clear that social characteristics such as 'the expression of identity become very important when multilingual speakers make linguistic choices' (Singh, 2000, p.84).

While the Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's model goes some way in addressing issues of identity and language use, they do not address the tensions that exist in language use in bi-dialectal contexts, that is, in linguistic situations where dominant and marginalized varieties exist. Furthermore, unlike Bakhtin's (1981) perspective, this paradigm ignores the ideologies of power, and the extent to which these are bound up with language practices. Despite these limitations, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's multidimensional model seems to offer the speaker a broader range of language

choices than De Camp's (1971) traditional linear model, and this makes it more appropriate for an English-based creole speaking environment like BVI.

The multidimensional model promotes the view that speakers are motivated to occupy a particular linguistic space, which may enable them to negotiate choices along the creole continuum that resemble the linguistic behaviour of those persons with whom individuals wish to identify, or distance themselves from. Thus, in situating themselves within a particular 'social and linguistic space', relative to a particular situation, speakers can assert their identities or negotiate a particular social relationship with the addressee.

Having looked at the creole-standard relationship from a multi-dimensional perspective, the next section attempts to examine the BVI linguistic situation from a diglossic standpoint, and it considers the ramifications of a strictly diglossic model for language use in this setting. In the next section I propose that the BVI linguistic situation seems to have the characteristics of both continuum (multidimensional) and diglossic models.

2.8   Creole-Standard English Relationship in BVI Linguistic Situation: A Diglossic Model?

This classic formulation of diglossia, originally proposed by Ferguson (1959), describes diglossia as having two separate varieties of the same language used in the community, and this suggests that the model applies to closely related varieties whose functions are distinct. Ferguson illustrates the concept with reference to Classical Arabic (H), as the superior variety and other regional forms of Arabic which are labelled as the (L) low varieties of language. Similarly, these labels are also applied to standard French (H) which is spoken in Haiti among, the post-colonial elite, as opposed to Haitian Creole (L) the low variety which is spoken among the masses. One of the key traits of a diglossic model is that the two linguistic varieties are functionally differentiated and Ferguson (1959) observes, one of the significant characteristics of diglossia is its 'specialization of function for 'H' (high) and 'L' (low). Thus, 'In one set of situations only 'H' is appropriate and in another only 'L', with the two sets overlapping only slightly' (Ferguson, 1959, pp.335-336).

The relationship between creole and a standard variety, its lexically related variety, could also lead to a diglossic relationship, that is, a linguistic situation in which two discrete codes demonstrate 'clear functional separation. In other words, 'one code is

employed in one set of circumstances and the other in an entirely different set' (Wardhaugh 2006, p.89). The linguistic situation in the British Virgin Islands which has been described 'as a relatively stable diglossic relationship' (Holm, 1989, p.455), seems to allude to Ferguson's model. However, I am suggesting that English-based, creole-speaking contexts such as the BVI are highly complex linguistic environments, and the application of a wholly diglossic relationship is questionable, particularly one that may be based on Ferguson's (1959) classic definition. As Gumperz observes, 'speakers in a diglossic situation must know more than one grammatical system to carry on their daily affairs, and only one code is employed at any one time' (Gumperz, 1982, p.60).

I am suggesting that the diglossic model only paints a partial picture of the BVI linguistic situation, which may represent an amalgam of both continuum and diglossic models, and this environment may need a broader definition of diglossia. Furthermore, the rigid dichotomy of language use which the classic diglossic model presents, as postulated by Ferguson, deviates significantly from the linguistic situation in the BVI as this view of language does not seem to make allowances for the social situations in which the functions of both linguistic varieties overlap, at times, considerably. For instance, in the BVI sociolinguistic environment there may be situations when individuals might be 'expected' to use standard English, but they may speak BVI Creole instead. This is, arguably, one of the marked limitations of the Ferguson model.

Fishman (1968, 1972) describes the situation in Paraguay, based on research conducted by Rubin (Rubin, 1968), in which Spanish the (H) high variety coexists with Guarani, the (L) low variety, as a form of 'extended diglossia'. Fishman's conceptualization of diglossia was extended to incorporate a range of multilingual contexts, as well as any linguistic situation in which two linguistic varieties are socially and functionally differentiated. In this linguistic context, Spanish, the so-called language of power, the (H) high variety, is reserved for official situations like education, media, the courts, government, religion and other formal situations. On the other hand, Guarani, the (L) low variety, is reserved for intimate, informal and every day settings and is bound up with issues of identity and solidarity.

Unlike Ferguson's classic formulation of diglossia, Fishman's (1968, 1972) model does not seem to present a rigid linguistic dichotomy to the same extent as the traditional Ferguson (1959) model. Fishman's notion of an 'extended diglossic' model seems to demonstrate some affinities with the BVI context in terms of social/ functional differentiation between creole and standard English, and this clearly

suggests that diglossia, at some level, is at work in the BVI linguistic situation. Even so, I suggest that despite its similarities to the BVI context, the Fishman model does not appear to extend far enough to allow for overlapping leakages between varieties which the multidimensional model of language use provides. This model fills this gap as, crucially, it offers the speaker a range of choices which may be influenced by the individuals' repertoire, their social status, and the nature of the interpersonal relationship with the addressee. In short, although there may be some evidence of diglossia in the BVI linguistic environment, it may not be possible to describe it as a 'true' diglossic linguistic community of the kind which is in evidence in Haitian society, where standard French and creole co-exist as two discrete linguistic entities. The next section briefly explores this linguistic phenomenon as it relates to the Haitian situation.

2.9   Haitian Creole/ Standard French Diglossic Model

In this section, I suggest that the linguistic situation in Haiti seems to reflect social and functional traits, unlike the BVI linguistic environment, which may resemble strictly diglossic situations. In such environments, dominant and less prestigious varieties 'lack continuity in so far as functions are concerned, and that functional discontinuity is generally strongly supported by severe social stratification' (Wardhaugh, 2006, p.83).

The rigid form of social stratification in the Haitian context is not manifested in the BVI situation, where there is evidence of a more fine-grained form of stratification with more complex social class divisions. As Holmes (2008) observes, with reference to the austere social divisions reflected in the Haitian-Creole/French situation, 'a Creole may remain as a stable ('L') low variety alongside an officially sanctioned ('H') high variety' (p.93). Despite the socio-economic and political differences between Haiti and the BVI, the social devaluations and negative attitudes toward (L) low varieties in relation to (H) high varieties, are likely to prevail in the wider society, and in the education system in both societies. The issue of perceptions and attitudes relative to (L) low varieties in the education system is relevant to this thesis, and this is addressed more fully in chapter three.

I argue that the social/linguistic situations between BVI and Haiti are markedly different, and the rigid compartmentalization of language use that is implied in a diglossic relationship is not in evidence in the BVI linguistic community. As Winford observes 'Creole continua are the result of the disintegration of a hitherto highly stratified society and subsequent development of more egalitarian societies' (p. 350). Furthermore, the overlapping of social and functional traits between creole and

standard English which appears to be a social/linguistic characteristic in the BVI situation, does not seem to exist in the Haitian context, where standard French and Haitian Creole coexist. Wardhaugh (2006) puts it this way:

> *Haitian Creole and Standard French differ almost as much as two quite unrelated languages; there are no intermediate varieties in Haiti, and the two are kept quite socially and functionally apart* **(Wardhaugh, 2006, p.84).**

In sociolinguistic environments where continuum and diglossic models of language may exist, questions inevitably regarding clear-cut definitions and functions of the terms 'language', and 'dialect', as the supposed inferior linguistic variety. This is the subject of the next section.

2.10 Definition of a Language or Dialect: Separate Entities or an Ambivalent Relationship?

This section begins by offering definitions of a 'dialect' and a 'language', and it then examines the traits used to differentiate one linguistic variety from another. While a 'dialect' and a 'language' are regarded as separate entities their relationship may be an ambivalent one, and the distinctions drawn between them are somewhat blurred. Hence, drawing clearly marked definitions between the two is somewhat problematic. As Haugen (1972) points out, the definition of the terms lends itself to some degree of ambiguity, and a similar position has been taken by Trudgill (2000) who maintains that neither term whether, dialect or language, reflects a clear-cut water--tight concept (Trudgill, 2000, p.3).

In offering a definition of the two entities, Wardhaugh explains that a 'language' is described as 'a single linguistic norm or a group of related norms', and a 'dialect refers to one of the norms' (Wardaugh, 2006, p.28). This seems to suggest that a dialect is a subset of language, and because linguistic varieties like English-based creoles are perceived as inferior to a 'language,' such varieties are perceived as 'equivalent to non-standard or sub-standard' (Wardhaugh, 2006, p.28). These linguistic entities differ markedly in terms of their social status and in the functions they serve. For instance, 'A language has more power than any of its dialects because of non-linguistic factors' (Wardhaugh, 2006, p.30), and when it goes through a process of standardization it becomes even more powerful as it assumes 'ideological dimensions--social, cultural, and sometimes political beyond the purely linguistic criteria' (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 34).

Despite the complexities of the relationship between a 'dialect' and a 'language', socio-political factors play a marked role in differentiating their functions. Whereas, a language helps to sustain relations of' 'power', the dialect serves to maintain 'solidarity' (Wardhaugh, 2006). As Wardhaugh puts it, 'A feeling of solidarity can lead people to preserve a local dialect or an endangered language' (Wardhaugh, 2006, p.30). Despite its role as an emblem of solidarity for its users a dialect is normally associated with a less privileged socio-political status, in relation to a language, in the wider society and the education system. Discussions regarding the differences between 'languages' and 'dialects' are of crucial importance in creole-speaking classrooms, as these may help to offer explanations for the traditionally inferior social status of varieties like creoles. This issue will be taken up in greater depth in chapter seven.

The next section addresses forms of code alternation that are relevant to linguistic situations in which two linguistic varieties co-exist, that is, so-called (H) high and (L) low varieties. It also offers and account of an interactional approach to code-switching that draws on the work of Gumperz (1982) and Gumperz and Blom (1972), and its relevance for an English-based creole speaking settings.

2.11   An Interactional Approach to Language Use

Drawing on the field of sociolinguistics, an interactional approach as put forward by Gumperz (1982) and Gumperz and Blom (1972), proposes distinctions between situational and metaphorical code switching. This approach to code switching is largely derived from a 'domain' analysis model (Fishman, 1967), that is, language use in social domains relative to functional differentiation.

In offering distinctions between situational and metaphorical code switching, Gumperz and Blom (1972) argue that the notion of situational code switching establishes a direct link between language and the social situation/context. In other words, when a speaker shifts from one domain to another and changes his/her code it signals 'situational code switching,' and this choice of code is determined by the domain in which speakers perceive themselves to be. Furthermore, the linguistic features which are employed are crucial to the situation in that 'any violation of selection rules changes members' perceptions of the events' (Gumperz and Blom, 1972, p.126).

Blom and Gumperz (1972), whose study was conducted in Hemnes, Norway, investigated the use of two linguistic varieties that constituted part of the 'community linguistic repertoire'. On the one hand, the Ranamal, which is a dialect, 'is regarded as

an integral part of a person's family background, a sign of his local identity' (p.411). On the other hand, Bokmal, the standard linguistic variety reserved for education, 'is always carried on in the standard, the language of official transactions, religion and the mass media' (411). Further, during their daily social/linguistic interactions, individuals choose between the two varieties as the context demands. Thus, 'Members view this alternation as a shift between two distinct entities, which are never mixed. A person speaks one or the other' (p.411). However, this situation is not necessarily true in English-based creole speaking situations such as the BVI, where a great deal of overlapping between linguistic varieties occur.

Blom and Gumperz (1972) succinctly describe situational code switching as 'a direct relationship between language and the social situation' and they maintain that this form of switching makes allowances in situations where 'alternation between varieties redefines a situation, and a change in governing norms' (p.408). Furthermore, the linguistic characteristics that the individuals draw upon are crucial to the situation in that 'any violation of selection rules, changes members' perceptions of the event' (p.424). Thus, 'a person who uses the dialect where only the standard is appropriate violates commonly accepted norms' (p. 424).

Metaphorical code-switching, on the other hand, involves switches that relate to 'particular kinds of topics or subject matters rather than to a change in the social situation' (p.425). Thus, 'The context in which one of a set of alternatives is regularly used becomes part of the meaning, so that when this form is then employed in a context where it is normal, it brings in some of the flavour of this original setting' (p.425). In this approach, code alternation 'enriches a situation, allowing for allusion to more than one social relationship within the situation' (pp.408--409). Thus, metaphorical code switching is essentially a means of changing the perceived context, in order to involve a layering of voices and metaphorical meanings.

The interactional model of language has been criticised for its perspective of code-switching which involves classifying or ordering the functions of language use in a pre-determined way (Myers-Scotton, 2006). However, despite the limitations of the interactional model, it seems to offer the language user a considerable amount of leverage to employ language use as it relates to social 'domains. In addition it offers the individual the opportunity to be creative and flexible in order to achieve a desired rhetorical effect. Moreover, this model also makes allowance for the use of 'contextualisation cues' (Gumperz, 1982), that is, cues which allow for aspects of

communication which add to a shared understanding within a particular social group that may be absent in other approaches.

Notwithstanding the limitations of this model, it helps to offer socially/linguistically plausible explanations of language use in bi-dialectal creole-standard situations such as the BVI, where purportedly (H) high and (L) low varieties exist. It also helps to offer the most plausible explanations for individuals' linguistic choices in an English-based, creole-speaking setting, which are made in relation to the topics of conversation, for emphasis, to express emotions, to tell jokes or anecdotes, to establish social distance or intimacy, solidarity, and to subvert the norms. Additionally, it helps the individuals to employ language strategies in a metaphorical way in order to achieve a desired rhetorical effect.

I am not devaluing other strategies of code alternation such as 'translanguaging' (Creese and Blackledge, 2010), that is, an approach whereby the individual employs languages, alongside each other, to make meaning, to convey information, and to enact identities. Neither am I attempting to discredit the value of other approaches to code switching including 'crossing' (Rampton, 1995), that is, 'an out –group' phenomenon in which linguistic/practices are performed by individuals who are non-established members of groups associated with language choices they make. In his study, Rampton (1995) coined the notion of 'crossing' in order to account for 'the use of Panjabi by young people of Anglo and Caribbean descent, the use of Creole by Anglos and Panjabis, and the use of stylised Indian English by all three' (Rampton, 1995, pp.3-4). Rather, I am suggesting that the interactional approach is one of a range of strategies that individuals in an English-based creole-speaking context may employ, in order to communicate their intentions, and which may play a significant role during interaction in these communities. I am arguing that this approach/model may provide a good starting point for creole-speaking pupils to reflect upon and to talk about their use of language.

The previous section examined language use from an interactional perspective. The forthcoming section explores code-switching which draws on Myers-Scotton's (1988, 1993, 2006) 'markedness model'. In this perspective, emphasis is placed on how individual language users view themselves in relation to others, how that may influence their choice of a particular code, and what it says about themselves and their affiliation to a particular individual/ group. To this I now turn.

2.12   The Markedness Model: A Socially-Motivated Theory of Language Use in a Creole-Speaking Environment

The central principle posited by the 'markedness model' (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 1988) is that speakers have a sense of markedness relative to the available linguistic codes during interaction. Underpinning this model is the claim that 'speakers make choices and others interpret them by considering the probable consequences' (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p.178). Moreover, as the model establishes a particular norm within the community, speakers know the social outcomes of making marked or unexpected choices. Thus, 'individuals select their codes based on the personal relationship with others whieh they wish to have in place' (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 75).

I suggest that the inherently social nature of the Myers-Scotton's markedness model can be fruitfully applied in creole-speaking environments like the BVI. This model posits that, 'speakers have a sense of markedness regarding available linguistic codes for any interaction, but choose their codes based on the personal relationship with others which they wish to have in place' (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 74).

Essentially, the markedness model (Myers-Scotton 1988, 1993, 2006) which draws on a social motivation theory of code switching, sees language as 'a tool and an index of interpersonal relationships', and the language choices which individuals make are regarded as indexical of negotiation of personal rights and obligations between participants' (Myers-Scotton, 1988, p. 178). Thus, the speakers' decision to select a particular linguistic variety is an indication that 'they are indicating both a view of themselves and their relationship with other participants in the conversation' (Myers-Scotton, 2006, p.143).

Furthermore, in this model, there is an emphasis on 'switching as simultaneously a tool and an index' (Myers-Scotton, 1988, p.156). That is to say, 'For the speaker switching is a tool, a means of doing something' (by affecting the rights and obligations balance). For the listener, 'switching is an index, a symbol of the speakers' intentions' (p.156). This seems to suggest a reciprocal relationship between speaker and listener or between participants; however, more than this, speakers are forming 'cognitive calculations about their choices and making choices that subjectively they judge to be the best for them' (Myers-Scotton, 2006, p.30). While in situational code switching (Blom and Gumperz, 1972), language choice is determined by situational factors, that is, 'the change in code is external to participants themselves' (Myers-Scotton, 1988, p. 161), in the markedness model, '…situations do not determine

choices. Rather, speakers' motivations do' (ibid., p.161). In other words, 'speakers make choices within a framework/context of forseeable or expected outcomes with situations featuring in an indirect manner' (ibid., p.161).

In offering a distinction between 'marked' and 'unmarked' choices Myers-Scotton (1993) explains that, in the case of codeswitching as the 'unmarked' choice, the choice of a particular language variety is expected as the medium for conversation, given the 'expected' norms. In this case, the choice of linguistic codes is motivated by the speaker rather than the situation. In other words, the 'unmarked choice is regarded as 'safer', that is,'it conveys no surprises because it indexes an expected interpersonal relationship' (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p.74); however, the unmarked choice is not always selected, as speakers do not always adhere to 'expected norms'. In the case of the 'marked' choice the speaker disassociates himself/herself from or deviates from the expected norms and principles, or the 'expected rights and obligations set'. Thus, in this situation 'rather than follow the unmarked choice maxim, the speaker takes a different path, the marked choice maxim' (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p.131).

This 'markedness model' has been criticized by some scholars who draw on a conversation analytic approach (Auer, 1998; Lei, 1998; Drew and Heritage, 1992) for its lack of attention to a fine-grained analysis of the structure of talk during interaction, for its unidirectionality (Lei, 1998), and its emphasis on the 'interpersonal level of individual interlocutors' (p. 411). Myers-Scotton (1999) and Myers-Scotton and Bolonyai (2001) are not discrediting or ignoring the merits of the CA approach that accounts for the fine-grained analysis of the structural features and sequential organisation of talk, in which speakers contribute to the conversation. Rather, they maintain that the structural elements of the exchanges which are examined by conversational analysts, offer 'an exceedingly "flat" explanation of choice' (p.4). Furthermore, an over-emphasis on surface features during the conversational exchange fails to account for "texture", that is to say, 'Who participants "are"—in demographic, social networks, and even ethnographic terms' (Myers-Scotton and Bolonyai, 2001, p.5).

In their view, the conversation analysis model pays very little attention to the role of speakers' motivations in the conversational exchange, as well as the individuals' tacit knowledge which may have 'developed' during the conversation. In addition, the conversation analysis model does not account for the socio-psychological associations and, therefore, the social messages carried by one linguistic choice

rather than another' (Myers-Scotton and Bolonyai, 2001, p.5). However, Myers-Scotton and Bolonyai (2001) are not arguing that wider societal factors do not play a role in influencing language choices, and in determining the speakers'linguistic repertoire. Rather, they are arguing that these social factors, 'do not ordain the actual choices that individuals make' (Myers-Scotton and Bolonyai, 2001, p.4). In other words, it is 'not the speech community nor even the social network, but rather that individuals "own'' the linguistic choice of one way of speaking over another' (Myers-Scotton and Bolonyai, 2001, p.2).

It is true that one of the limitations of the markedness model is that it assumes that everyone has a wide-ranging communicative repertoire; this is not always the case, as individuals have varying degrees of access to dominant forms of language and 'symbolic resources', depending on factors such as education, social status and so forth. Drawing on findings from his research Blommaert (2005) acknowledges that people's language repertoires are 'internally and externally stratified, with all kinds of distinctions marking differences between 'better' and 'worse' (p.5). These repertoires are a reflection of the wider social practices which are implicated with notions of agency, inequality and access to power, and they are among the factors which place constraints on individuals with limited social power and access to resources (Blommaert, 2005).

Despite its limitations, the markedness model is relevant for an English-based, creole-speaking environment like the BVI as it helps to reveal information about speakers/ individuals' social and interpersonal relationships, ingrained in speakers linguistic choices, which may reflect individuals' views of themselves and their relationships with other persons involved in the conversation. It also helps to explain pupils' use of BVI Creole, as the unmarked choice which adheres to the norms of the 'expected choice' during social interaction, and which represents an emblem of cultural identity and solidarity. BVI Creole, the 'expected choice' is also juxtaposed with the authoritative status of standard English in the education system, and this has pedagogical implications. This issue will be taken up later on in the thesis.

In my study I have not set out to explore 'accurate' or precise descriptions of turn-taking during interaction, nor am I seeking a fine-grained, microscopic analysis of individuals' conversation during interaction. Rather, I am arguing that the 'markedness model' best portrays the linguistic/social relationships that are enacted among teachers and pupils in relation to the linguistic varieties that coexist in the classroom. It helps to offer an explanation of pupils' use of BVI Creole as the 'unmarked' variety,

that is, the 'expected choice', and in this view the speaker 'is causing no social ripples because participants expect such a choice, based on experience (Myers-Scotton, 2006, p. 159).

The final section of this chapter moves on from the notion of how speakers view themselves in relation to others during conversation, to an awareness of the language choices they make, and I argue for its importance in a creole-speaking situation. While some level of 'awareness' of the linguistic choices which pupils employ during social interaction may play a role in language learning, more crucially, I suggest that they need to be offered opportunities in the English classroom which enable them to develop a metalanguage for talking about, and reflecting upon their language choices, and this may enhance their linguistic repertoires. The next section briefly addresses the varying meanings and theoretical dimensions of the notion of metalanguage, and it also illustrates its importance for this study.

2.13   Definitions of Metalanguage

The definitions of the term metalanguage which draw on different disciplines are varied, and there are notable inconsistencies relating to both the definitions and terms used to describe it. For instance, metalanguage has been referred to both technical or semi-technical terminology that is used to analyse or describe language (Crystal, 1997). However, Berry (2005), explains that 'metalanguage is more than terminology, more than just a specialised body of lexis' (p.17). Rather, it relates to all elements of language use that is used 'to talk about language, to features of grammar and discourse as well' (p.17).

Despite the disagreement relating to definitions Berry (2004, 2005) suggests that metalanguage offers several distinct advantages which can be explored in the L2 classroom, and that once we acknowledge a definition of metalanguage as 'any language about language, we come to realise its importance in language learning and everyday language use' (Berry, 2005, p. 17). More crucially, Berry (2005) also observes that metalanguage involves reflexivity, and in this way opportunities to reflect on language use become an integral part of pupils' language learning experiences.

Bialystok (2001), who draws on a cognitive approach to second language acquisition, suggests that the term metalanguage has different dimensions, and it is used to describe three different strands which include: knowledge, ability and awareness. In

her view, while metalinguistic knowledge refers to abstract structures of language that organise sets of linguistic rules, 'metalanguage ability describes the capacity to use knowledge about language as opposed to the capacity to use language (p.125). Finally, metalanguage awareness implies that 'attention is actively focussed on the domain of knowledge that describes the explicit properties of language' (p.127).

Having addressed the varied theoretical dimensions of the notion of metalanguage, the next section briefly addresses the findings of early research on bilingualism and the possible consequences for subjects' metalanguage awareness. Although the pupils in my study are not bilinguals the research studies in question, which draw on bilingual contexts, resonate with creole-speaking pupils who may be described as bidialectals.

2.14   Raising Pupils' Metalanguage Awareness in A Creole-speaking Classroom

A number of early studies conducted by researchers in a second language environment have suggested the positive effects of bilingualism on pupils' metalanguage in relation to their monolingual peers (See Cummins, 1978; Cummins and Swain, 1986; Bialystok, 1987, 1988). Cummins' (1978) early study investigated the effects of bilingualism on the development of children's awareness of some properties of language and on their ability to analyse linguistic input. In this study, the tasks which were assigned to grade 3 and grade 6 English-Irish bilingual children and monolingual children, respectively, suggested that at both grade levels the bilingual children showed a greater awareness of certain features of language, and they were better able to assess contradictory statements. The study's findings also suggested that 'bilingualism can increase the child's metalinguistic awareness and promote an analytic orientation to linguistic input' (p.131).

Similarly, the purpose of Bialystok's (1987a) early study was to explore the development of children's concept of 'word', which is regarded as central to reading, and its possible metalanguage benefits among bilingual pupils in relation to monolingual speakers. The study which involved three experiments among pupils aged between five to nine years, involved tasks which required them to select 'individual words from meaningful sentences, to focus on only the form or meaning of a word under highly distracting conditions, and to reassign a familiar name to a different object' (p.138). The findings of the study suggested that, bilingual pupils demonstrated a more advanced understanding of some elements of the concept of

word than monolingual children, and that bilingual children were significantly more advanced in the assigned tasks than monolingual children.

In a subsequent study, (Bialystok and Majumder 1998) examined the influence of varying degrees of bilingualism on the nonverbal problem solving abilities of children in grade three classrooms among English-speaking monolinguals, and this was subsequently compared with a French-English bilingual group, as well as an English-Bengali bilingual group. The findings of the study revealed that while there were no differences between the groups relating to non-linguistic tasks, the balanced French-English bilinguals demonstrated a significantly enhanced performance on the linguistic tasks which required control of attention, compared to the partial bilingual group and the monolingual group. Thus, the results suggest that, 'the balanced bilinguals carry over their linguistic advantage in control of attention into the non-linguistic domain' (Bialystok and Majumder, 1998, p.69).

The preceding studies are underpinned by cognitive /psychological theories of language learning, and although I am not denying the role of cognition in language learning, these studies do not seem to account for the social aspects of language learning proposed by a Vygotskean sociocultural approach to language learning. Scholars who draw on a sociocultural perspective of learning acknowledge the relationship between learning and the social situations in which it occurs (See Tharp and Gallimore, 1988; Mercer, 2000; Wells, 1999). Moreover, these studies conducted on metalanguage ability do not seem to acknowledge the situatedness of language use, that is, the social-cultural and contextual dimensions which shape language use as proposed by some scholars (See Barton and Hamilton, 1998, Street, 1993).

More recent research in L2 development not only acknowledges the cognitive/ psycholinguistic dimensions of second language learning, but also derives theoretical insights that are grounded in sociocultural views which are addressed by some scholars (see Zuengler and Miller, 2006; Gibbons, 2006). For instance, Gibbons suggests that because some children may be unfamiliar with the academic discourses of the school, it is crucial that classroom teaching and learning should offer continuity by building 'linguistic bridges between the conversational and everyday language with which students are already familiar and, and the specific and subject related registers and genres associated with curriculum learning' (Gibbons, 2006, p.4). Furthermore, in such classroom environments pupils' discourses are not implicitly undermined, but rather they are fully acknowledged alongside, and in partnership with, the dominant language.

Against this backdrop, I am suggesting that, as with bilingual children, raising bidialectal pupils' consciousness or awareness about the choices they make may be further enhanced in the language classroom, in conjunction with the development of a meaningful metalanguage between pupils and teachers during social interaction. In this way opportunities may be provided for pupils to reflect upon and to talk explicitly about their use of language, and the language use of others. This may promote the development and their mastery of their 'secondary Discourses' (Gee, 2008), that is, the 'Discourses' that go beyond early language socialisation in the home to those acquired within wider social institutions, such as schools.

2.15   Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored ongoing debates in the field of creole studies relating to the definitions and origins of pidgins and creole linguistic varieties. I have situated their origins in a socio-historical and political context and in the discourses of colonialism in order to offer explanations for their socially inferior status in education, and in the wider society. Following this, I have explored the typological characteristics of the Atlantic and Pacific groups of creoles in order to position BVI Creole.

It has then examined notions of diglossic and continuum models in a BVI sociolinguistic environment, and has argued that instead of regarding the BVI linguistic situation as a solely diglossic situation, it may be more fruitful to perceive it as having elements of both continuum and diglossic models. The chapter has further explored the creole continuum model, which is supposedly the final stage of the 'Life Cycle' hypothesis, from unidimensional and multidimensional perspectives, and I have argued in favour of the multidimensional model in relation to the BVI linguistic situation.

Having explored evidence from the Haitian linguistic situation, which is generally regarded as a largely diglossic context, and I have argued that the BVI, unlike Haiti, is a semi diglossic situation due to socio-political, historical and socioeconomic circumstances which are largely absent in the Haitian sociolinguistic situation.

Finally, the chapter has proposed both interactional and markedness models as ways of characterising language use in the BVI, and it has maintained that despite their limitations, both models offer plausible explanations for language use and interaction in an English-based, creole-speaking setting. In the final section, I have argued in favour of a theoretical perspective that may enhance pupils' language awareness and their abilities to develop a metalanguage which enables them to talk about, and reflect

upon the language choices they make. I argue that this may have implications for learning a 'new' linguistic variety, standard English, and for extending pupils' metalanguage abilities and their linguistic repertoires.

Chapter 3

A Social View of Language in the BVI Sociolinguistic Environment

3.1   Introduction

This chapter supports a social view of language as conceptualized by Bakhtin (1986, 1981) and Voloshinov (1973) in order to provide a fruitful explanation for the socio-historical and socio-political tensions inherent in the creole-standard English relationship, and it suggests that these traits seem to be absent in Saussure's structural and abstract conceptions of language use.

It examines the ideological perspectives as they relate to language use, and argues that Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony could be fruitfully applied in a post- colonial context like the BVI in order to explain the taken-for-granted assumptions that teachers and pupils make about the role of creole vis-à-vis standard English in the education system. The chapter then briefly discusses Marx's view of ideology which is based on economic production, in relation to Gramsci's position. This is followed by an account of Foucault's and Althusser's theoretical perspectives whose stances may have some bearing on each other, but are different in other ways. It further argues that although Gramsci's (1971) and Althusser's (1969, 1971) positions bear some similarities, Althusser's perspective does not seem to consider the theoretically ambivalent position, of 'coercion' and 'consent,' that are evident in Gramsci's work, and which has a greater relevance for a post-colonial context such as the BVI.

The chapter then addresses the relatively inferior position of creole in relation to standard English, the 'legitimate' variety, and it suggests that the role of creole has more to do with its socio-political status and its socio- historical origins, which are situated in the discourses of colonialism, than its linguistic traits which are implicitly devalued in the classroom. It also explores the unequal social relationship between BVI Creole and standard English in the BVI education system, that is underpinned by a dominant monolingual ideology, which positions BVI Creole in an inferior position in relation to the hegemonic status of standard English. Finally, the chapter suggests that this ideology may have pedagogical consequences for the teaching of English to creole-speaking pupils in BVI secondary classrooms. The next section begins by addressing a social perspective of language as it relates to the BVI sociolinguistic environment.

3.2 A Social View of Language in a Post-Colonial Environment: A Static or Dynamic View?

In Saussaure's theory of meaning language use is conceptualized as an 'abstract homogenous' system of fixed 'signs' (Saussaure, 1959, p.25) consisting of two elements: the 'signifier' (that is the sound image) and the 'signified' (that, is the meaning) (Saussaure, 1959, pp.66-67). Furthermore, 'signs' are connected to each other in an inconsistent/arbitrary manner, as each sign does not have its own inherent meaning; rather, meaning is based on their differences in relation to other 'signs'. As he puts it, 'the value of each sign acquires its significance from its difference from other signs in the language chain' (Saussaure, 1959, p.1).

In this perspective of language, Saussaure's position pays very little attention to the 'ideological' nature of language, which means that it ignores the political and socio-cultural elements of language use. This static view of language does not seem to account for linguistic variation which is an inherent quality of linguistically diverse settings, where English-based creole vernaculars are spoken. Furthermore, as language use is more than a production of linguistic 'signs' in which meanings are produced and constructed, 'this model is unsuitable for developing an understanding of the relation between concrete situations and ideological discourses' (Eagleton, 1991, p.209).

On the other hand, Bakhtin (1981, 1986) and Voloshinov (1973) both move away from structuralist understandings of language use, that is, a view of language that emphasizes the predetermined fixed structure of language, and unlike Saussaure, they conceptualise language as inherently social and infused with ideology. Indeed, Voloshinov described the structuralist conceptions of language posited by Saussaure as an 'isolated, finished, monologic utterance, divorced from its verbal and actual context' (Voloshinov, 1973, p.73). This means that language use from Saussaure's position is removed from its social context, and certain assumptions and socio-political underpinning of language use are not taken into account.

Saussaure's emphasis on the rule-governed traits of language also diverts attention from socio-cultural imperatives of language learning as put forward by Vygotsky (1978) who regards language use and development as embedded in its social context. In other words, within a sociocultural theory, language development takes place within specific socio-cultural, historical and linguistic contexts. Unlike Saussaure, Voloshinov's (1973) position is unequivocal regarding the social and ideological

nature of language. He maintains that languages or 'utterances' are 'ideological signs,' which are socially constituted, and which cannot be regarded as an individual phenomenon relative to the psychological conditions of the speaker. In other words, an utterance is 'an entirely social phenomenon' (Voloshinov, 1973, p.58).

The socio-historical and socio-political processes that are ingrained in the relationship between standard English and English-based creoles are infused with relations of power stemming from an ideology of colonialism. These linguistic varieties which were formed during interaction, among slaves in the context of slavery and colonialism, under the most adverse social circumstances, are a testament to this view.

In a similar vein, Bakhtin argues that 'Verbal discourse is a social phenomenon—social through its entire range and in each and every one of its factors' (Bakhtin 1986, p.259). This position also legitimizes language varieties like English-based creoles, which have absorbed dominant ideologies of slavery and colonialism which have shaped their existence, and which continue to be relegated to inferior positions in education, and the society at large. For Bakhtin, discourses are never impartial or free of certain world views, irrespective of whether they are dominant varieties or marginalized varieties like creoles. He argued that 'authoritative discourses', like standard English, or 'internally persuasive discourses' are essentially '...specific points of view on the world of words, specific world views each characterized by its own objects, meanings and values' (Bakhtin, 1986, pp.291-292).

Thus, language use in an English-based, creole-speaking context is not merely an objective relationship between 'signifier' and 'signified,' but largely a political and socio-historical phenomenon. In other words, the 'ideological signs' that constitute language use are saturated with certain conflicts and tensions (socio-political and socio-historical) that embody certain world views and assumptions, and the languages in this situation or 'ideological signs', to use Voloshinov's (1973) words, were forged in the absence of a common language under the most oppressive socio-historical circumstances during the colonial era.

Similarly, Heller (1988, 1995, 2007) argues that language use is but one form of social practice that is shaped and framed by a particular context. In her study conducted in a Canadian context she proposed that language practices are bound up with relations of power, and this seems to support a socio-political and ideological view of language. This theoretical position is fruitful as it enables us to take into account the socio-historical and political processes that shape language use. As she puts it:

'understanding language as a set of ideologically-defined resources and practices constructs language as a fundamentally social phenomenon' (Heller, 2007, p.2). Thus, unlike abstract views of language, this perspective of language use helps to facilitate an understanding of the varied meanings which inhere in language, and which individuals attach to their experiences of the world that are expressed in their everyday language.

In the previous section, I have argued that static conceptions of language use such as those put forward by Saussure may have limitations for English-based, creole speaking contexts as they ignore the socio-political and ideological dimensions of language use, and the tensions that inhere in the creole-standard English relationship. In the forthcoming section, I examine ideological perspectives as they relate to language use, and I later argue that Gramsci's notion of hegemony, which transcends traditional conceptions of ideology, is best suited to post-colonial contexts like the BVI, as it helps to offer a powerful explanation for the 'common sense' assumptions that shape individuals' understandings of the relationship between creole and standard English. I now turn to this issue in the next section.

3.3   Language and Ideology in a Post-Colonial Setting

The relationship between ideology as it relates to power has been discussed from varying perspectives by a wide range of theorists. An influential line of debate stems from the work of Marx and Engels (1938, 1974) who link power by way of ideology to the social class system. One of the dominant assertions about the theory of ideology which is expressed in The German Ideology, is that 'the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch, the ruling class ideas: i.e the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force' (Marx and Engels, 1938, p.39).

Essentially, Marx and Engels (1938, 1974) equate ideology with 'false consciousness' and ideology as a 'set of beliefs'. In their words, '...the ideas of those who lack the means of production are subject to it' (Marx and Engels, 1938, p.59). Furthermore, the dominant class which has access to the economic means of power and control 'regulate the production and distribution of the idea of their age' (p.39). This proposition suggests that power is manifested in an overt and unilateral manner as it is imposed on groups which have less socio-economic power and influence. In Marx and Engles' formulation economic relations have such a potent influence that they shape the belief systems and values of the society at large, and the individual is regarded as a product of social class and economic domination. In other words,

ideology is regarded as 'dependent on, and derived from, the economic conditions and class relations of production' (Thompson, 1990, p.37).

However, manifestations of power are not always overt; rather, these operate in more subtle and implicit ways as Foucault's account of power demonstrates. Whereas Marx and Engels conceptualise ideology as an overt form of power which is intimately connected with economic control that is exercised by dominant groups, Foucault conceptualizes power differently.

Foucault (1972, 1975, 1977, 1978) perceived of discourses as essentially instruments of power, and he believed that 'objects of knowledge' or discourses are produced by power, which have a 'mutually constitutive relationship'. As Foucault has observes,

> *We should admit that power produces knowledge...;that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (Foucault, 1975, p.27-28).*

Thus, power cannot be divorced from forms of knowledge, and these are intrinsically connected to each other. However, Foucault's position is not sufficiently explicit and there is a degree of vagueness in illustrating how the workings of power influence and shape discourses or, in his words, 'objects of knowledge'. What seems clear is that Foucault does not take the view which Marx and Engels espouse, whereby power is imposed by dominant groups who have economic control on less powerful groups. In his view, power is not the 'possession' of a particular group or institution, nor is it '…a certain strength that we are endowed with' (Foucault, 1978, p. 93). Foucault expresses it in this way,

> *It is….exercised rather than possessed; it is not a 'privilege' acquired or preserved, by the dominant classes, but the overall effect of its strategic positions…power is not exercised simply as an obligation or prohibition in those who do not have it (Foucault, 1972, p.87).*

Foucault's conceptualisation of power inheres in institutional discourses, that is, 'the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation of these institutions' (Foucault, 1972, p.121). Furthermore, he envisages power as 'a network of relations' (Foucault, 1977, p.2), which help to shape or construct the individual's subjectivity, that is, the individual's sense of self and ways of seeing the world in a particular way. Furthermore, the individual develops a particular perception of the world that is situated within a particular discourse, which is institutionally embedded, and this says

something about the person's identity, values and belief systems. Despite the pervasiveness of Foucault's form of power, he does not seem to offer an adequate explanation of how some individuals come to unconsciously absorb negative social judgements of their own linguistic varieties, in relation to other socially 'dominant' varieties. Besides, 'Foucault's understanding of power is so vague and vast that it can be made to refer to anything' (Hawkes, 1996, p.181).

Thus far, we have looked briefly at the philosophical standpoints put forward by Foucault and Marx and Engels who offer different conceptualisations of power. In the following section, I turn to Althusser, the French Marxist philosopher who places an emphasis on the notion of power/ideology as having a material existence, that is, ideology is regulated through 'material practices' which are ingrained in social institutions. Foucault, on the other hand, moved away from this perspective, and in his theoretical formulation power relations are inscribed in what he describes as 'discourses,' thereby rejecting the notion of 'ideology' altogether. The next section briefly examines Althusser's theoretical position, and I later discuss this in relation to Foucault's conceptualisation of power.

3.4   Althusser's Perspective of Ideology/Power

As Eagleton (1991) observes 'Althusser appeals to the individual's 'affective unconscious relations with the world, and to the ways in which they are connected to social reality' (p.18). That is to say, ideology from this perspective relates to the individual's unconscious perceptions and understandings of the world. The position that Althusser (1971) posits has some bearing on Foucault's perspective` in the sense that they both believe that ideologies are embodied in material institutions which help to shape the individual's world views. However, there are also marked differences in their positon, and this will be addressed later on in this section.

In Althusser's formulation the relationship between the individual and the position which he/she occupies in relation to a particular ideology is 'imaginary'. As Althusser notes, 'ideology is a representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence' (Althusser, 1971, p.162). In this perspective, ideology serves as a link between individuals and their relationship to real, day-to day existence. However, this relationship is largely unconscious and as Althusser points out, it is 'a matter of the lived relations between men and their world' (Althusser, 1969, p.223).

Furthermore, Althusser's perspective of ideology constructs individuals as 'agents' or 'bearers' of specific ideologies which are derived from institutional practices. In his view, ideology positions individuals or 'subjects' into designated roles in which they unquestioningly accept and internalize 'subject positions' in which they are positioned. In other words, ideology resides in institutional mechanisms and practices in which individuals are unconsciously constructed or situated, and in Althusser's words, this is achieved through a process of 'interpellation,' that is, a person is addressed or 'hailed' in such a way that it positions him/her into a fixed and preordained role.

In relation to Althusser, Marx conceptualizes ideology as the economic means of production by which relations of power are reproduced and maintained. However, Althusser does not conceptualise ideology as simply a situation in which the socio-economically powerful impose their ideas or belief systems on the less dominant. Rather, he perceives ideology as having 'a material existence' (Althusser, 1971). In other words, ideologies are manifested in social institutions where they are perpetuated and reproduced, and these are absorbed by individuals' or subjects' attachment to a particular ideological position. Furthermore, 'An ideology always exists in an apparatus and its practice or practices' (Althusser, 1971, p.166).

