Patwa is a language; no ifs, buts or maybes

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Abstract

Is Patwa a language? Linguistically speaking, Jamaican Creole is seen as a language. However, culturally there are many misconceptions about the status and importance of the language. This research focuses on a linguistic analysis of Jamaican Creole. Firstly, it emphasises the diachronic linguistic aspects of the language, examining the origins of the language. British English played a very influential part in the development of Jamaican Creole as well as the Niger-Congo languages from West Africa. One sees how historically intertwined the Creole is with the context of slavery and the formation of other Creole languages across the colonial world. Secondly, the examination of the Creole's grammar provides evidence of the evolution of the language, its divergence from British English and transference of some grammatical structures from the dominant Niger-Congo sect of languages, the Akan group (Twi). Thirdly, this research takes into consideration the sociolinguistic nature of Jamaican Creole; how it is perceived by its speakers and its status in society. Jamaican Creole has no rights in any public institution that relates to the state and the lives of citizens which includes the judicial system, public health care institutions, and schools. Interestingly enough, Jamaican Creole is present in all of these areas. It is more commonly used than the Jamaican Standard English because it is the language in which most have full fluency. This research calls for Jamaicans to challenge their current assumptions about Patwa, with the hope of fostering more positive attitudes towards the language. The purpose of this research is to give the audience an adequate explanation to why it is important to preserve and respect their own nation language. Essentially, I am promoting the message that, Patwa is a language, no ifs, buts, or maybes.

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Introduction

Patwa, is indeed a language and should be referred to as such. Throughout my years of being a student in Jamaica, my friends and I always considered Jamaican Creole to be lesser than Jamaican Standard English. Through, doing research and broadening my horizon, I have shifted my views completely. I can proudly say that Jamaican Creole deserves to be regarded as a language. There are many Jamaicans today who hold the same views pertaining to Jamaican Creole as I once did. It is of grave importance to share the knowledge that I now have in order to educate the Jamaican society.

Jamaican Creole should have the same status as Jamaican Standard English. Slaves were given one day a week to celebrate, worship and communicating the way the wanted. This is a good example of the misconception of what was considered valuable and not valuable was formed. It was through colonization that is was taught that African languages, pidgins and creoles were to be forgotten and that one should incorporate the usage of English as the mother tongue of the island. Even through decolonization, ethnocentrism became a notion that was praised. One was expected to emulate the mother land, England, because i represented all that was valuable. Through this, the devaluation of African culture and creole arose.

Jamaican's associate Jamaican Creole to their national identity and it is widely use throughout representation of our folklore. However, formally it has not been associated or acknowledge as a reputable source of communication. Most Jamaicans speak Jamaican Creole and it would be beneficial to have a uniform orthography for the language so that it can be taught in schools as a vehicle to promote education, positive self-identification and ending classicism.

Chapter one: Diachronic linguistics of Jamaican Creole

History of Jamaica

The history of Jamaica starts with the Arawak people who lived in the country centuries before the arrival of the Spanish. They came from South America and had given the country the name "Xaymaca" meaning land of wood and water. At the time of Columbus's arrival in 1494 on May 5, the Arawak population was estimated to be around 600,000 (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990). They became the slaves of the Spaniards overtime and in about 100 years, there was only a small number of them left. They were forced to do labour such as mining, farming, building and stock breeding. As the Arawak population began to decline, the Spaniards began to use African slaves to replace them. The Arawak people became extinct in 1620, 35 years before the British took control of the island in 1655 (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990). During the British colonialization, they encountered a group of runaway slaves called the Maroons. The British tried using Spanish interpreters so that they could communicate with them but that didn't work. It was later found that the Maroons may have spoken a mixture of Spanish, English and other African languages. However, the Akan element of the Maroons played a significant role in Jamaican Creole substrata.

