Teachers' and students' attitudes and practices regarding code switching in writing: A study in selected primary schools in St. Lucia.

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in three primary schools in St. Lucia, a multilingual country situated in the Caribbean. The goal of this research was to investigate teachers' and students' attitudes and practices regarding the use of code switching in the academic writing of Grade 5 primary school students.

For the purpose of this study code switching is defined as a phenomenon in which speakers [writers] switch back and forth between two separate languages and/or dialects (Schecter & Bayley, 1997). Code switching for bilinguals is "a way of saying that they belong to both worlds, and should not be forced to give up one for the other" (Zentella, 1997, p. 114).

There are four major aims in this study. First the study aims to document the nature of code switching in students' written texts. Second, the study focuses on examining both teacher and student views of Kwéyòl influenced code switching in students' writing. The third aim is to identify whether acceptance of code switching in students' written texts can be used positively to support their writing. The final aim is to evaluate the impact of teachers' feedback on students' written texts.

A mixed-method approach was used to gather data for this research. The teachers' interview was conducted with three Grade 5 teachers from three different primary schools. Questionnaires were also distributed to the other teachers on staff of each of the three Primary schools involved in this study. Selected students of the Grade 5 classes were part of the focus group interview. The students' written scripts were also analysed and used during the focus group discussion, where students were able to provide reasons for certain statements in their text which reflected code switching.

A thematic approach was used for the data analysis and this provided in depth knowledge of how teachers and students felt about code switching in their writing. A major finding was the teachers' contradictory responses in terms of their attitudes and practice related to code switching. Some teachers commented that the use of the L1 would have a negative impact on the acquisition of Standard English. The

importance of students learning the 'proper' structures of Standard English was highlighted as a major factor in assisting students in becoming communicatively competent. Although some teachers held a negative view of code switching practices in students' writing, others were indeed pleased that some students were able to use their L1 to express their intended meaning. Moreover, the study found important differences in the attitudes between the individual teachers in the three different schools

The responses from the teachers also indicated that code switching would be more effective in some genres of writing. This suggests that there is some kind of acceptance of code switching in students' writing. The majority of the teachers agreed that code switching could be used positively to teach Standard English. However, teachers felt that they needed further information on the phenomenon in order to make informed decisions and assist students more effectively in their writing. There were other responses suggesting that there are positive attitudes towards code switching. What was of great interest was that some of the students' attitudes mirrored those of their teachers, suggesting that teacher attitudes, beliefs and perhaps school ethos play a major role in changing the attitudes of the most important stakeholders, the children.

The research highlighted the effective role that teachers' attitudes and metalinguistic awareness, or lack of it, play in the language learning classroom, particularly in a multilingual society. Teachers need to be aware of the importance of metalinguistic awareness and should aim at exploring ways to promote language learning among students. This study also makes an important contribution to understanding how attitudes and practices in bilingual contexts and the use of language varieties in second language development are related.

In conclusion, the study highlights the urgent need for all stakeholders to work collaboratively to finalise a draft literacy policy and plan document that might support bilingual and/or multilingual development of all students in the linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms.

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INTRODUCTION

Kilti yon pép, sé léspwi'y, sé lam-li, sé mannyé'y ka viv,mannyé'y ka palé, mannyé'y ka ésplitjé kò'y. Nou, pép Sent Lisyen ka viv en Kwéyòl, nou kan palé an lang Kwéyòl. Nou ka ésplitjé kò nou anKwéyòl. LangKwéyòl-la, sé wasin pép-la, sé lamnou, semanyé pansé nou.Mé délé, i ni télman bagay ki ka mennasé kilti sala, nou ka oblijé mandé kò nou chésyon. Ki sa ki kay wivé Kwéyòl-la? Eski touswit, nou kay touvay kò nou kon yon pép san lam? Eski kilti nou asé enpòtan pou nou, pou nou sa fé mannév pou pwézévé? (Louisy, 1985, pp. 5-9)

[The culture of a community is its soul, its very essence, it depicts the way the community lives, the way it expresses itself. We St Lucian people live as one with Kwéyòl, we speak a creole language. We describe our very existence in the language. The Kwéyòl language is the root of the community, it's our soul, it's the way we think. Sometimes, however, there are so many things that threaten the existence of this culture that it forces us to question ourselves. What will happen to the Kwéyòl? One day, will we find ourselves a people without a soul? Is our culture important enough to us, to make the necessary preparations to preserve it?]

The opening statement epitomizes the richness and importance of French creole or Kwéyòl (also known locally as Patois/Patwa) to St. Lucia's cultural heritage. In this multilingual country (although most research describes it as being bilingual), many persons have recognised French creole or Kwéyòl as the mother tongue. However, the lingua franca, English, has taken precedence over Kwéyòl, and it is acknowledged as the language of education for the majority of the population. Creolists and culturalists continue to negotiate for Kwéyòl to be recognised as an integral part of our education system, particularly since it plays a major role in St. Lucia's creole cultural heritage. Many people would not want to turn their backs on such a rich, unique language where a variety of proverbs, expressions, songs, and folktales are used to demonstrate the interconnectedness among a group of people.

Regardless of the outcry by cultural activists and creolists on the island, school literacy programmes continuously focus on developing successful and competent

fluent English language learners in all aspects of literacy, despite the simultaneous use of the three language varieties among students. The three language varieties will be discussed in a subsequent chapter. Although there exists a rich French cultural heritage in St. Lucia, and researchers (Frank, 2007; Nwenmely, 1999; Siegel, 2009; Simmons-McDonald, 1996) have acknowledged the importance of both bilingualism and multilingualism especially for students, the teaching of Kwéyòl as a language continues to be challenged.

1.1 Context for the study

Over the past 10 years, the focus of the literacy programmes in St. Lucia has been on all aspects of literacy development including promoting literacy environments where learners (children and adults) will become verbally and functionally literate, thereby increasing the literacy rate among the citizenry. Literacy is central to the curriculum and the Ministry of Education and Culture in St. Lucia has identified a skills approach to language learning. The objectives of the Language Arts curriculum cater to the diverse needs of individual learners and focus on a holistic and integrated approach to literacy. Therefore, it is important that schools adopt an approach to the teaching of Language Arts where the four domains; listening, speaking, reading and writing, are integrated across the curriculum, and where students are taught to use oral and written language purposefully as these are essential tools for competence in other subject areas. Gibbons (2002) supports skills integration and views this as an idea of scaffolding. She explains that the integration of content knowledge will assist in the development of thinking and language skills across the curriculum. Furthermore, the integration across skills may improve students' confidence in other subject areas, particularly if they are exposed to specific registers relating to other content. Therefore it is important that, as educators, we should not over-look the role of language in subject matter learning (Snow, Met & Genesee, 1989). In St. Lucia, it is hoped that skills integration will encourage students to improve their communicative competence, develop their writing skills across the curriculum, and in due course, enhance their social, personal and educational development.

> For the child in Primary school, the O.E.C.S harmonized Curriculum
> provides a profile of a competent and proficient language learner,

> which includes one who: Feels confident in using Standard English and other language varieties in his/her repertoire for a variety of purposes and in the appropriate situations and contexts. (Draft Literacy Policy and Plan, St. Lucia, 2005, p. 5)

The statement above is a clear indication that the O.E.C.S harmonized curriculum is designed to cater for the holistic development of each child despite their language background. As a result, language skills should not be taught in isolation from other content areas. Further, since students' cognitive and language development are intertwined, students should develop confidence in using language and see it as an important tool in various contexts apart from the classroom.

Despite one of the major goals of the curriculum being to improve students' writing, their poor academic performance in this area, especially during examinations continues to be of grave concern to many stakeholders. A major contributing factor perceived by stakeholders, including teachers and parents, is the way in which students' use language, particularly with respect to the inclusion of Kwéyòl. From my experience, many students' scripts are marked inappropriately because teachers see this phenomenon as being interference of Kwéyòl to English and therefore do not regard the mixing of two languages as having a positive impact on students' text. They feel that the use of Kwéyòl interferes with the acquisition of what is considered the acceptable spoken and written standard language (Siegel, 1999). Further, when writing scripts reflect code switching, no opportunity is provided for students to see the contrast between their errors and the expected standard. Teachers need to explore other approaches and engage in pedagogical practices that will assist students in both learning the required standard and in drawing on their language knowledge of Kwéyòl. In St. Lucia, most teachers and some members of the community view Kwéyòl as being a degenerate form of language. It is views such as this that have prompted me to investigate teachers' and students' attitudes and practices regarding code switching in writing and whether this phenomenon can be used positively in primary and secondary classrooms in St. Lucia to support them in their learning of what is regarded as Standard English.

1.2 Aim of this study

This research seeks to document teachers' and students' attitudes towards the use of code switching in students' written texts and to present a case for how it can be used positively. The study involves three classes of Grade 5 students and their respective teachers. Teachers were interviewed by the researcher about their views on students' use of code switching before and after the examination of students' writing scripts. Students involved in the research activity were also interviewed about the use of code switching in their texts and about ways that they were able to change their writing to reflect the required standard. The specific objectives for this research are:

1. To document the nature of code switching in students' written texts;
2. To examine students' and teachers' perceptions of the impact of Kwéyòl on their writing;
3. To investigate how the acceptance and use of code switching in students' texts can be used positively to support student writing; and
4. To evaluate the impact of teachers' corrections on students' written texts.

1.3 Research questions

The following research questions frame the study:

1. What are selected primary school teachers' attitudes about students' use of cross language variety and cross language code switching in their written texts?
2. What are the responses of teachers to students' written texts which reflect code switching?
3. i) What are students' explanations for code switching in their texts?
   ii) Can students identify code switching in their written texts?
   iii) How do students respond to feedback about code switching in their texts?

1.4 Language situation in St. Lucia

St. Lucia is one of a group of islands called the Windward Islands. The island's current sociolinguistic situation is as a result of its rich history of being ruled by both the French and the British. During the mid-seventeenth century and eighteenth century the island was battled for over fourteen times. The British finally gained possession of the island, but the French colonists who remained there continued to have a great influence over the islanders for many decades. French is no longer used as the primary means of communication among the citizenry, however, the language is sustained as it is taught at both Primary and Secondary schools and secondly, because of the island's close proximity to a French territory, Martinque. Although, there has been a remarkable decline in the use of the language, St. Lucia has kept the French créole vernacular, *Kwéyòl* (Chaudenson, 2001).

In the early 1900s, the importance of having an educated society became very important, therefore English was regarded as the language of prestige and considered the language of formal education. Despite the fact that many islanders communicated in Kwéyòl, many people have held and continue to hold a negative view about the language. One of the earliest assessments of Kwéyòl came from Henry Breen who was a colonial mayor of the city of Castries in the mid-nineteenth century:

> The Negro language is a jargon formed from the French, and composed of words, or rather sounds, adapted to the organs of speech in the black population. As a patois it is even more unintelligible than that spoken by the Negroes in the English Colonies. Its distinguishing feature consists in the suppression of the letter 'r' in almost every word in which it should be used, and the addition of 'ki's' and 'ka's to assist in the formation of the tenses. It is, in short, the French language, stripped of its manly and dignified ornaments, and travestied for the accommodation of children and toothless old women. I regret to add that it has now almost entirely superseded the use of the beautiful French language, even in some of the highest circles of colonial society. The prevalence of this jargon is one of the many disadvantages resulting from a want of educational institutions. It is the refuge of ignorance, and the less you know of French, the greater aptitude you have for talking Negro. (Breen, 1844, p. 185)

Frank (2007) asserts that this negative evaluation of Kwéyòl should be regarded as a matter of historical perspective since Breen was in a position of relative power and furthermore, an outsider to the creole culture. Although many Kwéyòl speakers embrace the language, the culture, and the set of relationships it represents, anti-Kwéyòl colonial language policies which were intended to maintain the existing power relationships within the St. Lucian society continued throughout the post-colonial era. Associated with such policies, is the view that:

> If linguistic minorities learn the dominant language, they will gain access to social, economic and political equality. In line with this view is the notion that becoming literate in a major European language is a perquisite for modernization and liberation from backwardness and dependency. (Nwenmely, 1999, p. 270)

These policies have been successful in most Caribbean countries where English is the official language of instruction. Roberts (1994) notes that in islands like St. Lucia and Dominica, where a significant number of persons were monolinguals at the beginning of the century, (Kwéyòl being the only language in their repertoire) is now non-existent. He further discusses that there are many St. Lucians under the age of 21 who reside in urban areas who have very little or no competence in the language. These attitudes in St. Lucia and other Caribbean territiories which have seen a decline in speaking the creole languages can be attributed to the development of the society and the power relations that govern them.

During the early twentieth century, the use of the language was stigmatized. Most Kwéyòl speakers were subjected to various categorisations such as "being low class" and were looked upon scornfully. Kwéyòl was regarded as "broken French", "home" or "street talk". Many parents even objected to its use and scolded their children for using Kwéyòl. Further compounding the situation was St. Lucia gaining independence from Britain on February, 22nd, 1979 after British rule for over a century and a half. Moreover, during the period of post-independence, the use of Kwéyòl was restricted in both in the electronic and print media. Only on rare occasions would Kwéyòl be printed in newspapers in columns and cartoons (Nwenmely, 1999).

A Kwéyòl writing system was developed during the years 1984-2000 and with this came some recognition of Kwéyòl as a respectable and authentic language. According to St. Hilaire (2009), "the development of a writing system for Kwéyòl and printed matter in that vernacular represented a concrete break from the colonial past, demonstrating to St. Lucians from across the social spectrum the modernizing and development potential of the language" (p. 37). From the early 1990s, there has been the publication of numerous Kwéyòl-related books. The publishing of English-Kwéyòl and Kwéyòl-English dictionaries in 1992 made the language more distinguished, although the high cost of dictionaries was a deterrent for many persons. However, in 2002, an inexpensive version became available. In addition, in 1999, a New Testament Bible in Kwéyòl which took 15 years to complete was available to St. Lucians. Hence St. Lucians can now have more ready access to written forms of a language that is indigenous to their cultural heritage. But how will children and adults alike be able to read such a language if they are not instructed in it, especially if the language is not viewed as being socially equal with St. Lucian Standard English?

It is noteworthy that Kwéyòl has been recognised for the purpose of teaching students about their cultural heritage. Also, teachers may use Kwéyòl as a means of giving directives in class or to emphasise a point. Hence, they view Kwéyòl as a language that is being down played and unimportant to language learning. As a result, students' code switching practices are regarded as being nonstandard. However, the Draft Literacy Policy and Plan, St. Lucia (2005) indicates, "St. Lucia French Creole is the language for instruction and communication in some cultural components of the Primary school syllabus, i.e. instruction in St. Lucian folk songs, music, stories, games, traditions, history, festivals, drama, food, etc." (p. 10). Kwéyòl has survived as long as it has in an era when it might be considered redundant and not worthy, but its survival would seem much more remarkable if the general attitude toward it had been one of hostility for any length of time (Frank, 2007, p. 3).

Throughout many rural communities, Kwéyòl continues to be used as language of communication by both adults and children, along with Vernacular English of St. Lucia (VESL). VESL is a variety believed to be heavily influenced by the interaction of the Kwéyòl language and English. Notwithstanding that language policies are

geared towards the acquisition of Standard English, Garret (2003) asserts that most St. Lucians are unable to acquire and speak fluent Standard English, instead they speak VESL.

Although all varieties of English can be considered to be linguistically equal, they are not viewed as being socially equal. Standard English is therefore considered as being prestigious, whereas the other varieties are identified as being substandard or non standard. This is highlighted by Lick and Alsagoff (1998):

> Generally, the variety spoken by the socially dominant group which normally includes the rich and powerful, as well as the educated elite has the most prestige. This variety is then institutionalized as the standard: it is used for governmental administration and on all formal occasions. It is taught in schools and used in the mass media (on television, radio, and in the press) and it serves as the model for those who wish to master the language. In contrast, the varieties used by people of lower social status such as the poor and the educated, are tagged as nonstandard, sometimes derogatorily as substandard, synonymous with words such as corrupt, and offensive. Such a standard-nonstandard division is basically a reflection of social inequality. (p. 282)

One objective of the Draft Literacy Policy and Plan, St. Lucia (2005) is to "use creole as a medium of instruction at all levels of the education system" (p. 11). What is also relevant is that the Draft Literacy Policy and Plan, St. Lucia (2005) endorses the need for a referendum on bilingualism in literacy education, especially considering that St. Lucians are exposed to three language varieties.

1.5 St. Lucia's educational structure

In St. Lucia, education has been highly regarded as an avenue of upward mobility. The education system aims to contribute to the holistic development of all learners. Therefore, a major goal of St. Lucia's government is to prioritize education and ensure that all children are given equal opportunities to attend Primary and Secondary schools on the island. By prioritizing education, it is expected that St. Lucians will be prepared to face the challenges of the twenty-first century. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the publication of the World Data on Education in St. Lucia (2010) claims:

> The main principle underlying the education system of St. Lucia is the belief that the promotion of the education of the people and the establishment of institutions devoted to that purpose shall contribute towards the development of the human, physical, mental, moral, cultural and spiritual resources of the community. (para. 3)

This is to be accomplished by "providing quality education for all and fostering an enriched culture through research, legislation, policies, a comprehensive development plan and support services" (Ministry of Education and Culture, St. Lucia, 2008).

The figure below represents St. Lucia's educational structure as of 2007. In St. Lucia, it is compulsory that all children enter primary school at the age of five every new academic year beginning in September. The primary grades are from Kindergarten to Grade 6. With the full implementation of universal education, all students have the opportunity of gaining access to a secondary school education until 17 years of age. At end of the fifth form, students are required to write the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) and, based on their results, may gain entry into the island's tertiary institutions. There are two main tertiary institutions: The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College which is located to north of the island and Vieux-Fort Comprehensive Secondary Campus B- Post Secondary Programme located in the south. There are three other skills training/technical institutions which students may choose to attend, particularly if they are not academically inclined. Upon completion of their studies at the island's tertiary institutions, St. Lucians may chose to pursue their studies at the University of West Indies Distance Education Center located in St. Lucia or the main campuses located in three other islands in the Caribbean. Some may decide to attend international universities.
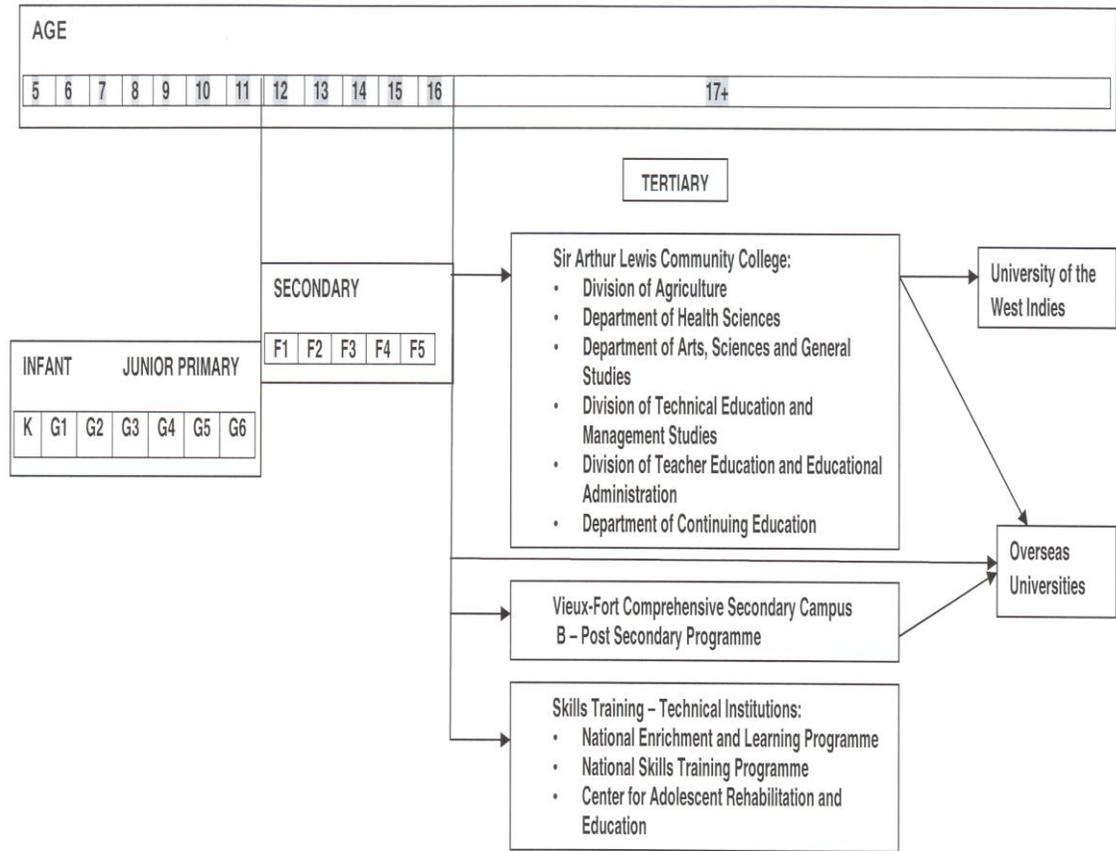
Figure 1. Diagrammatic representation of St. Lucia's educational system (Ministry of Education and Culture, St. Lucia, 2007)

1.6 High stakes literacy assessment

In many postcolonial African countries, social scientists and linguists have been fighting for the recognition of indigenous languages and against the hegemony of colonial languages, especially in the education sector (Rajah-Carrim, 2007, p. 56). In recent times, the use of Kwéyòl has been identified as a hindrance to students' accomplishing good grades, and many efforts have been made to ensure that English was the lingua franca of the society. There have been renewed claims that Kwéyòl has been negatively influencing the acquisition of Standard English and this has remained the view of many educators today.

In the context of the school system in St. Lucia, literacy is viewed as an important area in which students need to show progress. One way of assessing students' performance is by implementing the Minimum Standard Test (MST). The test was

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established as the need to raise the level of literacy in the society was of particular interest to the Ministry of Education and Culture, particularly as access to basic education was increasing with the availability of more primary and secondary school places.

Students are required to complete the MST at both primary and secondary levels: Grade 2, Grade 4, and Form 3. The assessment at these various stages involves comparing each student's results against specific achievement indicators for major differences, strengths and weaknesses. The Grade 2 component of the tests focuses on literacy and numeracy, whereas the Grade 4 test has an added component of the General Paper. The papers are submitted to the Ministry of Education for marking. Teachers from different schools on the island are recruited and engaged in a one week marking exercise of the test scripts. Each script (Language, Mathematics, General Paper) from the two primary grades is first graded by a marker, and then the marks are moderated, followed by a thorough, final examination by the supervisor who may approve or disapprove of the grades. If the supervisor disapproves of the marks awarded to an individual's script, then it will be returned to be re-examined by the marker or the moderator. In the area of written expression, the students are awarded marks based on the following criteria; organization, grammar, content and mechanics.

The results are analysed by the Ministry of Education and Culture and then submitted to the various schools where teachers use the students' MST results to implement corrective measures and provide the necessary support for students who have encountered difficulties.

It would seem that the MST has failed to meet its objective in assessing learners' needs and assisting them to improve in their areas of weakness. Firstly, some teachers use these results as a means of assessing their colleagues' performance and making comparisons among students from the different classes. The students' results have shown that the children who perform poorly in grade two continue to perform poorly in Grade 4 as well as Grade 6, because there has been no remediation, or if there has been any intervention, then it has not been effective. From my observations and experiences as a marker, moderator and supervisor of

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the MST exams, in the area of Language Arts, children continue to be oblivious to spelling rules, punctuate poorly, have difficulty with subject and verb agreement and their poor analytical skills make it difficult for them to summarize, analyse and evaluate. Moreover, there is evidence of direct translation from Kwéyòl to English, which is not received positively by others.

This is the context in which the present study seeks to validate the use of code switching in students' writing, and teachers' and students' attitudes towards and practices regarding this phenomenon.

1.7 Overview of the thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters. In Chapter 1, I provide the introduction and the context for conducting this study. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 provide a review of the literature which is relevant to the topic and the research questions which guide this study. Chapter 5 describes the methodology used in this study and gives an overview of the justification for using the instruments, a description of the participants and research sites, and the data analysis procedures. In Chapter 6, I present the findings on the participants' attitudes towards and practice of code switching. The findings from each instrument are also categorized into different themes and the participants' direct quotes from the interview give a clearer picture as to some of their attitudes. Chapter 7 discusses the relevance of the research findings and how teachers' attitudes play a significant role in students' overall language acquisition and L1 use in their writing. The final chapter in this study is Chapter 8 which provides some suggestions for the relevant stakeholders, recommendations for further research and the conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

LANGUAGE DIVERSITY

2.1 Introduction

For many educators, student language use orally or in writing remains a pertinent issue. Christenbury (2000) observes that "one of the most controversial and difficult issues for English teachers is their responsibility to students who speak what is considered 'non-standard' English, English that violates the usage rules we often mistakenly call grammar" (p. 202). Code switching practices and the incorporation of aspects of language from *non-standard* varieties have been attributed to students' poor oral and written language. However, it is important that educators are aware that students' language practices can be attributed to the socio-cultural and sociolinguistic contexts in which they live.

In this literature review, I discuss language diversity and the important role that language plays in bilingual education. It is also relevant to examine language and language varieties which exist within the Caribbean region as this is significant in shaping teachers' attitudes. Teachers' attitudes and practice play an instrumental role in the language learning classroom. Their attitudes and behaviours with regard to language diversity in the classroom has the potential to assist in eradicating some of the misconceptions about code switching and other language varieties; but they can also reinforce negative views. I also present evidence-based research on the use of vernaculars and their overall success in learning a second language (L2). The literature also focuses on the different language varieties in St. Lucia and the important role that language and culture plays in an individual's overall linguistic development.

2.2 Language diversity

One of the most interesting and notable features studied by linguists is the diversity of languages that exist worldwide. The diversity of languages is a reflection of the diversity of cultures, social class and geographical location. As a result of the

reactions towards deviating from the standard, it is important to critically examine this linguistic term *language*, and also the notion of *standard*.

2.2.1 What is language ?

Language is a "powerful means by which we identify ourselves and broadcast our identity to others" (Barry, 2008, p.103). Brown (2007) further expands on this statement and highlights eight underlying assumptions of language, which helps to make the definition clearer. He states:

> Language is systematic.
> Language is a set of arbitrary symbols.
> Those symbols are primarily vocal, but may also be visual.
> The symbols have conventionalized meanings to which they refer.
> Language is used for communication.
> Language operates in a speech community or culture.
> Language is essentially human, although possibly not limited to humans.
> Language is acquired by all people in much the same way; language and language learning both have universal characteristics. (p. 6)

From the eight statements above, it can be assumed that language should be regarded as a "multiple, complex, and kaleidoscopic phenomenon" (Scollon, 2004, p. 272). Languages differ in terms of vocabulary, sounds and grammar and other aspects. These differences in the features of language contribute to the varieties of language that exist within various societies. The language we use gives us a sense of identity and place (Wolfram & Shilling-Estes, 2006). This point further clarifies the sociolinguistic theory that 'we are what we speak'. Our language choices, including vocabulary and grammar, provide an indication about the value we have placed on language. In addition to choosing a language and/or a variety, we are judged and defined by the language variety that we speak within our social settings, whether it is the stigmatized or valued language.

Our language use depends on the setting or the purpose. Wheeler and Swords (2006) emphasise this point by stating that the "form of language we choose, like our clothing, varies by time, place, audience and purpose" (p. 70). We wear particular clothing to suit the purpose or the occasion. Likewise, our language choice reflects

the social setting in which we are immersed during our discourse. Hence, many people choose the language variety or dialect that they feel comfortable with when they are in social groups.

2.3 Language and language varieties

A dialect is defined as a "variety of the language associated with a particular regional or social group" (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 1998, p. 350). However, because of the negative perceptions associated with the term *dialect* many linguists prefer to use the term *language varieties* (Wolfram, Adger & Christian, 1999). Therefore, for the purpose of this study the term language varieties will also be used. Varieties of language include creoles/pidgins, registers and dialects.

In some instances, the term *language* is used to describe something that is actually a variety, and there are times when what is called a variety is a language. For example, in China, all are said to speak a variety of Chinese.

Wheeler, Swords and Carpenter (2004, p. 473) acknowledge three insights about language: language is structured, language varies by circumstance of use, and difference is distinct from deficiency. Although all the insights are very important, the latter is most significant as it applies to the language varieties in the Anglophone Caribbean[1].

