FROM LINGUISTIC *MARONAZ* TO OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: THE RECOGNITION AND OFFICIALISATION OF THE CREOLE LANGUAGE THROUGH PUBLIC EDUCATION IN LA RÉUNION BETWEEN 1970 AND 2022

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Abstract

Creole is the mother language of over 80% of the population of La Réunion in the Indian Ocean. Despite this, it has historically been restricted to private and domestic roles, while French has dominated the public sphere. Between 1970 and the 1990s, these distinct roles were challenged through cultural and linguistic movements which increased recognition and pride in the Creole language. In 2000, Creole was recognised as an official regional language of France in the *Loi d'orientation pour l'outre-mer*. This law sparked two decades of legislation and local policy changes which facilitated the use of Creole in public education. The increased recognition for Creole and its officialisation through public education are the result of language planning and activism by formal and informal actors across culture, politics, research and education. Of these domains, public education has undoubtedly been the key focus of language politics in favour of Creole in La Réunion. Creole teaching initiatives in La Réunion are supported by a growing emphasis on plurilingual pedagogies in global education and applied linguistics. This research has drawn on conceptual approaches from sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, humanities and the social sciences. Ethnographic methodologies have produced authentic and contextualised research findings. Interviews were conducted with Creole teachers, activists, policy makers, researchers and grassroots associations. Furthermore, participant observation in schools and universities was conducted during a research trip to La Réunion. This thesis addresses a gap in literature on La Réunion and contributes to the Réunionese perspective in ongoing debates around creole languages, regional language education and plurilingual pedagogy in France, Europe and beyond.

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General Introduction

> *"Un homme qui possède le langage possède par contrecoup le monde exprimé et impliqué par ce langage"* (Fanon, 1952, p. 31).

There are fourteen regional languages spoken in metropolitan France and fifty-four in the overseas territories (Cerquiglini, 1999). Despite this, the history of France has been rooted in a unilingual ideology (Braga Alonso, 2021, p. 5). Since the 1970s, this monolingualism has been challenged through movements affirming regional languages and identities in the *départements d'outre-mer* (henceforth DOM) such as La Réunion in the Indian Ocean.[1] Using ethnographic research methods, this thesis examines the factors which have contributed to the emergence of the Creole language (defined below) in public education in La Réunion between the period 1970 to 2022.[2] While the Creole language was not officially introduced to public education until 2000, the period from 1970 to the late 1990s saw a growing recognition for Creole as part of identity and ideological movements in politics, culture and research. The period 2000 to 2022 is marked by the officialisation of Creole in education in La Réunion. Formal legislation such as the *Loi d'orientation pour l'outre-mer* (LOOM) (JORF, 2000a) which recognised Creole as an official language of France in 2000, have paved the way for developments in language education policy and teaching practices. These developments have contributed to an evolution in the role and status of Creole from a form of linguistic *maronaz* to an official language in public Réunionese society.

Maronaz, in Réunionese Creole, or *marronage,* in French, is a term originally used to describe the act of fugitive slaves escaping slavery in the inaccessible mountains in the centre of the island (Hawkins, 2007, p. 123). The term has been used in local cultural spheres to evoke an oppositional or anti-colonial sentiment, particularly in *Maloya* music. *Maronaz* is the name of a Réunionese music group and features in the album title *'Maronaz*

[1] Throughout this research, DOM refers to the French overseas departments; La Réunion, Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana. In 2011, Mayotte became the fifth DOM following a referendum in 2009. Today they are referred to collectively under the acronym DROM-COM (*départements et régions d'outre-mer et collectivités d'outre-mer*), previously DOM-TOM (*départements d'outre-mer et territoires d'outre-mer*). Their political and administrative status is determined in the constitution; Article 73 for the DROM, and Article 74 for the COM.

[2] This research was granted ethics approval by *The School of Modern Languages Research Ethics Committee* on 17th March 2022.

Peï l'éden' by Maloya musician Stéphane Grondin. In Creole, the word has also come to refer to clandestine or underground activities.[3] As discussed in Chapter Three, it is used by author and president of the association for Creole, *Lofis la Lang Kréol La Rényon* (see Table 2, Chapter Four), Axel Gauvin, in an interview to describe the unofficial use of Creole in public education pre-2000. This thesis expands upon local definitions of *maronaz* by arguing that between 1970 and the 1990s, the Creole language emerged as a form of cultural and linguistic *maronaz*. Through its appearance in political, cultural and ideological resistance movements during this period, Creole became an expression of anti-colonial and oppositional sentiment against French assimilationism. Meanwhile, the underground use of the Creole language in certain public domains became a way to 'break free' from French monolingualism. Creole as 'linguistic *maronaz'* became key to defining a new Réunionese identity and later formed an ideological foundation for the subsequent recognition and officialisation of the language in public education.

Education is essential for the transmission and development of languages (Ferguson, 2006a). Consequently, the education system provides a valuable lens through which to examine how a language becomes rooted in a society. Following an outline of the research questions, this introduction will discuss the significance and originality of this research, before discussing definitions for creole languages and providing the historical context considered necessary for understanding the research. The final section will provide an outline of the chapters and content included in this thesis.

Research Questions

Turning now to the research questions that have led to this project, the first and principal research question investigates: *how and why has the Creole language been recognised and officialised in public education between 1970 and 2022?* This question distinguishes between two main processes involved in the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion

[3] *"maron (parler des isles).* ***N.: Maron, marron****. Le terme qui s'applique à l'origine aux esclaves fugitifs est employé pour désigner aussi bien des animaux domestiques devenus « sauvages »: chat sauvage, chèvre sauvage, porc sauvage; que des plantes non cultivées qui rappellent par leurs caractères des espèces utiles: avocat marron, ayapana marron, raisin marron, ail marron…* ***Le mot peut également qualifier des activités clandestines ou frauduleuses: taxi marron, école marron, rhum marron****"* (Chaudenson, 1974, p. 616) (emphasis added).

during this period. The first process is defined as a 'recognition process', by which public opinion has shifted in favour of Creole. This shift in perceptions towards the language was the result of cultural movements which saw the growth of Creole in literature, music, and theatre. Recognition for Creole as a language was also gained through a growing linguistic research interest in Creole and through emerging discussions over the role and status of Creole in Réunionese society. This process of recognition is discussed mainly in Chapter Three. The second process is defined as an 'officialisation process', by which the Creole language has gained (and continues to gain) a formal status and role in formal and public spheres in La Réunion.[4] This officialisation began when Creole gained official status as a regional language of France through the *Loi d'orientation pour l'outre-mer* (LOOM) in 2000 (JORF, 2000a). This law facilitated the formal integration of Creole into public education and became the first in a series of legislative and policy changes which saw the development and expansion of Creole in public institutions such as education throughout the 2000s.

A second research question examines: *how have actors in both formal and informal domains contributed to Creole language education in the Réunionese context?* For the purposes of this research, 'actors' is used to refer to individuals, groups and organisations who have influenced, contributed to, or participated in the recognition and officialisation of Creole in Réunionese society. This question identifies the different actors involved in driving and enacting the emergence of Creole in public education from both the top-down and the bottom-up. An examination of the actors engaged in Creole education reveals collaborations across many disciplines and public spheres which span culture, research, policy, and private associations and grassroots organisations. This research question distinguishes between two main bodies of actors. 'Formal actors' are considered as the individuals and groups involved in official and public roles such as education, policy and governance. This includes both national and local authorities, as well as ground-level actors such as teachers. 'Informal actors' involve individuals and groups who occupy unofficial, grassroots or private roles. For example, cultural actors such as writers and musicians, and members of private associations for Creole in La Réunion.

[4] Previously Creole had been restricted mostly to the domestic sphere (Glâtre, 2020).

Despite these distinctions, many of these actors occupy an intermediary role between formal and informal domains. For example, researchers are both driven by their own individual interests and are directed externally by universities and research organisations. Similarly, cultural actors who primarily occupy a sphere outside of formal and official functions, often find their work being fed back into the formal sphere as educational resources and references. Moreover, formal actors such as teachers are diversifying their influence by participating in cultural spheres, research and associative work. The multi-faceted and cross-disciplinary nature of actor involvement in Creole education in La Réunion highlights a key theme discussed throughout the course of this thesis. The interconnectedness of actors who comprise movements for the recognition and officialisation of Creole in La Réunion reflects the creolisation, hybridisation and plurality of the Réunionese culture, society and language. The diversity of domains into which the Creole language has permeated in La Réunion reveals the significance and extent of the language, and collaboration between these domains and their different expertise has strengthened movements for the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion.

Investigation into the research questions outlined above is deepened by the use of theories on language planning as a conceptual framework for the thesis. Status and corpus planning (Bartens, 2001; Ferguson, 2006a) are considered the two essential elements of language planning which enable a language to survive and thrive in public spheres. These two elements overlap with the actions involved in the processes of recognition and officialisation of Creole in La Réunion between 1970 and 2022 (as discussed further in Chapter Two).

Originality and significance of the research

Having outlined the research questions, we will now consider the originality of this project for its focus on La Réunion and its significance during a pinnacle era for Creole language politics in Réunionese education. The past decade has seen the acceleration of official legislation, media coverage and increased public pride for the regional language and culture all of which have brought about important changes to Creole education. This section will also set out some of the ways in which the Réunionese context differs to other creole societies.

The specificity of the Réunionese context

The DOM in the French Antilles and their creole languages boast a more widely renowned international literature than La Réunion (Hawkins, 2007). Antillean writers and academics such as Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, Édouard Glissant and Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphael Confiant are well-known in global intellectualism. Regional identity movements in Réunionese literature are arguably more substantial and pre-date their Caribbean counterparts, yet they have often been overlooked in postcolonial academia and creole literature (Hawkins, 2007). Much of the literature in La Réunion is published locally, often making it more difficult to gain national and international acknowledgement (Hawkins, 2007). Some of the Réunionese literature and studies included within this research were acquired directly through their authors or from locations in La Réunion. Additionally, La Réunion has rarely been a focus in anglophone sociolinguistic literature or applied linguistic studies on creole languages in education, often with only a brief mention (Bartens, 2001; Siegel, 2007; Migge, Léglise and Bartens, 2010). While Caribbean literature is known in both English and French academic circles, the majority of literature on La Réunion is written for French-speaking audiences. The few exceptions who have contributed to anglophone literature on La Réunion (Hawkins, 2007; Picard, 2010; Vergès, 2011, 2015, 2017) are interested mainly in cultural aspects of Réunionese society and are not focused on the Creole language in Réunionese society. This research collectively examines studies written in both French and English to identify links between Réunionese literature on Creole education and global literature on creoles in other contexts, and to expand understanding of Réunionese Creole in the English language texts of this field.[5]

Despite this lack of global attention, La Réunion offers a window into a unique and fascinating sociolinguistic context. Of all the regional languages of France, the French-based creoles in the DOM are *"sans doute les plus vivantes, essentiellement parlées, pratiquées maternellement par plus d'un million de locuteurs*" (Cerquiglini, 1999, p. 5). Among these four creoles, Réunionese Creole is especially alive. A study by Christian Monteil and INSEE in 2010 revealed that Réunionese Creole was by far the most used regional language in the DOM, with more than half the island's population exclusive Creole speakers, in contrast to 17% in Martinique and 29% in Guadeloupe (Monteil, 2010a). The prevalence of near-

[5] While the majority of Réunionese researchers on the Creole language and education are Creole speakers, their literature is generally published in French.

exclusive creolophones in La Réunion has been argued as a reason for the comparatively high levels of illiteracy and low academic achievement in La Réunion.[6] For example, Réunionese academic and Creole teacher Laurence Daleau-Gauvin cites another of Monteil's studies, *L'Influence de la langue maternelle en question* (Monteil, 2010b) as evidence of the link between Creole speakers and illiteracy; *"[l'étude] affirme sans en imputer la faute au créole, que l'illettrisme est beaucoup plus important chez les créolophones que chez les francophones"* (Daleau-Gauvin, 2021, p. 65). Additionally, a study on the educational inequalities in the French territories compared to the metropole, revealed that of the four DOM, in La Réunion the highest percentage of parents spoke Creole during childhood and the lowest percentage of households currently speak French (Valat, 2021). The links between language, school attendance and academic achievement are therefore most pronounced in La Réunion compared to its Antillean counterparts. Furthermore, La Réunion also claims the largest population of the DOM, which doubled between 1967 and 2019 from 416,525 to 861,210 (Jeudy, 2023). Meanwhile, the populations of Guadeloupe and Martinique have fallen to just below 400,000 in 2019, and the population of French Guiana is the smallest at 281, 678 (Jeudy, 2023). Thus, language planning measures which have developed in La Réunion since 2000 have far-reaching potential for the expansion of Réunionese Creole, due to its large proportion of speakers and the fast-growing population size of the island.

La Réunion is often considered more peaceful than the other DOM and "unlike its counterparts in the Antilles – Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Guyane – it does not have a strong "oppositional" cultural tradition of its own" (Lionnet, 1993, p. 102). Moreover, Réunionese Creole has historically been considered *"la plus douce, la plus enchanteresse, la plus musicale"* (Auguste Vinson, op. cit. cited in Fageol, 2016, p. 16) of the creoles in the Indian Ocean and Antilles. This judgement of Réunionese Creole perhaps stems from the comparative grammatical and lexical proximity between Creole and French. However, while for some Creole represented an enchanting regional variety of French, linguistic similarities between the two languages in La Réunion have arguably contributed to delays in the

[6] 'Creolophone' (from the French *'créolophone'*) is occasionally used as an alternative for 'Creole speakers' as used by some Réunionese linguists (Gauvin, 1977; Armand, 1987; Daleau *et al.*, 2006; Georger, 2011; Lauret, 2020).

recognition and officialisation of Creole in the public domain. Fears of language transfer (Siegel, 1997) and mixing between Creole and French have been used as arguments against the use of Creole in education. Meanwhile, others have rebutted this by arguing that confusions can be avoided through teaching literacy in both languages from a young age. *"La proximité entre le français et le créole facilite la compréhension entre les deux systèmes, mais elle entraine aussi des confusions"* (Watbled, 2021, p. 21). This linguistic proximity between Creole and French, has equally led to a complex cohabitation between the two languages (Georger, 2011) which, when coupled with the colonial history of the island, has often led to feelings of a *"quête identitaire"* (Fageol, 2016) and a linguistic insecurity (Fanon, 1952; Gauvin, 1977) which has influenced language attitudes and practices among the population. Linguistic insecurity has fed into a sense of cultural insecurity, in which "the level of disaffection among the peoples of Reunion is deeper than that of the Antilleans whose cultural identity has always been somewhat better defined" (Lionnet, 1993, p. 102).

However, this research challenges assumptions that La Réunion lacks a history of oppositional movements or an established regional identity by examining cultural and linguistic movements since the 1970s, and language planning actions since 2000, as efforts to navigate the complexity of the Réunionese sociological and sociolinguistic situation both as a part of and apart from France. While cultural identities in the Caribbean creole islands may be more visible on a global level, La Réunion nevertheless lays claim to an extensive and significant cultural and linguistic integrity. Moreover, despite the possible insecurities and confusions as a result of grammatical similarities between Creole and French, Réunionese Creole remains the most vigorous and extensive of the creoles and regional languages in the DOM. While *Créoliste* movements have formed part of a challenge to French monolingualism and monoculturalism in La Réunion, the same movements have insisted on the importance of a Creole-French bilingualism in Réunionese society. The significance of the emergence of Creole in public education is not restricted to the linguistic realm, but also implicates the recognition and officialisation of a regional cultural identity alongside France. The following section explains how public education has emerged as a key domain in which Creole has rooted itself in Réunionese society.

Education as a channel for the emergence of Creole

While cultural and linguistic movements for Creole throughout the 1970s are examined as part of a wider contextual background, this research focuses more specifically on the introduction of Creole to public education in La Réunion. During the colonial era, education became one of the principal instruments of social and linguistic control (Gauvin, 1977; Glâtre, 2020). Access to education was restricted to the local French-speaking aristocracy during the colonial period. Following departmentalisation in 1946, public schools were made accessible to all Réunionese children as part of assimilation projects (Daleau-Gauvin, 2021). Public education became a vehicle for social and economic progression and French citizenship through the teaching of universalist French values and literacy in written French. The enhanced accessibility of education in La Réunion offered the promise of a period of greater opportunity and possibility for the Réunionese population and to an extent facilitated their engagement in national democratic processes. However, the exclusion of Creole from education and a lack of consideration for the local sociolinguistic landscape demonstrated a widespread failure characteristic of the French education system in its overseas territories. The legacy of these failures persists today in the continued high levels of illiteracy and lower academic achievement levels in La Réunion compared to mainland France (Monteil, 2010b; Daleau-Gauvin, 2021).

Language politics has historically been prevalent in nation-building exercises and the state has often been a principal actor in the marginalization of regional languages through standardisation projects in education and the military (Ferguson, 2006b, p. 74). As defined by Milroy and Milroy in 1998, 'standard language ideology' involves the dissemination, often by government agencies and the media, of the belief in the inherent superiority of one variety over others (Ferguson, 2006a, p. 22). This ideology leads to false notions of 'correct' or 'incorrect' languages (Ferguson, 2006a, p. 22).[7] The notion of standard language has often been superimposed over the concept of national language, and the creation of a standard, homogenised culture and language has often accompanied efforts to unify citizens under an allegiance to the motherland (Ferguson, 2006b, p. 74). This has been particularly visible in France since the Revolution, in which schools in the Republic constructed the values of *liberté, égalité et fraternité* around a single, unifying language (Ferguson, 2006b, p. 74). By contrast, regional languages and cultures have often been prohibited in education for fears

[7] This ideology is common in many creole societies (DeGraff, 2003).

that they encourage separatist movements (Ferguson, 2006b, p. 74). In La Réunion during the 1960s and 1970s the use of Creole in the public sphere for many became synonymous with autonomist tendencies. Nevertheless, contemporary Creole movements have more frequently aimed to reverse unilingual constructions of the French nation, in favour of a bilingual, or even plurilingual, regional identity within the French Republic.[8] Public education has become one of the main fronts for challenging monolingualism in La Réunion.

Education became a focus for early calls for Creole-French bilingualism in La Réunion (Gauvin, 1977; Armand, 1987). Its role in the formation of diglossia has positioned it as one for the most effective domains for the reversal of linguistic hierarchies and negative perceptions towards the Creole language.[9] Alongside written propositions for Creole and Creole literature, education has been the subject of some of the most visible and polarised debates around the role of the language in public Réunionese society (Georger, 2011). Furthermore, education is arguably the principal domain for the development of linguistic politics since the official recognition for Creole in 2000. *"Le droit français des langues régionales concerne quasi-exclusivement le domaine de l'enseignement"* (Bertile, 2020, p. 124). Language planning is applied as a conceptual approach for the emergence of Creole in education in La Réunion, as discussed further in Chapter Two.

Language planning in education has often been one of the most effective tools for the standardisation and officialisation of a language and for altering social opinions and practices (Ferguson, 2006a). While language planning in other domains such as culture, media and research is also vital for the development of a regional language, Ferguson argues that of all these domains, "education in probably the most crucial, sometimes indeed bearing the entire burden of LP implementation" (Ferguson, 2006a, p. 33).[10] As education is generally funded by the state (Ferguson, 2006a), it offers stronger opportunities for language planning measures and teaching initiatives than informal spheres. Moreover, research into language acquisition and literacy reveals that they are best developed among younger children. This, coupled with the importance of schools as key agencies of socialisation (Ferguson, 2006a),

[8] Further discussion of the conceptual shift towards plurilingualism is discussed in Chapter Five.
[9] 'Diglossia' refers to a sociolinguistic context in which a standard superstrate and a substrate co-exist yet perform different functions and are usually restricted to separate domains (Georger, 2011; Bremner, 2019).
[10] LP - Language planning (author's abbreviation).

means that school-aged pupils are a target audience for awareness-raising programmes and language teaching. However, distinctions between public education as a formal domain and other informal domains in Creole language planning in La Réunion are not always clear-cut. This research reveals how public education is an instrumental channel through which teaching practices often echo the voices of grassroots movements and informal actors arguing for the promotion and recognition of Creole. The following section discusses historical and present definitions of creole languages in La Réunion and further afield.

Creole languages, regional languages and language ideologies

Creoles and creolisation

Definitions of creole languages have evolved with societal perceptions towards them. The contentiousness of creole language definitions and classifications has perhaps impeded their *prima facie* recognition and officialisation in contexts such as La Réunion. Creoles have been objects of linguistic and anthropological study since the colonial period, during which they were generally perceived as 'broken' or 'corrupted' variants of their dominant lexifier language (DeGraff, 2003). Sociohistorical ideas of creoles as inferior or degenerate languages have often accompanied racialised hierarchies constructed between colonial powers and colonised communities (DeGraff, 2003).[11] Colonial attitudes towards creoles and their speech communities have shaped linguistic research which has defined and classified them. Parallels can be drawn here with Glâtre's (2020) recognition of the role of colonial institutions in La Réunion in reinforcing linguistic hierarchies between French and Creole based on their status as written or oral languages. Similarly, the historically assumed inferior status of Réunionese Creole in comparison to French has been critiqued as a colonial legacy by many Réunionese academics and linguists (Gauvin, 1977; Wharton, 2006; Watbled, 2021).

A re-evaluation of definitions and classifications of creole languages has taken place globally in the field of linguistics and creole studies since the 1970s. Some linguists have challenged assumptions that creoles form a separate classification of languages. For example, Jean-Phillipe Watbled (2021) expands on Robert Chaudenson's (1974) argument that creoles are

[11] As explained later in this section, 'Creole' with a capital is used to refer to Réunionese Creole, while 'creole' or 'creoles' refers to creole languages in general.

more accurately described as a hypernym of the subcategories 'neo-romance' or 'neo-germanic' languages. Creoles formed primarily from lexifiers such as Portuguese, Spanish and French form the 'neo-romance' languages, while creoles formed from English or Dutch for example, are 'neo-germanic' languages (Watbled, 2021). In defining creoles as 'neo-romance' or 'neo-germanic' languages, 'eurogenetists' such as Chaudenson (1974) reconceptualise creoles as the evolutionary fruit of European languages (Georger, 2011, p. 16) in a process of language change brought about by migration and contact with other languages. This approach offers a more neutral explanation for the high percentage of French-derived vocabulary in Réunionese Creole. However, this theory has been rejected by the 'afrogenetists' school of linguists for overlooking the significance of non-European languages in shaping creoles. For example, some creoles are based primarily on languages autochthonous to Africa (Bartens, 2001) and Réunionese Creole has also been heavily influenced by African and Madagascan languages (Georger, 2011, p. 16).

Both the eurogenesis and afrogenesis theories of creole language development consider the importance of sociohistorical context in creole development, resonating with Michel DeGraff's (2003) argument that the only difference between 'creolisation' and 'language change' is their sociohistorical context; creolisation is characterised by colonial inequalities. This is also mirrored in Jean-Claude Carpanin Marimoutou and Françoise Vergès' definition of 'creolisation' as "a dynamic process of loss and borrowing in a situation of unequal power" (Vergès, 2008: 22). This definition incorporates both linguistic and cultural mixing and thus reflects Martinican writer Édouard Glissant's definition. Glissant widens the linguistic definition of 'creolisation', as the formation of a 'composite language', to the cultural mixing which accompanies it to form 'composite' cultures and identities (Glissant, 2020). Importantly, Glissant considers creolisation as an ongoing process of cultural and linguistic evolution. Hybridisation in the Creole language has become a linguistic expression of cultural amalgamation in regional Réunionese identity (discussed further in Chapter Three). Another alternative defines creoles broadly as *"langues de contact"* (Watbled, 2021). This definition allows for a consideration of the different contexts for cultural and linguistic contact which extend beyond the colonial era, such as, in the case of La Réunion, indentured labour from South Asia and immigration from Mauritius, Rodrigues, Madagascar and the Comoro islands.

As part of their classification as contact languages, creoles have often been studied alongside pidgins. Linguist Jeff Siegel suggests that "a pidgin is a new language that emerges as a contact vernacular among people who need to communicate but do not share a common language" (Siegel, 1997, p. 86). Meanwhile, "a creole is a language that arises as the mother tongue of a newly formed community of people who do not share a common language other than an emerging or already established pidgin" (Siegel, 1997, p.86). This approach proposes that creoles develop from the evolution and expansion of a pidgin into the mother language of a new generation. Other linguists, such as DeGraff (2003), have argued against theories of a pidgin-to-creole cycle of language development, arguing that it reinforces linguistic hierarchies based on notions that creoles are 'simple' languages. Meanwhile, linguists such as Parkvall (2008) defend the notion, arguing that "it is perfectly possible to claim that all languages have the same expressive potential, while not necessarily being equally complex" (Parkvall, 2008, p. 269). His defence of the comparative simplicity of some creoles is supported by references to similar developments in European languages, such as the loss of the Latin case system in Romance languages and the loss of grammatical gender marking in English (Parkvall, 2008, p. 267). Academics in La Réunion since 1970, have often chosen to focus on the expressive capacity of Réunionese Creole and its status as a language (Gauvin, 1977; Daleau *et al.*, 2006). Contemporary linguistic movements for Réunionese Creole have often highlighted the importance of protecting and retaining grammatical variation as an expressive feature of Creole, and prided themselves on avoiding the rigidity of a normative system such as French (Georger, 2011).

Citing Chaudenson (1974), Watbled (2021) distinguishes between endogenous creoles and exogenous creoles. Endogenous creoles are defined as developing in an environment in which the dominant population is homogenous and conserves its ethnic unity, traditions and language (Watbled, 2021). On the other hand, exogenous creoles are formed in a context where the speakers are *"des individus isolés, arrachés à leur pays natal, séparés de leur tribu et de leur famille, jetés dans les "habitations" au milieu d'autres esclaves venus d'autres pays"* (Chaudenson, 1974, p. 392 cited in Watbled, 2021). As an island with no indigenous population prior to its colonisation by the French, La Réunion is an example of an exogenous creole context; in which Réunionese Creole has developed from the forced contact between peoples of different ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds as a result of the French slave

trade and indentureship. According to Watbled (2021), the divergence between exogenous and endogenous creoles requires a consideration of the importance of sociohistorical background as a significant determining factor in the development of a creole language. Watbled (2021) argues that due to the variety in their developmental backgrounds, creoles have no specific structural properties which characterise them as such. This theoretical approach is indicative of a re-definition of creoles among linguists post-1970 who, whether they favour a eurogenesis or an afrogenesis approach, view them as primarily defined by their sociohistorical background of colonial and post-colonial contact (Watbled, 2021). In La Réunion, language recognition movements have often accompanied a renewed discourse concerning the colonial history of the island and a (re-)discovery of colonial-era traditions and cultures such as *Maloya* music (discussed in Chapter Three).

The influence of history on the development of creole languages has also shaped their status and role as a characteristic of regional identity. Historical context has thus informed the process by which a language becomes embedded in a particular society, and whether it is recognised through education, academia and the arts. Postcolonial writer from Martinique, Frantz Fanon, argues that in colonial contexts, there is a direct link between language and social and racial hierarchy which has permeated public spheres such as administration and the army. For example, while completing military service, many Martinicans would be offended when they are mistaken for Senegalese. Meanwhile, the Senegalese soldiers would refer to both Antilleans and white French soldiers as *'Toubabs'* (Fanon, 1952, p. 37), in relation to their mastery of French.[12] In this way, French as the 'civilised' language (Glâtre, 2020), is used as a linguistic marker for intellectual and civilisational superiority and as a tool for assimilation into French society. While in La Réunion constructions of regional identities are usually founded on the multiracial and multicultural characteristics of the population, the assumed superiority of French has often been considered a marker of education and higher social and economic class in La Réunion (Glâtre, 2020).

Sociolinguistic ideologies also emerge in scientific research (Watbled, 2021), dictating the way in which creole languages are studied and classified. This could partially explain the contentious nature of debates within the field of creole linguistics and the frequent

[12] *'Toubab'* is a word used in Senegal to refer to white people; it originates from the French *'tout blanc'*.

indefinite distinctions between scientific conclusions and ideological arguments. This remains an important consideration when examining corpus planning texts in La Réunion in which political and ideological motives are often intertwined (De Robillard, 2001), as discussed later. Ideology is equally, if not more, prevalent in debates around creole languages in education (Georger, 2011; Watbled, 2021). In public domains, constructions of language become synonymous with constructions of historical narratives and their relationship to identity and sociology. For example, Réunionese linguists use language to comment on historical social and political relations in the region. This introduces another approach to the study of creole languages, one which Georger (2011) describes as 'sociogenesis'. This approach follows an anthropological and sociological conceptualisation in which Réunionese social identity is created through the Creole language (Georger, 2011, p. 16). This perspective is foregrounded in this research and informs the research questions by drawing links between language in cultural and ideological movements and language in public education in La Réunion.

Regional language ideologies and linguistic terminology

The use of the term 'language' in relation to creoles has also been subject to debate since their emergence and another obstacle for the recognition and officialisation of Creole in education. Throughout the colonial era, and during the post-departmentalisation period in La Réunion, Creole was often described as a *'patois'.* While the term is often used synonymously with 'dialect', Daniel Braga Alonso (2021) highlights some noteworthy distinctions between the terms. A dialect, he defines as a neutral term used to denote a *"forme particulière d'une langage […] parlée et écrite dans une région"* (Braga Alonso, 2021, p. 7). By contrast, '*patois'* is a term used to define the same function, yet it retains a more stigmatising insinuation (Braga Alonso, 2021, p. 7). A more recent definition by the *Académie Française*, takes a more neutral stance, defining a *'patois'* as a *"variété d'un dialecte"* or a *"sous-dialecte"* (Braga Alonso, 2021, p. 8). While the term *'patois'* has been used somewhat affectionately to describe Réunionese Creole by individuals sympathetic to the assimilationist politics of the right, it has been rejected by more militant defenders of the language since the 1970s. The *Créoliste* movement sought to reverse what they viewed as a diglossia between Creole and French in La Réunion, in part through an affirmation of the status of Creole as a 'language'. Some Creole activists argue that the term *'patois'* is not only

derogatory, but is linguistically inaccurate (Gauvin, 1977).[13] By contrast, Braga Alonso defines a language as a *"système de signes vocaux et/ou graphiques, conventionnels, utilisé par un groupe d'individus pour l'expression du mental et la communication"* (Braga Alonso, 2021, p. 6). The term 'language' has been used in La Réunion, not only to generate a more scientifically accurate narrative around the Creole language, but also to define both Creole and French as languages equally inherent in Réunionese identity, history and society. As Daleau *et al.* (2006, p. 22) argue; *"ni inférieure, ni supérieure, notre créole nous est – à nous Réunionnais – indispensable, au même titre que le français"*.