During the British rule, most of the Spaniards fled to the nearby country of Cuba. They left behind mulattos, blacks and even Jews who spoke Portuguese. There were many small farms with a limited number of Africans at the beginning. By the last three decades of the 17th century, the British improved their trading and began to get huge shipments of Africans from Upper Guinea and the Gold Coast to countries such as Barbados, Jamaica, and Antigua (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990). However, Natural disasters such as the Cacao Blight of the 1680s and the Great

Earthquake of 1692 caused a decline in the white population. From 1700 to 1739, the ratio of whites to blacks changed drastically; from 1:4.5 to 1:12. By the middle of the 18th century, the whites who became wealthy decided to send their children back home to England to be educated. According to D'Costa and Lalla, it is very difficult to pinpoint a specific moment in time when Jamaican Creole or Standard Jamaican English was created. They argue that the first time that they could have been noted, could either be in 1700, when the Creole, began to form a certain type of national identity or in 1721-1722 when John Atkins stated that the people who lived in Jamaica were a spurious race that had been mixed together. He described the separation between mixed people as being either a "Mulatto", a "Mustee" or a "Castee". The Mulatos were considered the darkest in relation to their skin tone. He continued by saying that they each had a unique way of communicating with each other and he called it "a language especially pleasant, a kind of Gypsy Gibberish" (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 24).

The African slaves hated how they were being treated and so they began to fight for their rights. Many Maroons were leaders of slave rebellions and helped slaves to run away into the mountains to their secret settlements. The population of slaves and slave masters had been intermingling for quite some time and during the mid-18th century. Even the Creole and the African population were roughly of the same percentage. However, by the end of the 18th century, the Creole population had a higher percentage. D'Costa and Lalla (1990) explained that "the slowly growing Creole population became the link between the original homelands of the exiles and the Jamaican society of the future, a society in which things creole took precedence over the African past" (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 26). The British slave trade ended in 1809-1810 which meant that the country stopped receiving additional African influences. One saw a movement away from the Africans being the ones to free the slaves. The people who were

considered to be creole took over the role. They understood that social mobility was needed in order to survive instead of running away and hiding. This led to emancipation proclamation of 1838 and other rebellions such as the Morant Bay Rebellion. Ultimately, Jamaica gained its independence on August 6th, 1962. (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990).

Patois, Pidgin, Creole

According to the Concise Oxford Companion to the English Language, a Patois is a non-technical term for a dialect, especially if it has low status in relation to a standard, literary language. It is strongly associated with French; however, the term has been used to refer to many different languages which indicates mixed usages and low status. It is sometimes called Patwa with reference to a specific Caribbean creole, such as Jamaican Creole. Patois also refers to other Caribbean based languages and varies from location to location. In Dominica, St Lucia, Grenada, and Trinidad, it refers to the French-based Creole of the Lesser Antilles because the French-based Creole is the major vernacular.

A 'pidgin' is basically a simplified language that arose from contact between groups of people over a long period of time who have no common language. John Holm stated that a pidgin evolves when there is a "need for some means of verbal communication, perhaps for trade, but no group learns the native language of any other group" (Holm 1988-9, pp. 4-5). One uses simple vocabulary and basic grammar in order to communicate. Here, one sees that the substratas take and use words from the language of the superstratum. There tends to be subtle differences in meaning as the superstratum speakers begin to adopt the changes, applying the new meaning to simplify their language. Pidgins are rarely a mother tongue, but are learned wherever and whenever their use becomes necessary (Bolaffi, Guido et al, 2003).

The definition of the word creole varies a lot in the field. Nevertheless, it is generally referred to as the first language of a speech community. This indicates that it has greater lexical and syntactic complexity than a pidgin, but it is derived from a pidgin. It differs in two specific ways. The first being that it is generationally linked and the second being that it is distinct form the European languages and minority languages that fostered its growth (Bolaffi et al., 2003). As

with any language, there are many different varieties, but they can generally be distinguished according to their closeness to the language on which they are based. Therefore, the Creole continuum exists with the presence of an acrolect, a basilect, a hyperlect and a mesolect.

In general, languages hold a very important part in the power relationship of every country. They act as an economic and political weapon that indicates one's status and authority within a given society. Most importantly, there are also social and political forces that govern the use and the development of any language, giving preference to one over the other. When talking about the origins of Creole, one quote that stands out is that of Frantz Fanon where he states, "To speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (Fanon, 1952, pp. 13).