Althusser expresses his position in this way:

> *…ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals...or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects….by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing (Althusser, 1971, pp.162-163).*

While Althusser's position has the benefit of linking ideology to institutional practices and to the individual's 'lived relations' or every day practices this perspective suggests that ideological positions are not produced directly from the individual's mind and cognitive faculties. Rather, these are shaped and influenced by 'material practices,' that is, ideology resides within particular social mechanisms and institutional practices, and the individual's beliefs and world views are controlled and regulated through these.

In Althusser's theorization ideologies are related to material or institutional contexts/practices, and these are embodied in 'Repressive' and 'Ideological and State Apparatuses' (Althusser, 1971, pp.141-148). He differentiates between 'Repressive State Apparatuses' such as the army, prisons and the police which operate by violence and domination, and 'Ideological State Apparatuses' which refer to social

institutions such as schools, churches, media and the family. As stated previously, these institutions produce ideologies in which individuals' 'subjectivities' are constructed, that is, 'the conscious and unconscious thought and emotions of the individual, her sense of self and her ways of understanding in relation to the world' (Weedon, 1997, p.32).

Althusser's position seems to suggest that the individuals' positioning is fixed, that is, they unquestioningly accept ideological positions, and are helpless to change their circumstances. In other words, in Althusser's static or predetermined view of power individuals are positioned in 'subject positions' in which there seems to be little or no opportunity to change or resist their circumstances. Furthermore, this perspective does not account for other factors which may influence the individual's beliefs, values and perceptions of the world such as race, gender, ethnic identities and sociocultural orientations. As Giroux notes, 'Althusser deflates the possibility of defining ideology as a form of 'interpellation' in which subjects simply become bearers of imposed roles' (Giroux, 1981, p.18).

The theoretical concerns shared by both Althusser (1971), and Foucault (1979) seem to bear some similarities as they believe that individuals are governed or subjected to institutional ideologies or 'discourses', to use Foucault's (1979) term, which help to forge their subjectivities'. However, despite some similarities there are also marked differences between Foucault's and Althusser's conceptualization of power, as I briefly illustrate.

Foucault (1991) conceptualises the individual or 'subject' as a 'discoursing subject' situated within 'discursive fields' of enquiry in order to establish a relationship between language, social institutions, subjectivity and power' (Weedon, 1987, 1997). In other words, 'discursive fields' are constituted of conflicting ways of rendering meaning 'to the world and of organizing social institutions and processes' (Weedon, 1987, p. 35). Furthermore, discursive practices influence the ways in which individuals conduct their lives as conscious thinking subjects/individuals, and these 'shape our subjectivities (our ways of understanding in relation to the world), as it is only in language and through discourse that social reality can be given meaning' (Mc Laren, 2007, p. 210).

Whereas, Althusser (1971) saw power as constituted in 'repressive/state' and 'ideological apparatuses,' Foucault shunned the notion of power as an oppressive force in which dominant groups and institutions exert power against 'weaker' individuals and groups. Furthermore, Foucault's (1975) understanding of power is

more pervasive and all-encompassing as he affirms its ubiquitous nature. He suggests that power permeates every aspect of society and, indeed, the individual's daily personal encounters. As Foucault puts it: 'Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere' (Foucault, 1975, p.56).

Unlike Althusser, Foucault conceptualises knowledge as inseparable or inherently linked to power. He affirms that 'power and knowledge directly imply one another; there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge' (Foucault, 1977, p.28). However, both Foucault and Althusser, 'have failed to conceptualise the role of human agents in the process of change' (Bocock, 1986, p.16), and this is in contrast to Gramsci's formulation where human agency plays a fundamental role. Hence, in this perspective, individuals are equipped with the potential to engage with issues and to question orthodox views and assumptions which are 'common-sensical' and have become 'naturalised' in the wider society.

In the previous section, we looked at Althusser's and Foucault's conceptualizations of power, which have some bearing on each other; however, despite some similarities there are also notable differences in their theoretical positions. In the next section, we now turn our attention to Gramsci's notion of hegemony which clearly distances itself from an economistic standpoint of the kind which Marx and Engels' (1938) position demonstrate, and I discuss Gramsci's concept and its relevance in post-colonial classrooms in the BVI the context. Moreover, none of the social theorists discussed in the previous section address ideology from the unique perspectives of both 'consent' and 'coercion', as well as the ambivalent notions of 'hegemony' and 'counter-hegemony,' as a Gramscian theoretical position illustrates.

3.5 The Gramscian Problematic: The Notion of Hegemony in a Post-Colonial Context

The starting point of the notion of hegemony begins with the work of Gramsci (Williams, 1977) who questions the economism of traditional Marxist views of ideology, by reconfiguring the relationship between ideology and society and conceptualizing it as hegemony (Van Dijk, 1998). Thus, instead of inflicting the dominant ideologies by the ruling class, 'hegemony most subtly works through the management of the mind of the citizens by persuasively constructing a consensus about the social order (VanDijk, 1998, p.3). He posits a distinction between 'rule' (dominio) and 'hegemony': Whereas 'rule'is conveyed directly in political forms by means of direct control or domination, the concept of hegemony '…does not just passively exist as a form of dominance'

(Williams, 1977, p.112). In this light, the notion of hegemony constitutes a powerful form of covert control in so far as it is disguised as consent, which penetrates the individual's consciousness thereby implicating his/her role in the process.

Gramsci's concept of hegemony essentially represents a marked departure from dogmatic Marxist economistic perspectives which conceptualized ideology 'as being only a theory about economically determined classes and their actions' (Bocock, 1986, p.35), in order to account for socio-historical and political issues (Bocock, 1986, p.13). Gramsci (1971) distanced himself from traditionally narrow Marxist perspectives of ideology as 'false consciousness', and as a 'system of ideas' in which individuals understand their world. Rather, he conceptualized hegemony 'as a form of praxis', (Hawkes, 1996 p. 114). As Gramsci (1971) puts it 'Ideology itself must be analysed historically, in the terms of the philosophy of praxis, as a superstructure' (p. 376). In other words, human beings and their economic, socio-political and cultural situations are of central concern to the Gramscian problematic.

Thus, hegemonic processes straddle a range of social and linguistic contexts including creole environments such as the BVI, where the co-existence of two linguistic systems are the direct result of socio-political conflicts that emerged during the colonial era. Not only does the notion of hegemony shed light on the socio-political and historical processes that shaped these varieties, but it also helps to offer a plausible explanation for the universally accepted assumptions that propagate the relationship between dominant and marginalized varieties like creoles. Like Bakhtin, Gramsci acknowledges the socio-political and historical processes that are implicated with language use in a given social context, and this perspective resonates in post-colonial environments such as the BVI.

Williams (1977) defines hegemony, in this way:

> *It is the whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our....perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meanings and values (Williams, 1977, p.110).*

In alluding to the complex and dynamic nature of hegemony, Williams (1977) further notes that hegemony is:

> *…. a realized complex of experiences, relationships and activities with specific and changing pressures and limits' (Williams, 1977, p.113).*

In post-colonial speaking environments such as the BVI, hegemony accounts for the ways in which ''common sense'' assumptions and beliefs pervade the consciousness of both dominant and marginalised groups, regarding the relationship between marginalised varieties like creoles and dominant languages. Thus, the Gramscian notion of hegemony spans socio-economic, socio-political and historical boundaries which are inherently associated with ideological struggles.

As Gramsci (1971) suggests:

> *ideologies are historically necessary, they have a validity which is "psychological"; they "organise" human masses, and create terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle etc (Gramsci, 1971, p.377).*

Definitions of hegemony also raise questions about its relationship to the concept of ideology, and the ways in which these may overlap or diverge from each other. In a general sense, the concept of ideology refers to a 'relatively formal and articulated system of meanings, values and beliefs of a kind that can be abstracted as a 'world view' or 'class outlook' (Williams, 1977, p. 109). However, while hegemony resembles or demonstrates some likenesses to these traits, 'it is distinct in its refusal to equate consciousness with the articulate formal system which can be, and ordinarily is, abstracted as ideology' (p.109).

Despite the controversies inherent in the definition of ideology and the different theoretical strands associated with the concept, the historical terms of the debate bear striking similarities (Van Dijk, 1998). Woolard (1998) outlines four salient, and reoccurring themes underpinning the notion of ideology. One strand conceptualises the notion of ideology as an ideational or cognitive phenomenon. In this light, it deals with 'consciousness, subjective representations, beliefs, and ideas' (Woolard, p.5). Another prominent theme, according to Woolard, conceptualises ideology as a reflection of interests of a particular social position. In this formulation the definition of ideology hinges, to some degree, upon the social and experiential elements of day-to-day life.

The third theme sees ideology as linked to social, political and economic relations of power. In this formulation ideology is regarded as ideas and practices, and as a means of maintaining unequal relations of power (Woolard, 1998). Thus, the uses of language and other symbolic forms are ideological, in so far as they serve to sustain relations of domination (Thompson, 1990). In the final strand, as proposed by Woolard

(1998), ideology is envisaged as a distortion or an illusion, that is 'false consciousness,' derived from the interests of the dominant group, and this definition has been put forward by Marx and Engles. Based on their formulation, the notion of ideology seems to be a far more restrictive and limited concept than the notion of hegemony (Eagleton, 1991, p.112). Thus, the critical question which pertains to ideology 'is not whether it is 'real' or 'false' but how it comes to be believed in, and to be lived out' (Loomba, 1998, p. 30).

Although hegemony does not 'exclude the articulate and formal meanings, values and beliefs which a dominant class propagates' it goes beyond the traditional notion of ideology in a Marxist sense, 'in which a lived system of meanings and values is the expression or projection of a particular class interest' (Williams, 1977, pp.108-109), that is, hegemony incorporates a 'lived, habitual practice' (Eagleton, 1991, p.115). It is 'not only the articulate upper level of 'ideology nor are its forms of control only those ordinarily seen as 'manipulation' or 'indoctrination'. Instead, the notion of hegemony 'is a whole body of practices, expectations, over a whole body of living, our senses, and assignments of energy, our.... perceptions of ourselves and our world' (Williams, 1977, p.110). Essentially it involves a struggle in which the powerful win consent of those who are oppressed, with the oppressed unknowingly participating in their own domination (Mc Laren, 2007).

Unlike ideology, a defining characteristic of hegemony is that it is not accomplished by means of indoctrination or inculcation, rather it involves 'playing upon the common sense of people.…' (Loomba, 1998, p.30). Thus, hegemony is been extended to include a complex and dynamic spectrum of processes, beliefs and assumptions that the individual 'lives' and experiences throughout his life time. In its broadest sense hegemony infiltrates '....the actual consciousness of both dominant and subordinated classes' (Williams, 1977, p.109), and more than an overt manifestation of socio-political and economic domination, it is a tacit and invisible form of domination and consent.

Paradoxically, hegemony is a complex combination of 'power achieved through a combination of coercion and consent' (Loomba, 2005, p.30). This makes it a particularly effective 'tool' with relevance to post-colonial situations as there is an inherent trait of freely-given 'consent' that plays on beliefs and thought processes of the masses, or the society at large. While, 'Consent is not manipulated nor produced by fear of coercive force' (Bocock, 1986, p.28), one of the defining traits of hegemony, is that it is a subtle yet potent form of control whose influence has the potential to

endure for centuries, thus making it difficult to subvert dominant assumptions about language. It involves 'constructing alliances and integrating rather than simply dominating subordinate classes, through concessions or through ideological means, to win their consent' (Fairclough, 1992, p. 92). This quality endows hegemony with a deceptive nature.

Gramsci defines 'common sense' in this way:

> *….. not rigid and immobile but continually transforming itself, enriching itself with scientific ideas and with philosophical opinions which have entered ordinary life. Common sense creates the folklore of the future that is as a relatively rigid phase of popular knowledge at the given place and time (Gramsci, 1971, p.362).*

Hence, 'common sense' assumptions are 'the uncritical and largely unconscious way in which individuals conceptualise the world and their 'lived experiences' (Simon, 1992, p.25). In creole speaking contexts like the BVI, these assumptions are of crucial importance as they are implicated with individuals' every day understandings of the relationship between BVI Creole and standard English, and the extent to which these are tacitly played out in the language classroom. As I later suggest these 'common sense' assumptions may be implicitly propagated in teachers' classroom practices, where they may be absorbed and internalized by the pupils. This issue is addressed more fully in chapters five and six of the thesis.

Once these assumptions become deeply entrenched in the stream of consciousness and thought processes of the masses, they become so cemented that they are difficult to subvert as they maintain a degree of permanency and 'naturalness,' to the extent that 'common sense' ideologies become naturalized or automated' (Fairclough, 1992, p.92). Furthermore, to a large extent these are more effective and potent than the implementation of overt practices of domination as there is no resistance, but rather a tacit acceptance. As Hall (1996) observes while common sense '…represents itself as the traditional wisdom or truth of the ages 'it is deeply a product of history' (p.431), which the individual comes to accept as 'common sense' and this is largely shaped by socio-historical and political processes.

In Gramsci's view, 'common sense' assumptions refer to 'the uncritical and partly unconscious way in perceiving and understanding the world that has become 'common' in any given epoch' (Gramsci, 1971, p.322). These universally accepted 'world views' permeate institutions such as schools and language classrooms, where they may have a significant influence on teachers' and pupils' perceptions, belief

systems, and the everyday assumptions they make about language use. Furthermore, these assumptions can only thrive and propagate if they are accepted unquestioningly without any form of resistance and, as I later suggest, the school is the domain in which pupils can be equipped to challenge these dominant assumptions as they relate to language use in a post-colonial environment.

Gramsci (1971) differentiates between two basic kinds of political domination which are exercised by the dominant group. One of the ways in which this reveals itself is by means of overt domination' or coercion (dominio) and 'intellectual and moral leadership', that is executed by means of hegemony (Femia, 1981, p.24). Enmeshed with the notion of tacit consent is an element of psychological domination which has a potent influence on the belief systems of subordinate groups, who believe that the universal interests of the dominant group operate in their favour. In reality, this form of power operates in a complicitous manner, and the notion of 'hegemony' gives legitimacy to the institutions which make ideological forms seem 'natural' (Boggs, 1976, p.9). Having addressed the notion of 'common sense' in Gramsci's theoretical formulation, I now turn my attention to a key theoretical construct in the Gramscian problematic, that is, the notion of the 'organic' intellectual, in relation to the 'traditional intellectual,' and its relevance for this thesis.

3.5.1   *Organic and Traditional Intellectuals*

Gramsci (1971) makes a distinction between 'traditional intellectuals', that is those classes that convey and perpetuate previous modes of production and 'organic intellectuals' which arise in response to particular socio-political and historical developments in the interests of the subordinated class. In Gramsci's view the 'organic intellectuals' have the potential to bring about 'moral and intellectual reform' (Gramsci, 1971), that is, a process which entails the re-articulation/reformulation of existing ideological characteristics (Mouffe,1992). The Gramscian distinction between 'traditional' and 'organic intellectuals' will be further elaborated upon in chapter seven and, in particular, the relevance of the notion of 'organic intellectuals' for the thesis will be explored.

In differentiating between 'traditional' and 'organic' 'intellectuals Gramsci (1971) observes that on the one hand, 'traditional intellectuals' are those individuals who tend to perform cognitive/ intellectual leadership in society. On the other hand, 'organic intellectuals' tend to be associated with the particular class from which they originate. Whereas 'organic intellectuals' arise 'in response to particular historical developments'

the primary role of the 'traditional intellectual' ceases as society enters a different phase of development (Ransome, 1992, p.25).

In other words, 'organic intellectuals' are essentially agents of change who are actively involved in society, that is, 'they constantly struggle to change minds and expand markets….' (Said, 1994, p.4). This suggests that the role of the 'traditional intellectual' is of a static and fixed nature, in relation to the malleable traits of the 'organic intellectual'. While the 'traditional intellectual' maintains orthodoxy and traditions from one generation to the next, the role of the 'organic intellectual' is more dynamic and flexible, and it emerges to meet certain social/political demands in society. Gramsci defines the role of the 'organic intellectual' in this way:

> *…. organic intellectuals are distinguished less by profession, which may be any job characteristic of their class, than by their function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they 'organically' belong (Gramsci, 1971, p.3).*

Regarding the 'traditional intellectual', Gramsci observes,

> *….every essential social class emerging into history from the preceding economic structure, and as an expression of one of the developments of this structure has found, in all history up till now, intellectual categories which were pre-existing and which…appeared as representatives of an historical continuity uninterrupted even by the most complicated and radical changes in social and political forms (Gramsci, 1957, p.118).*

The notion of continuity is enmeshed in the function of the 'traditional intellectual' as its role implies a static one, in relation to that of the 'organic intellectual'. In Gramsci's problematic, 'organic intellectuals' act as leaders of social change who have a pivotal function to perform in raising socio-political awareness, new modes of thinking and in realising intellectual transformation. Moreover, they contribute to 'moral and intellectual reform' among the 'subaltern', that is, the less dominant and disadvantaged groups of society. Having examined the distinctions between the 'organic' and 'traditional' intellectuals in the Gramscian problematic, in the forthcoming section I briefly explore some key characteristics that are evident in the work of Gramsci and Althusser. While they share similar perspectives in some ways, their positions also diverge from each other in other important ways. The next section explores this issue.

3.5.2 Gramsci's and Althusser's Perspectives of Ideology/Power

Both Althusser's and Gramsci's share similar positions, in the sense that these social theorists conceptualise power as situated in the tangible /material institutions, that is the 'state' and 'civil society' and 'Repressive /State' and 'Ideological Apparatuses', which help to shape individuals' values and belief systems, by situating them within particular discourses. In Althusser's conceptualization of power Repressive State Apparatuses operate 'massively and predominantly by repression (including physical repression) while functioning secondarily to ideology' (Althusser, 1971, p.138). Conversely, Ideological State Apparatuses 'also operate by ideology, but they also function by repression, even if ultimately....this is very concealed even symbolic' (p.138). This issue is discussed more fully in section (3.4).

Similarly, in the Gramscian formulation, 'the state' or 'political society' constitutes institutions that operate by means of 'violence' or overt domination, and these include the 'police and armed forces, prisons, and the courts of law in a given context' (Bocock, 1976, p.33). On the other hand, the institutions of 'civil society' include 'trade unions, schools, the churches and the family---an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs that are in one way or another supportive of the established order and the class interests that dominate it' (Boggs, 1976, p.39).

Gramsci differentiates between the two spheres, :the 'Civil Society' and 'the State' in this way:

> ..one can be called ''civil society,'' that is, the ensemble of organisms commonly called ''private, '' and that of ''political society'' or ''the State''. These two levels correspond on one the hand to the function of ''hegemony'' which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand, and to that of ''direct domination'' or command exercised through the 'State and 'judicial' government. (Gramsci, 1971, p.12).

The concept of 'civil society' is of crucial importance in Gramsci's theoretical perspective, as it is the site where struggles for hegemony between the dominant and marginalised classes are played out. It is in this sphere that Gramsci (1971) believed that 'organic intellectuals' (pp.6-23), can play a pivotal role in organizing 'hegemony in 'civil society,' and its domination through the 'state apparatus', to use Gramsci's (1971) words.

However, unlike Gramsci, Althusser's formulation does not consider the theoretical ambivalent positions of coercion and consent that are evident in the work of Gramsci,

nor does not make allowances for counter-hegemonic positions, that is, opportunities for individuals to challenge or resist the positions in which they are situated or constructed. In other words, Althusser's theoretical position, which implies a fixedness, little allowances are made for the individual to 'escape' from the discourses in which he/she is positioned. Moreover, Althusser does not seem to account for the psychological processes that saturate individual's perceptions, that is, the 'common sense' assumptions which are intrinsic to hegemonic ideologies that operate subtly and implicitly through the discourses of colonialism in post-colonial environments, such as the BVI.

The previous section briefly examined ideological perspectives of language, and discussed the extent to which Gramsci's notion of hegemony assumes a broader and more encompassing definition than traditional conceptualisations of ideology. As I will argue in section (3.7) Gramsci's concept is particularly suited to creole environments as it helps to explain the extent to which speakers of marginalized varieties come to regard the negative perceptions of creole, in relation to dominant varieties as 'natural' and 'common-sensical'. In this view, individuals give their consent to 'particular formations of power because the dominant cultural group generating discourse persuades them of their essential 'truth', 'desirability' and 'naturalness' (Benwell, 2006, p.30).

Having briefly examined Althusser's and Gramsci's theoretical position, the next section explores the definition of standard English in order to further illuminate the socio-political nature of the relationship between creole and standard English, and to shed light on the origins of negative social evaluations which are made on creoles, in relation to dominant varieties. Although the notion of standard English, the so-called 'legitimate' variety, has connotations of 'correctness', underlying this socio-political construct are hegemonic assumptions that appear to be universally accepted. It is to these understandings, that I now focus my attention.

3.6   Creole and Standard English: The 'Legitimate' Language?

Although the concept of standard English has generated many different meanings, no unanimous agreement has been reached regarding its precise definition. Standard English ideology has been defined as a biased position towards a romanticized and fixed view of language that is enforced and perpetuated by the dominant institutions, which use written language as a criterion to measure the social and linguistic worth of other varieties (Milroy, 2007; Milroy and Milroy, 1999; Lippi-Green, 1994). This

definition is a widely disseminated view which evidently suggests an element of domination that is sustained by means of universally dominant social institutions. Ingrained in the standard English ideology, is the view that standard English is the 'correct' form of the language and all other varieties are seen as 'incorrect' or 'bad' (Milroy and Milroy, 1999, p.46).

Blommaert observes that the 'language ideological debates' involving discussions about what is regarded as the 'legitimate variety', are to a large extent associated with their integrity as languages and their socio-political status in relation to other linguistic varieties. He maintains that language ideological debates are intrinsically linked to wider socio-political processes, and these debates help to illuminate 'the precise role played by language ideologies in more general socio-political developments, conflicts and struggles' (Blommaert, 1999, pp.1-2). Thus, linguistic varieties like creoles, and so-called Black American English, continue to be socially stigmatised and regarded as non-languages, as their speakers tend to be equated with individuals who are socio-economically disenfranchised in society.

Given its socio-political origins standard English is deemed the 'legitimate language' (Bourdieu, 1991) in the school system, in relation creoles which have been traditionally relegated to an inferior position, both in the classroom and in the wider society. Underlying the notion of standard English are deeply ingrained assumptions, which are largely unconscious, 'which position speakers into believing that their attitudes towards dominant linguistic varieties are natural' (Milroy, 2007, p.133). Furthermore, 'Standard English ideology offers a web of ''common sense'' arguments that become enmeshed in the lives of the speakers of inferior varieties of language' (Lippi-Green, 1991, p.66). The deeply-entrenched ideas about the superiority of some linguistic varieties in relation to others, are largely 'common sense' views and assumptions, relating to the intrinsic social and linguistic value of denigrated varieties like creoles that have become ingrained in the popular consciousness.

 In the British context the term standard English, according to Stubbs, emerged as the standard due to 'historical, geographical and social 'accidents' (Stubbs, 1983, p. 20). This means that this variety did not emerge as the dominant variety just by mere accident; rather, it was a social class dialect that was derived from the socially and economically powerful that gained currency, and became recognized as the prestigious variety, in relation to socially marginalized varieties. Furthermore, the criteria that is used for the selection of a variety of language as a dominant variety, as some have pointed out, are not based merely on linguistic attributes, but on socio-

political and economic associations (Milroy, 1999; Leith, 1997; Crowley, 2003). Thus, 'taken-for-granted' assumptions help to maintain and uphold the criteria that are used to measure what is deemed 'correct' and 'proper' as they relate to dominant varieties like standard English.

In the context of the British education system the debate involving standard English relates to issues of 'correctness' of grammatical structures, and the view that standard English is superior, implicitly, to vernaculars like creoles. In challenging the tenets of the so-called new orthodoxy in English Language teaching in the British context Marenbon (1987), who supports prescriptive views of language teaching, argued in favour of upholding the notion of the superiority of Standard English. He stated unequivocally that, 'Standard English is superior to unrefined dialects' (Marenbon, 1987, p.24).

In a similar vein, Honey (1987, 1997) also claimed, in his book 'The Story of Standard English and his Enemies'', that standard English must be held in high estimation in relation to other varieties. As he asserts, 'English must be safeguarded mainly from a disrespectful populace and brazen linguists who fail to show veneration for certain forms of language' (Honey, 1997, p.138). These incendiary comments represent efforts to adhere to dominant ideological positions and to maintain the status quo, and this argument is not so much about the intrinsic value of 'superior' linguistic varieties in relation to marginalised varieties, as it is about maintaining a symbol of socio-political dominance. Hence, the notion of standard English can be conceptualised a socio-political construct that is infused with ideologies of power, which is permeated with specific world-views and assumptions that are ostensibly in the interest of everyone, but which effectively maintain its hegemonic status.

Underpinning the social relationship between BVI Creole and standard English are hegemonic assumptions which play a crucial role in determining and maintaining the social criteria that measures what is deemed the 'legitimate' and 'correct' linguistic variety. As Bourdieau observes linguistic variation should be perceived as an approach to language use which is tailored to meet specific 'linguistic markets' (Bourdieu1991, p.22) that is, the range of social contexts in which linguistic features are appropriately applied. Bourdieu's perspective goes some way in blurring the lines between socially superior and traditionally devalued varieties of language. However, difficulties may arise when 'linguistic markets,' to use Bourdieu's metaphor, such as schools uphold the dominant language as the 'legitimate' language in relation to

pupil's home language which may be tacitly devalued, by virtue of its exclusion or its tokenistic presence in the school curriculum.

Although social judgements or negative devaluations are largely unconscious, they are underpinned by powerful, yet 'invisible' ideologies of language that infiltrate the individual's consciousness. The next section addresses the implications of hegemonic ideologies in the classroom, when they remain unchallenged and unquestioned in classrooms in creole-speaking environments. I further argue that schools, as important institutions of 'civil society,' (Gramsci, 1971), can play a pivotal role in equipping pupils with the tools to challenge these ideologies as they relate to language use.

3.7   The BVI Classroom Context: Hegemonic Discourses and Pedagogic Implications

The notion of hegemony and the extent to which is it may shape teachers' and pupils' assumptions about the role of BVI Creole in the English Language classroom, has received very little attention in educational/empirical research in the Anglophone Caribbean region. In many classrooms in post-colonial territories in the region, English Language was traditionally taught using monolingual approaches in which creole was positioned as the impoverished reflection of standard English. In other words, 'monolingualism in the dominant model promotes the official language of the school at the expense of the home language' (Craig, 1989, p.248).

Language plays a crucial role in the education process as it pervades every level of interaction between pupils and teachers, and it is one of the most potent tools in which ideologies are perpetuated and maintained in the classroom. In territories where creole and standard English coexist, like the BVI, dominant assumptions about language are shaped by the discourses of colonialism that historically position creole vernaculars as inferior in relation to standard varieties of language. These lingering discourses, which seep through teaching practices, may have pedagogical consequences for pupils in these environments as they unwittingly conform to negative perceptions, in a largely unconscious way, about their own linguistic variety vis-a-vis the dominant variety. In other words, pupils may collude in their own 'symbolic domination', (Bourdieu, 1991), as they misrecognise it and, hence, give their consent to it. As Sharp observes:

Hegemonic practices succeed when they produce an unquestioned, taken-for-granted attitude towards things where subjects identify themselves within limits defined by the hegemonic meanings and operate unconsciously via their ideological practice (Sharp, 1980, p.103).

As 'hegemonic ideologies function in a covert and invisible manner' (Fairclough, 2000, p.89), I am suggesting that pupils in creole-speaking environments may contribute to the perpetuation of 'common sense' discourses about language, insofar as they give their tacit consent to the prevailing assumptions about language. In this view, creole-speaking pupils come to accept the denigration of their linguistic variety, to the extent that they become subjected to a covert form of power whereby, they unconsciously 'apply the dominant criteria of evaluation to their own practices' (Bourdieu, 1991, p.46). In other words, pupils may become implicated in the denigration of their own linguistic varieties, without being aware that they may be unwittingly reproducing practices that do not necessarily work in their favour.

Foucault's understanding of 'disciplinary power' is also relevant here as it asserts that relations of power pervade all realms of society including a range of institutions such as the media, church schools, hospitals and prisons which constitute both 'ideological' and 'state apparatuses', to use Althusser's words. This means that social institutions like schools play a pivotal role in endorsing and legitimizing the authoritative discourses, insofar, as they are 'a political means of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourse with the knowledge and power that it carries with it' (Foucault, 1972, p.227). Emanating from the institutional discourses of schooling are relations of power which determine what counts as the 'legitimate' linguistic variety, and which exercise the 'power' to marginalize or exclude those 'voices' that diverge from the dominant practices of the school. Thus, '…whatever is identified as the 'good' or 'correct' form of the language empowers those who have it as part of their linguistic repertoire, and disempowers those who don't (Joseph, 2006, p. 44).

The discourses of colonialism which are implicit in classroom practices in post-colonial territories, such as the BVI, also have the potential to construct pupils in ways in which they uncritically accept the hegemonic ideologies that may seep through language teaching. This is particularly evident in cases where teachers do not invite or encourage their pupils to question or interrogate hegemonic discourses that are ingrained in the dominant ideologies of language. While Gramsci (1971) maintains that "everyone is a philosopher'' (p.331), it clearly does not mean that everyone is in a position to produce highly original and scientific forms of thought. Rather, the individual has the potential to challenge dominant beliefs, doctrines and ideologies,

and to build on existing ideas in a critical way. As Gramsci further notes,'…..it is not a question of introducing from scratch a scientific form of thought into every one's individual life, but of renovating and making ''critical'' an already existing activity' (Gramsci, 1971, p. 331).

Gramsci' theoretical formulation seems to be the most relevant and insightful construct to be employed as the main theoretical underpinning of this study. The notion of hegemony provides a conceptual tool for thinking about the hegemonic position of standard English in the wider society, and in the education system in a post-colonial environment. This construct also promotes our reflection of the uncritical and unquestioning acceptance of the dominance or supremacy of standard English, and it helps to explain the taken-for-granted assumptions that individuals make about its status in relation to marginalised varieties like BVI Creole.

In the Gramscian problematic educational institutions such as schools, which constitute 'civil society' (Gramsci, 1971) are neither socio-politically 'neutral' nor entirely objective institutions, as they serve to advance the interests of the dominant group. As sites of 'hegemonic leadership' (Gramsci, 1971) schools play an essential function in 'cementing' and perpetuating the role of the existing hegemony, as they position individuals in ways in which they unconsciously and unquestioningly accept the assumptions and 'world views' of the dominant group. Just as educational institutions can be regarded as sites or terrains which sustain hegemony, so too can they be perceived as 'terrains' in which attempts can be made to establish counter-hegemonic positions.

An obvious point of comparison between Gramsci's notion of hegemony and Bourdieu's notion of 'symbolic domination' is that both constructs are characterised by forms of consensual power, and they both play a role in maintaining the social order, not by means of coercion, but by cultural domination. Like hegemony, when 'symbolic domination' is successfully accomplished it is indiscernible in all facets life including, sociocultural, political, religious and socio-economic spheres. However, one of the points in which the two concepts differ substantially is that unlike 'symbolic domination' hegemony is maintained by a combination of force and consent, and each one 'balances each other reciprocally without force predominating over consent' (Gramsci, 1971, SPN, p.80). Whereas Gramsci's theoretical notion of hegemony relates to the political process of organising consent, Bourdieu's emphasis is on the institutional process of reproducing it (Friedman, 2005).

Crucially, the Gramscian concept of hegemony seems to go much further than Bourdieu's notion of 'symbolic domination', and this has implications for the thesis. More than Bourdieu, Gramsci is concerned with social transformation which he conceptualises as the breakdown of hegemony and the emergence of an 'alternative hegemony'. As Williams observes, it is 'continually resisted…altered, challenged by pressures not at all its own' (Williams, 1977, p.112), and this foregrounds questions about resistance and counter-hegemonic possibilities.

In alluding to the non-static, dynamic nature of hegemony, and its potential for resistance, Williams illustrates that it is open to 'negotiation' and 'renegotiation', and therefore to being renewed and regenerated (Williams, 1977). Thus, hegemony has the propensity 'to be continually renewed, recreated, defended and modified' (Williams, 1977, p.112), owing to its inherently flexible nature. Unlike hegemony, Bourdieu's concept of 'symbolic domination' essentially makes no allowances for developing a language of 'opposition or resistance', to use Giroux's (1983) words. Furthermore, while hegemony cannot be 'divorced' from questions of subordination and domination it is also characterised by possibilities for resistance and struggle in readiness for social change.

Although hegemony 'universalises' and 'normalises' dominant assumptions, while supressing alternative ideologies and ways of seeing the world, it has the capacity to evolve. In other words, hegemony does not 'passively exist as a form of dominance' (Williams, 1977, p.112). Rather, it is endowed with traits of 'counter-hegemony and alternative hegemony which are real and persistent elements of practice' (ibid., p.113). In this view, hegemony is useful in assisting English teachers in creole-speaking environments to create spaces in their classrooms, which enable them to reflect upon the potential of implementing a 'pedagogy of possibility' (Simon, 1992). That is to say, it may facilitate teachers' quest for engaging with alternatives that may enhance pupils' potentials for interrogating orthodox assumptions about language. Similarly, what Gramsci seems to advocate is 'a process of education which equips children with the necessary acumen to be able to participate in an informed dialogue' (Borg and Mayo, 2002, p.100).

Employed as a tool, language can be used to reconceptualise traditionally uncontested terrains and unquestioned world views. Hence, counter-discourses can be established in English classrooms and one of the key functions of English teachers is to help with this formulation (Pennycook, 1995). As he puts it, 'English teachers should become 'political actors who have the potential to use English to oppose

dominant discourses, and to help with the development of counter-discourses in English (Pennycook, 1995, p.55). English teaching in Anglophone Caribbean territories, more than any other subject, is implicated in the discourses of colonialism that reverberate in its practices and policies, and these have become' enmeshed and ingrained in a reciprocal relationship with English, each mutually perpetuating the other' (Pennycook, 1998, p.29). In this view, the discourses of English Language teaching in BVI secondary classrooms are implicitly bound up with the English Language Arts Syllabus/Curriculum, as well as with the 'common sense' assumptions that teachers and pupils make with respect to BVI Creole and standard English, and in the ways in which they are positioned in the hegemonic discourses.

3.8   Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that a social view of language as postulated by Bakhtin and Voloshinov can be applied in BVI, in order to address the socio-political underpinnings of language use in this linguistic environment. I have also maintained that Gramsci's notion of hegemony can offer a fruitful explanation in order to shed light on the 'common sense' assumptions that both teachers and pupils make about the status of BVI Creole in relation to standard English, in a post-colonial environment.

I have also considered Marx's perspective of ideology before considering the ideological perspectives postulated by Althusser in relation to Foucault. I then argued that while there may be some similarities between Gramsci and Althusser's theoretical positions, the notions of 'coercion' and consent', which are relevant for this thesis, which are evident in Gramsci's work, are largely absent from Althusser's account of power.

The chapter has then examined the relationship between BVI Creole and standard English, and I have attempted to illustrate with reference to the BVI linguistic environment that the superiority of standard English, in relation to English-based creoles, has more to do with its socio-political and historical origins, and the dominant ideologies underpinning this linguistic variety, rather than its inherent linguistic characteristics. Finally, the chapter suggests that notions of 'good' and 'bad' language, which are socially constructed in an ideology of colonialism, may be implicit in English Language classroom discourses, and these may have implications for English Language pedagogy in BVI classrooms.

The next chapter addresses the philosophical assumptions that underpin the methodology, and it offers a justification for the methods of data collection procedures that were employed in order to find answers to the research questions.

Chapter 4

Approaches and Methods
Used in the Research

4.1   Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to outline the nature of the research and to explain the philosophical and theoretical stances behind the methodology of the study. The chapter begins by addressing the background of the study, which is followed by a discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of the research, before offering a rationale for drawing on the qualitative paradigm. After presenting a case for employing the case study approach, the chapter examines the principles that guided the methods of data collection and analysis and the emerging ethical issues in the study. Finally, it addresses the challenges the researcher's role as an 'insider', who had taught in the context, in relation to the position of 'outsider'. This ambivalent status presented ongoing challenges during the course of the research that involved distancing myself from my previous knowledge of the setting, and finding a space in which to make 'the familiar strange.'

4.2   Background of the Study

The research study emerged as a small scale qualitative case study which involved teachers and pupils in English Language classrooms, in a post-colonial context, in a government-run school secondary school in which I had taught (see chapter one, section 1.8) for a number of years. I was interested in exploring teachers' and pupils' perceptions and attitudes to the role/status of BVI Creole in relation to standard English in the classroom. In the early stages of the research, my focus was on the teaching of writing to creole-speaking pupils in secondary BVI English Language classrooms, and the inherent challenges that written language development presented to some pupils. My aim was to explore the extent to which the structural and grammatical features of BVI Creole may constitute instances of 'negative transfer' (Ellis, 1994), or whether these traits were regarded as a hindrance or interference to pupils' written language development.

I concur with Abd-kadir et al., (2003) who explored the notion of creole interference in the writing of secondary school pupils in the Commonwealth of Dominica, that there is

a paucity of empirical research in this field. A limited amount of empirical research has been conducted in the Anglophone Caribbean region which relates to teachers' and pupils' perceptions/attitudes to the role of an English-based creole in the secondary classroom, and the implications of these for English Language teaching and learning.

 Early research was limited to wider community attitudes in St. Lucia (Alleyne, 1961; Liberman, 1974; Alexander, 1993), and to an exploration of teachers' attitudes toward language varieties in a creole-speaking community in the Trinidadian context (Winford, 1976). More recent research, conducted by Simmons-MacDonald (2006), investigated pre-service student-teachers' attitudes to a French-based creole in relation to standard English, in the St Lucian sociolinguistic situation.

Admittedly, it took some time for me to formulate ideas and to derive insights from my readings, in order to develop an understanding of the direction my research should take, and which demonstrated relevance for my context. As the study progressed, I came to the conclusion that it was premature to look at the teaching of writing of creole-speaking pupils as the initial subject of my research. Additionally, as I began to further explore the field it became apparent that I needed to narrow the scope of the study, and to look more closely at the status of creole in the classroom, as it relates to teachers' and pupils' attitudes and perceptions around its use in the classroom. In spite of the change in direction of the research, the interviews with the participants about BVI Creole in relation to standard English, afforded me the opportunity to shed light on the socio-political underpinnings of English Language teaching in the BVI sociolinguistic environment, and the unexamined assumptions inherent in classroom practices. Although the present research did not pertain directly to the teaching of writing, it offered some insights into participants' views and understandings of the structural features of BVI Creole which may occur in pupils' classroom writing. The original focus of the study may also offer a fruitful area of research at a later stage. In what follows, I address the assumptions which guided the study, and these are set out below.

4.3   Philosophical Assumptions

The two main views of social science research methodology are situated in two domains: quantitative and qualitative. Each paradigm is derived from competing epistemological perspectives: positivist and empiricist, and constructionist and interpretivist standpoints, respectively. An objectivist epistemology maintains that meaningful reality exists separately and apart from any consciousness, and this

position is premised on the view that supports the application of methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality. From this vantage point, knowledge is generated by means of collecting facts and is based on the view that science must be organised in a manner that is objective and value-free. On the other hand, interpretivism, generally perceived as the opposite to positivism, refutes this perspective of human knowledge, and is predicated upon the view which acknowledges 'the differences between people and phenomena, and which requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action' (Bryman, 2004, p.13). Furthermore, the role of the researcher is to 'gain access to people's 'common-sense thinking, and hence to interpret their actions and the social world form their point of view' (ibid., p.14). This means that what people say and their subjective interpretations are crucial to the researcher's understandings of the issue/phenomena. As a qualitative researcher, who draws on an interpretivistic stance, I was engaged in presenting multiple realities and different perspectives of the participants, rather than a 'fixed view of reality' As Croatty notes:

> *There is no objective truth waiting for us to discover it. Truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world. Further, meaning is not discovered, it is constructed (Croatty, 2003, p.8).*

On the one hand, positivist orientation, normally aligned with a quantitative mode of investigation, maintains that social reality exists as a separate entity from its social participants. On the other hand, an interpretivist approach draws on an ontological perspective which views 'social phenomena as constructed by participants and produced through interaction' (Bryman, 2004, p.17). From this standpoint, the notion of reality is not fixed; rather, it is fluid and related to the participants' multiple interpretations. This approach focuses on 'processes and meanings that are not rigourously examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.4). Furthermore, the interpretivist approach examines 'culturally derived and historically situated views of the world' (Croatty, 2003, p.67), and this also suggests that the researcher's interpretation of the world is shaped by a range of factors including socio-cultural, historical and political factors that help to impact upon his/her understanding of the context.

Congruent with a theoretical stance that informs the methodology of this project is an emphasis on 'the socially constructed nature of reality, and the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied...' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.4). Imposing a 'fixed view of reality' on the research setting may have forced me to

overlook the subtleties of language use, among the teachers and pupils, and this may have impacted upon my understanding and interpretation of the context. Furthermore, this perspective may not have facilitated an in-depth account of teachers' and pupils' views and perceptions of the phenomena in the classroom, and the ways in which they 'construct meanings' in BVI Creole and standard English. As Gillham (2000) observes, 'How people behave, feel, think, can only be understood if you get to know their world and what they are trying to do in it' (Gillham, 2000, p.13), and an interpretivist philosophical stance provided the opportunity to explore the participants' setting.

Having examined the philosophical assumptions that underpin the study, it is now necessary to examine the main characteristics of the qualitative paradigm before discussing more fully the rationale for drawing on this approach. I now explore this issue.

4.4   Characteristics/Nature of Qualitative Research

The word 'qualitative' suggests 'a focus on the qualities of objects, functions and meanings that are not examined experimentally in relation to measurement, volume, depth and prevalence' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, p.13), and qualitative researchers generally emphasize the socially constructed nature of reality and the close linkages between the researcher and the social phenomenon that is being explored (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008).