Their existence alongside a more dominant standard language has led some linguists to consider creoles among endangered languages (Bartens, 2005). Creoles are also often considered alongside 'minority' or 'minoritized' languages in intellectual discussions and language legislation. While Creole may fall within a global linguistic minority, the term 'minority' is not considered in this research to be an accurate description of Réunionese Creole. Creole in La Réunion is spoken by at least 80% of the island's population, as well as by pockets of Réunionese diaspora in mainland France; *"le créole est une réalité linguistique bien vivante dans la région Parisienne"* (Cerquiglini, 1999, p. 4). Not only is Creole spoken daily by 80% of La Réunion, but it is the mother language of the majority of the Réunionese population. Mother languages are defined as "a language learned in childhood in the home environment, also referred to as a mother tongue, first language, or native language" (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020). The term *'langue maternelle'* is increasingly being used by Creole militants and actors in La Réunion as a way of emphasising its significance in Réunionese society and to push for further development in favour of the language in domains such as education. For this reason, neither is it considered entirely appropriate to classify it among endangered languages. This, coupled with its social and cultural importance for Réunionese people and its emerging use in official public spheres, are argued in this research to be evidence of its persisting vitality and adaptability to a modernising Réunionese society.

In French language legislation, the French-based creoles of La Réunion, Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana are described as *'langues régionales'* (Bertile, 2020) and in

[13] For a more general discussion on 'language activists', see (Gorrara, 2021).

national education policy are generally grouped under the singular *'créole'* (Lauret, 2020). Cerquiglini's (1999) report on the languages spoken across France and its overseas territories has influenced national French legislation on languages and was conducted following the signing of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by France (Bertile, 2020). Cerquiglini defines regional languages as languages practised *"traditionnellement sur un territoire d'un État par les ressortissants de cet État qui constituent un groupe numériquement inférieur au reste de la population de l'État"* (Cerquiglini, 1999, p. 3). 'Regional languages' is the favoured term used in this research when discussing broader trends in French policy and sociolinguistics. This decision is in part influenced by the ease and clarity it assures for discourse on official texts and documents which use the term *'langues régionales'*. Furthermore, the choice of terminology also reflects a decision taken *"sur la base de la perspective profondément linguistique, et non politique"* (Braga Alonso, 2021, p. 9). The term 'regional language' in relation to Réunionese Creole is not only considered socially and linguistically accurate, but also suitably non-partisan for my position as an external researcher. Throughout the course of this thesis, 'Creole' with a capital is used to refer to Réunionese Creole, while 'creole' without a capital is used in reference to creoles or creole languages more widely. This decision stems from the terms used by Réunionese people for their language; *Kréol* in Creole, and *Créole* in French. Some writers (Gauvin, 1977) and participants in this study have referred to Creole simply as *'Réunionnais'* or *'la langue réunionnaise'*, in reflection of its status as the mother tongue of La Réunion.

Social and political ideologies which have influenced linguistics and language practices have often played into arguments for language revitalisation and language planning. Gibson Ferguson identifies two principal arguments for language revitalisation: ecological and identity (Ferguson, 2006b). Ecological arguments draw links between loss of linguistic diversity and loss of biodiversity (Ferguson, 2006b). This approach would suggest that as "the strongest natural systems are those which are diverse" (Ferguson, 2006b, p. 78), social and cultural environments are also strengthened by linguistic diversity. Ecological arguments have been used by some linguists to warn of the decline of linguistic diversity in creole-speaking contexts (Bartens, 2005). Similarly, variation and pluralism within the linguistic space has often been defended in arguments both for and against Creole education and language planning in the public domain in La Réunion. Those against Creole language

planning in La Réunion argue that linguistic variation may be lost in standardisation measures and Creole language pedagogy. Meanwhile, those in favour argue that language planning and education policies must preserve and protect linguistic diversity within Réunionese Creole through flexible and adaptive practices (Daleau *et al.*, 2006; Georger, 2011).

Identity arguments for language revitalisation argue that "the destruction of a language is the destruction of a rooted identity" (Fishman, 1991, p.4 cited in Ferguson, 2006b, p. 78). The identity-based argument echoes the sociogenesis and sociohistorical theories for language change and development in creole contexts discussed above. Creole actors in La Réunion have used similar ideas to claim that *"la langue c'est l'âme d'un peuple"* (Gauvin, 1977, p. 81). While the preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity is inevitably present in arguments in favour of Creole education, this research considers Creole language debates in La Réunion as driven primarily by questions of identity. Identity issues in language debates reflect Réunionese discourse and sentiment on their history and status as a French overseas department. For this reason, this thesis agrees with Ferguson, in that "the most persuasive reasons for preserving linguistic diversity are to be found not in the environmentalist, prudential set of arguments but in those that give a central place to the interests and dispositions of speakers of [...] languages" (Ferguson, 2006b, p. 80). Moreover, given its persisting vitality, this research does not consider the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion as a language revitalisation project. Rather it is examined as a shift in the legislative, cultural and social status and role of Creole as a result of identity movements and language planning actions.

Changing ideas on the role and status of Creole in La Réunion run parallel with a broader terminological shift towards plurilingualism in pedagogy (Marshall, 2021). This shift has largely been driven by *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) published in 2001, and updated in 2022 (Council of Europe, 2022). The CEFR distinguishes between 'multilingualism' as "the coexistence of different languages at the social or individual level" and 'plurilingualism' as "the dynamic and developing linguistic repertoire of an individual user/learner" (Council of Europe, 2022). Discussion of plurilingual approaches for education has expanded in influence throughout Europe, largely within francophone literature, and has thus influenced similar debates around Creole-French linguistic

repertoires in La Réunion (Georger, 2011) (discussed further in Chapter One).[14] Thus, the evolving conceptualisation and use of regional language ideologies and linguistic terminology relevant to the Réunionese context has important implications for broader academic discussions in applied linguistics. The following section builds on the above discussions by providing the historical context required to understand the Réunionese territory, population and language.

History and context of La Réunion pre-1970

La Réunion is an island located in the Indian Ocean measuring 2,500 kilometres squared. It forms part of the Mascarenes Archipelago, along with Mauritius and Rodrigues. With no previous indigenous population, between 1646 and 1654 it was used intermittently by sailors and merchants as a stop-over, during which time it was often described as an 'Eden' (Georger, 2011). In 1663, it was colonised by several families from the north of France and their African servants (Vergès, 2008; Georger, 2011). At the dawn of the eighteenth century, La Réunion became a source for the intensive plantation of coffee and later sugar cane (Georger, 2011). This was accompanied by France's mass importation of slaves from Africa and Madagascar (Georger, 2011). The colonial plantations thus became the main site for cultural and linguistic creolisation during this era (Price and Price, 1997; DeGraff, 2005). The Creole language developed through interactions between slaves of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, as well as with their masters (Ghasarian, 2004). Between 1810 and 1815, La Réunion was briefly occupied by the British (Georger, 2011), contributing further to the linguistic exchange and contact on the island. After the abolition of slavery in 1848, a replacement workforce for the plantations was imported in the form of indentured workers (Georger, 2011).[15] Between 1848 and 1933, 120,000 indentured workers were imported from China and predominantly, south India (Finch-Boyer, 2014). In a clause in their contracts, indentured workers were forbidden from speaking their own languages or practising their own traditions; thus, they adopted Creole, as *"la langue de la soumission"* (Ghasarian, 2004,

[14] Links between Creole language education in La Réunion and plurilingualism appear throughout this thesis. A more in-depth discussion of overlaps between plurilingual pedagogy in European literature and Creole initiatives in Réunionese education can be found in Chapter Five.

[15] An indentured worker/servant refers to an individual who was forced to work for someone for a fixed period of time, often in order to repay a debt or loan (Collins English Dictionary [online], 2023).

p. 315). These waves of forced mass immigration to the island brought varied forms of cultural and linguistic contact which remain visible in the lexicon of Réunionese Creole today.

The island's name reflects its history as a French, and briefly British, colony. It was known as *'Île Bourbon'* during French colonisation, *'Île de La Réunion'* during the Revolution and then later *'Île Bonaparte'.* During British colonisation it reverted back to its original name 'Isle of Bourbon', before being re-named its revolutionary name, *'Île de La Réunion'* at the beginning of the Second Republic in 1948 (Georger, 2011, p. 12). The origins of La Réunion in colonialism and migration are preserved in many of the geographical, linguistic and cultural denominations on the island, such as the three *'cirques'* in the central area of the island.[16] *Mafate* takes its name from the name of a fugitive slave who escaped to live in the region, *Cilaos* derives from the Malgache word *'Tsilaosa'* meaning 'the place you never leave', and *Salazie* comes from the Malgache word *'Salaozi'* meaning 'good encampment' (Georger, 2011, p. 10). 42% of La Réunion is listed as a UNESCO Worldwide Heritage Site (reunion.fr, 2023), and *Piton de la Fournaise* remains one of the most active volcanoes in the world.

In 1946, deputy for the French National Assembly for Martinique, Aimé Césaire, proposed a *Loi de Départementalisation* (Césaire, 1946). In his report, Césaire argued that *"Sous le Consulat et l'Empire, les colonies sont déclarées […] « en dehors du droit national »"* (Césaire, 1946, p. 2). Contrary to their previous state of political and social exclusion, the proposed law would bring equality to the four French colonies, Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guiana and La Réunion, and allow their people to participate fully in French national democracy as equal citizens. The law proposed that all the laws applicable in mainland France be immediately applicable in these four regions. For Césaire, this would signify *"que la Martinique, la Guadeloupe, la Guyane française et la Réunion entrent dans la famille française et participent au destin de la France sur un pied d'égalité avec les départements français"* (Césaire, 1946, p. 8). This legislative and administrative development would *"[exprime] le vœu d'un rattachement plus étroit à la France"* (Césaire, 1946, p. 8). While the law proposed legislative assimilation, Césaire does not overlook the necessity for some possible exceptions due to the economic specificities and geographical particularities of the DOM (Césaire, 1946).

[16] Natural mountainous formations formed from volcanic activity on the island.

Following the enactment of the *Loi de Départementalisation*, the period of 1946 to the 1960s was characterised by assimilationist politics, during which cultural and linguistic differences from mainland France were minimalised in official discourse. A turning point came in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when, due to increasing frustrations over ongoing inequalities between the DOM and the metropole, resistance to assimilationism emerged in the form of autonomist politics and cultural and linguistic movements which affirmed a regional identity (Gauvin, 2002). Some argue that the source of these inequalities can arguably be traced back to a colonial hierarchisation in which *"la langue est un prisme par lequel se révèlent et se diffractent les tensions coloniales"* (Fageol, 2016, p. 16). The significance of the political history of La Réunion for Creole language movements is analysed in Chapter Three.

Over the last few decades, the gradual dissolution of colonial relations between metropolitan France and overseas departments such as La Réunion has led to a re-assessment of sociolinguistic descriptions of the island. Many academics now challenge the relevance of the term 'diglossia' for the Réunionese context (Georger, 2011; Bremner, 2019), as the defined roles and domains for Creole and French are gradually eroded. The 'continuum' model has been applied by some to acknowledge the existence of intra-linguistic variation and mixed forms in every-day Réunionese speech (Lebon-Eyquem, 2015). Meanwhile, considering the diglossic and continuum models as too structuralist, some linguists have attempted to theorise a new model which takes into consideration the complexity and plasticity of mixed speech production in daily Réunionese communication. 'Interlect' refers neither to a basilectal nor an acrolectal variety, but to the zone of communication in which language items are mixed and merged in complex, flexible and yet organised speech patterns.[17] According to Fabrice Georger (2011), the interlect model accurately describes the complexity of linguistic production and communication in La Réunion, without the confinement of structuralist notions of language (discussed further in Chapter One). Natalia Bremner's term 'translingual', referring to the combined use of French and Creole by Réunionese speakers, mirrors the notion of interlect (Bremner, 2019, p. 95). The re-evaluation of sociolinguistic descriptions in DOM such as La Réunion

[17] A 'basilectal' variant is one which is furthest from the standard, while an 'acrolectal' variant most closely resembles the standard (Georger, 2011).

accompanies a re-evaluation of social and cultural relations. In this way, it is important to consider the possibility that "the boundaries between languages are socially constructed rather than linguistically determined" (Bremner, 2019, pp. 83–84). This thesis views the emergence of Creole in education as part of the emergence of a modern social construction of Réunionese public society.

According to Pierre-Éric Fageol, *"la langue met en évidence les principes d'accommodation adoptés par les sociétés coloniales, leur double volonté d'assimilation et de reconnaissance de leur singularité"* (Fageol, 2016, p. 16). This argument is reflected throughout this thesis, in which different linguistic approaches are interpreted as varied constructions of cultural and social narratives on relations between La Réunion and the Republic. Discourse on the sociolinguistic context of La Réunion has evolved from theories centred on diglossia, to an emphasis on the inherent bilingualism and plurilingualism of Creole and French language practices specific to Réunionese identity. The emergence of Creole in the public domain is a legislative and social manifestation of this sentiment. While historically, monolingualism has been seen as central to nation building and social-cohesion, Creole movements in the cultural, linguistic and political spheres in La Réunion pose the question; *"peut-on concilier la réalité d'un multilinguisme avec les aspirations à l'unité de la Nation?"* (Fageol, 2016, p. 6). This thesis provides insights into how public education has become a passage through which to navigate this question.

Thesis outline

The structure of this thesis follows the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion through the processes of recognition and officialisation for the language between 1970 and 2022. This introduction has outlined the key research questions, the originality and significance of the project, introduced some of the central themes, and provided background to the research field. Chapter One introduces some of the core literature which has come closest to answering the research questions for this thesis, identifies related disciplines, and highlights where this thesis has expanded upon them. Chapter Two describes and explains language planning as the central conceptual framework for this research, identifies other conceptual approaches which have influenced this research and provides background to the fieldwork and ethnography which has informed my

understanding. Chapter Three forms the first part of the main body of analysis and focuses on the period 1970 to 2000. This chapter contextualises the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion by examining the initial cultural and linguistic movements in favour of Creole within their social and political context. Moreover, Chapter Three examines some examples of the clandestine use of Creole in certain public domains as evidence of a grassroots resistance to the assimilationism and monolingualism enforced by the French State. Chapter Four follows on by analysing the officialisation of Creole through legislation and policy since 2000, and the role of different formal and informal actors in driving these officialisation processes. Chapter Five forms the final part of the analysis, by investigating more closely how education legislation and policy are translated into Creole teaching practices on the ground. This chapter focuses on the teacher experience and perspective, by drawing heavily on the ethnographic research conducted. Finally, the general conclusion reviews the principal observations and arguments made throughout the thesis, considers the future of Creole in public Réunionese society and suggests further research to be conducted.

Chapter One. Existing and Emerging Literature in the Field

Introduction

This research investigates how and why the Creole language has emerged in public education in La Réunion between 1970 and 2022, and what the role of formal and informal actors has been in producing this emergence. In order to answer these research questions, literature by Réunionese actors on the Creole language and education will form a main focus of the study (Gauvin, 1977; Georger, 2011; Daleau-Gauvin, 2021). Secondly, literature on other creole-speaking contexts will provide a wider contextual insight on some of the similarities and specificities of the Réunionese case. Réunionese literary sources help to gain an extensive understanding of the different currents which have driven the recognition of Réunionese Creole through cultural and linguistic movements since 1970 and its subsequent officialisation in public education between 2000 and 2022. Linguistic and sociolinguistic studies (Chaudenson, 1974; Armand, 1987) have credited Creole as a language alongside French, pointing to existing grammatical systems, a distinctive lexical base and fixed syntactic structures. Linguists later emphasised the prominence of mixed and hybridised language forms (De Robillard, 2001; Georger, 2011; Lebon-Eyquem, 2015), demonstrating an acknowledgement of the complexity of sociolinguistic landscapes in La Réunion, much like other DOM (Prudent, 1981). Creole musicians, poets and novelists, such as Boris Gamaleya, *Ziskakan*, Axel Gauvin, Daniel Honoré, Danyèl Waro and Jean-Claude Carpanin Marimoutou, have formed a cultural movement which has actively promoted Creole in public spheres. Further literature has been contributed by actors in policy and education, forming a strong current in favour of Creole-French bilingualism and plurilingualism in schools. The diversity of contributors to literature on the Creole language in La Réunion illustrates expansive engagement from the multiple sectors and fields which language permeates. The diverse voices heard in movements for the recognition and officialisation of Creole reflect the heterogeneity and multiculturalism that characterise Réunionese identity.

A few key texts have provided more specific and comprehensive details on Réunionese Creole and other creoles in education. The first half of this chapter examines some of the core literature on Creole education in La Réunion. This literature introduces key actors in both formal and informal domains who have actively intervened in promoting the Creole

language in public Réunionese education, offering insight into the theories and arguments employed to propel the movement. The majority of these actors have also participated in this research through interviews and meetings which informed the ethnographic aspect of this thesis.[18] While the literary field is narrowed by overlapping in authorship of these texts, this also serves to accentuate their place as experts in the field. Consequently, this chapter also serves as a background to their significance in the domain and as a validation for the ethnographic findings discussed later in the thesis. The second half of this chapter discusses global literature on creole languages in education which can provide a useful point of comparison to developments in La Réunion. While this latter body of literature is rarely referenced by Réunionese researchers, case studies from other creole societies can serve as a benchmark for the Réunionese context and situate it within a global body of literature recognising and promoting the value of creole language education. Firstly, we will examine the significant Réunionese literature on Creole.

Significant literature on Creole in La Réunion

Gauvin (1977) *Du créole opprimé au créole libéré, défense de la langue réunionnaise*

Axel Gauvin's manifesto for Creole-French bilingualism, *Du créole opprimé au créole libéré, défense de la langue réunionnaise* (1977) is important for this study as one of the first essays promoting Creole education in La Réunion. Written during pro-Creole literary and linguistic movements in the 1970s, this polemic text argues that the exclusion of the Creole language from the public domain has historically been used as a (neo-)colonial tool by the French Republic to oppress the Réunionese population. Gauvin's essay represents the political angle of engagement which often characterised early debates around Creole-French bilingualism. These movements viewed Creole language politics and regional political autonomy as inherently linked. Therefore, the essay also contributes to knowledge on the socio-political background of early movements in favour of Creole. *Du créole opprimé* (Gauvin, 1977) was written prior to the official recognition of French-based creoles as regional languages of France in 2000 (JORF, 2000a). Thus, it represents an ambitious argument for linguistic and political change in La Réunion which was not instigated officially until over two decades later.

[18] As discussed in Chapter Two, permission to name these participants has been granted as a result of their position as researchers/authors.

The text pre-dates much of the literature on other creole languages in education which formed the emergence of a global intellectual movement at the turn of the millennium: (Bartens, 2001; DeGraff, 2003; Alby and Léglise, 2005; Siegel, 2006; Migge and Léglise, 2007). Some of the main arguments provided by Gauvin in his manifesto are discussed below in relation to their contribution to this research.

The departing principle for the essay affirms that Creole is a distinct language (Gauvin, 1977). This observation is argued through references to linguists such as Chaudenson, Cellier and Carayol who, "*sans exceptions*", assert the linguistic status of Creole (Gauvin, 1977, pp. 40–41). Gauvin also references Boris Gamaleya as one of the first to contribute significantly to the recognition of Creole through publications such as *Lexique illustré de la langue créole* (Gauvin, 1977, p. 40). Gauvin identifies a number of grammatical and etymological characteristics of Creole which support his arguments that it is a language separate from French. He tracks the development of Creole back to the linguistic contact between northern dialects of French and other African, Asian and European languages throughout the history of the island. Using an etymological perspective, Gauvin argues that lexical similarities between Creole and French are the result of a linguistic evolution similar to the development of Romance languages from Latin. This theory echoes those proposed by Chaudenson (1974) and has subsequently been argued by other creole linguists outside of La Réunion (DeGraff, 2003, 2005). In addition to this, examples are given of how some of the vocabulary most similar to French has taken on a different meaning, while other grammatical or syntactical structures are entirely original and unique to Réunionese Creole (Gauvin, 1977, pp. 25–39). Through linguistic argumentation, Gauvin refutes suggestions that Creole is an inferior language compared to French and declares that all languages have equal potentialities in academic, political and administrative spheres. The essay reflects an increasing interest in the study and promotion of the Creole language throughout the 1970s, which marked the beginning of movements in favour of its recognition in official public spheres. Further discussion of these arguments in cultural and linguistic movements between 1970 and the 1990s can be found in Chapter Three.

Having argued for a recognition of Creole as a language equal to French, Gauvin (1977) examines the historical marginalisation of Creole throughout the colonial and post-departmentalisation periods, acknowledging the sociohistorical and political determinants of

linguistic realities. In La Réunion, as in the case of many plantation societies, colonial and slavery regimes forced cultural and linguistic contact between colonisers and colonised, forming the Creole language. The power imbalances which underpinned the social, political and economic organisation of these societies had a similar impact on the linguistic landscape of the island, with Creole becoming a *"langue d'opprimés, langue opprimée"* (Gauvin, 1977, p. 10). During the colonial era, Creole was viewed as a subordinate *'patois'* (Gauvin, 1977) and was excluded from official public domains, while French, the language of the colonisers was held up as the language of success and education. According to Gauvin, these negative attitudes towards Creole have continued to impede its integration into public spheres long after La Réunion's transition from a colony to an overseas department. Axel Gauvin refers to a *"complexe d'infériorité"* instilled in Creole-speakers by the French Republic which defined French as the only legitimate language and marginalised Creole (Gauvin, 1977, p. 66). This notion reflects concepts in postcolonial writing such as Frantz Fanon's *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* (1952), which argues that colonialism constructed an 'inferiority complex' among colonised populations. This leads into another important argument made by Gauvin; that language status and practices are constructions carved out by a society's social and political history. Therefore, perceived linguistic hierarchies are not testament to the inherent superiority or inferiority of some languages in relation to others. This notion has since been echoed by linguists privileging a sociohistorical approach to linguistic definitions (Bremner, 2019; Watbled, 2021). If diglossic relations between languages are socially and historically constructed rather than linguistically pre-determined, then all languages have equal potential to survive and thrive, provided they are given the right opportunities to do so. By highlighting the central role of history in the establishment of language attitudes in La Réunion, Gauvin's essay provides context to efforts to challenge these attitudes through educational and awareness-raising initiatives today.

Gauvin draws a direct link between linguistic inequalities and political and social inequalities; maintaining that linguistic freedom requires political freedom. Gauvin argues that the prestige attributed to French in contrast to Creole is artificial considering that for the majority of Réunionese, Creole is their mother tongue and French is a second language. He asserts that the linguistic and social inferiority complex ingrained in Réunionese people contributes to a political and economic dependency on the French state and local elites

(Gauvin, 1977, p. 69). In this way, linguistic control becomes a tool for political control from which emancipation can only be achieved through the formation of a bilingual autonomist Réunionese state within the French Republic. Gauvin's mission for Creole-French bilingualism is therefore a profoundly political one, with the freedom and equality of the Réunionese people at its heart. By extension, the exclusion of Creole from public domains such as education, administration and politics transforms into a threat on democracy in which an insistence on French monolingualism inherently interferes with political elective and democratic processes.

Axel Gauvin (1977) was not alone in positing these arguments; *Du créole opprimé* sits in an era in which the emergence of Creole movements accompanied a rise in autonomist politics among some sections of Réunionese society. The ties between language and politics have remained prevalent in Réunionese contemporary history, with linguistic policies playing a defining role in political campaigns on the island (Gilles Gauvin, 2002).[19] However, Gauvin's (1977) manifesto represents a divergence from some political parties in that it finds political solutions for a linguistic issue, rather than using language as a tool for realising a political motivation (Gauvin, 2002).[20] While politics continues to play a vital role in both restricting and facilitating changes in language practices in La Réunion in the 2020s, the essay published by Gauvin in 1977 similarly reveals an evolution in the political landscape which has altered arguments in favour of Creole today. During conversations for this research, Axel Gauvin admits that his views have transformed dramatically since publishing this essay; political and colonial arguments have given way to more pedagogical ones. This progression from political and ideological motivations to mainly educational and linguistic motivations is demonstrated throughout this thesis. Nevertheless, *Du créole opprimé* (Gauvin, 1977) provides a context of the theoretical and polemic foreground which has influenced contemporary debates on Creole and demonstrates its progression throughout recent years.

Despite its political orientations, *Du créole opprimé* (1977) is founded on a pedagogical argument which stems in part from Gauvin's experiences teaching literacy informally to friends in *Chemin Portail* (Gauvin, 1977, pp. 13–16). Drawing on this experience, Gauvin

[19] The historian Gilles Gauvin, as opposed to the writer and activist, Axel Gauvin.
[20] Links between socio-political context and language movements between 1970 and the 1990s are discussed further in Chapter Three.

observes the incomprehension and illiteracy prevalent among Creole speakers, even among those who have attended school. The neglect to recognise Creole in education dates back to the colonial period; *"dans l'infériorisation de l'individu créole par l'infériorisation de la langue créole, l'école coloniale joue un rôle fondamental"* (Gauvin, 1977, p. 66). Gauvin suggests that schools have historically been used as a principal instrument in the establishment of linguistic, social and economic hierarchies in La Réunion. Despite illusions of economic and social opportunities through the acquisition of French, according to Gauvin (1977), the education system has in reality done little to successfully teach French and even less to provide Creole speakers with the opportunities promised. Gauvin raises a number of pedagogical concerns and arguments, including mutism and the psychological damage caused as a result of punishments for speaking Creole in schools (Gauvin, 1977, p. 61). The essay transforms this into a metaphorical mutism in which Creole speakers in La Réunion are silenced by the state as a result of incomprehension in legal, administrative and democratic processes. Furthermore, bilingualism is promoted as a solution to high levels of illiteracy in La Réunion, which Gauvin suggests result from an artificial enforced monolingualism in schools. Chapter Five discusses how these issues continue to appear among motivations for Creole education since its introduction in 2000, revealing a continued relevance of the text several decades on.

Gauvin (1977) demonstrates an essential argument for this research; that as the historical instruments for the marginalisation and exclusion of Creole, schools are transformed into the best-placed domain from which the reversal of social and linguistic inequalities can be achieved through Creole-French bilingualism in education. This research builds on this text by examining how this bilingualism is being established several decades later and how argument has evolved since the first pioneer texts in the 1970s. Furthermore, conversations with Axel Gauvin reveal his continued engagement in the Creole language debate and the development of his ideas over time.

Daleau, Duchemann, Gauvin, Georger (2006) *Oui au créole, oui au français*

Early literature in favour of Creole such as *Du créole opprimé* (Gauvin, 1977), accompanies more contemporary literature to build a timeline from which to track the emergence of Creole in public education and the evolution of the theories behind it. Written after the official recognition of Creole as a regional language of France in 2000, *Oui au créole, oui au*

français (Daleau *et al.*, 2006) is a collaborative essay by Axel Gauvin, Laurence Daleau, Fabrice Georger and Yvette Duchemann which represents another significant text for this research. The authors discuss the issue of Creole in schools in La Réunion using official documents, experiences of bilingual teaching, and quotations from interviews with researchers, teachers and educators to support and structure their arguments. This essay is arguably less political than the earlier text by Axel Gauvin (1977), focusing on the pedagogical and practical reasoning behind bilingual education; *"enseignants nous-mêmes, c'est ce domaine que nous avons privilégié dans notre essai"* (Daleau *et al.*, 2006, p. 101). Moreover, given the fact that it gives little explanation of cultural and social references and no translations for phrases and textual extracts in Creole, it is possible to assume that the text is primarily intended for teachers and educational actors in La Réunion. As was the case with Gauvin (1977), *Oui au créole, oui au français* (Daleau *et al.*, 2006) provides an analysis and argument based primarily on the specific Réunionese context. However, it is written in French perhaps in the hope of keeping it accessible for a wider audience. The essay discusses linguistic research; although it is undoubtedly first and foremost intended to engage with public attitudes towards Creole education among actors in the domain. The inclusion of official documents, interview transcripts and anecdotal examples of the authors' experiences teaching in the domain make the text a rich resource for research into the progressive emergence of Creole in public education, and a valuable point of reference and comparison for the data collected for this thesis.

The extended essay by Daleau *et al.* (2006) follows on from earlier literature (Gauvin, 1977) by revisiting some of the arguments in favour of Creole education. The authors identify grammatical, lexical and literary examples to demonstrate the breadth and diversity of Creole language practices in La Réunion. Furthermore, the text addresses the sociohistorical context of La Réunion which has contributed towards the interiorisation of stigmas surrounding Creole which lead to representations of it as a *'patois'* or inferior language (Daleau *et al.*, 2006, p. 22). However, in a divergence from earlier literature which maintained close ties to autonomist politics, the text distances itself from political agendas outside of linguistic politics. Instead, the text contextualises historical associations between Creole activists and autonomist politics as a reaction against assimilationist politics and hostility towards any expression of regional identity (Daleau *et al.*, 2006, pp. 12–13). The

depoliticization of Creole movements is in part a direct result of legislative developments in favour of Creole such as the *Loi d'orientation pour l'outre-mer* (JORF, 2000a).[21] The official recognition of Creole in this law, to an extent neutralised the debate, allowing activists to focus on pedagogical and social arguments. Additionally, an increased focus on the psychological and academic benefits of Creole-French bilingualism in school is equally an attempt to convince other teachers, educational staff and policymakers of its necessity, thus expanding the movement further. Through analysis of laws and policies in favour of regional languages in France and La Réunion, the text illustrates the way in which changes to the legislative status of the Creole language have given momentum to grassroots movements among cultural actors, linguists and teachers. This thesis expands beyond this knowledge by analysing legislation since 2006 and the continued involvement of actors in both formal and informal domains.