Each of the territories in the Caribbean has a local variety which has evolved over time. These are creolized influenced vernaculars. It must be noted that none of the Caribbean English-based creoles consists of a standardized orthographic system because they are mostly spoken.

The language of colonization, *Standard English* which exists in most Caribbean territories, including St. Lucia, has been sanctioned in the classroom and is highly regarded as the variety which is necessary for academic and economic success

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[1] Anglophone Caribbean is the term used to refer to the independent English-speaking countries of the Caribbean region.

especially in writing, and generally for formal contexts. A standard is defined in the following way:

> The variety of a language which has the highest status in a community or nation and which is usually based on the speech and writing of educated speakers of the language. A standard variety is generally: (a) used in the news media and in literature, (b) described in dictionaries and grammars, (b) taught in schools and taught to non-native speakers when they learn the language as a foreign language. (Richards, Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 271)

Lick and Alsagoff (1998), claim that all varieties of English should be viewed equally because they are rule governed and completely systematic. However, although there may not be qualitative differences in the varieties of English and they are linguistically equal, many of the social elites may not consider all varieties as being socially equal.

The language varieties that exist in the Caribbean today arose as a result of historical events, especially those associated with the Atlantic slave trade and colonial plantation societies (Garett, 2003; Rickford & Romaine, 1999). The majority of these varieties are considered as *non-standard varieties* and they include vernaculars. Vernaculars are associated with diverse subcultures and communities. They arise as a result informal contexts and interactions within groups (Rassool, 1999; Siegel, 2009). Vernaculars may or may not be creoles.

2.3.1 What is a creole?

Creoles and pidgins are often discussed concurrently because pidgins are commonly perceived to be the initial stage of creole development (Singh, 2000). Many speakers of creole languages have been convinced that their speech is "defective," "unintelligible" and "broken" because their discourse does not reflect the standard variety. Singh (2000) contends that, to some extent, these perceptions of creoles "are not totally untrue" (p. 2), because creoles do arise as a result of speakers of different native languages who need to communicate. Vergès (2001) argues "the term 'Creole', takes different meanings with regard to its geographical, linguistic and historical location" (p. 169). Bosire (2006) suggests that the definition of a creole is

rather controversial, therefore a shared approach is "creoles are considered contact outcomes" (p. 186). Pratt-Johnson (2009) defines an English creole as a "language variety that differs from the standard variety of English in grammatical structure, word order, pronunciation, and in some cases, even vocabulary although most of its vocabulary comes from English" (p. 121). Thomason's definition of creoles (as cited in Bosire, 2006) is one of the most persistent because he explains that creoles derive from lexicons of other languages and become the dominant language of a speech community.

Many creole languages exist globally and have been widely researched. These creole languages are placed in various categories including French-, Spanish-, Dutch- and English-based (Aceto, 2003). However, for the purpose of this study, I focus on the varieties [creole] across the Anglophone Caribbean as this also applies to the context of St. Lucia. Creolists, Devonish (1986) and Folkes (1993) are of the view that creole is the mother tongue of the Caribbean territories and in reality Standard English is the second language. Many St. Lucian culturalists and creolists may be in agreement with Devonish and Folkes. Until recently, the emergence of this fascinating language use in the Caribbean has been largely ignored and is only now being extensively researched. Linguists have recognised that creoles are not incorrect versions of the standard language but are new languages emerging (Holm, 2000). According to Holm, (2000) "they are new languages shaped by many of the same linguistic forces that shaped English and other 'proper' languages" (.p. I). He contends that if creoles are thoroughly examined as linguistic systems and compared with the original language from which they got their lexical base, one would recognise that they differ in terms of phonology, syntax and word formation, and hence they should be considered emerging languages.

Although creoles have the "structural complexity of full languages" (Singh, 2000, p. 13), they are often perceived as having a low social status and hardly receive support despite their widespread use among distinguished governmental and educational organisations. This is an indication that many people still identify creoles as the result of colonization and slavery, and therefore they continue to adhere to demands and to speak and write the standard language in order to define one's sense of self and nationhood.

2.4 Special role that creoles play in the Caribbean

> In a certain sense, the creole language is like the calypso and the steelband, features which are expressive of a certain culture and part of a historical experience, and which have evolved to a status of respectability in Caribbean territories because they have been integrated into the musical scene. They are now parts of annual, rigourous and demanding competitions. (Roberts, 1994, p. 53)

The linguistic situation in the English-speaking Caribbean according to Pratt-Johnson (2009), can placed on a creole continuum of three varieties. The creole continuum is a continuous spectrum of speech varieties ranging from creole to the standard language. There are three main levels of the continuum; acrolect, mesolect and basilect. The acrolect (standard variety) is at one end of the continuum and considered the most prestigious language, whereas the mesolect (intermediate varieties) is in the middle of the continuum and the basilect (creole) is the other variety which is furthest away from the acrolect. In St. Lucia, Kwéyòl is regarded as the basilect because according to Isaac (1986), it is the language of many persons who are poorly educated and illiterate, but they have some oral proficiency in English to assist them in gaining access to employment and getting basic transactions completed. The creole continuum however, has been used mostly to describe the linguistic situation in mainly two Caribbean territories; Jamaica and Guyana.

Caribbean creoles do play important roles in the lives of adults and children. Many adults may value the use of creoles as a form of intimate communication and to express themselves more creatively when engaged in community gatherings such as river washing, working on farmlands and socializing with friends, whereas children may use creole more frequently in role play, particularly when depicting adult roles or when conversing with their friends away from home or school setting. In addition, Paugh (2005) explains that the use of creoles are "considered 'better' for emotionally expressive speech acts like gossiping, arguing, joking, cursing, teasing, and assessing others" (p. 67).

2.4.1 Use of different language varieties in St. Lucia.

The French-based vernacular, Kwéyòl is not indigenous to St. Lucia. Kwéyòl is also used as a language of choice for the people of the Eastern Caribbean nations of

Dominica, Martinique and Guadeloupe. Martinique and Guadeloupe are French territories, whereas Dominica, like St. Lucia, was colonised by both the British and French, and as a result of the Briton's victory, English became the official language. Although, English is the official language of Dominica, there are four language varieties available to Dominicans: Dominican Standard English (DSE), French based Creole (Kwéyòl), Dominican Creolised English (DCE), English based Creole Kokoy (Cocoy). However, the language of choice for most of the population is Kwéyòl (Bryan & Burnette, 2003), whereas in St. Lucia three varieties are used: St. Lucian Standard English; St. Lucian creole/ Vernacular English of St. Lucia (VESL) and Kwéyòl. Kwéyòl has played an influential role in the development of the creolized vernacular (VESL), the third language variety. The three examples presented below represent Garrett's (2005) explanation of how VESL is influenced by Kwéyòl. Most times the speaker may code switch to get the message across.

Standard English: I don't have anything in my bag.
VESL: I doh have nuffin in my bag uh.
Kwéyòl: Mwe pa ni anyen andidan sak mwe/
(Mwe pa ni anyen andidan bag mwe)

Vernacular English of St. Lucia (VESL) is considered as an alternative name for St. Lucian English Creole. Garrett (2003) asserts that VESL can be easily distinguished from the other Caribbean English Creole (CEC), not only because of its importance, but in addition because of its socio-historical origins. Although, VESL emerged in the mid-nineteenth century, it is a widely spoken vernacular that can be heard throughout St. Lucia, especially among school aged children, in the classrooms, during social activities, on the playgrounds and in the canteens. VESL is considered part of the extended family of CEC (Garrett, 2003; Frank, 2007; Nwenmely, 1999; Simmons-Mc.Donald, 2004).

For many teachers in St. Lucia, the most rational thing to do is avoid the use of the non-standard language varieties (VESL and Kwéyòl) in the classroom since the major goal is to teach Standard English, despite the students' background. However, policy dictates the socio-cultural and socio linguistic experience of students should be considered in the language learning classroom. According to the Organisation of Eastern Reform (O.E.R.U):

> It is most important, therefore, that the child who speaks Creole or CIV as a first language be accepted, be allowed to express himself or herself using the language that he or she knows while we provide the situations and experiences that will help the child to acquire English in as natural a way as possible in the classroom. (2005, p. 2)

Siegel (2009) explains that the latter is illogical. As a matter of fact, we should first recognise and embrace the vernaculars (the known) and use them to assist students in acquiring the Standard English (the unknown) until they are comfortable with speaking and writing Standard English. Siegel identifies three approaches that can be taken towards the recognition and use of a vernacular: instrumental, accommodation and awareness. In instrumental programmes the stigmatized variety is used to teach literacy and content, also additional subjects such as Mathematics and Science. In accommodation programs, students' home languages are accommodated in their oral language and also their writing. In the awareness programmes, the CIV is "an object of study in the context of discussions of language diversity or of literature" (Siegel, 2009, p. 705). Siegel's instrumental program is one of the closest to St. Lucia's situation. Although programmes are not designed to teach literacy and other core subjects using the stigmatized varieties, teachers may refer to Kwéyòl and VESL to assist students who may encounter difficulty in learning new content, particularly the students who come from Kwéyòl-speaking backgrounds, where language and culture are valued and play an integral in their cultural identity.

2.5 Importance of language for cultural identity

Language and culture are inseparable. Mitchell and Myles (2004) suggest that the two are acquired together whereby one supports the development of the other (p. 235). In one of her earlier works, Ochs (1988) explains that language acquisition and socio-cultural knowledge are interdependent. She asserts, "Participants in verbal activities/practices draw on linguistic socio-cultural knowledge to create and define what is taking place. On the other hand, these verbal activities/practices are the means through which aspects of linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge are created and/or maintained" (p. 128). This demonstrates how language and culture are intertwined and play an important role in effectively transmitting a society's values and beliefs. St. Lucia's moral values, beliefs, ideologies, cultural and linguistic

identities are indigenous to the people. This, therefore, adds richness to the language varieties and the cultural behaviours which are exhibited throughout the various districts on the island. Therefore, language educators need to recognise that learners bring to the classroom environment a variety of beliefs, attitudes and experiences about language within a bilingual community where the learner is accustomed to using the first language (L1) for various communicative purposes. It is from this perspective that teacher attitudes towards and behaviours regarding language varieties in the classroom can be fully examined.

The following chapter examines beliefs and attitudes to language learning. In this chapter the focus will be primarily on teacher attitudes towards language learning in the classroom. This will also include literature on code switching as this phenomenon plays a critical role in forming teacher beliefs and attitudes towards students' language use.

CHAPTER 3

ATTITUDES TO AND BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE

3.1 Introduction

> Language attitudes are a significant part of how we assess one another. Understanding folk attitudes towards ways of speaking contributes to our knowledge of how speech can influence educational success, housing opportunities and job opportunities, as well as other critically important matters for maintaining equality in a democratic society. (Preston, 2004, p. 480)

Attitudes to and beliefs about language may have a profound effect on teaching and students' learning behavior in the classroom. Attitudes are the way a person thinks or feels about or towards something. According to psychological theory, attitudes are judged, emotional responses consisting of three domains mainly: affective, cognitive and behavioral (Rajecki, 1990; Zimbardo & Lieppe, 1991); whereas beliefs are assumptions that an individual holds about himself or herself as a learner, about the influences of language learning and teaching (Victori & Lockhart, 1995). This chapter focuses on the scope of language attitudes and the critical role they play in the survival of a language or a variety of language, especially in a society where two or more language varieties exist. Further, the chapter discusses teacher attitudes to and beliefs about students' language use. Following this, I provide a review of the literature concerning beliefs about how language should be taught. The latter is relevant as it provides an indication of how beliefs about language learning can affect teaching. Most importantly, there is a discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of attitudes to code switching, the significance of code switching, and approaches to code switching. Following this is a discussion of the distinctions between the types of code switching, especially as they relate to writing. Also discussed in this chapter is the justification for students' code switching in the classroom. The chapter concludes with a review of the literature on code switching in students' written texts.

3.2 Scope of language attitudes

Crystal (1992) defines language attitudes as the overall beliefs, feelings and judgements that people perceive about their own language and the language varieties of other people. This is echoed by Baker (2000a) who claims that attitudes are an important factor because they are indications of societies' beliefs, including their thoughts, preferences and desires. Furthermore, Fasold (1984) explains that attitudes (negative or positive) toward languages often represent the attitudes towards members of different ethnicities. Hence, when people are exposed to speakers of other language varieties, their reactions will indicate how they perceive the speakers. These attitudes, however, may affect how the language or language variety maintains a high or low status. It is important to note there are individuals who may have attitudes towards speakers because of their accents and some teachers display attitudes towards their students because they are not competent in the standard variety.

Hohenthal (n.d.) argues, "attitudes are crucial in language growth or decay, restoration or destruction; the status and importance of a language in society and within an individual derive largely from adopted or learnt attitudes" (para. 3). A society's attitude towards a language is extremely important as this determines to a great extent the longevity and existence of the language.

3.3 Attitudes to language varieties

Many tensions exist because of the varying views on the use of non-standard varieties in the classroom. Neutral attitudes and beliefs towards vernaculars and creoles in the classroom are very rare (Fleischmann, 2008; Rickford, 1999). There are pervasive views that non-standard varieties should be kept out of the classroom. Alongside this, people may feel that they are acceptable in certain social settings. However, I believe that before judging speakers of other language varieties and the varieties themselves, it is important that we are knowledgeable and aware of the social contexts in which they are used.

As previously highlighted, many teachers regard vernaculars and dialects as being non-standard. Additionally, Siegel (2009) asserts that children who speak or write the vernacular are often judged as being irresponsible speakers or writers of Standard English. Since Standard English in St. Lucia is considered the only language of the classroom in all subject areas, especially in Language Arts, when students deviate from the standard, or the patterns in structure and vocabulary, then the listener's or reader's response (generally the teacher) may be to indicate that there are inaccuracies. Teachers may interrupt the speaker and address the errors or mark the written texts where the non-standard variety is reflected.

A research study conducted by St. Hilaire (2009) on the attitudes towards Kwéyòl and support for its use in St. Lucian schools has revealed the majority of the interviewed respondents suggested that there were positive implications for the use of the L1 in schools. Approximately three quarters of the respondents supported the use of Kwéyòl as a teaching aid to assist young learners who are experiencing difficulties learning Standard English. These respondents also identified more academic than cultural reasons for the use of Kwéyòl (St.Hilaire, 2009). Other participants in the study, however, thought Kwéyòl should be utilised only for the purpose of extra-curricular activities. Moreover, most of the interviewees expressed the opinion that Kwéyòl should be integrated and have a more institutionalized role within the school curriculum.

The Language Attitude Survey conducted by the Jamaica Language Unit in 2005 found over 70 percent of respondents were in favour of bilingual education in schools where students would learn "to read and write in Jamaican creole and English" (Jamaica Language Unit, 2005). As a result of academic research by creole linguists, Jamaican creole has made significant headway in the language learning classrooms in Jamaica. Additionally, the Ministry of Education in Jamaica states that it is a rather "important step in taking account of the mother tongue, showing that the first language is an integral part of their literacy development" (Bryan, 2004, p. 89). Likewise, in the Seychelles and the Netherlands Antilles, changes in the education policy have seen the Creole Influenced Vernacular (CIV) incorporated in schools for educational purposes. It is likely that the steps taken to include CIV are due to both theoretical and social perspectives (Simmons-McDonald, 2004).

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Bryan and Burnette (2003) in eighty classrooms across Dominica, it was revealed that for all the teachers their language choice was Standard English. However, despite the extensive use of English, the use of Kwéyòl in the classroom was acknowledged by 65 percent of the teachers as the second language variety used in the classroom. In Dominica, teachers have been reportedly using Kwéyòl to facilitate the linguistic development of both primary and secondary school students, especially in their academic writing (Bryan & Burnette, 2003).

In comparison to St. Hilaire's (2009) study, Katz, Scott and Hadjioannou (2009) conducted an exploratory study of language attitudes with the main focus on teachers' attitudes towards language differences and diversity. Their study revealed that the majority of the respondents held a negative attitude towards language differences. Secondly, teachers' exposure to the students who spoke the non-dominant language variety had a positive effect on their attitudes, and thirdly, if teachers' had received proper training in initial education programmes, this would have assisted them in having a positive attitude towards the language varieties that they encountered in the classrooms. The conclusions from this study suggest that when teachers have positive attitudes towards language varieties, this will have an enhancing effect on their beliefs about students' language learning and language use.

A statement from a teacher from a rural community during the launching of the Kwéyòl New Testament in 1991 in St. Lucia, sums up how positive a response can be:

> Langaj bèl. Langaj sé on bagay ki enpòtan. Mé nou ka wè signifikans langaj lè ou li langaj-la, lè ou palé langaj-la èk la ni lakopwann. Kon yon titja, mwen wè palé langaj Kwéyòl épi li langaj Kwéyòl èk lakopwann, mwen wè sa sé pli bèl bagay mwen sa janmen jwenn an lavi mwen.
> ["Language is beautiful. Language is an important thing. But we see the significance of language when you read the language, when you speak the language and there is understanding. As a teacher, I see the Creole language spoken and read with understanding, and I see that that is the most beautiful thing I can ever see in this life."]

3.4 Teacher attitudes and beliefs about students' language use

There is a paucity of evidence-based research on teacher attitudes towards language varieties and student writing. Most of the research literature is concentrated on language varieties and oral language, and reveals that teacher attitudes towards language learners, their perceptions and beliefs will determine whether they have an immense influence on learning behaviour especially in language learning (Cotterall, 1995). When teachers continuously expose their students to negative attitudes regarding their use of written language, these students will begin to perceive their language use as being "awful" and consequently this may lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy (Redd & Webb, 2005). In a self-fulfilling prophecy, negative beliefs become negative behaviours. This was indicated in a Michigan Black English Court Case, where the court revealed that teachers who have a negative attitude towards children's language influenced negative expectations and further encouraged the self-fulfilling prophecy (Wheeler, 2009). In addition, "telling or teaching students that their language is wrong or bad is not only damaging, but false" (Christenbury, 2000, p. 203).

It is very important that teachers have a positive approach to their students' writing because demonstrating negativity towards students will also have an effect on the way they amend their subsequent drafts, especially in the process approach to writing.

3.5 Beliefs about language learning and teaching

In recent times, researchers (Arnold, 1999; Bernat 2006; Breen, 2001; Flores, 2001) have increasingly focused on teacher beliefs and the nature of language learning. As indicated in a variety of studies, teacher beliefs have an influence on learners' success. Altan (2006) provides a clear indication of the relevance of teacher beliefs in language learning.

> Beliefs are a central construct in every discipline which deals with human behavior and learning. Teachers' beliefs influence their consciousness, teaching attitude, teaching methods and teaching

policies. Teachers' beliefs also strongly influence teaching behaviour and, finally, learners' development. The formation of teachers' educational beliefs in language teaching/learning process will exert an indiscernible effect on forming effective teaching methods and will bring about the improvement of learners' language learning abilities. (p. 45)

From this perspective, beliefs about language teaching and learning are regarded as important aspects both to the teacher and the learner. As emphasised by Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005, p. 1), "in the classroom context, the perceptions, beliefs, attitudes" will inform teachers' practices in language teaching. Teachers' beliefs will either motivate or dissuade them from creating an environment that provides a positive or negative impact in the language learning classroom.

Richards and Lockhart (1994) identified five categories of teachers' beliefs about language learning and provided suggestions that beliefs are constructed in the following ways: teachers' own experiences as language learners; their experiences and knowledge of what works best; their practices which may be considered as reputable; educational and evidence-based practices and principles governing language learning; and the established principles derived from an approach or method.

Additionally, many teachers have their own beliefs about their approaches to their classroom situations. This is supported by Gardner and Miller (1999) who suggest that "these beliefs come from how they were taught, their training and their experiences as teachers" (p. 40). Teachers in St. Lucia develop their own philosophies in their classrooms. While some may focus on the curriculum instituted by the Ministry of Education and teach for the purpose of examinations, others may use the curriculum as a guide while taking into consideration the linguistic behaviours of the individual learners in their classrooms. It is therefore important that teachers establish their goals and implement strategies if students are to learn effectively and become proficient speakers and writers in the L2 or the target language (TL)

Although there are varying beliefs about language learning in schools, it is important that teachers' beliefs about language learning and teaching do not influence their

approaches to their teaching and providing feedback especially when students code switch in their written text.

3.6 Attitudes to code switching

One common observable feature in any multilingual society and a linguistic behaviour present among bilinguals is *code switching*. Buell (2003) defines code switching as "a phenomenon in which speakers switch back and forth between two separate languages or dialects" (p. 98). Code switching or mixing occurs in a variety of guises, "from the occasional lexical item inserted into largely monolingual text (where the matrix text can be either L1 or L2) to alternating clauses" (Norrish, 1997, p. 4). It is a prevalent practice where bilinguals move between varieties of languages in different contexts.

Although, many educators may have opposing views about the use of code switching in the classroom, it is important that all stakeholders have a heightened awareness of the underlying reasons for code switching, or the functions of code switching. This is supported by Wheeler (2005) who investigated the effectiveness of code switching. She stresses that code switching helps teachers and bilinguals identify and respect cultural values and norms and also celebrates their linguistic competence. Moreover, "code-mixing and switching have a legitimate place in the multilingual's repertoire just as switching between registers and styles has its functions in a monolingual's linguistic behaviour" (Kachru, 2009, p. 31). Kachru argues further that there is no reason for stigmatizing such a variety as it can be "exploited for effective language teaching as can translation between languages and varieties" (p. 31). Additionally, Montes-Alcalá (2001) emphasises that both oral and written code switching, "is an idiosyncratic phenomenon governed by rules, both social and grammatical, and that for an individual to code switch, he or she must be proficient in both languages" (p. 194). Further, Buell (2003) indicates that the simultaneous use of two languages creates a link between the two languages being learnt, as it is a strategy being used by children in learning the required standard.

Unfortunately, many do not view the simultaneous use of two languages as a result of linguistic competence, but as a negative influence on language learning (Buell,

2003). Code switching is still being regarded as an unsystematic process which involves interference or negative transfer. Heller (1992) asserts that the "absence of code-switching can be as significant as the presence of it" (p. 124). This is because this natural language phenomenon has not been acknowledged because it is regarded as being in "direct conflict with normative or conventional forms and attitudes about what is 'good language' and thus, it is not appreciated or supported" (Duran, 1994, p. 85). In addition, Montes-Alcalá (2001) claims that the stigmatization of this phenomenon has meant that code switching is closely "attributed to illiteracy, lack of formal education, and or/lack of proficiency in one or both languages," (p. 193). It is important to note that teachers may not be aware of their own code switching which is done more frequently in oral discussions.

In order for teachers to communicate effectively using code switching in the classroom, the students must share a similar native language. This is applicable to St. Lucia because there is only one native language and many children, depending on their socio-linguistic environment, will be familiar with Kwéyòl. What is also significant is that for effective code switching to occur in the classroom, there must be some kind of mutual compatibility between the teachers' and students' native language and their second language.

Cook (2002) stresses the importance of teacher knowledge of the diverse cultural backgrounds and languages in the classroom. He claims that the application of code switching in the classroom, where students may not share the same native language, will result in difficulties, one of them being neglect. Further, Skiba (1997) explains that code switching should be viewed from the perspective of providing a linguistic advantage rather than as an obstruction to communication.

Hughes, Shaunessy, Brice, Ratliff and McHatton (2006) also make a claim that when learners are able to switch between two languages and they are still able to maintain the grammar of both; this indicates high order thinking skills. Therefore, rather than being viewed as language interference, code switching should be regarded as a powerful linguistic skill that benefits learners in developing linguistic competence in a L2. The only way code switching would have a negative outcome on learners' L2

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acquisition is where students have none of the pre-requisite literacy skills (Tabouret-Keller, Le Page, Gardner-Chloros & Varro, 1997).

Many people attempt to eradicate and suppress code switching because of the negative attitudes and behaviours attributed to it. However, they must realize that it is a naturally occurring function that takes place in any bilingual or multilingual society. Therefore, contrary to the negative views on code switching, many researchers and proponents of code switching have tried to dismantle the barriers that teachers currently hold against this phenomenon. They have identified effective strategies that can be used in classrooms, especially the inclusion of real life (authentic) activities. Therefore, it is important to examine the significance of code switching as part of the verbal repertoire of a bilingual society.

Despite both negative and positive reviews of code switching there has been an increasing number of studies on the types of this naturally occurring phenomenon and the positive implication it has in the social functioning of bilinguals and monolinguals.

3.7 Explaining the significance of code switching

Language educators across the globe have investigated the theoretical underpinnings, causes, functions, characteristics and effects of code-switching and code-mixing. Code switching has been studied from a number of different perspectives, hence the causes of this language phenomenon have been associated with sociolinguistic, socio-cultural and psycholinguistic factors. However, for the purpose of this study I will focus on two perspectives; the sociolinguistic and socio-cultural factors.

From the sociolinguistics perspective, code switching is viewed as part of an effective communication process. The sociolinguistic perspective also focuses on the social meaning and the discourse functions code switching serves. The use of learner code switching is not only an indication of a relationship between two languages but may also be an actual manifestation of integration between cultures. Gonzalez (2001) argues that when students have the knowledge and the ability to

code switch, they are able to adjust to the discontinuities of home and school cultures because of their language.

It is important to note that children's socio-cultural setting is a marker of their daily lived experiences which also determines their linguistic habits (Martin-Jones, 1995). In addition, Martin-Jones, and Hughes et al. (2006) view code switching as a continuum of the communication process where two languages and two cultures are integrated. On this basis, code switching may be used as an effective teaching strategy for second language learning.

Namba (2004) contends that bilingual children will use code switching in various social contexts for a variety of reasons and this may be reflected in discourse practices. It is noteworthy that the language choice in any given situation is based on the speaker's relationship with the persons within that particular setting. As a result, the phenomenon has become an extremely useful social skill, particularly among bilinguals, which in turn enhances their mutual understanding and helps develop relationships in a community of bilinguals. Therefore, code switching among bilinguals clearly serves various functions in their social settings, especially in the classroom. Hence from a socio-cultural perspective this phenomenon will definitely occur when persons from similar cultural backgrounds encounter each other, especially in the classroom in various situations.

Situational code switching is a social view of code switching and occurs when the setting, topic and speaker changes. The speaker switches to a different language than he or she was originally using (Wardhaugh, 2006). In situational code switching, languages correspond with changes from one external situation to another, whereas in metaphorical code switching, the language chosen by the speaker is determined because of the situation. Sinha (2009) asserts that:

> In case of code mixing, a fluent bilingual speaker, while speaking to another fluent bilingual speaker, changes language without any change at all in the situation. The changes generally take place more or less randomly as far as the subject matter is concerned (p. 275).

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Metaphorical code-switching occurs when bilinguals switch in order to identify with a group. It is used to add meaning to different aspects of a conversation (Saville-Troike, 2003). Two types of code switching that have been frequently highlighted in a number of research studies are intrasentential and intersentential code switching.

3.8 Structural description of code switching

Linguists' analysis of intrasentential code switching is restricted to a single sentence or phrase. Intrasentential code switching is as a result of the speakers' aim to make their utterances consistent with their context. In intrasentential code switching two sentences from two distinct languages can be placed together and as a result there is language alternation within a single sentence. It involves a "shift in language in the middle of a sentence, usually performed without pause, interruption or hesitation" (Zirker, 2007, p. 10). This type of code switching occurs more frequently in bilingual societies. Angermeyer (2002), in his research on intrasentential code switching explains the usefulness and necessity for also incorporating the conversational context of an utterance when examining and explaining patterns of lexical choice in multilingual conversation.

In contrast, intersentential switching consists of language switches at three main levels: phrasal, sentential, or discourse boundaries (Zirker, 2007, p.10). Intersentential code switching requires greater fluency in both languages, because each part of the statement must coincide with the rules of the subsequent language being spoken. Cook (as cited in Block, 2003) emphasises this point when he claims, "the individual who switches languages in mid-sentence, but still respects syntactic boundaries, may be seen to be drawing on multi-competence as the process requires, if not a single system, tight interconnection for switching from one language to another" (p. 38).

3.9 Should learners code switch in the classroom ?

Clearly, the reasons why bilinguals may engage in code switching support our understanding of the important role that code switching plays in their overall linguistic development. According to Wei and Martin (2009), if the monolingual ideologies

were non-existent in language policies, then perhaps code switching would have gone unnoticed and unmentioned. Code switching in the community context is readily accepted, however, when it comes to students' use of code switching in the classroom, it is deemed as being inappropriate and most often prohibited (Moodley, 2007; Reyes, 2004; Wei & Martin, 2009). As educators we need to take into account that code switching is one of the most distinctive linguistic behaviours of bilinguals. Therefore, bilingual students will use their L1 and also "smuggle the vernacular into the classroom" (Probyn, 2005) and code switch for a variety of communicative purposes.