The researcher's choice of qualitative research is also guided by certain beliefs and assumptions which include the ontological (the nature of reality) and the epistemological positions (which address how knowledge is generated) (Creswell, 2003). Other considerations also include the axiological assumptions (which refer to values and biases that the researcher brings to the study), rhetorical assumptions (situating oneself in the study) and methodological assumptions (which address methods used in the project) (Creswell, 2007, pp.15-18).

A qualitative mode of inquiry has been described as an approach which involves 'an interpretive, naturalistic view of the world' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p. 3), and this kind of research is usually carried out when 'an in-depth, meticulous understanding of the phenomena is needed' (Creswell, 2007, p.40). Besides, this mode of inquiry is generally employed in order to enable the researcher to derive insights into the

participants' understandings of the setting, and the significance of the meanings that subjects attach to social phenomena and situations' (Punch, 2005, p.238).

As a qualitative researcher, I was able to explore issues that I were of interest to me, within the natural classroom context, in order to illuminate and extend my understandings of the linguistic and social phenomena in the classroom, and the beliefs and understandings that participants attach to these. Having discussed the rationale for drawing on a qualitative model the next section examines, in more depth, the reasons for employing this approach.

4.5   A Qualitative Approach in this Study

In the preceding section, I explained that the decision to employ a qualitative paradigm meant accounting for certain implicit philosophical assumptions. To this end, methodological considerations made it necessary for me to acknowledge the value-laden and subjective nature of the qualitative process, and to heighten my awareness of the inherently subjective approaches to data collection such as observations and interviews. In addition, axiological assumptions enabled me to account for the biases that I brought to the process, given my previous experience and familiarity with the setting.

This assumption also takes into account the relationship between the researcher and the participants, and the possible effects that I may have had on the participants, that is, the 'observer's effect', and the steps that I took to reduce this. Furthermore, my role as a 'human instrument' (Robson, 2002, p. 202) made it necessary for me to account for the possibility of imposing biases, based on my knowledge of the setting during the research process. The effects of these on the research process are addressed later on in the chapter.

'Rhetorical assumptions', to use Creswell's (2007) words, were crucial as they enabled me to 'position' myself in the study, to employ the use of a more informal style in writing and to use a personal voice. Additionally, methodological considerations also offered a rationale for the methods I used in the research process, and these further enhanced my ability to describe the context in detail, and to incorporate an inductive approach **(**Creswell, 2007). Because this research employs a case study mode of inquiry, I expected to rely heavily on an inductive approach that involved immersing myself in the data/evidence in order to derive or generate categories that helped to explain classroom phenomena.

A distinct advantage of the qualitative mode of inquiry is that it assisted me in deriving an in-depth grasp of the linguistic phenomena, from participants' perspectives, and an understanding of their 'lived experience' in the 'real life' setting of the BVI secondary classroom. In order to do this, it was necessary for me to maintain a reasonably close affinity 'to the people and situations being studied, in order to personally understand the realities and minutiae of daily life' (Patton, 1990, p.46). However, the close relationship between the participants and the researcher can be problematic as it may influence participants' behaviour, and although my observations in the classroom served as a backdrop to the interviews, the primary source of data, my presence in the classroom needed to be accounted for and its possible effects on the participants (see section 4.9.2).

Teaching and learning are 'complex social happenings, and understanding them as such is the grand purpose of qualitative case studies' (Dyson and Genishi, 2005, p.9). Given the exploratory nature of the study, and the kinds of questions I asked during the course of the research, the qualitative paradigm seemed to be the most reasonable approach to employ as the dominant research methodology. As Punch observes, one of the objectives of this paradigm is that it offers an 'in-depth and holistic understanding in order to do justice to the complexity of social life' (Punch, 2005, p.38). To this end, I was in search of a broad understanding of language use which was embedded in classroom practices, and statistical models or standardized rating scales, which are not particularly sensitive to context, may not have offered the opportunity to fully provide the kind of depth that I sought.

In this project I set out to explore participants' views and understandings of BVI Creole in the 'natural' classroom setting, in the Anglophone Caribbean region, where a very limited amount of empirical research has been conducted on the subject, and qualitative approaches enabled me to obtain an in-depth understanding of these views, in ways that a purely quantitative approach could not provide.

As Punch puts it:

> *Qualitative methods are the best way we have of getting the insider perspective, 'the actor's definition of the situation' the meanings people attach to things and events.' This means that they can be used to study the lived experience of people, including people's meanings and purposes (Punch, 2005, p.238).*

In short, the qualitative mode of inquiry, with its penchant for details, provided the opportunity to glean insights and to develop an interpretation of participants'

perceptions of language use in a creole-speaking setting. As Creswell (2007) notes, 'a qualitative approach is best suited to a study where language use and context are inextricably linked' (p.20), and this suggests a blurring of the lines between the context and the linguistic traits and practices that characterise and shape the context. I now examine the case study approach, a key strategy of qualitative research, which was employed in this research.

4.6   The Case Study: A Key Qualitative Strategy

The main objective/purpose of the case study is to develop an understanding of the case in an in-depth manner within its natural context, which takes into account the complexity of a particular setting. A further aim of this approach is to maintain and develop a broad and complete understanding of the case, which retains its ''wholeness and unity'' (Punch, 2005, p.144). This suggests that the case is a cohesive and integrated entity which makes allowances for the exploration of fine-grained details of the setting.

There are intrinsic difficulties in offering a precise definition of the case study, and this is due, in part, to a considerable amount of variation in terms of the varied meanings that it has within diverse contexts and disciplines (Punch, 2005). While some researchers define the case as 'a method, with different sub-methods' (Gilliam, 2003, p.21), others describe it 'as a strategy' (Punch, 2005, p.144).

Yin (2003) defines the case study as an empirical investigation which explores a particular phenomenon within a specific 'real life' context where multiple sources of evidence are used, and where the parameters are blurred or not distinguishable, making it difficult to draw precise boundaries. In a similar vein Creswell (1998) observes that 'A case is an exploration of a 'bounded system' or multiple cases over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context' (Creswell, 1998, p.61).

The notion of the 'bounded system' of the case, which is a salient feature of a case study was also addressed by Miles and Huberman (1994) who succinctly describe the case as 'a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context' (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.24). This notion of a 'bounded' system' enabled me to place specific constraints and parameters on my study with respect to the duration of the study and the context. In this research, the study took place in the largest government-operated secondary school in the BVI, and it focussed on two classes for

a period of approximately two school terms. The pupil-participants were drawn from two classrooms, consisting of mixed ability groupings, which included two English Language teachers. I selected a total of four pupils, two from each class, for the final study.

Another key trait of the case study which has resonance for this study, is that it emphasises the natural contexts in which the events unfold, and research of this nature is described as one which involves an interpretivist, naturalistic approach to the phenomenon at hand. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) describe it in this way: 'qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.2). In the following section I illustrate how I applied this form of inquiry in my project.

4.6.1   Application of Case Study Approaches in the Project

Stake (1995) differentiates among three main types of case studies, including the intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. In this research I employed the intrinsic approach to a case study as I was interested in developing an enhanced knowledge about the role of BVI Creole in the secondary classroom, and participants' understandings of the phenomenon.

In this study I employed what is described as 'between methods' triangulation (Denzin, 1978) which involves combining different data sources, in order to explore the classroom phenomenon. One of the primary merits of this method is that the limitations of one approach, are frequently the strengths of another (Denzin, 1989), and these may serve to counterbalance the shortcomings that may be inherent in a single method. By employing multiple sources when collecting data, the investigator may be able to achieve rigour in research may be able to achieve rigour in research, and this may further enhance the trustworthiness of the research undertaken (Robson, 2009).

In my research, teachers' and pupils' views and perceptions of the classroom phenomena were crucial to my understanding of the context, and my intention was to layer my interpretations on top of my participants' perceptions of the status of BVI Creole. To this end, in my role as a researcher I was engaged in the process of 'reconstructing the respondents' interpretations and views' (Guba and Lincoln, 1985, p.357), and these contributed to my interpretation of the linguistic phenomena.

A description of the context is of paramount importance in this research project, and the case study approach assisted me in deriving a fuller picture of the phenomena, than would have been possible if I had used quantitative approaches. Classrooms are complex settings that represent verbal and social interaction among teachers and pupils, and without an emphasis on context, and its relevance to the classroom phenomena, it may have been virtually impossible for me to build up a rich, descriptive account of the participants' perceptions of the linguistic phenomena. Having addressed the case study application and its relevance for the study, the next section offers details of an initial small-scale pilot study. This is followed by a description of the characteristics of the main study, the data collection and analysis, the participants and sampling procedures

4.7   Small-Scale Pilot Study

In preparation for the main study an initial small-scale informal pilot was carried out in April 2008, for a period of two weeks. I conducted classroom observations on three days a week, as a minimum, excluding days when the pupils were being assessed. The pupils were selected from the group which comprised the middle years of secondary schooling, and their average age was 13+-14 years of age. A small sample consisting of two pupils, one of each gender, was drawn from the group in order to 'try out' the interviews and, additionally, one English Language teacher, who taught this level was also selected to be interviewed.

One of the main objectives of the pilot study was to conduct a 'dry-run' of the interviews with the participants. With regard to the interviews, I paid attention to issues such as the wording, sequences of questions and responses, and the extent to which I probed for more details. I was also able to identify areas where more probing was required, in order to encourage the participant to offer more detailed information. In some instances where participants' responses needed further expansion I rephrased the questions accordingly, to make them more open-ended. In other instances, I identified areas where interviewees' responses needed greater clarity, and this meant probing for further explanations and examples in order to derive more details. In short, the 'dry run' also offered me the opportunity to further adjust the wording of some questions or to eliminate others entirely. As Oppenheim (1992) observes, poor prompting and probing can lead to biases in the interview data.

In this phase, I also realised that it was necessary to pay more attention to relations of power, when conducting future interviews with the pupils. In order to help reduce

relations of power and to put the children at ease, in the main study I interviewed the pupils in pairs, rather than individually. Based on my experiences in the early pilot phase of the study, it also became apparent that it was necessary (in the main study) to provide a context for the pupils' interviews in order to make the content less abstract and more relevant to their experiences. This had the added benefit of encouraging the pupils to 'open-up' and to talk more freely about issues that were within their frames of reference.

The classroom observations were naturalistic and took the form of 'running records' in order to get a sense of what was going on. This proved to be very challenging as it was difficult to focus on the activities that occurred simultaneously during whole-group lessons, while I attempted to concentrate on the status of BVI in the classroom. Although I did not use a pre-coded instrument during observations, I realised that it was necessary for me to apply a theoretical lens in order to help guide the classroom observations. This issue is discussed more fully in section (4.9.2) of this chapter.

In this early pilot phase, I also implemented the use of a diary among the pupil-participants, as a method of data collection. The main purpose of this approach was to encourage the pupil-participants to reflect upon their use of BVI Creole and standard English in different contexts (home, school, friends). I had met earlier with the pupils in order to explain that the exercise involved their making daily entries for the period of one week, as I believed that a longer period of time may have led to their becoming distracted. This approach was not successful as the pupils seemed to have lost interest after a few days. As my idea was to encourage pupils to reflect on their language use in a natural and unstructured way, I decided against asking them to relate these experiences using a structured approach, as I felt that the exercise may have lost some of its intended spontaneity.

Arguably, the diary approach to collecting data had a great deal of potential in getting pupils to reflect on the use of language. However, in hindsight, I should have approached its implementation in a different and more rigorous manner. One of the ways in which I could have done this was to ensure that the pupils were making the entries on a daily basis, and offering more encouragement in the cases where their interest waned. While I didn't think that it was appropriate to have given them examples, I believe that I should have engaged the pupils in a brain-storming exercise about language use in a creole setting or, alternatively, given them the task immediately following the interview**.**

Having discussed the issues related to the pilot study and the early/initial phases of the research process, the next section examines the characteristics of the main study including access, setting, participants, and the sampling procedures. This is followed by a discussion of the methods which were employed.

4.8   The Main Study: Access, Setting, Participants, Sampling Procedures

The main study was conducted at a mixed ability, co-educational institution and the rationale for choosing this school is that it is the largest secondary, government-run school of its kind in the British Virgin Islands. The time frame allotted to the main study was three months, and this spanned a period of two terms. The data collection phase commenced at the beginning of February 2009—mid-March and, after a two week Easter break, data collection resumed from mid-April to end of May, 2009.

Access to the context of the study was an important consideration before the onset of the study, and as Cohen et al., (2000) observe 'Investigators cannot expect access to a nursery, school, college, or factory as a matter of right' (p.53). Although I had previously taught at this school it was still necessary for me to request official permission, both orally and in writing, before embarking on the project, and this initially involved meeting with the principal of the school to discuss my intended research. Once the intended research met the principal's approval, I was attached to two English Language teachers and their classrooms. This is discussed further in section (4.9) of the chapter.

The overall student population consisted of approximately 2,000 pupils ranging in age from 11-17 years old, and upon entrance to secondary school pupils begin following the Caribbean Examinations Council's (CXC) English Language Syllabus. However, it is during the third year of secondary schooling that the Examination Syllabus is fully implemented in order to prepare pupils for examinations during their final year. Whereas, the General Level Examination is normally administered to those pupils who intend to study beyond secondary school, and who are more mature writers, the Basic Level Examination is recommended for less mature writers.

For the purpose of this research I also employed 'purposive sampling' (Silverman, 2001, p.250). Notably, this form of sampling enabled me to choose a case because it illustrated some characteristics or processes in which I was interested, and which helped to shed light on or illuminate the phenomena. This strategy assisted me in

selecting and hand-picking the teachers and pupils who willingly and enthusiastically took part in the study, and it further enabled me to select the participants on the basis of the special traits and qualities which they possessed, and the direct relevance to this research focus.

To this end, I selected two classes from the target population that included Form Four pupils whose average age ranged from fourteen+--fifteen years, and who were fluent speakers of the local creole vernacular. Another factor which impacted upon my decision is that the pupils in the senior secondary years of schooling, would have covered a broader range of syllabus material than their Form Three counterparts. Excluded from the study were pupils who had repeated the academic school year as they would have been, chronologically, one year older than the pupils in the study. I also excluded pupils who were in the early years of secondary schooling as I felt that they were adjusting to a new environment, and were generally more unsettled, in terms of behaviour, and less mature in their writing. Also eliminated, were those pupils in the middle years of schooling from whom I had drawn samples for the informal pilot-phase of the study.

The flexibility of the purposive sampling strategy enabled me to draw a sample of a total of four pupils, derived from two classes, of mixed gender and mixed ability, and despite its limitation of generalisability or representativeness, 'this sampling strategy was chosen for its ability to study small groups in-depth' (Hatch, 2002, p.50). Hence, the strategy provided me with the opportunity to explore the linguistic phenomena in the classroom, and to derive insights from participants' views and perspectives in order to illuminate my understanding of what was taking place. A more detailed description of the two classrooms which were involved in the research project is discussed in section (4.9.3) of this chapter.

The two teachers who participated in the study were purposively selected on the basis of their years of experience in teaching English Language, as each had a minimum of ten-fifteen years of experience, as well as the practical knowledge of teaching senior secondary pupils for a many years. I also considered that an experienced teacher may have been less likely to feel intimidated by my presence in the classroom, than a 'junior' teacher, and this may have minimised the 'observer effect' on the participants. A third teacher, who was the Head of the English Department, was also interviewed, but this data was not included in the study.

As noted earlier my study draws on an epistemological perspective which sustains the view that knowledge of the world can be generated by immersing oneself in the natural social setting in order to 'live' the experiences of the participants (Mason, 1996). While this section examined the characteristics of the main study, the forthcoming section addresses the secondary sources of data, the relevance of the Caribbean Examinations Council, (CXC) English Language Syllabus, and the classroom observations, which were employed in order to serve as a backdrop for the research. Following this, I discuss the interviews which constituted the primary source of data in the study.

4.9   Secondary Sources of Data: Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

4.9.1   The Caribbean Examinations Council's English Language Syllabus

As I discussed in chapter one (section 1.10) by analysing the principal document pertaining to English Language teaching in a creole-speaking setting, it helped to provide background information to the context. In the absence of policy documents and a national curriculum I selected the document that is most relevant to the teaching of English Language in the BVI sociolinguistic situation, and the wider Anglophone Caribbean region, that is, the English Language and Literature Syllabi which were designed by the regional Caribbean Examinations Council. As Krippendorff (1980) observes 'when all sampling units are a replica of each other, a sample size of one is adequate' (p.69). This document was analysed in order to determine the role that BVI Creole plays in relation to the hegemonic status of standard English, and the inherent 'common sense' assumptions (Fairclough, 2001) that underpin English Language teaching in a post-colonial context.

While interviews were the prevailing/ primary source of data, classroom observations served as a supplementary source of data, and as the backdrop to the study. They also functioned illustratively in order to corroborate what was said in the interviews with teachers and pupils, as far as was possible, and to glean information that might be asked in the interview phase. The next section addresses the observational phase which occurred at the onset of the study.

4.9.2   Direct Observations

Classroom observations which spanned a four-week period, occurred in the assigned classrooms three times a week, for a minimum of least forty-five minutes, and these served as a precursor to interviewing the teachers and pupils. A brief observational period which prefaces the interview phase 'enables the interviewer to familiarise herself with the context and children's speech habits' (Eder and Fingerson, 2002, p.183), and to assist me in generating further questions that may arise in the setting. The questions which helped to guide my descriptive observations were adapted from Wilkinson and Birmingham's (2003) approach to direct observations, and this enabled me to account for the time, place, length of observations, descriptions of the context, the participants and what was taking place.

The observations also assisted in developing a rapport between the participants and the researcher (myself) thus, helping to diminish the 'observer effect', that is, the influence that the act of observations may have on the participants or on the phenomenon being observed. I also engaged the pupils and teachers in conversation during lunchtime and at break-time, and this may have further helped to enhance my rapport with the participants. Initially, the pupils very quiet and well-behaved during the early classroom observations as they saw me as a 'visitor' whom, according to their teachers, they wanted to impress. However, as time progressed the pupils became used to my presence and classrooms reverted to being loud and animated settings. As a result of this, the 'observer effect' may have been further reduced, as my presence seemed to have had little or no effect on pupils' behaviour.

The influences on my initial observations were shaped by constructivist perspectives of learning (Mercer, 2000), and the 'dialogic model' (Wells, 1992) which are in turn derived from Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural views on language and interaction. In this perspective, interactional relationships among teachers and learners are regarded as a complex 'ecology of cognitive and social interaction' (Erickson, 1996), and language learning is socially constructed among participants, rather than an individual endeavour. Despite my interest in the constructivist model of interaction, I saw little evidence of this occurring in the/initial observational data and it did not seem productive to pursue classroom observations in BVI classroom, from this perspective. In addition, the two English Language classrooms in which the study was conducted seemed to demonstrate a traditional model of classroom teaching where a transmissional form of pedagogy appeared to be pervasive, that is, an initiation-response-follow-up sequence (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). In this view, 'the learner

is not seen as having the same 'agentive footing' (Hicks, 1996) in interaction with the teacher.

A first-hand account enables the observer 'to see things that may generally go unnoticed by participants, may be taken-for-granted or may not emerge during the interviews' (Hatch, 2002, p.72). Classroom observations were also important to complement and corroborate the information obtained by interviews, since among responses it is common for there to be some discrepancies between 'what people say and how they behave and act in the 'real life' in the real world' (Robson, 2011, p.191). Thus, while the observations were not employed as an approach in their own right, they were used illustratively as a secondary source of data and as a backdrop to the interview data. In the previous section, I discussed classroom observations, which constituted a supplementary data source, and in the forthcoming section I offer a description of the classrooms in which the study was conducted. This is followed by a vignette which offers a snap-shot of classroom talk in a whole-group situation.

4.9.3   A 'Story' of Two Classrooms

Before I was introduced to the pupils I met with the teachers who briefed me on what to expect from their respective classes and, after explaining what my research involved, the pupils became very enthusiastic and several wanted to take part in the study. In each of the two classrooms the pupil-participants who took part in the study were in Form Four, which is the equivalent of Year 10 pupils in the British education system and, as I previously discussed (see section 4.8), the pupils were in their penultimate year of compulsory secondary schooling. Both classrooms were comprised of a total of thirty mixed–ability groups: Mrs. Smith's classroom, Form Four-1A consisted of 15 boys and 15 girls, while Mrs. Brown's Form Four-1B, was comprised of 19 boys and 11 girls. The pupils were uniformly dressed in accordance with the dress code imposed by the school and, as I later witnessed, both classrooms were loud and noisy settings. This was particularly evident in Mrs. Brown's classroom, where she constantly had to ask the pupils to cease shouting and speaking out of turn, when responding to questions.

The classrooms were large and well-ventilated and were situated on the fourth floor, in a four -story building, which was described as part of the 'new block' This block, which houses all English Language teaching sessions was one of eight blocks of buildings situated on the school compound including the teachers' staff room, music department and so forth. Situated in the classroom were two free-standing fans which

were strategically placed: one at the front of the classroom, and another at the back which were used on particularly hot days, during the summer months. While Mrs. Smith's classroom had samples of pupils' work on the display board, in Mrs. Brown's classroom, pupils' writing samples were not on display.

The lay-out of both classrooms was a traditional one, with rows of desks and chairs facing the teachers' desks and chalk–boards. At times, this order was interrupted when pupils were asked to work in groups, and this was more evident in Mrs Smith class than it was in Mrs Brown's. Each teacher had a small room at the back of the classroom, which she used as her office and book-room, where she marked books, and had one–one meetings with pupils at break time.

A large percentage of the pupils were indigenous British Virgin Islanders who were fluent speakers of BVI Creole. Other pupils who may have originated from other English-based creole-speaking Caribbean territories, and whose accents were different, were also fluent in the local vernacular. Although this was not in evidence in the classrooms which were part of the study, a few of the pupils in the school originated from Santo Domingo in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, others were the off-spring of Middle Easterners, of Lebanese descent, who were born in the British Virgin Islands.

The socio-economic backgrounds of the pupils in Form 4-1A resembled those of their counterparts in Form 4-1B and, like the pupils who participated in the study, a large percentage of the pupils originated from predominantly lower socio-economic/working where speaking standard English is not the norm. That is to say, BVI Creole is essentially the pupils' first language, and it is the predominant variety that is spoken in their homes. In the words of the pupils, 'We ain't grow up aroun' nobody tellin' us to speak proper English,' and 'De people where I live does speak really bad English'.

This seems to fit in with the profile outlined by Simmons-MacDonald (2001) who suggests some children in the Caribbean acquire an English lexicon-based creole or vernacular as a first language (see chapter 1, section 1.3). In contrast to their working-class counterparts, middle class pupils learn standard English in the home and they acquire BVI Creole, the language of the wider community as a second language. In other words, they have receptive and (productive) competence in the vernacular variety (Simmons-McDonald, 2001).

As I discussed in chapter one (section, 1.5.2) the BVI is not a highly stratified society in ways that are in evidence in many post-colonial environments. Rather, I suggested that a fine-grained form of social stratification undoubtedly exists, unlike rigidly socially stratified societies such as the Jamaican situation. In this context, there appears to be a strong association between socioeconomic class, language, education and academic achievement (Nero, 2009). I am not denying that this relationship is non-existent in BVI society, but I am suggesting that it may not be as marked or evident in the BVI context in ways in which it is reflected in the Jamaican social milieu.

Admittedly, I did not originally set out to explore the social class construct in order to inform the analysis. However, through my readings I became aware of arguments derived from the work of many scholars whose work embrace the view that classroom language does not exist in a sociocultural/political void, nor can it be fully understood outside of a broader analysis of broader social class relations and power (eg. Bourdieu, 1991; Pennycook, 1995; Bernstein, 1975; Heath, 1985). I realised that the notion of social class is an area that is worthy of exploration in relation to BVI English Language classrooms, and my study may have been further enriched by conducting a class-based analysis which draws on a Bourdieusian conceptualisation of social class.

In chapter eight of the thesis, I point out that the omission of the social class variable is one of the limitations of my study. I also suggest that an examination of this construct as it relates to language use and achievement in creole-speaking environments, should be considered in future research endeavours as little research has been done on social class and language achievement in Anglophone Caribbean territories such as the BVI. An in-depth exploration of the construct in the present study may have, undoubtedly, offered insights into the possible association between creole-speaking pupils' language socialisation practices and educational differentials.

In what follows I present a short classroom vignette which offers some insights into the nature of this setting, including pupils' use of BVI Creole. This is followed by an outline of transcription conventions used in the data.

4.9.4   Classroom Vignette 1: Teacher/Pupils

In this lesson the teacher, Mrs. Smith introduces the pupils to the concept of 'Tone'. Initially a pupil is nominated to read the written definition of 'Tone' which the teacher writes on the board. The exercise which follows involves one in which the pupils are given a series of underlined words in a number of sentences. After the pupils are given examples, they are then asked to describe and identify the 'tone' in each sentence. This is later followed by an exercise in which the class discusses the notion of 'tone' in the context of a poem.

T: Okay, good. Can we turn to page 120, in our text books please? Today we are looking at the term 'Tone'.

T: Nelburn, please read.

S: Teacher, wha' page dat [that] on please?

T: Okay, Nelburn is not ready and time is passing, so can you read Elroy?

(Elroy reads the section on the use of 'Tone' in poetry in the text book.)

T: Now what is the meaning of formal …. um a formal tone. If your tone is formal, how do we describe it?

Ss: Xxxx .

S: Miss, correct, 'stuck up'!!

S: It mean yer [you are] speakin' [speaking] 'proper English', Miss

T: I asked what does formal means? If I speak in a formal way it means..?

S: It mean …. teacher, it mean serious.

T: Yes, okay. It is a respectful tone.

T: What about the term 'neutral' What is a neutral tone like?

Ss: Xxxx (unclear)

T :   Keisha, can you try?

K.   It mean yer ain't [you are not] takin' [taking] no side!

T: Good!. It means that you are unbiased. Please don't write anything yet....um you will have a chance to do that later.

T: What about a biased tone? How do we define a biased tone?

Ss: Xxxx .

T: One at a time!

S: Racist! Racist!

T: Well …. no, not necessarily. You can be discriminating but not in that sense, Jane can you define the tone?

J: Miss it mean yer [you are not] takin' [taking] a side, yer aint [you are not] neutral.

T: Okay, Now what about indignant...um an indignant tone Miranda, what does it mean?

M: I don't know, teacher I goin' [going] get a dictionary. Teacher, I could [can I] use a dictionary?

T: No dictionaries! Please, what is the meaning in your own words! If someone uses an indignant tone they are? Anyone?

T: Okay an indignant tone expresses displeasure and um....it may even be insulting.

T: And, what does the word 'benign' mean in terms of tone. Anyone?

Ss: Xxxx.

T: So if your tone is benign your tone is, John?

J: Gentle! Soft!

T: Or what?

Ss: Xxxx.

S: Mild! good!

T: Rita, can you describe the tone?

R: Polite! Kind, Miss!

T: Okay, your tone is harmless. Have you heard of a benign tumour? Um …. if someone has a benign tumour, it means that it is harmless, and the person does not have cancer.

T: Finally, what does a hostile tone mean, Nelburn?

N: It mean, yer [you are] bein' [being] rude.

T: Anything else?

Ss: Xxxx

T: Children, I said one at a time, please!

S: Rough, Miss!

T: Will, can you try? What does a hostile tone mean?

W: Rebellious! Unfriendly!

Ss: Xxxx.

(At this point the bell rings indicating the end of the session).

T: Okay we will continue this exercise in the next session. You are dismissed!

(The pupils quickly grab their school bags and scamper through the door).

Transcription Conventions

T: Teacher

Ss   many pupils/students yelling out responses

S: unidentified pupil/student

.,?!   some traditional conventions of punctuation

[ ]   indicates a word spoken in Creole, with the Standard English equivalent

Xxxx   unclear transcription

….   short pauses in the conversation

This brief classroom vignette helped to reconfirm my recollections of classroom talk which occurs in English Language secondary classrooms, and it also helped to reaffirm and corroborate, to some degree, what teachers and pupils had said in the interviews about the pupils' preferred use of BVI Creole in the classroom. Having looked at this extract of classroom data, the next section offers concise sketches of the participants (teachers and pupils) in the study. This is then followed by a discussion of the interviews which were conducted among pupils and teachers.

4.9.5   Participants: Brief Sketches of Pupils and Teachers in the Study

4.9.5.1 Pupil-Participants

The pupil-participants who took part in the study were selected with the assistance of their classroom teachers. They were black, third-generation, indigenous 'British Virgin Islanders' who were fluent speakers of BVI Creole, and had received their early and primary schooling in government-operated schools. This is discussed more fully in section (4.9.3) of the chapter.

Although all the pupils in my study were very willing and enthusiastic participants, Ozzie and Christine seemed to 'stand out', as they were the most frank, talkative and outspoken members of the group. These qualities were sometimes demonstrated in classroom sessions where Ozzie and Christine, who seemed to be extroverts, willingly took part in whole-group classroom discussions. Occasionally their teachers appointed them as leaders of small groups and, additionally, during break-time or lunch-time both Ozzie and Christine chatted with me, from time to time, without my

prompting them to do so. Table 1 (below) indicates the gender composition of the pupils who participated in the study.

Table 1 - Gender Composition of Pupils Participating in the Study

Pupils' Names	Gender
Ozzie	Male
Christine	Female
Kimaal	Male
Brianna	Female

Whereas Ozzie was an extrovert, who also seemed to show leadership qualities, Kimaal appeared to be a bit more reserved, and tended to be more reticent during classroom sessions, unless the teacher prompted him to respond. Although Brianna, did not appear to be as outspoken and talkative as Ozzie and Christine, she certainly did not seem to be as shy and reserved as Kimaal. Based on descriptions derived from the pupils, they originated from homes where creole is the predominant linguistic variety that is spoken, and in the words of the pupils, 'We ain't grow up around nobody tellin' us to speak proper English,' and 'De people where I live does speak really bad English.'

4.9.5.2 Teacher-Participants

The two female English teachers who took part in the study were senior, experienced teachers in the secondary school system, and this was one of the reasons that they had been selected. Both Mrs. Smith and Mrs Brown ranged in age between 40s and early 50s, and they were black, indigenous British Virgin Islanders of Caribbean heritage. Although both teachers were fluent speakers of the BVI English-based creole, they felt that it was necessary to speak standard English in the classroom, in order to give pupils assess to the dominant discourse This is addressed more fully in chapter five.

Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Brown were university-educated, and were awarded degrees in English Language and Literature from the University of the West Indies, Barbados,

and they also held post-graduate certificates in teaching. Both teachers prepared pupils to sit examinations, in English Language, which are prepared by the Caribbean Examinations (CXC) Council, and they taught pupils ranging from the middle to senior years of secondary schooling. In addition, Mrs. Smith also prepared pupils for the Caribbean Examinations Council, English Literature Examinations, and she was actively involved in after-school extra-curricular activities.

The forthcoming section begins by outlining the key traits of the semi-structured interview, and the rationale for using this approach in the study, and the steps that were taken during the interview. It also discusses the possible effects of the role of researcher (myself) on the interview process

4.10   Interviews: Primary Data Sources

In this study, the primary source of data consisted of interviews with the teachers and pupils. Qualitative interviews go beyond ordinary day-to-day conversations, in terms of the approach and technique, and they have the ability '….to capture the complexities of individual perceptions and experiences' (Patton, 1990, p.290). Thus, this approach seems to be in keeping with the qualitative exploratory approach to interviewing.

My primary reason for conducting a semi-structured approach to interviewing was to be able to derive an understanding, as far as was possible, of participants' views and beliefs of the role that BVI Creole plays in the language classroom, vis-a-vis standard English. Essentially, the semi-structured in-depth interview 'attempts to understand themes of the lived everyday world from the subjects' own perspectives' (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p.27). Furthermore, at the heart of this form of interviewing 'is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meanings they make of that experience' (Seidman, 2013, p. 9).

Owing to the nature of this research and my interest deriving insights into teachers' and pupils' views of the linguistic phenomena in the classroom, the interview seemed to be the most suitable choice to accomplish this. Apart from this, the semi-structured interview also encouraged a certain degree of depth by providing me with the opportunity 'to develop and expand the interviewees' responses' (Hughes and Hitchcock, 1995, p.157).

The approach to semi structured interviews which I conducted with pupils and teachers, was organised around an interview guide approach (Patton, 1990). This

served as the framework for the main body of the interview, and the questions consisted of predominantly open-ended questions. Owing to its inherently flexible nature, the semi-structured interview approach offered me sufficient structure to use questions that guided the interviews, while giving me the freedom to pursue issues raised by the interviewees on the spot. In contrast, a highly structured interview, which follows a more rigid format, may have placed constraints on my ability to pursue issues that may have been raised spontaneously by the participants.

The interviews were tape-recorded with the knowledge and consent of teachers and the pupil- participants, who were all interviewed on one occasion. While the interviews with the teachers lasted between one hour fifteen minutes to one hour and a half, those which I conducted with the pupils lasted between thirty-forty minutes. I began the interviews with 'ice-breaker' questions that is, questions which are 'easy and non-threatening (demographic) type questions' (Arksey and Knight, 1999, p.113).

In the case of the teachers, I attempted to put them at ease by asking general background questions that related to their qualifications, chosen areas of specialisations, and years of teaching experience. With respect to the pupils I initiated the interviews by asking them general information, that was within their frames of reference, which related to their schooling, hobbies, family and friends. I prepared for the next phase of the interviews with the pupils by explaining to them that the contents of the video clip (see section, 4.10.2) would frame the conversations around their beliefs and attitudes to the use of BVI Creole, in relation to standard English, at home, among friends and strangers, as well as in the classroom. Following this, I then progressed to the main questions.

Although the main questions in the interview guide were coherent, and followed an orderly sequence, I did not apply 'hard and fast' rules of sequencing during the interviews. In other words, while I did not always rigidly adhere to the same sequence in all cases, I was able to vary or adjust the order of the questions as the interview developed. This was in evidence in situations where themes/responses to questions emerged spontaneously during the interview. I also abstained from using technical terminology and jargon that were unfamiliar to both teachers and pupils. Rather, I used language that was accessible to the interviewees, and in this way, I avoided 'controlling the interview through language' (Arksey and Knight, 1999 p. 99).

 I did not engage in copious note-taking out of concern that I may have lost the opportunity to prompt, probe deeper or to pursue follow-up questions, but I made brief

one–word jottings about a particular question which I wanted to pursue. Thus, the probes, prompts and follow-up questions, or clarifications to interviewee responses that I employed during the interviews helped to 'codetermine and co-construct the conversation' (Kvale, 1996, p.183). Furthermore, in this perspective, the 'themes derived through thematic analysis do not simply emerge, but rather they are 'derived in interaction and co-constructed between the interviewer and the interviewee' (Talmy, 2010, p.184).

A number of researchers conceptualise the interview as a collaborative and co-constructed event between interviewer and interviewee (see Miller, 2010, Mann, 2011, Block, 2002, Holstein and Gubrium, 2002). Thus, interviews constitute not merely a question-and-answer sequence, but rather they are occasions for the co-construction of meaning. By considering the interviewer-interviewee relationship as a collaborative, constructed event, I am able to acknowledge that insights drawn from this approach raise my awareness, thereby enabling me to recognise and acknowledge how data generated from the classroom phenomenon in this project, can be further enriched with a new understanding of the interviewer–interviewee relationship.

The notion of the interview as a collaborative construction also acknowledges and highlights the contribution of the interviewer in the co-construction and his/her role/identity on the interview process. While being objective is central tenet to most interviewing/data collection approaches, my ambivalent status of 'insider-outsider' suggested that 'objectivity' which is an ideal that researchers aspire to, it may not always be entirely or wholly possible to achieve. I acknowledge that I draw on my experiences as a former teacher, black, female researcher, of Caribbean origin, whose repertoire includes standard English and BVI Creole. I inevitably brought certain beliefs and assumptions to the research process, and I was obliged to reflect upon the possible influence which these characteristics may have had on the interviewees' responses.

I also grappled with the notion that as a researcher one has to lay aside his/her beliefs, assumptions and orientations in the pursuit of deriving rich, authentic data. Furthermore, in the research setting, many subjective sensibilities converge and come to the foreground, such as race, social class and gender (Fontana, 2002), and these may influence the interviewer/interviewee relationship. A similar position has been assumed by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) who observe that both the researcher and the researched speak from a particular 'class, gender, racial, cultural and ethnic community perspective' (p.18). While I shared some common experiences with the

interviewees in terms of race, and Caribbean cultural identity, differences in socio-economic orientations may have influenced pupil-participants' perceptions of me, and this may have had a possible impact on their responses.

As a former teacher, the teachers positioned me as someone with whom they shared similar experiences, and a researcher they perceived me as an individual who had access to more 'knowledge' than they did. In short, my attempts to distance myself from this perception may have resulted in a subtle shifting of my identity-positions during the interview, and this may have also influenced or shaped the interviewees' responses. Furthermore, I could not help but reflect upon whether a researcher, who was regarded as a 'complete outsider,' of different racial, gender and sociocultural orientations may have elicited different responses from the participants.

Finally, from a social constructionist standpoint asymmetrical relations of power ingrained in the interviewer and interviewee relationship are also foregrounded. As Mann observes, 'the interview as a co-construction recognises that the 'power imbalance' and the 'shared contextual knowledge' (Mann, 2010, p.8) help to shape the interview. To this end, during the interview process I was also mindful of the power relations that existed between the researcher (myself) and the participants, and this was particularly evident when interviewing the pupils. I expand upon this issue in the forthcoming section.

4.10.1   Relations of Power During the Interviews

During the interviewing process relations of power are a crucial consideration (Kress, 1985, p. 52). As Reynolds acknowledges, the relations of power that exist between the researcher and the interviewee are not fixed, as each participant 'moves to occupy a position of power and authority during the interview' (Reynolds, 2002, p. 300). This was undoubtedly less applicable when interviewing the teachers whom I regarded as my equals. I further put the teachers at ease by informing them that that the interview was not designed 'to test' their knowledge, but that I was actually learning from them. When relations of power are shared, teachers are likely to become more receptive and willing to divulge information, and this was accomplished to a large extent.

However, when interviewing pupils/children the researcher needs to make allowances for the imbalance of power between herself/himself and the child, and as Eder and Fingerson observe, 'Relations of power are most acutely felt when interviews are conducted between an adult and a child' (Eder and Fingerson, 2002,

p.194). Whereas pupils were interviewed individually in the pilot study, in the main study I interviewed the pupils in pairs in order to put them at ease. Ritchie (2003) also pointed out that 'interviewing pupils in pairs, clusters of three, or triads has the advantage of reducing the relations of power' (p.37). Having accounted for the relations of power inherent in the interview process, in relation to the participants, the next section illustrates the steps which were taken during the interviews with the pupils.

4.10.2 Interviewing Children

Ader and Fingerson (2002) remind us that not only do children tend to be more comfortable and talkative among their peers, but this can encourage them 'to become reflective and to draw comparisons while building on one another's responses' (Ader and Fingerson 2002, pp.184-185). The experience of interviewing pupil-participants was in some ways more difficult than interviewing the adult participants, to say the least, as it required more prompts and probing. As the process was new to the pupils it was necessary for me to contextualise the interview; this involved asking them to reflect upon a five-minute video clip of an English-based creole vernacular speaker, who employed code alternation between creole and standard English.

The video clip featured featured an adolescent girl, originating from the island of St. Kitts, who spoke the St. Kitts Creole vernacular fluently, and whose speech was punctuated with a few standard English phases. The pupils in the study were familiar with this linguistic variety as St. Kitts nationals have a long history of residing in the British Virgin Islands, and while there are undoubtedly phonological differences between BVI Creole and Kittician/St Kitts Creole. Both English-based creoles share mutually intelligible linguistic traits, and have structural and grammatical characteristic which overlap (Roberts, 1988). I considered that the approach of playing the video clip was useful as a launching board to begin a conversation with pupils on language use, and their beliefs surrounding the role of BVI Creole in the classroom.

One of the primary reasons for not choosing BVI Creole is related to the lack of access and availability of a video clip which featured the local vernacular. In addition, the decision to feature St Kitts Creole, had the distinct advantage of enabling pupils to reflect upon aspects in the speaker's linguistic repertoire, that may not have been readily apparent to them in their own linguistic variety or their repertoire. In short, the pupils seemed to be able to identify with the speaker in the video clip, both culturally and linguistically, as St Kitts Creole has strong similarities to the BVI vernacular.

The importance of making the interview context as natural as possible for the children is of crucial importance (Eder and Fingerson, 2002, p.185), and conducting the interviews with the pupils heightened my awareness of the importance of this. I attempted to put the pupils at ease by informing them that there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers to their responses, and I further encouraged them to speak in their 'every day' language. As Eder and Fingerson point out:

> *If dialect codes and styles of talking that respondents use during the interview, are those they use with people they know well and with whom they are comfortable, the researcher can be assured that a high level of validity has been achieved (Eder and Fingerson, 2002, p.195).*

Given that the pupil-participants spoke BVI Creole,'the unmarked choice', (Myers-Scotton, 1993) during the interviews it posed unique problems during transcription owing to a lack of standard orthography. As Sebba (2012) observes '….virtually everything that is written in Creole, whether in Britain or the Caribbean uses a modified Standard English orthography. Even so there are no widely agreed norms' (Sebba, 2012, p.91). Furthermore, there are different variations in spelling from island to island and these include 'at least seven attested spellings for the word 'nothing': 'notten, notin, nutting, nutin, nutten, not'n, notin' (ibid., p.91).

Roberts (1988) explains that the articulation of consonants is a much clearer mark of 'Creole English', to use Roberts' term, than that of vowels, and the examples most frequently cited are the standard English sound represented by the spelling [th] and their equivalents in Creole English. As he observes, 'The high frequency of the words the, this, these, those, they, them, their, there, then, ensures that the correspondence between [d] and [d] together with that between [e] and [t] remains very prominent' (Roberts, 1988, p.54).