Daleau *et al.* (2006) attempt to appeal to education actors through their insistence on an optional Creole education. By adopting a more moderate line of argument, the authors recognise the value of public engagement and support for the survival of a language in a public domain such as education. To a similar effect, Daleau *et al.* (2006) argue strongly against the common assumption that Creole will replace French as the language of education, instead promoting the notion of Creole and French as *"langues partenaires"* (Daleau *et al.*, 2006, p. 104). This is achieved through their favoured use of the term 'bilingualism' and through frequent references to the value and necessity of Creole for mastering the French language. An improved French fluency and literacy and an increased understanding of the distinctions between French and Creole are therefore included among the benefits of Creole-French bilingualism in Réunionese schools. Alongside these, the integration of Creole into education is also considered important for combatting problems of illiteracy and mutism, improving self-confidence and reinforcing intergenerational ties. Many of these motivations reappear in interviews with teachers for this research, as discussed in Chapter Five, thus revealing a consistency in arguments in favour of Creole throughout the past couple of decades.

[21] Further details of this law can be found in Table 1, Chapter Four.

As well as revealing motivations behind Creole education among teachers and grassroots actors in the domain, *Oui au créole, oui au français* (Daleau *et al.*, 2006) offers a valuable insight into early teaching initiatives and some of the activities and approaches developed by Creole teachers in the first decade of official Creole education. Drawing on the real experiences of the authors and the perspectives of other teachers and linguists, the text serves as a useful starting point for this research, which examines the development of Creole education almost two decades on. The authors introduce some of the key issues implicated in the establishment of teaching initiatives which continue to appear in discussions today, such as orthography, linguistic variation and Creole-French mixing. Reflection on these issues demonstrates an awareness among teachers for wider sociolinguistic questions early on in Creole education. The culmination of the essay's arguments is their proposed new pedagogical approach, *L'Enseignement Intégré du Créole et du Français (EICF)*, which insists on a deepened learning in both languages, the development of an educational metalanguage, and a reflective and comparative observation of both languages (Daleau *et al.*, 2006, pp. 105–106). Elements of this approach continue to be seen in teaching practices and strategies which exist in Réunionese schools today. Furthermore, in their conclusion the authors offer some suggestions for the future of Creole education, such as the importance of an increased awareness for Creole education among teachers and staff, improved teacher training in the domain and a need for agreement and consensus among actors (Daleau *et al.*, 2006). These suggestions serve as a reference point for similar ideas given by teachers and actors for this research which takes place almost two decades later.

The essay by Daleau *et al.* (2006) contributes greatly towards answering questions on how and why the Creole language came to be recognised and later officialised in education in La Réunion. Informed by interviews with teachers and researchers, it serves as a precursor to this thesis. Nevertheless, this thesis widens the scope of analysis and discussion by providing an external perspective which is arguably more objective and neutral than the narrative favoured by Daleau *et al.* (2006). Similarly, this research builds on literature by Daleau *et al.* (2006) by widening the frame of investigation to examine the emergence of Creole in public education between 1970 and 2022. Moreover, three of the four authors of the text discussed above participated in this research through ethnographic interviews, therefore, their essay forms a foundation for the information provided in their interviews.

Adelin et Lebon-Eyquem (2009) *L'enseignement du créole à La Réunion, entre coup d'éclat et réalité*

Other teachers and educational actors have published literature on the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion, contributing a multitude of perspectives on the developments in educational linguistic politics on the island. From their perspective as teachers and actors directly involved in the domain, this literature contributes a valuable thread to the growing body of research on the Creole language and linguistic politics in La Réunion. As well as demonstrating how ground-level actors such as teachers are participating in research and policy, this literature can also reveal the extent to which Creole language politics in education have been successful. Academic articles and research studies conducted and written by teachers and educational actors are essential for this research for two principal reasons. In one sense, they reflect the breadth, diversity and interdisciplinary nature of literary and academic contributions to the field of Creole linguistics, culture and language politics. The multifaceted and interdisciplinary nature of movements in favour of Creole is one of the focuses of this thesis. Actors involved in one field have often also participated in another; thus, the existence of such a variety of literature reveals how the recognition and officialisation of Creole in education is in part a result of the engagement of a diverse range of actors. In another sense, this literature provides valuable content which gives insight into how these processes are transformed into a reality on the ground, especially in classrooms.

Evelyne Adelin and Mylène Lebon-Eyquem's (2009) article, *L'enseignement du créole à La Réunion, entre coup d'éclat et réalité* offers another comprehensive and detailed insight into Creole education in the past couple of decades. Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem (2009) situate the emergence of Creole teaching within the context of its gradual expansion into other public domains, such as its increased appearance in the media and publicity and in written forms. Thus, the article informs aspects of this research such as the background processes of recognition leading up to the officialisation of Creole in 2000. Moreover, Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem provide an overview of some of the laws and policies which have officialised Creole and resulted in the creation of Creole teaching programmes, such as the LOOM, the *Licence de Créole* and the *CAPES de Créole* (Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem, 2009, pp. 2–4). Although they have been teachers, neither Adelin nor Lebon-Eyquem are qualified Creole teachers,

therefore, the article provides an alternative perspective and reveals an engagement from local teachers in other disciplines. Furthermore, their research demonstrates the significance of legislation for status planning in Creole education, which has deepened understanding of language policy in this thesis.

In addition to this, Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem (2009) discuss some of the obstacles for the translation of Creole teaching initiatives into practice. They categorise the difficulties into problems of social demand and availability of staff, and problems relating to organisational and management technicalities. Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem argue that one of the main issues is that while bilingual teaching is offered as an initiative by the regional education board *Académie de La Réunion*, there are still very few classes due to staff availability and logistical barriers. For example, between 2002 and 2006 there were only two bilingual classes, none in 2007 and eight in 2008 (Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem, 2009, p. 5).[22] This pattern continues into secondary education which is often restricted by discrepancies with heads of establishments and disparities in the number of inscriptions across the island (Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem, 2009, p. 6). In addition to this, technical issues have resulted from a lack of reflection on the enactment and the management of Creole education programmes and initiatives in La Réunion. Cuts to the number of training hours for Creole teachers have resulted in insufficient preparation and a lack of consensus on linguistic questions such as written Creole and variation have led to disparities between teaching methods. Nevertheless, the article concludes on a more positive tone, praising the efforts made by Creole associations such as *Lofis, Tikouti* and *Lantant LKR*. The progress made in terms of official initiatives offered by the *Académie de La Réunion* and contributions by grassroots associations have led the authors to *"espérer que l'école réunionnaise puisse un jour permettre à chaque enfant de gérer sa diversité linguistique et de la transformer en richesse"* (Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem, 2009, pp. 8–9).

The article by Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem (2009) is among literature which comes closest to approaching the research questions asked in this project. In providing a sociolinguistic

[22] Where the term *Académie* is used, unless stated otherwise, it is used in reference to the *Académie de La Réunion*, and not to the *Académie Française*, which is the principal council established to deal with matters relating to the French language. See Chapter Four for further details on the *Académie de La Réunion.*

background to La Réunion, an overview of legislation impacting Creole education and an analysis of progress and obstacles to date, it mirrors in content some of the subjects discussed in this thesis. Moreover, its contribution to the field as a research piece written by former teachers means that it offers further insight into the perspective privileged in this research. However, the article views Creole education through a fairly narrow lens, focusing on Creole education policies and practices between 2000 and 2009. While it provides some sociolinguistic background, it does not include any in-depth analysis of the cultural and linguistic movements during the 1970s and 1990s which propelled the subsequent emergence of Creole in official public spheres. This research aims to delve deeper into the issue of Creole education in La Réunion through an examination of the beginnings of the movement to revalorise the language through poetry, novels, music and linguistics since the 1970s. Moreover, this thesis broadens the investigation through a comparison between Réunionese Creole movements and education and those in other creole societies, such as the other DOM. Furthermore, it expands upon early reviews such as the article by Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem (2009) by offering an updated view on the progress in the domain over a decade later, and by deepening understanding of the context through a greater focus on the experiences of actors such as teachers, policymakers and association members.

Georger (2011) *Créole et français à La Réunion: une cohabitation complexe*

Another significant academic contribution to literature on Creole education in La Réunion is Fabrice Georger's (2011) thesis *Créole et français à La Réunion: une cohabitation complexe*. This text sits within a body of literature published by Creole teachers which reveals their increasing engagement in educational and linguistic research. In this way it follows on from the literature discussed above such as Daleau *et al.* (2006) and Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem (2009), revealing patterns and progressions in actor involvement and Creole teaching theories and practices in La Réunion.

Georger (2011) introduces a new theoretical framework from which to analyse the sociolinguistic context in La Réunion, which he then applies to the domain of Creole education and language politics. The thesis discusses and critiques preceding linguistic notions on creole languages applied to the Réunionese context, such as theories on creolisation, diglossia and continuum which Georger (2011) argues are often overly rigid and structuralist. Instead, he suggests the theory of 'interlect', as proposed by Guadeloupean

linguist Lambert-Félix Prudent in 1993, as a more accurate description of language practices in La Réunion. Applied to La Réunion, interlect describes a sociolinguistic reality in which the first language spoken by the majority of Réunionese people cannot be clearly defined as one language, but rather as a complex macrosystem consisting of two solid syntactic nuclei; Creole and French (Georger, 2011, p. 96). These nuclei form the two psycholinguistic poles, while the space in between them is an area of language contact in which mixed utterances are often formed. The complexity of this system means that the language practices of each individual are unique, thus providing a 'free space' of which Réunionese are defensive. This individuality and flexibility often results in polarised debates around questions of normalisation and standardisation (Georger, 2011). The interlect model provides a conceptual background to the sociolinguistic environment in La Réunion and contextualises attitudes and opinions towards the Creole language and its use in Réunionese society. This literature is valuable for shedding a light on how theories in the fields of socio- and psycholinguistics have been applied to the development of Creole teaching initiatives and practices in public education. Moreover, Georger's notion of interlect and a complex macrosystem of speech echo definitions of plurilingualism as a set of hybridised, often unbalanced, and interrelated competences which form one linguistic repertoire (Marshall, 2021; Council of Europe, 2022). These similarities demonstrate an overlap between Réunionese literature on Creole and education, and broader European literature on plurilingualism in pedagogy.

Georger (2011) draws important links between the complexity of relations between Creole and French in Réunionese speech and language and the importance of considering this macrosystem when introducing language politics in all areas of public society. Georger (2011) describes how 'glottopolitics' as the politics of language have profoundly influenced *"au niveau langagier, les représentations, les pratiques sociales et les institutionnalisations"* (Georger, 2011, p. 256). In this sense, glottopolitics have shaped the relations between the Creole and French languages in La Réunion, the zones of society they occupy and the attitudes that the Réunionese people hold towards them. This contributes towards an understanding of Creole language attitudes and practices, and more importantly the institutionalisation of the language in public domains such as education, which is central to this research. For Georger, there are three main spheres in which glottopolitics in La Réunion

are the most visible; orthography, literature and education, which he argues are all intrinsically linked (Georger, 2011). These three areas identified by Georger inform the domains used in this thesis as the principal zones from which actors are engaged in Creole education.

The sphere of orthography links to what is defined in this thesis as the domain of 'research' which is highlighted as an important contributing field for driving the officialisation of Creole in education through corpus and status planning. The sphere identified by Georger (2011) as literature, is widened out in this research to encompass the whole 'cultural sphere', including music, theatre and other forms of cultural and linguistic interactions. Finally, education is the key focus of this thesis, and Georger's (2011) application of glottopolitics and theories of interlect to arguments for plurilingual education illustrates an evolution in the conceptualisation and argumentation of approaches by some education actors. Georger (2011) advocates a plurilingual approach to Creole teaching which involves a more flexible and adaptable teaching by considering the individual linguistic repertoires of each student as a point of departure. This is a strategy which has since been referenced by other teachers interviewed for this research, revealing an expansion of the idea within the domain and the influence of teacher-researchers such as Georger (2011). Similarly, Georger calls for greater collaboration between domains of glottopolitics and research in order to reach a consensus on contentious issues and policies. This thesis builds on this argument by highlighting some of the ways in which actors in the spheres of policy, education and research have successfully collaborated to advance efforts to recognise and officialise Creole in public education in La Réunion. This research enriches knowledge contributed by Georger's thesis (2011) and other articles through personal discussions with Fabrice Georger and by adding an ethnographic angle which provides perspective from other teachers and actors outside of research.

The thesis by Georger (2011) contributes towards a detailed linguistic and political understanding on which this research is based. Descriptions of a complex macrosystem of language within the Réunionese speech community in some way echo the complexity and interlinking nature of language politics in La Réunion. As language underpins all aspects of Réunionese society, the forces of glottopolitics either in favour or against the development of the Creole language in public institutions, can be seen on multiple levels and across

diverse spheres. In the same way that Georger (2011) argues that language contact between Creole and French forms an area of mixing and language contact in the brains of Réunionese people, this thesis demonstrates how different domains of actor engagement collide and interact to form a multi-layered and multifaceted movement in favour of Creole education. Similarly, as the variation and diversity of language practices form a 'free space' for the invention of unique language structures and self-expression for Réunionese people, the development of Creole teaching practices in La Réunion have become a space for self-expression and creativity for the many Réunionese actors involved in their production.

Daleau-Gauvin (2021) *La Co-alphabétisation créole-français comme facteur de réussite scolaire à La Réunion*

One of the most recent significant publications in the field of research into Creole education is Laurence Daleau-Gauvin's (2021) thesis *La Co-alphabétisation créole-français comme facteur de réussite scolaire à La Réunion*. The research expands on Prudent's theory of interlect as a model for language practices in La Réunion, this time applying it to the processes involved in teaching and learning literacy. The thesis represents a more recent contribution to the research field and sheds a light on how some conceptual approaches have evolved in the past decade.

Daleau-Gauvin (2021) provides a valuable background to the history of education and schooling in La Réunion, such as the changes to the institution throughout the periods of colonialism and departmentalisation. Moreover, she examines how throughout these periods, French has remained the principal language of instruction (Daleau-Gauvin, 2021). The research addresses the issue of illiteracy in La Réunion which it views as a result of the exclusion of Creole in schools in favour of French which has characterised the history of education in La Reunion. *"Pour nous, c'est la non-prise en compte dans l'alphabétisation de la langue des créolophones qui est la cause de l'importance de l'illettrisme"* (Daleau-Gauvin, 2021, p. 65). Daleau-Gauvin draws a distinction between an *analphabète*, as a person incapable of reading and writing who has never attended school, and an *illettré*, as a person who has been educated but who does not have sufficient competency in reading, writing and numeracy to manage the skills independently (Daleau-Gauvin, 2021, pp. 57–59). This distinction is important to consider in the case of La Réunion, where in recent decades despite increased academic attendance, illiteracy persists in an education system which is

poorly adapted to the linguistic and academic needs of the Réunionese population. The issue of illiteracy, as mentioned in other literature discussed above, is one of the main motivations for developing and improving education through the institutionalisation of Creole in schools. Moreover, as Daleau-Gauvin observes, illiteracy in La Réunion is more common among Creole-speakers than French-speakers (2021, p. 65), raising questions regarding the way in which French and literacy are taught in Réunionese schools. This is the founding argument for Daleau-Gauvin's (2021) call for an improvement in teaching practices and a further consideration for Creole as a mother-tongue in public education in La Réunion.

Daleau-Gauvin (2021) combines research on the structure of the Creole language with psycholinguistic research on bilingualism, literacy and second language acquisition. In this way, her thesis introduces new theories and research disciplines to the local research field and contextualises Réunionese research within a global intellectual environment. Using this broad range of perspectives on language literacy and learning, Daleau-Gauvin (2021) proposes a new approach to Creole-French literacy education. This reformed approach considers the close relationship between the two languages and applies the notion of interlect to teaching strategies for reading and writing in La Réunion. Her research marks a transition in academic discourse on Creole in La Réunion, which has moved from a focus purely on recognising Creole as a language, and towards a consideration of how to revise and develop educational strategies concerning language and literacy in La Réunion. *"Il nous semble que ce n'est pas le bilinguisme qui est en cause dans les difficultés de langage mais plutôt les conditions d'émergence et de développement du langage qui sont à considérer"* (Daleau-Gauvin, 2021, p. 113). As a teacher herself, Daleau-Gauvin (2021) represents another example of how teachers have used their own experiences and expertise in the field to contribute to research. As an actor involved directly in the enactment of Creole legislation and policy in the classrooms, Daleau-Gauvin (2021) is among the best placed to recognise some of the persisting challenges for Réunionese students. Her thesis follows on from other research which identifies problems with Creole education, such as Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem (2009) and Georger (2011), contributing a perspective from two decades after the official introduction of Creole into education in 2000. Conversations with Daleau-Gauvin for this research have deepened knowledge gained from her literature and provided a comparison to the voices of other local teachers who discuss their own teaching practices and attitudes

towards language in La Réunion. This research diversifies academic conversations around Creole education in La Réunion, including the perspectives of policymakers and associations, and by highlighting how ideas of culture, language and identity have influenced these perspectives.

When considered within the broader body of literature on Creole education in La Réunion, Daleau-Gauvin's (2021) thesis marks an emerging focus on research into literacy in Creole and Creole-French bilingualism. This evolution is significant in illustrating how debates among actors in the domain have transitioned from debates on *why* Creole should be recognised and officialised in public domains such as education, and towards a discussion of *how* these processes should be realised. This progression is reflected in the structure of this thesis which examines the emergence of the Creole language firstly as a result of ideological movements in culture and linguistics between 1970 and the 1990s which convinced actors of the reasons *why* Creole education was a valuable cause. Secondly, the thesis then analyses *how* Creole has been integrated into public education as a result of the legislation and actors who have driven and shaped the process. Having discussed Réunionese literature in the field, we will now identify relevant literature on creoles internationally.

Global literature on creoles in education

The late twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century witnessed a rise in literature relating to the use of creoles, pidgins and other regional and minoritized languages in education. There are now multiple studies which reveal the academic advantages of teaching initial literacy in the mother tongue in a creole/pidgin context (for example Siegel, 1997; Deutschmann and Zelime, 2021).[23] This research gives credit to arguments by Réunionese activists claiming that problems such as illiteracy and poor academic achievement stem from the absence of Creole in initial education. Additionally, researchers have also proven that an education system in which the first language is valued and encouraged facilitates beneficial bilingualism, in which bilingual children are often better prepared than monolingual children for third and fourth language acquisition (Bartens, 2001). Contrastingly, if both languages are not given equal status or value, bilingualism may in fact become detrimental to a child's psychological and academic growth

[23] See Siegel (2005) for further examples.

(Georger, 2011, p. 334).[24] This body of global literature on creole and pidgin languages in education has a wider reach than Creole in La Réunion, often focusing on creoles and pidgins in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Nevertheless, their findings introduce ideas and arguments that are also directly relevant to the Réunionese context. Consequently, comparisons and references to other creoles in education are included throughout analysis in this thesis where they mirror Creole education in the Réunionese context. Furthermore, this thesis addresses the frequent absence of Réunionese Creole from global research on creole linguistics and applied linguistics by contributing to anglophone literature on the Creole language in education in La Réunion.

Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, Jeff Siegel contributed significantly to global literature on creoles and pidgins as marginalised vernaculars in education (Siegel, 1997, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2010). Siegel analyses case studies of creoles and pidgins in education as a way of theorising different approaches and strategies for the implementation and development of creoles and pidgins in education. These approaches (Siegel, 2005, 2006) are discussed in Chapter Five in relation to similar initiatives in La Réunion. Siegel's research highlights him as a prominent figure in the field of applied linguistics on creoles and pidgins. His paper entitled, *Using a pidgin language in formal education. Help or hindrance?* (Siegel, 1997) is a study of the use of the pidgin language, *Tok Pisin*, in pre-primary education in Papua New Guinea. The study follows on from previous preliminary studies on *Tok Pisin* education (Siegel, 1992), and forms the first study on pidgin languages in education among, what was at the date of its publication, a sparse body of literature on creoles and pidgins in education (Siegel, 1997). Siegel identifies three commonly used arguments against the use of pidgins in education, which are also applicable to many creoles.

The first argues that pidgins are degenerate languages (Siegel, 1997); a commonly-held view among creole/pidgin-speaking communities (Bartens, 2001) and even among linguists (DeGraff, 2003, 2005). This attitude towards pidgins and creoles has long prevented their introduction to public domains such as education. Siegel refutes this argument by explaining their development as a "new language that emerges as a contact vernacular among people who need to communicate but do not share a common language" (Siegel, 1997, p. 86). The

[24] See Chapter Five for further discussion on bilingualism as a motivation for Réunionese Creole education.

second argument against pidgin education maintains that the standard language is key to success in education and employment, and therefore, literacy in the pidgin is a 'waste of time' (Siegel, 1997, p. 88). This argument can also be rebutted by "reference to many studies showing the educational advantages of teaching initial literacy in the mother tongue" (Siegel, 1997, p. 88). Finally, the third commonly provided reason against pidgin education argues that the use of the pidgin will interfere with acquisition of the standard language (Siegel, 1997). Siegel observes that this third argument is used by people who may otherwise be in favour of vernacular languages and bilingual education, however, consider creoles and pidgins as an exception due to their close resemblance to the lexifier language (Siegel, 1997, p. 87). This argument stems from a fear of 'negative transfer' resulting from lexical similarities between the two languages; Siegel addresses the need for further research to determine whether this concern is founded or not. These three arguments against the use of pidgins in education clearly mirror those used against the introduction of Creole to schools in La Réunion, implying that negative attitudes towards creoles and pidgins in education are a widespread phenomenon.

Creoles and Minority Dialects in Education: An Update (Siegel, 2007) is a more polemic article than his earlier papers, revealing a developing certainty to his findings on the advantages of creoles and pidgins as mother tongue vernaculars in education. The text is a comparative analysis and discussion of the global status of creoles in education and the significance of the research to date. Consequently, it contributes towards a more comprehensive understanding of wider developments in research into creole language education and policy. Siegel (2007) identifies four main persisting obstacles to the use of creoles and minoritized dialects in schools. These obstacles expand upon his previous observations on resistance to pidgin language education (Siegel, 1997), while this time focusing on barriers to their development following implementation in public education. The first obstacle is the negative attitudes of teachers towards students whose first language is the non-standard, in this case a creole or pidgin language (Siegel, 2007). The second, closely related to the first, is the negative self-image held by students. These two obstacles form a cycle of negative representation which hinders the development of minoritized languages in public spaces. The third obstacle is the repression of self-expression among students because of the requirement to use an unfamiliar language in

education. This echoes reported cases of mutism and lack of self-confidence among pupils in La Réunion, resulting from an unfamiliarity with French and the exclusion of Creole from the classroom (see Chapter Five). The fourth obstacle identified by Siegel (2007) is the difficulty of acquiring literacy and other skills in a second language or dialect. This argument highlights the importance of developing bilingual education programmes which are suitably adapted to their regional context. These obstacles reflect those reported by teachers in La Réunion, demonstrating how global literature on creoles and minoritized vernaculars in education can deepen knowledge and contextualise analysis of the Réunionese experience.

While some of the literature in La Réunion which identifies similar concerns among Creole-speakers and argues against them pre-dates studies by Siegel (Chaudenson, 1974; Gauvin, 1977; Armand, 1987), literature on *Tok Pisin* in Papua New Guinea (Siegel, 1992, 1997), reveals how other societies were ahead of La Réunion in implementing these theories into concrete practice. Moreover, Siegel (2007) suggests a widespread unwillingness to prioritise the place of non-standard languages in education among national and regional authorities, an observation supported by literature on Creole education in La Réunion (Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem, 2009).

Another example of a researcher who has further confirmed the benefits of creoles and pidgins in education is Angela Bartens (2001, 2005). Bartens' (2001) article *The rocky road to education in creole* provides a linguistic context on creole language education comparative to the case of Réunionese Creole. Reflecting arguments made by Siegel (1997, 2007), Bartens (2001) also emphasises the significance of attitudes among the speech community in promoting or hindering creole education development. On the one hand, she suggests that while the general population traditionally have favoured the prestige language for use with their children, in intellectual circles elites have actively sought to use creoles as part of identity movements, as in the case of *Antillanité* and C*réolité* in the French Caribbean (Bartens, 2001, p. 29). This argument could be applied to cultural and linguistic movements in La Réunion, especially during the 1970s, which can be viewed as indicative of a regional identity movement among elite and intellectual circles. These movements are discussed in greater depth in Chapter Three. However, on the other hand, in *The loss of linguistic pluralism: creoles as endangered languages,* Bartens (2005) argues that due to their sociohistorical context, creole languages are often the target of a systematic stigmatisation

and marginalisation in public society. This, coupled with their lexical similarities with the local standard language, has resulted in the fact that “the great majority of creole languages is endangered or highly endangered” (Bartens, 2005, p. 56). Her arguments are contextualised through an examination of the case study of Palenquero and Islander (Bartens, 2005), which facilitates comparisons with other creole languages across the world such as La Réunion. An awareness of sociohistorical marginalisation and the loss of cultural and linguistic diversity has similarly become an argument for the inclusion of Creole in education in La Réunion (see Chapter Three). Nevertheless, arguments defining creoles as endangered languages are perhaps misplaced in the case of La Réunion, where the Creole language is still spoken as a mother tongue daily by the vast majority of the population and is the most used of all regional languages in the French overseas departments (Monteil, 2010a).

Literature by Bartens (2001) also serves as a valuable reference point for studying the processes of recognition and officialisation of Creole in La Réunion by providing case studies of creole and pidgin education globally. Bartens analyses the French-based creoles in the DOM, whose primary obstacle to education she argues has been opposition from parents due to a state of diglossia with standard French (Bartens, 2001, p. 40). The slow progress in the DOM is juxtaposed with the comparatively advanced state of creole education development in the independent former French colonies of Haiti and the Seychelles (Bartens, 2001). These comparisons suggest a link between independence and language development referenced by other scholars (Craig, 1985), which would suggest that Creole education in La Réunion is restricted by its status within the French Republic, and thereby explain the prevalence of autonomist politics in pro-Creole movements during the 1970s. A comparative understanding is gleaned from further reviews on Portuguese creoles such as Papiamentu in the Dutch Caribbean islands of Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire. Also on Cape Verdean creole and Kriyòl in Guinea Bissau, English-based creoles in Trinidad and Tobago, Hawai’i and the Pacific islands, and creoles developed from autochthonous African languages (Bartens, 2001). The diversity of cases examined by Bartens (2001, 2005) indicates an international trend towards a greater recognition for creole and pidgin languages and provides an international benchmark for the study of Creole education in La Réunion. Furthermore, Bartens’ (2001, 2005) discussion of the importance of corpus planning and

status planning for the survival of a creole language is applied throughout this thesis as a framework for analysing processes for the recognition and officialisation of Creole in La Réunion. A more detailed definition and description of status and corpus planning and their significance for this research is provided in Chapter Two.

Sophie Alby and Isabelle Léglise's (2005) article, *L'enseignement en Guyane et les langues régionales: réflexions sociolinguistiques et didactiques* offers another possibility for comparison within the French DOM. Along with a later article (Alby and Léglise, 2014), the study contributes another benchmark case study for analysis of the emergence of Réunionese Creole in education. Although their political and administrative status is the same, French Guiana presents a linguistically very different context to La Réunion. While Guyanese Creole is considered under the same official language as Réunionese Creole in French legislation and educational policy (JORF, 2000a), the linguistic landscape of French Guiana reveals a greater diversity. According to Alby and Léglise (2005), Haitian and Martinican creoles are also spoken, as well as three families of Amerindian languages (Carib, Arawak and Tupi-Guarani), English creoles and Asian languages such as Hmong. Guyanese creole is the *lingua franca* of French Guiana and the mother language of around a third of the population (Alby and Léglise, 2005, p. 2). This linguistic diversity has resulted in an activism in favour of the recognition of the *"langues de Guyane"* throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s (Alby and Léglise, 2014, p. 272), distinguishing it from linguistic movements in La Réunion which have primarily been framed around a bilingualism between Creole and French.

The diversity of identities and cultures attached to the different languages spoken in French Guiana, coupled with the recognition (or non-recognition) of certain languages within them as 'regional languages of France' has complicated language recognition in education in the region (Alby and Léglise, 2005). Due to their focus on another French DOM, literature by Alby and Léglise (2005, 2014) has wider applications relevant to research into the Réunionese context. The Guyanese case study highlights how, despite the progress made in terms of creole language recognition in the DOM, French legislation has often overlooked other languages. Judicial distinctions between 'regional languages' and 'languages of migration' form linguistic hierarchies when applied to multilingual and multi-ethnic societies such as French Guiana (Alby and Léglise, 2014). Through their illustration of the complexity

of sociolinguistic issues in Guyanese education, Alby and Léglise (2005) call for an improved training for teachers in linguistic and anthropological knowledge and competencies. Despite distinctions in their sociolinguistic contexts, oversight in French language education policy has resulted in similar arguments made by teachers and researchers in La Réunion (see Chapter Five). Furthermore, amid calls for a greater emphasis on plurilingualism in education and a growing recognition for the Shimaore and Kibushi languages among teachers in La Réunion (see Chapter Five), literature revealing perspectives from other multilingual French overseas departments participates in building a collective voice in the research.[25]

Bartens and Léglise collaborated with Bettina Migge to provide an overview of the status of creoles and pidgins in education worldwide. In *Creoles in Education: A Discussion of Pertinent Issues* they argue that in most cases creole and pidgin languages are tolerated in education as a "transitional measure to facilitate acquisition of the official language" (Migge, Léglise and Bartens, 2010, p. 2). However, in few cases is the pidgin or creole actively encouraged. This is a complaint that has been made by Creole teachers in La Réunion, who argue that Creole has only been considered officially as a stepping-stone for improving French literary competency, see Chapter Five. Furthermore, Migge *et al.* (2010) argue that the restriction of creoles and pidgins to informal and oral domains creates a "vicious circle" (2010, p. 2) in which the lack of a written standard leads to greater stigmatisation of the language due to its assumed lack of suitability for official purposes. This reinforces the importance of establishing an official orthography, reflecting arguments made by Creole actors in La Réunion (Gauvin, 1977; Daleau *et al.*, 2006) and by Bartens (2005). As well as the complexity of establishing a written standard, the lack of a literary canon is also identified as a potential problem when attempting to implement a creole in education (Migge, Léglise and Bartens, 2010). These issues mirror other literature on the development of creoles and pidgins which serve as a useful reference point when analysing the extent to which these language planning measures have been developed in La Réunion.