Ovander and Collier (1998) suggest that children who engage in pedagogies which support their cognitive and academic development in the L1 in their early primary school years will exhibit cognitive advantages over their peers who are monolinguals, because cognitive development of a child's L1 provides academic support for second language acquisition.

> It is extremely important that cognitive development continue through a child's first language at least through the elementary school years. Extensive research has demonstrated that children who reach full cognitive development in two languages (generally reaching the threshold in the L1 by around 11 to 12) enjoy cognitive advantages over monolinguals. (Ovander & Collier, 1998, p. 90)

In addition, Flores (2001) posits that a bilingual teacher's role is significant in students' cognitive development because of the support they provide to their bilingual students especially when they utilise effective strategies to develop and enhance their language awareness. This signifies that teachers' code switching in the classroom does not impede students' overall L2 development and their linguistic awareness.

Code switching in the classroom can positively impact on the teaching/learning process, as the integration of language knowledge in the classroom is a useful tool in helping learners acquire what is regarded as the standard or prestige language of communication. In addition, researchers (Bialystok, 2001; Cummins, 2000; Riches & Genesee, 2006; Wheeler, 2005) explain the importance of bilingualism in students' literacy development and the role that the L2 plays in acquiring what many view as

the "only real and grammatical language" (Wheeler & Swords, 2006, p.32) "Standard English". Further, Bialystok (2007) emphasises the importance of bilingualism and how it may indeed have a positive influence on the acquisition of various aspects of literacy.

Despite the positive views on why learners should code switch, Eldridge (1996) challenges the acceptance of continued learner code switching in the classroom. He claims that if students' use of code switching continues and is not discarded from inception, then fossilization may occur. He further states, "the language acquired would then become a hybrid variety, and the learners would find themselves severely linguistically deprived with target code monolinguals" (p. 310). In comparison to L1 learners, L2 learners may reach a specific level and then be unable to move any further. Although the learners may engage in various activities to assist them in acquiring the L2 and may be successful, they may return to their former habits.

3.10 Writing and code switching

From all indications, research on code switching primarily focuses on its use in spoken language, whereas code switching in writing has been given little attention (Montes-Alcalá, 2005). She identifies the gap between studies on code switching and explains that code switching focuses mainly on oral production and the written aspects remain in an "embryonic state" (p. 194). Like Montes-Alcalá, Gort (2006) recognises the need for future research on written code switching in order to ascertain what occurs in written discourse of bilinguals when both languages are used simultaneously. Gort also expresses the need for studies that provide insights of bilingual students' perceptions and their writing strategies, as these are critical in developing instructional programmes and assessment practices that are compatible with the students' linguistic development and their cultural orientation.

From my perspective, if learners' are able to communicate fluently in both languages and are able to understand each other, then written code switching should not be viewed as a hindrance to L2 learning. This view is further supported by Duran (1994) when she states, "whether code switching is used to fill a gap or if it is a conscious

desire to mix the two languages to create new forms, the language created in most code-switches has internal linguistic consistency and validity for the learner's deep structure" (p. 75). Losey (2009) suggests that there needs to be further research on the importance of accessing additional information on teachers' attitude to written code switching, especially as it relates to grammatical/syntactical constraints in students' writing.

The research on the language processes in bilingualism explains the complexity of code switching and identifies that there is definitely a relationship between the L1 and the L2. For learners to be able to use these complex skills effectively to construct meaning, is indeed an intellectual ability. This reiterates the point by Hughes et al. (2006) that code switching might indicate a possible sign of giftedness among bilinguals, because of the skills that one must possess in order to code switch successfully.

The following chapter focuses on areas that are relevant to the aspects of language learning that are pertinent to St. Lucian classrooms.

CHAPTER 4

ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING AND USE RELEVANT FOR STUDENTS IN ST. LUCIAN CLASSROOMS

4.1 Introduction

Since students need to master academic language for various purposes, teachers must provide various experiences and strategies where their students will have opportunities to use language productively in oral and written tasks. Hence, it is fundamental to critically examine the aspects of language learning and use that are pertinent in the classroom especially in the context of St. Lucian classrooms.

In this chapter, I will consider the role of the L1 in attaining proficiency in the L2 and how learners can be competent in both the L1 and L2. Another significant aspect is the importance of transfer and whether negative/positive transfer are language features that learners use to develop sociolinguistic and linguistic competence in the TL or whether they are responsible for impediments in L2 acquisition. Furthermore, this chapter highlights the critical role that metalinguistic awareness plays in language teaching and learning. Cummins (1981) emphasises that when students have little awareness of a language, it hinders their learning and their success. Most importantly, in this chapter I examine the writing of students in St. Lucian classrooms and consider three major aspects: negative transfer and writing; the role of the L1 in children's writing, and cultural influences and writing. In dealing with aspects of language learning and use, teacher feedback is extremely relevant, hence the literature also explores the importance of teacher feedback on students' writing.

4.2 Importance of the L1 in L2 teaching and learning for students and teachers

Bilingualism does have a positive effect on a child's overall linguistic and educational development (Baker, 2000b; Cummins, 2000; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000; Krashen, 2005; Siegel, 2009; Thomas & Collier, 1997; Wheeler & Swords, 2006). Researchers

(Atkinson, 1993; Cummins, 2003; Gibbons, 2003; Siegel, 2003, 2009; Wheeler, 2005, 2009) also maintain that the development of a child's L1 will assist him or her in learning the standard or TL taught at school, because children are able to transfer their knowledge and skills across languages, since they view their L1 and the L2 as being interdependent or in other words as "resources" (Franken, 2005).

In reaction to what they view as misguided and unrealistic pedagogical principles, researchers have staked an additional claim for a sanctioned role for the learner's L1 in the language classroom, especially in their writing (Levine, 2003, p. 344). Lovejoy, Fox and Wills (2009) argue that although the conventions of academic writing are central and necessary to any language learning programme, children should also be aware of the importance of their L1 and should be exposed to a variety of experiences to increase their language awareness. Furthermore, Franken (2005) explains, "both general language proficiency and literacy skills in students' first languages should be regarded as resources to support the learning of, and learning [in the TL]" (p. 69). I concur with Cummins' (2003) claims that children who are engaged in language activities where their ability to speak and write two or more languages is constantly being developed will eventually have a better comprehension of language and how to use it effectively. Additionally, Eldridge (1996) and Wheeler (2005) emphasise that code switching is a useful method in teaching the TL, providing that teachers employ it appropriately in their classrooms. Teachers need to make students aware of the purpose of using the code switching and at the same time show students the relationships that exist between the two languages. Wheeler (2005) identifies the contrastive analysis approach which allows teachers to balance the use of languages within each lesson. The teacher switches languages at certain key points, showing students the contrast between the grammar of the L1 and L2. In this way, more opportunities will be provided for them to compare and contrast the two languages and develop competence in both.

In addition, Turnbull and Arnett (2002) remark that as teachers are the main contributors to students' linguistic development in the TL in the classroom, "it is therefore reasonable to argue that maximizing the TL in the classroom is a favorable practice" (p. 205). Therefore, the use of both languages can nurture each other in an environment that sustains them.

One area of research which shows that the L1 has no adverse effect on the acquisition of the L2 is the Foyer program in Belgium. This program was designed to develop children's speaking and literacy abilities in three languages (their mother tongue, Dutch and French) during their primary schooling. Research evidence confirms and illustrates the benefits of bilingual and trilingual education (Cummins, 2000, p. 218-219), especially in primary school classrooms. In support of the latter statement, Cook (2001a) suggests that when the learner experiences difficulty in the TL, the teacher should not hesitate to resort to the L1.

However, from my experience, teachers have argued that the use of the L1 deprives students of exposure to and practice of the communicative linguistic functions in Standard English. The latter also reflects Duff and Polio's (1990) qualitative study which examined thirteen university foreign language instructors teaching. Their findings also revealed that teachers believe that when the L1 is utilised during instruction, it deprives children of various opportunities to hear and process the TL. Therefore, students' code switching practices in their writing are viewed as negatively impacting on the TL which is Standard English.

One opponent of the use of the L1 in the English language learning is Gabrielatos (2001). He indicates that although he believes that the L1 does have a place in the classroom, teachers and learner's should be aware of the 'damaging' effects that the mother tongue can have on the "learner's awareness and production of the TL" (p. 6). Gabrielatos (p. 8) further claims that the use of the L1 or mother tongue should be limited within the classroom, otherwise learners will continue to be dependent on their existing knowledge of the L1 to assist them in comprehending the reason and the organisation principles behind the TL.

Cook (2001a) argues that the TL is an important linguistic tool that is critical in students' language acquisition. I am in agreement with him when he states that the traditional views of prohibiting the integration of the L1 in the classroom have restricted the "possibilities of language teaching" (p. 405). I also share the sentiments that the use of the L1 should not be seen as deviating from the principles of good language teaching or learning, but as a linguistic tool in facilitating the holistic language development of the learner. Therefore, it is also significant to

address and discuss the issue of transfer as it pertains to L2 acquisition especially in children's writing. In addition, I believe that the L1 has its place in the classroom and it should be seen as a successful way of assisting students in acquiring the required standard, and not as an impediment, particularly when students' writing reflects elements of language transfer.

4.3 Language transfer

Much research exists on the role of language transfer in L2 acquisition, and language teaching, especially in the areas of oral and written language (Cook & Bassetti, 2005; Cummins, 2003, 2007; Ellis, 2008: Odlin, 1989, 2003). Transfer is regarded as the cross-linguistic influence of the L1 on the L2. Odlin (1989) defines transfer: as the "influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (p. 27). Koda (2005) also maintains that it is "an automatic activation of well-rehearsed first-language mapping procedures, triggered by second language input, irrespective of the learner's intent" (p. 317). Although transfer is frequently discussed in the context of English learning and teaching, it can happen in any situation especially when one does not have a good command of the L2. However, it is also important to note that transfer is not always influenced by one's L1. The knowledge of previously acquired languages may also have an effect on the learners' language. Taking Odlin's (1989) distinction between positive and negative transfer, I will now make clear the positions on language transfer.

4.3.1 Positive transfer or facilitation.

Positive transfer or facilitation occurs as a result of similarities between the L1 and the L2, since the knowledge and skills used in the L1 can be easily transferred to the L2. The similarities between the L1 and L2 make it much easier to learn, read and write the TL. L1 habits play an instrumental role in acquiring the L2. Positive transfer or facilitation helps facilitate the acquisition of the properties of the L2. It can therefore be defined as, "facilitating influences that may arise from cross linguistic influences" (Doughty & Long, 2003, p. 438). Positive transfer can be determined by making comparisons of the accomplishments of groups whose native languages

differ (Odlin, 1989). Further, the following hypothesis by Koda and Reddy (2008) is relevant because it explains how positive transfer influences the development of two languages, "The language proficiency underlying cognitively demanding tasks, such as literacy and academic learning, is largely shared across languages, and therefore, once acquired in one language, it promotes literacy development in another" (Koda & Reddy, 2008, p. 497).

4.3.2 Negative transfer or interference.

Negative transfer has been defined as the, "inappropriate use of features of the first language (L1) or first dialect (d1) when speaking or writing the second language (L2) or dialect (D2)" (Siegel, 2009, p. 48). Initially, negative transfer was viewed as a problem in L2 acquisition because of the interference from the L1.

One impediment to L2 acquisition is interference of the prior knowledge of the L1. Ellis (2008) considers the above as proactive inhibition because he suggests that old habits get in the way of attempts to learn a new language. He explains further that these old habits have to be unlearnt so that they can be replaced with new ones. However, this perception is not applicable to L2 acquisition because learners do not need to forget their native language in order to learn a new one or even the TL, although there maybe instances that the native language will be lost (Ellis, 2008).

One of the early studies and landmark articles frequently highlighted is Kaplan's (1966) study on contrastive rhetoric which focused on cultural conventions and their impact on L2 writing. Kaplan asserted that rhetorical patterns of language are distinctive to one's language and culture. He maintained that the differences in rhetorical patterns may pose difficulties for L2 learners and provided a number of writing examples from non-native-English-speaking students, to substantiate his claims that the rhetorical organization of writing ideas is culturally influenced and writing is an activity embedded in culture. He states that, "each language and each culture has a paragraph order unique to itself and that part of the learning of a particular language is the mastery of its logical system" (p. 14). Kaplan's claims have been criticised on a number of levels, but possibly the most significant criticism has been his oversimplification of the phenomenon. The area of contrastive rhetoric,

however, has evolved to provide more complex and nuanced explanations of the nature of such transfer. A more in depth discussion on the theory of contrastive rhetoric is found in the section on cultural influences and students' writing.

4.4 Importance of teacher metalinguistic awareness

Metalinguistic awareness focuses on the ability to think about aspects and language form and structure and how 'they relate to and produce the underlying meaning of utterances" (Mora, 2009, p. 1). It is the ability to "reflect upon and manipulate spoken and written language" (Baker, 2000a, p. 71).

A wide body of research emphasises the importance of teacher metalinguistic awareness (Andrews, 1999, 2001; August & Shanahan, 2006; Bialystok, 2007; Mora, 2009). The literature on teacher metalinguistic awareness states further that teachers should also be aware of sociolinguistic aspects of language learning including dialects, vernaculars and other varieties of language (Grabe, Stoller & Tardy, 2000). In St. Lucia, teachers appear to have limited knowledge of metalinguistic awareness.

In classrooms in St. Lucia, there appear to be limited activities which assist in developing students' metalinguistic awareness and this can be attributed firstly to teachers' limited knowledge and secondly, to poor planning and weak pedagogical practices. Therefore, if teachers were fully aware of the importance of metalinguistic awareness and its impact on their pedagogical practice, their students would develop a better understanding of how language works.

4.4.1 Importance of learners' metalinguistic awareness.

Metalinguistic awareness plays a critical role in the aspect of learners' overall language learning and development, because it helps them to understand that language is much more than communicating and gaining meaning, but includes being knowledgeable and aware of the underlying structures that govern the use of language. Learners' metalinguistic awareness enables them to manipulate linguistic units and to reflect upon structural properties of language (Kuo & Anderson, 2010).

Additionally metalinguistic awareness has a positive impact on bilingual learners especially in the areas of vocabulary development and writing (Bialystok & Herman, 1999; Eviatar & Ibrahim, 2000). Therefore it is important that learners, "develop lexical, phonological, syntactic, morphological, and pragmatic awareness as part of their broader metalanguage knowledge" (Edwards & Kirkpatrick, 1999, p. 314) because of the positive effects on their overall language ability and literacy skills (Mora, 2009).

4.5 Writing in St. Lucian classrooms

Like all students, those in St. Lucia will exhibit a range of writing proficiency. It is important to note that students' writing abilities may reflect their social backgrounds, culture related preferences and also the teachers' teaching practices and the activities they incorporate within their classrooms to facilitate students' writing development and literacy skills. Furthermore, some students are more competent in writing on various genres and topics in which they feel more comfortable and as a result their writing may reflect the differences in their preferences because of the way they may have expressed themselves, the lengths of their compositions and their experiences. The majority of teachers continuously underscore the need for students to write Standard English, regardless of the genre or the topic. Despite the linguistic differences exhibited among St. Lucian students' written discourse, elements of transfer and code switching should be highly prioritized and receive equal attention to other aspects such as grammatical and spelling errors and also text elaboration, particularly in the primary grades.

4.5.1 Negative transfer and writing.

Many teachers in St. Lucia attribute the plethora of errors in students' writing to negative transfer or interference of Kwéyòl or VESL. Early studies by Elsasser and Irvine (1989) and Winer (1990) substantiate the above claim that language interference can be seen as an obstacle in students' learning and subsequently their writing. However, what must be noted is that it depends on the definition and the type of errors that were analysed during the Elsasser and Irvine (1989) study. Winer's (1989) study consisted of a detailed analysis of students' writing of first and

final year secondary school students from Trinidad and Tobago. The study revealed that more than half of the students' errors in Standard English were as a result of the interference from the territory's local creole. Subsequent research by Winch and Gingell (1994) on the effect of interference or negative transfer on students' writing in St. Lucia revealed contrasting results, although the age level of their sample was lower. Their findings showed that there was no clear evidence that interference from the local creole-influenced vernacular had an effect on the students' writing.

Ellis (1994) points out that transfer may not occur as errors but rather as avoidance, overuse, and facilitation as a kind of compensation strategy. However, when students are able to rely on the L1 (whether it may be interfering with the TL or not) is an indication that students are using the L1 as a 'resource' (Franken, 2005).

4.5.2 Cultural influences and students' writing.

> Language is not acquired in a vacuum; rather it is acquired by communicating within a larger social system. In learning language, children discover the symbolic system for expressing meanings and relationships within particular social contexts. It is now widely recognised that children do not *imitate* language, they *construct* it in an effort to convey meaning and to achieve certain desired ends. In other words, they use language to mediate the meanings of their culture and to create their own 'models' of the world, and this constructive process is supported through interaction with others in countless daily social encounters. (Eller, 1989, p. 341)

Although there are many other factors such as language knowledge, subject knowledge and genre knowledge which may influence students' writing, the concept of cultural influence on writing remains an important factor to many researchers and continues to be a cause for much discussion. Research on contrastive rhetoric has also provided insights on how L2 writing is influenced by culturally influenced behaviours and patterns.

Contrastive rhetoric has been extensively researched, and it is important to note that it can be incorporated in pedagogy. Educators must be cognisant of the fact that the writing strategies employed by L2 learners may be culturally formed. In St. Lucia, depending on the nature of the topic, children's writing may reflect some of the folk

tales and other aspects that are inherent in St. Lucia's culture. In support of the latter, Panetta (2001) claims, "Contrastive rhetoric helps us bypass stereotypes and realize that writing strategies are culturally formed. For example, what is relevant/irrelevant, what is logical/illogical, what constitutes an argument even, are all culturally determined" (p. 5). However, the theory of contrastive rhetoric has not made significant strides into the pedagogical practices of many teachers. Other approaches to writing may have taken precedence over contrastive rhetoric because teachers fail to recognise the significance of this especially in composition writing. Moreover, Panetta (ibid) strongly advocates for contrastive rhetoric to be utilised collaboratively alongside other approaches to writing. She asserts:

> Given its direct applicability to composition and the constant globalization of academia, contrastive rhetoric must begin to exist alongside any other theoretical stances in the writing class. Therefore, writing instructors need only add contrastive rhetoric to their pedagogy, not replace another theory. (p. 8)

Despite the advocacy for contrastive rhetoric to be utilised in L2 writing skills, there are criticisms from the post-modernist theorists who have contrary views on contrastive rhetoric. Canagarajah (2002) whose work focuses on ESL in academic writing for university students, provides a very critical perspective on contrastive rhetoric. He corroborates the views of many and makes suggestions that contrastive rhetoric needs to be complex. He states:

> Though CR is a rare research and pedagogical tradition indigenous to ESL with considerable value for teachers, it must develop more complex types of explanation for textual difference if the school is to enjoy continued usefulness. Though difference is always going to be there in writing, and though much of it may derive from culture, the ways in which this influence takes place can be positive or negative, enabling as well as limiting, and teachers have to be aware of these possibilities when they teach student writing. More importantly, teachers must keep in mind that no one needs to be held hostage by language and culture; students can be taught to negotiate conflicting rhetorical structures to their advantage. (p. 68)

I have encountered many students who make use of socio-cultural knowledge, including folktales to make their writing more interesting. They may interject words or phrases in the L1 to captivate the reader's interest. As a result, students' writing

contains features of code switching. However, the question remains: How should teachers respond to code switching in students' written texts?"

4.6 Teachers' effective use of feedback

In most St. Lucian classrooms, teachers provide students with both oral and written feedback. Some teachers who provide oral feedback prefer to do it as a whole class activity, whereas others believe that individual feedback is more beneficial to the students because of the face-to-face interaction. Although the use of praise and criticism in feedback is important, what should take precedence is the purpose of the teacher feedback and whether there will be an improvement In consequent written drafts. According to Hyland and Hyland (2001), "praising what a student does well is important, particularly for less able writers, and we may use praise to help reinforce appropriate language behaviours and foster students' self-esteem" (p. 186). As a result, "teacher feedback should always be constructive and encouraging, not punitive and demeaning" (Pratt-Johnson, 2009, p. 127).

According to research (Ashwell, 2000) teachers should provide feedback to students on their first drafts before they can move on the later drafts. The latter is based on the assumption that teachers can, therefore, encourage revision on early drafts before helping the students with editing on their final drafts (Ashwell, p. 227). It is important to examine teachers' practice when providing feedback to their students. In most instances teachers provide two main types of feedback to their students: form feedback and content feedback.

4.6.1 Form feedback.

Currently in St. Lucia, teacher feedback on student writing (oral or written) is mainly focused on form. Teachers concentrate on correcting grammar and mechanics where they underline, circle or use question marks to indicate the presence of the errors. This is considered a traditional approach because most attempt to remove, correct, and suppress students' language because it is not written in the required standard. There has been considerable debate about feedback on grammar correction, especially in students' L2 writing. Truscott (1999) explicitly states that

correction of student grammar is a "bad idea" (p. 111) and has no place in students' writing, moreover, it should be discarded. This is also supported by the analysis of studies by Kepner (1991) and Sheppard (1992) which show that there is not sufficient evidence that error correction plays an instrumental role in improving students' writing.

One strong opponent to Truscott's (1996,1999) claims on form feedback is Ferris (1999) who suggests that Truscott's arguments are hasty "and overly strong given the rapidly growing research evidence pointing to ways in which effective error correction can and does help at least some student writers providing it is selective, prioritized and clear" (Bitchener, Young & Cameron, 2005, p. 192).

4.6.2 Content feedback.

In content feedback, teachers concentrate on students' organization of detail and text elaboration. Fathman and Whalley (1990) and Fregeau (1999) suggest that teacher comments concerning content are usually erratic, imprecise and students may become confused, and as a result ignore the corrections. Similar to the views on form feedback, there have also been many deficiencies associated with the practices concerning content feedback. It has been argued that teachers' comments on content will be of little use to students if they do not know what the teachers require of them. Therefore, they are unable to use the teachers' comments productively to improve their writing skills (Williams, 2003).

From all indications, written or oral feedback should not be separated. Goldstein (2004) argues there is convincing evidence that comments which incorporate revision strategies are particularly useful to students. Furthermore, results obtained on students' later writing when teachers used both oral and written feedback showed an improvement in their writing (Fregeau, 1999; Hyland, 1998; Hyland & Hyland, 2001). Therefore, teachers who place an emphasis on oral feedback give students an opportunity to question teachers about their errors. Also, teachers will be able to gain a comprehensive understanding of the students' writing. As a result of face-to-face interaction, teachers can also address specific problems related to the L2 whether it relates to the students' grammar or content.

4.7 Conclusion

The main focus of this study is identifying teachers' and students' attitudes towards code switching in students' writing, therefore a great part of the literature has highlighted various aspects of code switching and the critical role it plays in the lives bilinguals. The literature has also discussed the importance of language and the role of culture in language learning in St. Lucian classrooms. Further, the discussion has focused on the complexities that face many educators because of their attitudes towards and beliefs about language learning. In addition, the review examined the language varieties across the Caribbean, and in particular St. Lucia, and the function of those varieties in the acquisition of the standard. The literature review also identified the importance of L1 and L2 acquisition and the role of transfer in writing. It was also discovered that the first and second language can be viewed positively in order to eliminate the negative perspective that many educators may hold. It was established that code switching in the classroom when used constructively and positively can help learners acquire the TL. Various views on the use of code switching in the classroom by both learners and teachers were presented along with arguments for and against it. Furthermore, the review acknowledged the importance of teachers' attitudes towards language learning and the effects of their attitudes on students' language use. The literature review has shown that teacher feedback also has effects on children's perception of language and which type of feedback is most effective for student's writing. Theories surrounding metalinguistic awareness were identified as a significant factor in any language learning classroom, and therefore the paramount requirement is that teachers are knowledgeable about language as it relates to code switching. It is important to note that teachers' beliefs, as well as practices, play a pivotal role in bilingual children's development in the TL.

In conclusion, this literature review has broadened my knowledge on various aspects of bilingualism and the wide body of research which exists on code switching and other aspects of second language acquisition. Code switching is a phenomenon that will support the continued existence of language varieties. As educators, we should, therefore, use this knowledge positively and accommodate this in our perspectives and pedagogical approaches.

The following chapter provides a description of the methodology and procedures that have been utilised to provide answers to the research questions that guide this thesis.

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

My key purpose in undertaking this research is to investigate teachers' and students' attitudes, and the practices associated with beliefs about code switching between Kwéyòl and English in Grade 5 students' written texts and to describe the nature of that code switching. In addition, the research sets out to capture students' awareness of code switching. In this chapter I provide a description of the methodology which was used for this study. The methods of data generation and analysis in this study draw on a variety of theoretical perspectives. The mixed methods approach was employed in this study as it provided answers to the following research questions being investigated:

1) What are selected primary school teachers' attitudes about students' use of cross language variety switching in their written texts?

2) What are the responses of teachers to students' written texts which reflect code switching?

3) a) What are students' explanations for code switching in their texts?
   b) Can students identify code switching in their written texts?
   c) How do students' respond to feed back about code switching in their writing?

In order to incorporate the participants' beliefs, attitudes, actions and thoughts as an important part of this investigation on code switching in students' written texts, the data corpus included questionnaires, audio recordings of teachers providing feedback to students on their written scripts, and audio recordings of interviews with teachers and students. Additionally, students' work samples also formed part of the data set.

5.2 Research method

As mentioned above, a mixed methods approach was used for the data analysis. Mixed methods is defined as the, "class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). A mixed methods approach in educational research is becoming

increasingly prevalent because of the insights that can be gained from the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Creswell and Plano-Clarke (2007) concur that "mixed methods research provides more comprehensive evidence for studying a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative research alone" (p. 9). Researchers who use a mixed methods approach in their inquiry may be perceived as being more open to the "diverse ways of thinking, knowing and valuing into their studies toward better understandings of the phenomena of interest" (Greene & Caracelli, 2003, p. 93). Further, there have been claims that the mixing of methods in a single study assists in clarifying several aspects of the phenomenon being investigated and provides, "a more holistic understanding of it, and resulting in better informed education policies" (Giannakaki, 2005, p. 323).

The following sections will address the data collection methods, and the data collection procedures: triangulation, validity and reliability and ethical considerations. Following this will be a description of the population and samples and lastly the procedures for data analysis used in this research will be described.

Four methods of data generation were used. They are:
1. Questionnaires;
2. Interviews: Semi-structured and focus group interviews;
3. Recording forms of feedback: Teacher oral feedback; and
4. Feedback on students' writing sample: Analysis of scripts.

Questionnaires were used to elicit information about teachers' attitudes and practices associated with students' code switching in written texts in their classrooms. Teacher attitudes may be a barrier to the way students would like to express themselves in their written text and if students continue to receive negative feedback about their work, then they will perceive Kwéyòl or code switching as unacceptable. Rajah-Carrim (2007) asserts, "People's attitudes towards their own mother tongues can therefore function as barriers against the use of these languages in formal domains" (p. 56). The questionnaires also provided useful data on their views about the use of Kwéyòl in the classroom.

The use of a semi-structured interview with the three Grade 5 teacher participants was valuable in obtaining further information on teachers' attitudes, knowledge, personal practices and processes in regard to code switching in the classroom. Teachers also provided me with additional information as to their views on the use of Kwéyòl in the classroom and the importance of the use of the Language Arts curriculum in their teaching. It was important to use focus group interviews with the students, as I believe they were valuable in collecting information from the students about their writing. Students felt comfortable and at most times were forthcoming with their responses when the discussions arose about their writing practices.

Other forms of feedback were included in order to obtain data on teachers' areas of focus during exchanges with students and also how students' respond to the teacher feedback. I also analysed the students' writing and their errors.