Phonetically speaking, [ŋ] spelled [ng] corresponds to the nasal sound [n] in Creole English. Further, the [ng] correspondence is not simply a matter of pronunciation; it relates only to specific word endings. Furthermore, while Creole English and standard English have the nasal sound [ ] in thing, sing, sting, ring, etc., but Creole English does not have it at the end of words corresponding to standard English words including singing, ringing and eating (Roberts, 1988).

The previous section looked specifically at the interviews involving the pupils in the study, the underlying relations of power inherent in the interview process, and the

issues related to transcription of creole features. The next section explores the data analysis phase of the study.

4.10.3   Analysis of Interviews: Thematic Analysis

Upon completion of interviews with the pupils and the teachers I wrote down a brief summary of my understanding of what was said, in my own words, in order to get a general idea of what I thought was being conveyed. Firstly, I listened to the audio-tapes for any issues which were recurrent, or which I considered to be striking, and after transcribing the interviews I was further able to get a descriptive sense of what was occurring in the data. Not only did this step serve as a precursor to organising the data into categories, but it gave me the opportunity to closely scrutinise the data for any 'catchy terms' or phrases, derived from the exact words of the interviewees, thus helping to explain what was occurring the data. I then devised a system which enabled me to differentiate one interview from the other, and I also matched extracts of data to respective pages within the transcript (e.g. I TAP1, i.e. interview teacher A, page1). During the analysis of the interview data, I hoped to enhance my understandings and interpretations, on the basis of the teachers' and pupils' views and perspectives, of the status of BVI Creole in the classroom, in order to answer my research questions.

I do not lay claims to having used a grounded theory approach in this thesis, in the strictest and most rigorous sense, as put forward by Glaser and Strauss (1990, 1998); however, I drew on one of the concepts, that is, 'open coding' which involved initially labelling the raw data by using descriptive labels, or tags which served a precursor to enabling me to identify themes and patterns, and which has been described as the first analytic step in analysing the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1998). This process, according to Miles and Huberman (1994) involves affixing or attaching 'tags or labels' 'to chunks of data of varying sizes', (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.56).

In this perspective, at times I attached a descriptive label to individual lines, and on other occasions I affixed a label to a paragraph or small chunks of data. Moreover, during the initial/open coding or 'indexing' phase 'which is by far the most common initial procedure in qualitative analysis' (Seale, 1999, p.154) entails dissecting the data into discrete segments or entities which and are closely scrutinised and compared for differences and similarities (Glaser and Strauss, 1998;Green and Thorogood, 2009).

I manually coded the first extracts of interview data, derived from teachers' interviews, by means of colour-coding, and this was based on emerging concepts and themes that I considered revealing or striking. Codes which were applied in the first interview extract were then applied to the other transcribed interview extracts, and I also followed the same process with the data derived from interviews with pupils in which the codes were applied to successive interview transcripts. In this perspective, as the researcher, I was able to interrogate segments of the text by asking: 'What is the segment about?' How is it like and not like other segments'? (p.199).

Next, I grouped, manually, extracts of data thematically using different colours for each theme or emerging pattern identified, and I then attached a label to that particular group of themes. I later looked at the data which reflected the participants' views, in relation to a particular research question, and I focussed on the categories that I considered to be the most illuminating to the research questions. Finally, in order to make further sense of the data I attempted to establish connections between categories and sub-categories.

Having examined issues related to the interview analysis process, the next section examines ethical issues which cannot be isolated from the research endeavour, as these permeate all facets of the research, as they were part and parcel of the entire research process.

4.11   Ethical Issues in the Research

Issues relating to consent, confidentiality, anonymity and trust form the bedrock of ethically grounded research (Ryan, 2004), and gaining access to any research setting requires the consent of those in authority, as it is one of the first ethical issues that the researcher will face. This entails requesting the permission of the 'gate keepers' or those in authority, (Taylor and Bogdan, 1985, p.20) in the case of my research, meant seeking the permission of those in authority to gain access to the school; it also meant gaining the consent and permission of the parents, of the pupils who took part in the study, to record the interviews and segments of classroom lessons (see appendices 1 and 2).

After gaining access, one of the initial hurdles that I confronted involved putting the participants at ease in order for them to demonstrate a willingness to share their experiences; this involved explaining the nature of the research, its purpose, and how it might benefit them. It was my responsibility, and in my best interest as the

researcher to develop a rapport with the participants which fostered mutual trust, and which encouraged and promoted the willingness of participants to share their views and understandings. In the absence of these crucial elements, methods of data collection are either likely to fail or they may not yield the kinds of data that are anticipated. The issue of rapport is addressed more fully in section (4.9.2) of the chapter.

Ethical issues should be not perceived as a discrete entity. Rather, 'these issues should permeate the entire course of the interviewing process' (Kvale, 1996, p.119). Thus, my goal was to create an environment in which the teacher was treated as my equal, and where experiences were shared and this meant assuring participants of confidentiality and anonymity in the final report. Furthermore, participants have the right to know that they are being researched, the right to be informed about the nature of the research, and the right to withdraw at any time' (Ryan, 2004, p.231). I was initial**y** concerned about this, but the participants reassured me that they were fully committed to being a part of the research.

In educational settings where children are involved ethical issues are of crucial importance (Hatch, 2002, p.67) and children are key beneficiaries in the final outcome of educational research. Hence, as a researcher my duty was to ensure that pupils' interests were protected, and that they were treated with as much respect as their adult participants. '...ethics finally comes down to the individual researcher making the best judgement they can to ensure that the individuals in the study are treated with fairness and dignity' (Hatch, 2002, p.69). The children needed to be made to feel as though their contributions are valued, and this meant establishing a rapport with them.

Having addressed ethical issues which were part and parcel of the research, in the next section I examine the notion of the insider-outsider stance and the particular challenges this ambivalent relationship, and how it influenced my positioning posed during the research process. The following section illustrates this issue.

4.12   Balancing Insider/Outsider Stances: Reflections

Griffith (1998) makes a distinction between the two stances which suggests a strict division between the roles. He notes that an insider is 'someone whose biography (gender, race, class, sexual orientation and so on) gives her a 'lived' familiarity with the group being researched'. (Griffith, 1998, p.361) On the other hand, an outsider is 'a researcher who does not have any intimate knowledge of the group being

researched, prior to entry into the group' (ibid., p.113). Based on this perspective, Griffith's position clearly suggests a dichotomy of roles.

Unlike Griffith, Labardee (2002) favours a continuum approach to the insider/outsider stance, and in this view, the researcher fluctuates between insider/outsider positions as the situation demands. In addition, some positions seem to generate more of an insider than an outsider stance, to a greater or lesser extent, 'as situations involving different values arise, different statuses are activated and the lines of separation shift' (Merton, 1972, p.28). This suggests the fluid nature of the insider/outsider relationship rather than the dichotomous relationship that Griffith's definition suggests. Mercer (2007) also makes a similar point when he states that it is more appropriate to conceive of the insider/outsider relationship as 'points along a continuum in order to acknowledge the likely merits and limitations of each approach in a range of settings' (Mercer, 2007, p.7).

Based on my experiences during the course of this research, I recognised that my position as the researcher fluctuated and shifted between insider and outsider stances. My previous role as a former teacher with an intimate knowledge of the setting, whose repertoire included creole, suggested outsider/researcher positions were not fixed. Rather, these stances shifted according to the situation, and at times conflicted with each other. For instance, as a quasi 'insider' I felt that I was sufficiently familiar with the pupils' linguistic practices; however, at the onset of the study the pupils initially perceived me as visitor or an outsider, hence I was required to position myself as an outsider, who had to work to gain their trust and to develop a rapport with them.

Similarly, the teachers expected me to be 'familiar', with the setting, but this was not always the case as in some ways I had to re-familiarise myself with the day-to-day experiences of the classroom, as I had not worked in the school for a number of years. As an outsider it was also necessary to develop a rapport with the teachers in order to win their trust, as I was concerned that they might have misjudged my intentions as researcher. Thus, the insider/outsider relationship is not as straightforward or as clear-cut as Griffith seems to suggest, and this became apparent during the research as I occupied the ambivalent status of being both the insider and outsider.

Furthermore, the insider stance can be a benefit as well as a hindrance depending on the role which the researcher occupies in a given setting. In this study, for example, my position as a quasi 'insider' may have facilitated my access to the setting, but it did

not preclude my negotiating and making formal written requests to gain access, nor in establishing a rapport with the participants (see section 4.8). On other occasions, I felt as though the label insider proved to be more of a hindrance than a benefit. Shah explains that 'a social insider is better positioned as a researcher because of his/her knowledge of the relevant patterns of social interaction that are required for gaining access and making meaning' (Shah, 2004, p.556). In my experience this is only partially correct, as one of the difficulties of this position is that 'making meaning', that is, developing an understanding of interpretation of the context becomes a challenging endeavour if it is too familiar.

Thus, it was sometimes difficult to shift from the 'familiar' gaze of a classroom teacher, and to suspend my 'common sense' understandings of classroom activities, in an attempt to develop new understandings and insights, that I had previously accepted as 'natural.' I inevitably found myself grappling with the issues of familiarity of the context, and the notion of 'making the familiar strange,' (Atkinson and Delamont, 1995) was initially an extremely difficult concept to conceptualise and to apply, as I had taught at the school before, and held the misconception that I 'knew' everything about the setting. Initially everything seemed 'normal'; that is, nothing seemed unusual, and the so-called 'privileged' position that I occupied sometimes actually proved to be a hindrance. It also meant looking beyond the take-for-granted and orthodox stances of perceiving language in the classroom, as a means of communication between teachers and students. It involved attempting to understand the subtleties of the role of BVI Creole as it manifested itself in the traditional IRF exchanges (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975) in the classrooms where the study took place (see section, 4.9), and accounting for its position in relation to the hegemonic status of standard English, and the extent to which this relationship is bound up with issues of identity and power.

Similarly, during the interviews with the teachers I assumed insider and outsider positions, to the extent that I could identify with issues they were talking about. In other instances, I had the impression that the teacher-participants sometimes felt as though they did not need to elaborate on issues that they considered to be 'familiar' to me or that I may have experienced in the setting. In such cases I had to shift to an 'outsider' stance, and to distance myself in order to glean more information on current classroom practices, form their perspectives. Hence, a paradox was established: one in which I was 'familiar' with the situation, and the other in which I needed to apply 'new' lenses in order to explore classroom phenomena. In short, I needed to develop further insights into linguistic classroom practices in which I had previously participated, and which originally seemed 'common-sensical.'

4.13   Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of the methodology, and I have offered a rationale for drawing on the qualitative paradigm and in employing the case study approach. The chapter has also described the characteristics of the research study, including the methods of data collection, access to the setting, participants, analysis and the sampling strategies, and have considered the ethical issues which pervaded much of the research process. Finally, I have also outlined some of the challenges which are inherent in the research, in relation to the ambivalent role of insider/outsider stances whieh I occupied, and the influence of these on the decisions I made in the setting.

In the forthcoming chapters, five and six, I discuss the findings of the data in relation to the interviews which were conducted with the teachers and pupils.

Chapter 5

Teachers' Views of the
Role of Creole in the Classroom

The classroom represents the single most important point of contact between social dialects; it is where nonstandard speakers first become conscious of their own speech patterns, and where the regulations and impositions of the larger society first make themselves felt (Edwards, 2010, p. 119).

5.1   Introduction

This chapter addresses teachers' views and attitudes towards the status of BVI Creole in the classroom in relation to standard English. It illustrates that the deeply entrenched 'common sense' assumptions teachers make about language, may seep through their teaching practices, thereby perpetuating dominant language ideologies underpinning creole vis–a-vis standard English in a post-colonial classroom. Gramsci's (1971, 1985) theoretical formulation is useful in offering an account for the dominant ideologies which underpin the linguistic varieties in the classroom, and in further illuminating the 'common sense' assumptions that teachers make about the relationship between creole and standard English.

It also demonstrates that although contemporary BVI teaching practices are not based on the traditional ''eradication model'', that is, an approach which attempts to obliterate creole from the classroom, evidence from the data suggests that teachers may be 'interpellated' (Althusser, 1971) and constructed in certain 'subject positions' and discourses, of which they are largely unconscious, and these may influence their beliefs and world views, thus propagating the hegemonic status of standard English, at the expense of creole**.**

Further evidence suggests that social judgements pervade language classrooms in the BVI, and implicitly construct BVI Creole as the devalued linguistic variety in relation to standard English, I argue that a dominant monolingual ideology (Pennycook, 1994), or standard English ideology (Milroy and Milroy, 1999) that is, a criterion of 'correctness' which is used to implicitly measure the intrinsic social and linguistic value of language varieties like creole in relation to standard English, may be in evidence in BVI classrooms. It then suggests that in the absence of a clear understanding of the relationship between creole and standard English, which is

governed by a standard English ideology, BVI Creole may continue to be perceived as an interference in the development of written language, and the teaching of grammar may be equated with an exercise in 'correcting' the structural features derived from creole.

Part and parcel of hegemonic assumptions of language are notions of 'appropriateness' of language use and deficit models of language (Valencia, 1997, 2010). These theoretical formulations are bound up with questionable assumptions about language use and the cognitive abilities of speakers of marginalised varieties like creoles. I suggest that in the absence of an awareness of the 'common sense' assumptions which teachers make, both pupils and teachers may be implicated in the process of perpetuating the devaluation of BVI Creole in the classroom.

Despite the role of BVI Creole as the 'unmarked choice' (Myers-Scotton, 1993), among pupils in the classroom, its inclusion in classroom activities is largely tokenistic, that is to say, creole 'is included yet marginalised'. Teachers seem to be aware of the symbolic value of standard English, the 'marked choice' in the education system, and the importance of giving pupils access to the 'legitimate variety'. Furthermore, although creole is acknowledged in the classroom, it is not integrated as a cognitive resource, and it continues to be implicitly marginalised. The final section of the chapter offers insights into teachers' understandings and explanations for creole-speaking pupil's differential achievement in the classroom which they attribute to language socialisation practices.

 I provide evidence to suggest that although BVI classroom teachers do not seem to engage in the overt denigration and obliteration of creole in the classroom, their language classroom practices may be reproducing a hegemonic ideology that positions standard English as the superior linguistic variety in relation to BVI Creole. In the forthcoming section, I begin by addressing teachers' views which clearly suggest that they are not in favour of eradicating BVI Creole from the classroom, and I do this with reference to extracts derived from the interviews with Mrs Smith and Mrs Brown.

5.2 Teachers' Understandings of the Effects of Eradication Approaches

> *If you have to stop some children from using non-standard English they become confused or distracted or limited (Mrs Smith).*

This statement encapsulates the general sentiment of both teachers, in relation to the explicit erosion of pupils' oral language. In the English Language classrooms which I observed, the "eradication'' approaches to dialect were not employed by the teachers, that is, teachers did not engage in an explicit and systematic approach of eliminating pupils' vernacular from the classroom. This seems to suggest that teachers have transcended the archaic approach of replacing pupils' oral language with the 'superior' dialect.

Trudgill warns of the futility of attempts to obliterate pupils' oral language, that is, the process of eliminating 'bad grammar' from the classroom, and he maintains that engaging in such practices could create an element of 'linguistic insecurity' in the child. Furthermore, this practice constitutes a virtual assault on pupils' identities, as it sends subliminal messages that his/her language is inferior. As Trudgill informs us:

> *well....to reject a child's language is to appear is to reject not just him but, all those who are like him who he identifies with and values….standard English is upheld as a superior dialect which ought to replace the child's own, the children will come to resent and reject anything that has to do with standard English (Trudgill, 1975, p.76).*

As the forthcoming interview extracts suggest the teachers' sentiments appear to be consonant with Trudgill's views, as they suggest that a continual erosion of pupils' oral language may foster a degree of uncertainty about the value of their linguistic variety, to the extent that they may feel discouraged and inhibited from speaking. In other words, this practice may foster a sense of 'linguistic insecurity,' and as findings derived from research conducted by Simmonds McDonald (2004) and Siegel (1999b) suggest, pressuring pupils to speak standard English may impede or negatively impact upon their learning. As was illustrated in section (5.3) the teachers in my study, Mrs Smith and Mrs Brown, are conscious of the emblematic value of BVI Creole, and they also seem to be aware of the implications of the practice of overtly obliterating the vernacular from the classroom. The following extracts illustrate that teachers seemingly refrain from engaging in this practice:

> *If you have to stop the children from using non-standard English they become confused or distracted or limited when some children are forced to use the standard forms many times they are limited. Even though it is an English class, there are times when we have to allow them to express themselves in their language variety....we can get a lot out of them in that way (Mrs Smith).*

> *I will have to continually correct them as almost every sentence or statement from them is creole, so if you keep interrupting and correcting them….um*

they will get turned off....it will have a negative effect and they may not want to turn up for class (Mrs Smith).

Um....we do correct their speech from time to time...not often though as they would begin to feel a bit inhibited and self-conscious, and that the dialect is worthless....and this is what we want to avoid....after all it is part of their cultural heritage….and um….I don't think that we should discourage children from speaking the dialect (Mrs Smith).

If you keep correcting and interrupting the students they will get turned off….it will have a negative effect and they may not want to turn up for class or speak at all in the in the English class as they will be inhibited in their expression and Creole is a part of who they are….their culture. I do not want them to feel that their language is bad or wrong. As I said, it is a part of them [the pupils] (Mrs Brown).

The children's language is a part of their culture….and culture is an important aspect of the classroom....it plays an important role in the classroom. I tell them that the local dialects are important within our society, because they are a part of our culture so I do not down play the value of the dialect....if we lose that we have nothing. I go out of my way to emphasize that creole is an accepted language....we cannot ignore creole as it is a very real part of our society (Mrs Smith).

Bound up with teachers' views of the status of BVI Creole in the classroom are issues surrounding language use and identity which also reveal something about pupils' cultural solidarity and allegiance to creole (Sebba, 1993), the language of their homes and communities. More importantly, and relevant to this thesis, the use of BVI Creole as the 'unmarked choice' (Myers-Scotton, 1988, 1993b, 1995, 2006) among the pupils is highlighted in the English Language classroom. I now explore this issue.

5.3 Language Use in the English Language Classroom: 'Creole comes naturally'

Drawing on socio-psychological conceptions of language use, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) hypothesised that 'language acts are 'Acts of Identity', in which individuals reveal their multiple identities on the basis of the roles that they are capable of fulfilling in the relationships in which they take part' (p.85). They assert that individuals engage in 'Acts of Identity' which reveal, through their use of language, both their personal identities, and their sense of social and ethnic solidarity and differences. They further argue that individuals behave in accordance with behavioural patterns that are exhibited by the group which they find it most desirable to identify with. This issue has been addressed more fully in chapter two.

The teachers in the study emphasised the fact that BVI Creole, 'the unmarked choice' (Myers-Scotton, 1993) is the linguistic variety that pupils use most readily in the classroom, and that they rarely speak standard English even among those pupils whose linguistic repertoire includes standard English. This suggests that BVI Creole, which is the every-day language of the pupils has a high degree of symbolic value (Sebba, 1993) among its speakers.

It implies that, on one level, pupils' linguistic behaviour, that is, their 'Acts of identity' (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, 1985), are bound up in relationships with their peers and teachers in classroom settings. On another level, their linguistic behaviour is associated with the individuals in their homes and communities. However, while Tabouret-Keller (1985) offers an explanation for individuals' language use and identity in creole settings, Myers-Scotton (1988, 1993b, 1995) goes further in extending our understanding of language choices as they relate to social relationships. She maintains that the choices which individuals make are contingent on factors which relate to long or short term relationships between the speakers, and on the ways in which issues of power or solidarity feature during the interaction. Furthermore, with respect to pupils' use of BVI Creole in the classroom, the issue of solidarity seems to feature prominently in their social/interpersonal relationships.

The following statements made by the teachers reveal the extent to which issues of solidarity and cultural allegiances are bound up with pupils' oral language in the classroom:

> *As I said earlier….in the classroom the children tend to speak the dialect freely with one another, and to their teachers, though I sometimes insist depending on the exercises that we are doing….if we are doing grammar exercises, or a formal report that they speak in standard English (Mrs Smith).*

> *Sometimes….the students would like to know why they have to speak in standard English, and why not creole which is natural to them….so I will try to explain that they have to write in standard English under exam conditions to a great extent (Mrs Brown).*

More strikingly, both teachers acknowledge that the pupils generally speak BVI Creole freely in the classroom with little or no sanction from them, and that it is rare for pupils to converse in standard English, except upon teachers' insistence, as it is not a part of many pupils' day-to-day experiences in the home environment. The data is replete with examples of this:

When children are speaking to each other, informally they use the dialect freely…. though I have surprisingly on a rare occasion heard some students speaking….um making an effort to speak standard English ….in fact I don't think it was an effort as it seemed spontaneous, but I was surprised as you don't hear that too often (Mrs Smith).

Equally as insightful are the following comments made by the interviewed teachers about pupils' linguistic practices:

Most of them find it difficult to speak it [standard English] consistently and they feel more at ease speaking creole (Mrs Smith).

I would say that 95 percent of the time they speak dialect….the children are so comfortable and complacent that they don't need to speak standard English. It would be rare to hear them speaking it consistently and they are more inclined to revert to the non-standard form against the standard (Mrs Smith).

um....creole comes naturally to the children so that is what they would use first, but only if I insist or demand that that they do, then they would try to speak the standard, but it does not come naturally to them (Mrs Brown).

….for example if the children are required to make a presentation before the class and it is a graded exercise, then they might make an effort to speak in standard English, but it does not come naturally for most of them....some of them speak a bit of standard English during grammar lessons as well (Mrs Brown).

Some scholars (Edwards, 2010; Abd-el Jawad, 2006) argue that minority dialects, including English-based creoles persist despite having a low social prestige because of the strong symbolic value they retain for their group members. In a similar vein, the pupils' use of creole is an expression of their cultural solidarity which is implicated with their social relationships within their homes and communities. Furthermore, although the pupils in BVI language classrooms seem to be aware, implicitly, of the 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu, 1991) which may be derived from proficiency in standard English in terms of access to jobs and higher education, they do not readily speak standard English in the classroom. This suggests that the desire for pupils to identify with their peers, and to seek group solidarity far outweighs the negative social perceptions of BVI Creole as an historically inferior variety.

 A reoccurring motif derived from the interviews with the teachers is that 'standard English does not come naturally' to the pupils. Based on Myers-Scotton's theoretical perspective, the 'markedness model' posits that 'linguistic choices are based on

individually motivated negotiations of identity, and that in any given social situation when individuals enter a conversation a particular variety is expected' (Scotton, 1980, pp.262-263). The extracts derived from the interview data also seem to illustrate that the use of BVI Creole among the pupils is an "unmarked choice" (Myers-Scotton, 1988, 1993, 1995), that is, the 'expected' choice among the speakers. Based on this notion speakers live up to participants' expectations regarding language choice, which are based on speakers' previous experiences.

Owing to the symbolic value of BVI Creole which is regarded as an emblem of pupils identities and cultural solidarity, pupils in BVI classrooms do not expect their classmates/peers to speak standard English as a 'norm', as they would regard it as highly unusual. This confirms the hypothesis that in 'particular well-defined role relationships' to use Scotton's (1980) term, there is a tacit agreement which relates to the unmarked linguistic choice that is used in the relationship. In these social situations, creole is 'safer' as 'it conveys no surprises because it indexes an expected interpersonal relationship' (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p.75).

Further evidence of this is illustrated in the following comments by the teachers.

> *Creole is a part of who they are ….part of their culture. I do not want them [children] to feel that their language is bad or wrong, and as I said it is a part of who they are (Mrs Smith).*

> *It is very common to hear creole in the children's speech in the classroom and the majority of students in the classroom speak creole naturally and spontaneously, it is their natural way of speaking and that's what they speak….Most of them find it difficult to speak it [standard English] consistently and feel more at ease speaking the creole (Mrs Smith).*

> *um….in fact they [the pupils] rarely speak standard....well not consistently at least and They try to defend their use of the dialect and they feel free using the dialect rather than trying to make an attempt....a greater effort to speak standard English as they are not in the habit of using standard English (Mrs Smith).*

Having looked at teachers' views and their understandings of pupils' language use/choice in the classroom in which BVI Creole is regarded as the 'unmarked choice' (Myers-Scotton, 1988, 1993), in the next section I turn my attention to the teachers' choice of language variety in the classroom, and I suggest that some insights may be drawn from their linguistic choices.

5.4   'As the English teacher, our job is to teach them Standard English': 'Proper' English or Creole in the Language Classroom?

In this section, I look specifically at teachers' choice of linguistic variety in the classroom and the implications of their choices. Both teachers acknowledge that standard English is a form 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu, 1991), that is, it privileges some language varieties as highly valued resources, at the expense of others. However, due to the authoritative status of English in the classroom, BVI Creole is implicitly devalued and undermined. As the data in the previous section suggests, pupils speak BVI Creole freely and spontaneously in the classroom during English Language lessons.

With respect to the teachers' choice of linguistic variety Mrs Smith, in particular, disagrees with the view that teachers should speak creole in the classroom. Both teachers, as I noted during classroom observations, generally spoke standard English in the classroom as they believed that it was their role to give pupils 'access' to, standard English, which is regarded as a highly valued 'symbolic resource' (De Mejia, 2002; Heller, 1992). In this perspective, language as a 'symbolic resource' includes, 'linguistic skills, specialised skill and knowledge that gives the individual access to social, economic, educational and material resources (De Mejia, 2002, p.36). Furthermore, Mrs Brown maintains that her choice of linguistic variety, standard English, should serve as a model which pupils should aspire to or emulate. She states unequivocally:

> *….If some language teachers sometimes insisted that the children speak standard English, when addressing them then the children would do so….I do this myself sometimes, but if I note that the child is having some difficulty then I am not so rigid. But for some students the only time that they [the pupils] have to practice standard English is when they are in the classroom. For this reason I think that teachers across all subject areas should make an effort to speak standard English as some of them speak creole in the classroom....we need to enforce that standard English should be used in formal setting....and the classroom is to some extent a formal setting. A number of teachers speak the dialect, and as I said before I don't think they should be doing that....some of them even make mistakes in their writing on the board and children copy them....things like um….spelling and subject and verb-agreement (Mrs Brown).*

Another striking example of the teachers' views of their choice of linguistic variety in the classroom is evidenced in the following extract.

> *Well some teachers speak creole....but I do not agree with that. In the English Department we try to promote the view that the teacher not only speaks standard English but tries to encourage students to speak it during the English lesson, because as I said earlier it is the only time….the only opportunity some of them have to speak standard English. I think....perhaps eventually it will rub off to some extent. I also feel that if teachers in other subject areas were to reinforce the speaking of standard English in the classroom then students would see the importance of it....or at least speaking it in the classroom then they [the pupils] could lapse into the dialect outside the classroom....they would know that there is a time and place for the dialect and a time and place for standard English (Mrs Brown).*

In the preceding extracts the creole vernacular is being portrayed as the structurally and linguistically incoherent and inferior variety, whose structures are regarded as 'mistakes in writing,' when measured against the social and linguistic 'norm', standard English, that is underpinned by a dominant monolingual ideology. Labov's (1972) early research findings suggest that non-standard varieties are 'highly structured, systematic, rule governed systems' and languages in their own right have helped to challenge the notion of a linguistic deficit. Despite these findings, 'common sense' assumptions about the inferior position of creole in relation to standard English still persist in BVI classrooms, and these may propagate its authoritative status.

As is evidenced in the preceding interview extracts, the teachers in the study are not in agreement that colleagues should speak BVI Creole in the classroom, and I am suggesting that their use of standard English, the 'legitimate language' takes on the function of the 'marked choice' (Myers-Scotton, 1993) and this helps to establish the power differentials between teachers and pupils. Furthermore, teachers' use of standard English, the 'legitimate language' (Bourdieu, 1991) enables them to exercise a formal 'authoritative footing' (Goffman, 1981) in the classroom and this reflects a 'marked choice'. According to Myers-Scotton (1988, 1995), this choice is more likely to occur in relationships where the power differential is a factor, which may enable teachers to assert their position of authority in the classroom, and to further establish a social distance between teacher and pupil. Mrs Smith later acknowledges, in the forthcoming extracts, that she occasionally speaks BVI Creole when discussing community issues in the classroom, during break-time or after lessons, and this seems to suggest that the linguistic variety is being used here as an "unmarked choice,'' which is emblematic of the teacher's cultural solidarity and identity, she shares with her pupils.

The forthcoming interview excerpt also demonstrated evidence of Mrs Brown's shifting or alternating between the terms 'creole' and 'dialect', which have connotations of

inferiority, in relation to standard English, whose status is largely associated and aligned with the socio-economically dominant groups in society (Trudgill, 2000**).** In chapter two (section 2.10) I stressed the importance for teachers in creole-speaking settings to be aware of the distinctions between a 'dialect' and a 'language', and how this knowledge may influence their understandings of the blurred relationship between the two entities. This issue will be taken up again in chapter seven.

Additionally, the recurring phrase in the interview extracts, 'lapse into the dialect,' implies that creole is in some way deficient, and this also seems to suggest that the value of BVI Creole may be implicitly and unconsciously undermined in the classroom, as the inferior 'Other' variety, in relation to standard English. These 'lapses' also imply a failure to maintain a particular standard or criterion, when matched with the socio-politically dominant position of the 'legitimate' variety. As I have stated, teachers are aware of the cultural value of BVI Creole; however, they are also aware of the value of speaking standard English in the classroom, and the 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu, 1991) to be derived from access to the dominant variety, as the forthcoming extracts suggest.

> *I think that teachers can speak creole, um….I believe that most of them do. I speak it from time to time. I may use a bit of creole here and there from time to time on what we are discussing but not as a rule….if we are talking about an event that occurred in the community or if we are talking outside the classroom I would speak the dialect but I don't believe that the classroom teacher should speak the dialect in the classroom as a rule....and the children don't expect the English teacher to do it either....although some of the subject teachers do speak the dialect in the classroom they may think that speaking creole is a way to try to get through to the students....but as an English teacher our job is to teach them standard English, and so we should be speaking standard English....the children understand both varieties, and if the teacher speaks creole because she thinks that the children do not understand standard English, she is making an incorrect assumption (Mrs Smith).*

> *um….for some students the only time that they have to practice standard English is when they are in the classroom. For this reason, I think that teachers across all subject areas should make an effort to speak standard English….as some of them [teachers] do speak creole (Mrs Brown).*

As is evidenced in these extracts while teachers 'appreciate' and 'applaud' the cultural value of BVI Creole, they are also aware that pupils also need access to the dominant language, and the 'symbolic value' that is associated with it, in the education system as well as the wider society. Applauding and romanticising the cultural value of creole without acknowledging the need to give pupils access to the 'symbolic resources' associated with standard English, may result in silencing the voices of pupils who

speak English-based creoles, thus excluding them from access to 'authoritative' discourses. As Janks observes 'an acknowledgement of diversity without access ghettoisses students' (Janks, 2010, p.25).

The notion of explicit access to speakers of marginalised varieties has been promoted by some scholars (for example, Cope and Kalantzis, 1993; Delpit 1988, 1995). Drawing on the notion of genre, Cope and Kalantzis (1993) argue in favour of making the characteristics of genre transparent in order to give pupils, who speak marginalised varieties, access to powerful discourses. Similarly, Delpit (1995) also asserts that 'if you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier' (p.25). This position seems to suggest that by merely making the rules of the 'culture of power' transparent and clear-cut, 'access' to 'authorised' discourses is straightforward and guaranteed. Furthermore, given the institutional relations of power that prohibit the access of speakers of marginalised varieties to mainstream discourses, it seems somewhat naïve to assume that the 'voice' of the vernacular speaker will be readily and automatically acknowledged.

This section addressed the issues relating to teachers' choice of language variety in the classroom, and the ways this may help to construct standard English as the 'legitimate' variety and to engender teachers' authoritative stance. It also suggested that creole is implicitly undermined in the classroom and positioned as the inferior linguistic variety. In the next section, I suggest that standard English is constructed as a privileged linguistic resource at the expense of BVI Creole which is implicitly marginalised in the classroom. Although it is included in classroom activities such as poetry, comprehension and narrative writing, from time to time, I suggest that BVI Creole is not fully acknowledged as a linguistic resource in its own right, and its role in the BVI classroom practices is largely tokenistic. In other words, the creole vernacular is 'included yet marginalised'.

5.5   The Implicit Marginalisation of Creole in the English Language Classroom: Included but Marginalised?

Students might be allowed to use their own variety in speech but the standard is required in formal contexts and in written work. Students can often use 'non-standard dialects' to create atmosphere or characterisation in drama and 'creative writing,' but the 'standard' variety remains the norm (Janks, 2010, p.114).

The above statement is useful in this section as it resonates with the teachers' practices in BVI English Language classrooms. As I indicated in a previous section of this chapter (section 5.2) teachers in the study have moved beyond the traditional practice of overtly denigrating and obliterating pupils' oral language, and they also seem to have an awareness of the negative implications of this practice. However, although they do not engage in this practice, as is evidenced in the interview data, and my initial classroom observations, there is evidence to suggest that BVI Creole is not fully integrated in the classroom.

There is further evidence to suggest that the creole vernacular is included in drama and narrative writing. However, despite these efforts evidence from the interview data suggests that BVI Creole is not fully acknowledged nor fully integrated as a separate linguistic entity in classroom practices. This is encapsulated in the following statements by the teachers:

> *….as I said before the children mainly speak creole, and from time to time they come they come across West Indian writers, many of whom write dialect. Sometimes, we have dialect poetry or extracts from novels….that serve as comprehension exercises as this is the language of the students (Mrs Smith).*

> *So, although the dialect is not openly discouraged I would say....sometimes it is encouraged in the sense that it is okay to write it (creole) in the conversation or dialogue in the story....in the story it goes along well with character development….but in all other forms of writing they are required to use standard English, so it is only with the narrative form of writing that they are allowed to that they….are allowed to write dialect in conversation (Mrs Brown).*

Furthermore:

> *….when they are writing short stories and they are depicting a particular character in the story then they are free to write in creole or the dialect. Or they might see some short extracts of creole in their comprehension texts books....apart from this everything else should be written in standard English....we allow them to develop the various characters and....they could use creole in that particular context (Mrs Brown).*

These comments clearly indicate that although BVI Creole is included in some activities in the English Language classroom**,** its inclusion is tokenistic and it is carefully compartmentalised. In other words, BVI Creole is not fully integrated nor acknowledged as a separate linguistic entity even though pupils speak it freely in every-day classroom situations**.** This appears to be consonant with experiences in

multilingual settings where 'students' languages are included but marginalised' (Janks, 2010, p.114).

In the previous section, I suggested that despite classroom practices which include the vernacular, BVI Creole remains marginalised, and implicitly devalued in language classroom practices. The forthcoming section examines the ideological/ hegemonic assumptions that teachers make in the classroom which are deeply ingrained and which appear 'natural' common-sensical to the extent that they are 'lived out' (Williams, 1977) and have become an integral part of teaching practices, and of the day-to-day experiences of the classroom. The next section illustrates that BVI English language classroom practices may implicitly reproduce a dominant monolingual ideology, which sustains the hegemonic status of standard English at the expense of BVI Creole.

5.6 Propagating a Monolingual Ideology in BVI English Language Classrooms: Unquestioned Assumptions?

Prescriptive views about language which are underpinned by a monolingual ideology or a 'standard language ideology' (Milroy and Milroy, 1999; Milroy, 2007) about language are part and parcel of hegemonic assumptions that are made about creole varieties in relation to standard English. Because BVI Creole is an unacknowledged and devalued linguistic resource, it helps to foster what may be described as the 'grammar syndrome'. This involves an obsession with correcting 'errors' or the supposedly linguistically deficient structural features derived from creole which may occur in pupils' writing.

In addition, as sites which reproduce the 'legitimate language' (Bourdieu, 1991) schools advance a 'deficit view' of learners, from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, by imposing or prescribing a linguistic 'norm' that characterises and recognises a socially acceptable yardstick of linguistic 'correctness' (Macedo et al., 2003, p. 41). The 'contemporary deficit model' like its antecedents, (Bereiter and Engleman, 1966; Orr, 1987), is based on the assumption that the academic failure of pupils who originate from marginalised groups in society, is attributed to cultural and linguistic deficits or deficiencies, and underpinning this model of language are hegemonic assumptions about language that position standard English as the privileged linguistic variety in relation to creoles. Although these views have been largely discredited, there is evidence to suggest that there may be a revival or rebirth of the deficit theory in contemporary educational practice and policy (Valencia, 1997;

Valencia and Pearl, 1997; Valencia, 2010), and its resurgence is an indication of the 'seductiveness of such rhetoric' (Lippi-Green, 1997) in educational environments.

Based on evidence gleaned from the data, I am suggesting that the misguided legacy of the deficit theory, which has resurfaced in different guises, still seems to persist, and the views derived from this model of thinking are unconsciously and implicitly interwoven in the fabric of contemporary BVI classroom practices, where they may play a role in reproducing the hegemonic assumptions about language. There is further evidence to suggest that the discourses of the 'deficit thinking' model may still have a significant influence on teaching practices, albeit in subtle forms, in contemporary BVI classrooms. This model insidiously seeps through teaching practices, as it offers 'common sense' explanations for the failure of many speakers of English-based creoles to learn written standard English.

In the forthcoming examples, Mrs Brown seems to attribute the difficulties that some pupils may have in making the transition from creole to written standard language, to the structural attributes of creole. In this light, the linguistic characteristics of creole are perceived as 'bad grammar' or 'bad English', and the purported aim of the teaching of grammar is to 'correct' these features which may be evident in pupils' writing. In this perspective, grammar teaching tends to be aligned with notions of 'error, accuracy, correctness and judgements about individuals and their intelligence' (Myhill, 2010, p. 130). In the following excerpts, Mrs Brown also seems to support the view that grammar drills are necessary to enhance the writing of creole-speaking pupils; however, underlying her explanation seems to reflect an element of tentativeness about the effectiveness of such an approach. As she states:

> *um....what we try to do to correct these problems is we give them [the children] drilled or practice exercises in grammar, but I am not sure if this works. When we give them exercises in grammar and verb tenses they know exactly what to do, but the problem is the application in writing and this is....where we try to get them to edit because I think this may help rather than just giving grammar drills per se....and we may have to teach grammar drills in context and to encourage them to edit their work (Mrs Brown).*

> *We do teach them [the pupils] grammar in addition to helping to improve the structures in their writing....and we may have to revert to teaching them what they should have covered in the early years of secondary schooling such as the various verbs, as their writing reflects not having had enough drills in the first second and third years....so we are now trying to address that (Mrs Brown).*

The following extracts reflect striking examples of 'common sense' assumptions about the relationship between creole in relation to the authoritative position which standard English occupies, and as I suggested these may be reproduced in the English Language classroom discourses. These extracts illustrate, based on Mrs Brown's views, that BVI Creole lacks its own inherent structure in relation to standard English, which is 'completely foreign' to some pupils. Further, the reoccurrence of use of the notion 'interference' seems to implicitly suggest that creole is a hindrance to learning the dominant language. The following extracts reflect these views:

I would say that there is some interference from the dialect going on, well...some of the students hardly know how to use the past tense, past perfect or the future perfect tenses....for example they would say 'ah goin' see you tomorrow' instead of 'I shall be seeing you'....they don't use these tenses in their speech at all. So these lack of tenses, and the subject-verb agreement and so forth are reflected, and these interfere with their writing. Some tenses are completely foreign to them....they are familiar with the basic one like the present, past and present continuous but hardly any other (Mrs Brown).

Sometimes....for example the children would say, 'he gorn' when they would like to say 'he went' or 'he has gone'. Or....they would say a part of the present tense....for example, they would not say 'he is here' but instead they would say 'he here'. And if they want to say 'he came yesterday' they would say, 'he come yesterday.' There is definitely an interference from the oral language, because that is the way they speak and that's the way they use the dialect (Mrs Brown).

Well....there is definitely an interference from creole in children's writing....especially in the tenses....they tend to fit in the same tenses that they speak in their writing....sometimes it is not the full present tense or they don't use their past tenses as well as the future....and for the most part what they say is in the present as there is hardly any use of the future and past tenses....and so when you are teaching them the various tenses they are shocked because they don't know half these tenses exist, because they don't use the....and the subject verb agreement can also be a problem (Mrs Brown).

Some early studies conducted in the Anglophone Caribbean region (Winer, 1989, 1990; Elsasser and Irvine, 1987) suggested that creole may be an interference in the development of written standard English, and this is also echoes one of the early prevailing views among parents and educators. The use of the word "interference" or 'negative transfer' (Ellis, 1994) essentially, suggests that the main obstacle to learning is an interference or hindrance from the old or existing language, and although, the notion of "negative transfer" or interference may be in evidence in the written language development of second language or bi-dialectal learners, research findings

suggest that it may be overestimated, or it may not be as prevalent as previously thought (Ellis, 1994, Siegel, 2006a).

Further, evidence derived from teachers' interviews suggests that interference from the pupils L1, BVI Creole, may be one of the possible reasons for some creole–speaking pupils' failure to develop proficiency in written standard English. If grammatical structures, derived from pupils oral language are measured against the monolithic status of English, the s that may occur in pupils' classroom writing are perceived as 'lapses in grammar', 'bad grammar', 'deficient', 'incorrect grammar', or ''incorrect structures' may help to reproduce the standard English ideology and the hegemonic status of English in the classroom.