Furthermore, Migge *et al.* (2010) reinforce arguments made by other scholars in the field of applied creole linguistics, including those in La Réunion (Gauvin, 1977), who claim that

[25] The Shimaore and Kibushi languages are spoken by migrants in La Réunion from Mayotte and the Comoros. Shimaore is a Bantu language related to Swahili, while Kibushi is related to the Malagasy language spoken in Madagascar.

linguistically speaking, no language is inferior or superior to another. Consequently, arguments against the use of certain languages in the public domain are always innately political or ideological (Migge, Léglise and Bartens, 2010, p. 2). Chapter Three of this thesis examines the social and political context of the 1970s to 1990s for its impact on ideological and political movements in culture and linguistics to recognise the Réunionese language and counter the politics of assimilationists. Although the prevalence of political and ideological agendas has largely diminished in debates around Creole in education since 2000, they remain significant in an altered form. Polarising political debates have been replaced with language politics in the form of legislation and policy, while ideological motivations continue to underpin Creole language debates in the form of regional identity building exercises and narratives with local history and culture.

A comparative analysis of literature on the status of creole education across the international stage provides a blueprint for research on the processes of recognition and officialisation of Creole in La Réunion. When examined alongside each other, global literature reviewing creole language development (Bartens, 2001, 2005; Alby and Léglise, 2005, 2014; Migge, Léglise and Bartens, 2010) reveals a consistent delay between research findings and language education policies, which is also prevalent in the Réunionese context. While a wide variety of case studies have contributed towards collective global research on creole and pidgin language education and applied linguistics, La Réunion has often not been the focus of these discussions. Similarly, much of the literature by Réunionese academics and researchers has overlooked parallels with other French DOM and creole societies. This research aims to build on international research on creoles in education by expanding the Réunionese perspective within the debate. Patterns can be drawn between global case studies and linguistic movements and education policy in La Réunion, while also considering the specificity of the Réunionese language, culture and identity.

Conclusion

This research has drawn on a wide range of literature which contributes towards the core knowledge and theoretical foundations required to understand the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion between 1970 and 2022. Literature by researchers, activists and teachers on the status of Creole education and bilingualism in public society in La

Réunion has the greatest significance for this research for its close proximity to the research questions investigated in this project (Gauvin, 1977; Daleau *et al.*, 2006; Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem, 2009; Georger, 2011; Daleau-Gauvin, 2021). Furthermore, literature in this field has contributed more directly to this research through the involvement and guidance given by its authors. In addition to literature specific to Réunionese Creole, the broader body of literature on creoles in education globally provides a valuable template from which to compare the Réunionese context to case studies in other creole societies (Siegel, 1997, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2010; Bartens, 2001, 2005; Alby and Léglise, 2005, 2014; Migge, Léglise and Bartens, 2010). This literature helps to situate developments in linguistic attitudes and language education policy in La Réunion within a global trend in favour of the recognition and officialisation of creoles and other minoritized languages. A handful of other texts significant for this research have not been discussed specifically in this literature review, however, they will be referred to in the main body of analysis later in this thesis.

Chapter Two. Conceptual approaches, methodologies and fieldwork

Conceptual approaches and methodologies

Having set out my research questions and shown that they have not been adequately answered in the literature, I will now consider the conceptual frameworks, methodologies and fieldwork approaches employed to address these questions. This research is interested in the process by which a marginalised language comes to be recognised and officialised through educational policy and teaching practices. In the Réunionese context, this process is experienced both at an official level by authorities, experts and elites, and on the ground by teachers and informal actors. The emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion is viewed as part of broader cultural, linguistic and political movements based on the construction of regional ideologies. The breadth of these movements has required a methodology which draws on conceptual frameworks from several different disciplines. However, due to the focus on the Creole language in La Réunion, the principal conceptual approach applied throughout this research is a sociolinguistic one. This leads into a discussion of language planning as my primary conceptual framework.

Language planning

Language planning approaches attempt to theorise and categorise the processes involved in implementing languages in public institutions such as education (Bartens, 2001). Language planning comprises two key elements, status planning and corpus planning. Status planning involves the cultural and legal actions necessary to recognise a language and establish an official role for it within society. Gibson Ferguson defines status planning as “intervention targeted at societal functions of a language” (Ferguson, 2006a, p. 32). Status planning is reliant on support from all spheres of public society in order for a language to be recognised and officialised by the population. For this reason, status planning often involves “simultaneous activity across several social domains: the workplace, local government, the family/home, the law, the media, education and so on” (Ferguson, 2006a, pp. 32–33). While Réunionese actors rarely refer to measures in terms of status planning, laws and policies which recognise Creole as a regional language of France and affirm its integration into public education have officially altered the status of Creole in France and La Réunion. Similarly, cultural actions through literature, music and theatre have increased recognition, interest

and pride in Creole among the wider population. Cultural and linguistic movements which have played a status planning role are examined in Chapter Three, while Chapter Four analyses the official legislation and policy which has introduced status planning measures for Creole nationally and regionally.

Furthermore, corpus planning prepares the field for the use of a language in formal public roles such as education, through the codification and standardisation of a spoken vernacular to written language (Bartens, 2001). Standardisation can be defined as "the constriction – and subsequent dissemination – of a uniform supradialectal normative variety" (Ferguson, 2006b, p. 21). As will be demonstrated in the Réunionese case, standardisation often comprises both a linguistic and ideological dimension. Linguistically it is the creation of a uniform written variety, ideologically it is a form of power play (Ferguson, 2006b, pp. 21–22). This research uses language planning as a conceptual approach to theorise how the recognition and officialisation of Creole in public education in La Réunion is as much an ideological movement as it is a linguistic one. Meanwhile, codification is the "process of giving explicit definition to the norm, principally through the production of authoritative grammars, dictionaries, spellers" (Ferguson, 2006b, p. 21). Alongside this, the production of reference materials, resources and a literary canon further officialises a language in public society (Bartens, 2001). In La Réunion linguistic studies have recorded and categorised Creole as a language, and groups of researchers and authors have collaborated to propose written forms for the language. The standardisation and establishment of an official orthography have become important objectives for movements in favour of Creole in La Réunion. This is discussed in Chapters Three and Four. In addition to this, cultural figures, associations and teachers have prioritised the production of resources and texts in order to support teaching and learning and diversify and develop the Creole language. Chapters Three, Four and Five cover different elements of corpus planning by formal and informal actors.

Although language planning can be implemented by diverse actors from both the bottom-up and top-down, its success for the recognition and officialisation of a language is contingent on its acceptance by the wider population. For this reason, status and corpus planning both involve conscious efforts to convince the population to accept changes in language attitudes and practices in the society. "That this [acceptance] is necessary, and

often difficult, is amply illustrated in the numerous instances where the standard, as developed by committees, academies or individuals, is rejected, or resisted, by the community" (Ferguson, 2006a, p. 25). This element of language planning as the principal conceptual approach for this research is essential when analysing how Creole education has been dependent on the dedication of Creole actors to public engagement strategies such as awareness-raising initiatives, demonstrations and conventions, cultural events and research surveys.

Status and corpus planning measures are especially relevant for research into the development of creole languages in societies where they exist alongside a dominant standard (Bartens, 2001). Actions commonly required for the expansion and legitimisation of marginalised languages therefore pose as a conceptual framework from which to analyse the actions and measures developed in La Réunion between 1970 and 2022. Consequently, the use of language planning as a conceptual framework for this research allows links to be drawn between Creole education in La Réunion and the emergence of other regional, marginalised and creole languages in education internationally. Similarly, when conducting ethnographic fieldwork for this research, status and corpus planning served as a conceptual reference point from which to steer interview questions or interpret interactions. This research uses the approaches represented by status and corpus planning as a thread along which to structure and guide this thesis. Both status planning and corpus planning actions are two essential elements required to ensure that the Creole language can be both recognised and officialised in education and other public domains. In the case of La Réunion, these actions are driven by a range of different actors in both formal and informal domains. However, ethnographic research reveals the necessity of a third element which enables Creole to not only survive as an official public language but also thrive. This third element is revealed throughout the course of this thesis and discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five. We turn now to additional conceptual approaches which have informed this research.

Other conceptual approaches

> "the aim of anthropology is the enlargement of the universe of human discourse" (Geertz, 1973, p. 14)

As discussed in the previous chapter, an understanding of the broader processes of cultural recognition and political and administrative officialisation can be inferred from academic literature and linguistic research. A reading of this thematic literature has informed and supported this research. Chapter Three prepares the ground for analysis by adopting a contextualisation approach which identifies the factors involved in driving the initial stages of recognition for Creole in La Réunion. For the main analysis, a corpus of legislative and policy documents concerning regional languages in France and Creole in La Réunion is examined to determine how language politics have materialised in the Réunionese public education system. Nevertheless, further insight is required in order to comprehend the lived reality of Creole teaching and learning in La Réunion. Methodologies inspired by anthropological fieldwork and research practices can provide a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) necessary for acquiring a deeper and more comprehensive picture. Moreover, they allow access to the "forms of knowledge that do not readily translate into policy" (Puri and Castillo, 2016, pp. 4–5) such as attitudes, opinions and personal experience. While it is mainly concentrated in Chapter Five, ethnographic insight is integrated throughout the thesis to support knowledge acquired from legislation and policy documents, academic studies, and wider reading.

Ethnographic methodologies, such as semi-structured interviews and participant observation, aspire towards an understanding of the personal, lived experience, making anthropology "one of the few disciplines that routinely dialogue with a wide cross section of people rather than only experts and elites" (Puri and Castillo, 2016, p. 9). While some of the participants interviewed for this research are experts in the Creole language and education through their involvement in research and policy, for the majority, it is their experience as teachers and/or activists which gives value to their perspective. The personal narratives of individuals working within the domain of Creole education bring to life theory and interpretations constructed from a reading of the academic literature and official policy documents. Thus, ethnography provides a possibility to move "from local truths to general visions" (Geertz, 1973, p. 21), by illuminating the transformation of Creole language politics into classroom teaching initiatives. Throughout this thesis, the perspective of Creole actors strengthens and enriches arguments and observations made from the literature and policy corpus. However, as anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) noted, ethnographies, and indeed

all academic research, are interpretations, and are thus open to misinterpretations. One layer of interpretation to be considered for this research is my own need to use French in the interviews as I am not a Creole speaker. This could have implications for the way in which participants expressed themselves to me. Other limitations of this research are reflected upon throughout the course of the thesis.

Fieldwork is increasingly being recognised as a valuable approach in the humanities and area studies (Puri and Castillo, 2016). In these disciplines fieldwork provides background cultural exposure and experience which simultaneously challenges and affirms narratives gleaned from literature. Fieldwork in the humanities may take the form of informal conversations which often remain "largely invisible or backstage or appear only in brief allusions onstage" (Puri and Castillo, 2016, p. 2). "Many of our field-based conversations do not show up explicitly in our writing yet nonetheless infuse and transform the entire project" (Puri and Castillo, 2016, p. 2). In the humanities, fieldwork offers an opportunity for literary or theoretical ideas to be experienced and contextualised. The same is true of this research project. The conceptual architecture for this project, which is developed through literary study and textual analysis, is both affirmed and challenged by practical fieldwork. In addition to quotes from interviews and references to participant observation, this thesis is steeped in the many unrecorded conversations and spontaneous interactions which have shaped and coloured a wider understanding of the sociocultural, political and linguistic realities of Creole and La Réunion.

Elements of this research also draw inspiration from methodologies developed in sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistic studies have employed ethnographic approaches such as semi-structured interviews and observation to compile corpora from which to examine speech and language practices within a specific social group or community. The role and status of a language within a society is in part dictated by representations of that language, and therefore "personal experience is a rich source of information on language in relation to society" (Hudson, 1996, p. 1). While this research does not focus on the specific speech patterns of Creole or Réunionese people, personal experience is used as a window through which attitudes towards language within Réunionese society can be viewed. Through an interpretation of Creole teaching initiatives and bilingualism in education, this thesis follows parallel objectives to those found in sociolinguistics as "the study of language in relation to

society" (Hudson, 1996, p. 1). Through the lens of education, this research explores how the Creole language has both shaped and been shaped by the value and meaning it represents for actors working within the domain. Alongside a study of educational documents and policy, fieldwork was employed as a methodology for investigating education as a key domain for the emergence of Creole in La Réunion.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork for this research took the form of interviews, meetings and participant observation in Creole classes. Online interviews allowed for an initial inquiry into the research questions and formed a foundational understanding of Creole education in La Réunion. Further interviews, follow-up meetings and participant observation were conducted over the course of a one-month research trip to La Réunion in October 2022. Visits to both a primary and a secondary school allowed me to gain first-hand experience of the initiatives and actions carried out by teachers on the ground. The research trip also allowed the information gathered from online interviews and analysis of official texts and thematic literature to be contextualised. This consolidated my understanding of the role of different actors within the domain of Réunionese Creole education and facilitated a more refined examination of the obstacles, achievements and debates concerning Creole in education and the public sphere in La Réunion. This research has also been informed by experiences working as a language assistant in La Réunion for eight months in 2020.

Twelve semi-structured interviews were conducted via Zoom and in-person, generally lasting between fifty minutes and two hours. The length of the interviews resulted in a smaller overall number of interviews but provided an incredibly rich set of qualitative data. Interviews typically opened with a series of broader questions, on the extent of recognition for the Creole language in the public sphere in recent years, the role of cultural movements in recognition processes and the key political actions contributing to the officialisation of the language. Further questions targeted key aspects of the research questions, such as details on specific initiatives or teaching practices, the challenges and advances facing actors in Creole education throughout the past two decades, and the future of Creole in Réunionese public society. More specific questions adapted to the individual and their role in the domain gave depth and individuality to each interview. Examples of the interview questions

can be found in the appendices.[26] Quotations from the interviews are included throughout the thesis to support analysis and provide context. These quotations are extracts transcribed from the original audio recordings and remain as faithful as possible to the participants' words. Nevertheless, in some instances some features of spontaneous speech, such as dysfluencies and fillers, have been edited out in order to maintain clarity and ease of reading. The decision not to translate interview extracts into English stems from an attempt to conserve authenticity and nuance of the participants' natural language.

Initial participants for this research were contacted using academic emails and networks made with teachers during a previous trip to La Réunion in 2020. A snowball approach was used to expand the number of participants. Given that education is the focus of this research, almost all of the participants are Creole teachers or former teachers. Consequently, this research can be seen in some measure as a study of Creole teacher perspectives and experiences of the officialisation of Creole in education. However, many participants are also directly involved in Creole education through research and policy or indirectly involved through activism and association work. The majority have worked in more than one of these domains, demonstrating an interdisciplinary engagement in Creole education and activism.

While the pool of participants recruited for this research is appropriate for its focus, it is nevertheless necessary to consider some of the limitations implied. All of the participants interviewed are actively involved in Creole education in some way and are therefore strongly in favour of its promotion and consolidation in public Réunionese society. Creole education, and related issues such as standardisation and orthography, remain a contentious topic in La Réunion. This research does not demonstrate the perspective of teachers or educational policymakers in other disciplines and subjects who may be indifferent to or against the emerging use of Creole in schools. Neither can it claim to be a true representation of wider attitudes towards Creole and regional language education among the general Réunionese public. Furthermore, while the number of participants interviewed was considered ample for a research project of this size, it remains a small portion of the total number of Creole teachers in La Réunion and must not be considered a

[26] See Appendix D for sample initial interview questions. See Appendix E for sample further questions for the research trip.

reflection of the complete picture. According to Clifford Geertz ,"cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete" (Geertz, 1973, p. 29), meaning that it is necessary to reflect upon any limitations inherent in interpretations within this research throughout the thesis.

Throughout the interview process, Cardiff University policy and academic conduct on professionalism and ethics were adhered to. Participants were provided with a detailed information sheet and written consent was acquired prior to the interview.[27] A general principle of anonymity and confidentiality was followed, and for the majority of interview quotes, only details of the participants' profession and role within Creole education are included in the thesis to provide context. However, due to the fact that some participants are also active in academic research and public policy, and many have written literature cited in this thesis, it was considered important in some cases to recognise their work and its relevance to their participation. As a result, in some instances where it was deemed appropriate, special permission to name participants and provide context of their public engagement was granted. These names appear in the thesis as part of case studies, participant narratives and alongside quotes from their interviews. Certain participants also opted to read the extracts from their interviews intended for publication as part of the drafting process. As well as contextualising participants' perspectives within their own experiences and expertise, the decision to name certain participants also derives from an aspiration towards reciprocity in ethnographic practices (Lassiter, 2001). Research, publications and public engagement by interviewees has formed an integral part of investigation for this project. This has contributed towards a more collaborative and equal dialogue between myself as a non-Réunionese researcher and my participants as experts in the field.

The one-month research trip to La Réunion offered further opportunities for two-way dialogue with actors in the domain of Creole education. I attended a conference for the International Day of Creole Languages and Cultures at the University of La Réunion, celebrated in La Réunion as *Somin Kréol* (*Semaine Créole*). During the conference, teachers, policymakers, linguists and university students debated current issues and discussed developments made in the twenty years since Creole was formally introduced to public

[27] See Appendix A for sample Participant Information Sheet. See Appendices B and C for sample consent forms.

education.[28] Furthermore, I attended a seminar where I had the opportunity to present my own research project to academics and university students within the *Laboratoire de Recherche sur les Espaces Créoles et Francophones* (LCF) at the University of La Réunion. The seminar became an occasion for Creole education specialists, some of whom had been interviewed, to observe my findings and provide feedback. Not only did this acknowledge the importance of participant self-representation and reciprocity by crediting participants for their own expertise, but it also encouraged reflexivity on my part and validated my interpretations of the situation through collaborative dialogic research practices.

While the research trip as a whole can be considered a form of participant observation, visits to classes offered specific insight into Creole teaching initiatives. The class visits allowed me to observe Creole teaching and learning across all four levels of education: primary, secondary, university and postgraduate training. This provided first-hand experience of the diversity and range of Creole education initiatives and enabled a holistic analysis which revealed their progression throughout different stages of education. In addition to this, I was able to interact with Creole teachers and students within these different stages and compare their experiences and perspectives. During the primary school visit, I observed a morning session in Creole in a bilingual CM1 class. Observation of the class and conversations with the teacher solidified my understanding of the bilingual education initiative in La Réunion by offering insight into how it is interpreted and implemented by teachers in the classroom. Further details on the specific teaching practices observed in this class are discussed in Chapter Five.

Additionally, I attended an optional workshop for the *Somin Kréol* in a *collège* near Saint Denis. Pupils in the *Troisième* class were involved in delivering the workshop to pupils in the *Sixième* class. The workshop was conducted mostly in Creole and involved a presentation of several posters created by the older students during their Creole lesson prior to the workshop. The posters detailed information on the origins of the Creole language in La Réunion, including its links with colonialism, indentured workers and other waves of immigration, as well as the etymology of certain words. Following this activity, the *Sixième* students had the chance to engage in a series of interactive games and activities for the

[28] See Appendix I for a programme of the conference.

discovery of archaic Creole vocabulary and false friends with French. The students were then asked to choose their favourite word to spray paint onto a t-shirt. Through interactive games and pupil participation the activities combined discovery, exploration and knowledge acquisition with awareness-raising objectives. Not only did it encourage older Creole students to consolidate their understanding and put their knowledge into practice, but it also gave younger students who may not yet have received any education in Creole an opportunity to learn about their first language in a fun and interactive manner. The workshop proved immensely popular, obliging the teacher in charge to repeat the session the following week in order to accommodate the extra demand.

Furthermore, I observed three classes in the *Laboratoire de recherches sur les espaces créoles et francophones* (LCF) at the University of La Réunion. Some students were studying for the *Licence de Créole*, while others were following other programmes such as *Science d'Information et de Communication*. The LCF is an interdisciplinary research laboratory, bringing together the study of Réunionese literature, linguistics and anthropology, and information and communication. It incorporates research in both the Creole and French languages within a broad research field of area-based studies in the creole and francophone world. This interdisciplinarity was reflected in the lessons observed which ranged from Creole in publicity, to sociolinguistic research methods, and Creole language and grammar. The modules provided by the department reflect both the research interests prioritised by lecturers as well as areas of demand among students. Grammar classes echo a drive towards research and interest in Creole linguistics in education, in part a ripple effect from the official amalgamation of Creole into the national programme for regional language education. Alternatively, the session on Creole in publicity is evidence of a growing recognition for the public status of Creole and its evolving role in public domains outside of education. The engagement with Creole from other disciplines such as information and communication studies, is testimony to a possible increasing consideration for the language across other disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. Like the conferences, two out of the three classes were conducted primarily in Creole. The employment of Creole, not only as a subject, but as a medium of instruction and academic discourse further affirms its expansion into official roles in Réunionese society.

Finally, in order to extend the investigation of Creole education into postgraduate education, I observed a teacher training class at INSPE *(Instituts Nationaux Supérieurs du Professorat et de L'Éducation).* The class was a first-year Master's class comprised mostly of future Creole teachers, but also of students wanting to pursue careers in language or communication more generally. Of the seventeen students registered, twelve were present. Led by a Creole teacher in secondary education, the class was conducted in Creole, with some students occasionally switching to French or an interlect (Georger, 2011). The session aimed to encourage students to consider how they would plan a lesson on Creole grammar incorporating the different grammars that have been proposed since the 1970s. Observing the lesson and discussing with the teacher in charge of delivering the session offered a chance to contemplate how Creole teaching and learning initiatives offered in primary and secondary schools are theorised and represented in teacher training programmes. Moreover, observing the teaching of some of the pedagogical theories and approaches for these initiatives also provided an insight into some of the motivations and objectives behind the officialisation of the language in education. When visiting the *collège*, I had the opportunity to discuss with three *stagiaires* in their final year of the Master's at INSPE who were on placement in the school. Two of the students were studying for a *CAPES bivalent* in Creole and English and the other in Creole and French. Their motivations for choosing Creole were based in part on a personal passion and interest for the language and literature, as well as a desire to contribute to building children's knowledge of their own regional language and culture; something which they themselves had felt was lacking in their own education.

The next three chapters analyse the processes by which the Creole language has come to be recognised and officialised in public education in La Réunion between 1970 and 2022. In Chapter Three the analysis will be founded on an examination of the emergence of Creole as a recognised language in cultural movements and linguistic research since the 1970s. Chapters Four and Five will then continue this investigation, beginning with the official recognition of Creole as a regional language of France in 2000 and its subsequent implementation in education through legislation, policy and teaching initiatives carried out by Creole teachers in the classroom. The conceptual approaches discussed in this chapter are applied throughout the main body of analysis as a theoretical foundation for the

analysis. Moreover, insights from the ethnographic interviews and participant observation are infused throughout to provide practical examples and a contextual reality to the arguments and observations made. Having set out the rationale and methodologies used for this research, the subsequent three chapters will follow through with the principal analysis and discussion.

Chapter Three. Cultural and linguistic *maronaz* from the 1970s to 1990s

Introduction

This chapter sits within the main body of analysis, following a discussion of the key literature, conceptual frameworks and methodologies. It introduces the initial movements which played a role in increasing public recognition and pride for Creole, examining them within their social and political context. While Creole was not formally integrated into public education until after 2000, a period of sensitisation through cultural movements and linguistic research ensured its earlier appearance in other public domains. Consequently, this chapter provides context for the subsequent emergence of Creole in public education in La Reunion. During the 1970s, the *Créolie* and *Créoliste* cultural movements marked the beginning of a contemporary literary canon which diversified Creole language practices and embraced and encouraged regional linguistic and cultural heritage. Literature, music and theatre were accompanied by a linguistic movement which affirmed Creole as a distinct language and attempted to classify and codify it through glossaries, dictionaries and linguistic surveys. Cultural and linguistic movements in favour of Creole formed a collective grassroots pressure to increase recognition for the Creole language and elaborate its status and functions in Réunionese society. The increased presence of Creole in public spheres through cultural and academic publications spilled over into political debates and ideological movements. These movements and their actions are examined in this chapter with a view to establishing how the Creole language began gaining increasing recognition in public discourse during the Seventies, Eighties and Nineties. The focus will then turn to the emerging clandestine use of Creole in media, journalism, and occasionally classrooms, which can be viewed as a grassroots resistance to French assimilationism and divergence from monolingual and monocultural practices.

Due to a divisive socio-political context, debates around the Creole language were often characterised by polarising arguments and contentious political affiliations. Nevertheless, recognition through cultural and linguistic movements and pressure from political ideologies led to a growing focus on questions of Creole language, regional identity and bilingualism in Réunionese public society. As discussed in Chapter Two, while Creole activists did not

attempt to justify their approaches in terms of status and corpus planning, cultural and linguistic movements between 1970 and 1990 introduced important language planning actions which raised public awareness and developed Creole linguistic understanding. Therefore, theories on status and corpus planning in creole-speaking contexts will form a conceptual framework from which to analyse the significance of Creole movements during this period.

This chapter leads into Chapters Four and Five which analyse the officialisation of Creole in public education through legislation, policy and teaching practices. An analysis of the socio-political context views early Creole movements as a response to the fragmentation of regional identity and continued socio-economic inequalities due to departmentalisation and migration. Cultural movements in literature, music and theatre which began using Creole in the 1970s contributed to the development of the language and its growth as a language of creativity and regional cultural expression. Following this, linguistic movements in the form of language surveys and lexicons are examined as an intellectual force which introduced corpus planning actions such as written propositions, codifications and classifications which credited Creole as a language alongside French. The legacy of early Creole cultural and linguistic movements is evident in interviews with Creole actors several decades later, as discussed in Chapter Five. Finally, insight from ethnographic research reveals how despite the unofficial status of Creole pre-2000, the language had already begun to emerge informally in journalism and some classrooms, revealing a drive on the ground which pre-dated its official implementation in public domains. Firstly, we will provide a socio-political context to the cultural and linguistic *maronaz* which characterised this period.

Social and political context

The ideologies expressed in cultural movements in literature, music and theatre particularly in the 1970s are often marked by political motives. While *Créolie* movements favoured a political and cultural harmony with the rest of France, the *Créoliste* movements were transparent in their alignment with a leftist, often autonomist, political agenda. While political factions relating to Creole are no longer widely applicable (Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 47), it is important to understand the political influence on informal status and corpus planning through ideological movements between 1970 and the 1990s. Status and corpus

planning "both are typically driven by political considerations extending well beyond language per se" (Ferguson, 2006a, p. 21). Therefore, a background examination of the social and political context of La Réunion since 1970 can contextualise the rise in cultural and artistic movements which encouraged a growth in the status of Creole in Réunionese society.

Post-departmentalisation and a politics of assimilationism

The departmentalisation law in 1946 formally integrated the four *vieilles colonies*, Martinique, Guadeloupe, La Réunion and French Guiana, into the French administrative system, giving them equal status alongside the other *départements.*[29] Prior to this, the period of 1870 to 1919 saw the introduction of *"une politique d'intégration"* through which the four colonies were *"à peu près assimilés à la métropole du point de vue administratif et politique"* (Césaire, 1946, p. 4). However, according to Aimé Césaire, the deputy for the French National Assembly for Martinique, *"l'assimilation s'est arrêtée aux Antilles et à La Réunion à l'orée de la justice sociale"* (Césaire, 1946, p. 5).[30] The continued exemption of these regions from French legislation and rights was viewed by some as an attempt to prolong the subordinate status of the colonies (Césaire, 1946). By contrast, the departmentalisation law allowed the citizens in these regions to participate in French social and political democracy and render all French laws and decrees applicable to the new departments (Césaire, 1946). Consequently, for Césaire and the other deputies, such as Raymond Vergès in La Réunion, a comprehensive assimilation with France presented a road to equality with the rest of France in a post-colonial context. The post-departmentalisation period was therefore characterised by efforts among local authorities to consolidate links with the metropole and to minimise cultural and linguistic particularities in La Réunion such as the Creole language (Gauvin, 2002). In order to maximise assimilation, the construction of a national identity and sentiment in La Réunion became an important political agenda between 1946 and 1960. Elected *Député* for La Réunion in 1963, Michel Debré led a politics of assimilation (Gauvin, 2002), whose paternalistic authoritarianism led to him being referred to as *"papa Debré"* (Georger, 2011, p. 264). During this time, Creole was

[29] The '*vieilles colonies*' refers to the first French colonial territories conquered under the *Ancien Régime*, the First Republic and the first Napoleonic empire between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.
[30] Aimé Césaire later became the President of the Regional Council for Martinique, following departmentalisation.

acknowledged only as a linguistic exoticism, a *"charme pittoresque"* which represented no viable cultural differences between La Réunion and the mainland (Gauvin, 2002, p. 74).

As the official language of the Republic, French was the language of instruction in education. Linguist Robert Chaudenson (1974) observes that the democratisation of education in La Réunion in fact led to a decrease in overall academic achievement. When schooling was only available for the local aristocratic children, their sociolinguistic background equipped them for an education in French (Chaudenson, 1974, p. XIX). However, when schools were opened up to the general public, the education system was not adapted to the linguistic diversity of the new school population. Consequently, academic failures were blamed on the presence of a *"parler local"* and *"la doctrine officielle a visé une irréalisable éradication de ce "patois""* (Chaudenson, 1974, p. XIX). Even prior to departmentalisation, schemes such as *francisation* created a linguistic hierarchy in which French was the language of social and economic success and the use of Creole in school establishments was punished (Glâtre, 2020). This linguistic hierarchy became so ingrained that the few suggestions made for Creole in education were not met with much support, even among communities who spoke little or no French (Chaudenson, 1974, p. XX). The prohibition of Creole in public institutions led to feelings of alienation which later provoked resistance through cultural movements and the use of the language in domains from which it had previously been excluded. Moreover, linguistic hierarchies came to reflect socio-economic hierarchies, in which Creole became synonymous with a low social and economic status. During cultural movements in the 1970s, Creole-speakers re-appropriated their regional identity and heritage through the use of their mother language in literature, music and theatre. This accompanied an increasing interest in linguistic research which affirmed Creole's status as a language and sought to develop its codification.