5.3. The questionnaire

Questionnaires are an inexpensive way to gather data from a potentially large number of respondents. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) explain further that the questionnaire is a very useful instrument for the collection of information, and can be administered in the absence of the researcher. In addition, the questionnaire was designed because it is considered a useful tool in measuring attitudes and other information from research participants. Further, the questionnaire may be easier to analyse than other methods of data collection because of the ease of the data analysis, especially for closed questions and rating scales. Although, the analysis of questionnaires is mostly qualitative in nature, I have used qualitative in conjunction with quantitative data to analyse my findings (See Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaire). The questions in Section A were demographic in nature and included questions based on gender, age, years of experience and qualifications. These questions were purposely designed because many studies indicate that teacher attitudes towards educational programmes and policies vary, taking into account their length of service, where novice teachers display a more positive attitude than their expert counterparts (Farkas & Johnson, 2003). It has also been stated that teachers who are highly qualified and have been exposed to a variety of training programmes, vary in their attitudes towards new educational programmes and pedagogical approaches and therefore are more positive in comparison to their

less qualified peers (Giannakaki, 2005). These seemingly contradictory findings are important in considering what factors affect either positive or negative attitudes towards code switching in students' texts.

The response categories in Section B of the questionnaire were designed using a Likert-type scale which consisted of a series of declarative statements. In a Likert-type scale, participants are asked to indicate whether they agree or disagree with each statement. Commonly, five options are provided: "strongly agree," "agree," "undecided," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." Research has generally confirmed that the Likert-type attitude scales are relatively reliable and valid instruments for the measurement of attitudes. Each statement on the Likert Scale was written so that the participant ranked statements by selecting an option that best described their attitude to the statement. All the statements on the Likert scale were constructed by the researcher and were developed based on the research questions:

1. What are selected primary school teachers' attitudes about students' use of cross language variety and cross language code switching in their written texts?

2. What are the responses of teachers to students' written texts which reflect code switching?

The statements in the questionnaire in Sections B and C were also designed to provide information regarding teachers' attitudes, beliefs and perceptions about code switching and were operationalized in five areas: attitude, process, personal practice, personal knowledge and curriculum. These statements also provide the researcher with information on whether teachers hold a negative or positive attitude towards code switching; and with an indication of teachers' reported behavior in terms of their response to students' written texts. However, what is most important and fundamental to this research is the teachers' attitudes about the use of Kwéyòl and code switching. It was important to create statements on teacher beliefs as this would provide insights about whether teachers hold positive or negative views of code switching and whether their beliefs have an effect on using student code switching effectively to teach Standard English. Beliefs are essential in everyday activities that deal with behaviour and learning. This is supported by Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005) who explain that research on learner beliefs about the acquisition of language provides valuable insights and

information on which beliefs are fundamental to language learning. A thematic analysis approach was undertaken in order to categorize the questionnaire items. The data were specifically collected for this study, coded and developed into themes. This was done inductively and the themes were useful in addressing how the data related to each other. Further, the development of themes provided me with "an accessible and theoretical approach to analyzing" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 77) the qualitative data in this study and also assisted me in the interpretation of different aspects of the research. Table 1 below presents a description of the categorization of the areas of focus of the questionnaire items.

Table 1

Five main areas of focus in teacher questionnaire

Areas of focus	Item Number	Number of items	Sample item
Attitude	1,7,11,16 Section C:1	5	Code switching impacts negatively on students' acquisition of Standard English.
Process	2,8,10 Section C:2	4	I believe code switching can be used positively to teach Standard English.
Personal practice	4,9,12,13,17,18 Section B:3	7	I only code switch to maintain order in my class room.
Personal Knowledge	6,14,15 Section C: 4,5	5	I want to learn more about code switching so that I can assist my students more effectively.
Curriculum	3,5 Section C: 6	3	Code switching is seen more in students' Language Arts writing than in other subjects.

As a result of the themes which arose from the questionnaire, there were five main areas of focus. The corresponding item numbers and the number of items under each area of focus or theme are presented in the second and third columns in the table above. Also, there is an example of a sample item which is analogous to the area of focus.

Another method of data collection used was interviews. Interviews as part of a research process, serve a specific purpose. In research, the interviewer can

pursue in depth information around the topic in order to gain the meaning of the participants' utterances. In the following section, I will discuss the rationale for the use of the interview as a method of data generation for this study.

5.4 Interviews

The interview questions are constructed and posed by the researcher based on the research questions in order to generate knowledge on various social phenomena. Therefore, the researcher "paints a picture potentially facilitating the voice of the research participant to be heard, for others to reflect on" (Bishop, 1997, p. 30). As clearly defined by Enosh, Ben-Ari and Buchbinder (2008) an interview is:

> An interpersonal encounter; a conversation with a purpose; a guided exchange that aims to understand the perspectives, interpretations, and meanings that interviewees attribute to specific issues: and an encounter in which both parties contribute to the construction of the outcome. (p. 450)

Further, an interview seems to be most appropriate when the researcher wants to gather "truly qualitative data" (Mertler, 2009, p. 10). I thought it was suitable to use an interview as one my data collection methods as it would assist me in obtaining detailed information about both teachers' and students' attitudes and beliefs around the topic of code switching in students' written texts. Secondly, the interview provided informative data that enriched my understanding of educational processes (Desimone & Le Foch, 2004). I used a face-to-face semi-structured interview with teachers and a focus group interview with students.

In the next section, I will provide an explanation for using semi-structured interviews during this study.

5.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interview is regarded as an interview that offers the interviewer access to people's ideas, their thoughts and also their memories in their own words. According to Bishop (1997) "this type of interview offers the opportunity to develop a reciprocal, dialogic relationship based on mutual trust, openness and engagement, in which self-disclosure, personal investment and

equality is promoted" (pp. 32-33). In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer may have some pre-set questions and may also ask some questions spontaneously. The use of open-ended questions in a semi-structured interview enhances the interaction between the researcher and participant and provides opportunities for clarification and the discussion of anything that is not clearly understood between the two parties. Also, depending on the responses by each interviewee, open-ended questions can be used in order to obtain additional information from participants. The use of open ended and closed questions enabled me to generate many types of information and the data generated will be presented in a variety different ways.

The semi-structured interview used during the data gathering for this research comprised eleven questions (See Appendix B). The questions were designed to elicit more information about teachers' beliefs, attitudes and perceptions regarding the use of code switching in students' writing.

Bialystok (2001) explains that research has shown that, overall, the children who use two languages have more advanced metalinguistic skills than their peers. Therefore, question 6, "Do you think it is an advantage to students when they know two languages?" was designed to discover whether teachers view students' code switching is a sign of giftedness. Hughes et al, (2006) acknowledge that for children to be able to code switch they must possess a high level of linguistic competence. Further, Cook's (1991; 1995; 1996) theory of multi-competence emphasises that a bilingual is one who is a competent speaker and listener which cannot be compared to a monolingual competence in either language. The questions in the semi-structured interview were divided into five main categories which were similar with the areas of focus identified in the teachers' questionnaire (Refer to Table 1 above).

This leads to question 7 which focused on how teachers dealt with students who continuously code switch in their written texts. Walqui (2006) claims that, "it is possible to for second language learners to develop deep disciplinary knowledge and engage in challenging academic activities if teachers know how to support them pedagogically to achieve their potential" (p. 159). This question provided information about the number ways that teachers assist students in developing Standard English.

Many teachers feel pressured by the national curriculum to teach the required standard. Cook (2002) asserts that many teachers come into contact with language teaching in various dimensions. This would include syllabuses and policies that dictate what should be taught, the approaches and methodologies. Therefore, it was important to discover whether the teachers felt compelled to abide by the programmes dictated by the Ministry of Education, hence Q9 asked: "Do you feel pressured by the English National Curriculum to focus on teaching students Standard English?"

Semi-structured interviews were used with three Grade 5 teachers, representative of each of the three schools in the sample. Secondly, semi-structured questions were also used in student focus group interviews (See Appendix C). Semi-structured questions during the interview were more valuable as they enabled me to focus on pre-determined set of questions and to probe and follow up on the individual responses from each student. This is further discussed in the description of the focus group interview.

5.4.2 Focus group interview.

Focus group interviews are useful in situations for collecting information about a specific topic or area of concern. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) "the [focus] group interview can generate a wider range of responses than individual responses" (p. 373). This is because it should be a fairly free flowing conversation based on a particular topic. Focus groups are used frequently to assess preferences, attitudes and also needs of participants. Ideally, it has been acknowledged that focus groups should consist of no more than six participants and no less than four (Creswell, 2002).

Furthermore, focus group interviews are also appropriate when dealing with children, and as Best and Kahn (as cited in Cohen et al., 2007) note that it may be the only realistic strategy for obtaining children's responses. It is important that the researcher who has child participants as part of the interview plans carefully and establishes an atmosphere of trust.

During interviews with children, the group size must be taken into consideration in order to avoid children losing focus. Interviews using face-to-face interaction assist "in the establishment of rapport and a higher quality of motivation among respondents" (Burns, 2000, p. 583). This makes the interview process comfortable and assists in establishing a level of trust and confidentiality between the interviewer and participants. Thus the interviewee will be more forthcoming with the information. Moreover, Wilkinson (1998) asserts that the data gathered by this method is interactive and qualitative, therefore its usefulness will assist in assessing students' attitudes and beliefs about code switching in their written texts.

The focus group for this study consisted of three different groups of twelve students. However, I interviewed three to four students at a time, where they responded to questions about their attitude to the use of code switching and the use of Kwéyòl in their writing. These questions are important to this present study as the focus group interview data will be used in comparison to the teachers' attitudes to the use of code switching in their students texts, the feedback that the students received from their teachers and also the analysis of the students' writing scripts. The focus group interviews with the students and the interviews with the teachers were audio taped.

5.5 Limitations of a questionnaire

Although the use of rating scales in questionnaires are very useful during research there are also limitations which the researcher needs to be mindful of. One limitation is that there is no way to interpret whether the respondents are responding truthfully to the statements and that they are not falsifying their responses. Secondly, when absolute statements are used in the rating scales, some respondents may provide contradictory responses on their knowledge towards the subject which is under investigation. Furthermore, Cohen et al, (2007) explain that there is no way of knowing whether the respondent wished to add further comments or explanations on the subject or issue being investigated. This therefore hinders the participants from providing the researcher with a clearer picture on the issue being investigated.

The questionnaire used during this research did not provide the respondents with any additional categories where they could have included further information on

their attitudes, beliefs and practices in the classroom. I acknowledge that the rating scale used in the questionnaire may have been limited in its usefulness to this research because of the fixity of the given choices, rather than providing teachers with an opportunity to provide their own responses. Despite the limitations which exist within a questionnaire which contains Likert rating scales, the data obtained from the questionnaire for this research were easily coded and proved to be relevant in providing answers to the research questions.

5.6 Limitations of interviews

One of the main disadvantages of interviews is that they are costly and time consuming. Interviewers may have to travel long distances in order to gain access to the participants and at times may have to re-schedule the interview because of the unavailability of the participants. I encountered this situation and had to re-schedule a few times, firstly because the dates for the interviews conflicted with activities being held at the schools to commemorate St. Lucia's 31st anniversary of independence and secondly, schools were preparing for their annual sports. Another issue which arose was that teachers required more time to review students' writing scripts. On one occasion, the interview was scheduled and confirmed for a particular date and time. Upon my arrival at the school the teacher had not reviewed the students' writing and complained that she was not ready to be interviewed.

This is reiterated by Grinnell and Unrau (2008) when they comment that problems with time are further aggravated when participants are difficult to reach, fail to maintain appointments and do not complete the interview because of previous commitments and other external distractions.

It is also important to note that during focus group interviews the interviewer may face some challenges. One major short coming of the focus group interview is the snow ball effect. Researchers claim that one or two participants can potentially influence the responses of the other participants and as a result this can have a negative effect on the outcome of responses or information provided by the group (Breakwell, 2006; Wimmer & Dominick 1997; Fontana & Frey, 2005).

Another shortcoming of a focus group interview is that it can be very difficult to transcribe the data because of the interaction among participants, making it a

complicated task to differentiate and correctly identify which participant is responsible for providing certain information while transcribing the data (Tilley, 2003). Furthermore, the use of focus group interviews can be time-consuming, firstly in getting the participants and organising a suitable time that would be convenient to all the participants and secondly, the transcription and analysis of the data because of the large volume of data that have been produced.

Despite, the shortcomings of the interview method, I decided that it would be one of the most suitable methods of data collection for this study. It would enable me to collect a large amount of qualitative data and provide me with more in depth information pertaining to my research questions.

5.7 Other forms of data about feedback and writing

Information about feedback and writing were useful in providing additional data for this study. Therefore, the analysis of students' writing and teacher feedback to students played a significant role in obtaining data based on the research questions directing this study.

5.7.1 Students' writing: Analysis of scripts.

To facilitate my analysis of the students' writing, the class teachers gave students a general topic from which they wrote. It must be noted that teachers discussed the topics thoroughly before students engaged in their writing activities. Each teacher from the individual schools - RPI, IMR and MIC - provided the students with a topic of their choice based on the type of writing being done; narrative. I created my own error analysis chart in order to extract patterns across the students' writing and to assist me in identifying common errors.

I collected and analysed the samples of all the students' writing in the class. The analysis of students' scripts was made using an error analysis sheet which I created to aid me in identifying students' errors. The aim of the analysis on the students' scripts was to ensure that students received appropriate feedback from their teachers. However, before receiving feedback, teachers also had an opportunity to analyse the students' scripts. The teacher and I then compared our findings based on the students' errors to ensure that we were in agreement. However, for the purpose of the focus group interview, only a sample of 12 was

selected and these scripts were used for final analysis. Based on the analysis of the students' scripts by the researcher and the respective classroom teachers, teacher feedback (written and oral) was provided to all students.

5.7.2 Teacher feedback.

The aim of the teachers' feedback to the students based on their story writing was significant to this investigation as it provided further details as to the aspects of students' writing that are prioritized by the teachers. Further, the data collected from the teacher feedback provided additional insight into the teachers' attitudes to students' writing and answered the second research question: What are the responses of teachers to students' written texts which reflect code switching?

Moreover, I was able to obtain additional information about the pedagogical practices of teachers when responding to students' writing. Although this was not the focus of this study, the information provided on pedagogical practices does play a significant role as teachers' areas of focus when providing feedback to students' on their writing was examined. Hence, this determined whether teachers were providing judgements on the students' content (organization and details) or the language structure (grammar and mechanics). Also, the use of teacher feedback demonstrated how teacher practices can have an impact on students' academic performance and whether students would respond to feedback and put it into practice. Research focusing on how students' respond to teacher feedback on their compositions has identified that various forms of feedback are necessary in order for students' write effectively (Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; McCurdy, 1992). Therefore, students' responses to teacher feedback also answered the following question: How do students' respond to feedback about code switching in their written texts?

Teachers spent time giving both oral and written feedback to students on their first drafts. Ferris (1995) explains "the amount of time and effort teachers spend in providing written and/or oral feedback to their students suggests that the students themselves feel that such a response is a critical part of their job as writing instructors" (p. 34). Further, research in L1 and L2 suggests that it is more effective when students receive feedback on their first drafts, rather than their final drafts (Ashwell, 2000).

Nonetheless there are opposing views, and some researchers are of the opinion that feedback should be given near the editing stage of writing. I believe that feedback should not be confined to the final stage of writing, especially when students' writing reflects areas of code switching and receiving early feedback might ensure that students' later drafts show an improvement from the first. It is important that the feedback the students' receive must be meaningful to them so that they are able to respond positively.

All teacher feedback in this study was audio taped. Teacher feedback was provided as a whole class, individually and also in small groups. Teachers were not restricted in the way they provided oral feedback. I urged them to conduct it in the manner that they were comfortable with.

5.8 Data collection procedures

The semi-structured interviews were conducted at each of the three schools participating in this study. These interviews were conducted at a time convenient to the teachers in their classrooms. All three teachers willingly used part of their lunch hour period to have the interview conducted. The focus group interviews with the students were conducted during the students' Language Arts lessons. Teachers identified the date and the time for the focus group interviews and thought it would be most convenient during the Language Arts periods. Two focus group interviews were conducted in the empty classrooms, and one was conducted on the verandah away from the classroom so as to minimize the noise and the distractions from the other students since there were no empty classrooms available.

The students' written work samples were first analysed by the researcher and then taken to the respective teachers for further analysis. The student errors were highlighted and teacher provided feedback to the students on their errors.

Teacher feedback to students was done as a whole class activity at one school in comparison with the other two schools where teachers provided individual feedback to the students. However, for research purposes and because of the time constraint, the teachers who provided individual feedback to the students selected a small number of students.

The following table provides an overview of the data collection procedures. I followed the same procedures of data collection for each of the three schools in the sample and therefore spent at least 10 to 12 days at each school. It must be noted however, the days were alternated in order to accommodate teachers and students and minimize interruptions.

Table 2

Procedure of data collection

Day	Activities
1	Administration of teacher questionnaires. Collection of students' writing samples.
2	Analysis of students' writing.
3	Return of students' writing samples to teacher for further feedback and analysis.
4	Selection of students to be part of focus group interview.
5,6	Audio taping of feedback to students.
7,8	Semi-structured interview with teachers.
9,10	Focus group interview with students.
11	Collection of teacher questionnaire.
12	Forwarding of transcribed data for review by teacher interviewees.

It must be noted that the interviews with all participants were transcribed while out in the research field, in order to afford all participants an opportunity to comment or withdraw any statements they made.

5.9 Research quality

Quality in educational research must be maintained throughout the research process, irrespective of the paradigm being used. Consequently, I considered the following in order to maintain the quality of this study: triangulation, validity and reliability, trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

5.9.1 Triangulation.

Data triangulation has been identified as an approach for improving the validity and reliability of the research, especially in mixed methods. The process of using

and relating multiple sources of data to establish trustworthiness or verification of consistency (Mertler, 2009) is an effective strategy in ensuring that data is valid and reliable. According to Eisenhart (2006) "the validity of any research study depends on the trustworthiness of the representations that depict it…" (p. 568). Placing reliance on one method of data collection may bias the research or provide a different picture to the researcher of the phenomenon under investigation.

The data in this study were gathered through focus group interviews with students, teacher interviews, questionnaires, teacher feedback to students and analysis of student scripts. These methods of data gathering were useful in triangulating the data. Cohen, et al. (2007) state that the more that there is a disparity between the methods, the greater the researcher's confidence. The triangulation method assists in checking the consistency of the findings which have been generated by different data gathering methods and explores the consistency of different data sources within the same method. Hence, the methods of data gathering could be used separately to provide the necessary answers to the research questions which are critical to this study.

5.9.2 Validity and reliability.

According to Cohen et al. (2007, p. 133), "validity is an important key to effective research. If a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless". Validity is important in any research paradigm and should be addressed at all times as it is a prerequisite to maintaining quality in educational research. Furthermore "valid research is plausible, credible, trustworthy and, therefore defensible (Johnson & Christensen, 2000, p. 207). In positivist educational research, a test or other data gathering method is valid if it collects the data it purports to collect (Bell, 2009) and the analysis can confirm or refute the hypothesis. When children are being interviewed and the researcher disregards some of their answers and only acknowledges the information that he/she believes is appropriate, then the validity has been compromised. However, this study does not reflect positivism because all the participants' responses will be acknowledged so as to provide in depth understanding of teachers' and students' code switching practices in St. Lucian classrooms. Hence, this research relies on the mixed method paradigm to assist in its validity, although most educational researchers use qualitative

research to assess their findings because it addresses the validity of the research through honesty, depth and thick detailed description and the richness of the data (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2007). However, reliance on the mixed method provides the opportunity to accommodate more divergent views. Interpretive validity should also considered because the aim is to portray and shed light on the teachers' attitudes and practices associated with their beliefs on code switching in their students' writing.

Reliability defined by Bell (2005) is "the extent to which a test or procedure produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions" (p. 117). To achieve reliability the information received must be consistent, accurate, precise and dependable. Like validity, educational researchers can achieve reliability through member checking, establishing trustworthiness and most importantly continuous transcription of the data. It is noteworthy that some researchers believe that validity and reliability are intertwined. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that, "since there can be no validity without reliability, a demonstration of the former [validity] is sufficient to establish the latter [reliability;]" (p. 316). Therefore with regards to the researcher's ability and skill in any qualitative research, reliability is considered as being a consequence of the validity in a study. Another important question that the researcher must answer pertaining to the data quality is whether the research is credible and trustworthy. The research must, therefore, be unbiased and free of error for it to be considered valid, furthermore, this will also contribute to its overall trustworthiness.

5.9.3 Trustworthiness.

Trustworthiness, as explained by Lincoln and Guba (1985), involves whether the researcher can convince his/her audiences that the findings of the inquiry are valuable and worth paying attention to. It also involves what arguments can be discussed and questions asked that would be persuasive on the issues being addressed (p. 290). The trustworthiness of qualitative data is essentially concerned with the accuracy, credibility and dependability. Trochim (as cited in Mertler, 2009) posits that "credibility involves establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspectives for the participant. Whereas, dependability emphasises the need for the researcher to account for the ever-changing context within which research occurs" (p. 115).

Trustworthiness cannot be overlooked whether qualitative or quantitative methods are used to justify the results of the research study. If the research evidence is not trustworthy, then the findings based on them will be suspect (Eisenhart, 2006, p. 567).

5.9.4 Ethical considerations.

Before going out into the field, the researcher must be guided by ethical principles and successfully meet the requirements of the educational institution's ethical committee. The University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee emphasises the importance of ethical guidelines when educational researchers embark on investigating problems. The purpose of their regulations is "to facilitate ethical conduct which respects the rights of people, communities, companies, trusts, and other organisations" (p. 1). It was, therefore, necessary to comply with the regulations articulated by The University of Waikato, Ethical Conduct in Human Research and Related Activities Regulations. Therefore, before going out into the research field, I sought approval from the University of Waikato Ethics Committee. After my research proposal was approved, I made further arrangements to go out in the research field.

Most importantly, whenever, people are involved in research, the researcher must apply ethical principles such as the notion of respect between the researcher and participant. Hemmings (2006) explains:

> Education researchers are to respect the 'rights, privacy, dignity and sensitivities of their research populations and also the integrity of the institutions which research occurs,' and protect human subjects by maintaining confidentiality, obtaining informed consent and adhering to IRB policies and procedures. (p. 12)

This can be achieved by obtaining informed consent, respecting privacy and maintaining confidentiality of the participants. In protecting the participants, informed consent is seen as encompassing some of the most significant issues in ethical research. As a result, the researcher must ensure that the participants are competent, fully informed and comprehend the nature of the research and that their participation is voluntary. If this is not ensured, as researchers we will do immeasurable damage to people's lives (Weis, 1992, p. 47), the data will be useless, and the quality of the research will be compromised and will be of no

significance to the research communities. Therefore, a number of ethical considerations were taken into account before going out into the research field. They included informed consent and confidentiality, access to the participants and research venues and recruiting procedures.

During my school visits and discussion with the teachers, one of my main objectives was to further discuss the objectives of my research and establish whether they wanted to be part of the study. I then proceeded to provide the teacher participants with the information sheet outlining the nature of the study, along with the consent forms. After the teacher participants acknowledged they had fully understood the nature of the study, I handed them the consent forms, which they read carefully before signing. This was done because informed consent can only be given after the participants are given all the information and facts associated with the research. A copy of the teacher invitation letter and consent form can be found in Appendix D.

I ensured that the four elements of informed consent identified by Diener and Crandall (cited in Cohen et al., 2007) were addressed: competence, voluntarism, full information, and comprehension. At this stage, the teacher participants were informed through various debriefing procedures before the interviews were conducted, and during this discussion we were able to identify suitable times where I would be conducting my study. This was done in order to minimize teaching/learning disruptions in the classroom. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions or clarify any other issue regarding the nature of the study. It was also necessary to inform the participants that they could withdraw their participation at any time during the data collection process.

Throughout the years many, researchers have had difficulty obtaining informed consent from children. Hughes and Helling (1991) suggest "the most common solution has been to secure proxy consent from the parent(s) or guardian(s) of children they wish to study" (p. 226). Therefore, students were given consent forms for their parents. From all three schools there was an overwhelming response as parents demonstrated their willingness to allow their children to participate in this study by signing the consent forms, thereby granting me the permission to look at their children's writing samples and also interview them (See Appendix E for parents letter and consent forms). All students who were part of the interview also read and signed their own consent forms, by circling a

face which would indicate how they felt being a participant in this study (See Appendix F).

It is important that the researcher ensures that he or she has been granted permission by the relevant authorities under which the proposed research will be conducted. I corresponded with the principals and indicated my intent to conduct research at their schools (See Appendix G for Principals' letter). After receiving positive feedback from them and a willingness to accommodate me at their schools, I proceeded to seek the University of Waikato's Ethical Committee approval for my proposed research.

It is noteworthy that gaining access should not be considered as one of the easiest activities during research. Van Maanen and Kolb (1985) make the claim that gaining access "involves some combination of strategic planning, hard work, and dumb luck" (p. 11). Furthermore, in order to gain access the researcher must obtain the permission and full acknowledgment of the participants before access can be granted (Cohen et al., 2007). In order to access the research sites and the participants I first sought permission from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education through a letter, and also applied to the Ministry of Education's research community by completing the recommended form (see Appendices H and I respectively). I also sought formal approval from the District Education Officers responsible for each of the participating schools (See Appendix J) before seeking approval from the principals. I received written approval from the Permanent Secretary and the District Education Officers and verbal responses from the principals of each school. Further, the teachers were informed by the principals about my study and teachers were also furnished with cover letters which accompanied the questionnaire. Since two of the schools, RPI and IMR, each had only one class of Grade 5, the individual teachers willingly agreed to be part of this study. However, at MIC, the principal was the one who played a critical role in the selection process of the teacher participant.

5.10 The Sample

A random selection strategy was used in selecting the three participating schools in this study. However, the Grade 5 teachers were nominated by the principals while the student participants were randomly selected. I placed students' names

(those who had consented), into a bag and randomly selected twelve students to participate in the student interview.

5.10.1 Site selection.

School RPI is situated in a rural community and has a roll of 160 children, (82 boys, 78 girls), a principal and nine teachers: this includes a Special Education teacher and a Physical Education teacher. There is one class of each grade ranging from K-Grade 6. Teachers' teaching experience ranges from ten to forty years of service, with all teachers possessing a primary school teaching diploma or certificate, or other Primary school qualification and in addition one teacher also holds a Primary degree in education (B.Ed.).

School IMR is also situated in a rural community and was established in 1935. The institution has a staff of nine, including the principal. The school has a roll of 187 children; 84 boys and 103 girls. Also, there is one class in each grade level with the lowest grade being Kindergarten and the highest Grade 6. Teachers' experience at teaching at a primary level ranges from one year to thirty years. Whereas most teachers have been teaching at this school for most of their teaching career, one teacher has only taught at this school for four months. This teacher, unlike her colleagues, has not had training at the island's sole institution for teacher training, Sir Arthur Lewis Community College; Division of Teacher Education and Educational Administration, and hence does not possess a teaching diploma, certificate or other primary school qualification.

The third school in the sample, MIC, located in a suburban community, has a staff of thirteen teachers. The school is the largest in the sample, because there are 261 children and like RPI and IMR, classes range from Kindergarten to Grade 6, however there is more than one class of each grade. Most teachers from IMR have taught for many years with the minimum being three years and a maximum being thirty four years. Further, from all indications most teachers have also been teaching at the institution for most, if not all, of their teaching years. It is also significant to note that teachers hold a wide range of qualifications in addition to their teaching diploma or certificate.

5.10.2 Participants

As previously mentioned, purposive sampling was utilised in the selection of teacher participants. Purposive sampling falls under the category of non probability sampling. As a sampling strategy mainly associated with qualitative research, this type of sampling is where researchers select the participants based on their judgments or various characteristics being sought (Cohen et al., 2007), therefore the participants are handpicked. In this study, a type of purposive sampling was used to select one teacher participant: reputational case sampling. As indicated earlier, the teacher from MIC was selected by the principal. In reputational case sampling, participants are selected based on the knowledge of a key informant because the researchers do not have the necessary information regarding the participants, and has to depend on the opinions of others (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). In this study, the key informant who allowed me to access the three Grade 5 teachers was the principal. All the Grade 5 teacher participants are females. The student participants were also randomly selected after an analysis of their written scripts. The group of 12 students from each school was heterogeneous.

The table below provides a brief description of the three teacher participants. They have been assigned pseudonyms for the purpose of maintaining their confidentiality, hence they will be referred to as Tessa, Sally and Betty. The table also indicates that each teacher's teaching career spans a period of 15 to 30 years and their qualifications vary, with only one teacher having a Bachelor's degree, which was in testing, measurement and evaluation. The interviews were conducted separately at the three different schools in the sample.

Table 3

Teaching experiences and qualifications of the teacher interviewees

Teachers	School	Experience (years)	Qualifications
Tessa	RPI	15	Teaching certificate in primary education; B.Ed in testing and measurement evaluation.
Betty	MIC	16	Teaching certificate in primary education.
Sally	IMR	30	Teaching certificate in primary education.