> *Some persistent areas of difficulty involve verb tenses as creole pays very little attention to past tense endings and to past participles, and the subject-verb agreement....um when these occur in their writing [pupils'] I would circle or underline them as they are incorrect grammar and this indicates to them [pupils'] that these are incorrect structures in their writing (Mrs Smith).*

> *I do not agree with teaching grammar incidentally and I believe that we need to teach more grammar um….if I see a reoccurring or error in writing I would focus more on that aspect of grammar and teach more grammar exercises like subject-verb agreement and um....the student can get full marks on the content area of the writing even though there are lapses in grammar when creole slips into their writing....um the children's speech patterns govern what they write....whatever is used in their speech will tend to be reproduced um….their speech will affect their writing (Mrs Smith).*

The interview extracts also suggest that the taken-for-granted assumptions which teachers make are implicated with a dominant monolingual ideology, and in this perspective the value of BVI Creole is measured against a barometer of 'correctness' which is ingrained in the authoritative status of standard English. This is reflected in the following excerpts.

> *If I am teaching expository writing, I might ask them [the pupils] to explain how to make or do something in front of the class in standard English….before they are asked to write it, and many of them [the pupils]lapse into creole naturally. They know what to say, what the correct thing is, but they simply say that is too difficult and that it is too much effort to speak standard English....um we may be hindering their standard English expression by not allowing them to express themselves properly (Mrs Smith).*

> *We allow them to use the dialect freely, but sometimes I ask them to upgrade it to giving me the standard forms....while we allow them to speak the dialect it is not so much about that, but it is more about the language that comes naturally to them (Mrs Brown).*

If I attempt to correct them….they would behave as though, 'well, we speaking English.' In their minds they [the pupils] are speaking English but when you try to correct them then you realise that they know the correct thing (Mrs Brown).

As I said earlier some students speak a deep dialect….a low-level creole and….they tend to have more grammatical errors in their writing and the oral creole structures influence writing and….the oral structures come out in their writing....these creole structures influence writing....and most of the time the children speak as they write….and we see this in their writing because of the way they speak, and the children assume that they are saying the correct thing (Mrs Smith).

In addition, the teachers' repeated references to the 'lack of tenses', 'absence of linking verbs, or 'incorrect' use of tenses in pupils' speech, as well as 'lapses in creole' all suggest an innate deficiency in the creole vernacular. In addition, the following phrases seem to further suggest that the structural features, derived from BVI Creole, are perceived to be indicative of a structurally and linguistically deficient variety which is measured against the monolithic status of standard English. These include: 'children speak as they write', 'grammatical errors in writing', 'children assume that they are saying the correct thing', 'creole structures influence writing.' There is also the suggestion that grammatical features derived from creole, which may occur in pupils writing, are regarded as an interference which encroaches on pupils' written language development. Furthermore, other key phrases which also suggest that the hegemonic status of English is evident in classroom practices include: 'they know the correct thing', 'upgrade it by giving me the standard forms', 'express themselves properly', and 'we may be hindering their standard English by not allowing them to speak properly.'

In these extracts of data grammar teaching is constructed as the 'tool' which automatically obliterates the 'incorrect' features derived from pupils' language, which may occur in their writing. Furthermore, judgements about grammaticality are largely based on prescriptive norms of written English (Milroy and Milroy, 1999), and in creole-speaking contexts the teaching of grammar runs in tandem with prescriptive views of language, and these are bound up with negative attitudes and implicit devaluations of language. Measuring the structural features of creole against a criterion of 'correctness', embodied in a standard English ideology, may also foster a misunderstanding of the relationship between oral and written language in a creole-speaking context.

Modes of language, oral and written, have different functions which represent different kinds of interpretations and meaning systems (Halliday, 1987), and this means that '....one mode of language, speech, is judged inappropriately by another mode of language, writing' (Kress, 1979, p.48). Notions about 'correctness' of language usage seem to be inextricably linked to the prescriptive rules of grammar and, as I have suggested, the structural and linguistic features derived from creole, which are closely scrutinised may be regarded as an 'interference' in the development of pupils' writing abilities. I maintain that the practice of measuring the grammar of creole against a criterion of 'correctness,' which is used to judge its social and linguistic value, may help to cement the hegemonic position of standard English, and to reproduce 'common sense' (Gramsci, 1971, 1985) beliefs about language which may become 'naturalised' in a creole environment.

In the previous section, I suggested that a monolingual ideology of language is reproduced at the expense of BVI Creole which is the devalued variety in BVI English Language classrooms. Part and parcel of a monolingual ideology are the taken-for-granted assumptions that teachers make about creole, and this may foster the notion of creole as a linguistic variety which is structurally and linguistically deficient, vis-à-vis the monolithic status of standard English. In the forthcoming section, I examine issues which relate to norms of 'appropriateness' emerging from teachers' interview extracts, and I suggest that these views may also be implicated with the hegemonic status of English in the classroom.

5.7 'There is a time and place for Creole and a time a place for Standard English': Appropriateness or Inappropriateness of Language Use?

'Common sense' views dictate that linguistic varieties like creoles are an inappropriate choice/code in the classroom context, and in the previous section teachers' interview extracts, along with my observations, confirmed that pupils spoke BVI Creole freely and spontaneously in the classroom, without negative sanction. However, while there is a tacit assertion among the teachers that creole is inappropriate in the classroom context, as the popular view holds, pupils' use of the vernacular during classroom interaction, contrasts with this norm. The following extracts exemplify the teachers' positions:

> ....students need to be equipped with the skills to use language appropriately and in the appropriate contexts....they need to be able to function within another parameter of language which is standard English (Mrs Smith).

....we want the students to learn that….creole is only acceptable within a certain context and that the dialect has its place. It is appropriate within certain settings and um....they need to know that the dialect has its limitations (Mrs Smith).

I don't tell my students that dialect is wrong. I don't tell them….well this is good English or bad English....I tell them that they are writing or speaking dialect or standard English. Dialect has its place and standard English has its place. I do not say that we should get rid of the dialect and um....throw it out of the classroom, because it is the students way of communicating....and it is the language they feel comfortable with (Mrs Smith).

This section also suggests that the notion of 'appropriateness' seems to offer an apparent resolution of the paradox that standard English is to be taught, while the use of other varieties is to be 'respected' (Fairclough, 1995), and this helps to further cement notions of inferiority or unworthiness of the 'Other' linguistic varieties. This is illustrated in the excerpts from Mrs Brown's interview.

If children are encouraged to publish their writing….not only in the school magazine but in the newspaper....it may encourage them to perfect their writing because will know that their audience is not just the students in the classroom, but the general public….they may want to impress the people who are reading the letter....so I think perhaps if we could encourage publication of their writing it would help to develop an awareness of the proper context.…the time and place for the dialect or standard English (Mrs Brown).

When they [pupils] are writing or presenting a speech to their class we encourage them to use standard English….to make it as formal as possible so that they can prepare themselves to speak in public and to use the appropriate language which is standard English....and to use the acceptable language for that purpose….we stress the appropriateness of creole in drama and….and the use of dialogue in the narrative. They can use the dialect when they are communicating with their friends, their peers or classmates because it has its place in society, but I told them that there are formal occasions when they should be able to switch from the dialect to standard English automatically and be able to distinguish between the appropriate context for the dialect and standard English (Mrs Brown).

Based on these extracts one gets the sense that Mrs. Smith is well informed, and seemingly has a sound grasp of classroom practices, and her 'common sense' views of 'appropriateness' of language use dictate that marginalised varieties like creoles are 'appropriate' for specific situations and contexts. In this light, BVI Creole which 'has its limitations' is relegated to drama, poetry and dialogue in narrative writing is only 'appropriate' for some classroom activities, but not for others. Furthermore, underpinning Mrs Smith's phrases which include, 'creole has its limitations,' and 'it has its time and its place' are dominant ideologies of language which run counter to every-

day assumptions about language use. Thus, it is not so much the term 'appropriate' which is the problem, but the way it is used sometimes, subtly, to support and propagate ideologies (Lippi-'Green, 1997, Fairclough, 1992).

Inherent in the 'appropriateness' model of language use are notions of prescriptivism and ideologies of language, and this model is ideological in the sense that it conveys political goals as a sociolinguistic truth (Fairclough, 1995). Thus, 'Standard English is preferred, obligatory, appropriate and widely used while the 'Other' languages are narrow, inappropriate and merely tolerated' (Lippi Green, 1997, p.110). The applications of norms of 'appropriateness' in classroom contexts, where dominant and marginalised varieties coexist, do not simply consist of a linear process that amounts to a straightforward matching of linguistic features to a particular situation (Fairclough, 1992). Rather, the concept of appropriateness is not entirely 'innocent'; rather, 'it is underpinned by substantial political and ideological issues' (Fairclough, 1992, p.42).

The previous section examined the 'appropriateness' model of language use with relevance to a creole setting, and it suggested that these norms are buttressed by hegemonic assumptions about language. While creole-speaking pupils' difficulties in acquiring written language proficiency may be ascribed to their cultural and linguistic 'deficiencies', the next section examines teachers' explanations for pupils' school failure, from the perspective of language socialisation practices. The next section explores this issue.

5.8   Teachers' Explanations of the Under-Achievement of Creole-Speaking Pupils: 'If parents speak standard English at home…. they are helping the children to speak standard English.'

In offering an explanation of school failure Bourdieu's (1991) sociological perspectives of language are useful in that it draws our attention away from the individual and focuses on the wider social context, and the inherent relations of power. In a similar vein, Auerbach (1995) also reminds us of the importance of developing an understanding of the social and ideological relations within the classroom which are associated within the wider society. As she puts it, 'the classroom functions as a kind of microcosm of the broader social order' (Auerbach, 1995, p.9).

In teachers' views creole-speaking pupils in BVI language classrooms who exhibit the kind of 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1991) derived from their 'habitus', which is valued by the schools, are more likely to be successful in the acquisition of the dominant

language, or the 'culture of power' so use Delpit's (1996) words. In other words, their language socialisation practices in their homes and communities, or their 'Ways with Words' (Heath, 1986) play a role in their success in language use. In the forthcoming excerpt Mrs Smith expresses a view to this effect:

> *I think that it is important for the teacher to understand how the arrangement of the sentences and the syntax in the dialect differs from standard English….it would be helpful as it would tell us something about their origins um….if you understand that you would have an idea why children say and write these things in this way, And, um….the child's initial exposure to language is important….children are exposed to language very early and it depends on how much the children learn at an early age um….this may affect how they respond or progress [in language] later on (Mrs Smith).*

In Bourdieu's vision, the nature of middle class children's language orientation` in the family, amounts to the kind of 'cultural capital' that is congruent with that which the school presupposes, and which may ensure their success. In this perspective, the school is regarded as one the primary institutions in reproducing socioeconomic inequalities and social stratification (Bourdieu, 1991; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Furthermore, children's 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1991), that is, the skills, habits and language socialisation orientations, derived from their home and communities, controls access to the 'legitimate language,' which is largely selective and unequal, given that all children do not begin school at equal starting points. Thus, 'Speakers lacking the legitimate competence are de facto excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required' (Bourdieu, 1991, p.55).

Similarly, Gramsci (1971) also alludes to the role of the social status and socialisation in the context of the family as an explanation in facilitating or impeding some pupils' success in school.

> *In the whole series of families, especially in the familiar intellectual strata, the children find in their family life a preparation, of a prolongation and completion of school life; they breathe in....a whole quantity of notions and attitudes which facilitate the educational process (Gramsci, 1971, p.31).*

Because some pupils' language socialisation practices may be at odds with those of the school, they may be required to take on a new 'linguistic habitus,' and indeed new identities, which may diverge substantially from the practices of their homes and communities, and this may be a challenging endeavour for some pupils. A striking example, based on Mrs Brown's explanation for pupils' underachievement in language is attributed to the home environment, and this is conveyed in the following interview extract:

I think the home background has a tremendous effect on students. If parents speak standard English at home....or even if they don't consistently but they are helping the children to speak standard English, it makes a big difference and those students try….they are the ones who try to speak standard English when they are in the classroom, but rarely as all the other classmates are speaking the dialect (Mrs Brown).

Having looked briefly at teachers' explanations for some creole-speaking pupils' underachievement in learning the dominant language, the forthcoming section offers further insights, emerging from the interviews, in which the teachers attribute pupils' abilities to code-switch, between BVI Creole and standard English, to their language socialisation practices in the home environment. To this I now turn.

5.8.1   Code Switching and Pupils' Linguistic/Cultural Capital: 'There are some children who can do that….they can switch, and as I said it is related to the home environment.'

I am suggesting that the implicit taken-for granted assumptions that teachers make in relation to BVI Creole, of which they are largely unconscious, may further play a role in excluding pupils from acquiring the kind of cultural/linguistic capital that is privileged in different 'fields' (Bourdieu, 1991) of social interaction like the school. As Bourdieu observes successful language use involves 'not just the competence to produce grammatically well-formed expressions, but the capacity to produce expressions (a propos) for a particular market' (Bourdieu, 1991, p.29).

In the teachers' understandings some pupils' have the ability to code-switch, as the situation demands, and this may have implications for their writing achievement, and they attribute this to pupils' language socialisation practices. Examples derived from the teachers' perspectives, which seem to allude to the relationship between 'cultural capital' and differential language achievement of creole-speaking pupils, and their abilities to code-alternate is conveyed in the following:

Well....there are some children who can do that….they can switch, and as I said it is related to the home environment....they hear the standard at home and their parents tend to be educated and know the value of speaking standard English. Those are the ones who can readily switch and they tend to be better writers….then on the other hand there are those who only hear creole in the home (Mrs Brown).

Um….the better students tend to be the ones who switch with ease….and those who speak standard English at home (Mrs Brown).

Well….the children who are adept at switching between creole and standard English are the ones whose parents have tertiary education….who have good jobs and know the value of speaking standard English….um they are able to master both the dialect and the standard as their parents help them with the standard….those are the children who are able to make the switch and you tend to find that those children who have difficulties tend to be those whose parents are cleaners or come from the lower classes of society (Mrs Brown).

Some children speak more dialect than others....um….they come from low-level creole speaking homes than other students and they are the ones that have the most difficulty with writing...it comes from the background and the home environment. Although, they all speak dialect, those who speak a little less dialect tend to be better writers and they are the one who can easily switch between the dialect and standard English....orally and in writing. Um....it comes from the home....maybe at home standard English is spoken….and some parents tend not to focus on the education of their children….they leave it to the school to be responsible for that….they don't insist on reading or writing until the child reaches school (Mrs Smith).

Well….they [the pupils] are already comfortable with creole….I want them to be comfortable with standard English as well….I would like the children to fit in....and to be able to switch when it is necessary, and not to have to….not have difficulty in speaking standard English when it is necessary, or in writing it (Mrs Smith).

In these extracts the teachers suggest that pupils' 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1991) plays a pivotal role in their success or failure in language achievement, and in their abilities to be able to use language in different 'fields' (Bourdieu, 1991), that is, the social spaces or domains in which language use is valued. Based on teachers' views there is the underlying assumption that pupils from middle class homes, where the use of standard English is prevalent, are more likely to be successful or proficient in using both BVI Creole and standard English, than their so-called 'working class' counterparts. The teachers' views may also exemplify a classic case of a self-perpetuating prophesy (Rist, 1970), which may translate into a form of labelling, which is based on the expectations that teachers may have of their pupils.

The argument that I am attempting to put forward is that while some pupils' language socialisation may be incompatible with the practices of the school, they may be further disadvantaged if the 'common sense' (Gramsci, 1971, 1985) assumptions which are perpetuated in the English Language classrooms remain unquestioned. Having examined teachers' explanations for pupils' abilities to switch between linguistic varieties, the final section briefly addresses teachers' alternative explanations for pupils' language achievement.

5.8.2   Teachers' Alternative Explanations: 'reading helps with writing….'

While the teachers in the study tended to attribute pupils' differential achievement in acquiring standard English to their early language orientation, they also acknowledged that pupils success in acquiring the 'legitimate language' (Bourdieu, 1991) may also be attributed to other variables such as reading, and such practices are also part and parcel of language socialisation practices in the home.

Mrs Brown succinctly puts it this way:

> *I also tell them that the only time they [children] have to practice standard English is in the English classroom because....I am not sure that they practice at home, or with their peers, in the community or anywhere for that matter (Mrs Brown).*

The forthcoming extracts also convey teachers' beliefs and understandings regarding the effect of reading on creole-speaking pupils' writing abilities:

> *….One of the things I do to address persistent difficulties in writing is to stress more reading....um reading helps with writing and I would encourage more reading…. difficulties in writing are related to a lack of reading so I would stress more reading um….reading helps with writing and many of them do not read (Mrs Smith).*

> *This [problem] is also common among those students where not much reading is done in the home. I find that children who do a lot of reading, their standard English is much improved….that's why I encourage students to read and um….even if they come from the lower echelons of society they should be able to improve their expression and writing in standard English (Mrs Brown).*

> *I think if children in this school were reading extensively they would improve in their standard English….we [teachers] are supporting the implementation of book reports during the summer as students need to improve their reading....they are not doing as much reading as they should and their work is slipping, they are weakening in these areas of writing because of a lack of reading (Mrs Brown).*

In these interview excerpts, the teachers are offering an alternative explanation for variable achievement in standard English among the pupils. Mrs Brown also states that reading may also assist pupils in developing their written language expression, despite originating from 'the lower echelons of society,' where their 'primary Discourses (Gee, 2008) diverge significantly from the dominant linguistic variety.'

Reading as it relates to the enhancement of writing abilities, is also consistent with Wallace's (1987) view. She stressed that the reading event offers access to written standard English, which may enhance the reader's ability to derive and understand written texts, whose structural characteristics differ from spoken language. In addition, reading also offers the learner the opportunity to raise his/her awareness of the features of written language, and access to written language makes grammatical features more visible. This view is also supported by research conducted by Krashen (1993) who stresses the importance of reading in language teaching as a tool for increasing learners' vocabularies and for enhancing their abilities to read and write. Similar findings, derived from Warrican' (2006) research, conducted among creole-speaking pupils, also suggest that reading may enhance pupils' written language development in standard English.

5.9   Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that the unquestioned beliefs and 'common sense' assumptions that teachers make about creole in relation to standard English may seep through their English Language classroom practices. In addition, teachers are positioned and constructed in discourses, of which they are largely unconscious, which serve to propagate the monolithic status of standard English at the expense of BVI Creole in language classroom practices. This chapter has also suggested that 'contemporary' deficit models of language and notions of 'appropriate' norms of language, which are part and parcel of hegemonic assumptions about language, may be implicitly and unconsciously interwoven in the fabric of day-to-day language classroom practices.

Without out a clear understanding of the relationship between BVI Creole and written standard English, which is governed by a standard language ideology, the vernacular may be perceived as an interference in the language classroom, and the teaching of grammar may amount to an exercise of 'correcting' structural features derived from pupils' writing. Furthermore, if teachers are not aware of the ideological underpinnings of language classrooms practices they may be unlikely to question or challenge them and to impart this knowledge to their pupils.

Finally, the chapter has also offered insights into teachers' explanations for creole-speaking pupils' differential achievement in language use in a creole-speaking environment, which they attribute to pupils' language socialisation practices. I have suggested that the onus is on the school to explicitly account for pupils' language

variety and to acknowledge it as a separate linguistic entity in the classroom, while giving them access to the dominant variety. Without this, pupils who speak linguistic varieties like creoles, may be continually excluded from participating in the dominant discourses and relegated to the periphery. In other words, the 'voices of creole-speaking pupils may be silenced and they may be denied access to the powerful discourses of the school and society, thus reproducing socio-economic inequalities.

Chapter 6

Conversations with Pupils:
BVI Creole Versus Talkin' Proper English

If students are to find their own voice so that they may speak or write their reading of the world, then the relation of community languages and dialects to the standard language has to be confronted (Meek, 1987, p.ix).

6.1   Introduction

In chapter five I suggested that teachers are 'interpellated'/'hailed' (Althusser, 1971) and constructed in discourses, of which they are largely unconscious, which serve to perpetuate the hegemonic status of standard English in BVI classrooms. This chapter argues that the implicit 'common sense' assumptions that teachers make about BVI Creole, which seep into their teaching practices, may be unconsciously reproduced by pupils in the secondary English Language classroom.

Following Gramsci's (1971, 1985) theoretical construct the chapter draws on the notion of hegemony in order to make sense of the ways in which pupils, like their teachers, may become 'complicit' in the misrecognition of standard English as the 'legitimate' variety, and it suggests that deficit views, which are part and parcel of hegemonic assumptions of language, may become 'naturalised' in classroom practices. Gramsci's formulation is also useful in offering insights into the ways in which the pupils construct conflicted identities in relation to standard English, the 'authorized' language, vis-à-vis BVI Creole.

The chapter draws on notions of the 'power semantic' and the 'solidarity semantic', proposed by Brown and Gillman (1972), in order to discuss pupils' ambivalent beliefs about their teachers' choice of linguistic variety in the secondary classroom and the dimensions of power and solidarity, which are key components of the relationship between teachers and pupils in the classroom, that are enacted in standard English or BVI Creole. It suggests that, on the one hand, pupils identify with the use of BVI Creole, which is employed by their subject teachers, as it engenders cultural solidarity. On the other hand, the pupils also favour their English teacher's use of standard English, the authoritative discourse, and the 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu, 1991) it embodies in the wider society. In other words, standard English as a 'symbolic

resource' may facilitate access to the highly esteemed social, and cultural knowledge, linguistic skills, material and educational resources (De Mejia, 2002; Heller-Martin-Jones, 2001). Furthermore, by speaking standard English, the 'legitimate' variety, an authoritative stance or footing (Goffman, 1981) is maintained among the English teachers, and in this way elements of power and distance are maintained between both the teachers and the pupils.

In light of the findings from the data, the chapter then draws on evidence to suggest that pupils may be constructing creole identities that tacitly subvert the 'legitimacy' of standard English which they may regard as 'foreign' to their early language socialisation experiences and practices. In other words, the pupils seem to demonstrate a tacit form of resistance to being absorbed by the 'authoritative' linguistic variety, which contrasts with BVI Creole, 'the unmarked choice', (Scotton, 1988, Myers-Scotton, 1993, 1995) which serves as an emblem of group solidarity, that is employed among pupils in the classroom with little or no sanction from teachers.

It further suggests that pupils in the study may demonstrate a keen metalinguistic awareness, which may facilitate and enhance their abilities to talk about and to reflect upon their use of language. Following this discussion, the chapter then draws on the concept of 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1991) in order to explain and offer insights into the mismatch between the linguistic practices of some creole-speaking pupils in relation to the dominant school discourse school, which they are required to learn, and the implications of this mismatch for pupils' language achievement.

The final section of the chapter argues for a view of language use that inevitably builds on the pupils' linguistic resources and the 'cultural capital' they bring to school, and this approach may mean implementing additive rather than subtractive (Cummins, 1996, 2000) approaches to teaching in a creole environment. This may include promoting a view of language learning that shifts from a traditionally monolingual approach, to one which accounts for the socio-cultural orientations of pupils and the ideological and political underpinnings of language use in this context. Furthermore, a literacy programme in an English-based creole setting, which is geared towards extending pupils' linguistic repertoires in these contexts, also needs to account for ways in which teachers can extend pupils' critical repertoires, that is, their 'critical consciousness' (Freire, Giroux and Macedo, 1987) in order for them to be in a position to challenge and question the 'common sense' assumptions that are infused in the relationship between, linguistic varieties like standard English and BVI Creole.

The forthcoming excerpts were obtained on the basis of conversations which I had with the four pupils that enabled them to reflect upon the language choices they make, with respect to BVI Creole and standard English. The following section begins by addressing pupils' perceptions and views of this linguistic phenomenon.

6.2 'De dialect does kick in and kick out when I talkin': Code Switching and 'Proper English.'

In order to launch the pupils into a conversation about local vernaculars I initially asked them to identify the speaker's [featured in the video clip] accent and linguistic variety which they readily recognised, in relation to their own language variety. I later asked the pupils to describe their own linguistic variety in relation to the linguistic variety, spoken by an adolescent girl [a native of St. Kitts] which was an English-based Creole that was featured in the video clip. The details of the aspect of the interview with pupils were discussed more fully in chapter four (section 4.10.2) of the thesis.

From time to time, in the video clip, there was slight evidence of code switching/shifting between the creole vernacular and standard English which the pupils were able to identity. In other words the speaker in the video-clip drew on the basilectal end of the continuum (De Camp, 1971) that is, the variety that is closest to a deep St Kitts Creole. However, periodically the speaker inserted what appeared to be short, fleeting elements of standard English into the conversation, 'inter and intra-sententially' (Wardhaugh, 2010, p.98) that is, between or within a single sentence.

During English Language classroom activities there appeared to be very little evidence of codeswitching and the use of BVI Creole, that is the 'unmarked choice,' (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2006) was pervasive among the pupils, and this seemed to corroborate teachers' views in relation to the use of this linguistic variety in the classroom. In what follows is an attempt to illustrate the pupils' explanations of their language choices.

> *For example….for me certain words....um I might say somet'in [something] in proper English and de next time de dialect cut into my sentence or my speech because like I say it….de [the] dialect does come natural to me (Kimaal).*

> *um….it don't come natural to some Caribbean people to speak proper English all de way….sometimes it [creole] does kick in and kick out. For example....I might say somet'in [something] in proper English and de next*

time de [the] dialect does cut into my sentence because like I say it....it [Creole] does come natural to me (Brianna).

Miss....when we have speakers in the school to talk to us and dey [they] ask us questions I would actually start to speak proper English and de [the] dialect would kick in and kick out....I aint speaking proper English even t'ough [though] I believe so (Christine).

We ain't [aren't] really accustom to talkin' proper English….de [the] dialect does kick in and kick out when I talkin'....and um de dialect does kick in more when I talkin' because I ain't used to talkin' [talking] proper English (Ozzie).

Um….I don't t'ink she [speaker in the video clip] aware....according to what I say earlier, de dialect does come naturally….it natural for me to speak like dis....and in her accent and Caribbean dialect um….proper English don't come natural to de girl in de video eit'er [either] because she speaking mostly in dialect and a little proper English does kick in here and dere….going back and fort' [forth] and I am sure she don't know....I mean she not aware….and proper English don't come naturally for her (Christine).

Apart from providing rich examples of the pupils' creole identities, which I elaborate upon in a later section of this chapter, these extracts derived from the interviews with Christine, Brianna, Kimaal and Ozzie seem to have striking similarities. This is indicated by the repetitious use of the phases, 'kick in and kick out' and 'cut in'. These phrases which allude to the notion of code-switching, seem to describe Gumperz's (1982) notion of conversational code switching which he describes as 'the juxtaposition within the same extract of conversation that is derived from two distinct grammatical systems' (p.59).

The Blom and Gumperz model, which draws on language use in a bi-dialectal community in Norway, like the Myers-Scotton's model also accounts for changes in the social parameters of the situation, and the social meaning which is encoded in code switching can be perceived as 'a resource for indexing situationally salient aspects of attempts to accomplish interactional goals' (Myers-Scotton, 1988, p.3). There is further evidence in the data that is suggestive of techniques which Blom and Gumperz (1972, pp. 424-426) describe as 'situational code switching, that is, it assumes a direct linkage between language use and social situation, and it is generally associated with a 'social separation of activities and associated role relationships' (Myers-Scotton, 1988, p.5). In addition, Blom and Gumperz (1972) also describe 'metaphorical code switching' as switches which involve different kinds of topics and subjects. In this case 'alternation enriches a situation, allowing for allusion to more than one social relationship within the situation.' (p.409) Some of the most

striking aspects of the data, in relation to code switching, suggest evidence of metaphorical code switching. The next section explores this issue.

6.3   Speaking 'Proper' English or Constructing Alternative Identities: 'Gurl where you get dat talk from?'

As Myer-Scotton (1988) observes, 'Switching away from the unmarked choice signals that the speaker is trying to negotiate a different rights and obligations balance as salient in place of the unmarked one, given the situational features' (Myers-Scotton, 1988, p. 167). When the participants of the study used the 'marked' choice, 'proper English' or in Preece's (2006, 2009) words 'posh' talk', they could be described as engaging in the process of 'metaphorical codeswitching'.

In Sebba's (1993) study among young black speakers who spoke both 'London Jamaican', which is a variety that is based on Jamaican Creole, and London English, he attempted to explain their linguistic behaviour in terms of code switching. He suggested that switches between London Jamaican to London English were used as either a communicative strategy, or were a manifestation of their cultural identities. Conversely, the switches from London English to London Jamaican were used in a humourous sense (also see Edwards, 1986; Sutcliffe, 1982), among his informants.

However, in the present study BVI Creole, an emblem of cultural identity among the pupils, was the 'expected' or conventional linguistic variety, that is, the 'unmarked choice' constituted the everyday linguistic variety of the participants. Thus, the pupils' linguistic choices are bound up with particular 'rights and obligations' (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 1995), that is, the meanings and assumptions that are associated with the use of BVI Creole at a particular point in time, in a given setting. There were also instances in my study in which the pupil-participants spoke standard English to create humour, among family and friends, in order to establish social distance between themselves and the speakers of standard English. I also suggest that this represents a form of tacit resistance to being absorbed by the dominant culture.

A strand emerging from the interview extracts derived from both Christine's and Ozzie's comments seems to suggest that the pupils are constructing identities that resist the 'legitimacy' of standard English. In other words, this may represent pupils' tacit resistance to being absorbed by the dominant culture, and the shift could be described as metaphorical. In addition, in these extracts there is evidence to suggest a tacit resistance, conveyed by the pupils, to being absorbed by the dominant 'culture

of power' (Delpit, 1995) which is encoded in the standard variety. Thus, on those occasions when pupils switch away from the 'expected' language choice, BVI Creole, to standard English, it constitutes a violation of the unmarked choice maxim' (Myers-Scotton, 1988 p. 167). In what follows, based on the interview data, I offer an account of pupils' explanations of their code switching behaviour to 'marked choices'. These examples, appear to represent what Blom and Gumperz (1972) describe as 'metaphorical code switching' (p.425).

In this study, the pupils' use of the unexpected choice, 'proper English', is being used among friends and family, as 'a metaphor for the social meanings the variety has come to symbolise' (Heller, 1988, p. 5). In other words, the term 'proper English is generally associated with social power and superiority. The following extracts constitute examples in which the interviewed pupils distance themselves from this socially established notion.

> *My friends accustom to hearing me speak like dis….so if dey hear me using English wit [imitating speaker of standard English] 'this' and 'that', 'is' and 'are'….dey would say 'why you talkin like dat'? Or gurl [girl] where you get dat talk from? Dey would say stop yankin' or stop playin' White! Dey [they] aint accustom to hearing me speak like so….um only sometimes….sometimes when we makin' jokes I would use a lil' proper English but we does have it like a joke, for fun. [giggles] (Brianna).*

> *Miss, if I speak proper English wit' my family I would do it as….like a joke if I was trying to make fun of somebody [giggles] I would speak proper English um....if de t'ink de better dan [than] us or if de person acting different from me....um when dey don't fit in wit' us I might speak a lil' [little] proper English to make fun of de person (Ozzie).*

Moreover, the pupils appear to be upholding, albeit unwittingly, implicit relations of power while engaging in practices that are endorsed by the dominant group. Implicated in the phases 'talkin' proper English and 'playin' White' are notions of superiority and power from which the pupils distance themselves. In this instance, the pupils' language choices are used metaphorically in order to avoid identifying with the socially prestigious groups that speak 'proper English.' In a similar vein in Ogbu's (1999) study the speakers of Black American vernacular in West Oakland, California regarded 'proper English as 'white' English, and Black English as 'poor slang' or 'just plain talkin'. Interestingly, the participants conveyed that when a black person 'is talkin proper, he or she is putting on or pretending to be white or talk like white people' (pp.171-172).

The notion that so-called 'posh' or 'proper' English, that is encoded as the 'culture of power', is only reserved for certain groups and social classes alludes to the relationship between language use and social class stratification. This seems to illustrate the view that diverse social groups use language in socially differentiated ways (Trudgill, 2000) and these 'differentiated ways' are implicated with issues of power. The pupils in my study stated they would not expect to use BVI Creole, the 'unmarked choice', (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 1995) with a stranger, and were more likely to speak 'proper English', as they would not be understood and the element of cultural solidarity would clearly be absent. In this particular situation, standard English is regarded as the 'unmarked choice,' as it is the linguistic variety that the participant would be 'expected' to speak with a stranger.

With reference to Sebba's study, the participants' switches to London Jamaican from London English, were often used as 'asides' to depart from the main conversation at hand. As he states '….the speakers switch to Creole does not provoke a Creole response. The conversation continues in London English as before and Creole is treated as "one-off" (Sebba, 1993, p.109). In the present study, when the participants switched to 'proper English'/standard English from BVI Creole it served a different purpose as the excerpts below illustrate.

In this study further examples of 'posh talk' (Rampton, 2006; Preece, 2009) or 'proper' English were evident in other aspects of the data, and in stark contrast to Sebba's study, when the pupils in this study switched to standard English, that is, the 'marked choice', they did so in order to construct an alternative identity as the excerpts below illustrate. For instance, Christine notes that she speaks 'proper English' to create a good impression', and similarly, Ozzie equates speaking 'proper English' or 'posh' English with his desire to impress the visitor, 'sound intelligent', or to convey "educatedness" (Honey, 1997).

For instance, when the pupils used standard English they did so in order to appear to be more authoritative. In Ozzie's words, using 'posh' English or 'proper' English helped him appear to be more 'intelligent' and 'educated.' This is illustrated in the following examples which are derived from the data.

The following excerpts reflect the pupils' explanation of this:

> *Um….in de classroom when I aware dat I ain't speakin' de dialect is when I*
> *mean to….um like in de classroom when we have a speaker or visitor some*

children does speak proper English, and I does feel left out and I does speak proper English to make a good impression (Christine).

Miss, I guess sometimes….um in certain situations it does make you seem more smart….more intelligent if you speak proper English, so if I really want to get a point across to....and I want and I want to impress a visitor I'll try to speak proper English….so I'll den [then] be aware when I speaking proper English (Ozzie).

Um….if we want to get good jobs or to go to college we need to know how to write and speak proper 'English....or if you want to be a teacher you can't be teaching children to 'bad' English, we need to speak like how you does speak, Miss um….we need to know how to speak proper English and how to communicate….when we wit our friends and family we could speak de dialect, but….when we go for a job interview we should speak proper English (Christine).

Um….as I was saying before I would only speak proper English if we have a visitor like de Premier or a foreign visitor….I would not just speak my island talk….I feel it would be more appropriate to speak in a way dat dey would understan' me and um….it would be more respectful and as Christine say if you want to seem more educated (Ozzie).

Miss, you does sound smarter if you in a interview and you speak proper English and we want to impress de boss and um....you usually associate people who speak broken or 'bad' English wit' people who ain't smart or who kinda from de ghetto we need to be able to speak proper English in de right place….we will sound more civilize' (Ozzie).

In these extracts standard English, the 'superior' linguistic variety, is associated with being 'civilised,' creating a 'good impression', 'respectfulness', 'cleverness,'and 'intelligence,' all of which have their roots in dominant ideologies of language. Ozzie also addresses the perception that creoles or other marginalised varieties are typically spoken by individuals of low social and economic status, thus alluding to the notions of language and social class/status.

Decades earlier Trudgill (1975) pointed out that British dialects and accents are associated with politically or socially prestigious social groups which generally tend be regarded more favourably than others. As Trudgill (1975) observes, 'Judgments which appear to be based on social and cultural values, have much more to do with the social structure of our community than our language' (p. 28). Thus, while notions of 'good' and 'bad' language have a social basis, missing from Trudgill's account is the influence of dominant ideologies have on language use.

In the next section, I suggest that the 'Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990, 1993), which draws on second language approaches to learning may not be an adequate explanation for language learning and use in creole settings, which are not described as 'true' bilingual contexts. Furthermore, the notion of consciousness in second language learning is somewhat elusive and inconsistent in these linguistic environments, and I am suggesting that creole-speaking pupils need to be offered support to develop a metalanguage which enables them to talk about and to reflect upon their language choices. I now examine extracts of the conversation with pupils which seem to offer an explanation that supports this position.

6.4   Code Switching and Metalinguistic Awareness: 'Miss I ain't always Aware'

An issue which emerges from the forthcoming extracts of the conversation is the notion of consciousness when code switching. As I previously discussed in chapter 4 (section 4.10.2) I asked the pupils to tell me about those occasions when they used the linguistic variety that is closer to the standard English end of the continuum, whether they were conscious or aware of their choices, and if they could explain or justify the choices they employed in conversation.

While the pupils in my study cannot be described as bilinguals, I am suggesting that in creole speaking settings such as the British Virgin Islands, occasions arise when the speaker may or may not be conscious of a switch between the two linguistic varieties. This is borne out by aspects of the data which suggest that an element of consciousness may not always be bound up with the speakers' decisions to switch from one linguistic variety/ code to another. This seems to support Gumperz's (1982) position that code switching may operate both at the conscious or subconscious level. Additionally, Heller (2007) observes that:

> *The constant emergence of traces of different languages in the speech of individual bilinguals goes against the expectation that languages will neatly correspond to separate domains, and stay put where they are supposed to stay put (p.11).*

Wardhaugh (2010) also explains that in a 'diglossic' community (see chapter two) code switching tends to be on the consciousness level. He further maintained 'that individuals in 'true' diglossic communities, where code choice determines the linguistic variety, the individual generally tends to be aware that he/she has switched from H (high) variety to L (low) variety or vice versa' (p.102). With reference to the data, both

Ozzie and Christine also raised the point that there may or may not be an element of consciousness or awareness on their part when switches occur in their conversation. Going beyond this, in the forthcoming coming extracts, I suggest that the pupil-participants are demonstrating some level of metalanguage awareness, which may facilitate their abilities to analyse and reflect upon the language choices that they make.

This is illustrated in the following extracts.

> *If a tourist ask me for directions, I would try to speak proper English, but de dialect would cut in….um kick in but I would try to speak to de tourist so de would understand me. Miss sometimes de dialect does just come out….um cut in and I ain't always aware and it [Creole] does come naturally....and um sometimes half way into talkin' to de tourist I might realise dat [that] I ain't talkin' de way I does usually speak (Ozzie).*

> *Miss most of de times I aint aware dat of switchin' over like dat..um not all de time only sometimes I aint aware....um probably sometimes when I in de middle of a conversation I would be aware but I wont stop..um I would just continue speakin' (Ozzie)*

> *Well....if I speaking wit a tourist or I on holiday….um I want to speak in a way dat people would understand me....I would consciously switch over to proper English. I kinda switch over to a lil bit to proper English..but not too much um....I would switch to a lil [little] bit of proper English [Standard English] but I wouldn't overdo it….When you speak a lil island talk I does feel more relax um....you does speak slightly different from us but I could hear like a lil….a lil island accent um....you does do de same ting sometimes too Miss….you does switch in and out a lil' [little]….a lil' [little] island talk but not heavy like de way we does do it (Ozzie).*

The final extract is particularly interesting as Ozzie seemed to articulate some evidence of metalinguistic awareness. Not only does he appear to demonstrate some ability in controlling his linguistic choices, but he also seemed to be able to analyse and reflect upon his language choices. Some early research which is largely based on cognitive perspectives of language offers evidence to suggest that influence of bilingualism on metalinguistic development (See Bialystok, 1986, 1987; Cummins, 1978; Cummins and Swain, 1986). Despite the limitations of these findings for the BVI sociolinguistic environment, which could be more aptly described as a bi-dialectal rather than a bilingual context, some insights can be drawn from findings of research conducted in bilingual settings.

A further example of this occurs in the following interview extract, where Ozzie seems to be articulating that he has some degree of awareness/consciousness over the

linguistic choices that he employs: 'I switch to a lil' bit of proper English, but I wouldn't over do it.' However, more than being aware, he seems to be able to reflect upon and talk about the language choices he makes. These examples, which are reflected in the extracts above, seem to be consonant with Berry's (2010) definition of metalanguage awareness which supports the view that the individual may be able to talk about and to reflect upon his/her language choices.

Ozzie also noted that I spoke differently from him/them, and that my speech/accent was not as deep nor as 'heavy', in his words, as their [the pupils'] accent. Despite this difference, Ozzie perceived evidence of some common ground between us (participants and researcher/myself) in terms of an accent, which seemed to put him at ease. When I asked him to explain the effect it had on him, he explained it in this way: 'I feel more relax....and I could be myself….and Miss, when we don't feel comfortable, we speak proper English and when we speak de dialect we feel more comfortable' (Ozzie).

Not only do teachers make unconscious and implicit assumptions about their pupils' use of language in the classroom, but the data also reveals evidence to suggest that pupils' also have views of their teachers' choice of language in the classroom. The ways in which pupils cultural identities are bound up with these views also help to further illuminate dimensions of solidarity or, conversely, issues of power/authority that are enacted in their teachers' language practices in the classroom. The following section explores the pupils' views and perceptions with respect to the ways in which these are intrinsically linked with issues of cultural solidarity and the symbolic value of BVI Creole.

6.5   Pupils' Perceptions of BVI Creole and Standard English: Issues of Solidarity or Authority in the Classroom?

Myers-Scotton (1993) reminds us that 'speakers choose, although not always consciously, how they say, what they want to say' (p.93). Moreover, individuals are generally aware of the dimensions of power in which they play a part, and they also know whom they wish to form or establish bonds of solidarity with or align themselves with.

Further evidence seems to suggest that the pupils have an understanding that English is equipped with the kind of 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu, 1991) which can offer them access to certain kinds of resources. In other words, by maintaining the position that

English teachers, who are generally seen as symbols of authority and respect in the classroom, should speak standard English the pupils seem to be endorsing the 'legitimacy' (Bourdieu, 1991) and the authoritative function of the dominant linguistic variety. This is exemplified in following extracts:

> *Well….we does speak dialect in de classroom wit'our classmates and our teachers….um dey [they] does speak de dialect to us too… but not Miss Brown, our English teacher she don't speak de dialect....um why should we try to speak proper English if we getting' dialect right back at us….I don't even t'ink [think] of de [the] respect you should have to speak proper English to de teacher (Christine).*

> *Well....um personally if you speak to a teacher you should be respectful and try to speak proper English....but our science teacher don't speak proper English to us....and he don't correct us....and um….Mr Vanterpool does speak to us in de dialect and we feel more comfortable....um it feel more comfortable for us to talk to Mr Vanterpool….we don't have to be t'inking about what to say or if it is de proper way to say somet'ing. Um….we could cope better like so (Kimaal).*

As is illustrated in the forthcoming extracts, the cultural allegiance associated with BVI Creole, and its role as a marker or symbol of solidarity the pupils are associated with their subject teachers, who converse with them in the vernacular. Furthermore, both Christine and Kimaal are equating the use of 'proper English' with demonstrating deference or respect towards the English teacher, who is the figure of authority in the classroom.