Creolization came out of the seventeenth century plantation life of the slaves. This was where contact between the West African slaves and their British slave masters were most frequent. The owners did not realize or did not put into consideration that the slaves all came from different regions of West Africa and therefore they spoke many different languages. They assumed that they all spoke the same language and could easily communicate with one another (Bryan, 2010). The slaves had to work with each other and over time they created new languages to facilitate an ease of communication. Some believe that the languages that the Africans spoke on the plantation arose from a Portuguese based pidgin that they all would use in Africa before they were brought across the Atlantic Ocean. It was believed to have been relexified according to the language of the enslavers. The Africans would retain the grammar of the pidgin and change the lexicon according to the European language of the slave masters. This accounts for the commonalities that exist across the "New World" in regard to their creole languages.

Additionally, some people believe that the creoles originated in different places at different times Nonetheless, the Africans experienced similar circumstances that allowed them to produce parallel results. This is known as the Polygenic explanation and it focuses on the planation environment being the primary factor for producing a similar linguistic outcome (Bryan, 2010).

The two major positions in the debate surrounding how Creoles were formed, are the Universalist view and the Substratist view. The Universalists see Creolization and the formation of creole languages as the result of innate processes of natural language making (Bryan, 2010). They focus on Chomsky's Universal Principles of child language acquisition. The most important aspect of the principle is that it is possible for any normal child to learn the language of his or her speech community by the age of five. Children draw inductively from the rules and grammar that their speech community provides for them, ultimately acquiring the common language. In a case where a child was born into a community of pidgin speakers, one sees that the child receives no clear guidelines and experiences a chaotic language acquisition process (Bryan, 2010). A pidgin should never be a child's first language and should only be a source of input in order for the child to develop their first language. Unfortunately, on the plantation the pidgins were the only input that children received and the formation of a Creole language is their linguistic effort to transform the pidgin into a language. On the other hand, the Substratists' view sees languages such as Jamaican Creole as maintaining the structure of the native African language at the time of slavery and transferring elements to combine it with the European languages (Bryan, 2010). In Jamaica's case it was English, the Akan languages and the (Kwa) Niger Congo languages. With Jamaican Creole as the topic at hand, one sees that there were many African languages that were incorporated. As time went by, English became the dominant language. While trying to learn English as their second language, the Africans lost some of the

structures and distinctive linguistics features of their language. English became the Superstrate and the African language, the substrate. One started to discriminate against the lower language and one saw drastic changes because of borrowing from the dominant language and even disuse of their own.

In general, the explanations of the origins of Creole are all accommodations because one cannot simply come up with a concrete answer. The history of slavery itself and the plantation lifestyle is extremely complicated and during that period of time, learning about the language evolution of slaves was not very important. One can appreciate the explanations of other linguists in their efforts to find an appropriate and approximate explanation. Both the Universalist and Substratist views have made valid points but they have also been challenged. For the purpose of this research, the Substratist view will be upheld.

Language of Jamaica

The official language of Jamaica is English. One may think of Jamaica as only an English-speaking country however Jamaicans also speak Jamaican Creole or Patwa[1]. Jamaican Creole does not have an official status in the country however most Jamaicans do speak it. Jamaican Creole has no rights in any public institution that relates to the states and the lives of citizens which includes the judicial system, public health care institutions and schools (Kouwenberg, 2011). Interestingly enough,Jamaican Creole is present in all of these areas and is most commonly used because it is truly the most dominant language or the language in which most have any competency. Even though it may not be officially recognized, one can see that it is socially acceptable as a form of communication amongst most individuals.

Most Jamaicans have constructed certain views about Jamaican Creole from a young age. One of these perceptions is that Patwa, is not a language and that it is and should always be considered as "Broken English" (Kouwenberg, 2011). Most Jamaicans are better able to express themselves in Jamaican Creole than they would in English. They tend to use English in a more formal setting, - whereas, Jamaican Creole is seen as much more familiar and friendly. This being said, Jamaicans communicate far more in Jamaican Creole than they do in the English language on a daily basis (Kouwenberg, 2011). This has a lot to do with "the prestige of a language". Fundamentally, Jamaicans' perception towards their own nation language is due to the deep-seated, historically anchored prejudices which are closely related to the aftermath of decolonization and efforts to confront the past and self-identify (Kouwenberg, 2011). There is a constant battle between English and Jamaican Creole even though English has more social

[1] Otherwise known as Patwah or Patois. Throughout this paper, it will be referred to as JamC.

prestige and power. The Patwa debate, that exists in the country aims to shine light on the discussion if Jamaican Creole should be respected as a language or if one should continue to see it as a "Broken English".