All participants in this study generated information which was critical in answering the research questions. The findings were transcribed, coded and analysed and further inform the research community as to teachers' attitudes and practices associated with the beliefs about code switching.

5.11 Data analysis

Data for this study was obtained through semi-structured interviews with teachers, focus group interviews with students, teacher questionnaire, teacher feedback to students and analysis of students' writing. The analysis of the findings is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods, thereby enhancing the quality of the findings.

The findings from the teacher questionnaires from all three schools were combined, coded and categorized into five main areas. This was also done with the data from the teachers' semi-structured interview were the findings were also analysed under common themes from the questions of the semi-structured interviews. It is noteworthy that there were common themes emerging from the teacher interviews and the questionnaires.

For the focus group interview with students, I also identified the common themes which were based on the questions. Unlike the teacher interviews which were combined and analysed collectively, the first section of the students' focus group interview was analysed by individual schools. I chose to analyse Section B of the students' focus group interviews by collapsing the data. This was done because of the sample size and also the data retrieved provided a greater insight into

students' attitudes about the use of Kwéyòl in their writing. After transcribing the audio recordings of teacher feedback, the teacher exchanges with students were coded and the total number of each teacher's exchanges, along with their areas of focus while providing feedback to students, was tabulated. There was a comparative analysis of the findings from the teachers' feedback with students.

The use of themes to analyse the findings which surfaced from the sources of the data collection was essential and revealed inter-connectedness across the findings and these will be presented under various headings in the following chapter.

5.12 Conclusion

In sum, the mixed method approach was most suitable in answering the research questions for this study. Further, the use of triangulation was appropriate as it enabled me to critically analyse, provide a descriptive analysis and make comparisons across data collected from the interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, students' writing, and teacher feedback. Additionally, maintaining validity and reliability was foremost, as this determined the trustworthiness of this study. Most importantly, all guidelines regarding Ethical considerations involving human participants by the University of Waikato's ethical regulations (2009) were adhered to. All participants gave informed consent to be part of this research, and their rights and privacy were respected. The procedures used in the data analysis were essential in allowing me to meticulously examine the data in order to provide answers to the research questions. The following chapter provides an analysis of the findings obtained from the methods for the data collection for this research.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings derived from the different methods of data collection used for the study. The major aim of this research was to examine teachers' attitudes and practices associated with code switching in students' written texts. Secondly, this research aimed to identify students' and teachers' perceptions of the impact of Kwéyòl-influenced errors in students' writing. Also, it is important to evaluate the impact of teacher's feedback on students' written texts and students' responses to feedback from teachers. This was also done. The final aim of this research was to investigate students' attitudes towards and explanations for the use of Kwéyòl in their writing.

Given the aims of this research, both teachers' and students' views played a pivotal role in the analysis of the data. Data obtained from the interviews, questionnaire and students' writing were categorized into themes. This provided a rich source of information and comprehensive knowledge of teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding code switching in their students' writing, and also the students' responses to code switching which is reflected in their writing.

The findings in this chapter provide important data in light of official policy which provides guidelines to teachers advising them to assist students, who are described as disadvantaged because of their lack of knowledge of Standard English.

The data from the study are presented below and categorized according to the method of data generation and placed under different themes. An analysis of the teachers' interview provided a rich source of data on teachers' personal knowledge, their attitudes, practices and their views on the Language Arts curriculum. Feedback from the questionnaire also provided additional data on teacher knowledge and practices. Finally, the data from the students' focus groups and their written scripts provided data about their conceptions and beliefs about the use of Kwéyòl in their writing.

6.2 Teachers' interview

The procedure for analyzing the teachers' interview was first transcribing the audio taped interview. Transcribed recordings were reviewed by me and cross checked by a fellow researcher from another faculty, who is aware of the ethical issues in research. Cross checking of the teachers' and students' interview responses was done especially with the parts of the data which required intensive analysis. The analysis of the interview responses was written precisely as spoken by the participants. This was done to ensure the validity of the data. Kvale (1996) points out the use of verbatim descriptions is relevant, especially in linguistic analysis, as this helps the reader gain meaningful insights into participants' utterances.

6.3 Feedback from teacher questionnaires

Teacher questionnaires were distributed to all eight teachers from RPI. From the eight questionnaires which were distributed, all were returned to me on schedule. From School IMR, seven questionnaires were distributed, however, only six were returned to me. Despite several attempts to have the missing questionnaire returned, my efforts proved futile. Hence, only six teacher questionnaires from IMR could be used for analysis. Although more questionnaires were distributed to MIC (a total of thirteen), upon collection, only seven questionnaires were returned, because some teachers were reluctant to complete them. Hence, the analysis of the data includes seven questionnaires from MIC. Therefore, a total of twenty one questionnaires from the three schools were analysed.

A number of statements relating to attitudes and beliefs about code switching, formed part of the teachers' two-part questionnaire. In Section B the teachers responded to prompts using a 5 point Likert rating scale, whereas in Section C, a 4 point scale was used by respondents to indicate their responses to questions (See Table 1 in Chapter 5). The responses to the statements and questions concerned five main areas of focus: attitude, process, personal practice, personal knowledge, and curriculum.

1. Attitude: Teachers' approaches, points of view and behaviour towards code switching in their students' writing.

2. Process: The manner or the steps taken by teachers to deal with code switching in students' writing.

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3. Personal practice: The approaches that are incorporated in teachers' classroom practice to assist students who are encountering any form of difficulty.

4. Personal knowledge: Teachers' linguistic awareness of code switching and their ability to identify the phenomenon in students' writing.

5. Curriculum: Teachers' feelings towards the current Language Arts curriculum and whether it plays an instrumental role on the teaching/learning process of Language Arts.

The statements within these above areas of focus provided a response to the research questions:

1. What are selected primary school teachers' attitudes about students' use of cross language variety and cross language code switching in their written texts?

2. What are the responses of teachers to students' written texts which reflect code switching?

The findings discussed in the following sections combine data for both the questionnaire and the interviews.

6.4 Teachers' personal knowledge and code switching

Having adequate information about teachers' personal knowledge on code switching was essential and this determined the structure of the questions during the semi-structured interviews.

6.4.1 Code switching: What it means to teachers.

For all three teacher interviewees, the term *code switching* was unfamiliar. However, they had some understanding based on the information which I provided during my initial discussion with them and also from the covering letters which accompanied the questionnaire. Sally defined code switching as the switching from one language to another. Tessa indicated that because of our discussion, she was now aware of the term and this made her more knowledgeable of the transitions from English to Kwéyòl. Tessa further explained that this awareness would make her pay closer attention to the structure of the students' writing and provide the necessary assistance to students.

Tessa's views also extended to the terms *interference* and *transfer* and she regarded code switching as being both. Further, her comments indicated that students' code switching practices in speaking and their use of spoken Kwéyòl had a negative effect on students' written and spoken language. When I questioned her on the reason for this assertion, her remarks were that the speaking of Kwéyòl and code switching hinders students' expression in English. She maintained that the students are required to acquire the standard variety. However, her final remarks contradicted what she initially expressed. Her comments were:

> Transfer in itself for me is not a very big thing. It is not much of an issue because here you have the students expressing themselves in the way they best know.

The teachers' knowledge of code switching and their views on the phenomenon prompted me to further inquire about their views on the influence of the L1 on students' writing.

6.4.2 Knowledge of the L1.

During the interview with the teachers, they expressed the view that knowledge of the L1 would definitely have an effect on the students' writing. Betty emphasised that although the L1 would influence the students' writing, it would also have a greater effect on the students' oral expression.

Sally commented further that is why students need to learn the "proper structures of both writing and speaking." She indicated that teachers must play their role in nurturing the students' language acquisition because some "students may not be as fortunate as their peers." Sally also expressed the view that teachers who are aware that the students have not acquired the "proper" structures because of the constant use of the L1, will have to do their utmost to assist students in developing better writing skills.

Additionally, Tessa shared similar views with Sally and discussed her view that a child who speaks Standard English demonstrates a higher quality of writing than a child who uses the L1. She pointed out that sometimes the students who

constantly communicate in the L1 may have the ideas; however, they are unable to express themselves fully in their writing (in English).

The teachers all explicitly stated that the knowledge of the L1 would definitely have an impact on students' writing and that it would be a negative impact rather than a positive one. Later results will indicate that this rather negative view is not represented in all the data, and teachers often hold quite contradictory views.

I proceeded to question the teachers on the effectiveness of code switching in their students' writing to find out whether their responses to this issue reflected the thoughts above.

6.4.3 Effectiveness of code switching in writing.

I questioned teachers to identify whether code switching would be effective in the students' writing and if so, in which type of text or genre. Tessa responded that code switching in the writing of a dialogue would be most effective. She stated, "It can be written in a substandard format".

Sally explained that she does not regard the mixing of two languages in a child's writing as code switching:

> I wouldn't call it code switching. I wouldn't call it code switching then. I would say that is adding interest to the child's writing in that the child has a character and the character spoke in this manner and the child simply has to indicate using quotation marks that is the language of the character. I would just leave it as that. I would not term it code switching then, as long as it's used properly I would not call it code switching.

She remarked that it is, "adding interest to the child's story". This reflects a positive orientation to the behavior but a negative one to the concept of code switching as she understood it. Her understanding of the term code switching was the detrimental switching from one language to another. Sally maintained that one of St. Lucia's famous writers has Kwéyòl in his work and this is not regarded as code switching. However, she regarded narratives and poetry as the genres that would lend themselves more to code switching and as a result make students' writing enjoyable to the reader.

All three teachers explained that code switching would be less effective in more formal writing (letters and descriptive writing), as it would defeat the purpose of the writing. This suggests a rather problematic distinction between formal writing and informal writing. Arguably, narratives can feature in letters, and descriptive writing can be a feature of narratives.

From the teachers' responses about the effectiveness of code switching in students' writing, it appears that code switching has its place in the students' writing but it is limited to narratives and dialogues where it is seen to add interest to the students' stories, thus making it more enjoyable for the reader.

6.4.4 What teachers know about the importance of being bilingual.

All three teacher interviewees acknowledged that knowing two languages is an advantage and provided me with a variety of reasons, some of which conflicted with the views of their colleagues. Betty also redirected the question to me to ask my opinion.

Tessa was in no doubt that it is important to learn two languages because of globalization. She also acknowledged that as early as pre-school years, children are taught French and Spanish at some St. Lucian early childhood institutions. However, these views of bilingualism did not extend to the use of Kwéyòl as the following discussion shows.

Tessa:	You see I think it has to do with how we as teachers and other persons have been ` educated about that.
Interviewer:	The Kwéyòl
Tessa:	Yes
Interviewer:	But look now you have Kwéyòl bibles, programs on the radio stations.
Tessa:	Yes but how effective, has it been filtered down into the population.
Interviewer:	No because we have a negative perception of it.

Tessa:	Well that too, but then what has been done and what is being done to help educate the people. It's one thing to speak it, but to write and to read it is something else.
Interviewer:	But the same way we can embrace other languages into our classrooms and get teachers to teach them we also have to embrace what is ours.
Tessa:	Well that is true, I quite agree but it's going to take a very long time.
Interviewer:	Well it shouldn't be because now children are being made to feel that when you speak Kwéyòl it is bad. So why the fuss about Jounen Kwéyòl[2]?
Tessa:	I don't think that speaking Kwéyòl is bad. Even when visitors come they marvel at the way the children speak, but the thing is as I was trying to say is that although Kwéyòl does not have its place yet in terms of books being written in Kwéyòl and people being able to read Kwéyòl sentences.

It can be seen in our discussion that Tessa had a somewhat guarded view of the values of Kwéyòl. She acknowledged that it should be used more, and maintained that there has not been an adequate amount of exposure to the Kwéyòl in order for it to have widespread acceptance.

In contrast, Sally commented that we should not be embracing the foreign languages into our classrooms if we think that our language (Kwéyòl) creates a barrier. She explained that it is not a problem knowing Kwéyòl and English. However, what is significant is teaching the students the correct structures. She made the point that if the French and Spanish language can be taught and learnt, so can Kwéyòl. Like Sally, Betty seemed positive. She observed:

> The children who really can speak Kwéyòl well and who have a good command of the English, it does not affect the English at all. That is what I have noticed.

Her observations are at variance with Tessa who mentioned previously that the students who come from homes where Kwéyòl is the main language spoken are

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[2] Jounen Kwéyòl also know in English as Creole Day, is celebrated in the month of October. The celebration highlights St.Lucia's creole heritage.

not very competent in English. Moreover, Tessa believed that this negatively impacts on the students' writing. Despite the varying views of the advantages of students being bilingual, it is noteworthy that all teachers conceded that it is an important asset to be bilingual. In the teachers' questionnaire, the two statements under the category of personal knowledge also provided insights into teachers' personal practice. The responses are given in Table 4 below. It is important to note that the teachers responded to the two statements in much the same way.

Table 4

Teachers' responses concerning their personal knowledge

	Frequency of teachers' responses (%)				
Items	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
I am aware of approaches that can be used to help students frequently code switch in their writing	1(5)	6 (29)	7 (33)	6 (29)	1 (5)
I am aware of the types of code switching practices and can identify them in the students' writing.	0 (0)	6 (29)	8 (38)	7 (33)	0 (0)

Note: SA=strongly agree; A=agree; U=undecided; D=disagree; SD=strongly disagree

A third of the teachers (33%) were undecided about approaches that could be used to help students who code switch and just under a third (29%) had either quite some knowledge in this area, or little knowledge or no knowledge in this area. Just over a third of the teachers (38%) were undecided about the code switching practices and whether they could identify them in the students' writing, just under a third (29%) had quite some knowledge in this area, and a third (33%) indicated that they had little or no knowledge in this area.

When questioned on the value of receiving professional learning using code switching effectively in Section B of the questionnaire, most teachers expressed the view that it is very important to receive training on how code switching can be used effectively in their classrooms. Furthermore, all the teachers when responding to a related question: "How important do you believe it is to cater to those students who continuously code switch in their written texts?" indicated that it was very important to cater to those students.

6.5 Teacher attitudes and code switching practices

This section provides an analysis of the three teachers' attitudes towards code switching in their classrooms. This will be followed by their views on students' bilingualism and the advantages and disadvantages of using English only in the classroom.

6.5.1 Teachers' responses to code switching in the classroom.

The three teacher interviewees indicated that they were accepting of code switching practices in their classrooms and highlighted a variety of reasons, including that St. Lucia is considered to be bilingual, as is the community in which the school is located. Sally did not explain how she felt about code switching in her classroom, although she expressed the view that there were instances where the students would code switch, but it would be done orally with their peers. However, she emphasised that the students' speak both English and Kwéyòl, hence code switching would take place predominantly when socializing with their peers especially out on the playground. Betty explained that she had no difficulties with code switching in the classroom, especially if this was a way that the students felt confident in expressing themselves. She said that on numerous occasions she would have to revert to patois in order to make the lesson more meaningful to the students. I observed this on one occasion, given in the section of transcript below:

Betty:	You were walking down the road and suddenly a cow got loose and was chasing you. (No response)
Betty:	Ou te ka marche épi an bef lage [you were walking and a cow got loose] a cow got loose épi i météte kouwi déyé 'w [and it began running after you].
Students:	Oh ho mwen sav ki sa mwe ka matjé [Oh, I know what I will write].

Betty commented on the fact that since Kwéyòl was maybe some of the students' L1, it was a better way to assist them in understanding the concept being taught. Tessa, Sally and Betty made it very clear that they felt confident when it came to using Kwéyòl in the classroom. They all suggested that using Kwéyòl during instructional activities might be beneficial to many students. Tessa stated, "Saying in Kwéyòl might be more effective and this may enhance their learning."

In concluding this section on teachers' attitudes towards code switching in their classrooms, I believe that teachers have a positive attitude towards code switching in their classrooms. They seem to see it as a way to meet the needs of students in terms of their language background. Although, teachers provided a variety of reasons for the use of Kwéyòl during their pedagogy, it was also relevant to investigate whether there were advantages and disadvantages of using English only in the classroom. This would provide additional information and confirm some the findings on teachers' attitudes and knowledge of code switching.

6.5.2 What teachers' say about using English only in the classroom

Tessa had the view that the advantage of using English was for academic purposes, especially in preparation for examinations.

> Well I think since the examinations are based on Standard English and you know in St. Lucia and most of the Caribbean we are examination bent, especially teaching an exam class, so you have too. In teaching English only, you will not meet all the students' needs, because the students come from diverse backgrounds, homes, so they are not at the same standard or the same level.

Having acknowledged that using Kwéyòl would accommodate the children's diverse backgrounds, Tessa also identified that teaching English only in the classroom would limit this. Initially, Betty thought that there were no advantages in using English only. However, on reflection, she commented that the use of English only would be an advantage, "providing on the group of students that teacher has in her class." Secondly, she suggested the location of the school plays a role in determining the language used in the classroom and thirdly, she acknowledged that the use of English only would be advantageous because it is the "language that you would want them to model"

> I think that you have to look at the crop of students that you have. You have to bear in mind also where the school is situated. If I go to a Castries school, where the children speak predominantly English, then I am disadvantaging the children if I mix the two languages too much, or speak more Kwéyòl. But, to me in an area where the children use a lot of Kwéyòl like here I do not think that it is to the best advantage of the child, when I come to class and I speak only English. I think that there are some

students who will never understand what I am trying to say. There shouldn't be any disadvantage in using English only.

Sally further acknowledged that the use of English only is effective because students are afforded a model and as a result they can produce the required standard variety in their writing:

> I would say they are advantages providing you have a set of students who know… English only can be good providing you have a group of students who can follow and who can be with you. If using English only is going to put some of the students at a disadvantage who will have to know how to help the students to understand what you trying to explain. But using English only is effective because the children model what they hear. So you as the teacher and you use English and use it correctly the children hear it and they are able to pick it up and are able to model it. There is a disadvantage in that if there are students in your class who are not comfortable with the language you lose with them and they are not able to keep up with what you are saying. You are not communicating with them, so then you will have to switch to help that child.

Table 5 below indicates the prompts corresponding with teachers' attitudes towards code switching and the percentage of the teacher responses. It must be noted that almost half of the teachers (43%) are in agreement with the statement that code switching impacts negatively on the acquisition of Standard English, however, 53 percent of the respondents do not view code switching as a form of broken English, and an even larger percentage (76%) were pleased that students can use the mother tongue to express their intended meaning. Seventy six percent of teacher respondents agreed that there should be more information on code switching and how it can be used positively, and almost all of the teachers responded favourably to the prompt that they would like to learn more about code switching so they can assist their students effectively.

When asked, "How important is it for students to speak English only in the classroom?" less than half of the teachers (43%) indicated that it was very important that students speak only English in the classroom. This is a similar response to the prompt about the negative impact of code switching on the acquisition of Standard English.

Table 5

Teachers' attitudinal responses towards code switching

Items	Frequency of teachers' responses (%)				
	SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
Code switching impacts negatively on students' acquisition of standard English.	5 (24)	5 (24)	1 (5)	9 (43)	1 (5)
There should be more acceptance towards the students' use of code switching and how it can be used positively.	2 (10)	14 (66)	3 (14)	2 (10)	0 (0)
I feel that code switching is a form of broken English.	1 (5)	5 (24)	4 (19)	9 (43)	2 (10)
I want to learn more about code switching so that I can assist my students more effectively.	13 (62)	7 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (5)
When I see code switching in the students' written texts: I am pleased that they are able to use their mother tongue to help them express their intended meaning.	3 (14)	13 (62)	1 (5)	3 (14)	1 (5)

Note: SA=strongly agree; A=agree; U=undecided; D=disagree; SD=strongly disagree

Given this somewhat negative view, it is not surprising that when asked the question, "How important do you believe it is to cater to those students who continuously code switch in their written texts?", the majority of the teachers (90%) agreed that it was very important to provide assistance to those students who continuously code switch in their written texts.

6.5.3 Processes of code switching.

Teacher responses concerning the process of code switching is undoubtedly very relevant in ascertaining information on teachers' attitudes and their practices towards beliefs of code switching. Overall, three statements and one question from the questionnaire provided information concerning the process of code switching. Table 6 below represents the prompts and the percentage of teachers' responses in relation to the process of code switching.

Table 6

Teachers' responses concerning the process of code switching

Items	Frequency of teachers' responses (%)				
	SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
Students' home environment impacts on their use of code switching.	11 (52)	9 (45)	1 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)
I believe code switching can be used positively to teach Standard English.	9 (43)	10 (48)	1 (5)	1 (50)	0 (0)
I regard code switching as a normal part of the process in learning to use Standard English.	4 (19)	10 (48)	4 (19)	2 (10)	1 (50)

Note: SA=strongly agree; A=agree; U=undecided; D=disagree; SD=strongly disagree

Interestingly, as indicated in the table above, 97 percent of the teachers strongly believe that the students' home environment impacts on code switching practice. This point was also emphasised during the teachers' interview where Tessa, Betty and Sally suggested the students' immediate social environment played a critical role in their code switching practices. Teachers responded positively to prompt 8 and 91 percent of them indicated that code switching should be used positively to teach Standard English. It is noteworthy that 67 percent of the respondents regarded code switching as a normal part of the process in learning to use Standard English. When teachers were questioned on how useful it was to encourage students to write stories in Kwéyòl, 52 percent indicated that it was moderately useful in comparison to only 10 percent who did not think it was very useful.

6.6 Teachers' personal practice

Teachers' personal practice in the classroom is important as this provides further insights into how teachers respond to students' language use. One main area of interest is how teachers approach code switching practices in their students' writing. In this section, I provide data about teachers' pedagogical practices when responding to students' writing where there is code switching.

6.6.1 Teachers' responses to code switching in students' writing

During the interview with the three teachers, one of my questions focused on the teachers' responses to code switching in the students' writing. Tessa explained that her practice included constant interaction with the students. She also indicated that one-on-one / face-to-face interaction was one of the best methods of actually meeting the students' needs, especially in her situation where she has a mixed ability group of students. Tessa expressed the view that having one-on-one interaction with her students fosters opportunities for the students to express themselves freely, compared to the whole class discussion where students may feel intimidated by their peers. She testified that she observed an improvement in students' subsequent drafts when they were provided with individual feedback on their written work. Tessa discussed the use of the contrastive analysis approach not only during writing, but also during the teaching of the other components of Language Arts. Sally reported that she addresses students' written code switching in their essay writing differently from Tessa. She explained that her practice involved identifying the errors, noting and addressing them with the whole class. Interestingly, Sally also mentioned that she would make students aware of the errors by further explaining whether it was direct translation from Kwéyòl to English. She claimed that using this as a whole class teaching strategy would allow the other students an opportunity to critique each other's work and hence students would be able to learn the "proper structures."

In responding to my question on approaches to code switching in the students' writing, Betty indicated that she had not come across code switching in her students' writing. She claimed that in some students' writing that there had been "substitution of patois words to English and there was no indication of direct translation." She noted that most students' errors were related to spelling and poor grammatical structure. Betty attributed some of the grammatical errors to the influence of the Kwéyòl language. Like her colleagues Tessa and Sally, she would include contrastive analysis as a one way in addressing students' errors.

The three teacher interviewees provided me with overwhelming responses in terms of their pedagogical practices when assisting students who code switched in their writing or with grammatical and spelling errors. Teachers suggested that they would resort to the mother tongue, despite the fact that Standard English is the mandated medium of instruction.

Knowledge of teachers' personal practices is critical to this research as it gives insight into the attitudes and beliefs regarding code switching. Hence the majority of the statements on the teacher questionnaire focused on teachers' personal practices when dealing with code switching in students' writing. The percentage of teachers' responses to each prompt on personal practices is presented in Table 7 below. It is noteworthy that all teachers stated that they code switch sometimes during their instruction in order to make the lesson more meaningful to their students who may have difficulty understanding certain concepts being taught. The majority of the teachers also disagreed that they used code switching only to maintain order in their classroom. Most teachers (91%) believe that it is significant that they are sensitized towards students' use of code switching. They also suggested that teachers should be aware of code switching practices and how they can be used positively.

With regards to responding to written texts with code switching errors, 57 percent of the teachers indicated that they highlighted and corrected the students' errors. However, a large number of teachers (67%) expressed the view that they preferred it when students' code switched orally rather than in their writing. Furthermore, 24 percent were undecided as to the measures they would take when they came across students' written texts which contained code switching. The majority of the teachers stated that in their personal practice they provided positive encouragement to their students during teacher/student feedback. Additionally, in Section C there were two questions pertaining to the teachers' personal practices:

> How valuable would it be to receive professional learning on using code switching effectively?

> Do you think it is important to teach English language patterns and structures?

In responding to question one, 90 percent of the teachers stated it was very valuable to receive professional training on learning how to use code switching effectively in their teaching. This point coincides with 95 percent of the teachers who expressed a desire to learn more about code switching in order to assist students more effectively (See Table 4 above). This shows that teachers have a positive orientation to learning more about code switching. However, all the

teachers indicated that in the teaching process, English language patterns and structures must be prioritized.

Table 7

Teachers' responses concerning their personal practice

Items	Frequency of teachers' responses (%)				
	SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
I sometimes code switch during my instruction because it helps students understand the lesson/ concept being taught.	10 (48)	11 (52)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
There should be more sensitization towards the students use of code switching and how it can be used positively.	10 (48)	9 (43)	1 (5)	1 (5)	0 (0)
I only code switch to maintain order in my classroom.	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (5)	14 (66)	6 (29)
I prefer when my students code switch orally rather than in their writing.	1 (5)	13 (62)	3 (14)	3 (14)	1 (5)
It is difficult to read and I cannot help but highlight and correct their errors.	1 (5)	11 (52)	5 (24)	3 (14)	1 (5)
I give students positive encouragement and use this as a learning opportunity for all students.	8 (38)	12 (57)	1 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)

Note: SA=strongly agree; A=agree; U=undecided; D=disagree; SD=strongly disagree

Teachers' also responded to statements on the contexts where Kwéyòl use is acceptable. The table presented below represents teachers' responses on the contexts that they thought were acceptable for Kwéyòl use by the students. In addition, their responses were calculated and the percentage scores for each response are also presented in the table below. Teachers were not limited to one response, hence some teachers indicated that one context was acceptable, whereas some teachers ticked two contexts and others all three. However, what is remarkable is that these responses seem to contradict what was previously expressed in the first part of the questionnaire.

Around three quarters (76%) of all the responses favoured the context of spoken interaction on curriculum content as the most acceptable for Kwéyòl use by students. Secondly, the responses indicated that spoken interaction inside the classroom for social purposes should take precedence over spoken interaction outside the classroom. These figures suggest that teachers' attitude towards the use of Kwéyòl by students should not be limited to home environment but should be embraced as part of the curriculum. It also indicates their willingness to use code switching practices positively in their teaching.

Table 8

T*eachers' responses concerning the contexts in which kwéyòl use is acceptabl*e

Items	Frequency of teachers' responses (%)	
Spoken interaction outside the classroom.	12/21	(57)
Spoken interaction inside the classroom for social purposes.	14/21	(67)
Spoken interaction on curriculum content.	16/21	(76)

The teachers' responses sometimes contradicted their responses to previous statements. As a result of the discrepancies that I observed, I concluded that teachers did not fully comprehend the question or otherwise had just completed this part of the questionnaire to please me. Teacher contradictions to statements will be explored further in the discussion in Chapter 7.

Another area of interest in obtaining data for this study was teacher-student interaction, especially during feedback. Therefore, one of the questions during the semi-structured interview dealt with students' responses to teacher feedback either individually or as a whole class. Thus, the next section addresses teachers' views about students' attitude to feedback on their writing.

6.6.2 What teachers say about student response during feedback.

The manner in which students respond to teacher feedback is key as this determines whether the students' written work will improve in subsequent drafts in terms of the errors the teacher highlights. Remarkably, when interviewed about students' attitude towards feedback, all three teachers clearly stated that students were very receptive to feedback and most times adhered to the corrections. Betty

also explained that she had not encountered any child who responded negatively when given feedback on his or her written work. Sally also indicated that despite the fact that the students may have to return to their seats on numerous occasions to make adjustments to written work, they always respond positively. In addition, the answers from the three teachers' during the interview suggested that they believed in teaching the students the correct structures of Standard English, because it was a requirement of the curriculum.