> *Miss I t'ink we….it probably would help if we speak proper English on a everyday basis….um at least in English class….we could make it into a game and de teacher could give us rewards for de person who could speak 'proper' English for de longest....teacher does correct how we talk….but not often….um most of de times she don't correct us but if we make it into a game it might help us instead of correctin' us just like dat....because after a few minutes we does forget what she say….but if we speakin' a little bit every day….um for one period in a day it might help us (Ozzie)*

> *In all our classes we does speak de dialect and a lot of our teachers does speak dialect….um dey expect us to speak de dialect too, instead of speakin' proper English....but I don't expect our English teacher to be teaching us 'is' and 'are' if she aint using none of dat and not speakin' proper English. In English class we should speak proper English but it hard because we always end up speaking de dialect….and sometimes teacher does make us say it over….um maybe all teachers should stick to speakin' 'proper' English....dey should use de dialect only on certain occasions, like say after school....or when exams finish, but not in de classroom um….even if we speak it (Brianna).*

In the preceding extract derived from Brianna's interview, one could assume that this alludes to Fishman's (1972) conceptualisation of 'domains of language', that is, the functional differentiation of language use as it relates to different domains within a given speech community. However, Fishman's model of language does not account for the complex or 'messy' ways in which speakers in creole-speaking environments employ linguistic resources across domains or institutional boundaries in order to have a particular rhetorical effect. The Fishman model has further limitations in the context of this study as it does not enable participants to construct different identities and 'versions' of themselves, irrespective of the domain, during social interactions.

With reference to Sebba's (1993) study, in which participants spoke London English and London Jamaican/Jamaican Creole, there seemed to be tensions in representing the notion that distinct linguistic varieties are employed exclusively in different domains. Whereas London English was deemed appropriate in nearly all situations, London Jamaican/Jamaican Creole was only regarded as appropriate in some of these, and even in circumstances where the creole vernacular was regarded as a suitable linguistic choice, it was spoken inconsistently. Further evidence which is associated with the idea of domain specificity in my study, and which contradicts the notion of 'diglossia', also emerges among the participants who spoke BVI Creole freely in the classroom domain, where they are 'expected' to employ standard English. For instance, when the pupils employed 'posh' or 'proper English' among friends and family, which is outside the norm for many of the pupils, it was employed for a specific purpose and to have a particular effect. Unlike my study, there seems to be very little evidence of this in Sebba's study.

Emerging from Brianna's and Ozzie's excerpts there seems to be an awareness of the 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu, 1991) derived from standard English proficiency, as they are both in agreement that their English teachers should speak 'proper English' instead of BVI Creole in the classroom. On the one hand, the pupils expect the English teacher to speak standard English as they see English as the 'legitimate language' (Bourdieu, 1991) of authority, 'misrecognised' as such, which offers the kind of 'capital' that gives them access to 'symbolic and material resources' (Heller, 1992, p. 161). On the other hand, as an expression of cultural identity and solidarity the pupils are also in favour of their subject teachers' use of BVI Creole in the classroom. In this perspective, creole is seen as the language that bridges relations of solidarity or, in Brown and Gillman's (1972) words, 'the solidarity semantic' which is in evidence between the teachers and the pupils. Contradictorily, both Ozzie and Brianna also

stated that perhaps all teachers, irrespective of their subject areas, should speak 'proper English' in the classroom.

As a result of these views, competing tensions are established between the pupils' expectations of their subject teachers' choice of BVI Creole in the classroom, and the symbolic value it embodies, **in relation to** their English teachers' use of standard English or 'proper English,' which gives them access to language as a 'symbolic resource' (See De Mejia, 2002;Heller, 1992; Heller, 1995). In other words, based on the pupils' views standard English is the linguistic entity which has the means to provide opportunity or access to other resources (Fairclough, 1992) and, paradoxically, it is also the variety that may be 'alien' to some pupils' day-day linguistic experiences.

Further extracts derived from the conversations with both Ozzie and Christine also suggest, unequivocally, that they share their classmates' views regarding the English teacher's linguistic choice of standard English, instead of BVI Creole in the classroom.

> *Ok....um if our English teachers speaking dialect in de classroom we wouldn't really like dat as she suppose to be settin' a example for us....um she suppose to be speakin' proper English and correctin' us....but for de ot'er [other] teachers we don't mind if dey speak de dialect and um....dey don't correct how we does speak....dey does leave us alone and try to fit in wit us (Christine).*

> *I don't see anyt'in [anything] wrong wit' our ot'her [other] teachers speakin' de dialect because most of our teachers is from de islands....um if de feel comfortable speakin' de dialect like how we feel comfortable den I don't have a problem wit' it....but our English teacher shouldn't speak like dat because she suppose to be teachin' us proper English. Miss....de teachers [subject-teachers] speak to us how dey accustom' to be speakin' at home (Ozzie).*

The final excerpt derived from Ozzie's interview, which was made without any prompting on my part, seems to allude to language use as it relates to social class stratification, and in this view 'language use is subject to stylistic and social class differentiation as language communities are functionally differentiated to a greater or lesser extent' (Trudgill, 2000, p.27). Furthermore, in the preceding interview extracts, as well as the one which follows, the recurring motifs 'proper,' 'correct' and 'correctness' reinforce the perception of the fixed hegemonic status of standard English, at the expense of linguistic varieties like BVI Creole which do not adhere to this social/linguistic 'norm'. Such views seem to confirm Honey's (1997) conservative stance on the hegemonic, and unquestionable position of standard English.

This view is also encapsulated in Christine's comment:

> *Well, um in de dialect….um creole yer could say anyting yer want, but to write correct and proper English....it only have one way wit proper English, but wit de dialect....yer could say anytin' [anything] yer want and anyting yer [you] feel (Christine).*

This brief, but poignant, extract also conveys a prescriptive view of language learning where the emphasis is placed on notions of 'correctness' rather than the effective use of language, and this perspective is part and parcel with pupils' 'common sense' assumptions about BVI Creole in relation to standard English. Furthermore, there is also the suggestion that BVI Creole is devoid of structure, which implies that it is not a language in its own right. Wheeler and Swords (2001), who draw on their experiences of the Black American vernacular context, also concur that the 'correctionist' approach to language teaching assumes that standard English is the only 'proper' form of language which implicitly obliterates and marginalises non-standard varieties. Furthermore, because classrooms are not culturally or linguistically monolithic, this approach is likely to marginalise those pupils who are not fluent in standard English.

In the forthcoming section, I attempt to illustrate the position that pupils may be internalising the implicit and 'common sense' assumptions that teachers make about BVI Creole, which seep through their teachers' classroom practices, and I suggest that pupils may be 'complicit' in the devaluation of BVI Creole.

6.6   Pupils' Assumptions about BVI Creole in the Classroom as the 'Other' or the Inferior Variety: "We Does Talk Raw, Broken English"

Gramsci (1979, 1985) offers an insightful and compelling position which highlights the non-coercive aspects of domination, and as I discussed, (see chapter 3) the concept of hegemony posits that the mechanism of tacit consent, that is, 'symbolic domination' (Bourdieu, 1991), operates through invisible cultural dominance rather through overt political power and control. Thus, this form of domination which works implicitly and lacks transparency is successful in 'convincing all participants in an activity that the rules which are defined by one group are natural, normal universal, and objective, and that it is in everyone's interests to accept those rules' (Heller and Martyn-Jones, 2001, p.6).

The following excerpts provide striking examples of the hegemonic assumptions, that is, the 'lived experiences' of the pupils' everyday language use, to the degree that these universal beliefs appear to be 'natural' and unquestionable. Extracts derived

from the conversation with the pupils provide us with evidence of the taken-for-granted beliefs that are 'lived out' in the classroom.

> *Some people might speak proper English, and yer might not hear any dialect and...um in another person yer might hear somebody speakin' raw dialect straight through, straight through....and um somebody from the Caribbean might be speakin' um....raw dialect like: 'wha' yer want'? Well, we does speak like dat! (Kimaal).*

> *Miss, um....dat is a Kittician accent. [ref.to speaker in video clip] I would say she speaking rough...she speakin' rough and raw like ours....um it worse dan our BVI dialect. Our dialect bad too....it sound bad but when you compare it wit' de St Kitts dialect t'eirs [theirs] sound worse! (Kimaal).*

> *Miss, I does talk raw....Virgin Islands raw talk um....raw mean dat your language aint correct! It mean mixin' up everyt'ing yer want....it ain't proper English (Ozzie).*

> *Okay....um when I say raw I mean....raw is how we define de dialect....it raw! I mean bad English, vulgar, not much t'inkin' about what yer want to say and um....yer not tryin' to pronounce de words properly....is broken English (Brianna).*

Based on these excerpts there is the implication that individuals who speak 'bad' English, are associated with being rough, crude and vulgar, and these traits seem to have some bearing on Trudgill's (1975) view that 'socially prestigious groups generally tend to be regarded in a more favourable light than others' (p.28). Consequently, negative social devaluations about language have much more to do with the social structure of society than with language. As Godley et al., (2006) concur standard varieties of language are not linguistically 'better'; rather, they are socially preferred as they are the linguistic varieties which are used by the most powerful and influential in society.

Evidence derived from the quotes also suggest that BVI Creole is devoid of linguistic structure and logic, and that the speaker's cognitive faculties are somehow excluded from language use. This is exemplified in Brianna's views which convey that 'not much t'inking' is involved when speaking BVI Creole, and I argue that this perspective helps to nurture 'deficit views' (Valencia, 1997) of language in contemporary BVI classrooms. There is also further evidence to suggest that the pupils may be devaluing their own linguistic variety, and the variety of other creole speakers, and as Lippi-Green (1997) observes, speakers of socially stigmatised varieties, which are

continually devalued and undermined, become implicated in propagating their devaluation.

> *Miss, we does talk raw, um….broken English….well I t'inkin' about it now....um sometimes yer hear somebody from de Caribbean islands speaking wit' a different accent and dey [they] speakin' bad English and not really realisin' dat we here in de BVI doing it too....so now dat you ask us dis [this] question you put us to t'ink [think] about it (Christine).*

> *Miss, she talkin' rough [reference to the speaker in the video clip] um….straight Caribbean talk (Ozzie).*

> *I would say dat [that] I speak broken English um….dialect and sometimes I try to bring in proper English depending on who I talkin' to....for me raw dialect is when yer [you] ain't pronouncin' de words properly and….and proper English is when yer pronouncin' de [the] words properly (Christine).*

The views expressed here appear to be consonant with Bourdieu's description of an implicit form of power, that is, 'a gently invisible violence' which is 'misrecognised as legitimate' (Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 23-24), and because this form of power does not manifest itself overtly, individuals are likely to conform to it, albeit implicitly, as they believe in the 'legitimacy' of linguistic varieties like standard English. Furthermore, the 'common sense' assumptions that pupils make about BVI Creole, in relation to standard English, suggest that they may 'consent' to their own, as well as other individuals' negative devaluations of creole and, to use Bourdieu's words, a form of 'symbolic domination' (Bourdieu, 1991) may be at work in which social inequalities are preserved and maintained. One of the most striking elements of the social devaluation of language is 'the widely disseminated tendency for non-standard speakers to be subtly coerced into agreeing with and accepting unfavourable stereotypes of their speech styles/traits' (Edwards, 2010, p.46).

Furthermore, pupils' 'primary Discourses (Gee, 2008), that is, their everyday language use and their early language socialisation practices are also intimately associated with their identities as language users. Hence, I am suggesting that language classroom practices which implicitly delegitimize and devalue BVI Creole, may negatively impact upon pupils' beliefs and attitudes towards their own language variety, and on their identities. Like their teachers, pupils are also constructed in discourses that perpetuate the inferior status of BVI Creole in the classroom, and although pupils acknowledge that the creole vernacular is occasionally included in their English Language lessons, I argue that BVI Creole is 'included yet marginalised.' The extracts derived from the conversation with Ozzie seem to be indicative of this.

If we writin' a story....we have to write proper English and....um de narrator would speak proper English, but de characters in de story could speak de dialect if its a island story but we have to use quotation marks (Ozzie).

Yeah, if we narratin' [ing] a story from the Caribbean....and it have in some dialogue....dats de only way. Sometimes, our teacher does give us stories in dialect and poems in dialect like um….Song of de Banana Man and it is a Jamaican poem, Now dats an island poem and you can't be speaking proper English for dat poem, usin' [imitating the teacher] 'this' and 'that' you have be speakin' in de dialect....you have to read it [the poem] like de way it....like you from de islands (Ozzie).

Despite those occasions when creole is included in the English lesson, as the preceding extracts suggest, classroom practices implicitly devalue BVI Creole in relation to standard English, and as I have suggested (see section 6.5) this runs counter to the symbolic value of the creole vernacular among pupils and their teachers. The next section examines further evidence to suggest that pupils' oral language may be undermined and measured against an ideology of 'correctness' in the classroom, and motifs of 'correctness' of language use and 'perfection' in relation to standard English grammar are part and parcel of this perspective.

6.7   From BVI Creole to Written English in the Classroom: 'De way I speak is de way I write'

The forthcoming extracts explores evidence to suggest that pupils may be equating their oral language structures with 'bad' grammar, and this may be play a role in reproducing dominant ideologies of language in the classroom. Furthermore, these hegemonic assumptions about language may have an effect on propagating deficit views of language in the classroom, and these may saturate teachers' classroom practices thus becoming part of the unconsciously accepted fabric of classroom life.

Standard English, the perceived 'legitimate' variety is equated with a barometer of 'perfection' and 'correctness' (Milroy and Milroy, 1999, 2007), and there is evidence to suggest that pupils' oral language may be implicitly undermined and devalued in the classroom. One of the consequences of 'common sense' assumptions about language in the classroom is its effect on pupils' perceptions and beliefs of their own linguistic variety, and as I suggested (see section 6.6) pupils may be internalising and reproducing, albeit unwittingly, the assumptions which teachers make about BVI Creole, in relation to the dominant variety. In other words, the apparent 'naturalness' of these beliefs may influence the ways in which they may be unquestioningly

accepted. The following extracts offer evidence to suggest that this occurs in BVI English Language classrooms.

> *Um….because we speakin' de dialect when we go to write….dats one of de problems dat I have....and dat is why I lose marks in spellin'....de way you structure your sentence….um subject-verb agreement and um….in English you have to be perfect (Kimaal).*

> *We does speak the dialect in all our classes mostly….when we speakin' to our classmates….when we doin' oral work, when we asking questions….answerin' our teacher….and because we speakin' dialect when we go to write….um dats one of de problems I have and dats [that's] why I lose marks....um spellin' matters, de way you structure your sentence, subject–verb agreement verb tenses....and in English you have to be perfect!(Brianna).*

In these quotations the pupils appear to be measuring 'good' written language against the 'imperfect' linguistic structures of BVI Creole that may occur in their writing. Not only do these views suggest what is deemed 'correct' in relation to the structures of creole, but they may also contribute to the reproduction of language ideologies in the classroom, which position BVI Creole as an impoverished linguistic manifestation of standard English.

> *Miss it's how we does speak….um we does say 'you is'instead of 'you are' sometimes we know dem miss, but we just….don't t'ink before we write….but it does come natural to us to speak dis [this] way so it does come out in our writing sometimes (Christine).*

> *We usually write how we talk so it does make it a lil bit harder for us to translate it….um nowadays I don't have as much of a problem like when I was in forms 1 and 2. Um….some days ago we had a grammar exercise in sentence completion and um….I forget what de sentence was exactly….but I put 'Mary was walking her dog,' and we had to put 'Mary had been walking her dog,' and I get it wrong....um I put 'was walking' instead of 'had been walking' and I really didn't even know it was dat….so I get it wrong [giggles] Um….I still ain't understan' some of de tenses and um….past participles and participles 'has been going' and 'had been going' (Ozzie).*

During the interview with Mrs Smith (see chapter five) she claimed that her pupils rarely used these constructions [present, past participles] in their speech, and that they sometimes experienced difficulties in applying them in their writing. I argue that this view fosters a misconception of the relationship between oral and written language, and it further raises questions about creole-speaking pupils' abilities to talk about the structures of standard English. Notwithstanding, it was interesting to note

that Ozzie was able to talk about aspects of grammar usage that few standard English speakers may be able to articulate.

Halliday (1989) observes that the structures of speech and writing are fundamentally different, and as he points out, 'Writing and speaking are not alternative ways of doing the same thing: rather they are ways of doing different things' (Halliday, 1989, p. xv). Thus, using a dominant linguistic variety as a yardstick to measure the intrinsic value of non-standard varieties is tantamount to an overt social and linguistic bias against varieties like English-based creoles.

In addition the teacher's views do not seem to fully account for the fact that these verb constructions which are fundamental to written English, are absent in BVI Creole, and this view may lead to a misconception of creole is an impoverished reflection of written standard English, and the view that grammar teaching may remedy the 'errors' in writing.

> *Oka….when we speak um....just grammar as a whole is a problem….and yer not corrected a lot orally….when we speakin' orally and as Kimaal say what we speak is what we write….and when we speak is what we write….and when we read it over we might not see not'ing wrong….sometimes we ain't aware dat [that] we writin' de dialect and um when we write it over and t'ink [think] it sound like proper English, and we would put 'is' where 'are' should be and 'was' where 'were' should be um….Miss, grammar on a whole is a big problem. Well....um grammar ain't [isn't] really have not'in [nothing] for us and for our language (Brianna).*

Emerging from the preceding quotations is evidence the common misconception of the relationship between oral and written language which regards one mode as a reflection of the other, and the misunderstanding of this relationship leads to 'the stigmatizing of certain speech forms on the basis that they do not conform to written conventions' (Holborn, 1991, p. 155). Furthermore, in creole-speaking settings where it is prevalent for oral features, derived from the vernacular, to be perceived as an interference in pupils' written language, this view helps to foster notions of inferiority of varieties like BVI Creole.

In contrast, like standard English, deemed socially and linguistically superior, emerges as 'the legitimate form and all other forms become, in the popular mind, illegitimate' (Milroy, 2007, p. 138), and this issue resonates in BVI language classrooms where creole structures, which are perceived to be an 'interference,' are measured against the perceived 'legitimacy' of standard English. The notion of the deficiency of the structural traits of BVI is conveyed in the following extracts:

Miss, um we do letter writing, short stories um summaries, descriptive writing letters….and miss, you got to make sure no dialect aint dere! It's like de way I speak is de way I write and depending on how I read it....it don't seem wrong because its like how I speak....broken English (Ozzie).

Miss it hard to write proper English….it hard to put some verbs in place….words like 'was' and 'were'. Verbs give us a lot a trouble….sometimes de tense or subject verb agreement....um when teacher give us practice grammar exercise on verbs and subject verb agreement we know dem, but when we go to write we forget dem….so it does dialect does come out in our writing (Christine).

One of the arguments that has been advanced in favour of teaching standard English is that it is more logical that other non-standard varieties, and inherent in this view is the belief that linguistic varieties like English-based creoles, are 'incorrect' or impoverished, and devoid of rules and structure, despite linguistic research (see Labov, 1972) which refutes this view.

I argue that these socially constructed beliefs which are also reproduced in the classroom, may help to further reinforce and sustain deficit views about language, and the forthcoming examples seem to suggest that pupils may be, perhaps unconsciously, upholding and endorsing implicit relations of power that underpin language use in the classroom. Furthermore, the notion of grammar as it relates to writing in creole environments is equated with 'correcting' features derived from pupils' oral language that are perceived to be inadequate or deficient.

In the forthcoming extracts, there is the suggestion that teachers' views and beliefs which relate to the teaching of grammar may be absorbed and internalised by the pupils and, like their teachers, they believe that the teaching of grammar will obliterate creole features from their writing. Despite recent research which suggests that sentence-level grammar teaching is not effective in helping students to write more effectively, and in enhancing the quality of their writing (Andrews, 2006, 2010), this belief seems to be prevalent. Thus, grammar teaching becomes associated with error correction exercises, and this is coupled with notions of 'error, accuracy, correctness and judgements about individuals and their intelligence' (Myhill, 2010, p.130).

Miss Brown would mark dem [creole features in writing] wrong because she expect us to use proper English, um….sometimes we t'ink we writin' English, because we speakin' de dialect all our life....So she would read out de mistakes to de class and show us de right t'ing. She would talk to de whole class because some children have problems wit' grammar. She would say, [imitates English teacher] 'class this is not the way to do it.' Or she would make us write out de corrections (Brianna).

Well, um in de dialect....um creole yer say any t'ing yer want but to write proper English it only have one way wit' proper English, um but wit' [with] de dialect....um....wit' creole you could say anyt'ing you want and say anyt'ing you feel [giggles] (Christine).

Gramsci (1971, 1985) reminds us that one of the most effective ways of domination is through the shaping of 'common sense' assumptions, and one of the principal ways of exercising this is through language. In a similar vein, Lippi Green (1997) and Milroy (2007) assert that standard English ideologies are insidious as they appear to be 'common sense' beliefs about language, which are essentially value- judgements which nurture binary descriptions of language, in terms of 'good', 'bad', 'rich' or 'impoverished'. Because standard English is universally accepted and recognised as the 'legitimate' linguistic variety, these beliefs encourage pupils to describe their own language variety in a manner that is regarded as a social 'norm.'

The view that some forms of language are regarded as wrong/incorrect is generally taken for granted. Thus, it becomes a 'linguistic fact' (Milroy, 2007, p.45) that some features are 'right' and others are 'wrong', and everyone is expected to conform to this everyday assumption without question. The effect this has is that the standard language ideology creates a network of common sense arguments in which the individual becomes enmeshed (Lippi-Green, 1997). In the case of BVI classrooms, these 'taken-for-granted' views exert a strong effect on the pupils' perceptions of linguistic varieties like BVI Creole, which means that describing it in perjorative terms comes to be seen as 'universal…. natural and self-evident' (Collins, 1991, p.236).

I have suggested that pupils may be further disadvantaged in classroom settings where their linguistic variety may be implicitly negated or devalued, and the forthcoming section attempts to illustrate that some pupils' language orientations may be at odds with those of the school, and this may have pedagogical consequences. I now address this issue.

6.8 Asymmetrical Relations of Cultural Capital in a Creole-Speaking Environment

De language what yer hear in de every day de surroundings what yer grow up in is raw English….we ain't grow up aroun' nobody tellin' us we have to speak proper English (Brianna).

This section explores the ways in which some creole-speaking pupils' language socialisation practices may run counter to the practices of the school, and the

implications of these for pupils' language achievement. A key strand running through this extract is the mismatch between some pupils' 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1991) in relation to the acquisition of the dominant school discourse. In Bourdieu's view, language use and achievement is defined and measured in terms of a 'cultural arbitrary' (Bourdieu, 1991), that is, the dominant culture is 'authorised' as the yardstick that measures the value of non-mainstream linguistic varieties in relation to standard English. Thus, pupils whose 'familial socialisation bestows upon them the appropriate level of 'cultural capital' will necessarily achieve more academically than those whose relationship with the 'cultural arbitrary' is more distant' (Jenkins, 1992, p. 112).

As powerful institutions of 'civil society' Gramsci (1971) schools are in a position to sustain and give credence to dominant linguistic varieties like standard English as they exercise a considerable amount of 'power behind discourse' (Fairclough, 1992) which endows them with the capacity to determine and impose ideas about what counts as the 'legitimate' language (Bourdieu, 1991;Bourdieu, 1977). Furthermore, 'the school establishes the authority and the legitimacy of the scarcest, and therefore most highly valued linguistic forms and secures universal recognition of this legitimacy' (Woolard, 1985, pp.740-741) and, thus, it is endowed with the power to marginalise and disenfranchise creole-speaking pupils whose linguistic practices may differ from the dominant norms which they impose.

Bourdieu (1977) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) offer insights into the ways in which societal practices are reproduced through language and educational institutions, which are primary sites for 'the construction and application of processes of symbolic domination' (Heller and Martin-Jones, 2001, p.6). They also maintain that schools and other 'symbolic' institutions contribute to the perpetuation of inequality by rewarding the 'cultural capital', that is, the culturally esteemed benefits that individuals acquire, primarily from the family backgrounds of dominant, mainstream groups. Bourdieu is unequivocal when he states that 'all linguistic practices are measured against what are regarded as 'legitimate' practices, that is, the practices of those who are regarded as dominant' (Bourdieu, 1991, p.53).

Germane to this section is the notion of the pupil's 'cultural/linguistic capital', and following Bourdieu's (1991) theoretical formulation individuals endowed with appropriate 'linguistic capital', have more than merely the capability to speak or to produce grammatically well-formed expressions of language. It means that individuals are able to utilise and produce 'the right expressions at the right time for a particular field or 'linguistic market' (Bourdieu, 1991, p.79), that is, the structured spaces where

social and linguistic interaction occurs among individuals. In the words of Bourdieu, 'those who are not in possession of the 'legitimate' competence are de facto excluded from the social domains in which these linguistic competencies are demanded and they are condemned to silence' (Bourdieu, 1991, p.55). Hence, linguistic competence, in Bourdieu's view, means the competence 'to produce sentences that are likely to be understood, likely to be listened to, likely to be recognised in all situations when there is an occasion to speak the legitimate language' (Bourdieu, 1991, pp.53-5).

As a result, individuals who speak a stigmatised variety, such as an English-based creole, and who may lack the 'legitimate competence' (Bourdieu, 1991) are rendered powerless, and excluded from participating in the discourses of mainstream institutions where demands are made on them to employ the 'legitimate language'. Without the full acknowledgement of pupils' oral language in the classroom, the rich linguistic repertoires that pupils like Ozzie and Christine possess may continue to marginalised.

In alluding to the implications of the implications of the incompatibility between home and school discourse, Gramsci (1971) puts it this way:

> *In a whole series of families, especially the intellectual strata, the children find in their family life a preparation or prolongation and completion of school life; they breathe in, as the expression goes, a whole quantity of notions and attitudes which facilitate the educational process properly speaking (Gramsci, 1971, p.31).*

Similarly, Gee (2008) also reminds us that the family endows children with 'primary Discourses', that is, 'culturally distinctive way of being an every day person...' (Gee, p.156), and in this theoretical perspective these 'Discourses' provide 'our initial and often enduring sense of self and sets the foundation of our culturally specific vernacular language...' (ibid., p.156). On the other hand, 'secondary Discourses' which are acquired 'within a more 'public sphere' than our initial socializing group' (ibid., p.157) are obtained 'within institutions that are part and parcel of the wider community…' (ibid., p.157). This may mean that creole-speaking pupils who may originate in homes where a 'deep creole' is spoken, may encounter a discontinuity between their 'primary Discourses' and the 'secondary Discourses,' which are associated with the school as they may be socially and academically disadvantaged.

The forthcoming extracts seem to capture the essence of the discontinuity between the 'cultural capital' derived from pupils' home socialisation and the 'secondary Discourses' which they encounter the school environment. These extracts also

suggest that the home environment, which falls under the umbrella of 'civil society' (Gramsci, 1971) or 'ideological apparatuses' (Althusser, 1971) are also sites in which 'common sense' assumptions about language are pervasive, and where domination and consent are mutually produced and maintained.

In order to elicit the forthcoming responses, I asked pupils to tell me about, and to describe the linguistic variety that they use in their 'every day' lives, among family and friends and why it was the 'expected' choice or linguistic variety (see chapter four).

> *Well….when I home wit my family is dialect..pure dialect I does speak….um a lil' [little] proper English might kick in...um come....but not much….not as much as de dialect. Well, normally....my family does just speak it [creole] around me and dey [they] don't speak proper English….my mo'ter [mother] would say: 'come ere' gurl'! [girl] [giggles] (Christine).*

This example also reflects, as in earlier extracts of data, the taken-for-granted assumptions that are made about the inferiority of BVI Creole in relation to standard English, the authoritative variety. Furthermore, the misconception that standard English is the monolithic variety also runs through these extracts, as it is regarded as the variety which is equated with notions of 'correctness', in relation to other language varieties, like English-based creoles. The forthcoming interview extracts clearly illustrate this:

> *Miss, I does speak de dialect wit' my friends and my family….and um my classmates….my grandmot'er and my mot'er [mother] does talk raw talk all de time (Ozzie) um….de language wha' yer hear every day in de surroundings you grow up in is raw English….we ain't grow around nobody tellin' us we have to speak proper English. Or....no, we ain't suppose to say it [imitating teacher] 'this' way or 'that' way (Ozzie).*

> *No, Miss! Dey ['they] my family] don't want to hear me speakin' proper English..I speak de [the] dialect wit' my friends....and my family at home….I aint goin' to speak proper English wit' my family....um probably if a family member of mine from de States visitin' us I might want to speak like dem....so um sometimes I might kick in wit a little proper English. Um….miss its de same tin [thing] for me….most of de people in my family does talk de raw dialect….um de people where I live does speak really, really bad English and I does pick it up (Christine).*

The motif of BVI Creole as the 'unmarked choice' (Myers-Scotton, 1988, 1993, 1995) continues to run through the preceding extracts, that is, it is the linguistic variety which is the 'expected choice' of the pupil-participants, among family and friends. In Christine's extract, she seems to suggest that some level of 'accommodation' (Giles and Powlesland, 1975) may occasionally occur in her speech, to match the variety

which her US relatives speak; however, she emphasises, unequivocally, that 'I ain't goin' to speak 'proper English wit' my family and friends.' Similarly, Brianna also states that she also 'accommodates' her speech to her interlocutors, and this is captured in the phrase, 'if it's a stranger, I would try to speak proper English.' The forthcoming extracts, derived from interviews with Kimaal and Brianna, there is evidence to suggest that the pupils are unfamiliar with speaking standard English in their day-to-day lives, and this is captured in the phrases, 'we don't feel comfortable' speaking standard English, and 'de dialect does come natural to me.'

> *Yeah....de dialect does come natural to me because I hear it every day....um I grow up around it and it wasn' [was not] until I come to school dat I learn dat it have somet'in' [something] call standard English and dat it is de proper way to say 'this' or 'that' [imitating standard English speakers]....um from when yer beginnin' to talk yer hearin' de dialect....so its like sometin' [something] natural (Kimaal).*

> *Um….like her [Kimaal] my parents don't correct me because dats de way dey does talk….dey don't speak proper English and we don't have nobody tellin' us when to use 'is' or 'are' but if yer [you] have to be around somebody constantly correctin' yer speech or remindin' you dat 'this or 'that' is de way you suppose' to pronounce certain words….to speak proper English, but we don't feel comfortable. Well….um if its a stranger I would try to speak proper English because dey [they] won't understand de dialect, but wit my friends and family and classmates I speak like dis. De dialect! (Brianna).*

As we have seen, a recurring theme emerging from the interviews with the teachers' (see chapter five), as well as from the conversations with the pupils, was that BVI Creole was the 'norm' for the pupils, many of whom had few opportunities to speak standard English outside the classroom, and there is also evidence of this in the preceding interview extracts derived from conversations with the pupils.

Having explored the ways in which some pupils' language socialisation practices may run counter to the dominant practices of the school, the final section re-emphasises the view that although BVI Creole may be implicitly undermined in the classroom, it has immense 'symbolic value' for the pupils in the study. This issue is briefly addressed in the next section.

6.9   A Question of Cultural Identity and Solidarity: 'We can't be speakin' English all de time.'

This section maintains that despite the implicit devaluation BVI Creole it continues to be an emblem of group solidarity and cultural allegiance among the pupils, and the

essence of pupils' sentiments is encapsulated in the following succinct, but revealing extract. Furthermore, like many of the other interview extracts in this chapter, this extract conveys the notions of 'correctness', and the hegemonic status of standard English is maintained through the repeated use of the word 'proper' which contrasts with the inferiority of BVI Creole.

> *We can't be speakin' proper English all de time or we will forget where we come from....our culture and our language and we ain't going to like dat um....we don't want to be speakin' proper English all de time (Brianna).*

Findings derived from early studies which are still relevant and illuminating suggest that, despite the continued devaluation of highly stigmatised linguistic varieties they continue to persist because of the strong symbolic value and the sense of group identity which they maintain for their speakers (Ryan; Ryan and Carranza, 1975). Similarly, in a more recent study, Abd-el Jawad (2006) argues that low-prestige linguistic varieties continue to thrive because they represent emblems of social and cultural identity.

Based on Myers-Scotton's (1993, 1995) 'markedness model' linguistic choices are individually motivated negotiations of identity, and I offered a number of illustrations in this chapter, as well as the previous chapter, to suggest that BVI Creole, the 'unmarked' choice among the pupils in the study, is the variety that is 'expected' among friends and family. This seems to confirm Myers-Scotton's (1993, 1995) hypothesis that when a relationship between two participants is well-defined there will be a general agreement, albeit implicit, on both sides relating to the 'unmarked' linguistic choice for each participant.

As was also noted, during my early conversations with the pupils (see chapter four) they appeared to make subtle shifts, occasionally, from BVI Creole to standard English in an attempt to 'accommodate' (Giles and Powesland, 1975) to my speech. This linguistic characteristic also appears to substantiate Myers-Scotton's (1993, 1995) postulation that 'marked choices' may occur more frequently in relationships where the power differential is a factor, and this clearly contrasts with the role of BVI Creole as the 'expected' choice, which pupils employ among individuals in their socio-cultural milieu.

6.10   Conclusion

In this chapter, I have illustrated pupils' views and perceptions of the role of BVI Creole in the classroom, in relation to standard English, as well as pupils' beliefs with regard to their teachers' use of a particular variety in the classroom. The findings derived from the interview data suggested that the use of BVI Creole, which is regarded as the deficient and unacknowledged linguistic variety in the classroom, is largely an emblem of solidarity among the pupils in the study, as well as a manifestation of their cultural identities. Further findings also suggested that pupils may have ambivalent attitudes towards standard English which, on the one hand, they regarded as the supposed 'legitimate' variety, that may give them access to 'symbolic resources' and, on the other hand, they seemed to tacitly resist being absorbed by the dominant culture and the language it embodies.

I have argued that the taken-for-granted assumptions which teachers make about BVI Creole in relation to standard English, which filter through teachers' classroom practices, may influence pupils' perceptions and views of their oral language. Furthermore, I suggested that they may unconsciously internalise the implicit devaluations of creole in BVI English Language classrooms, and they may become 'complicit' in the propagation of the 'legitimacy' of standard English. Based on evidence derived from the study, I have also maintained that pupils in the study seemed to demonstrate a keen metalanguage awareness which may enhance their abilities to talk about, and to reflect upon their language choices. In the final section of the chapter, I have addressed the mismatch between the 'linguistic capital' which some creole-speaking pupils bring to school, in relation to the dominant language practices upheld by the education system, and the pedagogical consequences.

The forthcoming chapter addresses the pedagogical implications of the continual and implicit devaluation of BVI Creole in the classroom, and it offers recommendations for policy and practice which may lead to the enhancement of English Language teaching in a bi-dialectal, creole-speaking environment. It argues that in the absence of a critical dimension of language teaching in the classroom, both teachers and pupils may be implicated in reproducing hegemonic ideologies of language. It further proposes that teachers can create spaces in their classrooms, for a new kind of pedagogy, in order to offer pupils the opportunities to develop a metalanguage for reflecting upon their language use.

Chapter 7

New Pedagogical 'Spaces' for Creole in Traditional BVI Classrooms: Implications for Language Classroom Practices

7.1 Introduction

This chapter argues in favour of validating BVI Creole in teachers' pedagogical practices in order to valorise and enhance perceptions of its status in language classroom, which go beyond paying lip-service to its role as an emblem of cultural solidarity. It is not arguing in favour of second language approaches in an English-based creole speaking environment as some early studies (Craig, 1971, 1979, 1999) have suggested, or recent studies have proposed (see Yousseff, 2002; Carpenter and Devonish, 2010). Rather, the chapter argues for is a language policy in the BVI sociolinguistic context, that is not regarded as a bilingual setting, which implements creole as a 'intellectual tool' or cognitive resource (Cummins, 2000) that can play a role in extending pupils' linguistic repertoires, that is to say, a policy which incorporates pupils' 'linguistic capital' along- side and in partnership with the dominant school discourse.

It further proposes that in order for practicing and prospective teachers to challenge the beliefs ingrained in English Language classrooms, opportunities should be provided which include the implementation of quasi-autobiographical narratives, in order for them to deconstruct and evaluate their 'common sense' (Gramsci, 1971) assumptions. In this way teachers' awareness may be raised in order to be able to critically reflect on hitherto unquestioned beliefs and assumptions which underpin their classroom pedagogical practices. In this perspective, teachers may be able to unravel and unveil their stances, and to reflect upon the beliefs and assumptions which they make, that are integral to their professional lives.

Drawing on Gramsci's (1971) notion of 'organic intellectuals' and the theoretical parallel of 'transformative intellectuals' (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985; Giroux, 1988), the chapter argues that teachers in BVI language classrooms are capable of performing in the capacity of 'transformative intellectuals' in their own right. In this view, teachers can become actively involved in implementing fundamental changes in relation to the English Language syllabus/curriculum and their teaching practices, thus contributing to unveiling and challenging dominant assumptions of language.

It then suggests that teachers can also operate as quasi policy-makers in order to complement their roles as 'transformative intellectuals'. From this vantage point, teachers are in an enhanced position to support their teaching practices and their pupils' learning, thereby enabling them to become active inquirers into issues related to language. Thus, rather than play the role of passive actors, teachers can play a fundamental role in becoming 'authors' (Kramsch, 1993) of their own circumstances, which may contribute to reforms in their teaching practices.

It also proposes that a critical perspective of language should be integrated in the English Language secondary curriculum/syllabus which is suited to the needs of a bi-dialectal environment, where a dominant and marginalised variety co-exist. Consistent with Fairclough's (1992a, 1989, 1995) views on 'critical language awareness,' and 'critical language study (Clark et al., 1991), or 'critical language pedagogy' (Janks, 1999; Wallace, 2003), the inclusion of a critical awareness component in the English Language Syllabus is of crucial importance in the BVI sociolinguistic environment, as it considers pupils' language potentials and their lived experiences. In addition, it encourages teachers to promote reflection on the assumptions they make about BVI Creole and standard English, and ways in which language conventions are implicated in relations of power in a postcolonial setting.

The chapter also suggests moving beyond contrastive analysis (see e.g. James, 1980) approaches, which are largely mechanistic, that are predicated on the view that two linguistic varieties which focus primarily on structural differences between two linguistic varieties be compared. It also proposes that pedagogical spaces are needed in BVI English Language classrooms which foster and enhance the development of pupils' metalanguage awareness, thereby enabling them to analyse, talk and reflect upon their language choices, and the language choices of other individuals. These choices may relate to marking a change in a given situation, that is 'situational style shifting', or language used to convey 'metaphorical style shifting' (Gumperz and Gumperz, 1982; Gumperz and Blom, 1972) in order to convey particular rhetorical meanings.

The forthcoming section begins by proposing that teachers can operate in the capacity of 'transformative intellectuals' in BVI English Language classrooms. In this view teachers can play a pivotal role in endowing pupils with the critical abilities needed to challenge deeply ingrained and orthodox assumptions, in relation to marginalised varieties like BVI Creole vis-à-vis the monolithic status of standard English.

7.2   Transforming BVI Classrooms: English Language Teachers as 'Intellectuals' in an English-Based Creole Speaking Environment

In this section, I argue that it is crucial for teachers in BVI English Language classrooms to become 'transformative intellectuals' if they are to educate pupils 'to become active critical citizens' (Giroux, 1988, p. 127). My argument is that teachers in BVI classrooms need to create spaces in classrooms which enable them to question and reflect upon their ideological stances which influence the assumptions they make about language in the classroom. By creating spaces in their pedagogical practices teachers may be able to determine whether their everyday beliefs and assumptions work in tandem with those propagated by the wider society, or whether their assumptions challenge the dominant status quo.

The notion of 'transformative intellectual' (Giroux, 1988; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985) as applied to the creole-speaking classroom is fruitful as it suggests that the potential role of the teacher is a dynamic one, rather than one which conforms to the traditional, static, role in which the teacher is constructed or positioned by the educational institutions in which they serve. Hence, by operating as 'transformative intellectuals' teachers may be in a better position to disengage themselves in order to deconstruct the dominant discourses inherent in their teaching practices, that may not be readily apparent, or which may be taken-for-granted.

Giroux (1988) maintains that a point of departure in achieving the role as a 'transformative intellectual' is to conceptualise schools as socio-economic and cultural settings which are inexorably linked to issues of power and domination. Through this theoretical lens, in which the socio-political dimensions of schooling are emphasised, it thus becomes possible to highlight the possible functions which educators can perform as 'intellectuals who operate under specific conditions of work and who perform a particular social and political function' (Giroux, 1988, p. xxxiv). From this vantage point, teachers are able to consider the implications of their classroom practices, and whether these resonate with the dominant assumptions which are ingrained in the wider cultural and socio-political sphere.

 In reconceptualising the role of the teacher as a 'transformative intellectual', Giroux (1988) reminds us that it becomes possible for individuals to reflect upon and deconstruct traditional circumstances which may have impeded them from realising their potential as 'active reflective scholars and practitioners' (p.125). This enhanced function may form the basis for reformulating the function of the teacher as

'intellectual labour', rather than limiting it to a merely technical or mechanical one. In other words, teachers need to be equipped to serve not only as technicians who are equipped with pedagogical expertise in their specific subject areas, but they also need to be armed with the analytical tools to evaluate their ideological stances which are embodied in their teaching practices and the curriculum. By adopting a stance similar to that of the 'organic intellectual' (Gramsci, 1971), as conceptualised by Gramsci, teachers can challenge traditionally accepted norms and unquestioned assumptions, as well as inequities in the wider society. Thus, 'we can be more specific about the different relations that teachers have both to their work and to the dominant society' (p. 126).