Chapter 2: Grammar

This section will give a brief analysis of JamC's Grammar. It will discuss and show examples of Articles, Numbers, Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, Conjunctions, Prepositions, Adverbs and Verbs. There are many other aspects of JamC however it is not within the scope of this work to discuss them there.

Articles

Definite Articles

"Di" (also spelt "De") is the definite article used in Patwa

1. **Di** pikney a dead.[2]

In speech, however "Di" is sometimes reduced to "i" (it is usually shortened as "I" also)

2. **I** pinkey a dead[3] (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 187).

Indefinite Article

Demonstrative adjective pronoun	Preposition (Instead of "of" and "at")	Personal pronoun
A	*A* (A give him fe de good "a" him children[4])	*A*
One		

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[2] The child is dying (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 187).

[3] The child is dying (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 187).

[4] I gave him for his children benefit. (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 187).

Numbers

There is a singular and a plural. However, plurality does not mean a change in the noun. It is represented in three ways; by cardinal numbers, adjectives and the pronoun **dem**.

Cardinal Numbers	Adjectives	Pronoun "Dem"
De "two" hamper[5]	"Nuff" cow pass ya[6]	Di man "dem"[7]
De "tree" boy[8]	"Plenty-plenty"yam dig[9]	

(D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 192)

Nouns

There are nouns where:

1. the letters are dropped

- The letter **t** and **k** when they follow a constant are omitted, e.g. *Wrist: Wris*
- When **r** comes after **e**, it is omitted and the **e** changes to an **a,** *e.g. Matter: Matta*
- The letter **d** is always omitted from the ending of words, e.g. *Sand: San*.

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[5] The two hampers (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 187).

[6] The three boys (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 187).

[7] A lot of cows are passing there (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 187).

[8] A lot or many yams were dug (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 187).

[9] The men (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 187)

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2. Nouns in which only half of the word is used or it has been completely changed. There is no distinct pattern.

- The letter **b** is usually changed to **v** and vice versa, e.g. *Sabbath: Savat, Manoeuvres: Manubas*

<u>Examples of Nouns that are derived from English</u>

JamC	JSE[10]
Dutty	The earth
Hebiny	Ebony
Breda	Brother

(D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 189)

3. Nouns that are not taken from the English Language are mostly of African origins.

<u>Examples of African Nouns</u>

JamC	JamSE
Duppe	Spirit
Pickini	Child
Duckonoo	Corn boiled in balls, and then toasted

(D'Costa and Lalla, 1990. Pp. 190)

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[10] Jamaican Standard English

Pronouns

These pronouns only serve for person and number and do not serve for case and gender. It is believed that the formation of the word order made case forms unnecessary. The pronoun's reference to the noun could account for the lack of gender (D'Costa and Lalla, 1990).

Case	Singular	Plural
First person	Me (Pronucned /Mi/ or I /A/ e.g. **A** tink so sah or **Me** a try fi remember[11]	We (Pronucned Wi) e.g. All a **we** fren a come[12]
Second person	You (Pronounced /Yu/) e.g. Mine **you** mash me, man[13]	unu (Ibo unu with the same usage) e.g. Tek **unu** basket galang[14]
Third person	him (all genders) (Pronucned /him/, /im/ e.g. **Im** gone so lef me[15]	Dem e.g. **Dem** no come yet[16]

(Cassidy, 1971, pp. 54)

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[11] I think so or I am trying to remember (Cassidy, 1971, pp. 54).

[12] All of our friends are coming (Cassidy, 1971, pp. 54).

[13] Watch out, you might step on me (Cassidy, 1971, pp. 54).