6.7 The Language Arts curriculum

Having an understanding of the goals and aims of the Language Arts policy and English curriculum is very important in language teaching and learning because teachers will be able to make informed decisions about their students' language learning and their pedagogical practices. There are teachers who are sometimes fearful to take risks in their classrooms and consequently their classroom activities are dictated by the curriculum. Hence, it is significant to find out whether the three teacher interviewees feel pressured by the curriculum to continuously teach Standard English without acknowledging the students L1.

Prompts on the curriculum were also incorporated in the teacher questionnaire and this further extended my knowledge on teachers' attitudes and also perceptions about the Language Arts curriculum. Their views on Language Arts curriculum are discussed below.

6.7.1 How teachers feel about the Language Arts curriculum.

In responding to the question about their feelings towards the teaching of Standard English which is advocated by the St. Lucian Language Arts curriculum, teachers Sally and Betty said that they do not feel pressured in any way. Sally's comment on the topic was, "The students are supposed to know Standard English, and I will do everything that I can in order to assist them in acquiring it." Betty constantly emphasised that in order to be an effective teacher in the classroom, one should be aware of the particular group of students that one has in terms of the students' social background, parental status and, of course, the community where the school is located. She explained further that at her current school she would need to code switch, and provided a variety of reasons for making this statement:

Based on the parents' background you will have to understand where the child is coming from and the parents do speak a lot of Kwéyòl at home to them. So we are sort of in denial if we think we are going to come to school and speak only English and not even to inject a little Kwéyòl to make them really understand where you are coming from.

Betty's observations clearly indicated that she is not perturbed by the national curriculum to teach Standard English. However, Tessa's comments revealed that she feels pressured to teach the Standard English as proposed by the Language Arts curriculum. Additionally, her views extended to the students and she suggested that they will be targeted because of their continuous code switching. Hence, the pressure will be placed on the students and not necessarily the teacher. The percentage responses to prompts 3 and 5 from Section B of the questionnaire are represented in Table 9 below.

Seventy two percent of the teachers are in agreement that the St. Lucian Language Arts policies should incorporate the teaching of the L1 so that teachers will be able to deal more effectively with code switching in their students' written texts. Almost two thirds of the teachers (62%) expressed the view that code switching is more prevalent in students' Language Arts writing than in other subject areas.

In addition, when responding to the question: "How useful is it to encourage students to write stories in Kwéyòl?" Forty eight percent of the teachers indicated that it is moderately important to include the study of Kwéyòl as a subject taught in primary school. The remaining had a less positive view.

Table 9

Teachers' responses concerning the curriculum and code switching

Items	Frequency of teachers' responses (%)				
	SA	A	U	D	SD
School Language Arts policies should incorporate the teaching of the mother tongue/ Kwéyòl so that teachers will deal more effectively with code switching in their students' written texts.	10 (48)	5 (24)	2 (10)	4 (19)	0 (0)
Code switching is seen more in students' Language Arts than in other subjects.	8 (38)	5 (24)	2 (10)	6 (29)	0 (0)

Note: SA=strongly agree; A=agree; U=undecided; D=disagree; SD=strongly disagree

6.8 Teacher exchanges

In this section I discuss the focus of teacher exchanges while providing feedback to their students on their writing. There will also be an illustration of examples of transfer from the students' writing which was identified by their teacher. It is also interesting to note the code switching errors which have been highlighted in the students' writing and also the oral code switching made by the teachers. Table 10 below indicates that Tessa had the highest number of exchanges with her students in comparison with Betty and Sally. Tessa provided only individual feedback to her students, whereas the Sally provided both individual and group feedback and Betty only whole class feedback. This may have accounted for Tessa's highest number of exchanges while providing feedback to students.

It is interesting to note that Betty's and Sally's exchanges focused on text elaboration and organization. This area received the highest percentage out of all the other areas during the teachers' feedback sessions. Out of Betty's 15 exchanges, almost three quarters of her exchanges (73.3%) focused on text elaboration and organization. On the other hand, Sally's exchanges were concentrated on the students' sentence structure and grammar in their writing and out of a total of 194 exchanges, about a quarter (24.2%) were used to highlight those errors.

Table 10

Teachers' areas of focus while providing feedback to students

Focus of teacher exchanges during feedback	Tessa	Teachers Sally Frequency (%)	Betty
Punctuation	29 (14.9)	4 (6.3)	1 (6.6)
Sentence structure/grammar	47 (24.2)	9 (14.2)	1 (6.6)
Text elaboration/ organization	42 (21.6)	36 (61.9)	11 (73.3)
Spelling	43 (22.1)	4 (6.3)	
Vocabulary	20 (10.3)	6 (9.5)	
Legibility	1 (0.5)		
Transfer	5 (2.5)		
Code switching in students' texts.	1 (0.5)	1[3](1.5)	
Code switching while providing feedback to students.	2 (1.3)		1 (6.6)
Total number of exchanges	**194**	**63**	**15**

However, Sally's discourse focused on sentence structure/grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation in the students' writing. The differences in the total number of exchanges during the teacher/student feedback could be as a result of whether the teacher decided to provide whole class, group or individual feedback to the students. Tessa can be singled out as the only one who recognised elements of transfer and interference of Kwéyòl while providing feedback to the students. Betty and Sally overlooked elements of transfer or interference in the students' writing and they did not use these two terms. However they categorized some of the writing as having grammatical errors or what could be also identified as VESL.

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[3] The code switching in the student's text was not discussed with this teacher.

6.8.1 Transfer in students' writing.

Language transfer has become an area of focus in language acquisition especially in speaking and writing. There are many research findings which suggest that transfer plays an important role in second language acquisition (Cummins, 2003; Ladiere, 2000; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Siegel, 2009). Therefore, one central theme which arose when coding data for this study is the element of transfer in student's writing and how teachers' address this issue while providing feedback to their students.

As indicated in Table 10 above, only Tessa addressed the issue of transfer in the students' written texts. Out of her 194 exchanges with the students during teacher-student feedback, 2.5 percent concentrated on transfer or interference in their writing. Tessa explained to students that their writing was a reflection of direct translation from Kwéyòl to English. She further mentioned to students that as a result of the elements of transfer identified in their writing, their sentences were grammatically incorrect. Presented in the following table are some samples of students' sentences from their English compositions which reflected cross linguistic transfer.

Table 11

Students' (RPI) writing containing evidence of transfer

Students' writing	Direct translation from Kwéyòl to English
The noise began coming louder.	Dézòd la koumansé ka vini pli fò.
I saw him bursting down the road.	Mwen wè'y ka pété desann chimen-an.
There came Vernel our conversation began coming terrify.	Vernel vini pawòl nou koumansé ka. vin pé.
Who was doing that noise.	Ki moun kit té ka fé dézòd sala
It had a long pick at the front of it.	I té ni an pik long douvan.

Tessa also impressed upon the students that they should try to write Standard English at all times, especially when writing for an audience. Further, to ensure that they were aware of the correct structures of Standard English, she allowed her students to locate their errors, explain why they thought they were incorrect, and have the students correct their errors orally in Standard English.

6.8.2 Students' writing.

From my analysis of the students' writing, there were many grammatical/syntactical and spelling errors that could to be traced to transfer. These two areas recorded the highest rate of errors. However, the area of the students' writing in which I was most interested recorded the least number of errors. There were few code switching errors in the students' writing and as mentioned above, the two teachers whose students made such errors approached them differently.

The use of the students' writing formed the basis of a discussion with them and this enabled me to gain further insight into their errors and, most importantly, the reasons for their errors. My analysis of the students' scripts also revealed elements of both negative and positive transfer which Betty and Sally did not give much consideration too. As highlighted earlier, Betty focused on text elaboration when providing feedback to her students and only once made mention of grammar, vocabulary and spelling errors and warned students to be careful. The sentences which reflect elements of transfer were taken from the written scripts of students from IMR and MIC. Examples from the students' writing of RPI were omitted in this section since I previously provided some examples.

> My heart was no longer sorrowful again.
> So we bring him home and give him medicine.
> Then we started giving each other jorks (jokes).
> We run so much we lose.
> Then I lost myself, I was afraid.
> I was scared that x[4] father was going to quarrel behind me.
> I gave her the story.
> It was turning dark.
> My mother went to bed and she off the light.
> My grandmother told me she afraid so much that her heart almost stop.

---

[4] Student wrote another classmate's name and this has been omitted.

Two of the most interesting sentences came from students of MIC. They were:

The bull started to *book* the tree.
The goat nearly *book* me.

During the focus group interview when I questioned the students individually about the use of the word *book* in their writing students explained they meant *hit*. I asked them what is the Kwéyòl word for book and they responded *liv*. They were unsure of the origin of the word. The following is the dialogue which took place with one of the students concerned about the use of the word *book* and the two other students in the focus group interview. This is evident in the following section of transcript:

Interviewer: The bull started to *book* the tree. Where did the word *book* come from? Isn't there another word you could use? "The bull started to *book* the tree," is that what you usually say?

Student 1: No.

Interviewer: So what would you say?

Student 1: The bull started to hit the tree.

Interviewer: It started to …...?

Student 1: Hit the tree.

Interviewer: So why did the word *book* come to your mind? What were you thinking of?

Student 1: Because when a cow bully you it *book* you.

Interviewer: It *book* you? The word *book* is it an English word? Where do you think it came from?

Student 1: I don't know

Student 2: From his mind.

Student 3: Miss they have two books.

Student 2: *liv* [student says the Kwéyòl word for book]

Interviewer: He said the bull started to book the tree.

Student 2: Oh, Miss the horns

Interviewer: Would you say that in English?

Student 1:	No
Student 2:	*Juke* [VESL- meaning to prick]

Upon researching the word in Kwéyòl it is spelt *bouk* and there is more than one meaning: a billy goat, a failed attempt to hit the plank in a game of marbles and a buckle. Hence, I am left to infer that the use of the word *book* is a corruption of the word *boot* in VESL, which is used to describe a strike with the head or the use of the Kwéyòl word *bouk* being used incorrectly. From my observations and analysis of the students' writing, a plausible statement could be that most of the students write the way they speak and that this is heavily influenced by Kwéyòl and VESL.

6.8.3 Code switching in students' writing.

Because a major area of focus of this study is the area of code switching in students' writing, it is important to examine teachers' attitude towards code switching in their students' writing and how they addressed it in their students' writing.

Sally failed to systematically address the use of code switching in the students' writing and dealt with it on only one occasion. The code switching was just brushed aside, because the student indicated that he was unaware why he wrote that particular sentence. However, he explained what he meant when he used the word *based*. Although, the student misspelt the word in Kwéyòl, there is no doubt that the word *based* used in his writing is derived from the Kwéyòl word *bésé* which means to lower or bring down. The student read his story aloud to the teacher.

Student:	"afterwards I started watching tv, I *based* on the volume"

[Teacher highlights the word *based*].

Sally:	What is that?
Student:	I mean lower the volume
Sally:	So why did you use *based*? Where did that come from?
Student:	I don't know.

The student continued reading and the teacher expressed the view that she did not like the way the sentence was phrased and asked that the student to make the necessary correction. Unlike Sally, Tessa recognised the error and discussed it at length with the student concerned.

Tessa:	[Reading from student's written script] "The dog eating the goats and sheep, it had a long pick," What do you mean by that? The dog had a long pick? What are you trying to say, explain that to me?
Student:	It had a long thing in front of it.
Tessa:	A horn?
Student:	Yes, Miss
Tessa:	So, that is Kwéyòl translation. I té ni un pic. The horn, the dog had a horn. "At the front of it" what do you mean at the front of it? Douvan! Again you[5] translating creole to English. Where was the horn?
Student:	At the front of it.
Tessa:	At the front of it? It's head. Was it on the head?
Student:	Yes Miss

Again, the student has demonstrated his inability to spell the Kwéyòl word [pik] for horn, however, it should be noted that he has substituted the word he is familiar with as being a horn. Furthermore, the spelling and pronunciation are similar to the English word. Tessa also indicated to the student that this was direct translation (a code switching error) from the Kwéyòl to the English.

The second sentence containing code switching was based on one of St. Lucia's folk tales. The student, therefore, relied on her cultural experience to write her story. Tessa never indicated that anything was wrong with the sentence because this is a common word, *ti bolonm*[6] used in folk tales by story tellers, however, the word is derived from French Kwéyòl. Below are two examples from two different parts of the story where the student incorporated the word.

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[5] VESL- Note the omission of the verb in the sentence.
[6] *Ti bolonm*-Child: a supernatural character who looks like a child with a big head and makes a sound like a cat.

Late night I was in bed and I was comfortable. Suddenly, I was dreaming about how *ti bowloms* can be born.
Then I started talking in my sleep. I was talking to my sprit [spirit] which told me to "follow her outside". She brought me in the forest. But it was not my spirit, it was a *ti bowlom* that had trick me.

Like her peer who code switched in his text, she was unable to spell the Kwéyòl word correctly. Further, the rest of the story provides details as to what the story tellers would normally say about encounters with the *ti bolonms*. It is also note worthy that during my analysis of the students' writing from MIC, most of the students used a common cultural folk tale of *papa bwa*[7] in their stories, perhaps because of the topic: You were catching fish with a friend near a river when suddenly he disappeared without a sound or trace. Write a story on what happened that day.

Most students wrote about *papa bwa* because the story has been associated with the disappearance of people, especially near the rivers and in the forest. Again, many of the students demonstrated their inability to spell the word correctly.

I just tune [turned] my back and when I tune [turned] my back I didn't see a thing. I said to myself maybe *papa bois* took him.

Then I see *papa bois*. I pick up a ston [stone] and san [sent] it after it.

One student even made use of the cultural practice that if one uses obscenities at any evil spirit in this case '*papa bwa*' then it will leave you alone or die.

My aunt side [said] fork you and *papa bois* died.

It is rather interesting how Betty responded to the students' constant use of *papa bwa* in their story. While providing feedback to the students in their writing, Betty's discussion was focused on text elaboration about *papa bwa*.

Betty: The other thing I wanted to mention to you, besides the person just disappearing, everybody wrote about papa bwa.
Everybody wrote about papa bwa.
Remember you were fishing. From what

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[7] *Papa bwa*- Papa meaning father; bwa- woods. Papa bwa in St.Lucia's cultural context is a male spirit living in the forest/woods.

	people know of stories of papa bwa, papa bwa lives in the forest. Not by the river.
Student:	By the river is a forest.
Betty:	By the river is a forest?
Student:	Miss they have bushee [bush]
Betty:	Point taken. If by the river is the forest then you should have mentioned in your story that next to your river there was a forest, and you had heard stories of *papa bwa* living in that forest. You all just introduce *papa bwa*. I don't know where *papa bwa* came from. I just heard about *papa bwa* in the story. I don't know who *papa bwa* is, I don't know where *papa bwa* came from. And that's the problem, when you are writing stories you must never assume, you must never think that whoever is reading your story know what you talking about. I know about *papa bwa* because we spoke about *papa bwa* in another story we did on Monday, right. So I know where that *papa bwa* came from. But let's assume that somebody who doesn't know anything about *papa bwa*, somebody who is not from St. Lucia at all and the person never heard about papa bwa and that person is about to correct your story, you cannot just bring in *papa bwa* in the story. You cannot just bring in *papa bwa*. You have to say that there's a story that says that um....!
Student:	A crazy man
Betty:	*Papa bwa* is not a man; *papa bwa* is some spirit that lives in the woods. Now you cannot just bring *papa bwa*. If you just bring papa bwa it means that whoever maybe reading your story may not know who *papa bwa* is. Do we understand that?
Students:	Yes Miss.

Betty failed to provide her students with the explanation that *papa bwa* is a Kwéyòl word. Her response to one student, who described it as a crazy man, was that he was not a man, but a spirit. However, she had the opportunity to explain that in our culture *papa bwa* is perceived to be a male spirit living in the woods.

It is interesting to note the oral code switching while the Tessa was providing feedback to one student. This student code switched in order to describe his illegible handwriting. The term he used *pat mouch* when translated from Kwéyòl to English means a fly's leg. This is usually considered a derogatory term to describe one's illegible handwriting.

Teacher:	You have some wrong spelling, but apart from this, what else?
Student:	Miss I write *pat mouch.* [Miss, I wrote illegibly]
Teacher:	Yes it is illegible, but [name of student] you have no full stops.
Student:	Aye!!

Tessa responded to the student's oral code switching by using the correct term in English and proceeded to provide feedback on other areas in his writing.

There were instances when the teachers' code switched orally while providing feedback to their students. The oral code switching came naturally and teachers were trying to get students' attention and secondly to show emphasis.

6.8.4 Teachers' oral code switching during feedback.

There were two instances where Tessa code switched while providing feedback to the students. Firstly, she code switched to place emphasis on the student's use of the correct tense in her writing.

Tessa:	Mwe still ka wé [I am still seeing] you have things in the past tense, and you have "I keep running up the river."

[However, Tessa's second code switching involved text elaboration].

Tessa:	Exactly! So you need to say that, at its front, on its head, *pa just douvan* [not just in front].

Betty's code switching while providing whole class feedback seemed to be used as a strategy to retain their attention while she was discussing students' text elaboration/organization in their writing.

| **Betty**: | What do you think was missing from that essay? |

[Students responded in a chorus].

| **Betty**: | Just now, *talè-an* [wait], one at a time. What do you think was missing from that essay? |

Teachers Tessa and Betty both code switched for various purposes while providing feedback to their students. The code switching on the part of the two teachers played effective roles in the two classrooms. Further, from the teachers' questionnaire, all the teachers acknowledged that they sometimes code switched during their instruction because it assisted students in their understanding, especially when the concept proved to be challenging. Therefore ,from Tessa's and Betty's response, and the teachers' responses from the questionnaire on code switching in the classroom, one can deduce that the teachers regard code switching as an effective strategy to assist students in understanding concepts, for emphasis and also to gain the students' attention.

6.8.5 Errors in students' writing.

The analysis of students' writing samples and the teacher feedback provided a rich source of information as to students' ability to think and also reflect on the nature of language. The students' writing indicated that the highest number of errors were as a result of poor spelling, with the students of IMR having the highest total of spelling errors; however, in the other four areas they recorded the lowest number of errors. MIC students had the highest number of errors in the area of punctuation, whereas RPI students had the highest number of errors in the area of grammar/sentence structure. It is significant to note that MIC students had the highest total number of errors of all three schools. However, the variation in student errors from all three schools could have been attributed to the nature of the writing task and perhaps if the errors were calculated per number of words, different scores would have been obtained. Despite the high number of errors identified in the areas of spelling, punctuation and grammar, as mentioned previously Sally's and Betty's exchanges with the students while providing feedback focused on text elaboration and organization. On the other hand, Tessa's exchanges during feedback with her students concentrated on the areas I also identified as representing most errors in the students' writing (See Table 10 above).

6.9 Students' focus group interview

The first part of the focus group interview focused on students' language awareness. Students were questioned about their writing which reflected code switching errors and their perception of the errors highlighted by their teachers. Students also described what they were going to do to improve their written texts.

6.9.1 Metalinguistic awareness.

It is significant that students are able to differentiate between "knowing" and "knowing about" a language (Odlin, 2003) as this an indication of their language development and awareness. From my analysis of the students' written scripts and during my focus group discussions with them, they showed very little metalinguistic awareness. Also, in this study, students who demonstrated greater competence in their writing were those who had greater metalinguistic awareness. This revelation, therefore, provided additional information to the research question, "What are students' explanations for code switching in their texts?"

From the focus group interview and also while teachers were providing feedback to the students, the majority of the students were able to read their written texts. Only one student indicated that he could only read some of it and this claim was substantiated when I asked him to read certain parts of his texts and he was unable to read it fully.

The combined findings of the second part of the focus group interview also revealed interesting details about students' knowledge of their use of Kwéyòl in their writing. Fifty six percent (twenty) of the students stated that they know when they are using Kwéyòl in their writing, whereas 80 percent (29 out of 36) of the students across the three schools responded, "No" to the statement: I use Kwéyòl when I am writing direct speech.

The majority of the students demonstrated their metalinguistic awareness to some degree by identifying the strengths and weaknesses in their writing. However, during the focus group discussions, some students were questioned on their sentences which reflected code switching or elements of transfer. Their responses revealed that they were unaware of the reasons why they wrote certain sentences. Some of their responses to the question included:

> Miss, I just write that.
> I was just thinking of that and I write it so.
> Nothing, I was just writing.

Therefore, I found it necessary to question students on whether they write the way they speak or they just write. Interestingly, most of the students from RPI explained that they write the way they speak. One student from RPI also claimed that she thought her sentence was not clear when she wrote, "the noise was coming louder." Her response was, "Miss that's how I say it" and this was the reason she wrote it this way. This illustrates that the students from RPI and the other two schools were unable to analyse spoken words into their constituent parts. It also indicates that the students are not that aware of language forms and functions.

6.9.2 Perception of errors.

In response to the discussion on identification of their errors, all the students agreed that there were errors in their texts which could have been avoided. Their identification of errors included the incorrect use of punctuation marks, grammatical errors and poor use of vocabulary. The majority of students were concerned about their spelling errors, in comparison with their teachers who identified grammatical accuracy and text elaboration/organization as being problematic.

Students agreed that the parts of their writing that the teacher highlighted were indeed errors. They further made the suggestions that the teacher is always right when she highlights a part of the text and claims it has errors. Students were able to identify the reasons why certain parts of their highlighted writing were regarded as having errors. Students from each school provided very interesting reasons why their texts were highlighted.

> Because, I didn't talk about the passage.
> Well in my second draft, I will try to put it better and get rid of the mistakes I have.
> I have no punctuation marks.
> Because, I have wrong spelling.
> It doesn't make sense.
> So I could learn from my mistakes.

These comments suggest that students' have some kind of metalinguistic awareness, but not when it comes to code switching, Kwéyòl or VESL. The students gave many other valid reasons for their text being highlighted. Also, they were able to identify ways that they could improve their writing and avoid any future occurrences of the errors they made.

One of the most important issues for the students was to ensure that their subsequent drafts would be improved significantly and this would be done by adhering to the teacher's suggestions during feedback. Out of all the 36 students who participated in the focus group discussion, only one commented that he would use a dictionary to assist him in spelling the difficult words or words he did not have much confidence spelling. He explained that this was the surest way of avoiding many errors in his text.

Moreover, most students explained that they would be able to make the corrections to their written text on their own. Few students expressed the view that they would require the teachers' assistance. Those who said that they might need the teachers' help provided reasons such as not being able to spell the word correctly or not understanding the topic as the major factors for seeking assistance from the teacher. One student from IMR explained that when he encounters difficulty, he seeks assistance from his peers so there is no need to go to the teacher.

6.9.3 Students' perceptions of using Kwéyòl in their writing.

A key issue in this research was to discover how students felt about Kwéyòl in their writing, so the second part of the focus group interview concentrated on students' responses to prompts which provided information about their attitude to the use of Kwéyòl in their written texts. Therefore, I combined the findings across the three schools as this provided an overall perception of the use of Kwéyòl in their writing. The results of my findings can be found in Table 12 below.

Table 12

Students' responses concerning kwéyòl use in their writing

Items	Percentage (%) of students' responses from 3 schools.		
	Y	S	N
It motivates me to write something when I don't know the English word.	13 (36)	5 (14)	18 (50)
It helps me write when I think I am going to make a mistake in English.	9 (25)	10 (28)	17 (47)
It helps me to describe how I feel especially in my writing.	9 (25)	8 (22)	19 (53)
It makes my writing more interesting.	16 (44)	9 (25)	11 (31)
It helps me express myself more fluently in my writing.	9 (25)	13 (36)	14 (39)
It motivates me to write much more than I would in English alone.	17 (47)	8 (22)	11 (31)

Note. Y=Yes; S=sometimes; N=No

Based on the results from the students' feelings about code switching in their writing, half of the students remarked that Kwéyòl does not motivate them to write something when they do not know the English word, whereas 36 percent noted that Kwéyòl motivates them. Fewer than half of the students said that Kwéyòl helps them write when they think they are going to make a mistake in English. Thus, this relates to the use of the L1 as a communication strategy by some students. Fifty three percent (19) of the students disagreed with the statement; Kwéyòl helps me to describe how I feel especially in my writing. Further, 39 percent said "No" in response to the statement: It helps me express myself more fluently in my writing. Despite the number of high percentage of "No" responses to most of the statements based on Kwéyòl in their writing, 16 (44%) agreed that it would make their writing more interesting and 47 commented that the use of Kwéyòl would motivate them to write much more than they would in English alone. It can, therefore, be concluded that students' have a negative view of Kwéyòl in their writing since the majority of students feel that it does not:

- motivate them to write something when they do not know the English word;
- help them to write when they think they are going to make a mistake in English;
- help them to describe how they feel especially in their writing; or
- help them express themselves more fluently in their writing.

These findings from the students' attitudes do not coincide with the teachers' attitudes towards code switching in students' writing. However, as indicated in Table 5 above 48 percent of the teachers believe that code switching impacts negatively on students' acquisition of Standard English, because of the simultaneous use of both languages (Kwéyòl and English). Therefore, it can be concluded, that this view is passed on to the students who now view Kwéyòl as having a negative impact on their writing and their acquisition of Standard English. On the contrary, as indicated from the findings of the teachers' questionnaire, most of the teachers believe that code switching is not a form of broken English and it plays an integral role in learning and using the L2.

It is also important to compare and contrast the students' attitudes across the three schools as these further inform this research as to the attitudes of the individual schools towards Kwéyòl use in their writing. This further enables me to form a comparison about students' attitudes from the three different schools involved in the study and also will inform professional judgements about the teachers' attitudes towards their students' code switching practices. Table 13 below focuses on the attitudinal differences in the cohorts from the three different schools.

Based on the number of Yes and No responses to each statement across the three schools, it is evident that students from one particular school demonstrate a more positive attitude towards the use of Kwéyòl in their writing. The students from RPI attained a mean score of 6 for "Yes" responses in comparison with their cohorts from IMR who attained a mean score of 1.7 for "Yes". This clearly indicates that the students from RPI have a more positive attitude towards the use of Kwéyòl in their writing compared to the students from IMR and MIC students.

Table 13

Students' responses concerning the use of kwéyòl across three schools

	Schools/Responses								
	IMR			RPI			MIC		
Items	**Y**	**S**	**N**	**Y**	**S**	**N**	**Y**	**S**	**N**
It motivates me to write something when I don't know the English word.	2	4	6	6	1	5	5	0	7
It helps me to write when I think I am going to make a mistake in English.	2	5	5	5	1	6	2	4	6
It helps me to describe how I feel especially in my writing.	2	2	8	5	4	3	2	2	8
It makes my writing more interesting.	2	5	5	7	1	4	7	3	2
It helps me express myself more fluently in my writing.	0	4	8	4	4	4	5	5	2
It motivates me to write much more than I would in English alone.	2	3	7	11	1	0	4	4	4
Total	**10**	**23**	**39**	**38**	**12**	**22**	**25**	**18**	**29**
Mean	**1.7**		**6.5**	**6**		**3.5**	**4.1**		**4.8**

Note: Y=Yes; S=Sometimes; N=No

Interestingly, more than half of the students from RPI and MIC acknowledged that Kwéyòl seems to make their writing more interesting, while less than one quarter of the students from IMR seem to have opposing views. Moreover, almost all the students from RPI stated that Kwéyòl motivates them to write much more than they would in English alone. The students' from IMR had the highest mean of "No" responses, followed by MIC with a mean of 4.8 and RPI with the lowest mean of 3.5 for their "No" responses. The low mean for "No" responses obtained by students of IMR explains why, during the focus group interview, one student of that school commented that Kwéyòl is a bad language. However, this student's view may be as a result of the teacher's (Sally) pedagogical practices and her attitudes. During the semi-structured interview, teacher Sally expressed the view that the students are supposed to know Standard English and she will do everything to ensure they acquire it. Therefore, students' attitude towards the

mother tongue appears to be influenced by teachers' pedagogical input and curriculum teaching of Standard English.

6.10 Summary

For the purpose of this study, it was important to categorize the findings in the following areas because they provided a comprehensive perspective on teachers' attitude and practice associated with beliefs of code switching and the students' awareness of the use of Kwéyòl and code switching practices in their writing.

- Teachers' personal knowledge and code switching
- Teacher attitudes and code switching practices
- Teachers' personal practice
- Teacher exchanges
- The Language Arts curriculum
- What students think about their highlighted written texts
- What students said about improving their written texts

Further, these areas assisted in addressing the three research questions in this study.