The *Parti Communiste Réunionnais* and the autonomist agenda

Continued socio-economic difficulties and inequalities between La Réunion and mainland France led to rising frustrations and the emergence of a local communist movement. The 1970s and 1980s were marked by political demands in which language became a symbol for the emancipation of the Réunionese population (Gauvin, 2002, p. 77). Growing support for the local communist movement and demands for autonomy were in part influenced by patterns of independence in neighbouring societies such as Madagascar in 1960, Mauritius

in 1968, and the Seychelles in 1976 (Georger, 2011).[31] Moreover, the increased focus on Creole within autonomist politics could also be seen to mirror commonly found links between indigenous language revitalisation and independence (Craig, 1985, p. 276). In 1959 the *Parti Communiste Réunionnais* (PCR) launched a campaign for autonomy and encouraged a memorialisation of slavery and the reinforcement of Réunionese culture and heritage (Gauvin, 2002, p. 82). This stance opposed the paternalistic and exoticized narratives of traditionalists and *départementalistes* such as Debré. As part of their promotion of an 'authentic' Réunionese culture, the PCR endorsed *Maloya* music and *Créoliste* music groups such as *Ziskakan.* Similarly, links were forged with *Créoliste* literature through PCR supporters such as Boris Gamaleya, Alain Armand, Axel Gauvin and Carpanin Marimoutou (*Créoliste* movements are discussed later in this chapter). *Maloya* musicians, who were typically working-class sugar-cane workers and PCR voters, were solicited to play at PCR meetings. PCR meetings were effectively illegal during this time and public performances of *Maloya* were routinely disrupted and shut down by the authorities (Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 37). By adopting *Maloya* as a symbol of censorship and oppression of lower classes (Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 37), the PCR engaged in a form of political resistance through cultural and linguistic movements. It was not only the PCR who appropriated cultural and artistic expression for the advancement of their political agenda. *Créoliste* actors viewed linguistic issues as inherently political, framing their demands for Creole-French bilingualism within a leftist political agenda of autonomy (Gauvin, 1977).

The ties between the PCR and *Créoliste* movements could create the illusion of a political endorsement of Creole during the 1970s. However, despite their links to *Créoliste* cultural activists, the PCR and their leader Paul Vergès maintained a mostly passive stance in terms of linguistic policy (Gauvin, 2002). The historian Gilles Gauvin observes that the only case of a public address in Creole in the local parliament during this time was by an anti-communist and defender of ties to France (Gauvin, 2002, pp. 74–75). The fact that there was no decisive political action to recognise Creole until 2000, would suggest that the role of Creole in politics at this time was limited to its use as a political instrument in the opposing campaigns

[31] While the term 'autonomy' has been used to refer to increased regional governance within the French Republic (Gauvin, 1977), PCR leader Paul Vergès insinuated on a number of occasions that autonomy was seen as a necessary step for independence from France in the future (Gauvin, 2002, p. 75).

of assimilationism by the right and autonomy by the left. While ideologies in cultural movements affirmed that *"la langue c'est l'âme d'un peuple"* (Gauvin, 1977, p. 81), in political movements *"la question de la langue créole est dans ce cadre un outil, mais non un objectif majeur, de la patiente œuvre de « nationalisme regional »"* (Gauvin, 2002, p. 82). The Creole language therefore became a tool in the construction of a regional 'nationalism' which was supported by the 'construction' of the language in literature, culture and linguistics.

While there is little evidence of any direct political intervention to expand the role and status of Creole in public society pre-2000, the endorsement of Creole through literature and music by the PCR nevertheless propelled the language into the public eye, increased recognition for the language, and sparked political debates which prepared for official linguistic policies from 2000 onwards.

BUMIDOM and the fragmentation of regional identity

In reaction to the rise of autonomist movements in the French DOM, the *Bureau pour les migrations intéressant les départements d'outre-mer* (BUMIDOM) (Gauvin, 2019, p. 85) was created in 1963 by the French government at the request of Michel Debré (Pattieu, 2016). Its purpose was the organisation and control of migration from the DOM to the metropole to alleviate the social crisis in the regions and ensure that they would remain a part of the French Republic (Pattieu, 2016). This latter objective was theorised on the notion that the migration of young people from the DOM would diminish independence movements by cutting them off from their base (Pattieu, 2016). BUMIDOM therefore became an object of criticism for draining the lifeblood of their nations (Pattieu, 2016, p. 83), thus fuelling autonomist movements further. The sense of *déracinement* experienced by those left behind as a result of mass migration from the island fed into cultural and political movements, especially among students and the working class, which were characterised by a *"réveil identitaire"* (Lauret, 2020) of which the Creole language became a symbol.

Organised by BUMIDOM, the *Enfants de la Creuse* episode took place between 1963 and 1982 and refers to the period in which Réunionese children, sometimes orphans, sometimes with family still alive, were deported to rural areas of the metropole to counteract population decline (Georger, 2011, p. 264; Gauvin, 2019). The children were seized by

authorities, declared 'wards' of the State and put to work on the mainland (Gauvin, 2019). The period demonstrates the authoritarian, paternalistic, and often neo-colonial politics of the 1970s and 1980s, which provides a backdrop for growing movements to reclaim and affirm a sense of regional identity. BUMIDOM contributed to an environment in which the DOM became increasingly dependent on the metropole for resources and financial aid, amid their continued subordination. The organised migration of *Domiens* to the mainland exacerbated socio-economic inequalities between the DOM and the metropole and contributed to the growing search for a new sense of collective identity. In this way, the politics of migration and deportation from La Réunion during this period led to feelings of uprootedness (Gauvin, 2002, p. 78) and fragmentation which fuelled the cultural, political and linguistic demands which emerged during this period.

The departmentalisation law in 1946 saw the merging of the DOM into the French political and administrative system. Throughout the post-departmentalisation period, this political assimilation was expanded to incorporate a cultural and linguistic assimilation which intended to minimise, and even eradicate, differences with mainland France. In reaction to this, autonomist movements arose in local Réunionese communist politics, challenging assimilationism through an appropriation of regional cultural expression. For *Créoliste* writers and musicians, political autonomy became a means for acquiring a linguistic autonomy which would allow the development of Creole-French bilingualism in public Réunionese society. A mirror image of struggles between assimilationists and autonomists in the political realm is reflected in emerging battles between linguistic assimilation with France and linguistic autonomy in La Réunion, of which cultural movements during the 1970s became a battlefield.

Cultural movements

The 1970s witnessed the first significant wave of literature and music which used Creole as a medium of cultural and artistic expression in the public sphere. The choice of language can be an important factor in identity politics (Ferguson, 2006a, p. 35), and this new wave of Creole literature reflected the socio-political context of the time. The use of Creole to express regional heritage and local collective identity became an important thread in cultural movements in which the creolisation of literature, music, and cultural discourse ran parallel

with an affirmation of the creolisation in regional Réunionese identities. Different currents and approaches within these cultural movements reflect the diverse attempts to navigate the complex relationship between regional identity and national identity. Daleau *et al.* (2006) identify a number of examples of texts composed in Creole between 1828 and 1928, revealing a longstanding use of the language for regional tradition and cultural expression. Moreover, Creole has long been used orally as a medium of storytelling and poetic expression; a fact that must not be overlooked when focusing on the emergence of Creole in primarily written forms. Contentions around written Creole are discussed throughout the course of this thesis. Nevertheless, 1970 is generally considered to mark the beginning of a contemporary body of literature consistently produced in Creole. Writers such as Boris Gamaleya, Axel Gauvin, Jean-Claude Carpanin Marimoutou, Danyèl Waro and Daniel Honoré, continue to be recognised for their contributions to both Creole and French Réunionese literature and many appear on reading lists for Creole education programmes today (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Jeunesse, 2019b, 2019a). Several scholars (Lionnet, 1993; Hawkins, 2007) have previously identified two main strands in prevalent in 1970s Creole literature; the *Créolie* and *Créoliste* movements, which were and remain an important influence on the recognition for Creole in public Réunionese society.

Réunionese literature

The first significant movement which emerged in Réunionese literature, was the *Créolie* movement, spearheaded by Gilbert Aubry, Jean Albany and Jean-François Sam-Long (Lionnet, 1993, p. 104). *Créolie* celebrates the Réunionese language and culture through poetry in one of the first currents of literature which used Creole as a medium of literary expression. The *Créolie* authors valorised the language by using it as a written language in their poetry and literature. The movement is characterised by its distinctly apolitical approach and conservative view on the Creole language as a *patois* (Lionnet, 1993; Hawkins, 2007). Some of the first *Créolie* texts were published as early as 1969, such as Jean Albany's *Bleu Mascarin*, a collection of poems composed in Creole. However, the majority of the literature appeared in the following decade, coinciding with a second more military movement, the *Créoliste* movement. According to Hawkins (2007), the *Créolie* movement was invented as a mental universe, adopting its name from Gilbert Aubry's *Hymne à la*

Créolie published in 1978, in which he celebrates the mixed-race culture which characterises La Réunion (Hawkins, 2007, p. 125). Following this poem, Aubry and Sam-Long published a series of annual collections of literary texts under the title *Créolie* (Hawkins, 2007, p. 125). The apolitical traditionalist approach of *Créolie* was centred around the idea that the Creole language is a treasured *patois* which contributes towards the rich cultural and linguistic heritage of La Réunion, despite the fact that "in terms of expressive capacity, French is clearly superior to Creole" (Aubry, 1980, p. 114 cited in Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 40).[32] The aim of *Créolie* is thus to preserve Creole, without preventing its inevitable disappearance as an inferior language. The *Créolie* authors attempt to define the movement as harmonious and unifying by focusing on convergences with France rather than differences; emphasising "unity *in spite of* diversity" (Lionnet, 1993, p. 110).[33]

While its aims may seem honourable, Lionnet (1993) criticises the movement which she claims, in its focus on preserving history and heritage, disguises the "fact that the Creole language is by no means an obsolete model of communication, that it can hold its own" (Lionnet, 1993, p. 110). Lionnet's criticism suggests that the *Créolie* movement in fact could undermine the status of Creole as a language that is alive and spoken as a mother tongue by the majority of the population in La Réunion. This criticism has been echoed by many actors involved in Creole education in the 2000s, who have drawn distinctions between Réunionese Creole and other regional languages in France by highlighting its role as a *"langue plus jeune que le français"* and the "*langue majoritairement parlée sur le territoire"*. In framing Creole as a *'patois'* inferior to French, the language used by the *Créolie* authors appears to resonate with assimilationist narratives which encouraged French monolingualism in the Republic. However, this research argues that *Créolie* literature remains an important alternative to the monolingualism enforced in the DOM by the French state. The *Créolie* poems were among the first notable literature in La Réunion which used Creole for written expression. Until this time, Creole had largely remained an oral language, a factor which, through perceptions of oral languages as inferior, contributed to its exclusion from public spheres (Glâtre, 2020). In

[32] *'Patois'* - defined by Larousse [online] as a *'système linguistique essentiellement oral, utilisé sur une aire réduite et dans une communauté déterminée (généralement rurale), et perçu par ses utilisateurs comme inférieur à la langue officielle'* (Larousse, n.d.). The use of the word by the *Créolie* movement reflects an avoidance of the more political use of the word *'langue'*. The term *'patois'* has later been rejected by linguists, as discussed later in the Chapter.

[33] In contrast to 'unity in diversity' (Picard, 2010, p. 307).

adopting Creole as a form of written expression, *Créolie* literature formed part of an essential step towards a wider recognition for Creole in literary and intellectual spheres. This contributed to its progression from oral to written language, an advancement necessary for its subsequent introduction into public education in 2000.

As referenced earlier in this thesis, another more radical and politically engaged stream of literature emerged in the 1970s. The *Créoliste* movement began with the appearance of militancy, bilingualism and social engagement in Réunionese novels and poems. Articles in the journals *Barzour* and *Fangok* (Raffy and Sultan, 2018) often contained more radical ideologies concerning the Réunionese language and identity. Anne Cheynet's *Matanans et Langoutis*, published in 1971 documented the poverty and social deprication of La Réunion compared to the mainland (Hawkins, 2007). Similarly Alain Lorraine's *Tienbo le rein*, in 1976 celebrated social solidarity and resistance in the island (Hawkins, 2007). These texts reveal an emerging critique of the social and political context in literary fields. Poems such as Axel Gauvin's *Létshi mir*, published in 1970 (Raffy and Sultan, 2018), Boris Gamaleya's *Vali pour une reine morte* in 1973 and Jean-Claude Carpanin Marimoutou's *Fazèle* in 1979 (Hawkins, 2007) diverged from the more moderate *Créolie* poems in their appropriation of different poetic and literary conventions. These poems were characterised by their militant defence of the Creole language and often very explicit political alignment with autonomist agendas and the PCR. The overt political stance of the early *Créoliste* movement in La Réunion is arguably its most obvious difference from the *Créolie* current, and thus ties in with the social and political context of the period (Gauvin, 2002; Idelson, 2004; Cole, Meunier and Tiberj, 2013; Finch-Boyer, 2014), discussed earlier in this chapter. Rather than attempting to depict the island as a harmonious and unified collective, the *Créolistes* engaged in a direct attack on the assimilationist monolinguistic politics of the French State. Among the clearest examples of this being Axel Gauvin's (1977) manifesto for bilingualism, as discussed in Chapter One. The *Créolistes* viewed Creole as the language of emancipation from what they saw as French (neo-)colonial control (Gauvin, 1977). In contrast to the apolitical *Créolie* movement, the *Créoliste* movement considered linguistic and political issues under the same battle.

Aside from the politicisation of the Creole language, *Créoliste* writings also contributed significantly to the recognition of Creole as a cultural language. As well as a political challenge to French monolingualism, novels and poems which employed both Creole and

French alongside each other reinforced bilingualism in literary expression. Some authors published separate versions of their literature in French and Creole, such as Axel Gauvin's *Quartier trois lettres* and *Kartyé trwa lèt* published in 1980 and 1984 respectively, and *Faims d'enfance* and *Bayalina* published in 1987 and 1995 respectively. Other literature was published in creolised French, using standard French as a base but incorporating Creole vocabulary and references throughout, such as Axel Gauvin's postcolonial novel, *L'Aimé* published in 1990 (Hawkins, 2007). Other texts incorporated this bilingualism within their publications, for example, Carpanin Marimoutou's bilingual collection of poetry, *Romans pou la tèr ek la mèr* published in 1995 (Hawkins, 2007). Bilingualism and creolisation in Réunionese literature can be seen as a linguistic representation of the themes of cultural mixing and complex relations between La Réunion and the metropole which are found in the texts. The *Créoliste* movement thus uses literature as a space for exploring the linguistic and cultural hybridisation of La Réunion, for highlighting divergences with mainland France, and for celebrating a unique regional identity.

Créoliste literature contributes to the emergence of Creole in the public domain on two levels. Firstly, *Créoliste* writers actively initiated and participated in debates around Creole in public and political spheres. Through politically engaged literature written in and using Creole, the movement increased visibility for the language in public debates in Réunionese politics from which it had previously been excluded. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, *Créoliste* music and literature often became a symbol for political campaigns in favour of autonomy (Gauvin, 2002). Secondly, the movement took this political engagement a step further by lobbying for a greater use of Creole in public domains such as education. Key *Créoliste* figures and literature in the 1970s inspired actors involved in Creole education and status and corpus planning measures between 2000 and 2022. In an interview, the former Creole teacher and academic Fabrice Georger recollects that *"dans les années 90, où je suis en train de me construire identitairement, mon influence, c'est le mouvement Créoliste"*. Another teacher refers to the *Créoliste* writers as the source of her own personal interest in the Creole language, and in altering public perceptions of the language more widely; "*il y a un regard qui était décomplexé"*. *Créoliste* literature has therefore indirectly influenced language attitudes in the wider population which have resulted in a shift in favour of a greater recognition for and officialisation of the Creole language in La Réunion.

The transition from oral to written language which took place throughout the 1970s and 1990s through Réunionese literature has been criticised by some in La Réunion for erasing oral-based local traditions. While the *Créolie* and *Créoliste* movements in La Réunion brought important status planning developments to the language through its increased production in written form, oral poetry and storytelling pre-dates written literature and should not be considered inferior in local cultural value. For example, the *Kabar Fonnkèr* is a Réunionese poetic genre derived from East African and Malagasy traditions in which poems are heard and shared on an entirely oral basis (Glâtre, 2020, p. 9). The importance and prevalence of these oral traditions for Creole Réunionese society and culture is seen by some to be threatened by the emergence of written literature. For example, celebrated Réunionese singer Jacqueline Farayol is among the famous cultural figures who is vocal in their opposition to Creole education. The focus on written expression in the *Créolie* and *Créoliste* movements could therefore be criticised for accentuating perceived hierarchies between oral and written languages (Glâtre, 2020). However, this research considers transitions towards written Creole as a diversification of linguistic practices, rather than an erasure of oral traditions. *Kabar Fonnkèr* and overlaps between poetry and song (discussed below) continue to play a central role in Réunionese Creole cultural spheres. Resistance against the standardisation and codification of Creole for similar arguments is discussed later in this chapter and in Chapters Four and Five.

The *Créolie* and *Créoliste* movements represent two differing approaches to the valorisation of Creole in public literary domains in La Réunion and reveal complex relations between the Réunionese population and the Creole language. These two ideological currents reflect different attempts to navigate linguistic relations and diversity in La Réunion and to define their significance for ideas of national and regional identity and belonging. While Creole literature can be loosely separated into apolitical and political streams, Carpanin Marimoutou (2014) argues that all Creole texts are inherently political. For Marimoutou, Creole literature is a reformulation of the oral traditions and histories of slaves in the colonial period, the *contes creoles*, for contemporary Réunionese society. Thus, *Créolie* and *Créoliste* poetry, novels and essays alike reveal the multiplicity which defines Réunionese society, culture and language. They highlight the importance of the Creole language for relating Réunionese identities to place and space. They are therefore proof of the Creole

language, *"qu'elle s'écrive, se dise, se dessine, se performe, se danse"* (Marimoutou, 2014, p. 47), as a means for relation, identity and political engagement with the complexities of a post-departmentalisation La Réunion. In this way, Réunionese literature in Creole has performed a status planning role by allowing a predominantly domestic and oral language to transform itself into a written language of cultural and political expression and engagement. This in turn led to an expansion in vocabulary, style and expression which diversified its functions and legitimised its status as a language in public society. The significance of Creole literary movements in the 1970s and 1990s for Creole education is recognised officially through references to texts on reading lists and official curricula and programmes (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Jeunesse, 2019b, 2019a). These appear alongside equivalent writings from other creole societies in the French Caribbean.

Caribbean literature

The cultural and linguistic *maronaz* which characterised literature in La Réunion during the 1970s reflect similar ideologies in the French Caribbean which constructed identities around creole cultures and languages. Creole literature in the Caribbean is generally more visible in international intellectual circles, despite the fact that Réunionese literature is arguably more substantial and often pre-dates its more famous Caribbean counterparts (Hawkins, 2007). Nevertheless, because of the visibility of Caribbean creole movements analysis of *Créolie* and *Créoliste* literature in La Réunion necessarily requires some comparison to similar writings which were taking place simultaneously in Martinique and Guadeloupe. Creole movements signal an international shift in attitudes towards creole identity and relation in the post-colonial francophone world; one which challenges the assimilationism of departmentalisation and asserts a sense of distinction through the plurality and composite nature of creole societies compared to the 'purity' of French nationalism. In recognising conflict and difference and accepting them as integral characteristics of human languages and societies, diversity becomes the condition of unity (Vergès, 2008, p. 220 cited in Picard, 2010, p. 307). The emergence of Creole in the Réunionese cultural scene can be seen as a deliberate manifestation of this sentiment. Creole writers view linguistic diversity and bilingualism not as a threat to collective identity, but as an inevitable and unavoidable truth to be celebrated and not disguised. In considering similar cultural movements in other French DOM, Creole literature in La Réunion thus signifies a regional participation in

globalised constructions of anti-colonial creole identities which took place in the 1970s and 1980s. These identities contested the French metropolitan monopoly on francophone culture and ideology and prepared the stage for the emergence of creole languages in public spheres in the DOM.

The *Créolité* movement in the Caribbean was headed by Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant and their "praise song", *Éloge de la créolité* in 1989 (Price and Price, 1997, p. 6). *Créolité* is often thought of as a reaction against the *négritude* movement led by Aimé Césaire, and as an alternative to Édouard Glissant's 'creolisation' (Price and Price, 1997). The *Créolité* movement possesses some ideas in common with the *Créolie* and *Créoliste* movements in Réunion. For example, one of the main ideas expressed by the *Créolité* writers is the value of literature as one of the only ways in which the complexities of creole societies can be described and explained (Price and Price, 1997, p. 7). Similarly, poets and novelists in the 1970s in La Réunion have used literature in Creole as a medium for expressing the complexities of Réunionese culture. In a more radical tone, the C*réoliste* movement in La Réunion "proclaims the importance of Creole as the only language that can articulate a truly emancipated Reunionais subjectivity" (Lionnet, 1993, p. 104). In this way, both La Réunion and the Caribbean alike have used literature and language to express cultural, ideological and political ideas in a form of grassroots resistance and defiance against the monolingualism and monoculturalism of French assimilationist politics.

Créolité literature values history and heritage for its role in the construction of creole identity and language in the Antilles. However, Price and Price (1997, p. 15) suggest that it is sometimes perhaps overly retrospective. The *Créolité* movement has been criticised for depicting Caribbean identity as static and unchanging (McCusker, 2008), which could wrongly suggest that linguistic and cultural interactions are restricted to the past. In this way it could be compared to Réunionese *Créolie* for its retrospective, traditionalist approach. In contrast to the cultural and linguistic stasis implied through *Créolité*, Édouard Glissant's 'creolisation' theories depict creole cultures, languages and identities as continually evolving. Glissant's concept of 'creolisation' in the 1980s and 1990s is well-known in both francophone and anglophone international intellectualism. The term originates from the linguistic term describing "a composite language, emerging from contact between entirely heterogeneous linguistic elements" (Glissant, 2020, p. 9). Glissant extends this definition to

the idea of 'composite' cultures and identities found in former colonies such as the French Antilles. While Glissant's theories of creolisation concentrate on the French Caribbean, many of the same ideologies apply to the context of La Réunion. Glissant promoted a sense of 'relation' through creole culture, moving beyond regional or national identities and towards a *mondialité* and *tout-monde* (Forsdick, 2015, p. 231). Réunionese writers such as Françoise Vergès have emphasised the international importance of Caribbean creolisation literature for its defence of vernacular practices and solidarity among oppressed peoples (Vergès, 2015, p. 40). Moreover, other scholars have used Glissant's creolisation to conceptualise Réunionese Creole language and cultural practices in tourism and the media as a way of participating in the global community (Picard, 2010).

Following a similar comparative vein, this research contextualises the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion within a broader political, cultural and literary shift towards a greater recognition of creole identities. This shift is revealed through cultural movements such as *Créolité* and creolisation in the Caribbean, and *Créolie* and *Créoliste* literature in La Réunion. Intellectual thought on creole identity in La Réunion serves to relate it to other French DOM in the Antilles (Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 27), and reveals a sense of pan-*créolité* (Étienne, 2013) across the francophone and creolophone worlds. However, despite parallels between the movements, Laurence Daleau-Gauvin, who participated in this research, claims that Réunionese ideologies maintained a sense of distinctiveness among themselves.

> *"À La Réunion, nous ne [nous] reconnaissons pas dans la définition de l'Eloge à la Créolité, donc ils ont créé ici ce petit mouvement de la « Réunionnité ». C'est parce que nous sommes africains, nous sommes malgaches, nous sommes chinois, nous sommes indiens, et européens que nous sommes créoles; nous sommes Réunionnais"*
> (Laurence Daleau-Gauvin: teacher, academic, *agrégée*)

The wider recognition for creole languages and cultures in the DOM achieved through the emergence of creole cultural movements has contributed a form of status planning by altering public perceptions and facilitating public acceptance of their introduction into public institutions like education. Réunionese movements participate in these global recognition movements, while retaining a particularity characteristic of their cultural and linguistic uniqueness.

Music and theatre in La Réunion

Music and theatre were also part of the cultural movements in La Réunion which helped pave the way for the emergence of Creole in public education by increasing recognition for Creole as a language of Réunionese identity and culture. Moreover, they reflect the ideological approaches of *Créolie* and *Créoliste* literature, revealing the complex balance between an affirmation of a regional creole identity and an adhesion to France (Hawkins, 1996). Decisions in music and theatre to incorporate different native and imported linguistic, musical and theatrical styles (Hawkins, 1996, p. 80) reflect the complexity of the situation of departmentalisation to which La Réunion belongs.

The music which best reflects the ideologies expressed in *Créolie* literature, is the *Folklorique* genre of music. Figures such as Georges Fourcade, represented a paternalistic perspective of La Réunion in the realm of 'colonial exotica' (Samson and Pitre, 2007). This genre has been used in the tourism industry, such as the *Groupe Folklorique de La Réunion* (Samson and Pitre, 2007), who contributed to a romanticised view of La Réunion as an exotic province of France. In this way, music joined other forms of Réunionese cultural representation in engagements with the global community through industries such as tourism (Picard, 2010). *Folklorique* music used acrolectal Creole varieties and creolised French to contribute to the image of Creole as a French-derived 'patois' (Samson and Pitre, 2007). Thus, in some ways, the *Folklorique* music genre inhibited recognition for Creole by reinforcing its assumed inferiority in comparison to French. Nevertheless, its use of Creole also diversified Creole expression and developed its cultural value. Not only was the *Folklorique* music genre linked to *Créolie* poetry through its traditionalist ideologies, *Créolie* poets were also involved in music production, such as Aubry's album *Créolie* (Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 34). Contemporary cultural movements thus continued historical Réunionese traditions, in which music, poetry and storytelling are fluid channels for the exchange of a regional identity and cultural discourse which expresses itself through the medium of Creole.

With the rise of the *Parti Communiste Réunionnais* (PCR) in the 1970s, *Maloya* music, which had been systematically suppressed by authorities due to its affiliations with slaves (Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 37), re-emerged as a counter-culture. Hawkins (1996), through his sociological examination of the musical history of La Réunion using Bourdieu's theories of 'habitus', analyses *Maloya* as a *'violence symbolique,'* considered a threat to the habitus of

the dominant culture (Hawkins, 1996, p. 82). Within this theory, the use of the Creole language in *Maloya* could also suggest that the language itself came to be viewed as a *'violence symbolique'* which challenged its prohibition in education and other public institutions. While Creole had existed in Réunionese music such as *Maloya* since its beginning in the plantation society, its celebration in the re-birth of *Maloya* music during the 1970s emerged as a form of resistance in which a valorisation of linguistic and historical particularities in the region became a way of commenting on issues in politics with the metropole. Moreover, like Creole in literature, lyrics in Creole served as another way of expanding and developing the language. While *Folklorique* music is often considered the *Créolie* of music, *Créoliste* poet Patrice Treuthard's first book is often considered a *"poème-maloya"* (Marimoutou, 2001, p. 71 cited in Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 39). The poem is written in the phonetic spelling *Lékritir 77*, affirming *Maloya*'s non-European origins (Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 39). [34] The fusion between poetry and music seen in both *Créolie* and *Créoliste* cultural movements reveals a cross-collaboration and amalgamation of genres and styles representative of the plurality and creolisation of Réunionese culture, language and society.

This collaboration between music and literature represents for some a "new artistic vision in which music and poetry were one and the same" (Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 42). This vision continued with the formation of the revolutionary music group *Ziskakan* in 1977.[35] The group was founded by *Créoliste* poets Alain Armand, Axel Gauvin and Bernard Payet and came to be led eventually by the singer-composer Gilbert Pounia (Samson and Pitre, 2007, p. 40). The lyrics continued to be written by the founding poets, demonstrating another example of the appropriation of music as a platform for poetry. The group overtly rejected the *Créolie* and *Folklorique* genres of literature and music, and the use of *Lékritir 77* and collaboration with *Créoliste* poets signalled their political orientations. Nevertheless, despite their angle of resistance to the assimilationist policies of regional authorities, some albums by *Ziskakan* were supported by the *Conseil Régional* and the *Conseil Générale du Département de La Réunion* (Hawkins, 1996, p. 85). This demonstrates a growing official

[34] See later in the chapter for details of written forms for Creole.
[35] The name itself, which translates as *'Jusqu'à quand?*', is arguably a comment on the socio-political situation of the time (see Hawkins, 1996, p. 84).

support for *Créoliste* music and, by extension the use of Creole in public artistic spheres, which would suggest that cultural movements were somewhat successful in their status planning efforts even before 2000.

Moreover, cross-collaborations in Creole cultural movements in La Réunion have also included a growing use of the Creole language in theatre in La Réunion during the 1980s. *Creoliste* writer and lyricist Axel Gauvin has also contributed to Creole theatre with *Po lodèr flèr bibas* in 1984 and *La borne bardzour* in 1988 (Daleau *et al.*, 2006). *Théâtre Vollard* produced a series of original plays from 1981 onwards, incorporating a mixture of French and Creole into the dialogue (Hawkins, 2007, p. 132). Similarly, *Théâtre Taliop*, whose centre was a disused sugar factor in Pierrefonds, used various languages in their productions including Malagasy, Creole, Hindi and French (Hawkins, 2007). Their use of language in theatrical productions thus served to represent a plurilingual La Réunion. The emergence of Creole in theatre allowed the language to branch out from literature and music into other creative and artistic zones, facilitating a development of its functions and status. Its gradual appearance in theatre testified to its ability to adapt and expand into new roles in Réunionese public society and culture. This arguably contributed to an increased recognition for the language through the attribution of a cultural and artistic value which subsequently justified its status as a language in the public domain. This status was established more directly by similar regional ideologies which developed simultaneously in linguistic movements in the Seventies, Eighties and Nineties.