[14] Take your things and leave (Cassidy, 1971, pp. 54).

[15] He/She left me (Cassidy, 1971, pp. 54).

[16] They have not come as yet (Cassidy, 1971, pp. 54).

Adjectives

Adjectives are made by means of the Positive, the Comparative and the Superlative.

1. *For the Comparative, one adds **er** to the Positive.*

Examples:

JamSE	JamC
Bad	Bader (Badda)
Good	Gooder (Godda)
Worse	Worse (Wosa)

(D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 193)

2. *For the Superlatives, one adds -**is** to the Positive.*

Examples:

JamSE	JamC
Good	Goodis
More	Moris
Wosa	Wosa

(D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 193)

One can use other adjectives to compare by using the **more** and **wosa** Comparative and the **moris** and **wosis** Superlative

3. *Few adjectives are from African origins.*

Example:

JamC	JamSE
Chaka-chaka	Disorderly
Nyaka-nyaka	Filthy looking

(D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 193)

4. *Adjectives that can be compared by **-er**, **-is**, or **through reduplication***:

JamC	JamSE
Dutty	Dirty
Fool e.g. fool-fool	Foolish
Sicky	Sickly

(D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 194)

5. *Adjectives that closely describes the concept or thing that is being explained.*

Examples:

JamC	JamSE
Sweet-mout	Persuasive
Big-eye	Greedy

(D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 194)

Conjunctions, Prepositions and Adverbs

By assigning new meaning to English words and by forming phrases, JamC has formed its own conjunctions, prepositions and adverbs.

Conjunctions

After e.g. <u>Afta</u> yu no handsome[17]	since or because
Before e.g. <u>Before</u> yu tank me fe cary yu pon me head, yu dah shake-up shake-up[18]	instead of
So	even as or and thus

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[17] You're not handsome (Cassidy, 1971, pp. 65).

[18] Instead of thanking me for helping you, you're getting vexed (Cassidy, 1971, pp. 65).

Prepositions and prepositional phrases

The most common prepositional phrase is Sake of, e.g. ***Sake a dah big mout' police man me nearly miss de train*** (Cassidy, 1971, pp. 66). Most of the Standard English prepositions are also used. They however have some changes and differences in meaning.'

Examples:

JamC	English
A[19]	At, to, of
Ina or Eena[20]	In or into
Fe[21]	For, to (with infinitive)

Adverbs

No is commonly used in comparisons. It comes from the old English usage of nor meaning "than".

Other adverbs

JamC	English
Same like	Comparison
Kya	No matter
Same way	As usual

(D'Costa and Lalla, 1990, pp. 66)

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[19] D'Costa and Lalla (1990, pp. 1999)

[20] Adams (1991, pp. 18)

[21] Cassidy (1971, pp. 66-67).

Verbs

The verb system in the JamC does not have the stem-changing verbs as well as the English's suffixes such as -s, -t, -ed, -ing or -en. The standard form of the verb is typically used along with auxiliary verbs to show the present of different tenses.

JamC	JamSE	Tense
Im say	He says	Simple Present
Im a say	He is saying	Present Progressive
Im en say or im wen say	He said	Past Definite
Im ena say or im wena say	He was saying	Past progresive
Im a go say or im wi say	is going to day or he will say	Future
m ena go say or im wenao say	He was going to say	Past Future
Im wooda say or im da say	He would say	Conditional
Im wooda en say	He would have said	Past Conditional

(Adams, 1991, pp. 26)

This is a simplified chart if the verb forms that exist in the JamC. **Ben**, **wen** and **did** are also used to indicate the past tense of verbs.

Statives (Non-past tense reference)

In general verbs in the JamC can stand unmarked. However, that means that one has to use discourse context, properties of the verb and object to identify the tense. However, from objects that have a determiner or number, one can determine the sentence to be in the past tense.

JamC	English	Tense
Jan nyam aki	John eats ackee	Present

(Parsard, 2016, pp. 24)

JamC	English	Tense
Jan nyam **di** aki	Jam ate the ackee	Past tense

(Parsard, 2016, pp. 24)

Statives with Past tense reference

These are marked by using **ben** and **did** which are pre-verbal particles.