Teachers' personal knowledge on code switching was divided into five sub-categories. This contributed to understanding what code switching meant to the teachers. Questions from the semi-structured interview and the questionnaires provided information on teachers' knowledge of the influence of the L1 on students' writing. Teachers believed that code switching had its place in the students' writing, especially the genres of writing such as narratives and dialogues, although most teachers were unaware of the types of code switching practices and the approaches that could be utilised to assist students who code switched. Furthermore, teachers expressed the view that the students' social environment does play a major role in their code switching practices and that being a bilingual is an added advantage.

Secondly, teachers' responses suggested that they possessed a positive attitude towards code switching in the classroom and provided a wide range of possible reasons for student code switching. However, most teachers suggested that they

preferred it if code switching was done orally within their social interactions rather than it being reflected in the students' writing. Most teachers also explained that they believed it was important for students to speak English only in the classroom and that it was of extreme importance to cater for those who code switched in the classroom, as indicated from the data in Table 4. Most of the teachers acknowledged that code switching is not a form of broken English and that there should be more acceptance of the phenomenon and how it can be used positively.

In their personal practice, most teachers provided feedback to students whose writing reflected code switching. Teachers explained that they usually highlight student errors in their written texts and afterwards discuss the errors with students. One teacher identified the use of contrastive analysis as a means of assisting her students who continuously code switch and would address this at both the individual and whole class level. On the other hand, the majority of the teachers would address this as a whole class learning opportunity for all the students.

Teacher exchanges during feedback concentrated on students' grammar, spelling, punctuation errors and text elaboration. Code switching and transfer, when they did occur, were seldom addressed and discussed. Teachers paid more attention to what they believed were the students' areas of weakness

The teachers suggested that the Language Arts policy should be designed in order to incorporate use of the L1 as this maybe be helpful in teaching Standard English. Teachers have acknowledged that they are not aware of approaches to assist their students who constantly code switch in their writing, they are willing to acquire additional information in order to assist their students more effectively.

Most of the students responded negatively when asked about the use of Kwéyòl in their writing. They did not view it as making their writing more interesting. Students indicated that they always respond positively when given teacher feedback and all the errors that the teacher highlights on their written texts are indeed errors and need to be reviewed. Further, teachers were able to identify various ways that they can improve their writing.

In this chapter, I presented the analysis of the findings derived from the data collection methods used during this study. The use of the various methods of data collection provided a rich source of data into the attitudes and belief practices associated with code switching in Grade 5 students' writing. The following chapter, therefore, discusses the findings based on the analysis of the findings and the implications they may have for teacher attitudes, beliefs and practices associated with code switching.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

In Chapter 6, I presented the findings obtained from the five methods of data collection: teacher semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, students' writing and teacher feedback. In this chapter I will provide an evaluation and discussion of the findings related to teachers' attitudes and practice; students' code switching behaviours, their attitudes and knowledge about code switching and their responses to the nature of code switching in their written texts. These areas reflect the intent of the research questions which were:

1. What are selected primary school teachers' attitudes about students' use of cross language variety switching in their written texts?

2. What are the responses of teachers to students' written texts which reflect code switching?

3. What are students' explanations for code switching in their texts?
   ii) Can students identify code switching in their written texts?
   iii) How do students' respond to feed back about code switching in their writing?

This discussion addresses the major areas which are derived from the analysis of the findings. The following sections are relevant as they provide further insights into teachers' and students' attitudes, and practices of code switching in their written texts. They include the nature of code switching on students' texts; code switching as a resource for more effective writing: metalinguistic awareness to connect and understand students' language use; separating two languages to improve language awareness; feedback as an aspect of language development; communication and compensatory strategies in writing; attitude towards using L1 in L2 writing; writing and culture as an embedded activity in the classroom; the reality of bilingualism in St. Lucia; and teacher responses.

Although the area of bilingualism was not a component of any of the three research questions, I think it is relevant to discuss the reality of bilingualism in St. Lucia. Another area which was rather evident from the findings of this study was

teachers' contradictory views when responding to items from the questionnaire. These two areas will be discussed as the findings have implications for this study and any future research.

7.2 The nature of code switching on students' texts

The findings of this study suggest that the use of code switching in students' writing is relatively a minor phenomenon and one that results in few if any errors. From all indications, the majority of student errors are a result of orthography and grammatical features. Many of the students' errors also indicated difficulties with spelling patterns. During the teachers' interview, they remarked that students' use of VESL and code switching practices are more prevalent and mostly recorded during their oral discourse and do not appear to have serious impediments on their writing. Also, when I analysed students' writing, I found errors of transfer and code switching; however, these errors were not as significant as their grammatical and orthographic errors. This substantiates the reasons why the teachers' utterances during feedback concentrated on the students' grammar, vocabulary and spelling errors.

These findings coincide with and support Winch's and Gingell's (1994) study on students' writing in St. Lucia. Their findings indicated that dialect interference was scarce in the writing of St. Lucian students in comparison with other grammatical and orthographic features. In addition, an exploratory study on dialect interference on the writing of primary schools students on the island of Dominica conducted by Abd-Kadir, Hardman and Blaize (2003) coincides with my findings. They revealed that although there were errors related to dialect features, the use of the non-standard dialect was minimal in comparison with other grammatical features. Therefore, the belief that code switching and VESL are prevalent features in students' writing which can have a negative impact on their writing is not reflected in this study.

7.3 Code switching as a resource for more effective writing

In exploring teachers' attitudes towards code switching in students' written discourse, the overall findings indicate that the majority of teachers have a positive attitude towards code switching. Significantly, the majority of teachers verified that code switching became part of their instructional activities, and was

used to facilitate students' learning, especially, those who encountered difficulty understanding concepts being taught. Furthermore, the teachers remarked that code switching is not only used for maintaining order within the classroom, but as a strategy for connecting with students who may encounter difficulty acquiring new concepts which are being taught. Teachers explained that by code switching, the lessons were more meaningful to the students. The teachers were not questioned fully on how they felt about straying from the L2 and resorting to the L1 to assist students, however, during the interview they explained that sometimes they had to revert to the L1, regardless of how hard they tried to avoid this and in the end they felt accountable when students' made errors in their writing. Cook (2001b) and Ferrer (2005) explain that there is a generalized feeling of guilt among many teachers when they deviate from the L2 path and refer to the L1 despite their efforts not to do so in their language teaching. Teachers often believe that they are straying from the principles of good teaching when they draw on the students' L1 as a means to facilitate their learning (Ferrer, 2005).

The data indicated that many teachers were pleased that students were able to use their mother tongue to express their intended meaning, especially in their writing. However, there were equal views on whether code switching impacts negatively on the students' writing. Furthermore, the results from the findings also provide an understanding that teachers prefer code switching practices in spoken discourse rather than written discourse. This finding provides an indication of the teachers' beliefs that the influence of the L1 does have an adverse effect on the students' written standard. Teachers expressed the view that they would prefer if students code switched in other genres of writing such creative writing and poetry rather than formal pieces of writing. As reiterated by Lovejoy, Fox and Wills (2009), by encouraging multi-genre writing, students will be able to use their home language and other varieties, because the other genres permit and encourage "familiar, colloquial and creative uses of language" (p. 277).

The findings addressing the question of the effectiveness of code switching in the students' writing, suggest that code switching would be more effective in other genres of writing including poetry and creative writing exercises. This correlates with the findings of Sweetland (2006) that children who were given the opportunity to use AAVE in creative writing used a variety of vernacular resources to create effective texts.

Additionally, the findings of the students' writing suggested that the students' sociolinguistic and socio-cultural environments played a major role in their writing styles. This is consistent with the fact that students' use of vernaculars in their writing is not as a result of making errors, but because they are writing the language patterns which are consistent within their wider communities (Green, 2002; Sweetland, 2006; Swords & Wheeler, 2006). As a result, I believe this would also apply to St. Lucia's context where the use of Kwéyòl and even VESL could assist students in creating more effective stories and improve their overall writing performance.

7.4 Metalinguistic awareness to connect and understand students' language use

Although this study has focused primarily on teachers' attitudes towards the students' use of code switching in their written texts, from the analysis of the data there was an indication that there was an absence of a strong metalinguistic awareness among the teachers, especially in the process of responding to the students' writing which reflected various grammatical errors including code switching and elements of transfer. My analysis of the findings also revealed that the majority of teachers were undecided about the types of code switching practices and whether they were able to identify them in their students' writing. This finding was significant as it provided details on teachers' awareness and knowledge of certain aspects and features of language learning.

The results on teachers' knowledge of the approaches which could be used to assist students who continuously code switch in their writing attracted equivalent responses. Therefore, it is important to address teachers' metalinguistic awareness strategies and understand students' language use in the classroom in regards to the relationship between spoken and written language and to make better use of techniques that compare and contrast languages or language varieties (Cummins & Hornberger, 2008). The latter point is discussed further in this section.

Fielding-Barnsley and Purdie (2005) maintain that, "metalinguistic knowledge does not need to be as detailed for teachers, but they do need to understand the

relationship between spoken and written language" (p. 66). Further, Cunningham, Perry, Stanovich and Stanovich (2004) conclude that "teachers cannot teach what they do not know, it might also be the case that teachers do not always know what they do not know" (p. 162). Therefore, teachers' pedagogical knowledge about the conceptions of L1 and L2 use in their students' writing is of utmost significance.

The study has found that in order for teachers' to maximise their language awareness, especially in the area of students' writing, they should apply research findings that have been proven to enhance their pedagogy. Additionally, Wheeler (2005) concurs that a linguistically informed teacher will be very knowledgeable of the fact that the errors in students' writing are not necessarily errors, but maybe as a result of grammar patterns from the vernaculars used within their social environment which have been transferred to their writing.

It is significant to note that the analysis of the findings in this study indicated that the teachers have to some degree stigmatized the grammar and syntax of the students' writing, rather than accept features of the vernaculars and the cultural influences on students' writing.

Almost all the teachers believed that code switching can be used positively to teach Standard English. However, the findings of this study confirmed that many teachers are unaware of approaches to assist students who code switch in their text. Furthermore, researchers (Crawford, 2006; Cummins, 2008; Siegel, 2009; Wheeler, 2005) argue for the use of the L1 in addition to the L2 to be used positively in the language learning classroom. In this case, it would be that Kwéyòl and English would be used simultaneously in order to learn the standard.

7.4.1 Separating two languages to improve language awareness.

From the analysis, it was noted that students demonstrated poor metalinguistic awareness. Therefore, it is of great significance that students should be given an opportunity to contrast between codes and see the difference between or among languages whether it be VESL/Kwéyòl or English/VESL/Kwéyòl. As highlighted earlier, comparing and contrasting language varieties in the classroom is seen to be extremely beneficial to students. One teacher (Tessa) made mention of using

this approach where students' errors were compared with the correct grammatical structures. She also remarked that this was one of the best methods in assisting her students to acquire Standard English. Additionally, there has been a substantial amount of research and support in L2 language research and theory which supports this aspect of metalinguistic awareness, especially with students who are immersed in creole-speaking environments.

Moreover, research on comparing and contrasting language has identified this as a highly effective strategy because it helps in building on the students' knowledge of grammar and also enhances students' metalinguistic awareness, thus improving their writing skills in Standard English (Marzano, Pickering & Pollock, 2001). Furthermore, one major finding by Sweetland (2006) confirms that children who were taught grammar using contrastive analysis as an editing technique demonstrated greater skill in Standard English than their peers.

However, if teachers are unaware of the types of code switching practices and the approaches, such as comparing and contrasting languages, to assist their students, then it will be impossible for them to engage in effective pedagogical practices that would assist students in acquiring the required standard as dictated by the Language Arts curriculum.

The second research question seeks to address teachers responses to students whose written texts indicate code switching errors. Hence, in this section I will discuss the findings from the analysis of the data which pertains to this research question.

7.5 Feedback as an aspect of language development

Teacher-student interactions have a significant impact on the way the students respond to learning a L2 and their overall language development. Therefore, feedback, more importantly in the area of writing, should be prioritized as this enhances the students' writing skills and language awareness.

The findings in this study revealed that teachers always provide feedback to their students whether it is whole class or individual feedback. This can be recognised as one way of supporting students' language development. Kroll (2001) maintains that feedback is one of the key components fundamental to writing, second to the

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writing task that is given. The data indicated that during teacher exchanges with their students, feedback was either form or content focused. However, what is significant is that the type of feedback the students receive could have further implications on their future drafts. Students' writing which reflected areas of transfer or code switching were categorized mainly as poor grammatical structure and students were required to make the necessary adjustments after their interaction with their teacher. Hence, the teachers' corrective feedback lacked teacher input on how their writing can be improved by utilising the L1. It is, therefore, critical that teachers are aware of their students' language backgrounds and language use, so that they can understand that their students are language learners (Angelo & Frazer, 2008) and therefore provide positive feedback in encouraging and developing an awareness of language, especially in a bilingual society. Although, students responded positively to teacher feedback their responses were restrained by teacher dominance and therefore they willingly accepted that their writing reflected the errors that were pointed out by the teacher.

The data from the findings also revealed the type of corrective feedback that teachers frequently used to address students' errors. Teachers provided students with direct feedback which facilitates in helping to improve students' level of accuracy over time (Ferris & Helt, 2000). Although my analysis of the students' writing coincided with the reasons why teachers mainly focused on providing form or content feedback only, teachers could have also discussed the code switching and transfer errors in students' writing which I thought were quite apparent and needed to be addressed.

Despite there having been constructive debate on the types of feedback that teachers should provide to students on their writing (Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 1999, 2004; Truscott, 1999, 2004, 2009; Williams, 2003) the findings from this study suggest that there is also a need for teachers to focus on and address students' errors individually, particularly with regards to issues concerning code switching and transfer. As one teacher explained, face-to-face interaction creates an atmosphere of trust between the student and the teacher and, as also noted by Ferris (2002) it may be more effective as students are presented with an opportunity to clarify and discuss their writing with their teachers. In providing feedback to students who have code switched or used VESL, teachers should

also prioritize the students' communication errors. According to Pratt-Johnson (2009) it is these errors that are considered more serious because they impede the students' ability to communicate effectively. When students are provided with such opportunities to discuss their writing, these will enable them to develop and maximise their language development especially in the required standard, in the case of St. Lucia, Standard English.

In the following section, my discussion will focus primarily on themes as they relate to research question 3. The section begins with the significance of using code switching as a metacognitive strategy in order to develop language knowledge. Secondly, I discuss the findings as they pertain to students' attitudes to the use of the L1 in their writing. Finally, the discussion findings of this study will also provide insights in to how students use their culture to communicate in their writing.

7.6 Code switching as a communication strategy

The goal of any language writing instruction should be developing students' awareness about language and ensuring that they are able to manipulate language and use it purposefully. It is therefore, necessary, that language teaching and learning activities focus on metalinguistic strategies that will encourage the development of the language awareness. It is evident that the student participants in this study lacked metalinguistic awareness since their responses and explanations for why their writing reflected certain elements of code switching and transfer were limited.

One of the major findings in this study was students' responses concerning the use of Kwéyòl in their writing. The findings suggest that the majority of students have a negative attitude towards the use of Kwéyòl in their writing. Students indicated that their knowledge of Kwéyòl does not motivate them to write something when they do not know the English word, however, the majority of students' stated that Kwéyòl motivates them to write much more than they would in English alone. Although, the two statements were closely linked, it is interesting to note the difference in the percentage of the responses to each statement. Therefore, I deduce that students either did not comprehend the statements or they wanted to provide me with favourable responses. However, what was notable was that students were using various communication strategies

in their writing in order to convey meaning. The use of this strategy will be discussed further in the subsequent section.

The findings also showed that most of the students depended on the teacher's feedback in assisting them in identifying their errors, hence, the reason for a unanimous agreement among students that the teachers are always accurate when they highlight certain parts of their written texts which indicates errors. I am in total agreement that issues regarding correctness must be highlighted and students need to ensure that their writing, especially their final drafts, must reflect the conventions of Standard English (Turner, 2009), although I would also add to this statement and state that it depends on the genre and the purpose of writing. It is also necessary that students are knowledgeable about their language and thinking processes.

The analysis of the findings also disclosed that the majority of the teachers view code switching as an effective approach in teaching Standard English, consequently, teachers can provide assistance to students in learning to actively code switch and further improve their knowledge about language. Metalinguistic awareness requires students to think about their language both in informal and formal contexts and develop their cognitive flexibility (Cartwright, 2008; Taylor, 1991; Turner, 2009; Wheeler, 2008) which plays an important role in their overall literacy development.

7.7 Communication and compensatory strategies in writing

Research indicates that learners usually overcome deficiency in their writing by using a procedural skill that enables them to express themselves in their writing (Ellis, 1994) whether by avoidance, paraphrasing or conscious transfer. Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary and Robbins (1999), Cohen, (1998), and Fan (2003) indicate that successful language learners tend to select strategies that assist them in meeting the requirements of the language task, thus these learners are able to explain the reasons for the strategies they have employed and their purpose for using them. It would have been interesting to discover the factors that influenced their choices in using the communication strategies which were noted in their writing. However, the students' responses from the findings revealed that they were unaware of the factors that influenced their writing of certain phrases or the strategy that was used to bring out the meaning.

7.8 Attitude towards using L1 in L2 writing

The findings across the three schools also shed more light on their attitudes towards a language that is embedded in our culture. Some of these attitudes were reflective of their teachers' attitudes. The majority of students did not use Kwéyòl in their writing because they believed that it was not proper English. One of the most interesting revelations was when one student from IMR stated that speaking Kwéyòl is bad. I had expected that because the community in which her school is located, where she also lives makes such a huge contribution to our Kwéyòl heritage there would be no negative views on the use of the language. However, this particular student's statement was reflective of her teacher's (Sally) view where her comments indicated that she believed that code switching was a detrimental switching and she also indicated that the students are supposed to learn Standard English and she would do all she could to assist them (See Chapter 6, Section 6.7.1, page 89). Therefore, it could be determined that Sally has a great influence on how her students view language learning in the classroom, and as Cummins (2007) asserts, this is reflective of the monolingual principle which policy makers and teachers have internalized as being valid, regardless of the fact that classrooms' pedagogical practices are deficient in portrayal of this pattern.

7.9 Writing and culture as an embedded activity in the classroom

In this study, the analysis of students' writing demonstrated that students can use their vernaculars and, more importantly, their cultural heritage in diverse ways to create interesting pieces of writing. Elbow (2002) contends that there is sufficient evidence that the use of vernacular dialects in writing is "feasible and desirable" (p. 4). This can bring about a unique style or voice (Lovejoy, Fox & Wills, 2009) to each child's writing, particularly when the folk tales are incorporated in their writing as this helps students embrace and appreciate an important aspect of their cultural heritage. This is echoed by Hairston (2003) who asserts that a student's different cultural experiences are indeed a great, genuine and rich resource in the classroom. She explains further that, "every student begins class with a picture of the world in his or her mind that is constructed out of his or her cultural background and unique and complex experience" (p. 699). Moreover, this emphasises the claims of Panetta (2001) when she discusses the issue of

cultural rhetoric and the reality that educators must pay close attention to the fact that the writing strategies employed by L2 learners may be culturally formed. As a result, teachers must be cognizant that through writing many students are able to voice their cultural experiences using their own cultural lens (Katz & Champion, 2009; Jetton, Savage-Davis & Baker, 2009). For this reason, teachers must develop a positive attitude and an understanding of the children's culture, and in so doing also develop their knowledge of the pedagogy that they can use in their writing classrooms to encourage students to write creatively for different purposes and audiences. Also, this would encourage children to encode those cultural experiences in a language that truly expresses them. Bloome, Champion, Katz, Morton and Muldrow (2001) argue for multiple formats in evaluating children's writing, particularly in reference to the narrative styles and structures that they bring into the classroom from their sociolinguistic environment. This point is reiterated by Montes-Alcalá (2005) when she states:

> The language(s) one speak represent(s) the culture(s) one identifies with. If those languages are valued, the cultures associated with the languages will be valued as well. Thus, code switching represents a way of expressing one's cultures as much as one's languages. (p. 107)

Therefore, teachers will become more aware and recognise the significance of the interaction among language, culture and the construction of knowledge as it relates to children's writing.

7.10 Reality of language varieties in St. Lucia

From all observations, St. Lucia is a multilingual society because there are three language varieties in use, and most persons are bilingual because they possess a degree of competence in any one of the three language varieties: St. Lucian Standard English, Kwéyòl and VESL. Despite the three language varieties which exist, during the interview, Tessa explained that there has not been sufficient exposure to the Kwéyòl language. However, I disagreed with her statement because I believe that the Kwéyòl activists have been very proactive in the pursuing development of Kwéyòl as a language. In addition, there have been a number of media broadcasts and programmes on television and on the radio, many of our Calypsonians and other artistes have musical recordings in which their lyrical content consists of Kwéyòl. Most importantly, there has been political support for the use of the language in the media and now in the House of

Parliament. It was in 1997 when the out-going Governor General during his Throne Speech indicated that the government would be exploring all the possibilities of allowing Kwéyòl into parliament. Mallet (as cited in Nwemely, 1999) stated, "Kwéyòl sé langue ek lam pep-la [Kwéyòl is the language and soul of the people] and Parliament as the supreme expression of the sovereign will of people must accommodate itself to that reality" (p. 274).

I do not believe that there has been insufficient exposure to Kwéyòl. I shared similar sentiments with Tessa, when she explained further that, "it is one thing to speak the Kwéyòl language and another to write it." This is true because I find myself struggling to write the Kwéyòl for this study and at times may be writing a French word instead of Kwéyòl, because of the many similarities between the two. Also, I was educated in French at school and I have relied on my knowledge of French to assist me with my writing of Kwéyòl.

I am of the view that the reason the other languages, rather than Kwéyòl are being taught in our St. Lucian schools is that they have become widely recognised and, of course Spanish, has also become a foreign language that is widely used especially in North America. Therefore, I agree with Roberts (1994) when he explains that if the vernacular:

> [Kwéyòl] is encouraged and allowed to develop its own norms in the educational system, it will be perceived as a variety with its own functions, its own place in West Indian literature, its own power, and it will inspire users beyond an initial enthusiastic stage. (p. 57)

Therefore, Kwéyòl or VESL may be seen as languages that are linguistically equal to all other languages.

During the interview, the teachers and I also discussed that as a result of the limited exposure to Kwéyòl, students have a negative perception of the language. The teachers agreed that students are taught to learn and appreciate Kwéyòl only in the month of October when Kwéyòl heritage month is being celebrated and all aspects of our Kwéyòl heritage become one of the major attractions, and that special day when the schools host activities for students to wear Kwéyòl clothes and eat Kwéyòl food.

A major finding which arose out of the teacher interview during the discussion on the issue of bilingualism was that social settings play a major role in language situations. According to Thomason and Kaufman (1988) and Thomason (2001), when social factors and linguistic factors are likely to create opposite results in a language contact situation, the social factors will be the major determinants of the linguistic outcome. In contrast, in reviewing a number of variability studies, Preston (1996) argues, "the most important influencing factors on the variability of inter-language performance are linguistic ones" (p. 38). Moreover, in another article he expresses the view that "linguistic influences are nearly always probabilistically heavier than socio-cultural influences" (Preston, 2002, p.146). However, what is significant is that the findings of this study suggest that the children's linguistic repertoires are chosen for their social purposes

Part of St. Lucia's cultural identity is its bilingualism, hence for learners to develop awareness and become linguistically competent in the L1 there must be a language policy that takes into account the acceptability of the Kwéyòl language and upholds it.

7.11 Teachers' responses

Another significant finding was the contradictory views expressed by the teachers when responding to statements which were more or less interrelated on the questionnaire. This may be an indication of one of the short-comings of the use of a Likert-type scale questionnaire as the statements are absolute. However, another reason for teachers' contradicting views on their attitudes and belief practices could be as a result of their haste to complete the question and not thoroughly reading through and understanding the statements. Furthermore, teachers' cognitive dissonance (Craft, 2010) was clearly demonstrated when teachers responded to statements on their views of the processes of code switching, their personal practice and the contexts in which Kwéyòl use is acceptable.

The analysis of the findings revealed that there was a conflict between their attitudes, practices and overt behavior. This mental conflict of the teachers' views means they may not have truthfully answered the research questions and this could have compromised the results of the findings. Moreover, teachers must be cognizant of the fact that our attitudes and beliefs about language, inform and

shape our pedagogy, therefore, it is time that teachers apply evidence-based research findings and theories that are applicable to their classroom environments. Craft (2010) explains "all theories have important implications for teaching, especially if teachers wish to reach beyond content knowledge and basic teaching skills for professional self improvement" (para. 11). This could therefore, resolve their contradictory thinking about language and learning as it relates to a bilingual society.

7.12 Summary

The discussion has focused on areas of the findings which are significant to the research questions that guide this study.

The findings reaffirmed much of the discourse theory of the significance of teacher attitudes towards their students' languages, particularly in a bilingual society, where the recognition of language varieties plays a critical role in achieving competence in the TL. The discussion also substantiates the findings that teachers need to make countless decisions about students' language learning and their language use in the classrooms. The research findings of a study on teachers' beliefs and their relation to self reported practices indicate that teachers' bear testimony to the fact that when learners are given an opportunity to positively develop their L1, they are able to demonstrate metalinguistic awareness and cognitive flexibility.

Additionally, the discussion highlighted the importance of teachers' language awareness and knowledge as this is critical language in enhancing students' language learning. It was identified that teachers needed to decide which grammatical, pragmatic, and discourse standards they must use in order to promote language learning in their classrooms. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to recognise that there is a complex relationship between subject matter knowledge and the ability to communicate language effectively because of the interconnectedness between language teaching content and the medium of instruction. The role of code switching is one way of connecting with students and meeting their individual language learning needs in the classroom. The discussions revealed that teachers also need to be aware of the social dimensions of language use, because when teachers grapple with how to productively use their students' L1 in the classroom they must draw on

sociolinguistic expertise. When teachers "deal with students' attitudes toward language variation, they need sociolinguistic variation" (Mckay, 2005, p. 281). It was also identified that students' cultural experiences and their L1 played an integral role in their writing and that culture and writing depending on the genre of writing should not be isolated.

From all indications, teachers need to recognise that the use of code switching, L1 or vernaculars in the classroom can create a number of possibilities in the classroom. Cummins (2008) highlights a number of illustrations that suggest that many instructional possibilities can occur when the students' L1 and prior knowledge are used as essential tools for learning and students' culture can be used creatively and positively in their writing.

Overall, the discussion revealed that although teachers expressed contradictory views on various aspects on their knowledge and use of code switching, they generally had a positive attitude towards code switching, and they believed that with proper education on the topic, they would be able to use code switching positively to teach the required standard. This means that, despite code switching not being as prevalent as was expected in the students' writing in this research, teachers' are aware that it does exist and are willing to learn more in order to improve students' writing. This, therefore, indicates that such an area may require further study.

With the formation of a language commission in October 2010, there will soon be a clear cut policy on the status of languages spoken in St. Lucia. It is anticipated that the language commission will end the prolonged debate on St. Lucian creole/VESL as a formal language. Furthermore, the establishment of the language commission will assist in developing a language policy that will assist in the recognition and development of our own languages in the classrooms rather than other foreign languages such as French and Spanish. Our L1 needs to be legitimized and promoted, and programmes should be initiated in an effort to assist all stakeholders to learn how to read and write the language, just as the other foreign languages are taught.

In the following chapter, I present the suggestions for future research to address the issues which have emerged as a result of my findings. I also address the

limitations of this current study and have included recommendations for further action to address and research teachers' attitudes and practices in regard to students' writing.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

The possibility that code switching practices in students' written texts affect students' language development has been a concern for many teachers and other educators. However, this study has shown that teachers' attitudes and practice can be influential on students' written code switching. It further indicates how teachers' beliefs can have an impact on the language teaching and learning environment. The context of this study also signifies the importance of acknowledging the L1 of bilingual students as a means of assisting them to develop linguistic competence in the L2. Overall, most teachers have positive attitudes towards code switching and suggest that with adequate knowledge of the phenomenon it can be used positively in students' writing to teach academic language, Standard English. Furthermore, the importance of accommodating students' L1 and culture into the language learning classroom can be categorized as a principle of good practice in L2 learning. From all indications, the students had a poor attitude towards Kwéyòl in their writing, hence the reason for the evidence of limited code switching between Kwéyòl and English. However, the use of VESL resulted in poor grammatical structure in their writing.