Linguistic movements

> *"Il est à noter que plus de la moitié du vocabulaire du créole réunionnais est dû aux capacités créatrices des Réunionnais eux-mêmes"* (Daleau-Gauvin, 2021, p.74)

Linguistic studies and corpus planning

The collaborations and cross-genre practices in Creole movements which have seen the involvement of *Créolie* and *Créoliste* actors in politics, literature, music and theatre, can also be seen in linguistic movements to recognise Creole as a language throughout the period 1970 to 2000. Cultural actors such as Aubry, Gauvin, Marimoutou, Gamaleya and Armand have also contributed to linguistic research and the documentation of Creole through dictionaries, glossaries and surveys. From the beginning of the 1970s, Creole began to be

written as an autonomous linguistic system, through the linguistic works by Chaudenson, Carayol, and Cellier (Daleau-Gauvin, 2021). By increasing recognition for Creole as a language with distinct syntactic and lexical features, linguists also played an important role in promoting its bilingualism alongside French in public society. Chapter One discussed how teachers have entered the field of applied linguistics to link linguistic theory to their arguments for Creole education. These studies are based on linguistic research which emerged in the 1970s and which has since played a vital role in the process of recognition for Creole.

Créolie and *Créoliste* strands in cultural movements are also visible in linguistic movements. In 1974, *Créolie* poet, Jean Albany, published his *P'tit glossaire, le piment des mots créoles*, using an etymological French-based spelling for Creole. However, a more radical *Créoliste* current in linguistics highlighted linguistic distinctions between French and Creole, in an attempt to shift views of Creole as a 'broken' or 'dirty' variant of French (De Robillard, 2001; DeGraff, 2003). Insights from linguists have in this way accompanied voices from cultural movements to valorise and legitimise Creole as a language capable of occupying a formal role public society. Poet and member of the PCR, Boris Gamaleya, regularly published a *Lexique illustré de la langue créole* in the PCR newspaper *Témoignages* between 1969 and 1976. The use of the word *'langue'* is arguably a political choice indicative of Gamaleya's opposition to assimilationists. *Le lexique du parler créole de La Réunion* (Chaudenson, 1974) was arguably the first significant scientific study on Creole which defended its status as a language. Other linguists followed in this defence through scientific studies on the grammar and syntax of Creole, for example, Ginette Ramassamy's *Syntaxe du créole Réunionnais. Analyse de corpus d'unilingues créolophones*, and Pierre Cellier's *Comparaison syntaxique du créole réunionnais et du français* and *Description syntaxique du créole réunionnais* all published in 1985. These studies further established linguistic distinctions between Creole and French (Daleau *et al.*, 2006).

Alain Armand's *Dictionnaire Kréol Rénioné-français* was first published in 1987 (Armand, 1987) with a second, updated and illustrated edition released in 2014. A foreword by Armand states:

> *"Conçu, élaboré et rédigé selon toute la rigueur scientifique, ce dictionnaire se veut également un outil de base pour un très large public: élèves des classes primaires et secondaires, étudiants, enseignants et grand public"* (Armand, 1987, p. VIII).

The suggested audience for the dictionary implies that it was intended as an educational resource long before the official introduction of Creole to public education. This reveals a foresight among *Créoliste* actors involved in early corpus planning initiatives for Creole, in which linguistic movements between 1970 and 2000 began to prepare the ground for Creole education a couple of decades before its existence. Furthermore, Armand states that the dictionary was produced to increase understanding of the linguistic situation in La Réunion and a better acquisition of French (Armand, 1987, p. VIII). Réunionese linguists such as Armand were therefore already proposing the idea that a greater recognition of Creole could be beneficial to learning French, even before the appearance of such an argument in official education documents (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021). Armand (1987) uses a corpus of Creole literature, linguistic studies and glossaries to compile the bilingual dictionary, which he bases on a traditional model with contextual examples, grammatical descriptions and an alphabetic order. By using literature in Creole to justify and support his definitions and description of the Creole lexicon, Armand's dictionary (1987) demonstrates how cultural and linguistic movements in La Réunion in the 1970s and 1990s became themselves essential elements in the corpus planning actions which facilitated the emergence of Creole in public education from 2000.

Daniel Baggioni also published his *Dictionnaire créole réunionnais-français* in 1990 (Daleau *et al.*, 2006), and like Armand, Baggioni marks clear distinctions between Creole and French and focuses on a basilectal variety of Creole (Daleau-Gauvin, 2021), perhaps to emphasise an ideological distance from France. Furthermore, the *Dictionnaire illustré de La Réunion* was published between 1991 and 1992 under the direction of René Robert and Christian Barat, in collaboration with Jean-Claude Carpanin Marimoutou and Gilbert Aubry among many others. These dictionaries and glossaries demonstrate attempts to classify and categorise Creole as a language as part of the movement to increase recognition for it. The appearance of these first linguistic studies on Creole coincides with the 1970s literary movements, and the involvement of poets and authors in their production and publication suggests that linguistic studies and the Creole literary canon mutually influenced and

supported each other. Furthermore, linguistic studies such as these have been referenced by *Créoliste* writers in their political writing as a justification for their arguments. For example, Axel Gauvin cites Boris Gamaleya's claim that *"le créole est une langue, notre langue maternelle"* in *Lexique illustré de la langue créole* (Gauvin, 1977, p. 40). In this way, linguistic movements in favour of Creole supported cultural movements in status planning actions which increased recognition for Creole in public spheres and established its status as a language alongside French.

The emergence of a linguistic movement for Creole in La Réunion contributed not only to status planning actions, but also marked the first significant attempts at corpus planning. The publication of dictionaries, glossaries and linguistic studies developed the codification and classification of Creole important to its subsequent development as an official language with a formal role in public institutions. Linguistic movements recorded the breadth and diversity of the Creole lexicon and contributed to a scientific understanding of its etymology, structure and uses. Linguistic texts and studies published in the 1970s and 1980s can therefore be considered among the pioneering corpus planning measures for Creole in La Réunion, which existed before the language was officially recognised in 2000. Furthermore, these texts have formed the basis for subsequent research into the language, and texts such as the *Dictionnaire Kréol Rénioné-Français* (Armand, 1987) have since been used by teachers as educational resources for the study of the Creole language. The publication of Creole dictionaries was accompanied by the development of orthographical propositions which reflected differing ideological positions.

Orthographical propositions for Creole

As part of corpus planning efforts to expand and develop the Creole language in linguistic movements in La Réunion since 1970, actors involved in linguistics and literature collaborated to propose written forms for Creole. Until the 1970s, much of the literature written in Creole used an etymological spelling which was based on French phonetics and orthographic conventions, and therefore emphasised similarities with French. While an etymological spelling was favoured by the more moderate *Créolie* poets, Aubry and Albany, *Créoliste* writers rejected the franco-centrism of earlier written forms which they criticised for encouraging inaccuracies in pronunciation and false-friends with French. The first alternative was proposed by the group *Oktob 77* in 1977. In contrast to an etymological

written form for Creole, *Oktob 77* suggested a more phonetic spelling system (Daleau *et al.*, 2006). The phonetic spelling was an attempt to distance Creole written expression from French and to simplify creole literacy (Georger, 2011). The use of the letters K and Z marks this distinction from French standard orthography. Furthermore, *Lékritir 77* is based on a basilectal variety of Creole often used by the ethnic group known regionally as the *Kaf* (Georger, 2011).[36] The strong alignment with a specific variety of Creole explains in part its rejection among other ethnic and linguistic groups.

A second written proposition was suggested in 1983, known as *KWZ* or *Lékritir 83,* and was heavily inspired by the written forms adopted in Haiti by the *Groupes d'Études et de Recherches en Espace Creole* in the Antilles in 1976 (Georger, 2011). The written form adopts the maximum deviance from French orthography through the use of graphemes such as K, W, Z and Y. It is therefore often considered the most militant written form. Indeed, during a Creole language lesson observed at the University of La Réunion, the tutor admitted that while he generally favoured *Lékritir 77*, he occasionally chose *KWZ* when he wished to adopt a more activist stance. Affiliations between *KWZ* and militancy, have explained a resistance to the proposed spelling system among some members of the population (Idelson, 2004). As Marimoutou explained, the use of the letter 'K', while it is functional from a linguistic point of view, is often conflictual in a symbolic point of view for its deviance from French (Idelson, 2004). Similarly, contemporary studies have revealed that basilectal written forms such as *KWZ* continue to be viewed as the most 'Creole' (Georger, 2009).

A third written form for Creole was proposed in 2001 by the association *Tangol* which gave its name to the proposed form *Tangol* or *Lékritir 2001*. This proposition continues the preference for a phonetic spelling system, however, introduces the use of diacritic symbols to account for variety within the language (Daleau *et al.*, 2006; Georger, 2011). Despite the attempt to unify creole-speakers under one written form accessible to all varieties, *Tangol* is generally used without the additional symbols due to relative complexity and unsuitability for technology. All three of these written propositions for Creole are recognised and accepted by the *Académie de La Réunion* for use in Creole education. The creation of a new

[36] *'Kaf'* - A local cultural term generally used to describe individuals/communities who descended primarily from African slaves.

proposition, referred to either as the *Graphie Tableau* or as *Lékritir 2020* was synthesised from the previous three written propositions, and published as an official written framework by the *Académie de La Réunion* (Académie de La Réunion, 2020a). This is discussed further in Chapter Four.

The three written propositions for Creole testify to corpus planning efforts to codify the Creole language throughout the 1970s to early 2000s. The codification of Creole has been considered an essential preparation for the use of Creole in formal public education. The groups and associations which worked on the development of these orthographical propositions overlapped with actors involved in cultural and linguistic movements, demonstrating further the collaborative and cross-disciplinary nature of Creole movements. The collaborative approach which characterised early Creole status and corpus planning actions has continued to influence contemporary officialisation processes for Creole in public education since 2000, as discussed in Chapter Four. Furthermore, propositions developed in the 1970s and 1980s, such as *Lékritir 77* and *KWZ*, reveal a drive for corpus planning efforts for Creole which long pre-empted official recognition of Creole as a language in 2000. The following section will examine alternative areas in which the clandestine use of Creole can be viewed as a form of linguistic *maronaz* and an expression of a growing regional sentiment.

Linguistic *maronaz* in other public domains

Creole in journalism and the media

The recognition of Creole in cultural and linguistic movements in La Réunion throughout the 1970s and 1990s took place as part of a wider evolution in the role of the language in public spheres. The emergence of Creole in media and journalism became an alternative medium through which the language has gained an increasing recognition in public Réunionese society. This shift emerged within the context of a growing resistance to the monopolisation of public spheres by the French state. Anderson (1991) claims that the choice of print language in media and literature is instrumental in forging national consciousness (cited in Ferguson, 2006a, p. 19). Similarly, in La Réunion the Creole language became a symbol of regional identity and difference from France which expressed itself through literature, music, politics, linguistic research and the media. The appearance of Creole in these public

spheres acted as status and corpus planning measures, driven from the bottom-up, which developed and diversified the language in written and formal registers outside of its traditional domestic and oral functions. This in turn paved the way for the officialisation of Creole in public institutions such as education from 2000.

During the 1980s Creole was increasingly used in radio and television, however, this was achieved unofficially by illegal media platforms. One of the first radio companies to permit the use of Creole on its station was *Radio Free DOM*. Broadcasting since 14th July 1981, the station was among the first 'pirate' radio stations to break the State monopoly over media and news (Watin and Wolff, 1995, p. 9). Since its introduction to the island, radio had previously been entirely dominated by the government-controlled *Radio France Outre Mer* (RFO). The birth of *Radio Free DOM* challenged this monopoly and the monolingualism that accompanied it. The name of the pirate radio station also makes light of its resistance to restrictions on the media; a double entendre combining the English word 'freedom' with the French acronym for *Département d'outre-mer*. *Radio Free DOM* became a radio station for the Réunionese people. Interactive programmes such as *Radio-doléances*, in which members of the public were able to call in to discuss and debate certain subjects became hugely popular (Watin and Wolff, 1995, p. 9). Such programmes opened up the public sphere to popular ideas and opinion and adopted Creole as the language of these public debates. At the time, the station was the only one to allow Creole on air and the only alternative to RFO.

On 13th March 1986, *Télé Free DOM* was created by Camille Sudre (Watin and Wolff, 1995, p. 10). Following a similar idea to the radio programme, the immensely popular *Télé-doléances* allowed discussion in both Creole and French (Watin and Wolff, 1995). Following a decision in Paris by the *Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel* (CSA), the illegal television station was shut down in February 1991, leading to violent protests (Lionnet, 1993; Watin and Wolff, 1995). The protests which ensued after the decision to shut down *Télé Free DOM* became a political movement for freedom of speech, Réunionese identity and the use of Creole in the public sphere. The vehement reaction this decision sparked reveals in part a passion for the Creole language and a growing sensitisation to its appearance in the media. However, the dissolution of *Télé Free DOM* did not inhibit the use of Creole in radio and television, as TV 4 broadcast the first news bulletin in Creole in April 1992 (Idelson, 2004). A

further officialisation was more formally achieved when RFO introduced *"midi a zot"* and in 2001, a weekly news bulletin *Konsaminnm* (*"c'est comme ça"*) produced completely in Creole began broadcasting Saturdays at midday on *Télé Réunion* (RFO) (Idelson, 2004). The involvement of the public broadcasting company coincided with the official recognition of Creole as a regional language of France in 2000. However, two decades before this development, Creole had found alternative channels through which to secure an emergence; a fact that reveals a grassroots pressure in favour of the language in the public sphere which pre-dates official status planning action by the State. The emergence of news bulletins and discussions in Creole on radio and television accompanies its appearance in cultural movements through Creole music such as *Séga* and *Maloya*, which were later broadcast as part of radio programmes. The growing use of both Creole and French on radio and television formed a Réunionese media scene which increasingly reflected the sociocultural and linguistic reality of the island.

The recognition of Creole through the media was not limited to radio and television during this period but was further cemented through its increasing appearance in written journalism. As discussed earlier in this chapter, newspapers were also sometimes used as channels for publishing poems and glossaries, such as Gamaleya's *Lexique illustré de la langue créole*, published weekly in the PCR newspaper *Témoignages* between 1969 and 1976 (Lauret, 2020). Other newspapers such as *Le Quotidien de La Réunion*, created in 1976, also participated in the advent of Creole in the written press. The newspaper *"se penche sur la vie réunionnaise […] l'identité réunionnaise, la langue créole, la réalité du paysage politique local"* (Watin and Wolff, 1995, p. 11). In particular, its cultural column provided militants for the Creole one of the first spaces to publish and share their creations and ideas with the wider Réunionese public (Lauret, 2020). While Creole had previously occupied the cultural realm in poetry and music, its expansion into journalism marks the development of written forms of the language which facilitate its use in education. Moreover, this diversification of written Creole further challenged diglossic relations between Creole and French by breaking down hierarchies based on spoken and written language (Glâtre, 2020).

Writer and academic, Francky Lauret, argues that, as was the case for literary and linguistic texts discussed above, *"la naissance des première revues créolophones réunionnaises est*

étroitement liée au contexte politique de l'époque" (Lauret, 2020, p. 191). Throughout the 1970s, journals and magazines with a militant political stance, such as *Bardzour Maskarin* and *Fangok*, began to engage publically with debates around Creole in education and to argue against a popular anti-Creole discourse (Lauret, 2020). An anonymous collective publication in 1971 entitled *Lanséyeman La Rénion, in plan kolonialise* which extended across 157 pages, became the first theoretical work written in Creole (Lauret, 2020). The publication launched a public discussion in journalism and literature on the role of the Creole language in Réunionese society in relation to its political context. For example, the 1974 edition of the journal *Bardzour Maskarin* marks another foundational theoretical text in the Réunionese language (Lauret, 2020). This wave of *Créoliste* written journalism can therefore be seen as another response to the social and political context of the period 1970 to 1990s which used the Creole language as a mouthpiece in the wider search for a greater social and political equality and regional identity.

Similar to the name of the pirate radio and television stations *Free DOM*, the names selected for journals and magazines evoke a similar form of resistance. The choice of the Creole word '*Maskarin'*, as a term used for inhabitants of the Mascareines Archipelago in the Indian Ocean, positions the journal *Bardzour Maskarin* outside of the francophone world (Lauret, 2020) and reinforces links with other creole-speaking islands. Additionally, another journal *Fangok,* takes its name from the Creole for a tool used for gardening (Lauret, 2020), and is used as a metaphor for the growth and nurture of the Creole language in La Réunion. In this way, Creole vocabulary lends itself also to the spatial and temporal distancing of local Réunionese journalism and intellectualism from France and the French language. The affirmation of a Réunionese culture and identity through the affirmation of Creole as the Réunionese language, is a common thread which united Creole movements in La Réunion across culture, politics, journalism and academia during the 1970s and 1990s.

L'enseignement en *maron* et les idées subversives[37]

In *Du créole opprimé* (1977), Axel Gauvin describes his experience (which he refers to as "Chemin Portail") teaching literacy to friends through the medium of Creole. The literacy

[37]See General Introduction, pp-1-2 for a definition of *'maron'.* Here it is used by Axel Gauvin in an interview to refer to the clandestine use of Creole in classrooms prior to its official introduction to education in 2000; *"les experiences en maron".*

lessons, which began in 1975, draw important links for Gauvin between the exclusion of Creole from public education and the high levels of illiteracy in La Réunion. The idea for literacy lessons through the medium of Creole came to Gauvin, after attending a meeting by the *Association Réunionnaise de Cours pour Adultes* (ARCA) (Gauvin, 1977).

> *"Germe alors dans notre cerveau des idées bien subversives: pourquoi ne pas essayer d'alphabétiser dans la langue maternelle, le créole"* (Gauvin, 1977, p. 14).

Thus began Gauvin's experience teaching literacy informally to friends and neighbours. The process began with learning the alphabet and basic literacy in Creole, before transitioning to literacy in French (Gauvin, 1977). The experience ultimately resulted in the culmination of the political, ideological and linguistic ideas argued in Gauvin's 1977 essay. Gauvin considers the importance of this teaching experience for the manifestation of his passion for the protection and promotion of the Creole language; *"aurions-nous pris part active à la défense de notre language sans "Chemin Portail"?"* (Gauvin, 1977). The experience reveals the influence of pedagogical arguments for the recognition and officialisation of Creole in public domains as early as the 1970s. Nevertheless, as Gauvin describes his ideas as 'subversive', the use of Creole as a medium or subject of education during this period was certainly frowned upon, if not prohibited. Thus, "Chemin Portail" was forced to take place informally in a domestic setting. As the language of the Republic, French was also the language of education. However, this did not deter some teachers who engaged in clandestine teaching practices which used Creole in the classroom, described by Axel Gauvin, in an interview for this thesis, as *"les experiences en maron, […] les experiences clandestines"*.

One of the teachers interviewed for this research admitted to using Creole in their primary school teaching prior to the formal introduction of the language to education in 2000, and despite having been prohibited from speaking in Creole in class by the school. Having discovered that the pupils were not understanding instructions and teaching, the teacher and their ATSEM decided to try explaining in Creole.[38]

> *"Je me suis dit, on va essayer de braver les interdits. Et là, j'ai eu une explosion des élèves qui sont mis à parler"* (Participant: teacher).

[38] ATSEM – *Agent territorial spécialisé des écoles maternelles* – assistant who supports teaching and learning activities at *maternelle* level.

When their use of Creole in the classroom was overlooked by an inspector who observed a class comparing Creole and French grammar, the teacher continued to welcome the students in their mother tongue. This experience is one example among many of teachers using Creole in education without authorisation throughout the 1970s and 1990s. While this was not widely accepted and such experiences may have remained largely invisible until more recently, the clandestine appearance of Creole in education accompanies 'pirate' radio and television stations which illegally introduced Creole as a language in the public sphere of media and journalism. Parallel to this runs the resurgence of the prohibited *Maloya* music which used Creole as a form of resistance against political oppression and assimilationism. The often furtive and illicit nature by which Creole came to be recognised in many public spheres throughout the 1970 and 1990s reveals an underground, grassroots counterculture which for political, cultural, pedagogical or linguistic reasons adopted Creole as its embouchure. In this way, in contrast to subsequent measures which have taken place through the endorsement of top-down actors, status and corpus planning actions to recognise Creole between 1970 and 2000 were inherently subversive and completely driven by bottom-up pressure.

Conclusion

Cultural movements in La Réunion between 1970 and 2000 contributed to the initial status planning of Creole by increasing recognition for the language and elaborating its functions and status as a language of expression. Linguistic movements also contributed to the development of the language by introducing the first essential studies, dictionaries and glossaries for corpus planning. Bottom-up language planning movements in culture and research were shaped by a socio-political context which saw polarised debates around the status of La Réunion as an assimilated or autonomous region within the French Republic. Divisive politics and social inequalities resulting from mass migration and the political and cultural alienation of La Réunion from mainland France fuelled *Créoliste* movements across cultural, political and linguistic debates. During this period, Creole emerged into the public sphere through illicit channels in 'pirate' media, underground journalism and clandestine classroom teaching. Movements in literature, music, politics and linguistics reveal differing attempts to find and construct a Réunionese identity, in which the relationship between Creole and French in public spheres becomes a symbol for the relationship between a

regional Réunionese identity and French nationhood. While these movements themselves were not always unified, *"l'honnêteté intellectuelle des acteurs de l'époque a permis leur regroupement"* (Lauret, 2020, p. 194); strengthening the movements behind their shared passion for the Creole language. This strength in cross-field collaboration and unification in diversity which characterised early grassroots Creole movements has continued to shape, inspire and drive subsequent actions to officialise and concretise the language in public institutions such as education since 2000.

Chapter Four. The officialisation of Creole in public education since 2000 by formal and informal actors

Introduction

In Chapter Three, we examined how the Creole language came to be recognised and promoted within cultural spheres and academic research throughout the 1970s. As discussed in Chapter Three, this recognition process was crucial for expanding the roles of the language from domestic and oral spheres into public and written spheres. The transition from domestic to public language was considered by *Créolistes* to be essential in order for the language to continue to thrive and evolve within Réunionese society. Similarly, the transformation from oral language to written language was also an attempt to reverse colonial-era hierarchies between French and Creole (Glâtre, 2020) and to facilitate a more official use for the Creole language. The recognition gained in cultural written spheres was systematised when Creole was added to the list of official regional languages of France in 2000, through the *Loi d'orientation d'outre-mer* (LOOM) (JORF, 2000a). This officialisation through legislation has accompanied a reframing of the language not only as a regional language of France, but as a mother tongue, through the celebration of the *Journée Internationale des Langues Maternelles.*[39],[40] Similarly, the celebration of the *Journée internationale de la langue et de la culture créoles (somin kréol/semaine créole)* in schools and establishments reveals how Creole movements in La Réunion are gaining more widespread recognition in public institutions. This chapter follows on from the previous, by identifying some of the key legislation, policy and actors involved in officialising Creole in public education in La Réunion since it acquired official status as a regional language in 2000.

[39] See introduction for definitions of regional and mother languages.

[40] Between 2000 and 2019, a series of demonstrations were organised in cities across the island aimed at raising public awareness for Creole as a mother tongue and demanding further Creole teaching initiatives in schools. During this time, participation in the demonstrations grew from approximately 400 to 1800 people. Former teacher and academic, Fabrice Georger, describes the importance of this conceptual shift; *"On a commencé à mener, au début des années 2000, une action qui s'appelait '21 février, Journée internationale de la langue maternelle'. Donc pour nous, c'était important d'aller sur ce thème-là, pour dire que le créole ce n'est pas seulement une langue régionale, c'est aussi une langue maternelle."*

As seen in cultural and linguistic movements for Creole, officialising actions for Creole have mostly been driven by grassroots actors and organisations. Drawing on ethnographic interviews and participant observation, this chapter examines the roles played by teachers as the principal ground-level actors in public education. In order to fully comprehend the importance of grassroots-led pressures, consideration will also be given to the informal actors, such as associations, involved in indirectly pushing bottom-up action to officialise Creole in education. Nevertheless, this chapter will show how for Creole to fully secure an official role in education, some top-down measures, in the form of language and education legislation and policy, are also necessary status planning measures which legitimise the movement and provide the required political and administrative frameworks for ground-level initiatives and teaching. Moreover, political action has also been imperative for neutralising polarising political associations with the language (Blanchet, 2002). As one participant argued, important legislative documents for Creole in education can be categorised into two groups. The first comprises legislation which has attributed an official status to regional languages such as Creole at a state level. Examples of these are outlined in Table 1, such as the creation of a *Capes de Créole* in 2001 (JORF, 2001a) and the *Loi Molac* in 2021 (JORF, 2021). The second group comprises policy documents and reports which concern Creole teaching directly, such as the *Plan d'action* (Académie de La Réunion and Terret, 2014) and *Feuille de Route* (Académie de La Réunion and Marimoutou, 2020). These are outlined in Table 4. These two groups of official legislation and texts have provided a framework for local action for Réunionese Creole education. This chapter therefore examines the officialisation of Creole in education as a dual-directional process in which bottom-up and top-down actors have driven status planning actions to further root Creole as an official language within formal public society in La Réunion. This leads into the following chapter which will draw on ethnographic research to analyse how this process has been consolidated and experienced in the classroom by teachers, as well as its considered effectiveness. Firstly, we will examine the regional language legislation in France which has been relevant to the Réunionese context. Examples of these are outlined in Table 1 on the following pages.

Table 1 - Legislation attributing official status to regional languages, including Creole.

Year	Legislation	Description
2000	LOI n˚2000-1207 du 13 décembre 2000 d'orientation d'outre-mer (LOOM)	Art. 34 "*Les langues régionales en usage dans les départements d'outre-mer font partie du patrimoine linguistique de la Nation. Elles bénéficient du renforcement des politiques en faveur des langues régionales afin d'en faciliter l'usage. La loi no 51-46 du 11 janvier 1951 relative à l'enseignement des langues et dialectes locaux leur est applicable."* Creole added to list of regional languages of France. [41]
2000	Code de l'éducation : Section 4: L'Enseignement des langues et cultures régionales	Article L312-10 *"Un enseignement de langues et cultures régionales peut être dispensé tout au long de la scolarité".* Article affirming the official place of regional languages in education. This section has been modified since. [42]
2001	Certificat d'aptitude au professorat de l'enseignement du second degré (CAPES) de Créole	Order of 9th February 2001 modified order of 30th April 1991 to add *'Créole'* to list of regional languages for *CAPES* – facilitated Creole education by secondary school teachers.[43]

[41] (JORF, 2000a)
[42] (JORF, 2000b)
[43] (JORF, 2001a)

2002	Concours de recrutement de professeurs des écoles (CRPE) de Créole	Creole specialism added to the primary teacher training qualification - facilitated Creole education by primary school teachers.[44]
2011	National Curriculum for Creole in primary education	Order 22 juillet 2011, Art. 1 *"Le programme de l'enseignement du créole à l'école primaire est fixé"* - the national curriculum for Creole in primary education is officially established.[45]
2017	Agrégation Langues de France, option Créole	Order of 15th March 2017 modifed the order of 28th December 2009 concerning the organisation of the *agrégation. "Section langues de France"* inserted under Art. 1. Creole is listed among these languages.[46]
2021	LOI n˚2021-641 du 21 mai 2021 relative à la protection patrimoniale des langues régionales et à leur promotion (Loi Molac)	Title I, Art. 1 "*L'État et les collectivités territoriales concourent à l'enseignement, à la diffusion et à la promotion de ces langues. "* Embeds the promotion and diffusion of regional languages in national law. Further affirms the official place of regional languages in education (Title II) and in public services and institutions (Title III).[47]

[44] (Lauret and Payet, 2002; Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et ministère de la Recherche, 2005)
[45] (JORF, 2011; Académie de La Réunion, 2021)
[46] (JORF, 2017)
[47] (JORF, 2021)

Regional language legislation in France

> *"Le fait que [le créole] soit langue régionale, ça a changé beaucoup de choses dans les représentations [...] le fait que ça soit reconnu par l'Etat français ça donne de l'importance."* (Participant: former teacher, academic)

Top-down legislation has been necessary to legitimise pro-Creole efforts and to facilitate their advancement and development. Decisive political action in favour of regional languages is also necessary for neutralising public opinion towards regional languages and avoiding monopolisation by more nationalist or extreme political ideologies (Blanchet, 2002). By embedding the language in state law, Creole has acquired rights and protections which permit its permeation into more formal spheres of public society. This has allowed discussions around Creole to evolve away from polarising debates revolving around political agendas of assimilationism and autonomy and towards a more research-led, pedagogical-centred argument in favour of introducing Creole to public institutions. The most extensive and most visible example of legislative development in favour of Creole has been in education. Laws and orders have established Creole as a language within the Republic thereby securing its role in education. An examination of this legislation reveals the importance of top-down action in advancing movements to officialise Creole in Réunionese public society. Table 1 (above) sets out some of the key laws and orders which have contributed towards the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion.

The decision to accord the creole languages of the DOM official status as regional languages of France was undeniably seen by Réunionese Creole teachers and actors as an important advancement (Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem, 2009, p. 2). As Table 1 demonstrates, the *Loi de LOOM* in 2000 added the creole languages in the overseas departments to the list of officially recognised regional languages of France and permitted their use in education (JORF, 2000a). This law reveals a direct link between the official language status attributed to Creole and its emergence in public education. Laws such as this, demonstrate a top-down status planning action which facilitates Creole teaching and learning by officially recognising its linguistic status. The importance of these laws for Creole education is illustrated by one Creole teacher and academic who argued, *"Ces textes sont très importants pour moi et mes collègues, sans eux notre profession n'existerait pas"*. The LOOM made way for the

implementation of Creole teacher training qualifications, such as, firstly and most notably, the creation of a *CAPES de Créole* in 2001, see Table 1. This development marked the official entry of Creole into public education in France.

The term *'Créole'* in texts for the *CAPES* refers to all four French-lexically based creole languages in the French overseas departments of La Réunion, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiana, and occasionally includes the Anglo-Portuguese creoles spoken in French Guiana (Bertile, 2020). The appearance of *'Créole'* in its singular form has been criticised by some Réunionese Creole actors for obscuring the plurality within the creole language family. As one academic notes, *"cette reconnaissance est sensible, même si le CAPES de Créole (écrit au singulier) en gomme la pluralité"* (Lauret, 2020, p. 190). Some view the singularisation of creole languages in state legislation as an indication of ignorance and lack of ambition among state-level actors; "*la reconnaissance du créole (scandaleusement au singulier!) comme langue régionale de France en 2000* (Chaudenson, 2008 cited in Georger, 2014, p. 127). Nevertheless, the limitations implied by the appearance of *'Créole'* in the singular are mostly symbolic and do not inhibit the significance of the law in officially embedding regional languages such as Réunionese Creole in public society.