JamC	English
ten touzn yirz ago dem did penichriet aal dem ting ten thousand year	10,000 years ago they had [already] understood all those things

(Patrick, 2007, pp. 3)

Copula

There are three copulas forms in the JamC.

The predicative copula that is used before adjectives:

JamC	English
Im **did** tayad.	(S)he was tired

(Parsard, 2016, pp. 26)

The equative copula

JamC	English
Di saiyans man **a** mi kozin	The science man is my cousin

(Parsard, 2016, pp. 26)

The locative copula

JamC	English
Im **de** a yaad	(S)he's at home

(Parsard, 2016, pp. 26)

Tense and Aspect

Marking of tense, modality, and aspect in Jamaican Creole differs significantly from the English system. Whereas tense and aspect are sometimes conveyed through suffixation in English, all tense/aspect markers in JC are preverbal and analytic. (Parsard, 2016)

All tense and aspect markers in the JamC are preverbal and are not like those in English.

JamC	English
Im **did** nuo dat aredi.	He knew that already.
Jan **a** riid buk.	John is reading some books

(Parsard, 2016, pp. 22)

- There are also some verbs that do not have tense and aspectual markers. They can be read in the past or present.

JamC	English
Mi ron	I run or I ran
Mi en ron	I have run or I had run

(Parsard, 2016, pp. 22)

Similarities in African languages

Once the past tense has been indicated by using phrases such as **yestaday** (yesterday)**, dus likl while** (a while ago), it is assumed that the rest of the actions were done in the past (Adams, 1991).

The JamC also uses multiple verbs in a row in order to get a meaning across without using infinitives.

JamC	JamSE
Kyai go bring come	Carry go bring come[22]
Shooda muss kya fin'	Should be able to find

(Adams, 1991, pp. 34)

Negation

This is a very interesting topic in the JamC. It is not known for sure where the usage of "No" (**Naa, neh, no**) comes from. However, it is believed to be a remnant of Spanish from Spanish Colonialization of Jamaica.

JamC	English	Spanish
Im naa dwi	He is not doing it	El no lo hace
Wi no en heat none	We didn't eat any	No comenos nada

(Adams, 1991, pp. 35)

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[22] To carry mischievous tales from person to person.

Chapter three: Sociolinguistics of Jamaican Creole

Patwa in the Jamaican Society

Linguistically, creoles are considered to be complete languages. However, societally they are viewed as less than other European languages, such as English for example. The British invaded and took control of the island in 1655. During the period of slavery, there was a clear separation between the masters and slaves and how they spoke. The plantation owners and government officials spoke a more refined English than the direct supervisors of the plantation (Anderson, 2014). The language of the slaves was at the bottom of the social hierarchy. With the abolition of slavery, the social hierarchy did not change at all. Language became a social class marker where British English was associated with the educated elites of the nation and Patwa with the lower uneducated group of people (Anderson, 2014). This refers to JamC and its speech continuum. The relationship between the two can be described as diglossia. Patwa is often considered an informal language and JamSE is the formal language that should be used in all official settings.

"Patois" is seen as any low-status local dialect (Swan et al, 2004). In French, this word refers to rough speech. It is unclear when Jamaicans began to refer to their language as "Patwa" but one can see that it originated from the French word. In my opinon, using the term "Patois" has negative connotations. Nowadays, when someone says Patois, they tend to think of two meanings; "what Jamaicans speak" and the general definition of the word. Patwa is how JamC is known to the Jamaican people. I believe that identifying the clear difference between the two, could make it easier for speakers of JamC to move away from the notion of what is a "Patois". Hopefully, one will be able to accept the notion that JamC is a complete language and does not fall in the category of being a "Patois". The Patwa Debate concerns two groups of Jamaicans.