In this final chapter, I will first provide some suggestions which I believe will assist teachers in enhancing their pedagogical practices in the language learning classroom in St. Lucia. The suggestions are applicable to all grades among the primary schools in St. Lucia and not only the Grade 5 teachers and their classes where the study was conducted. It is hoped that these suggestions will assist teachers view vernacular education as a means of facilitating and promoting students' confidence in understanding and learning the value of language. Also presented in this chapter are suggestions to the Ministry of Education and Culture in St. Lucia and other agencies/stakeholders who are responsible for overseeing the Language Arts curriculum. These suggestions are intended to assist all stakeholders in making informed decisions about language learning classrooms in St. Lucia. The Ministry of Education and other agencies are encouraged to support teachers in improving students' communicative competence, flexibility and creativity in the vernaculars which will in turn maintain their overall linguistic

competence in the TL. This chapter also highlights some areas for further research which will lead to other studies on code switching and the use of language varieties, particularly Kwéyòl and VESL,which form part of students' linguistic habitus. The chapter concludes with a summary of this study and the importance of teachers' and students' attitudes towards and practices in cross linguistic transfer and their implications for academic writing.

8.2 Suggestions for teachers

1. Negative attitudes towards students' language variety are as a result of traditional views and misunderstandings of the vernaculars of English and code switching practices. In order to change their attitudes, teachers must enrol in programs or obtain resource material that will assist in facilitating their understanding of both vernaculars and code switching practices.

2. Using a language awareness approach will be beneficial to both the teacher and the students. Therefore, teachers need to incorporate language variation as part of their classroom language teaching, this would include the local varieties and also other regional varieties. Further, placing emphasis on the appropriateness of different language varieties for different situations, the students will begin to think about language and will select the language that is applicable to their writing.

3. In order to develop metalinguistic awareness among students and change students' negative perceptions about the use of Kwéyòl in their writing, teachers can provide opportunities for students to reflect on and choose the language appropriate for their genre of writing. This enhances their metalinguistic awareness and can be seen as a guiding principle in producing the formal language.

4. Teachers can develop a focused contrastive analysis approach language activities in order to identify common errors that occur as a result of transfer between L1/ VESL and Standard English.

5. Teachers, who are hesitant about using the L1, must recognise and become aware of the theory of moving from the known to the unknown. In so doing, they will build students' competence in the L2, based on

concepts of the L1. It is therefore important that teachers through the use of contrastive analysis will determine the cross lingual similarities and differences among students. This will assist them in ensuring that the students develop strategies that will assist in developing their linguistic awareness.

6. Feedback to students is a very important factor in any language learning classroom, therefore teachers should allocate appropriate times in order to make student-teacher interaction very meaningful. Feedback should not be rushed, and both parties need sufficient time to discuss the written text. Teachers would, therefore, have the opportunity to provide thorough feedback and students would have an opportunity to express themselves and develop their language awareness.

7. Teachers should also include a range of Caribbean literature into their language teaching. By doing this, students would be able to examine language use and discuss the writing styles and themes applicable to the genres of writing. Furthermore, this will help students appreciate the diversity of language varieties that exist within the region.

8.3 Suggestions for the Ministry of Education (M.O.E) and other agencies

1. The M.O.E, in collaboration along with linguists and curriculum units need to provide training so that teachers will be equipped in providing corrective feedback to their students about language use. Additionally, the M.O.E training exercises can include programs on alternative strategies/approaches for teachers regarding their pedagogy concerning language instruction, particularly in the area of writing. Teacher training should also include the variety of ways that students' L1 can be supported within the classroom and how this can be incorporated to assist them in achieving the competence in both oral and written Standard English.

2. The English language department of the Curriculum and Materials Development Unit needs to play a more proactive role in enforcing a language policy that would cater to the diverse needs of students,

especially in the early primary years when students are becoming linguistically aware of the structure and function of language. Moreover, there is urgent need to develop a language curriculum where teachers do not feel intimidated when they wish to use Kwéyòl, VESL or code switch during instruction

3. Cultural activists concerned with preserving the Kwéyòl should continue advocating for the use of the L1 as a form of instruction in schools, in order to preserve the cultural heritage of St. Lucia.

The suggestions presented above are not the answers for the use of Kwéyòl or VESL which are observable in students' writing, nor are they restricted in terms of addressing code switching practices. They serve primarily as means of improving attitudes, sustaining and preserving the Kwéyòl language for future generations. These suggestions are also guides to all stakeholders as a way forward to incorporate best practices and improve pedagogical practices in language teaching and learning, including the use of vernacular varieties in St. Lucian classrooms.

8.4 Future research

Several limitations of this present study should be kept in mind. One potential limitation is teachers' dissonance, where their responses were sometimes contradictory. As a result, the respondents may have responded to the questionnaire statements indiscriminately because of their unwillingness to complete the questionnaire or because they did not want to participate in this study. Further, I had no way of measuring or ensuring the sincerity and honesty of the respondents' attitudes and practices, since the findings were not based on their observable behaviour. Therefore, the use of the questionnaire may not have provided an accurate synopsis into teachers' attitudes and practice on students' use of code switching in their writing. As a result, future research can use another method such as interviewing teachers. By using semi-structured questions during the interview, participants will not be restricted to one answer and will have an opportunity to clarify and validate their responses. Secondly, the findings are based on one written sample of each student's texts. The use of more written samples containing various genres of writing would have provided a more detailed analysis of students' use of code switching and Kwéyòl in their writing.

Although the limitations presented above are focused on two of the data collection methods, I believe that the methodology used was best for this study. Most importantly, the data collected provided interesting information about teachers' attitudes and practice in the language learning classroom and also answered the research questions which guided this study.

The findings are based on the respondents' attitudes and practice towards code switching in writing. Many important issues have emerged from this study which are worthy of consideration for future research on teachers' and students' attitudes towards language teaching and learning in St. Lucia, particularly focusing on the use of language varieties in students' writing. The study has highlighted various theoretical implications for the use of code switching and other language varieties in students' writing in the language learning classroom.

Although the results indicate that teachers are more geared towards using Standard English or the monolingual principle in their language learning classrooms, it is important that as educators our responsibility is to identify and use effective pedagogical practices in our bilingual/multilingual language learning environment that would cater to the diverse needs of our students. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that various issues emerged from the findings which can further be explored in future research in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of attitudes towards and practices in using code switching and language varieties in students' writing.

First, it would be significant if further research on teachers' and students' attitudes and practices both orally and in writing, was conducted where their actual classroom behavior can be observed. Secondly, this study has also focused on the students, therefore, a study which would investigate more in depth students' attitudes and beliefs about using language varieties, especially Kwéyòl, in their writing would be welcomed. Researchers could also carry out similar research by using other methods to investigate the teaching of writing in the L2 through L1 concepts. Finally, the findings underscore the need for teacher metalinguistic awareness in the language learning classroom. It would be valuable if a longitudinal observational study could be conducted on the importance of teacher metalinguistic awareness and whether this knowledge is related to students' ability to write conventionally.

8.5 Conclusion

> Language has a central place in every classroom: Teachers use it to communicate ideas, to put questions to their students, to process their answers, to provide feedback, to elaborate, Students use it to comprehend, to follow instructions, to convey their ideas, to relate to others, to demonstrate their understandings. When teachers and their students do not share the same language, this core mechanism for communication is disrupted. (Angelo & Frazer, 2008, p. 23)

Teachers' metalinguistic awareness of the structure of language is very important in the language learning classroom, especially when the class consists of bilinguals. When students are aware of linguistic structures they are able to build on their language skills, particularly in the target language and develop positive attitudes towards language learning.

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' and students' attitudes and towards and practices in code switching in Grade 5 students writing in selected primary schools in St. Lucia. In so doing, I have discussed the language situation in St. Lucia and also language diversity as it relates to the language varieties in the Caribbean, particularly in St. Lucia. I also addressed the importance of teachers' attitudes and beliefs to language and how this can influence learners' linguistic behaviours. Furthermore, I discussed the importance of the L1 in the L2 learning classroom and addressed various issues, including the importance of teacher metalinguistic awareness.

In addressing these issues, the study revealed that although there were very few written scripts indicating that the students' errors were as a result of code switching in their writing, the influence of the other two non standard varieties (Kwéyòl and VESL) was visible, which resulted in both positive and negative transfer. Overall, the study has gathered some important data on the attitudes of teachers and students towards code switching in their writing. The majority of the teachers had a positive attitude towards code switching practices in their classrooms. However, their language awareness and dissonance are areas of perennial concern. The students, on the other hand, need to be knowledgeable about how language works, especially when they are made to believe that the use of their L1 is bad and it also inhibits their acquisition of the standard variety.

There is no doubt that the conventions of academic writing are necessary, but it is also important for students to be exposed to their L1 and culture and experience what they can do with their own language (Lovejoy, Fox & Wills, 2009). Code switching is not a consequence of being deficient in Standard English, but rather its use demonstrates that students have a high level of communicative competence. Therefore, it is necessary that all teachers, especially those in bilingual societies, have knowledge of the phenomenon and display attitudes that will support its use. However, the change in attitude will depend heavily on the status assigned to the languages and particularly the use of languages as a device for social control.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Teacher cover letter and questionnaire

January 4th, 2010

Dear Teacher,

I am Berthina Auguste-Walter, currently pursuing a Masters in Education degree at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. As part of the requirement towards my Masters thesis I am required to conduct research in my field of study. The title of my study is: Teachers' and students' attitudes and practices regarding code switching in writing: A study in selected primary schools in St. Lucia.

For many teachers, the term code switching maybe unheard of as it is generally referred as language interference or transfer. Code switching is the alternative use of two or more languages within the same conversation. As you are aware, this is an area of concern to all of us in St. Lucia because of our cultural heritage and the Kweyol influence.

I would appreciate if you would complete this questionnaire truthfully. Through the questionnaire I hope to find out teachers' attitudes towards students' code switching practices in their writing. I can assure you that there will be utmost discretion and ethical consideration during and after the research. The questionnaire should take about 20 minutes to complete and if you were able to complete and return it within two weeks, this will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Berthina Auguste-Walter

Section A

All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be coded accordingly. No one, other than the researcher, will have access to the information on this questionnaire. Thank you.

Sex: Male...........☐ Female ....☐

To which age group do you belong?

20 - 29 yrs..☐   30 - 39 yrs..☐   40 - 49 yrs..☐   50 - 59 yrs..☐

How many years have you been teaching at Primary school level?..............._____ years

How long have you been teaching in this school?.................._____ years

Which grade are you presently teaching?...............Grade_____

How many hours weekly are allocated to teaching Language Arts ?............hours

How many out of the total number hours allocated to Language Arts are used to develop students writing skills?.........._____hours

On average how much time per week do you spend giving individual feedback to students based on their writing.
None...☐
15 mins or less…..☐
16-30 mins..☐

Which of the following qualifications do you hold? [*Please tick all that apply*]

A primary school teaching diploma or certificate, or other Primary school qualification...........☐

A primary degree in education(B.Ed)……………………………………. ☐

A primary degree in another subject………………………………….. ☐

A postgraduate diploma in education…………………………………… ☐

A qualification in learning support, special education or resource teaching..☐

A higher degree in education (Masters, PhD, etc)………………………. ☐

Other [please specify]…………………………………………………..

Questionnaire

Read each of the statements carefully and indicate your response by putting a tick in the box that matches your perception of code switching.

Strongly Agree – SA   A -Agree   Undecided -U   Disagree – D   Strongly Disagree- SD

Teacher Attitudes towards code switching in students' writing.	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. Code switching impacts negatively on students' acquisition of Standard English.					
2. Students' home environment impacts on their use of code switching.					
3. School Language Arts policies should incorporate the teaching of the mother tongue/ Kweyol so that teachers will deal more effectively with code switching in their students' written texts					
4. I sometimes code switch during my instruction because it helps students understand the lesson/concept being taught.					
5. Code switching is seen more in students' Language Arts writing than in other subjects.					
6. I am aware of approaches that can be used to help students who frequently code switch in their writing.					
7. There should be more acceptance towards the students' use of code switching and how it can be used positively.					
8. I believe code switching can be used positively to teach Standard English.					
9. There should be more sensitization towards the students' use of code switching and how it can be used positively.					

		SA	A	U	D	SD
10.	I regard code switching as a normal part of the process in learning to use Standard English.					
11.	I feel that code switching is a form of "broken English".					
12.	I only code switch to maintain order in my classroom.					
13.	I prefer when my students code switch orally rather than in their writing.					
14.	I am aware of the types of code switching practices and I can identify them in the students' writing.					
15.	I want to learn more about code switching so I can assist my students more effectively					
	When I see code switching in students' written text :					
16.	I am pleased that they are able to use their mother tongue to help them express their intended meaning.					
17.	It is difficult to read and I cannot help but highlight and correct their errors.					
18.	I give the students positive encouragement and use this opportunity as a learning opportunity for all students.					

Section C

How important is it for students to speak English only in the classroom?

Very   Moderately   Not   Undecided
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

How useful is it to encourage students to write stories in Kwéyòl?

Very   Moderately   Not   Undecided
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Do you think it is important to teach English language patterns and structures?

Very   Moderately   Not   Undecided
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

How important do you believe it is to cater to those students who continuously code switch in their written texts?

Very	Moderately	Not	Undecided
☐	☐	☐	☐

How valuable would it be to receive professional learning on using code switching effectively?

Very	Moderately	Not	Undecided
☐	☐	☐	☐

Do you believe that the study of Kwéyòl should be included as a subject taught in primary schools?

Very	Moderately	Not	Undecided
☐	☐	☐	☐

Indicate the contexts that you think are acceptable for Kwéyòl use by students**.**

Spoken interaction outside the classroom	Spoken interaction inside the classroom for social purposes.	Spoken interaction inside the classroom on curriculum content.
☐	☐	☐

Appendix B: Semi-structured interview with teachers

1. How do you feel about code switching in your classroom?

2. How would you describe your approach to assisting students who code switch in their written text?

3 a) Do you think that students who have code switched in their writing respond negatively or positively to feedback in their writing?

      b) Why do they respond negatively?

      c) Why do they respond positively?

4. What factors would say contribute or influence students' code switching practices in their writing?

5. What effect, if any, do you think that knowing the mother tongue has on children in their writing?

6. Do you think it is an advantage to students when they know two languages?

7. How do you deal with a child who continuously code switches in his or her text?

8. When do you think using code switching in students' texts is most effective? Least effective?

9. Do you feel uneasy if you have to use Kwéyòl or code switch in your instruction?

10. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of using English only in teaching?

11. Do you feel pressured by the English National Curriculum to focus on teaching students Standard English?

Appendix C: Semi-structured interview with students

1. Can you read the text that you have written?

2. Do you have any errors that you think that could have been avoided?

3. Why did you write………………..? (Certain part of the text that reflects code switching).

4. The teacher has highlighted this part of your text as also being wrong. Why do you think she identified this part of your text as being wrong?

5. What are you going to do about the errors that she highlighted? Do you think they are errors?

6. Are you are able to make those changes yourself or do you need help from the teacher?

How I feel about using Kwéyòl in my writing	Yes	Sometimes	No
I know when I am using Kwéyòl in my writing.			
I use Kwéyòl when I am writing direct speech.			
It helps me to write something when I don't know the English word			
It helps me to write when I think I'm going to make a mistake in English.			
It helps me describe how I feel.			
It makes my writing more interesting.			
It helps me express myself more fluently in my writing.			
It motivates me to write much more than I would in English alone.			

Appendix D: Invitation letter to teacher participants and consent form

Dear Grade Class Teacher,

I am Berthina Auguste-Walter, currently pursuing a Masters in Education degree at the University of Waikato,in New Zealand. As part of the requirement towards my Masters thesis I am required to conduct research in my field of study. The title of my study is: Teachers' and students' attitudes and practices regarding code switching in writing: A study in selected primary schools in St. Lucia.

For many teachers the term code switching maybe unheard of as it is generally referred as language interference or transfer. Code switching is the alternative use of two or more languages within the same conversation. As you are aware, this is an area of concern to all of us in St. Lucia because of our cultural heritage and Kwéyòl influence. My aim therefore is to interview teachers and students about the influence of code switching practices in students' written texts and gain a "snapshot" of teachers as they respond to students writing.

The first interview will focus on your attitude towards students' use of code switching in their written texts, whereas the second interview will focus on your response to students who have code switched in their writing. This will be done after I have analysed students' written scripts and noted their errors in their writing. Each interview will be conducted between 25 minutes and will be at a time that is convenient for you. Secondly, the audio taping of sessions with students will be done while you are providing feedback to students on their writing. The recording will be audio taped only if you and your students have agreed to be recorded.

The data generated from this research will be used specifically for my Masters thesis and other academic papers and presentations relating to my study. You can rest assured that all the information that you and your students have provided will be kept confidential. Further, you will be asked to review any material collected and may add, change or delete any information if you wish to do so. If you have any concerns of an ethical nature regarding the study, please address them to myself in the first instance and then to my supervisor, Dr Margaret Franken of the School of Education at the University of Waikato at the following email address; franken@waikato.ac.nz or telephone (07) 838 4640, Ext 6360.

I would appreciate it if you can complete the consent form attached to indicate whether you would like to be a participant or non-participant in this research.

Thank you and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely

....

Berthina Auguste- Walter

Please read each statement carefully and put a tick in the box to show that you understand the research activities you will be involved in and the conditions before signing this form.

☐ My participation in the research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw any data that has not been transcribed.

☐ I and my school will not be identified in any discussions or publications of the research.

☐ All the information pertaining to me will be destroyed five years after the completion of this study.

☐ The information about me obtained during the research will only be used for the purpose of the research study, published papers and presentations.

☐ My signed consent will be completed before the commencement of the interviews and classroom recordings.

☐ I understand that I will be involved in interviews and audio taping sessions.

☐ I have read and understood the above research and guidelines and agree to participate in this research.

Name:_____

School:_____

Signed:_____

Date:_____

Appendix E: Letter to parents to obtain consent and consent forms

Berthina Auguste-Walter
4/36 Hogan Street
Hillcrest, Hamilton
New Zealand
3216

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am Berthina Auguste-Walter, currently pursuing a Masters in Education degree at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. I am seeking your consent for your child to be involved in a study related to students' writing that I am going to carry out at his/her school.

The study is entitled: Teachers' and students' attitudes and practices regarding code switching in writing: A study in selected primary schools in St. Lucia. It focuses on understanding why students write a certain way in their texts. Samples of your child's writing will be used for analysis, however, his/her name will be removed.

Your child may be selected and interviewed based on examples of code switching featured in his/her written text. The interview will be of a 10 minute duration and will be conducted at a time which is convenient for both the classroom teacher and the child so as to minimize any disruptions. It will be conducted in a group of three. Your child will also be recorded as the class teacher provides feedback to him/her based on his or her writing.

I assure you that your child's participation is voluntary and will require both your consent and that of your child.

Permission from the District Education Officer and the School principal has been sought and approved and your child's teacher has indicated his/her willingness to participate in this study.

If you have any concerns of an ethical nature regarding the study, please address them to myself in the first instance and then to my supervisor, Dr Margaret Franken of the School of Education at the University of Waikato at the following email address; franken@waikato.ac.nz or telephone (07) 838 4640, Ext 6360.

Thank you, and if you wish to contact me further about this research study I can be reached at the above address or contact me at telephone number 1-758-450-4887 or you can speak with me when I am visiting your child's school.

I would appreciate if you would please complete the attached consent form and return it to your child's class teacher by …………………….

Yours Sincerely

……………………..

Berthina Auguste-Walter

Name (Please Print Clearly)_____

☐ I am willing for my child _____ to participate in the study being conducted by Berthina Auguste- Walter.

☐ I understand that the identity of my child will remain confidential and that I may withdraw my child from the study at any time.

I am willing for my child:_____

☐ To give the researcher access to writing samples.

☐ To be part of classroom activities that are recorded.

☐ To be part of a group interview if chosen.

Signed:_____

Relationship to child:_____

Date:_____

Please include a postal address here if you would like a summary of the study to be sent.

Appendix F: Student consent form

Dear Student,

Your parents /guardians and your teacher have granted me permission to interview you as a participant in my study which I will be conducting at your school.

I will be asking you short questions about your writing and ensure you that I will not interrupt your lessons.

The interview will take about fifteen minutes to complete and any of the information that you have provided will be kept confidential.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and if you do not wish to participate you can withdraw your participation at anytime.

Thank you and I look forward to working with you.

I feel ☺ ☹ 😐 about participating in this study.

Name:_____

Class:_____

Date:_____

Appendix G: Letter to the principal

Dear Sir/Madam

As a follow up to our emails with regard to my proposed research in St Lucia, I wish to provide you with more details of my project. I am currently enrolled for a four paper Master's thesis with the School of Education, at the University of Waikato in New Zealand.

I am researching the topic of code switching in students' written text. For many teachers the term code switching maybe unheard of as it is generally referred as language interference or transfer. Code switching is the alternative use of two or more languages within the same conversation. As you are aware, this is an area of concern to all of us in St. Lucia because of our cultural heritage and Kwéyòl influence. My aim therefore is to interview teachers and students about code switching practices in students' written texts and gain a "snapshot" of teachers as they respond to students' writing.

I would like to work with a Grade 5 class teacher and his/her students in your school. I would also like to find out the views of the other members on this phenomenon and would appreciate if each teacher would be willing to fill in a questionnaire.

The interview and audio recording is scheduled to be carried out during the period January to February, 2010. The data generated will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of this study and other future publications relating to my research.

I will take care to minimize disruptions to the class programme, to the teachers and students involved by negotiating times carefully with them.
If you have any concerns of an ethical nature regarding the study, please address them to myself in the first instance and then to my supervisor, Dr Margaret Franken of the School of Education at the University of Waikato at the following email address; franken@waikato.ac.nz or telephone (07) 838 4640, Ext 6360.

I look forward to meeting and discussing this project with you and your teachers. If you have any further questions regarding my proposed research study, I can be contacted at the following addresses and telephone numbers:

Berthina Auguste-Walter
4/36 Hogan Street
Hamilton, NZ, 3216.

Berthina Auguste-Walter
P.O Box 1156, Castries
        St. Lucia.

Thank you for your kind cooperation and prior consent for access to your school.

Yours Sincerely,
…………………………..
Berthina Auguste- Walter

Appendix H: Letter to the Permanent Secretary seeking permission to conduct research in Primary schools

4/36 Hogan Street
Hillcrest, Hamilton,
New Zealand, 3216
January 4th,2010

Dr. Rufina Frederick
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education and Culture
Francis Compton Building, Waterfront
Castries

Re: Permission to conduct research in Primary Schools
Dear Dr. Frederick

I am writing to seek your permission to conduct research with three primary schools in St. Lucia. They are _____School in District ___, _____School in District___, and _____ School in District _____. The title of my research topic is: Teachers' and students' attitudes and practices regarding code switching in writing: A study in selected primary schools in St. Lucia.This proposed research is being undertaken as a fulfillment of the requirement for my Masters studies, which I am currently pursuing at the School of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand.

The aim of my research study is explore teachers' attitudes towards code switching in their students' written texts and ways that the teachers can use students' code switching practices effectively to teach them the required standard. In order to achieve the aim of this study, I will be working with Grade 5 students and their teacher in the selected schools within a time frame of one month (January 18th – February 18th, 2010).

The data generated will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of this study and other future publications relating to my research. I can assure you that ethical considerations and procedures stated in the University of Waikato Human Ethics Regulations will be observed throughout the study.

If you have any concerns of an ethical nature regarding the study, please address them to myself in the first instance and then to my supervisor, Dr Margaret Franken of the School of Education at the University of Waikato at the following email address; franken@waikato.ac.nz or telephone (07) 838 4640, Ext 6360.

I look forward to a favourable response from you at your earliest convenience via email in order to begin the necessary arrangements to begin my fieldwork in January, 2010. My email address is ba40@students.waikato.ac.nz. Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely

………………………

Berthina Auguste-Walter

Appendix I: Application to the Ministry of Education seeking permission to conduct research and approval to conduct research

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & CULTURE

RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

Application For Permission

Corporate Planning Unit
10/1/2009

Persons seeking assistance from the Ministry of Education in the conduct of their research are kindly required to complete the attached form and return to the Research Officer in the Corporate Planning Unit.

RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

The Ministry of Education & Culture through the Research Officer provides support to students/persons conducting research in education. This support involves access to available relevant documentation/literature, consultation on the research process and topics outlined in the Ministry's Research Agenda.

Persons conducting research in the field of education and Culture are continually encouraged to share the findings and recommendations emanating from their work. This will allow the Ministry of Education to gain access to empirical data that can inform the various initiatives aimed at improving the entire education system. Further, knowledge of the work done by researchers in the field of education will assist in the revision of the Ministry's Research Agenda and greatly reduce duplication of research in similar areas.

Persons seeking assistance from the Ministry of Education in the conduct of their research are kindly required to complete the attached form and return to the Research Officer in the Corporate Planning Unit.

Please be informed that the information presented will assist the Ministry of Education in updating its database of research providers and work done to date in the area of Education.

SAINT LUCIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & CULTURE

__Application for Permission to Undertake Research in Public Schools__

A. *(Please write legibly)*

RESEARCHER:

Surname: ….AUGUSTE- WALTER……. First Name: ..BERTHINA………………

Address: ..P.O. Box 1156, CASTRIES, ST. LUCIA……………………

Email Address:..aberthina @hotmail.com /ba40 @waikato.students.ac.nz

Telephone Number(s): 758-450-4884…………… Mobile: …758(713-6856)

School/Institution: …UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO………………………

Department/Faculty: ….SCHOOL OF EDUCATION………………………

Programme of Study: ….LANGUAGE AND LITERACY EDUCATION. Year:……………

Level: *Undergraduate* ☐   *Graduate* ☐   *Post Graduate* ✓

Completion date of Programme of study: ….MARCH, 2011……………………

Objective(s) of Research: To document the nature of code switching errors in students' written texts. To examine students' and teachers' perceptions of the seriousness of Kwéyòl influenced errors in their writing. Lastly to evaluate the impact of teacher's corrections on students' written texts on the changes made in their texts

Data Required for: *Long essay* ☐   *Dissertation/Thesis* ✓   *Publication* ☐

'School(s) where research is to be carried out: *(Please List)*

.... Combined School   ....
.... s Combined School   ....
.... Primary School   ....

Proposed Sample* ...... One Grade Five class from each ....
.... school and their teacher. ....

Estimated duration of research in school(s): From: .18 January, 2010 To: ..February 18th, 2010

Documents/Materials obtained from the Ministry of Education: *(Please List if applicable)*

....
....
....
....
....
....

Signature of Applicant: *B. Augusto for* ......   Date: *15/01/10* ....
                        B. Walter

B. Tutor's Approval (where applicable)

The above mentioned research work is being carried out under my supervision.

Tutor's Name: DR. MARGARET FRANKEN .... Signature: ....

C. Ministry of Education – Official Approval

The above request for permission to carry out research in Public Schools is hereby approved according to the conditions overleaf.

Signature of Authorizing Officer: ...... *Marcus Edward* .... Date: *Jan 15, 2010*
                                        R   Research Officer

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* *Researchers are advised to restrict the sample size to a minimum of teachers/students to minimize disruption to schools.*

4

Appendix J: Letter to District Education Officer to conduct research at the selected Primary school in District_____

4/36 Hogan Street
Hillcrest, Hamilton,
New Zealand, 3216
January 4th,2010

District Education Officer
District ………………

Re: Permission to conduct research in _____Primary School

Dear Sir /Madam:

I am writing to seek your permission to conduct research with a Grade 5 class and their teacher in the _____ School. The title of my research topic is: Teachers' and students' attitudes and practices regarding code switching in writing: A study in selected primary schools in St. Lucia.

This proposed research is being undertaken as a fulfillment of the requirement towards my Masters studies, which I am currently pursuing at the School of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand.

The aim of my research study is explore teachers' attitudes towards code switching in their students' written texts and ways that the teachers can use students' code switching practices effectively to teach them the required standard. In order to achieve the aim of this study, I will be working with the Grade 5 students and their teacher within a time frame of one month (January 9th – February 9th, 2010).

The students and their teacher will be the key participants of the research study and will be involved in interviews. Other staff members will be required to complete a questionnaire.

The data generated will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of this study and other future publications relating to my research. I can assure you that ethical considerations and procedures stated in the University of Waikato Human Ethics Regulations will be observed throughout the study.

If you have any concerns of an ethical nature regarding the study, please address them to myself in the first instance and then to my supervisor, Dr Margaret Franken of the School of Education at the University of Waikato at the following email address; franken@waikato.ac.nz or telephone (07) 838 4640, Ext 6360.

I look forward to a favourable response from you at your earliest convenience via email in order to begin the necessary arrangements to begin my fieldwork in January, 2010. My email address is ba40@students.waikato.ac.nz. Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely

…………………………..

Berthina Auguste-Walter