The creation of the *CAPES de Créole* sparked further legislation to integrate the creole languages formally into education. As outlined in Table 1, following the creation of the *CAPES de Créole* in 2001, further teaching qualifications and programmes were introduced. The addition of a Creole specialism to the *Concours de recrutement de professeurs des écoles* (CRPE) introduced Creole teaching to primary in 2002, see Table 1. However, this qualification only offers one or two places per year in La Réunion. Alternatively, the *habilitation LVR, option créole* offers pre-qualified primary teachers the opportunity to pass a Creole-teaching specialism, with around forty places available per year. Despite the early introduction of Creole to primary education, teachers were obliged to wait until 2011 for the release of a curriculum for the creole languages, see Table 1. Furthermore, an *Agrégation Langues de France, option créole* was created in 2017 which expanded Creole teaching programmes further in secondary and higher education. According to Isabelle Testa, the policy officer for Creole teaching in primary, the progression of these qualifications and teaching programmes forms a *"filière d'excellence"* which facilitates Creole teaching and learning from primary to higher education.

Most recently the 2021 *Loi Molac*, see Table 1, has reinforced the role of the state in the promotion and diffusion of regional languages through the national education system. The passing of this law has fuelled optimism among Creole actors in La Réunion who believe it confirms their hopes of a growing support for regional languages at a national level and reinforces their emergence in official domains such as education. *"Cette Loi Molac est extrêmement important pour nous aussi. Tout ce qui se passe dans les langues régionales, forcément, ça rejoignit sur La Réunion"* (Axel Gauvin). Laws such as these are examples of decisive political action in language planning which has officialised Creole at a national level. Insofar as the implementation of this legislation would arguably not have been possible without pressure from grassroots movements, the formal integration of Creole into education could equally not have been achieved without top-down officialising actions such as these. The recognition of regional languages such as Creole in national law legitimises grassroots efforts to promote the language and paves the way for the translation of these laws into regional policy and initiatives. This legislative process in top-down status planning for Creole reveals both a political and ideological evolution in attitudes towards the creole languages both in France and in public Réunionese society. Education policy for Réunionese Creole will be discussed later in this chapter, however, in order to fully comprehend how this progression has transpired, it is first necessary to identify the actors who have been involved in driving these changes.

Actors involved in the development of Creole education

> *"On lutte pour avoir une place dans les officialités"* (Participant: Creole teacher, association member)

In Chapter Three we discussed how the fields of culture, research, politics and media played a role, either directly or indirectly, in building recognition for Creole across multiple public spheres between the 1970s and 1990s. Since the introduction of new legislation in favour of Creole and its formal introduction to education, the actors involved in promoting Creole have also evolved. The creation of Creole teaching qualifications and educational policy has provided new roles in formal education. Personnel working in formal domains join those in informal spheres, such as culture and associations, to form a complex, multidimensional network of actors with overlapping and interlinking roles. According to Georger (2011),

language politics, or 'glottopolitics', are most apparent in three areas in La Réunion; orthography, literature and education. Georger's observation correlates with the division of actors in this section, which examines how research, culture and education have all contributed to Creole language politics. To these spheres of actors is added a fourth, associations, which are examined for their role in influencing formal policy for Creole and public opinion. Georger (2011) argues that there is a need to recognise the implication of linguistic issues in economic, social, educational, cultural and citizenship spheres and calls for greater collaboration between these domains. This section reveals some examples of this collaboration and how the interdisciplinary and multifaceted nature of this web of actors has undoubtedly strengthened pro-creole movements and expanded their visibility beyond culture and linguistics and into formal and official realms such as education.

Figure 1 (page 97) illustrates the different spheres of Creole language politics and language planning in La Réunion. As discussed above, these spheres are defined as research, public education, culture and associations. Research and public education can be viewed as primarily occupying the formal domain, while culture and associations occupy the informal domain. However, collaboration and cooperation between these four spheres has been an essential factor in the success of the movement to officialise Creole in public education. While public education has been the focus of top-down status planning initiatives in La Réunion, other domains are relied on to contextualise, support and diversify language planning efforts. In this way, while these four spheres may fulfil some distinct functions, their influence expands into other spheres and interacts in a multi-directional network of actors who have contributed through diverse mediums to the officialisation of Creole in public education. The principal intermediary actors are teachers, who commonly participate in all spheres and form links between them through their work (discussed further in Chapter Five). For example, cultural texts and exhibitions are used by teachers as educational resources in formal education. Moreover, teachers have also participated in corpus planning through linguistic and educational research, thereby influencing local policy and academic practice and enriching the resources for university training and higher education in Creole language and cultural studies. Since the creation of the *Licence de Créole* and the *CAPES de Créole* in the early 2000s, teachers have also been involved in founding Creole associations

to combat persisting negative perceptions of the language and consolidate its place in education.

Table 2 (following Figure 1) lists some of the key actors involved in Creole education in both formal and informal domains. Formal actors are outlined as individuals and groups who have an official role in public education through establishments or the *Académie de La Réunion*. Informal actors include associations which indirectly influence Creole education through campaigns, research, publications and public engagement projects. This section refers to Table 2 as part of more in-depth explanations of the roles played by these formal and informal actors in the development of Creole in public education.

Figure 1 – Actors involved in the officialisation of Creole in different spheres.

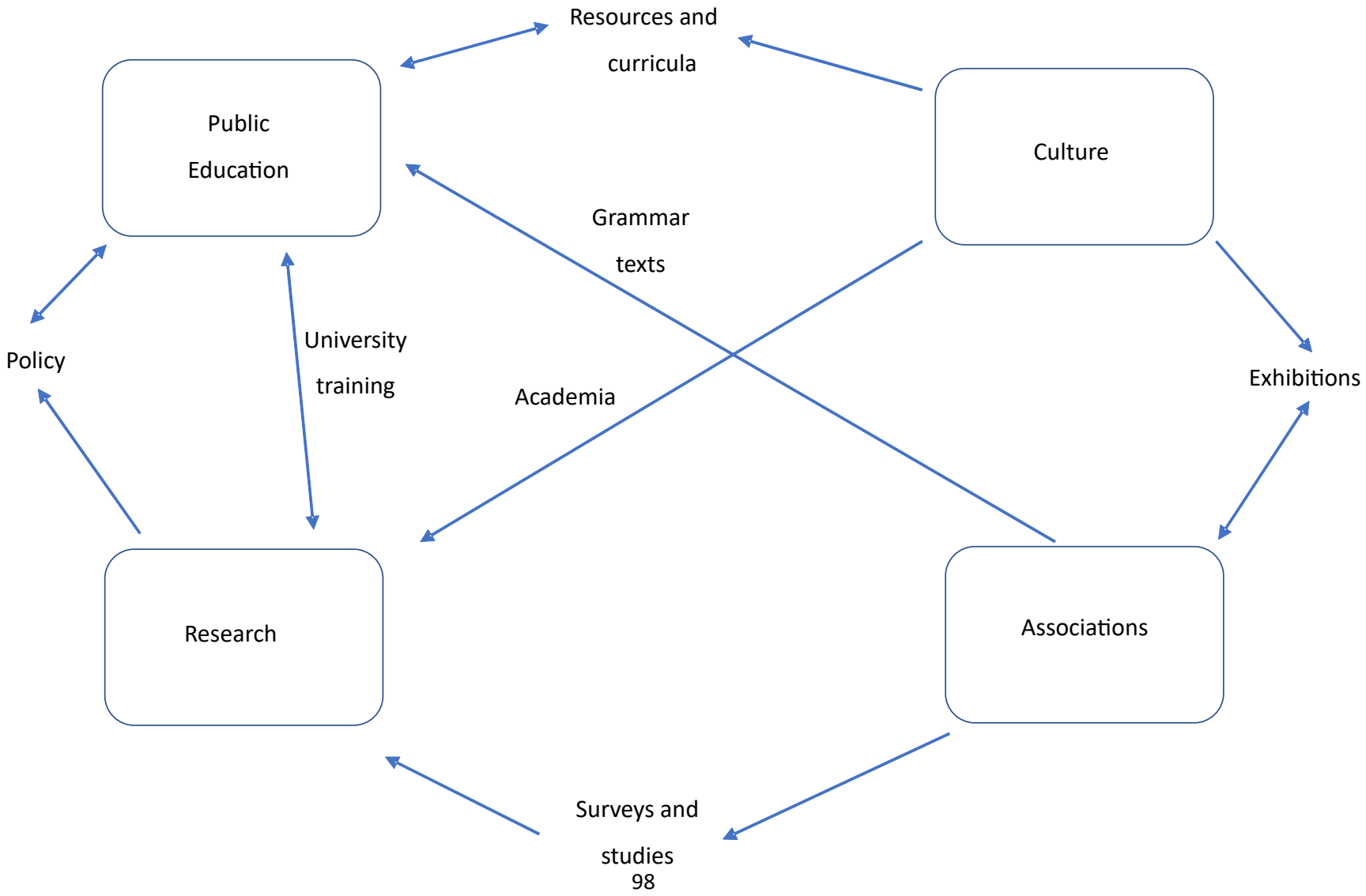

Table 2 - Formal and informal actors involved in Creole education in La Réunion

	Role	Description
Formal Actors (public education)	Recteur/Rectrice	Regional representative of the Minister of National Education in charge of governing and directing public education in the region via the *Académie de La Réunion.* Accompanied by a directional administration committee.
	Chargés de mission LVR (policy officers)	The policy officers for *langue vivante régionale* in charge of directing and implementing policy for Creole education in primary and secondary. Liaise with Creole teachers across establishments.
	Référents de bassin (contact teachers)	Contact teachers for different catchment areas who liaise between schools and the *Académie de La Réunion.*
	Primary teachers	Teachers qualified through the CRPE specialism in Creole (see Table 1). Alternately, teachers who have completed the further training (*habilitation*) qualifying them to teach bilingual classes or Creole language classes.
	Secondary teachers	Teachers qualified with a *bivalence* in the *CAPES de Créole* (see Table 1).[48]
	University tutors	Teachers qualified from the *agrégation* for Creole (see Table 1) are able to deliver Creole teaching at university level as well as secondary. They are also

[48] The *bivalence* is a double qualification, meaning that teachers must also train in another subject alongside Creole, such as French or a foreign language.

		subcontracted by the private university, l'*Université Catholique de l'Ouest* (l'UCO).
	Conseil académique des langues régionales	Created by legislative order n˚2001-733 in July 2001, the advisory council ensures the status and promotion of regional languages in the *académie* where they are spoken. It is made up of public education administration representatives, associations for parents, trade unions and associations for teachers, associative movements for the promotion of regional languages, and representatives of the municipal councils.[49]
Informal Actors (associations)	Tikouti	Created in 2003 by the first graduates of the *Licence de Créole* for the production and publication of texts in Creole, *Tikouti* became the first association for Creole.
	Lofis La Lang Kréol La Rényon (L'Office de La langue Créole de La Réunion)	Created in 2006 following the *États Généraux de la culture* organised by the *Région Réunion* in 2004. *Lofis* aims to research and inform the public on issues relating to Creole and Creole-French bilingualism in La Réunion. [50]
	Lantant LKR	Created in 2007, *Lantant LKR* was created for the promotion of Creole specifically in education in La Réunion. The association works primarily with parents and teachers to reinforce knowledge and competencies around Creole in schools.[51]

[49] (JORF, 2001b)
[50] (Lofis, 2021)
[51] (Lantant LKR, 2022)

Actors in public education

The actors most directly involved in officialising Creole in education are those working in public education. The *Académie de La Réunion* is the regional education board in charge of public education strategy and management, and is directed by a *Recteur* or *Rectrice* (see Table 2), the direct representative of the Minister for Education (Condette, 2004). The *Académie* intervenes both as a unified actor as a regional committee for policy and educational practice, and as individual actors such as policy officers and teachers (see Table 2). Creole education in La Réunion is considered under the national programme for *Langue Vivante Régionale* (LVR) and is thus guided by national policy for all official regional languages in France. At primary level, the main actors for Creole in formal education are teachers who have passed the *habilitation LVR, option créole* offered by the *Académie de La Réunion.* Teachers with this qualification are able to run bilingual Creole-French classes and specialised LVR language teaching in primary schools, these initiatives are discussed further in Chapter Five. Academic and former policy officer for Creole in primary, Fabrice Georger, claims that between 2002 and 2007 there were twenty-seven *habilités*. Recently this figure has increased drastically, and there are currently 396 *habilités* working across *écoles maternelles* and *élémentaires* in La Réunion (Journal Perkal n.5 Académie de La Réunion Mission LVR 1D, 2022). Thirty-eight teachers trained for the *habilitation* in the year 2021-2022 and fourty-one candidates have been accepted onto the course for the year 2022-2023 (Journal Perkal n.5 Académie de La Réunion Mission LVR 1D, 2022). Primary education has been the focus of the Creole-French bilingual teaching initiative, with importance placed on welcoming pupils in their mother tongue and supporting them in their first steps towards spoken and written literacy in both languages. More than 7,000 pupils benefit from one of the Creole initiatives at primary level, however, this is only 6% of the overall primary population (Académie de La Réunion Mission LVR 1D, 2022).

At secondary level, there are thirty-four teachers *certifiés* (see Table 2) in the *CAPES de Créole* currently working across *collèges* and *lycées* in La Réunion (Académie de La Réunion, 2022a), fourteen of whom have a permanent post. In the academic year 2021-2022, 978 students chose Creole as an option at secondary level, forming less than 1% of secondary school students (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2020). Secondary school teachers deliver Creole as a language option for the *Brevet*, *Bac*, and *BTS* and are

encouraged to run awareness-raising and plurilingual programmes across disciplines. The *Agrégation Langues de France, option créole* was created in 2017, (Table 1) allowing teachers who successfully obtain this highly competitive certificate to deliver Creole teaching at higher education level as well as secondary. There are currently two *agrégés* for Creole in La Réunion. As well as their work in public education, *agrégés* are also contracted by the private university, l'*Université Catholique de l'Ouest* (l'UCO), to deliver obligatory lessons in Creole for future teachers. The decision to render Creole lessons obligatory for teacher training courses reveals how actors and institutions operating outside of the official public system perhaps have more freedom to push more ambitious projects in favour of Creole education.

The University of La Réunion offers a *Licence de Créole* which is delivered by academics in the *Laboratoire de recherche sur les espaces créoles et francophones* (LCF). This laboratory brings together the disciplines of literature, linguistics, anthropology and communication studies to conduct research in the fields of Creole language and culture and francophone studies. The interdisciplinary nature of the LCF facilitates an assemblage of different fields relating to Creole language and culture. Cultural actors who played a vital role in early *Créoliste* and *Créolie* movements (see Chapter Three) are integrated into teaching practices in *collèges*, *lycées* and higher education. Texts by regional cultural figureheads such as Boris Gamaleya, Danyèl Waro, Axel Gauvin, Daniel Honoré and *Ziskakan* become references and resources for Creole teaching and learning in formal education (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Jeunesse, 2019a, 2019b) (see Figure 1).[52] Moreover, educational competitions such as the *Concours Lankréol pou lékol – Prix Daniel Honoré* reflect the way in which cultural actors for Creole have disseminated into formal domains to influence official Creole education practice. Furthermore, cultural actors are also directly involved in the formal delivery of Creole teaching as lecturers and tutors at the university, for example, Jean-Claude Carpanin Marimoutou and Francky Lauret. As shown in Figure 1, the contribution of cultural actors to public education exemplifies how links between the formal and informal domains have reinforced Creole teaching practices and further embedded the

[52] *Programmes de langues, littératures et cultures régionales – créole de première et terminale générale, 2019.*

language in formal public institutions. Another group of actors which has intervened in Creole education more indirectly, is associations.

Associations

Associations are among the principal driving forces in favour of Creole outside of formal education, offering alternative educational resources and contributing towards research and culture. Associations can also influence policymaking through their involvement in committees such as the *Conseil Académique des Langues et Cultures Régionales* (see Table 2). Since the formal integration of Creole in education, associations have been created to promote the language and culture through bottom-up initiatives and movements in the informal sphere.

Exhibitions on Réunionese society and culture presented by the association *Lofis la Lang Kréol La Rényon* (see Table 2) provide alternative resources to those provided in formal education (see Figure 1). These exhibitions are displayed bilingually in Creole and French, making them widely accessible and demonstrating an official and formal register for Creole. Exhibitions have covered a range of subjects which draw together cultural, historical, linguistic and architectural topics such as: *Santé. Maladi. Tizane.; Nout manjé. Nout mémoire. Nout listoire.; Listoire la kaz kréol.; Pou in bon lékritir le kréol rényoné* and one on the poet and Creole activist Boris Gamaleya (Lofis, 2021).[53] Founding member and president of *Lofis*, Axel Gauvin describes these expositions as a valorisation initiative; *"Lofis pour la valorisation fait énormément d'expositions sur les grands thèmes culturels"*. The *Lofis* website also provides links to videos of reading and poetry sessions, such as the *Kabarliv* (or *Kabarlire*) in 2016, 2018 and 2021 and the *Nuits de la lecture 2022* (Lofis, 2021). *Lofis* have also produced a series of sixteen videos, *Demoune partou : la lang issi* (Lofis, 2021).[54] Produced in Creole, actors perform comedic, yet informative dialogues discussing the social and linguistic history of La Réunion. According to Gauvin, these videos serve *"pour expliquer tel ou tel point de notre politique linguistique"*. The series is an example of an alternative

[53] Exhibition titles translate as: *Health. Illness. Remedies.; Our cuisine. Our memory. Our history.; History of the Creole House.; For a good written form for Réunionese Creole.*
[54] Video series appears in French as: *Peuplement de La Réunion et Langue Créole Réunionnaise*.

educational resource and awareness-raising initiative which informs the public and challenges common misconceptions around the Creole and French languages.

Another initiative by *Lofis* which indirectly influences the officialisation of Creole in public is the *Komine billing (communes bilingues)* (Lofis, 2021). This initiative, created by *Lofis* in 2008, has offered Réunionese municipalities the opportunity to sign a bilingual pact. The town chooses at least ten out of twenty-four actions proposed by *Lofis*, for example, the right to a marriage service in Creole, bilingual road signs, and bilingual communications from the local council (Lofis, 2021). Of the twenty-four towns in La Réunion, eight have signed the bilingual pact, among the first were Entre-Deux on 28th October and le Port on 6th November 2008. The *Komine biling* initiative aims to promote the use of Creole in official public roles and is illustrative of the influence associations and grassroots movements can have on the status of Creole in the public sphere. However, the bilingual pacts are not legally binding and according to the association's president, the initiative is *"symbolique avant tout"*. Further arguments along this line are discussed in Chapter Five.

Lofis have also indirectly furthered the official status of Creole through their participation in research (see Figure 1). In 2007, they conducted a survey with IPSOS on linguistic attitudes and practices in different public spheres, including written Creole and the media (IPSOS and Lofis, 2007). Another survey with IPSOS continued this work in 2008-2009 (SAGIS and Lofis, 2021a). The latest surveys conducted in July and September 2021 with SAGIS follow on from previous studies, investigating the sociolinguistic situation in La Réunion, opinions on Creole in school and Réunionese culture and history in education (SAGIS and Lofis, 2021a). The latest study revealed a progression in the number of people who believed Creole to be a language from 74% in 2009 to 85% in 2021 (SAGIS and Lofis, 2021b). Furthermore, the survey reveals a positive evolution in favour of Creole in school, with 81% of the participants declaring themselves 'for' Creole in school (compared to 61% in 2009) and 44% 'completely for' (compared to 29% in 2009) (SAGIS and Lofis, 2021b). Studies such as these support legislation and policy for Creole by revealing a growing public support for the officialisation of Creole. Moreover, *Lofis* have held conferences and roundtables to advance research into Creole linguistics, grammar, orthography and language education and politics. The publication of the *Grammaire Pédagogique du Creole Réunionnais* (Quartier, 2022) published by *Lofis* both serves as a pedagogical resource for teachers and contributes

towards the standardisation of the language. Standardisation and the development of Creole literacy are crucial steps for maintaining and progressing the role of the language in public Réunionese society.

Another association, *Lantant LKR* (see Table 2), have played a role in Creole education through their membership which is comprised mainly of Creole teachers.[55] On their website, *Lantant LKR* provide resources for pupils such as interactive games in Creole, and resources for parents, including information on laws and legislation, reading material, documentaries, resources on bilingualism, FAQs and resources for supporting children at home (Lantant LKR, 2022). Additionally, the association provides resources for teachers such as links to the *Code de l'Éducation* (JORF, 2013) and other legislation regarding regional language education, and a link to a petition for universal access to Creole education for students in La Réunion. Members of *Lantant LKR* are also active in trade unions and the association has been heavily involved in salons, conferences and demonstrations for regional languages in France. Recently, one of their main objectives has been the creation of a public office or institute for Creole which would be responsible for linguistic politics in La Réunion through the signing of a linguistic pact. The association published an open letter to the ministers for culture and the overseas departments and the presidents of the regional and departmental assemblies in La Réunion requesting the creation of such an institute (Lantant LKR, 2022). The letter is an example of how associations use their influence to lobby for political action to officialise Creole in the formal domain.

Both *Lofis* and *Lantant LKR* are regional representatives of the *Fédération pour les Langues Régionales dans l'Enseignement Public* (FLAREP). This federation legitimises, protects and mobilises local associations for regional languages on a national level and offers credibility to its members.

> *"Elle regroupe les principales associations ou fédérations de parents d'élèves et/ou d'enseignants qui œuvrent au développement des langues régionales dans le service public d'éducation. Elle est subventionnée par le Ministère d'Éducation Nationale. Elle est un instrument de liaison entre les établissements scolaires, l'Administration et les parents d'élèves."* (FLAREP, no date).

[55] Sometimes also called *Lantant LLKR.*

The FLAREP assembles associations for Basque, Breton, Catalan, Creoles, Occidental Flemish, Franco-provençal/Savoyard, Gallo, Guyanese languages, and Occitan. The only two member associations for the Creole languages are *Lantant LKR* and *Lofis*, both from La Réunion. Through their connection to the FLAREP, *Lofis* and *Lantant LKR* give authority to their actions regionally and contribute towards wider movements to protect and promote regional languages in France. The work carried out by associations such as *Lofis* and *Lantant LKR* reveals how grassroots organisations acting independently from official public institutions are instrumental in driving advances in Creole teaching practice through public influence and bottom-up pressure. Their membership groups together actors from formal domains, such as teachers, informal domains such as cultural actors, and members of the wider public, offering an opportunity for collaboration and sharing of experiences and knowledge.

In order to further comprehend the interconnectedness of actors involved in Creole officialisation processes, two case studies will be given. The first emerged from ethnographic interview and will demonstrate how actors in public education have participated in other spheres in order to further advance movements in favour of Creole. The second is an example of regional policy developed through collaboration between grassroots actors in formal and informal domains and top-down actors in administration and regional government.

The many *casquettes* teachers wear

> *"J'avais trois casquettes et parfois ça pouvait être un peu délicat à gérer"* (Fabrice Georger: former teacher and policy officer for primary, academic)

Fabrice Georger is an academic, former primary school teacher and policy officer for Creole in primary education, and association member who has been heavily involved in recent movements to formalise Creole in education.[56] Influenced by Creole musicians and writers throughout the cultural and linguistic movements of the 1970s and 1980s, Georger began his career as a primary teacher. Between 2002 and 2005, he opened the first bilingual Creole-French class at *maternelle*, leading to a role in public policy and administration as the *chargé de mission* (see Table 2) for Creole in primary education in La Réunion. He occupied

[56] See Chapter Two for details on naming ethics.

this role between 2006 and 2020, before being employed as a lecturer in the LCF at the University of La Réunion. Having graduated with the first cohort of students on the *Licence de Créole* in 2002-2003, Georger was involved in founding the first grassroots association for the production of Creole texts and resources, *Tikouti* (see Table 2). While working in his roles in public education and policy, Georger continued to participate in the associative sphere in a more activist role, such as co-authoring the manifesto for Creole-French bilingualism in public Réunionese society, *Oui au créole, oui au français* (Daleau *et al.*, 2006). Having completed a PhD on the linguistic politics of Creole and French in La Réunion (Georger, 2011), and now as a lecturer in Creole and linguistics at the university, Georger has also contributed a critical analysis perspective through his research and academic work. His implication in the domain of Creole through a simultaneous occupation of three spheres has allowed him to investigate the situation and advance its progress from different angles.

> *"J'étais par moment militant de langue créole, par moment j'étais fonctionnaire d'État, donc qui [ne] devait pas trop être militant, […] et en même temps, j'étais chercheur à l'université de La Réunion, forcément avec quelque chose de critique."* (Fabrice Georger)

Georger has addressed the complexity of his involvement in these diverse roles in his research (Georger, 2011, 2014) and has adopted a position which admits and accepts the subjectivity of the researcher and their underlying biographical implications.

> *"Et comment gérer ces trois pôles-là ? […] J'ai trouvé la solution qui m'a convenu la plus, ce sont les démarches complexes […] qui dit que, en fin de compte, le chercheur il est impliqué dans un objet d'étude."* (Fabrice Georger)

Drawing on their first-hand experience of education, other teachers have applied this knowledge to research in the fields of applied linguistics and educational research (Adelin and Lebon-Eyquem, 2009; Daleau-Gauvin, 2021), some of whom are also involved in activist and associative work alongside their professions. Laurence Daleau-Gauvin (Daleau-Gauvin, 2021), became the second Réunionese to obtain the highly competitive *Agrégation*. A former primary school teacher, Daleau-Gauvin now works as a Creole teacher in secondary and higher education, as well continuing her research into Creole-French literacy. Her professions in education and her research have equipped her with an expertise which she

further applies in her role as vice-president of *Lofis*, in charge or education and Creole teaching. Four out of six researchers in the linguistics department of the LCF are teachers or former teachers. According to another participant, this has beneficial consequences for Creole educational practice which is legitimised by experience-led evidence; *"ça donne une visibilité sur tout ce qui est partie enseignant*" and *"ça met en prise le terrain"*.

Georger is also not alone in his involvement in education policy and coordination. Two of the researchers in the LCF have been policy officers for the Creole programme in the *Académie de La Réunion*, completing a cycle of collaboration and communication between experience-based research, policy, and practice which has in turn, legitimised political actions and streamlined decision-making processes. This collaborative network of multifaceted actors involved in teaching, policy and research strengthens and synchronises official Creole education practices in the formal domain. As discussed earlier, this cooperation between domains in language planning actions is essential to their success. The role of teachers in research could be expanded in the future, as a result of discussions during the preparatory meetings ahead of the *États Généraux du multilinguisme dans les outre-mer* held in La Réunion in 2021. The *Recteur* agreed to proposals to create a number of 'teacher-researcher' posts to form a centre for research in liaison with other universities in creole-speaking areas (Académie de La Réunion, 2020a). The research centre would be in charge of developing pedagogical resources for the Creole education programme on behalf of the *Académie*. This would place teachers at the heart of decision-making and actions to develop and consolidate Creole in education in La Réunion.

La Graphie Tableau

> *"L'objectif d'une homogénéisation des pratiques d'écriture du créole réunionnais est fondamentale dans le cadre de l'aménagement pédagogique mais aussi de l'aménagement linguistique du territoire."* (Document outlining the 'Graphie Tableau' by Académie de La Réunion, 2020a)

The publication of the *Graphie Tableau* (Académie de La Réunion, 2020a) was seen by many Creole actors as a landmark development in Creole officialisation and standardisation efforts, and is also an example of collaborative corpus planning action in favour of Creole. Following surveys on classroom writing practices among Creole teachers, a framework

written form was synthesised, since known as the *Graphie Tableau*. The framework is based largely on *Lékritir 77* with tolerances from *Lékritir 83* (KWZ) and *Tangol.*[57]Some adaptations were also requested by *Lofis* according to their own research. Presented before the *Conseil Académique des Langues et Cultures Régionales* (CALCR), the *Graphie Tableau* was voted for unanimously by representatives of administration and policy, trade unions and teachers, parents, municipalities and Creole associations such as *Lofis* and *Lantant LKR.* Following the success of the vote, in 2020 the *Académie de La Réunion* published the written form in a document entitled *Document Cadre: Synthèse graphique pour le créole réunionnais. Graphie du créole réunionnais: contexte, cadrage et perspective* (Académie de La Réunion, 2020a). The framework is now accessible on the LVR pages of the *Académie* website and is used by many Creole teachers.

While its use is not mandatory and some actors consider it a temporary step, it is viewed by many as the first official written form for Creole, a monumental turning-point given the complex history and debates around written form and standardisation (see Chapter Three). As one participant explained; *"c'est la première fois qu'on a un établissement public qui a une proposition pour une graphie. Au niveau politique linguistique, c'est pas mal"*. The publication of a written form by the official public institution for education in La Réunion marks a major milestone event for the officialisation of Creole and for local corpus planning. Moreover, it is an example of decisive regional action which is categorically unique to Réunionese Creole, distinguishing it from some other recent official policy documents. Furthermore, the process by which the *Graphie Tableau* was synthesised, proposed and adopted is indicative of a collaborative and democratic approach to policy and language planning in La Réunion which has characterised many other developments. Developed from surveys on Creole teaching practices, the *Graphie Tableau* is founded on ground-level research and lay expertise, involving teachers and grassroots participants throughout the decision-making process. In addition to this, its presentation before the CALCR denotes another stage of democracy in which top-down and bottom-up actors from both formal and informal domains contributed towards the officialisation process. The *Graphie Tableau* is an example of interdisciplinary collaboration which has resulted in successful and effective advances for Creole in public education. Table 3 on pages 110 to 111 includes some extracts

[57] See Chapter Three for details on these pre-existing written propositions.

of the *Graphie Tableau*. Following this, we identify and discuss some of the polices and documents which have driven the emergence of Creole in education at a local level.