Just as 'organic intellectuals', to use Gramsci's (1971) term, can play a pivotal role in raising the socio-political consciousness of disenfranchised/marginalised groups of people, thereby helping to transfigure their lived circumstances, so too can teachers play a similar role by transforming pupils' lives by operating as 'transformative intellectuals'. In this perspective, teachers who operate in the capacity of 'transformative intellectuals' (Giroux,1988; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985) can assist in deconstructing the dominant ideological assumptions and the 'naturalising' effects that these may have on pupils in their classrooms. In a creole environment, teachers can foster 'ideological transparency' among their pupils by endowing them with the ability to critically reflect upon and question the 'common sense' assumptions about language in a postcolonial context. This, arguably, may play a role in deconstructing and dispelling deeply ingrained perceptions about the status of BVI Creole in the classroom, and the wider BVI society.

It may be somewhat naïve to claim that the role of the teacher as a 'transformative intellectual' is easily achieved, and readily accessible. As Gramsci (1971, 1985) is careful to point out, the process of becoming an 'organic intellectual' is not straightforward. Rather, it is a complex and protracted process. In his words, it is '…full of contradictions and, advances and retreats, dispersal and regroupings, in which the loyalty of the masses is sorely tried' (p.324). By operating in the capacity of a 'transformative intellectual' the role of the teacher is politicised to the degree that teaching is regarded as a socio-politically loaded endeavour. Hence, in this view, the teacher is in a position to equip pupils with the intellectual understandings to challenge and deconstruct orthodox stances on broader social/political issues, and the inequalities that affect their lives and social circumstances.

By reformulating the role of the teacher as a 'transformative intellectuals' (Giroux, 1988), or an **'**organic intellectual', to use Gramsci's (1971, 1985) term, I argue that teachers may be less likely to readily conform to discourses in which they are positioned or that are constructed for them in the education system and in the wider social sphere, in a post-colonial environment. In other words, by assuming the role of a 'transformative intellectual' teachers may be more likely to question and challenge dominant ideologies have shaped their teaching practices, and this may play a substantial role in enabling their pupils to develop their critical and reflective stances. Instead of playing a role in tacitly and unconsciously propagating dominant and unquestioned assumptions, teachers can also provide alternative possibilities and ways of thinking about the wider social sphere which may operate against their own interests, and the interests of their pupils.

In this section, I propose that the notion of the teacher as an 'transformative intellectual' (Giroux, 1988; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985) can be applied in BVI English Language classrooms. However, I am aware that the implementation of this notion may be confronted with challenges in relation to its formulation and implementation, as it may not be seen as an absolute priority or necessity in the education system. Furthermore, if the main objectives of an unfamiliar proposal, have not been hitherto applied in BVI classrooms, it may be regarded with an 'eye of suspicion' or scepticism by those individuals who occupy the upper echelons of the education system. Far too often proposals and ideas are resisted or rejected by those in authority if they are not fully understood or if they are being proposed, on a 'down-up' basis, by individuals in subordinate positions.

The formulation and application of a policy is not an entirely straightforward process, and it may be fraught with inherent complexities, and this is particularly true in cases where a 'new' and unconventional policy in being proposed, such as the idea of the teacher as a 'transformative intellectual'. It may give rise to tensions which are generated by differences in perspectives among government policy-makers and curriculum developers and proponents of the policy. For instance, the formulation and subsequent implementation of the proposal may also be met with resistance, if it is unorthodox, or if it is misconstrued as a distraction from the main business of teaching and reaching learning targets. Similarly, a poor understanding of the proposed objectives, and differences of opinions may also lead to some disagreement among government policy-makers and other key players.

It may be regarded as somewhat naïve, and somewhat unrealistic, to expect the notion of teachers as a 'transformative intellectual' to be readily absorbed and integrated; however, I am not proposing that the implementation of the proposed approach should in any way dominate BVI English teachers' practices or overshadow primary curriculum traits. Rather, I am suggesting that a 'space' can be created to incorporate the concept in classroom practices, and its inclusion should take the form of small incremental steps, which can be slowly introduced in English lessons over a period of time.

Teaching is a dynamic profession in which learning is ongoing, and this sometimes requires taking risks, and stepping outside conventional approaches in order to 'try-out' an innovative approach in order to achieve a particular objective. As I later recommend (see section,7.9), working collaboratively through ongoing dialogue is of crucial importance in order to help determine the viability and sustainability of a proposed policy in the long term. Working in this manner may help to reduce misconceptions and an overall lack of understanding of newly proposed approaches, that may be deemed out-of-the ordinary in a given educational setting.

Indeed teachers' efforts to transform their practices may be futile and solely confined to their classrooms, if these do not have the potential to influence changes in the wider syllabus/curriculum. In other words, teachers may become the proverbial 'lone voices in the wilderness' if their proposed changes do not go beyond their classrooms. I am suggesting that teachers' proposals, based on classroom experiences and practices need to be supported and complemented through collaborative efforts with their colleagues, which are set against the backdrop of the wider curriculum and language policies. In the forthcoming section, I further propose that teachers as quasi-policy makers may complement their roles as 'transformative intellectuals.'

7.3   Language Teachers as Quasi Policy-Makers: A Complementary Role in the Classroom

In this section, I am advocating that in order to further complement and enhance their role as 'intellectuals,' teachers can also operate as quasi policy-makers in order to make suggestions and contributions, based on findings and experiences derived from their classroom practices, thus becoming policy-makers in their own right. Teachers are in a key position to identify flaws and shortcomings in policies that influence their practices, rather than the policy-makers themselves who are removed from the day-to-day issues that influence classroom life. Teachers who fill complementary roles of

both 'intellectuals' and quasi policy-makers are in a strategic position to bring about fundamental changes, albeit at a slow pace, thus transforming traditional BVI language classrooms.

Policies do not exist in a vacuum and they cannot be successfully implemented in isolation from their relevant cultural and linguistic contexts, or in the absence of an understanding of the wider socio-political contexts that help to shape them. Menken and Garcia (2010) suggest that teachers should be at the heart of language policies in education, as they can help to act as key agents of change. In other words, 'rather than playing the role of blind followers who implement policies mandated from above, educators themselves could become policy-makers' (p.250). This suggests that teachers may not only take the initiative to make changes, but they can also play an active role in executing them.

As Kramsch (1992) puts it, teachers need to develop into 'authors of their own words', that is, going beyond echoing the sentences and ideas from the textbook. This does not mean that teachers should deviate from the curriculum, but it means interpreting it creatively by adding new layers of meaning, or exposing hidden layers. It also seems to suggest moving beyond emulating the utterances and phrases of texts and orthodox assumptions that inform their practices. Thus, the onus is on the teachers to enable pupils to explore novel ways of conveying their views, understandings and perspectives in a creative manner. As Kramsch further observes, 'it is through dialogue with others...that learners discover which ways of talking and thinking they share with others and which are unique to them' (p.27).

Speaking to a similar issue, a language ecology model which was proposed by Creese and Martin (2003) and Hornberger (2003) suggests that language use in multicultural settings demands an exploration of the relationship between linguistic varieties and the society in which they exist. Thus, in their view this approach encompasses '… the geographical, socio-economic and cultural conditions in which the speakers of a language exist, as well as the wider linguistic environment' (Creese and Martin, 2003, p.1).

This proposed model has resonance in creole-speaking environments as it fosters the transparency of the historical, socio-political and ideological underpinnings of dominant and marginalised varieties. Given the colonial and sociohistorical origins of BVI Creole, this model may help to further highlight the ways in which this linguistic variety is both underutilised and implicitly devalued in BVI secondary classrooms.

English-based creole-speaking environments that disregard these elements in their language policies, may not be in a position to offer adequate explanations for the socio-political relationship that exists between marginalised varieties like creole and standard English.

In the next section, I consider ways in which teachers in postcolonial contexts may to be provided with opportunities which enable them to reflect upon the social, historical, and political factors that may have helped to shape their belief systems and their teaching practices. I suggest tangible ways in which teachers can become more conscious of the hegemonic assumptions they make, which are part and parcel of the deficit views, that may be perpetuated in the English Language classroom. In what follows, I propose an approach which may serve as an opportunity whereby teachers can make transparent and explicit the unquestioned assumptions that they make.

7.4   Deconstructing Hegemonic Assumptions: Teachers' Autobiographical Narratives

In this section, I suggest that teachers' quasi-autobiographical accounts of personal and professional experiences can set the reflective process in motion. At the beginning of this thesis I attempted to offer my reasons, both personal and professional for embarking on the PhD journey by providing a quasi auto-biographical account, both on the personal and professional aspects (see chapter one, sections 1.7 and 1.8) that may have helped to shape the unconscious hegemonic assumptions that I made both in the classroom, and in the wider society.

At the beginning of my journey, I was not conscious that I was making hegemonic assumptions about language, as they seemed 'natural' and 'common-sensical', nor was I provided with opportunities to question or challenge the assumptions that I made. In a similar vein, by providing opportunities for teachers to reflect on their early experiences we can encourage them to construct autobiographical narratives, against the backdrop of critical theory, and in conjunction with resources such as Trudgill's (1976,1986) accessible texts such as 'Introduction to Sociolinguistics' and 'Accent, Dialect and the School.'

I argue that BVI classroom teachers can be provided with opportunities to confront taken-for-granted and unquestioned assumptions by reflecting upon their early experiences within the home, school, and community and how these may have shaped their professional experiences. I am not suggesting that this is a quick–fix

exercise that automatically fills a gap in teachers' knowledge, in which their assumptions are made readily transparent. Rather, deconstructing hegemonic stances involves a lifetime of professional and self-assessment, in relation to one's teaching practices, and an ongoing and protracted engagement for the individual teacher or quasi social activist. It means that throughout the duration of their careers teachers must engage in '…an ongoing, collaborative process of re-evaluation of, and liberation from, our taken-for granted views' (Berlack and Berlack,1987, p.170).

In his research into antiracist teacher education pedagogies Vavrus (2006) draws on the value of autobiographical research and analytical personal narratives about the socially constructed teacher–identity formation, in order to explore issues related to race and racial identity. As Vavrus (2006) notes, early family and school histories are useful in inducting teacher and teacher education candidates into autobiographical explorations of socially constructed identities. As he puts it, 'Every individual has a different set of family and schooling experiences' (p.104). It is these differences in early home socialisation practices that are crucial in developing their understanding of the circumstances that shape pupils' 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1991), that is, 'durable dispositions' habits, beliefs, world views and perceptions.

Deconstructing the notions of dominant ideologies of power begins with the teacher and, for this reason, I argue that it is crucial for teachers of creole-speaking pupils to begin by constructing critical and reflective stances that challenge their own thinking and philosophies in relation to their own practices. As Bourdieu (1977) observes 'the most successful ideological effects are those which have no need for words' (p.185). In other words, language ideologies become 'naturalised' to the point where the need to interrogate them is obliterated. As a result, individuals are silenced as they may become part and parcel of a system in which they willingly and unquestioningly accept the status quo, even though it may not necessarily work in their favour.

Similarly, English Language teachers are 'hailed' or 'interpellated' (Althusser, 1971) as subjects who are socially constructed or positioned in dominant discourses from which there seems to be no escape. I am suggesting that conceptual tool of hegemony as postulated by Gramsci's (1971, 1985) is a way of offering teachers the opportunity to reflect upon and challenge the taken-for-granted and unquestioned assumptions that they make about language use in BVI classrooms. This construct provides opportunities for "subjects'' like teachers and pupils to occupy alternative spaces and counter-hegemonic discourses, in an effort to dislodge themselves from the positions that are constructed for them by dominant discourses and institutions.

I am proposing that in post-colonial environments it is crucial for language teachers to focus on how reflections of their early language histories may reveal taken-for-granted assumptions which may influence their classroom practices. As Roth (2005) maintains, 'becoming a critical practitioner necessitates insights into the construction of selfhood and personal transformation' (p.155).As teaching is a dynamic rather than static profession it involves 'personal transformation'; it means critically evaluating, interrogating and questioning oneself in light of theoretical stances that have shaped teachers' early views and beliefs, and it involves becoming a 'transformative intellectual.' In this light, teachers are empowered 'to act in a more informed manner, to engage in critical actions that transforms not only one own life, but also the lives of others' (Roth, 2005, p. 155).

An approach which encourages teachers to reflect on their experiences and assumptions in relation to the dominant discourses, as it relates to language, is one which may promote a new understanding of hegemony 'in themselves, in school and in the wider society' (Lea, 2010, p.58). In other words, teachers have to actively and consciously reformulate and reconceptualise their early/initial experiences, relative to their teaching practices, in order to develop new insights and understandings. Developing an awareness of the implicit, and 'invisible' assumptions that make teachers make, albeit unconsciously, sets in motion the process of conscious and critical reflection.

I also argue that teachers in BVI classrooms need to develop 'political and ideological clarity' (Bartolomae, 2010, p.201) that is, an understanding that language use in a post-colonial context is not socio-politically neutral, but is sustained by relations of power. From this perspective language is seen as infused with ideologies, a view that is shared by Bakhtin (1981) and Volosinov (1973). It is these invisible ideologies which shape teachers' thinking and their practices, which need to be made explicit and transparent, and as I suggest, teachers need to be provided with opportunities to consciously unravel and deconstruct the hegemonic discourses which position them within the discourses of language teaching in a post-colonial context.

As Gonsalves (2008) explains, there are generally inadequate opportunities for prospective teachers to be exposed to counter-hegemonic possibilities that involve making the explicit the notion of hegemony. He offers an atypical solution that entails "saturating prospective teachers course of study with a critique of hegemonic ideologies'' instead of offering one-shot, multicultural education courses'' (p.89). However, while this may be one solution, it could only be sustained if policy and

planning within teachers' educational domains support this perspective, and these may be further maintained within the context of teacher workshops which may help to cement these 'new' ways of thinking.

Against the theoretical backdrop of critical theory which highlights the socio-historical and political underpinning of language and learning, and which foregrounds notions of ideology, hegemony, resistance, power (Darder et al., 2003; Mc Laren, 2008), teachers can come to terms with taken-for-granted assumptions and the origins of the stances which underpin their language teaching practices, and this theoretical stance gives teachers the opportunity to examine their practices through critical lenses. I am not proposing that this should be done unilaterally, but rather as a collective exercise in the context of professional workshops where teachers can share experiences and learn from each other experiences (see section, 7.9.1).

Thus, critically reflective teachers who interpret their classroom practice in light of the socio-political circumstances in which their teaching practices are situated, are in an enhanced position to analyse and assess their practices in intellectually meaningful and fruitful ways. As Berlack and Berlack (1987) observe, 'If… teachers hope to encourage critical thought in others, we must encourage it in ourselves' (p.170). That is, if teachers want their pupils to be in position to critically evaluate and deconstruct dominant discourses about language use in the classroom, in relation the wider society it must begin with the teachers themselves.

Furthermore, teachers may be able to determine whether the assumptions that underpin their classroom practices are in alignment with, or run counter to, those of the wider social sphere. I argue that one of the fundamental changes that teachers need to make in a post-colonial context is to come to terms with or confront the implicit, and unconscious assumptions they make, which reveal themselves in innocuous ways, and the ideologies which underpin them.

In the previous section, I attempted to put forward the view that teachers in creole environments need to be provided with the opportunities to examine the unconscious and ideological/ hegemonic assumptions that inform their classroom practices. In the forthcoming section, I suggest that by unveiling the hegemonic assumptions about language use in the classroom, by means of a critical perspective of language, teachers may further open the possibilities of enabling creole-speaking pupils to develop critical voices. I explore this issue in the forthcoming section.

7.5 Developing Pupils' Critical Language Awareness in the Creole-Speaking Classroom Environment

In this section, I argue for the relevance of a critical orientation to language, as a pedagogical tool in the teaching of English Language in a post-colonial environment, which draws on critical language awareness, as proposed by Fairclough (1989, 1992a, 1995), or the development of 'critical language study' (Clark et al., 1991) which supports the value of teaching standard English in conjunction with critically analysing the standard language ideology. In other words, teachers who adopt a 'critical pedagogy' (Janks, 1999; Alim 2005; Wallace, 2003) in their classrooms encourage pupils to critique pervasive assumptions about language. Furthermore, in this view teachers not only account for, 'language as pattern and language as purposeful process, but they consider that these views are inadequate without the critical dimension' (Ivanic, 1991, p.125).

A critical view of language provides opportunities to question a dominant monolingual ideology of language, or in Milroy and Milroy's (1999, 2007) words a 'standard English ideology' that is predicated on the view that standard English is inherently superior to other dialects' (Milroy and Milroy,1999, p.52). This conceptualisation of language promotes a prescriptive view of language which perpetuates notions of 'correctness' and the view that standard English is a monolithic entity or phenomenon. This issue has been addressed more fully in chapter three of the thesis. Thus, in language classroom practices where a critical view of language is adopted notions of correctness 'accuracy and appropriacy' are not things to be learned, but things to be questioned and understood' (Ivanic,1991, p.127).

The inclusion of a critical awareness dimension in the English Language syllabus in a post-colonial environment is imperative as it can play a role in raising pupils' awareness of the effect of the discourses of colonialism ingrained in the role of creole in the classroom, and the wider society. As Janks and Ivanic (1992) observe, 'critical language awareness should underlie all language teaching and learning' (p.320), and more importantly, 'It need not necessarily be the focus of all language lessons, but should be regularly foregrounded' (ibid.,1992, p.320). Thus, while teachers need to provide ample opportunities to make transparent the dominant assumptions about language use, underpinning BVI Creole and standard English, and opportunities to question them, I am not suggesting that language teaching should be overly saturated with this approach.

Fairclough (1992) observes that language conventions and language practices are implicated in power relations 'and ideological processes which people are often unaware of' (p.7). That is to say, discourses are socially constructed and shaped' by power relations, and 'Teachers who adopt a critical view of language pay attention to form and function, but not without a discussion of the way in which power relations affect language' (Ivanic, 1991, p. 127). Hence, I am proposing that a key component of teacher training in an English-based, creole-speaking context should account for the socio-political underpinnings of the coexisting linguistic varieties. Equipped with this knowledge teachers may be in position to raise pupils' broader socio-political consciousness, through a critical perspective on language, thereby enabling them to question and deconstruct the 'common sense' assumptions about the superiority of standard English, in relation to BVI Creole.

I am also suggesting that in order to develop pupils' understandings of the ideologies of power that underpin the relationship between BVI Creole and standard English, teachers can create authentic opportunities in their classrooms which enable pupils to become active inquirers and explorers and, in this view, pupils are able to form their own hypotheses, which enable them to reflect upon language practices in their homes and communities. Teachers can play an instrumental role in assisting pupils to become active inquirers or navigators in language-related issues that influence their daily lives, and they can also benefit from this collaboration as it creates spaces for creativity and innovativeness that may further enable teachers to question and deconstruct their own belief systems which underpin classroom practices. The next section explores the potential role that pupils may adopt as inquirers and ethnographers of language in their homes and communities.

7.6   Investigating 'Voices' in the Home and Community: Pupils as Ethnographers and Inquirers of Language

In this section, I draw on an ethnographically grounded approach to research in order to support the view that pupils can become quasi ethnographers in their own right, by researching language use in their communities. An ethnographic perspective 'is more than a set of techniques, it is a way of thinking about the world and about ways of participating in and learning in the classroom' (Yeager et al, 1998, p.138). A number of scholars drawing on American and British traditions have supported the role of 'learners as ethnographers' (Brice-Heath, 1983) or students as 'ethnographers in their own communities' (Egan-Robertson and Bloome, 1997) in their own research. (Also see, Cheshire and Edwards, 1997; Thomas and Maybin, 1997). I argue that the

benefits of such an endeavour are far-reaching, as working together jointly and collaboratively (Mercer, 2007; Wells, 1992) teachers and pupils are able to share knowledge and learn from each other on community-based projects, in creole-speaking classrooms.

Valorising and validating pupils' cultural and linguistic capital means more than merely acknowledging and utilising pupils' resources, and I am proposing that one of the ways in which attitudes to marginalised varieties might be explored in the classroom is by raising pupils' awareness. By immersing pupils in issues related to their own language experiences, in their role as quasi-researchers, it may be possible for them to explore attitudes to language, and the interrelatedness between language and dominant ideologies. Moreover, one of the most stimulating elements of dialect awareness approaches is that 'it encourages students to become ethnographers and collect their own speech data from their local communities' (Alim, 2005, p.27), and as Heath's (1983) study illustrated, the role of the science teacher, as pupils became ethnographers, was to become a resource person 'in the same sense as in which informants and other community members were resources.' (p.324).

As I explain in the forthcoming section, one of the ways in which teachers can help to dispel misconceptions about the inferiority of BVI Creole is by offering opportunities for pupils to explore the relationship between the creole vernacular and standard English in the classroom. More specifically, pupils can be given opportunities to explore attitudes to language and the ways in which notions of superiority and inferiority of language, ingrained in classroom discourses, are bound up with dominant ideologies in a creole-speaking setting.

Because English-based creoles have traditionally been regarded as ungrammatical and inferior in relation to standard English, I argue that the inclusion of BVI Creole as an object of classroom exploration may play a role in elevating its value in pupils' minds, and in dispelling notions of inferiority. Some scholars researching issues related to language and literacy (see Wolfram et al., 1999; Bloome et al., 2005; Chrisholm and Godley, 2011) observed that discussions involving pupils' linguistic variety can provide a powerful resource for learners, and as Cheshire and Edwards (1997) concur 'classroom discussions about dialect play a pivotal role in raising pupils social and linguistic awareness' (p.204).

I am also suggesting that, in order to further motivate pupils, research projects on language variation should be integrated into English Language classroom

assignments. Furthermore, if pupils are to develop an understanding of the reasons why some accents and linguistic varieties are deemed more socially acceptable or superior than others, then pupils 'need to be introduced to the historical development of English and to the intimate relationship between language and power' (Cheshire and Edwards,1998, p.202). The next section attempts to offer concrete illustrations of ways in which BVI language teachers can address issues related to negative social devaluations of BVI Creole, in relation to the dominant linguistic variety, in their classroom practices.

7.6.1 Exploring Attitudes to Accents and Dialects and Standard English: Deconstructing Notions of Talkin' 'Proper' English Versus Talkin' 'Bad' English

In this section I am proposing that English Language teachers can be encouraged to engage their pupils in discussions related to the BVI Creole vernacular versus standard English, Caribbean accents versus British or American accents/dialects, and notions of 'good' English, 'bad' English, 'proper' English and 'Received pronunciation' (Trudgill, 2000) that is, the so-called ('Queen's English').

Evidence derived from interviews with pupils (see chapter six) suggests that pupils were willing to discuss language related issues, but they rarely seemed to have opportunities to do so in their English Language classes. Furthermore, the pupils freely offered descriptions which devalued BVI Creole, in relation to standard English, and I argue that it is of crucial importance for teachers in a postcolonial settings to address and discuss issues related to language. Data which supports this view is as follows:

> *Some people might speak 'proper' English….and yer might not hear any dialect....in ano'ter person yer might hear somebody speakin' raw dialect....um somebody from de Caribbean might be speakin' raw dialect like: 'Wha' yer wan?'….well, we does speak like dat (Kimaal).*

In my study, after the pupils had listened to the video clip of (speaker of an English-based Creole). I asked them to offer their descriptions and reflections on the speaker's choice of linguistic variety. The quotations which follow illustrate the pupils' views:

> *Miss, she talkin' rough….straight Caribbean talk (Ozzie).*

Miss, um dat is a Kittician accent (St.Kitts) I would say she speakin' rough. She speakin' rough and raw like ours (Kimaal).

Miss I does talk raw Virgin Islands talk. Raw talk mean dat yer language aint correct! It mean yer mixin' up everyting yer want….It ain't proper English. (Ozzie).

….we does talk raw….um broken English. Sometimes yer hear people from de ot'er Caribbean islands speakin' wit' a different accent and dey speak in bad English….and not really realisin' dat we here in de BVI doing it too….so now dat you ask us dese questions you put us to t'ink about it (Christine).

One of the interviewed pupils offered her definition of 'raw':

Okay when I say raw, I mean raw is how we define de dialect….it raw! I mean bad English, vulgar, not much tinkin' about what yer want to say and um….yer not tryin' to pronounce de words properly….its broken English! (Brianna).

Building on these conversations with the pupils, I am proposing that BVI English Language teachers can begin discussions around the use of language, by launching a project entitled 'Voices from the Classroom and the Community: Attitudes to BVI Creole and Standard English'. Teachers can further initiate conversations with pupils on the subject of accents and dialects by asking pupils, working in small groups, to name/list the accents they hear in the community. The objective of this exercise is to raise pupils' awareness of the negative attitudes to linguistic varieties like creoles in their communities, and the origins of these beliefs. Moreover, 'Classroom discussions of dialect are useful not only for raising children's social and linguistic awareness, but also for their development as writers' (Cheshire and Edwards, 1998, p.204).

I am proposing that it is of crucial importance to have discussions with pupils involving the definition of the terms 'dialect' and 'language' in creole settings, and that teachers can employ similar strategies in their own classroom practices in which pupils, working in small groups, can begin by listing the accents and creole/linguistic variations that they hear in the wider community, using short descriptive words or phrases to describe these. As Chrisholm and Godley (2011) suggest, language instruction needs to introduce and distinguish concepts such as 'dialects' and 'registers' if it aims to increase both metalanguage awareness of the dialects and patterns pupils use. For instance, in Chrisholm and Godley's study, which was based on the discussion of language variation in classroom settings in the U.S. context , they

introduced sociolinguistic concepts such as 'dialect', 'accent', 'grammar', 'vocabulary' and 'slang' (p.462).

The findings from my study also suggest that in BVI language classrooms teachers need to focus on notions such as 'dialect', 'accent' and 'standard English.' The objective of an exercise of this nature is to enable pupils to develop an understanding of the reasons why linguistic varieties like creoles are called 'dialects' and standard English which is labelled, "a language" is seen as the superior linguistic variety. Hence, I am proposing that teachers need to be informed, in the context of workshops, about the socio-historical development of standard English in order to impart this knowledge to their pupils. They can draw on Trudgill's (2000) accessible explanation of the emergence of standard English in the U.K. context, which originated from an English dialect ,spoken in London by socio-economically and politically prominent individuals, and this linguistic variety gradually came to be perceived as 'the model for all those who wished to speak and write 'well' (p.6).

Later on, teachers can also draw on the expertise of a linguist, originating from either the University of the US Virgin Islands or the University of the West Indies, who can be invited to speak to pupils on issues related to language use in the Anglophone Caribbean. Working in groups, pupils can embark on an assignment in which they are asked to investigate the countries in the region where creoles co-exist with a dominant variety, and the socio-historical significance of the linguistic relationship. At the end of the project pupils can be asked to discuss their findings to the class, or to display these on bulletin boards, and in the school newspaper.

In order to further advance the proposed unit on attitudes to BVI Creole and standard English, BVI English teachers may then introduce the pupils to the U. S. based video production, entitled 'American Tongues' (Alvarez and Kolker, 1987) which deals with dialect diversity and attitudes to languages in a U.S. context. Although the film is now outdated, it has been used in two older studies (Wolfram, 1998; Wolfram et al.,1999), as well as in more recent studies (see, Chrisholm and Godley, 2011; Godley and Minnici, 2008; Godley and Escher, 2012).

In an earlier study scholars in the British context (Maybin and Thomas, 1998) drew on the BBC language File video series entitled 'Talkin Proper' (1990) in their classroom research, thus I am suggesting that BVI English teachers can conduct a similar exercise in which both teachers and pupils compile a list of the various regional dialects that are spoken in the UK, which may seem incomprehensible to creole-

speaking pupils, and these may include: Tyneside, Geordie, Yorkshire, Cockney, and so forth. If it is possible teachers can also work in collaboration with the Department/Ministry of Education to secure video tapes which depict and feature the accents of the various regions in the United Kingdom. This may help to dispel the misconception among the pupils that the socially constructed so-called 'Queen's English', that is, 'proper English' or 'posh English' (Preece, 2009) is the only variety that is spoken in the UK.

I also recommend that in the absence of commercially available context-specific, video-taped productions of regional Anglophone Caribbean dialects and accents, teachers and pupils in BVI classrooms can embark on their own language project, in collaboration with a local video productions company, in order to collect small samples of the accents and linguistic varieties in the BVI community. Based on their responses and their willingness to discuss issues related to language use, pupils may be motivated to take part in projects that take them outside of the classroom for the purpose of creating their own video production, which may be given the title: 'A Mosaic of Accents in the BVI Community.'

I am further suggesting that the approach which teachers employ may follow similar lines to the approach which I used in my own study. After looking at a short video clip (at 5-10 minute intervals) in which individuals shift seamlessly between an English-based creole and standard English, teachers can engage the pupils in classroom discussions which encourage them to reflect on their own language use based on the following contingent questions:

- Can you offer words or short phrases to describe a particular accent/dialect, that you are familiar with? Can you describe your linguistic variety (ie creole)?

- In your own words, can you offer definitions of 'proper' English' or 'bad' English?

- Can you list a words/adjectives that you associate with 'proper' English' and 'BVI Creole?

- Did you make judgements about the speaker in relation to the language variety that was spoken: a. creole b. standard English? Can you explain?

- What comparisons or contrasts can you make between your own language variety and that in the video clip?

Wolfram's et al., (1999),who conducted research in an American context, suggest that an awareness about dialect and knowledge about language diversity as an object of study could offer pupils 'insights into about the nature of language...' (p.171). Their approach emphasised the structural differences between standard English and the Black American vernacular, by means of contrastive analysis, and it offered ways for pupils to examine different forms of speech used by different speakers in the community. However, one of the limitations of their approach to 'Dialect Awareness' was that it did not account for the socio-historical associations of language use. Furthermore, the pupils in their research were not offered explanations for the existing language ideologies that underpin the linguistic varieties, which are deeply rooted in the 'common sense' assumptions that pupils make about language.

As the teachers in my study offered few opportunities for pupils to discuss issues related to language use, dialects, accents, and attitudes to standard English and an English-based creole, I am proposing that these issues should be foregrounded in the English Language Syllabus in a creole-speaking environment. When offered the opportunity, during the data collection phase of the research, the pupils were very enthusiastic and they fully engaged in discussions about their language use. Thus, I am suggesting that, equipped with tape recorders, pupils may conduct short interviews with individuals in the wider community, which relate to their attitudes to BVI Creole and standard English and, consonant with Delpit's (1998) suggestions, pupils can conduct interviews with various employees, including 'personnel officers in actual workplaces about attitudes to divergent styles in oral and written language' (p.44).

Before conducting short interviews among individuals in selected settings in the community, pupils and their teachers can role-play situations in the classroom. Later pupils can be asked to interview individuals with whom they are familiar, such as family members and friends, and this data may be discussed in small groups and whole-groups sessions before embarking upon the actual data collection in the wider community. The teacher can also suggest that pupils may draw on Fishman's (1965) 'domains of language choice' which account for 'who *speaks what language, to whom and when.*' However, I argue that language use in English-based, creole contexts is far more complex than Fishman's model suggests, as it does not account for ideologies of power, the occasions in which language use overlaps in a creole setting, nor does it make allowances for language use in a metaphorical sense. Despite these limitations, I am suggesting that this model can be a starting point to guide pupils in the collection of data.

Extracts derived from interviews with pupil further illustrate the need for teachers to engage in discussions with pupils on attitudes to linguistic varieties like English-based Creoles in relation to Standard English. These are as follows:

> *Some people might speak proper English and yer might not want hear any dialect….in anot'er person yer might not hear any dialect….in anot'er person yer might hear somebody speakin' raw dialect….um somebody from de Caribbean might be speakin' raw dialect like: 'wha' yer wan?' Well….we does speak like dat (Kimaal).*

> *Miss I does talk raw Virgin Islands talk. Raw talk mean dat yer language ain't correct! It mean mixin' up everytin'[everything] yer[you]want....it aint[isn't] proper English (Ozzie).*

In the forthcoming section, I examine issues of power and language which can form the basis of a language unit, and I argue that in order for pupils in an Anglophone Caribbean environment to develop an understanding of the socially inferior position of creole, in relation to standard English, they need to develop an understanding of the socio-historical origins of the relationship between the two linguistic entities.

In order to further raise pupils' consciousness and to equip them with the abilities to question and deconstruct hitherto unquestioned taken-for-granted assumptions, they need to be provided with tangible opportunities in teachers' English Language classroom practices. I address these issues, and offer concrete suggestions on how BVI English Language classroom teachers may approach this issue.

7.7 Dismantling Language Ideologies in the BVI Secondary Classroom

I argue that English Language teachers can create opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the relationship between language ideologies, and equip them with the tools to question and challenge the superiority of standard English in relation to the supposed inferiority of BVI Creole. The objective of the proposed unit is to illustrate to pupils that definitions of 'correct', and 'proper' English' (ie so-called 'Queen's English), or 'bad' English are socially constructed in the discourses of slavery and colonialism. Essentially, these terms relate to the socio-economic and political power which dominant groups exert over groups of people, who are marginalised or deemed less powerful.

I am proposing that teachers can further illustrate this by drawing on the poem by John Agard which is entitled, 'Listen, Mr. Oxford Don' taken from Alternative Anthem: Selected Poems. (2009). The teacher will be expected to discuss it in its entirety with the class, but I draw on the first three stanzas only, in order to illustrate my position.

Listen, Mr. Oxford Don

Me no Oxford Don
Me a simple immigrant
From Clapham Common
I didn't graduate
Immigrate.

But listen Mr. Oxford Don
I am a man on de run
And a man on de run is a
Dangerous one

I ent have no gun
I ent have no knife
But mugging the 'Queen English'
Is de story of my life.

The teacher can begin by offering pupils autobiographical data on the accomplished poet/playwright, John Agard, of Guyanese origin who won the Queen's Medal (2012) for poetry. This can be followed by an explanation of the history of Caribbean people's immigration to the United Kingdom, following the end of the Second World War.

In order to further the discussion of the poem, the teacher will, undoubtedly, have to explain the definition certain phrases that are specific to the UK context, such as 'Clapham Common', 'Oxford Don' as the guardian of 'proper English, and the so-called 'Queen's English' as the perceived superior linguistic variety. In their discussion, this poem can be treated like other poems in the pupils' textbook, entitled a Caribbean Examination (CXC) Comprehensive English Course, Book Four. Among the elements of the poem which can be discussed include: theme, tone and literary devices such as metaphors, imagery, and repetition to convey the ideas of 'danger', 'destruction' that are conveyed in the poem.

This poem is useful in addressing dominant language ideologies, that is, misconceptions of 'good' and 'bad' language, as it challenges the dominant status quo, notions of 'correctness' and the social and linguistic superiority of standard English, in relation to other varieties that are deemed inferior. Following these discussions, pupils can be asked to bring recordings of reggae, rap or calypso music which may convey a similar message, or whose message is a form of social critique/protest. In addition, a local poet or calypso singer/song writer can also be invited to speak to the pupils about writing poems, and lyrics of this nature. Working in groups, pupils can later be given guidance in writing lyrics and short poems, some of which can be published in the school newspaper or performed at the school's end of year music concerts.

I am also recommending that teachers can draw on literature texts to initiate discussions on the unequal socio-political and historical value of BVI Creole in relation to standard English. For instance, the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Literature Syllabus (2012-2014) prescribed set and elective texts which included Samuel Selvon's 'Lonely Londoners, that describes the plight of early West Indian immigrants in London in the 1950s, and V.S. Naipaul's Miguel Street, in which the authors freely employed both standard English and an English-based creole in their writing. Thus, by drawing on these linguistic resources in the text, teachers can provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on the main characters' use of code-shifting between linguistic varieties.

Literature teachers in BVI classrooms already examine issues related to formal and informal language in the novel, and they are also likely to discuss the author's use of language and style in the novel, or how language variation can reflect or portray the development of a particular character. However, I am proposing that teachers need to go beyond this, and as evidence derived from interviews with the pupils (see chapter six) suggest, it is of crucial importance for teachers in BVI English Language classrooms to explore ways in which to raise their pupils' metalanguage awareness, and their abilities to talk about and to reflect on their use of language, thus extending their linguistic repertoires. The next section explores this issue.

7.8   Enhancing Pupils' Metalanguage Awareness through Critical Reflections on Language Use: Beyond Contrastive Analysis

In this final section of the chapter, I want to argue a case for English Language teachers to foster pupils' meta-language awareness abilities by providing spaces in their classrooms for a new kind of pedagogy, which enables pupils to reflect upon

their language choices. This approach goes beyond contrastive analysis as it does not focus solely on the structural differentiation between a dominant and marginalised variety. The approach which I am proposing goes beyond mechanistic approaches as it offers teachers opportunities which enable pupils to talk, reflect upon, and to offer their own hypotheses on their language use, and the language use of others. By offering their hypotheses through explicit talk about language, and opportunities to reflect on language use in different 'domains' in an English-based, creole-speaking setting, teachers may be able to raise their pupils' consciousness thereby extending their meta-language abilities and their linguistic repertoires.

In short, the argument that I am attempting to put forward is not so much for an increased competency in BVI Creole, as pupils are already competent speakers of the linguistic variety, and the data is replete with examples which suggest that it is the 'unmarked choice' (Myers-Scotton,1988, 1995) among the pupils. Rather, I am arguing in favour of the inclusion of BVI Creole in order to increase its role as an intellectual resource/tool which could enhance pupils' meta-language abilities. Moreover, an increased acknowledgement of its role in the classroom might play a pivotal role in raising the social status of this linguistic variety in the classroom, as well as pupils' perception of it.

The contrastive analysis perspective, advocated among scholars in a Black American vernacular contexts, (see Wolfram et al.,1999; Wheeler and Swords, 2006; Wheeler, 2009), was also proposed in the very early research in an English-based creole speaking context by some creole scholars (Craig, 1966, 1983). More recently, this approach was proposed by Bryan (2004) in her study among Jamaican pupils in an attempt to raise pupils' understandings of the linguistic differences, which they may not be aware of, between the structures of creole and standard English. Wheeler's (2009) study, which was conducted among speakers of the Black American vernacular, suggests that code switching adds standard English to pupils' linguistic repertoires, and she argues that contrastive analysis and code-switching provide the tools in which teachers and their pupils can 'engage in critical thinking as they discover and analyse the patterns of diverse linguistic varieties' (p. 188).

Although I am not advocating this approach, one of the obvious merits of contrastive analysis is that it helps to emphasise the structural differences between vernacular languages and the structures of dominant linguistic varieties. On the other hand, one of the limitations of this approach is that it tends to de-contextualise language use, as its focus is primarily on differentiation of structures rather than on meanings.

Furthermore, I argue that the contrastive analysis approach does not provide pupils with the tools to deconstruct hegemonic assumptions about language, nor does it endow them with the resources to develop a meta-language which enables them to talk about and reflect upon the language choices they make.

A number of researchers including Kirkland and Jackson (2009) and Higgins et al., (2012) have called for a more critical re-conceptualisation of contrastive analysis approaches, that may be able to provide vernacular speaking pupils with opportunities to use their linguistic varieties in ways, other than merely facilitating the transition to standard English. In their research, which drew on a critical language awareness framework, among high school students who were pidgin (Hawaiian Creole) speakers, Higgins et al., (2012) aimed to address the issue of 'linguicism' (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1990) or, linguistic discrimination. The results of their study suggest that 'students as knowledge producers' may have the potential to challenge linguistic discrimination in ways that are not possible when contrastive analysis approaches are being used. Higgens et al., (2012) also argue that contrastive analysis approaches do not effectively challenge linguistic discrimination, 'since they grant hegemonic languages more authoritative space under the guise of 'appropriate language use because they relegate non-mainstream languages to the periphery' (p.50).

Similarly, Kirkland and Jackson (2009) maintain that a critical reformulation of contrastive analysis approaches, has the potential to offer pupils the opportunity to use their language in ways that go beyond a transition to standard English. As they note, 'By using African American vernacular simply as a scaffold to standard English, contrastive analysis approaches reinforce the asymmetrical positioning between two languages, relegating AAV as well as the people who speak it, to an inferior social status' (p.137). The approach which I am suggesting goes beyond transitional approaches. In other words, I am not arguing in favour of transitional approaches which use the creole vernacular as a bridge to learning standard English, as such approaches serve to further diminish the social/linguistic value of varieties like BVI Creole in relation to standard English. Rather, I am suggesting that situations need to be created in BVI language classrooms, which offer pupils opportunities to develop metalinguistic tools which enable them to reflect upon their linguistic choices, to offer hypotheses of their language use, and the language use of others. Evidence emerging from my study suggests that some positive benefits may be derived from pupils' engagement with two linguistic varieties in a bi-dialectal environment, as the participants seemed to demonstrate a keen level of meta-language awareness.

Early studies in second language development (see Cummins, 1987; Bialystok, 1987a, 1988, 1991) also suggest a positive effect of bilingualism on pupils' metalanguage abilities, that is, 'metalanguage can be perceived as both thing (terminology) and process (talk about language)' (Berry, 2010, p. 34). While, I am not arguing in favour of a bilingual approach for BVI language classrooms, lessons can be learnt from this approach that may resonate in a bi-dialectal situation. Furthermore, little empirical research has been done on this issue, as it relates to the metalanguage development among learners in the Anglophone Caribbean, where standard English and its lexically related variety co-exist.