Those who consider JamC as a language and those who consider it to be merely "broken English". One can see how the implications of considering the language as a "Patois" takes away the true value and nature of the language. This is why it is important to recognise the difference between Patois and Patwa. Those who consider it to be "broken English" tend to see Jamaicans who speak the language as uneducated. On the other hand, those who consider Jamaican Creole to be "Patwa" see it as the language of the people which makes them different from other nations but ethnically and culturally similar as a nation. The "Patois" vs "Patwa" debate is important because it has a lot to do with cultural identity and how Jamaicans perceive themselves. Those who control the power, control the language of institution and individual rights to the access to education which hinders social mobility. The typical view is that there is only one real language that is present in the Jamaican society and that is JamSE. Patwa is seen as an informal language that should only be used in the home (Anderson, 2014). It is also thought that it cannot be used academically and should only be used for entertainment purposes (Anderson, 2014). For example, the bible was translated in JamC and it gained a lot of backlash and criticism.

The different perspectives on Jamaican Creole have improved over time. In the past, older linguists considered it only as "a jargon of a language" (Bryan, 2010, pp. 17). Jamaican Creole has been devalued from the time of slavery up until the first creole conference that was held at the University of the West Indies, where people realized that creole languages could be studied and that more research was needed (Bryan, 2010). There, they focused on the fact that Jamaican Creole was linked to the lives of poor people, homing in on the lack of prestige of the language. Additionally, respecting the creole language was strengthen during the Black pride and independence movement. Therefore, through the rise of Jamaican nationalism, one has seen how Patwa has become a vehicle for cultural and pan-African self-identity (Anderson, 2014). The

popularity of Louise Bennett and her poems, have also gave way to a new sense of cultural pride in regard to the Creole (Bryan, 2010). Reggae and dancehall music have also been able to bridge the gap between the basilect and acrolect speakers even though the songs are mainly in JamC (Anderson, 2014). JamC does not have an official status in the Jamaican Society. The Jamaican Government has stated that it cannot consider it as an official language because the public has to do so first (Anderson, 2014).

The Dilemma

People who speak Patwa only, tend to have less education, less educational and professional opportunities, and social mobility (Anderson, 2014, pp. 5). Additionally, most of its speakers live in the rural areas of Jamaica. The opposite is seen for the speakers of JamSE. One can see language as a good way to indicate someone's social status in a community (Anderson, 2014). Jamaicans can easily recognize someone's status in society based on how they speak. Speakers of the mesolect can easily switch between the two ends of the spectrums when it is appropriate. Additionally, Jamaicans of low socioeconomic status tend to use hyper-corrective speech when they try to manoeuvre their way from JamC to JamSE. This is also a clear indication that they do not have a good grasp of JamSE.

The media is a strong influence source for information in Jamaica and throughout the years, they have constantly held positions on both sides of the Patwa vs Patois debate. "Today, instead of trying to build up from that broken English (of the slaves) to standard English, some of our academics, intellectuals and "culture developers" are going down to the level of the broken English" (Bryan, 2010, pp. 20). "Reinforcing patois in the early classroom somehow makes the learning of Standard English easier in later life [is like saying] encouraging of bad table manners learned and used in the home would graduate children comfortably in the use of knife and fork," (Bryan, 2010, pp. 20). These are two of the negative comments that were made in regard to Jamaican Creole. As one can see, it is seen as merely broken English and as the language that will hinder social mobility. However, there were also positive commentaries such as "The relationship between patois and Standard English is not necessarily antagonistic ad can indeed be complementary… Even the most cultured persons, even those who dream their dreams in Standard English, will occasionally find that to resort to patois is the best and perhaps the only

medium for expressing a mood – be it jest or annoyance, -" (Bryan, 2010, pp. 20). This shows that Jamaica is still divided between those who take pride in the language and see the benefit of using it to first educate the youths of Jamaica.

Chapter four: Discussion

Addressing the lack of recognition of JamC as a language in the eyes of Jamaicans is of grave importance. The colonial past of Jamaica; involving the British Slave masters and the African slaves has played a significant role in the negative feelings towards JamC. From colonial times to the abolition and emancipation of slavery and even independence, one can still identify the persistence of eurocentrism and social stratification. JamSE is the language of prestige and is supposed to be used in all formal settings. The clear separation between the speakers of JamSE and JamC indicates linguistic discrimination and diglossia. Through doing this literature review, one saw that JamC is a complete language. It is not and should not be referred to as "broken English". It's status in the Jamaican society should be much higher or even equal to that of English. Most Jamaicans speak or have some competency in the JamC. JamSE, however, is the language of the elite. Only a small portion of the population has had the opportunity to grow up with individuals who speak JamSE and who have obtained a good education. Linguistic discrimination, in this case refers to the Jamaicans who are looked down upon and treated differently because of how they speak. Jamaica has a classist society and this division can also be applied to the JamC continuum.