Additionally, research conducted in the United States by Schleppegrell (2013) illustrates that a meaningful meta-language can support L2 learners in accomplishing demanding tasks in the primary school curriculum, while promoting the kind of 'focussed consciousness raising' and explicit talk about language that has been shown to facilitate L2 development. As she argues, 'meta-language is learned in connection with the content and so serves as a pedagogical tool for learning about language' (p.166). In what follows, I attempt to illustrate how a meta-language derived from the field of linguistics may be applied in an English Language classroom, where BVI Creole and standard English co-exist.

7.8.1 Providing Spaces for Pupils to Reflect on Language Use in an English-Based Creole-Speaking Setting

In this section, I argue that pupils in a creole environment need be equipped with knowledge about language (Carter,1991), that is, the notion that language teachers should offer explicit knowledge about the structure of language which enables them to describe and classify language, but which also fosters the development of a meta-language that for talking about it. Pupils are already familiar with term such as 'themes', 'tone', 'similes', 'metaphors, alliteration and other poetic and literary devices used to discuss poetry. Hence, I am proposing that as pupils are already aware of these concepts teachers can build on their knowledge, thus extending their metalanguage awareness.

I am suggesting that as a starting point, teachers and pupils may become quasi-linguists in order to draw on notions of 'situational' and 'metaphorical' code shifting (Blom and Gumperz, 1972; Gumperz and Gumperz, 1985) in order to provide pupils with a metalanguage for talking about and explaining their choices, thereby raising their awareness and enhancing their linguistic repertoires. Whereas, 'metaphorical'

code shifting enriches a situation and may allude to a social relationship within the situation, that is not normally connected to a change in topic, 'situational' code switching attempts to define a social situation which is normally associated or connected with certain types of activities. I have addressed this more fully in chapter three.

In order to build on this, I am proposing that teachers can introduce a new lesson/ unit which may be entitled, 'Reflecting on Language Use in BVI Language Classrooms and Community.' They can begin by asking pupils to look at a video clip for 5-10 minutes, in which an English -based creole is spoken alongside standard English, and where the speakers seem to seamlessly shift from one linguistic variety to another. Following this, teachers can then ask the pupils, during a whole-group discussion, to offer their first/early impressions of anything, regarding the speakers' use of language that captured their attention.

To further advance the discussion, I am suggesting that teachers can invite the pupils to watch the video clip for a second time, while drawing on Fishman's (1972) classical domains of language use, which may help to explain and guide pupils' language choices, and these include: what accounts for who speaks what language? To whom? where? when? To this end, teachers may ask pupils to consider the following features when looking at the video clip: setting/ location, language choice, the addressee, and the topic of conversation. One of the limitations of the Fishman's model (see chapter two) is that it does not fully account for the extent to which the speaker is able to shift or 'accommodate' (Giles and Powesland, 1975) to their interlocuter's speech, that is, individuals shift their speech style to the speaking style of others, depending on the person's status or the nature of the social relationship. In this perspective, 'an individual can induce another to evaluate him more favourably by reducing dissimilarities between them' (p.98).

The proposed video clip can be replayed at intervals, in order to capture short stretches of conversation and to provide pupils with ample opportunities to reflect upon the snapshots of language use. Whereas the questions outlined in (section, 7.6.1) of this chapter are largely contingent questions, the questions posed in this section encourage the pupils to think deeper and to promote further reflection.

The following guiding questions may offer pupils opportunities to reflect on the linguistic choices that speakers make:

- Can you 'guess' (offer a hypothesis) or come up with possible reason why the speaker/s in the video clip may have used a particular variety in a given situation?

- Is it possible for you to reflect upon those occasions when you may have (consciously) used a particular variety? (for instance, standard English)

- Can you offer an explanation for your choice of a particular variety in a given setting? (home, talking to a tourist, friend)

As findings from the data suggest, pupils are ready for discussions or conversations of this nature as they seemed to demonstrate a sophisticated socio-linguistic awareness and, thus, it seems reasonable to suggest that teachers should build on these potentials. The following quotations, which emerged from the conversations which I had with the pupils help to capture the essence of this.

> *Miss, most of de[the] times I ain't aware dat[that] I switching over like dat....um not all de time only sometimes I ain't aware....um probably sometimes when I in de middle of a conversation I would be aware bit I wont stop....um I would just continue speakin' (Ozzie).*

> *If a tourist ask me for directions, I would try to speak proper English, but de dialect would cut in....um kick in but I would try to speak to de[the] tourist so dey[they] would understand me. Miss, sometimes de dialect does just come out....um cut in and I aint always aware....and it (creole) does come naturally....an um sometimes half way into talkin' to de tourist I might realise dat I aint talkin'de way I does usually speak! (Ozzie).*

> *Um....if I speaking wit a tourist or I on holiday...um I want to speak in a way dat people would understand me....I would consciously switch over to 'proper English'. I kinda switch over to a lil' [little] bit to proper English....but not too much....I would switch over a lil' [little] bit to proper English um....but I wouldn't over do it (Ozzie).*

These quotations also seem to suggest that pupils may be able to offer explanations for their linguistic choices on those occasions when they shift from BVI Creole to standard English, and I suggest that their abilities to talk about their code switching enhances their metalinguistic awareness. In order to further enhance classroom discussions with pupils the teacher can also ask pupils to reflect upon, and offer 'hypotheses' of their own language choices with respect to the creole vernacular or standard English, during conversation.

I am proposing that the English Language teacher can also implement the use of language logs or diaries (Nunan, 1992) among the pupils, and as Nunan suggests, 'diaries, logs and journals play an important introspective tools in language research' (Nunan, 1992, p.118). To this end, the objective of this exercise was to encourage pupils to actively participate, and to reflect on how they use both linguistic varieties in their daily lives and to reflect on other peoples' language choices.

The teacher can also suggest that pupils' try-out'/'dry-run' the exercise with classmates, and working in pairs they can then be asked to share what they have discovered, and what aspects of the discussion may have encouraged them to reflect upon their language choices. After engaging the pupils in whole-group discussions on early findings, the teacher can then ask pupils to make diary entries for a period of two-three days, and these short conversation extracts may be further discussed and analysed in the context of a whole-group class discussion.

In the final phase, teachers can ask pupils, equipped with a recorder, to make diary entries based on conversations they may have had with friends, family, stranger and so forth, and these findings will be discussed in the classroom before going into the wider community. After pupils have become familiar with the format that is expected of them, the exercise can be extended to a longer period of one week. The possible guiding questions are as follows:

- Where did the conversation take place?

- With whom did you converse? (e.g. office-worker, dentist, friend, relative, tourist, market vendor etc.)

- What were you talking about?

- Were you aware of any shifting (ie 'kicking in and kicking out') in your choice of language or in the addressee's language choices during conversation?

- Can you talk briefly about those occasions that you were aware of shifting between creole and standard English?

- Can you explain what factors/reasons may have guided your (conscious) decision to use a particular variety, in a given situation?

As I have stated elsewhere, in BVI English Language classrooms (see chapter five) teachers generally speak standard English; however, as they are also fluent speakers of BVI English-based creole, which is a part of their repertoire, I am suggesting that this linguistic resource can be implemented in the language classroom to the advantage of their pupils. For instance, teachers in discussion with pupils, can talk openly about their own abilities to code-switch/shift, between two linguistic varieties, and to share their reflections on those occasions, when they may have made conscious choices to use a particular variety.

I am also proposing that teachers can also keep a diary in which they can share their language experiences with pupils, and this may motivate them to reflect upon their own language choices, and to develop an awareness of the ways in which language use changes in relation to different purposes and audience. One of primary objectives of this exercise is that it can enable pupils to develop an understanding of why certain linguistic choices are made, and not others, in certain situations, and to be able to reflect upon, evaluate, and offer hypotheses of the decisions behind their choices. In other words, pupils may be in a better position to offer meta-language explanations for the language choices they may make, which involve the linguistic varieties that are available in the community.

In short, in this section I am not arguing in favour of implementation of code switching as a tool; rather, I am arguing in favour of using or including BVI Creole as an 'cognitive/intellectual resource' for raising pupils' meta-language awareness about the language choices they make, as well as the linguistic choices that others make. This goes beyond current classroom practices that include creole in a tokenistic way, and which pay lip-service to respecting and 'honouring' the cultural value of the BVI vernacular in the classroom through the inclusion of dialect poems, plays and dialogue in narration that are sanctioned by the Caribbean Examinations (CXC) Council. Such approaches do little to dispel notions of inferiority of BVI Creole, or to challenge the dominant status of standard English, and as my data suggest that pupils are in a position to engage in discussions of this nature, and it makes sense for teachers to build on their knowledge about language (Carter,1991). In this section, I suggested that spaces can be created in English Language classrooms which provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their own language use in creole settings, and in the forthcoming section, I discuss practical issues or limitations that may impinge on the successful implementation of new strategies. Finally, I make recommendations for the possible ways in which pathways may be created to enhance the implementation

of proposed strategies for policy and practice. The next section explores these limitations.

7.9   Limitations that May Impact Upon the Successful Implementation of New Strategies

In this section, I further advocate that teachers can serve as 'intellectuals' and as quasi policy-makers as they occupy the best vantage point for making suggestions for improving policy and practice (see sections 7.2 and 7.3). I am not claiming that the strategies which I am proposing are easy to implement or that these can they be readily or automatically achieved. On the contrary, there are intrinsic challenges and limitations to the successful implementation of new strategies, which may arise no matter how well-conceived a programme may be.

One of the main limitations of the successful implementation/application of any new approach is its financial viability. Proposals take time to be discussed, amended, and tested out subject to their approval and implementation, and the allocation of adequate resources is an essential part of implementation. Without sufficient resources it is difficult, if not impossible, to implement planned strategic activities. In addition to this, the lack of clearly articulated goals and objectives may also serve as a hindrance or roadblock to the successful implementation of a particular strategy. Once goals and objectives are clearly defined, and a convincing example or demonstration of how a particular strategy was successfully implemented in similar contexts, it may help to move the proposal beyond formulation stage.

The lack of inadequate or ongoing communication between those in authority and individuals such as teachers, school leaders and heads of departments, who operate at subordinate levels, may also constitute a key barrier to the successful application of a new approach. Furthermore, despite their best intentions and ideas teachers are virtually powerless to implement changes of their own accord which influence the wider curriculum, and their classroom practices. As a result of this, the implementation of a newly devised proposal needs the authoritative impetus and approval from governing bodies, such as the department and ministry of education.

Another key limitation that may impede success and sustainability of the application of a new approach relates to time constraints on the part of teachers, who already have heavy course schedules and a seemingly endless range of responsibilities which include: teaching and preparing lessons, meeting learning targets, managing

classroom behaviour, and engaging in pastoral roles. The goal is not to impose an added burden to BVI English teachers' work load, or to make the task of teaching an onerous endeavour. Rather, the objective is to facilitate them in making meaningful changes which do not encroach on their day-day duties, but which help to enrich the teaching and learning experience.

Each newly proposed approach also needs to have a 'selling point' that is critical to its success, and the absence of this may lead to its failure. In order for a particular procedure to succeed, teachers need to be fully committed to its success, and to be convinced that it will benefit their pupils. Furthermore, during the formulation phase of a newly proposed strategy, teachers need to be informed, or least made aware of its existence, as they have a vested interest in the strategy's success which they may be responsible for implementing. In addition, teachers need to have the necessary knowledge and skills to put the formulated strategy to work and, as I later recommend, this may require further training for teachers. This is discussed more fully in the forthcoming section, and to this I now turn.

7.9.1   Recommendations

In this section, I am recommending that building pathways or bridges to facilitate ongoing communication and coordination of ideas between teachers and their heads of department, administrators, policy-makers and curriculum developers. Ongoing communication can help to determine what the policy will look like, or whether a particular proposal is practical, relevant or beneficial to classroom practices.

Teachers are generally in the habit of informally networking with their colleagues, but there are few opportunities for them to build communicative pathways between themselves and those in authority, whose policies influence their practices. This communication may be facilitated in relatively small education systems such as the BVI, where it is generally easy to gain access to Ministers of Government via their permanent secretaries, and deputies. As I have previously stated, (see section, 7.3) too little account is taken of teachers' knowledge and professional expertise when new policies and strategies are being implemented or proposed, and they are generally excluded from policy-making processes and decisions. Thus, rather than being merely passive recipients of policies developed elsewhere (Taylor et al.,1997) teachers can be actively involved in contributing to the policies which influence their teaching.

The introduction of new policies and strategies, such as those I am proposing, also need to be done collaboratively, on a 'top down' and 'bottom–up' basis, and which account for teachers' input , as well as those in superior positions. When emphasis is placed on a solely 'top-down' approach, a perspective is adopted which may neglect teachers' contributions who, arguably, should play a role in the development of new strategies. If teachers' contributions are valued in a meaningful way they can become a part of the mechanism for real change, and this may have an enormously motivating and empowering effect on them.

Newly devised strategies and approaches may also need to be piloted, or 'tried out' before their implementation by school administrators and head of departments and school leaders. In this way, the progress and the sustainability of a particular strategy can be monitored throughout, in a systematic and evaluative manner, in order to determine its strengths, limitations, and overall effectiveness. The following can also be considered:

- What works?

- What are the possible barriers to the success of a proposed strategy?

- How can these be overcome or significantly reduced?

Although there are real benefits to be derived from educational research, in some instances classroom research is divorced from the real challenges and actual experiences, and interests of teachers in specific contexts. One way in which BVI English teachers may be able to convince those in authority to make needed changes in policy, is by means of their own teacher-initiated action-research. Teachers generally share their beliefs and hypotheses with colleagues about their teaching practices, which may form the basis of classroom research, but they are offered few opportunities to test or 'try out' these in a research context. Similarly, Stenhouse (1981) also laments the lack of opportunity for teachers to play a more central role in educational research other than through formal participation is higher degree courses.

I am not proposing that teacher research should be a compulsory requirement across the board, as owing to practical reasons this may be impractical or virtually impossible. However, I am certainly recommending that spaces can be created in which teachers are encouraged or supported if they are inclined to become, in the words of Hopkins, (2002) practitioner-researchers, or 'teachers-as-researchers' (Hardy, 2012). In this

perspective, teachers can work in collaboration with tutors or mentors (Costello, 2003) in order to complete 'action research' projects, while attached to a continuing education programme. Conceptualised in this way, teachers 'are not simply passive consumers, but also active creators of knowledge about their own work and learning' (Hardy, 2012, p.61). These projects may also be an opportunity for teachers' contributions to be recognised, professionally and academically as, currently, this opportunity is virtually non-existent in the BVI teaching community.

Finally, I recommend mandatory professional development workshops which may be conducted a few of times per year or during half-term, without encroaching on their term-time schedules and teaching commitments. In the context of professional development workshops, teachers may be able to apply creative approaches and techniques for solving issues in a collaborative manner. In lieu of institutions of formal learning, workshops are ideal places for facilitators to offer teachers additional practical training and skills in the implementation of a particular strategy. Thus, the introduction of small, and strategic changes, such as those that I am proposing, can be introduced and integrated in teachers' classroom practices in manageable, bite-sizes, in accessible language, and in reader-friendly formats over a period of time. In other words, teachers need access to information which may enhance pedagogy in a digestible format, and which they can consume and readily apply in their classrooms.

Teachers need to be constantly provided with opportunities to reflect upon issues that are pertinent to their practices, and workshops are ideal forums where proposals such as the notions of the teacher as an 'intellectual' or as a quasi policy-maker can be introduced. Furthermore, workshops are ideal sites in which teachers' unquestioned assumptions about their practices can be explored, discussed, and foregrounded by means of autobiographical narratives. The possibilities are endless, but meaningful changes and the development of new approaches begin with an ongoing dialogue or conversation among the key players.

7.9.2   Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued in favour of validating BVI Creole in the classroom, in order enhance the perceptions of its inferior status, and this means moving beyond applauding its role as an emblem of cultural solidarity or cultural allegiance. Rather, I have suggested that the BVI vernacular needs to be implemented as a 'cognitive resource' or 'intellectual tool', alongside and in partnership with the dominant school discourse, thereby extending pupils' linguistic repertoires.

I have also proposed that teachers in BVI language classrooms can take on the role of 'transformative intellectuals', and by operating in this capacity they may develop the potential to transform orthodox perceptions of language use in the classroom, and indeed in the wider society. Furthermore, in order to supplement and enhance their role as 'transformative intellectuals,' I have further suggested that teachers can also perform as quasi policy-makers in order to make contributions to policy. Thus, rather than playing the role of 'blind-followers' who implement policies mandated by those in the upper echelons of the education system teachers can make proposals and recommendations, based on experiences derived from their own practices, thus becoming 'policy-makers' in their own right.

The chapter has then argued that the implementation of a critical language awareness component in the English Language Syllabus should foreground language teaching practices in a postcolonial context. With an understanding of critical language pedagogy, teachers are in a position to interrogate and challenge orthodox beliefs, and to expose the unquestioned 'common sense' assumptions underpinning their teaching practices. Thus, teachers may become better equipped with the potential to raise their pupils' awareness of the hegemonic status of standard English, vis-a-vis the inferior status of BVI Creole, and in the absence of these tools in their language repertoires, teachers and pupils may continue to unconsciously propagate dominant ideologies of power, which may be reflected in the social and linguistic inequities in the wider society.

Finally, this chapter has concluded by proposing that rather than employ contrastive analysis approaches to language teaching, which may be limited to largely mechanistic approaches, teachers in the BVI linguistic environment need to go beyond this. To this end, I have proposed that teachers can create spaces, for a new kind of pedagogy, within the English Language classroom, in order to provide pupils with opportunities to develop a metalanguage in which they may be able to analyse and to critically reflect on their use of BVI Creole and standard English. By making these opportunities explicit in their English Language teaching practices, pupils may be assisted in exploring ways in which to build upon their apparent meta-language abilities.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1   Introduction

The primary objective of this chapter is to reflect on the study in light of its findings, and to illustrate the extent to which the thesis has answered the research questions that I have set out to explore. It also examines some of the issues which emerged in the study, and discusses the consequences which these may have for the limitations and strengths of the study. The chapter then briefly examines how the thesis contributes to knowledge with regard to English teaching in a postcolonial context, and makes a few suggestions for the directions for future research.

8.2   Reproducing the Dominant Standard English Ideology in BVI English Language Classrooms

The purpose of the thesis was to explore teachers' and pupils' attitudes/views and perceptions towards the role of an English-based creole in a secondary English Language classroom, in a postcolonial (bidialectal) environment. It has further investigated the ways in which these attitudes and assumptions about BVI Creole are implicated in the discourses of English Language teaching, and it has also addressed the pedagogical consequences of these views for the teaching of English Language in BVI classrooms, as is illustrated in the research questions. I begin by summarising the findings of the first two questions for the study which are namely:

1. What are teachers' attitudes to the role of BVI Creole in the secondary English Language classroom?

2. What are pupils' understandings of the status of BVI Creole in the classroom?

The teachers' and pupils' attitudes and beliefs of the role of BVI Creole in the classroom, as addressed in research questions 1 and 2 of the study have suggested that teachers are positioned, and 'interpellated' (Althusser, 1971) in discourses, of which the participants are largely unconscious, and these may help to perpetuate the hegemonic position of standard English at the expense of BVI Creole in the classroom. Findings derived from the study have further suggested that the taken-for-

granted assumptions that teachers make about creole, which filter through language classroom practices, may influence pupils' perceptions and views of their oral language. Hence, pupils may unconsciously internalise the implicit devaluation of BVI Creole and, like their teachers they may give their tacit 'consent' or they may be 'complicit' in the 'misrecognition' (Bourdieu, 1991), of standard English as the 'authoritative' discourse. I conclude this section by addressing the subsequent questions in the study and the extent to which these were answered. The questions are as follows:

1. In what ways are these beliefs and assumptions illustrated in the discourses of English Language teaching?

2. What are the implications of these attitudes and beliefs for policy and practice in BVI language classrooms?

In this thesis (see chapters five and six) I have analysed the interview data derived from interviews with teachers and pupils. Through analysis of the data, this study identifies how pupils' oral language, that is, the 'cultural capital' that creole-speaking pupils bring to the classroom is measured unfavourably against the hegemonic status of standard English. Hence, BVI Creole, which is implicitly devalued, is an undervalued resource in BVI English Language classrooms.

The tacit and implicit devaluation of BVI Creole plays out in various ways in the secondary English Language classroom, and this has consequences for classroom practices. In my discussion of the data, which was drawn primarily from interviews with teachers and pupils in two secondary English Language classrooms, I have illustrated that BVI Creole is acknowledged to some degree in English Language lessons. However, while this seems to satisfy the criteria stipulated in the Caribbean Examinations (CXC) English Language Syllabus, it is not fully acknowledged as a separate linguistic variety in it is own right, nor is it integrated as a resource alongside and in partnership with standard English. As a result, BVI Creole continues to be perceived as the 'Other' or inferior variety in relation to standard English, the 'legitimate' variety.

Further findings derived from the thesis speak to the ways in which the dominant ideologies underpinning classroom practices remain unquestioned, and these ideologies may play a role in sustaining the 'common sense' (Gramsci, 1971) assumptions which teachers make about language. The data also reveal (see

chapters four and five) that deficit views, which are implicated with hegemonic assumptions about language, may operate implicitly in BVI language classroom discourses. I have suggested that these assumptions which manifest themselves in innocuous and 'common-sensical' ways, may be unconsciously interwoven in teachers' classroom practices, and that these may play a role in reproducing dominant ideologies about language.

In this study, I have argued that language instruction in BVI classrooms is dominated by a standard English ideology, that is, a view of language in which standard English is constructed as the monolithic entity which has a privileged status in the classroom. In this perspective, a standard language ideology (Milroy and Milroy 1999; Milroy, 2007) exerts its influence to the extent that the dominant language embodies notions of social and linguistic superiority in relation to varieties like BVI Creole which is implicitly undermined and measured against an ideology of 'correctness'.

The thesis has further suggested that English Language teachers may be unaware that the taken-for-granted beliefs and the assumptions they make about the role of BVI Creole, in relation to standard English, may become so entrenched that these views become 'naturalised' in classroom discourses. These assumptions are part and parcel of misconceptions about the status of the BVI vernacular, which may filter through teachers' classroom practices, and the implication is that this linguistic variety which is deemed an inferior reflection of standard English, is perceived as an imperfect grammatical system that is devoid of structure, rather than a linguistic system in its own right.

These misconceptions further suggest that the inferior status of BVI Creole, ingrained in BVI English Language teaching practices, may influence the teaching of grammar which may become equated with eliminating 'bad' English or 'bad' grammar, that is derived from the structural features of the vernacular. I have also suggested that it is of crucial importance for English Language teachers in creole environments to make explicit notions of 'good' and 'bad' English, and that this can be accomplished if teachers have opportunities to begin questioning the dominant assumptions they make about language. In this way, teachers can begin to develop an understanding that language use in postcolonial settings is bound up with dominant relations of power, and that it does not operate in a socio-political, socio-historical and ideological void (Bakhtin,1986, Voloshinov, 1973).

In this study, I have also illustrated that one of the consequences of an implicit devaluation of BVI Creole, as constructed in English classroom discourses, is that it may help to reinforce the misconception that it is only reserved or valid for certain functions in the classroom, while being excluded from others. Thus, BVI Creole occupies the ambivalent status of being 'included yet marginalised', as findings from the data have suggested. As a result of these classroom practices, notions of 'appropriateness' (Fairclough, 1992) are perpetuated and these help to cement or maintain hegemonic ideologies of language.

Ample evidence in the study has illustrated that BVI Creole, an emblem of cultural solidarity and allegiance, is the 'unmarked choice' (Myers-Scotton, 1988, 993, 1995),that is, it is 'the expected choice' which is spoken freely among pupils in the language classroom to discuss topics and assignments, without sanction from their teachers. As previous research has suggested (Siegel, 1999b; Simmonds Mc Donald, 2004) coercing pupils to use only the standard variety in the classroom can impede or hinder learning, and this was substantiated by the teachers in the study who suggested that while the onus was on them to give pupils access to dominant discourses, they were also aware that their insistence that pupils should speak standard English was unrealistic, and it stifled spontaneity in language use. Having examined the findings of the study in relation to the research questions, the next section explores proposals for BVI secondary language classroom practices.

8.3   Proposals for Classroom Practices

In light of findings derived from the data, the study has proposed that a critical language awareness perspective should be an important component of English Language lessons in BVI classrooms. It has suggested that even though the pupils seemed to be offered few opportunities to examine issues related to their language use in the classroom, yet they willingly embraced opportunities to discuss these in the interviews with the researcher (myself).

In this thesis has also proposed that the implementation of a critical awareness approach (Fairclough, 1989, 1992) to language in BVI language classroom, may highlight the ways in which language conventions and language practices are implicated in ideologies, and the perception that discourses are 'shaped' by power relations (Fairclough, 1989). In other words, 'Teachers who adopt a critical view of language pay more attention to form and function, but not without a discussion of the way in which power relations affect language' (Janks and Ivanic, 1992, p. 127). A

critical language awareness component may, thus, provide the linguistic tools for both teachers and pupils to become engaged in analysing and challenging unequal relation of power, and wider social inequalities. As I have proposed this added dimension to the English Language Syllabus may enable teachers to raise with learners the question of 'whether and why and how dominant rules of 'appropriateness' might be flouted and challenged' (Fairclough, 1989, p.15).

An overly celebratory or 'romantic' view of BVI Creole in language classrooms runs the risk of under-utilising the linguistic variety as a resource which could be used in meaningful ways in the classroom. Based on the findings of the thesis, I have suggested that BVI Creole needs to be more fully integrated in the classroom as a 'cognitive tool' or resource. In this view, teachers in the BVI linguistic environment should aim to provide pupils with opportunities which encourage them to talk about, reflect upon and 'offer hypotheses' about their own language use, and this may extend their linguistic repertoires. Furthermore, children's mastery of a particular curriculum topic, 'and their use of "every day" language to express these understandings should be seen as the basis for the development of the unfamiliar registers of schools' (Gibbons, 1998, p.99). Having reflected on the findings of the study as they relate to the research questions set out in chapter one, (section 1.11) the next section offers some reflections on the study.

8.4   Reflections on the Study: Some Limitations and Strengths

Because my study was a small scale qualitative case study, which focussed on a limited or small group of participants, I cannot claim that my findings are representative, based as they are on the practices of only two English teachers and their classroom practices. While not claiming generalizability, I would hope that other educators in other English-based, creole-speaking [bidialectal] postcolonial contexts, would learn from the findings of this study, and that these might shed light on unaddressed assumptions about language use that shape their own teaching practices in related environments. Despite the limitations of generalisability, my sample was drawn from a different population, and a different socio-political/historical and sociolinguistic environment from the studies in the wider related literature, which address teachers' attitudes to the use of the Black American vernacular in secondary/high school settings (see for example, Gregory, 2011; Blake and Cutler, 2003; Bowie and Bond, 1994; Pietras and Lamb, 1978; Taylor, 1973).

While I make no claims to the application of traditional ethnographic approaches, the qualitative case study approach employed in this study, enabled me to apply these tools in a new context in order to derive an understanding of the language classroom practices. Admittedly, while the observational phase was regarded as secondary data, and served as a backdrop to the primary data, it still helped to enrich the study by providing some insights and understandings into language use in BVI classroom practices, which I would like to impart to teachers in the BVI sociolinguistic environment.

The study also had the added benefit of interviewing pupils in order to derive understandings of their views and beliefs of the status of BVI Creole, in relation to standard English, in the classroom. An inclusion of pupils 'voices', whose views are normally excluded or silenced in their own language variety, has helped to enrich the findings and authenticity of the research data. Furthermore, the pupils' perspectives added new dimensions to the study, and they also illuminated interesting and unexpected findings.

I acknowledge that not taking the findings of the study back to the participants or interviewing them for a second time may be one of its limitations. This type of involvement and feedback, from teachers, in particular, may have provided them with opportunities to reflect upon, and to engage them in meaningful discussions about their language classroom practices. This exercise may have added further richness to the study. With respect to the pupils, I believe that if I had met the pupils in a focus group setting, in addition to the paired interviews, it may have been a useful exercise in helping them to reflect on their experiences of the process, since it was new to them. While I was thankful to have had the opportunity to meet with the pupils in the first instance, and I learnt a great deal from them, the opportunity to conduct follow-up interviews with the pupil-participants was not possible and this was largely attributable to time constraints. I was concerned that frequent access to the pupils may have caused further disruptions to their class time-table, particularly if they were covering new material or being tested. Although I had their consent, frequent access to pupils may not have been regarded in a good light by their parents or teachers.

One of the main strengths of the research is that my experience and knowledge of the setting as a former teacher helped to facilitate access to the setting, and in collecting data. While at times I had to balance 'insider/outsider' stances (see chapter four) my former status as an 'insider' with previous knowledge of the setting may have helped to contribute to the enhancement of the research. In this perspective, as a former

teacher, it became necessary to examine the classroom setting with 'unfamiliar eyes' and to address 'new' findings which moved beyond my 'common sense' understandings of language use, that I had not considered exploring in my own classroom practices. Furthermore, once the pupils learnt that I was not an 'outsider' in the strictest sense, but that I had previously taught at the school, it helped to put them at ease, thus enabling them to talk freely about their language experiences. Having reflected on elements of the study, the next section addresses the implications and directions for future research.

8.5 Directions for Future Research

I envision a potential area for future research that includes further observational studies which focus on the analysis of the language use of creole-speaking pupils during social interaction in the classroom, and it may shed light on the 'shifting' identities that pupils enact, and the possible code alternation strategies that they employ. In addition, the use of the diary which I had implemented early on in the pilot phase, rather unsuccessfully, could be fruitfully employed as a method in its own right, in future research endeavours to derive insights into pupils' understandings of their own language use in English-based, creole-speaking [bidialectal] environments.

One of the popular misconceptions, among educators and parents alike, is that BVI Creole interferes with the pupils' acquisition of standard language despite research findings to the contrary, which suggest that the choice to include a dialect or minority language in the classroom alongside the standard variety does not hinder or impede the development of written standard English (Siegel, 1999, 2007; Yiakoumetti, 2007). To this end, I am proposing that future research endeavours should also explore whether the features of creole represent instances of 'interference' or 'negative transfer', in pupils' acquisition of standard English.

I also see a role for classroom-based research which addresses the teaching of writing in an environment where pupils speak an English-based creole, and as I explained in chapter four (section, 4.4) this was one of the research areas that I had originally intended to explore. As this is an area that is largely under-researched in the Anglophone Caribbean, it could offer a fruitful area of investigation as it may offer insights into some of the challenges that some pupils experience in learning the dominant variety. Drawing on findings derived from the study, I suggested that BVI Creole needs to be more fully integrated in the language classroom and, to this end, I am proposing that research is needed in Anglophone Caribbean settings in order to

explore the possible benefits of the inclusion of an English-based creole, alongside standard English, as a 'cognitive resource.'

The study also suggests that teaching of grammar, which works in tandem with prescriptive attitudes about language, is implicated in the relationship between creole and written standard English in the language classroom. I am suggesting that more research is needed to explore the role that the teaching of grammar may play in the enhancement of written language abilities among speakers of English-based creoles, as it is also an area that is largely under-researched. I also envision a place for classroom-based research involving discussions on the origins of the socio-political relationship, between English-based creoles and standard English, and the effect these may have on raising pupils' critical language awareness, and in developing the tools needed to critique/question dominant relations of power that underpin these varieties.

My research focussed on one secondary school, which was the largest government-run secondary school in the BVI, and it was limited to female participants who were mature, experienced teachers. In further reflecting on this, a useful line of inquiry which future research might explore is whether issues of gender (male) or age (younger teachers) may have an influence on teachers' attitudes and views towards BVI Creole across departments such as art, physical education or music. Furthermore, the literature does not take account for these factors or variables when addressing attitudes to creole in the classroom.

Another issue, emerging from the study, which needs more attention in future research endeavours in creole environments, should also focus on exploring issues related to the development of metalanguage awareness among English-based, creole-speaking pupils. While a body of literature in the field of bilingualism addresses metalanguage awareness, there is a virtual absence of empirical research among creole speakers in postcolonial [bidialectal] contexts. Although the BVI is not regarded as a bilingual context, some insights can be drawn from research conducted in this field. Other areas for future research can also include the role that metalanguage plays in raising pupils and teachers' awareness of language, and also the possible role that the development of pupils' metalanguage may play in enhancing and extending their language repertoires.

The findings of the study may have been further enriched if I had included an observational phase as a primary source of data, rather than as a supplementary

backdrop to the study. Hence, I am proposing that there is 'space' for future researchers, who draw on discourse analysis, to include a fine-grained analysis of the language use of creole-speaking pupils in order to shed light on the ways in which they use language as a 'tool' for collective thinking or, to 'interthink' (Mercer,2000) during classroom interaction. It is further hoped that future research in this field could contribute to a greater understanding of language teaching and learning in creole settings, which may assist educators and curriculum/ syllabus designers in devising and implementing content that is beneficial to the academic needs and interests of speakers of English-based creoles.

My study aims to contribute to the literature on English Language teaching in secondary education in an English-based, creole-speaking environment. Most of the studies in the wider literature on teachers' and pupils' attitudes to vernaculars tend to focus on African American vernacular speakers in an American context, and little empirical research has focussed on BVI creole-speaking participants in the Anglophone Caribbean environment. Furthermore, little empirical research has been conducted on the implications of hegemonic assumptions that teachers and pupils make in an English-based creole environment, and the consequences or implications of these for the teaching of English. Hence, the study makes an original contribution to our understanding of hegemonic constructions of standard language ideologies in a little researched context. The study has also aimed to contribute to the literature on the reproduction of dominant ideologies in language, as it relates to English language teaching in postcolonial situations, where dominant and marginalised varieties coexist.

In this study I am not calling for the use of BVI Creole as a medium of instruction or as part of a bilingual approach to teach English to creole-speaking pupils (see Devonish, 1986; Youseff, 2002; Carpenter and Devonish, 2010). Rather, I am suggesting that BVI Creole needs to be implemented as a cognitive 'tool' or resource in the classroom, alongside and in partnership with standard English. Furthermore, just as schools are sites in which hegemony (Gramsci, 1971, 1985), is cemented and perpetuated they are also sites in which dominant assumptions about language can be questioned, challenged and resisted (Giroux, 1981, 1983). I have also suggested that opportunities need to be provided for teachers to reflect upon and interrogate the dominant assumptions that underpin their practices, and the socio-historical and political imperatives that shape language use and teaching in a creole-speaking environment.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - School Letter of Permission

- Page 1 -

Date:

Re: Permission to conduct research in a secondary school

Dear Mrs…………….

I am formally requesting your permission to begin data collection at your secondary school. The duration of the data collection will take place for a duration of 3 months, and I will visit the assigned classrooms for a minimum of two visits per week.

I am currently conducting a research degree at the UCL, Institute of Education, in the field of Language in Education, and the main focus of my study is to explore teachers' and pupils' attitudes and perceptions to the status of BVI Creole in the classroom. My research draws on a qualitative case study approach, and I am interested in working with two English Language teachers, and their pupils from the Form-Four Year Group. The methods of data collection will include classroom observations, interviews with teachers and pupils, and will also warrant the use of a tape recorder and, at times, the use of a video-recorder.

I intend to adhere to strict ethical guidelines in order to protect the identities of pupils and teachers with respect to the interview data and the classroom observations. To this end, the findings derived from the study will be used solely for the purpose of my research, and will be kept in my possession at all times. Upon completion of my research the tape-recorded data derived from classroom research will be destroyed.

In addition, I would be most grateful if I could have access to documents that are pertinent to the teaching of English Language, including the current Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) English Language Arts Syllabus. Any assistance which you may provide in order to facilitate my access to the classrooms, and to these documents, will be greatly appreciated.

It is hoped that the insights derived from this study will be used towards the enhancement of the teaching of English Language in the BVI secondary school system.

Thank you so much for your kind cooperation.

Yours truly,

Eleanor Creque (Researcher)

Appendix 2 - Letter of Permission to Parents

Date …………………........

Re: Letter of Request to conduct research in a BVI secondary school

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am hereby informing you of my attachment to the English Language Department of the British Virgin Islands High School, where I will be conducting classroom research for a period of 3-4 months. I am a research student at the UCL, Institute of Education, United Kingdom, and my research involves an exploration of teachers' and pupils' beliefs and perceptions of the status of BVI Creole in relation to standard English in the classroom.

To this end, I expect to be working closely with two teachers and their pupils' from the Form Four Year Group, and this may involve your child's direct participation. This will necessitate my engaging some of these pupils in conversations about their language use, both inside the classroom and at home. In addition, I will also conduct classroom observations during whole-group lessons, and this will require the use of a tape recorder or a video-recorder.

I will make every effort to protect the pupils' anonymity by using pseudonyms when transcribing the data, which I collect during the interviews with the pupils. All data will be used solely for the purpose of my research, and will be kept in my possession at all times. Upon completion of my research the data derived by means of the audio-tape and video-tape will be destroyed.

I wish to emphasize that your participation is voluntary and, should you wish to withdraw your child's participation at any point during the process, you are entirely at liberty to do so. I would be most grateful if you could confirm your agreement with respect to your child's participation in this study, by signing the attached form.

It is hoped that the findings derived from this study will contribute to the enhancement of the teaching of English Language in the BVI secondary classrooms.

Thank you, in advance, for your kind cooperation.

Please sign below to indicate whether you grant permission or not.

I ……………………………………… (full name) agree to my child's participation in the study and to allow the information which is provided to be used in the way in which it was outlined above.

Signature: ………………………………………….

Date: …………………………………………………

I ………………………………… (full name) do not agree to my child's participation in the study.

Signature……………………………………………..

Date……………………………………………….

(Researcher)

Eleanor Creque…………………………………………………………

Appendix 3 - Extract of Classroom Talk

> **Thursday 22, February, 2009**
> **Teacher: Mrs. Thomas**
> **Class: Form Four**
> **Subject: English Language**
> **Lesson: Elements of a Narrative**
> **Time: 10:39—11:15**
> **Text: language for Living, page 109.**
>
> The teacher greets the pupils before asking them to take their places. She then begins the lesson by going to the board and writing 'Element of the Short Story'. The objective of the lesson is to raise pupils' awareness of the traits, and to enable them to use these in their writing. After going through an example/model with the whole class, in which she identifies and discusses the elements, as she goes along, the teacher then expects them to be able to do the same in the exercise which follows on the hand out.

T: Okay, now let's begin the lesson

T: What does the setting mean….um the time and place?

T: Tell us about the place?

S1:   A beach!!

T: Tell us more about it…each beach is different.

S2:   Cane Garden Bay Beach!!

T: Tell us about the atmosphere….can you describe it?

Ss: Xxxxx

S: gloomy! grey! De sun ain't shinin' teacher!

T: Okay….the mood has to do with the effect that the atmosphere has on the person.

T: Okay, what about the plot? Tell us about the plot story?

Ss: Xxxxx. (Lots of shouting, unclear).

T: Simone, can you tell us?

S: Teacher, yer [do you] mean de conflic' (conflict).

T: Well.…yes, a story must start out with a problem whieh develops into a conflict.

T: The problem might be a storm arising two men go out fishing.

T: Now what about the conflict.…it might be that they had to steady the leaky boat while on the stormy seas,

T: What other kind of conflict do we have?

T: What else can you have a conflict with?

S: Yer [your] emotions!!!

T: Yes, good! Something within you that tells you..?

Ss: Right from wrong!

T: What about the characters? who is the protagonist? Um.…anyone?

S: De[the] main character, teacher

T: Okay and And who is the antagonist? Anyone?

Ss: Xxxxxxx transcription not clear

(Pupils speak to each other in BVI Creole to ask questions, respond and to offer explanations to both teacher and classmates)

T: Well, we don't have one is this story, um but it is usually an adversary in the story?

T: Can we identity a character who is hostile towards another character in this?

Ss: No, Miss!!

T: Okay, now we will look at the dialogue in the story, more closely.

(Teacher asks pupils to refer to hand-outs).

T: Students, remember for CXC examinations you have to write in standard English

S;   Teacher, wha' if yer [you dont speak standard English? And wha' if yer carn [cant] write dialect?

T: Well….you are allowed to use Creole in dialogue, aren't you? Besides, you all write in dialect because it gets into the standard English part of the story....so you do write it!

S: *(Teacher!* announces another pupil who interrupts)

S: Wha' if yer doan have a title to de story? What if yer story doan have a title to match it?

Ss: Xxxxx transcription not clear

(Teacher then hands out a story with dialogue on a photocopies hand-out and a student offers to distribute them).

S: Teacher, teacher, [lemme] let me share dem [them] out.

T: Okay, now let's begin to read. (She then proceeds to assign children various parts).

        Who will be the narrator? You, Faith? We also need other persons to read the dialogue. And she also nominates other people to do so.

T: Okay let's begin.

F: (Faith, begins reading her role as the narrator and then suddenly stops) teacher, we could use cuss words in our story? Dis story have in cuss words.

T: Um…well, in this setting we should not use them. No, it is not acceptable!

T: Narrator, please continue reading.

(*After a short pause, the reading continues*).

S;   A student reprimands another loudly Shane dats [that's] yer line, read!!

T: Okay class.…wait a minute, at this point before you continue....this is suspene….it keeps you in suspense and you sense that something will go wrong….something will happen.

(*The pupil reads the story until the end of the story*)

F: He kill de [the] fadder (father) dat [that] were so sad.

Ss: Xxxxx pupils responses not clear.

(*A loud chattering ensues with each child giving his comments on the story's resolution*).

T: Apart from violent crime are their other ways in which to resolve conflicts or problems?

F: Teacher de [the] boy fadder [father] aint help him enough to deal wit [with] his anger.

T: Good, now you will follow the outline of this story in order to writ e your own. the story is used as a model so that they can write their own) I also want you to look at the dialogue and to make sure that you use dialogue in the story. As you may be aware this is the Trinidadian dialect in the story.

(*The bell rings to signal the end of the lesson, and the pupils are dismissed*).

T: Return to your seats, everyone!! We will continue with this next session. Class, you are now dismissed