JamC is a vibrant language that should exist on the same level as JamSE. By doing research, one realises that JamC is not a pidgin or broken English. It is undoubtedly a language. Its roots may have started off as a pidgin but the language has evolved over the years. This paper calls for Jamaicans to recognize their own language. For them to realize that words may have originated from 17th century English but they have either lost or changed their meanings. There is a difference between pronouncing a JamSE word incorrectly and pronouncing a word in the

JamC. One should no longer consider individuals as bad speakers of English or uneducated, but acknowledge the fact that they are speakers of JamC.

Language plays an important role in every society.JamSE is the language of instruction in schools in Jamaica. It is the official language of the country and therefore it is expected that instruction in school in done in JamSE. However, most Jamaicans have competency in JamC. "We have noted the education minister's stout defence of the use of textbooks in our schools that are liberally sprinkled with Jamaican Creole. According to Mr. Whiteman, Jamaican Creole is a language in its own right and it was important that students accept it as a part of their heritage and identity. About which we have no complaint," (Bryan, 2010, pp. 21). This quotation exemplifies efforts to promote Jamaican Creole in schools so that students can relate more and understand what's going on better in the books that they read. With that being said, it is quite easy to understand how a student who speaks only the JamC may not succeed in the Jamaican educational system, -thus, - maintaining the cycle of poverty and oppression. JamSE is seen as a vehicle for upward social mobility, not only because it is the language of instruction in school but also because it is one of the most spoken languages in the world at large. Those who are a part of the middle class and elite society have the option to code-switch effectively and seamlessly. School along with social mobility are not a problem for them because they have a good grasp of JamSE and how to switch when it's appropriate and inappropriate. A perfect exampleis "People look down on you if you speak creole...If I go out there and start my dialect.. they'll only say..'oh they thought it was someone of class," (Bryan, 2010, pp. 30).

The Jamaican educational system is based on JamSE. Therefore, students are expected to have had a good grasp of it before high school and even primary school. Nevertheless, even high school students have issues speaking and learning the English language even though it is

considered to be their native language. "We teach English to make the children more aware that there's another side to it, not just the way they speak… an international side to it. I've found that since I've been here they don't know that… so my aim is to help them to become more conversant with it… to let them know that outside of where they live, there's another language," (Bryan, 2010, pp.32). In this quotation, one can see that that the teacher refers to English as something international that the student is not accustomed to. "Sometimes a child is a little shy and slow and they can't speak what you would call English… we allow them to talk and ask somebody to translate… or… you've said it this way, could you say it another way. It's [JamC] their first language because it's the language they use at home and English to them is a foreign language," (Bryan, 2010, pp. 32). Again, English is referred to as a foreign language, however the means of institution lie solely in having mastered the so called foreign language.

Bilingual education in both JamSE and JamC should be the focus of the education system in Jamaica at least at the primary level. It would give all children the opportunity to excel in school through teaching them English as a second language rather than devaluing the JamC. The Jamaican Language Unit of the Department of Language, Linguistics, and Philosophy at the University of the West Indies in Mona had a pilot project which focused on bilingual education (Anderson, 2014). They used the JamC in order to help improve literacy and verbal skills. The project was well received and seemed to be very successful. The only issue at this moment is that JamC does not have a concrete orthography (Anderson, 2014). When the orthography is confirmed then bilingual education will be a serious possibility for schools and teachers to undertake. It is also necessary that the government acknowledges the fact that JamC is more than something that is attached to the culture of its people JamC is the language in which Jamaicans

are truly able to express themselves fully without restrictions. It has all the necessities of a

language. It only needs the same prestige as JamSE.

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