Table 3 - Abbreviated table of graphemes for the Graphie Tableau[58,59]

Sons	**Graphèmes possibles**	**Exemples**
	Voyelles orales	
/a/	a	amaré, kaz, zanana
/é/	é	égal, pétar, kozé
/i-u/	i, u	zizib/jujub, torti/tortu
/o/	o	oté, kozé, koko
	Voyelles nasales	
/an/	an	ankor, lontan
/in/	in	pinpin, zinzin
	Consonnes	
/f/	f	fatak, moufia
/gn/	gn	kagnar, pègn
/j-z/	j, z	zordi/jordu, manzé/manjé
/s-ch/	s, sh	sapo/shapo, zasar / zashar, ros/roshe

[58] For the comprehensive table see: *DOCUMENT CADRE: Synthèse graphique pour le créole réunionnais. Graphie du créole réunionnais: contexte, cadrage et perspective.* (Académie de La Réunion, 2020a)

[59] While the slanted brackets in the *'Sons'* column do not contain IPA symbols, they are represented as such in the original table, and so have remained in this version.

	Semi-consonnes	
/y/	y, i	pié, liane, yapana, méyèr, travay
/w/	ou	fouèt, boui
	w	mwin, twé, wati-watia
	Combinaisons	
/ame/	am	madam
/ang/	ng	lang, mang, moring
/inn/	inn	inn, shakinn
/yin/	ien	rien, bien, ienbou, tienbo

Policy documents and reports

> *"Ce qui est sûr c'est qu'il y a eu une reconnaissance par les textes."* (Isabelle Testa: teacher, policy officer for primary)

The introduction of legislation attributing official recognition to Creole and establishing the language in education has made way for another wave of official top-down language planning in favour of Creole, in the form of policy documents and reports. Regional actors in formal domains such as education, policy and research, as well as informal actors such as associations, have participated in the application and adaptation of national legislation to the Réunionese context. Since the Declaration of Cayenne in 2011 (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, 2011) (see Table 4), policy documents and reports have provided top-down frameworks for a more cohesive and effective integration of Creole into public education. They have also, as seen in the second case study discussed above, been produced as a result of collaboration between actors across multiple relevant disciplines and spheres. This section analyses some of these official documents in relation to the perspectives of teachers and actors interviewed for this research. Table 4 on the subsequent pages outlines some of these key policy documents and reports published on both a national level and a regional level which have influenced the status and role of Creole in Réunionese education.

Table 4 - Policy documents and reports relating to the status of regional languages on a national level, and to Creole at the regional level.

	Date	Official policy document or report	Description
NATIONAL (FRANCE)	2011	Déclaration de Cayenne	Document published by the *Délégation générale à la langue française et aux langues de France following* the *États généraux du multilinguisme dans les outre-mer*, held in Cayenne, French Guiana in 2011. Suggests a number of recommendations for the promotion and protection of the regional languages in the French DOM.[60]
	2013	Report entitled *Apprendre et enseigner les langues et les cultures régionales dans l'école de La République*	Report by the Minister for National Education outlining initiatives for regional language education in France. These general initiatives have since been adapted for Creole by the *Académie de La Réunion*.[61]
	2019	Report entitled *Valorisons les langues des outre-mer pour une meilleure cohésion sociale*	Report by *Conseil économique, sociale et environnemental* on the necessity to recognise and promote regional languages in the DOM. The report recognises their cultural importance for regional identity as well as their value in education as a tool for developing plurilingualism and social cohesion.[62]
REGIONAL LOCAL (LA RÉUNION)	2014	Plan d'action 2014-2019	The first in a series of academic and administrative plans for Creole education published by the *Recteur* Thierry Terret in the *Académie de La Réunion*. The document

[60] (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, 2011)
[61] (Peillon, 2013)
[62] (Biaux-Altmann, 2019)

			contains 15 actions which revolve around 5 main axes and specifies the initiatives offered and the objectives for Creole teaching policies.[63]
REGIONAL /LOCAL (LA RÉUNION)	2020	Feuille de route 2020-2024	Published by the *Recteur* Vêlayoudom Marimoutou in the *Académie de La Réunion*. Follows on from the 2014-2019 plan. 10 actions revolve around 3 central axes to further develop the Creole education programme in La Réunion.[64]
	2020	Graphie Tableau	Document entitled *Document cadre : Synthèse graphique pour le créole réunionnais. Graphie du créole réunionnais : contexte, cadrage et perspective*. The document proposes a written form for Creole in education which was synthesised from studies on written Creole used by teachers in the classroom and was voted for unanimously by the *Conseil Académique des Langues et Cultures Régionales*. The document is considered by many as the first official written form for Creole.[65]
	2021	Project Stratégique Académique 2021-2025	Published by the *Recteur* Chantal Manès-Bonnisseau in the *Académie de La Réunion*. Outlines a new academic strategy for La Réunion. Axis 1 includes a paragraph emphasising the value of Creole in schools and Axis 2, Action 15 states "*Reconnaître le créole comme un atout pour les élèves de La Réunion".* Places Creole at the centre of regional education policy and strategy.[66]

[63] (Académie de La Réunion and Terret, 2014)
[64] (Académie de La Réunion and Marimoutou, 2020)
[65] (Académie de La Réunion, 2020a)
[66] (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021)

As seen in Table 4, there have been a number of official texts published which have reinforced legislative support and language planning for Creole education. The existence of these documents, and the language used within them demonstrates, according to many participants interviewed, a positive evolution in favour of Creole. As one Creole teacher claimed, *"oui d'un point de vue institutionnel on peut dire qu'il y a des avancés"*. These institutional advances can be seen in the affirmation of the value of Creole in national reports by the Ministry of Education, as well as at a regional level; *"les textes ministérielles […] il y a eu un changement"* (Isabelle Testa). The Minister for Education's report in 2013 (Peillon, 2013) see Table 4, is an example of official recognition for the benefits of integrating regional languages into education. The report explicitly reinforced a recognition of national responsability for regional languages in education; *"l'engagement de la Nation à faciliter leur [les langues régionales] apprentissage pour ceux qui en expriment le souhait"* (Peillon, 2013, p. 2). Furthermore, the document overtly distances itself from historical attitudes which stigmatised regional languages.

> *"Il est loin le temps où, quand il fallut systématiser l'apprentissage du français dans les « petites patries » […] quiconque osait un mot de breton ou d'occitan dans la cour de récréation risquait une réprimande du maître d'école"* (Peillon, 2013, p. 2).

The inverted commas surrounding the archaic term "*patries"* in the above quote reveal a deliberate attempt to mark an evolution of linguistic and political representations of regional languages and cultures by the minister. This reinforcement by the national education minister supports suggestions by some participants that the legislative evolution reflects an ideological transition from opposition to consensus between Creole actors on the ground and top-down authorities. The publication of reports such as this are seen as evidence of an increased understanding among top-down actors; *"j'ai l'impression que les nouveaux dirigeants de l'Académie de La Réunion commencent vraiment […] à reprendre à sérieux cette question"* (Fabrice Georger).

On a regional level, the first policy document to assert the role of Creole in Réunionese education was the *Plan d'action 2014-2019* (Académie de La Réunion and Terret, 2014). In his introduction, *Recteur* Terret asserts that *"[le créole] représente dans tous les cas une ressource langagière"* (Académie de La Réunion and Terret, 2014, p. 4), making it among the first official regional documents to recognise the pedagogical and linguistic value of Creole

for students in La Réunion. The document clearly and effectively identifies areas for development in Creole education in La Réunion, including re-activating the *Conseil Académique des Langues et Cultures Régionales* which had been inoperative since 2008 (Filain, 2010), and a more effective use of the online pedagogical journal for LVR, *Kriké.*[67,68] Furthermore, the document displays a drive to create harmony, consistency and cohesion across the Creole programme from primary to secondary, echoing the *Code de l'Éducation* (JORF, 2013) and Peillon report (2013). The document also focuses on the need for improved training, especially supplementary training for teachers of bilingual classes (Académie de La Réunion and Terret, 2014). This development is important for minimising differences between establishments and individual classes, as well as for guiding teachers in adapting their teaching content.

The *Feuille de route 2020-2024*, was published under the direction of a new *Recteur*, Vêlayoudom Marimoutou, implying a desire to follow on from the previous plan and to continue developing the programme. The new plan is less detailed than the former and contains some overlap in content, suggesting a lack of significant progression. However, it does introduce some important developments such as a pilot project running six experimental plurilingual classes, of one hour a week each, at *Sixième* level. The project demonstrates a willingness to innovate and elaborate current initiatives and is also reflective of a drive towards plurilingualism in the French education system. The evolution towards plurilingual approaches stems partly from European initiatives, such as the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume* (CEFR) which now includes descriptors for plurilingual and pluricultural competence (Council of Europe, 2022). This latest publication "marks a crucial step in the Council of Europe's engagement with language education, which seeks to protect **linguistic and cultural diversity**, [and] promote **plurilingual and intercultural education"** (Council of Europe, 2022)**.**[69] The focus on plurilingualism reflects the conceptualisation of Réunionese language practices as an individual 'linguistic repertoire' (Georger, 2011), as well as evolutions in motivations among Réunionese teachers for Creole, discussed later in this

[67] See Table 2 for details of the *Conseil Académique*.
[68] For examples of the digital magazine see the LVR pages of the *Académie's* website (Académie de La Réunion, 2022b).
[69] Original emphasis.

chapter.[70] The initiatives outlined in regional policy plans mark the beginning of a desire among official actors to support Creole in education. According to one teacher and academic, before these documents *"il [n]'y avait pas la volonté […] il [n]'y avait pas un plan académique […] c'était moins officialisé"*.

Participants also gave mostly positive feedback on the new *Rectrice*, see Table 2, whose background in languages is viewed as contributing to her understanding of the importance of Creole as a mother language in education. As one teacher and association member explained, *"elle-même est réunionnaise, elle est attachée au fait que les enfants puissent profiter de l'apprentissage, ou du moins la prise en compte, de leur langue et culture"*. Positive attitudes towards the *Rectrice* also stem in part from the publication of the *Projet Stratégique Académique 2021-2025* (PSA) (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021) see Table 4, which addresses both the cultural importance of Creole in Réunionese society, *"culturellement attachée à un bilinguisme marquer d'identité"* (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021, p. 3), as well as the educational benefits of the language. The document outlines the academic plan along four broad axes. Action 15 of the second axis is entirely dedicated to the role of Creole in education; *"Reconnaître le créole comme un atout pour les élèves de La Réunion"* (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021, pp. 6, 50). In addition to this, the first axis, "*une école pour s'épanouir et prendre confiance en soi"*, includes a paragraph on valuing Creole in schools (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021, p. 23). Given that the document is not specific to LVR but outlines innovations and changes to the overall academic plan for La Réunion, the attention attributed to Creole is significant. The PSA demonstrates a generalisation of awareness of Creole in education among official actors.

The *Rectrice* goes a step further than her predecessors by directly referring to linguistic hierarchies in the overseas department, describing *"la coexistence de deux langues de statut différent, le créole et le français"* (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021, pp. 2–3). In a move which contradicts the more neutral mainstream narrative of official documents by national and regional authorities, Manès-Bonnisseau describes the *"persistance d'un modèle diglossique au niveau des representations"* (Académie de La

[70] Links between plurilingual pedagogy and Creole teaching initiatives in La Réunion are discussed further in Chapter Five.

Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021, p. 23). The use of the term 'diglossic' is considered progressive compared to other official documents and reveals the influence of sociolinguistic research (Georger, 2011; Watbled, 2021). In referring to persisting negative attitudes towards Creole among the Réunionese population, Manès-Bonnisseau identifies a specific obstacle for the advancement of the language in education which is inherently embedded in the sociolinguistic context of La Réunion. Her argument also represents an official understanding and confirmation of the experiences of many actors on the ground, such as teachers (Lebon-Eyquem, 2016). Moreover, the measures outlined are clear and ambitious, such as the implementation of training for all primary level teachers, the development of bilingual pathways at *collège* level, specialised Creole teaching in *lycées*, and consolidation of plurilingual actions (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021). The recognition of the pedagogical value of Creole in the PSA offers official legitimacy for bottom-up actors such as Creole teachers. *"On est en train de changer […] avec la nouvelle rectrice, […] avec son plan stratégique académique, on pose clairement, non la langue créole ce n'est pas un handicap, c'est un atout"* (Isabelle Testa).

However, there were some suggestions among participants that official policy documents have not been ambitious enough in advancing status and corpus planning for Creole in regional education. Teacher, researcher and vice-president of *Lofis*, Laurence Daleau-Gauvin, claims that policy documents provide only *"des grandes lignes"* as frameworks for Creole teaching, and that a more specific programme is required. For one Creole teacher, this would involve the production of teacher manuals specific to Réunionese Creole. *"Le manuel de langue vivante régionale, à proprement parler, n'existe pas. Donc il faudrait [que] les professeurs de langue vivante régionale, à chaque séquence de cours, créent des manuels"*. Another teacher denies the usefulness of these policy documents altogether, arguing that they simply re-word legislation recognising Creole on a national level. *"Pour moi la seule législation qui a vraiment eu un impact c'est l'instauration du CAPES de Créole […] j'ai envie de dire que tout le reste c'est des effets d'annonce […] c'est juste institutionaliser différemment avec de nouveaux mots"*. While a degree of institutionalisation of Creole is necessary for its growth in education and public society, these responses by teachers suggest that the adequacy of policy may depend on their translation into concrete initiatives and resources specific for Creole teaching in La Réunion.

In this way, officialisation of the language through policy is only effective when combined with actions which facilitate and aid their development on the ground.

Conclusion

Creole gained official status as a regional language of France in 2000 through the *Loi d'orientation d'outre mer.* This law marked the first significant top-down status planning action which laid the foundation for a series of legislation and policies which have since institutionalised the Creole language in public domains such as education. Regional language laws enacted at a national level have formed a platform from which policies for Creole in Réunionese education can be developed and adapted. Teachers have played a vital role in advancing Creole education, not only as the principal enactors of Creole teaching, but also through their involvement in other spheres of language planning such as research, activism and policymaking. Interdisciplinary collaboration and conducive action between formal and informal domains have led to important advances in policy and strengthened and contextualised Creole language planning across public spheres. By justifying their motivations in terms of Creole-French bilingualism and first language literacy, actors have successfully situated the Creole education debate within the context of international scientific research and studies on the sociolinguistic context of La Réunion. Pedagogical arguments, alongside awareness-raising initiatives have contributed towards a positive shift in attitudes towards Creole among the population. This chapter has examined the evolution of Creole teaching policy and practice and the roles played by actors in public education, research, culture and associations in La Réunion. The following chapter will expand on this by analysing the effectiveness and constraints of Creole teaching initiatives, as well as some next steps to be taken, according to actors involved in the domain.

Chapter Five. Local Creole Teaching Practices and the Teacher Experience

Introduction

As seen in Chapter Four, since its official recognition as a regional language of France in 2000, top-down language planning actions in the form of legislation and policy have played a crucial role in officialising Creole in Réunionese public education. However, the officialisation of Creole in education is also greatly influenced by popular perceptions and public support. Therefore, bottom-up action and grassroots movements are often more directly effective for language planning; "while change from above may not be feasible because of the existing power structure, change from below has a greater likelihood of success" (Siegel, 2006, p. 171). Chapter Three contextualised Creole education as a result of ideological movements and grassroots resistance through language. Chapter Four examined top-down status planning measures implemented by formal actors at a state and regional level, as well as bottom-up pressures from informal actors such as associations. This chapter examines more closely the specific Creole teaching practices and initiatives which have been developed locally in La Réunion. Moreover, it engages closely with findings from ethnographic interviews and participant observation, focusing directly on the perspectives of ground-level actors working in Creole education.

This chapter will first examine two frameworks for creole languages in education in international literature. The frameworks are not exhaustive but have been chosen because of their relevance to approaches used in the Réunionese context. This will lead into a description of the four main Creole teaching initiatives offered by the *Académie de La Réunion*, which are analysed according to the perspectives and experiences of teachers and key actors in Creole education. Finally, the chapter will discuss some of the possible courses of action for the future of Creole education, as suggested by Creole teachers. Many of these propositions develop existing status and corpus planning measures and expand and diversify the official role of Creole in public Réunionese society through collaboration between formal and informal actors. As discussed in Chapter Two, the vast majority of the participants interviewed for this research are Creole teachers and/or have been directly involved in

Creole education policy and research. Therefore, this research privileges the perspective and experiences of Creole teachers.

Global approaches to creole languages in education

There is a small but growing pool of academic literature which has contributed valuable theory and analysis on the development of creole and pidgin languages in public education. Given some of the sociohistorical commonalities between creole languages, there are often parallels with approaches developed in La Réunion. Some of the theories developed in the fields of 'creolistics' and applied linguistics can provide a broad framework from which to deepen an understanding of the initiatives developed for Creole in education in La Réunion. Moreover, by identifying links between these approaches, it is possible to contextualise Réunionese Creole education within a global pattern towards accepting and even encouraging creoles in education. This helps us to view movements for the officialisation of Creole in La Réunion as a case study situated within a wider trend, rather than as an isolated phenomenon.

A sociolinguistic study by Dennis Craig (1985) examined bilingual education strategies in contexts in which a dominant standard language and a subordinate creole language exist together. Craig (1985) reveals links between social status, language proficiency and education. He observes a social stratification of bilingualism within creole populations, with lower classes generally more monolingual in the creole, and upper classes generally bilingual or monolingual in the standard (Craig, 1985, p. 274). Craig argues that an awareness of this social stratification in language practices can act as a drive towards bilingual proficiency among the population (Craig, 1985, p. 277). This pattern between social class and linguistic practices and competency has also been observed in La Réunion, in which social status and parental income are linguistic markers and factors influencing attitudes towards Creole and French. In a study on the spontaneous speech of children aged five in school and family settings, Lebon-Eyqeum (2015) observed that while the overall majority of children used more Creole language structures than French, children from higher income families tended to be dominant in French or considered bilingual Creole-French. An awareness of this, coupled with persisting colonial and post-colonial assimilationist-era conceptions that French is the more civilised language (Glâtre, 2020), has led middle class families to be more hostile

towards Creole and encourage the use of French in domestic settings.[71] Craig (1985) argues that the social stratification of linguistic practices and attitudes must be considered when implementing a creole language in formal education. The choice of strategy depends on the social context of the creole, its relation to the standard and the objectives behind its use in education.

The first strategy, defined as 'transitional bilingualism', refers to the use of a creole to facilitate learning in the standard (Craig, 1985, p. 278). The standard is considered the target language and the creole is viewed as a stepping-stone towards achieving full fluency and literacy in the standard language. The second strategy, described as 'monoliterate bilingualism', refers to an educational approach in which both languages are spoken in school, however, literacy is only developed in the standard language. A third approach, 'partial bilingualism', describes the development of oral fluency and literacy in both the creole and standard languages in different subjects. Finally, the most complete form of bilingualism and integration of a creole language, 'full bilingualism' describes an educational strategy in which oral fluency and literacy are developed in both languages in all subjects. Craig's (1985) four strategies for creole languages in education represent a spectrum of integration in which the degree of recognition and importance attributed to a creole language reflects the strategy applied to education. Links will be drawn between Craig's (1985) creole education strategies and the initiatives offered for Réunionese Creole later in this chapter.

A second framework for creole and pidgin language education was developed by Jeff Siegel (2005, 2006) and has been cited by other academics in the field of applied creole linguistics (Migge, Léglise and Bartens, 2010). The first approach defined by Siegel (2005, 2006) is the 'accommodation approach' in which the creole language is tolerated or accepted in the

[71] Although participants for this research rarely discussed race and ethnicity in relation to the Creole language, some participants noted that certain variants are more frequently used by different ethnic groups. Moreover, despite the ethnic diversity of La Réunion and the use of Creole across all ethnicities, one teacher claims that among her primary school pupils, Creole is often associated with darker skin. One pupil once said; *"moi je suis marron mais je parle français".* The same teacher recalled that for foreign Erasmus students studying in La Réunion, *"c'était plus facile pour ceux qui étaient de couleur foncée d'essayer de parler créole"*. Further research should be conducted to ascertain to what extent race and ethnicity are factors in shaping linguistic attitudes and practices in La Réunion.

classroom but is not formally studied or used as a medium of instruction. Developing this, the 'instrumental approach' uses the creole or pidgin as a medium of instruction and can therefore be considered as a form of creole-standard bilingualism. The approach discussed in the most depth is the 'awareness-raising approach' (Siegel, 2005, 2006). As discussed in the General Introduction and in Chapter Three, creoles have historically been considered as inferior or 'corrupt' languages (DeGraff, 2003), while in La Réunion, French was represented as the superior, civilised language. Given that widespread persisting negative perceptions of creole languages are often considered the main obstacle to their successful integration into education (Bartens, 2001, p. 3), this approach is considered necessary to dispel prejudices and increase recognition for their status as a language. Siegel (2005, 2006) identifies three main components within the 'awareness-raising approach'; sociological, contrastive and accommodation. These three components acknowledge the sociohistorical, linguistic and cultural contexts, providing a holistic education of the language. The sociological component addresses the history and politics of the language(s) in question, the contrastive component teaches structural and grammatical differences between the creole and the standard, and the accommodation component gives students the freedom to express themselves in their own variety (Siegel, 2005, 2006). In a later paper, Siegel introduces a critical analysis aspect which encourages students to build on their own existing knowledge as a foundation for learning and to participate actively in the learning process (Siegel, 2006).

Siegel's framework reveals some overlap with Craig's (1985), in that the type of strategy reveals the degree of importance attributed to the creole language compared to the standard. However, while Craig (1985) focuses mainly on bilingualism, Siegel's framework (2005, 2006) offers more of an insight into the content of creole education programmes and the importance of incorporating wider sociological knowledge and a promotion and appreciation of the minority language. Theories developed by both Craig (1985) and Siegel (2005, 2006) can be applied as a framework from which to begin analysing the main initiatives for Creole teaching in La Réunion. These initiatives follow a similar pattern to the above approaches, revealing parallels between Réunionese strategies and global trends in creole language education.

Nevertheless, despite the value of these frameworks for analysing commonalities between Réunionese teaching initiatives for Creole and global creole education strategies, neither

Craig (1985) nor Siegel (2005, 2006) pay significant attention to how these approaches are performed by teachers in the classroom. In order to ascertain how and why Creole has emerged in public education in La Réunion as a result of contributions by formal and informal actors, this chapter extends well beyond the theories set out by Craig and Siegel. As well as outlining Creole teaching initiatives in La Réunion, this chapter also considers the role played by teachers as the primary enactors of these initiatives, and their importance for decision-making and feedback on the success of Creole education strategies. Thus, alongside status and corpus planning, the dedication and drive by key actors such as teachers, is revealed as a third essential element for ensuring that the Creole language survives and thrives in Réunionese public society. Furthermore, while Craig (1985) and Siegel (2005, 2006) briefly considered sociological context within aspects of their frameworks, this chapter examines more thoroughly how Creole teaching initiatives in Réunionese public education are supported by language planning in culture, research and informal domains. The next section analyses the four initiatives for Creole in Réunionese education and links them to the literature discussed above.

Creole teaching initiatives in La Réunion

> *"Le créole, ce n'est pas seulement une langue régionale pour beaucoup d'enfants, c'est aussi une langue maternelle avec le français"* (Participant: teacher, academic)

Since 2006, the Académie de La Réunion has offered four initiatives for Creole:

i) *Enseignement du Français en Milieu Créolophone* (EFMC);[72]

ii) *La sensibilisation et la valorisation de la langue et de la culture régionales*;

iii) *L'enseignement de la langue vivante régionale (LVR)*;

iv) *L'enseignement bilingue LVR/français* (Académie de La Réunion, 2022b).

All four of these initiatives exist at primary level, while only LVR exists formally at secondary level, making primary education the more developed area for Creole education in La Réunion. With the exception of EFMC, the above initiatives echo those listed in the report by the education minister, see Chapter Four, Table 4 (Peillon, 2013), revealing a translation

[72] The use of capital letters is copied from the original usage by the *Académie de La Réunion*.

of national policy on regional languages into local initiatives for Creole in La Réunion. We begin with the first initiative listed above.

Enseignement du Français en Milieu Créolophone (EFMC)

The initiative *Enseignement du Français en Milieu Créolophone* (EFMC) was born from collaborative research with the *Académie* between 1996 and 2001 which reflected on French teaching and learning in La Réunion (Souprayen-Cavéry, 2020). The initiative attempts to adapt French teaching practices for a majority creolophone public, using Creole as a medium of instruction for the youngest primary school pupils to aid them in their acquisition or development of French. As the only initiative developed uniquely by local actors, EFMC is proof of how cooperation between the domains of sociolinguistics and education has led to initiatives which accommodate the linguistic idiosyncrasies of the Réunionese public. In turn, this has led to a greater awareness of Creole not only as a regional language, but more importantly, as a first language for the majority in Réunionese society. The initiative can be considered progressive not only for its recognition of Creole as a first language, but also for its re-framing of French as a second language or joint first language for the majority of Réunionese primary-aged children.

Unlike some of the other initiatives, EFMC does not require teachers to pass the *habilitation* or any other specialist diplomas or certificates in Creole. This opens up the initiative to all primary teachers, making it more easily implemented and accessible. As well as the *Académie de La Réunion*, the centre for teacher training and education, *L'Institut national supérieur du professorat et de l'éducation* (INSPÉ), has also played a vital role in developing the EFMC initiative. Since its creation in 2013, INSPÉ have offered a training programme for teachers adapted to the sociolinguistic context of La Réunion (Souprayen-Cavéry, 2020). However, many Creole teachers feel that this training is insufficient. *"On a plusieurs dispositifs pour pouvoir travailler sur le créole à l'école, mais on va dire c'est-ce qui manque […] c'est une dynamique, un accompagnement, une formation"*. While there is some initial training offered by INSPÉ, some feel there is a need for more, especially for teachers arriving from metropolitan France who may lack local knowledge. One teacher argued that the sociolinguistic differences are overlooked during welcoming events for teachers from the mainland: *"J'ai eu envie de hurler, parce qu'on a dit, ah oui il y a le créole à La Réunion mais ce n'est pas un problème. Point finale"*.

As it does not focus on Creole as a subject itself, but instead considers it a medium of instruction for the acquisition of French, the EFMC initiative can be considered an example of an 'instrumental approach' (Siegel, 2005, 2006). By using Creole as a mediating language for learning French, the EFMC initiative also demonstrates clear overlaps with plurilingual pedagogical approaches promoted at a European level, such as in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2022). The initiative equally draws parallels with Craig's framework, as a form of 'transitional bilingualism' (Craig, 1985). EFMC encourages Creole as an educational apparatus for achieving complete fluency and literacy in French, but not necessarily in Creole. This objective is expressed explicitly in the *Project Stratégique Académique 2021-2025* (see Chapter Four, Table 4), which states its goal as *"appuyer sur le créole pour asseoir la maîtrise du français"* (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021, p. 50). This aim has been criticised by some teachers; *"on continue à mettre en avant le français"*. For others, it is revelatory of the motivations of the *Académie*:

> *"L'Académie ne cache pas son objectif: la maîtrise de la langue française à la fin de l'école primaire, car c'est la langue d'enseignement de toutes les disciplines à partir du collège. Le créole dans les petites classes est donc pris en compte dans l'espoir de servir de tremplin pour mieux entrer dans la langue française"* (Participant: poet, academic)

This franco-centric stance assumed by official actors has been criticised by some for rendering Creole initiatives superficial. Nevertheless, the complexity of the sociolinguistic context of La Réunion which involves variation, continuum and interlect (Georger, 2011), coupled with its political and administrative status within France has rendered an officialisation of Creole outside of a bilingualism with French impossible. This is a reality embraced by the majority of Creole teachers; *"la maitrise du français est essentielle à la réussite à l'école"*. Fluency in French is considered necessary for employability and participation in French society. The EFMC initiative demonstrates a recognition of the sociolinguistic reality of the Réunionese school population. Moreover, it exemplifies innovative regional action in language education which has established an official role for Creole as a necessary linguistic, cognitive and academic resource for the acquisition and command of French (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021). This leads into the second Creole teaching initiative.

Enseignement bilingue

> *"le plus épanouissant c'est d'être capable de s'exprimer parfaitement en français, parfaitement en créole"* (Participant: teacher, association member)

The bilingual teaching initiative offered by the *Académie de La Réunion* is developed from national legislation permitting bilingual education in French and a local regional language (JORF, 2003). Bilingual Creole-French education has formed an essential element in the development of Creole education practices in primary schools, especially in *maternelle* classes. Initially, the initiative required a near-equal split (eight to twelve hours) in the number of weekly hours taught in French and in Creole. This led to a feeling of being overwhelmed by increased expectation and extra work-load due to a lack of Creole teaching resources and training.[73] As of 2021, the weekly minimum number of hours for Creole has been reduced to three, and can increase up to a maximum of twelve (Académie de La Réunion, 2022c). Decreasing the minimum requirement for Creole in bilingual classes may seem like a step backwards, however, it has in fact eased pressure on teachers and made it easier for them to embed Creole teaching into their timetable. According to the current Creole policy officer for primary, the move has prompted an explosion in the number of inscriptions for the *habilitation* and has increased the demand for bilingual classes. Since the first bilingual classes in 2002, the annual number of bilingual classes in La Réunion has increased exponentially from one to thirty-seven (Académie de La Réunion, 2021). Bilingual classes allow pupils to distinguish between the Creole and French languages, develop their oral fluency and literacy in both languages, and improve their awareness and confidence. The initiative also plays a direct role in the officalization of Creole by introducing it as an equal language to French. For one teacher interviewed, *"c'est aussi […] avec l'écriture, une officialisation"*.

The bilingual Creole-French initiative is currently usually a 'partial bilingualism' (Craig, 1985) as the Creole teaching usually does not extend beyond a few weekly sessions. As part of participant observation for this research, I observed a bilingual CM1 class (nine year-olds) in the north of La Réunion. This particular class adhered to the new guidelines of a minimum of

[73] See Appendices F, G, and H for examples of Creole education resources which have been created by teachers and published on the LVR pages of the Académie de La Réunion.

three hours in Creole weekly, holding the welcome and registration in Creole every morning and one Creole session every Thursday and Friday. A call and response song opened the Friday session observed, followed by a story in Creole and a comprehension exercise afterwards which involved reading and writing in Creole. The classroom featured many bilingual resources, including books and dictionaries in both languages. The date was written in both languages and an alphabet featuring Creole words for each letter decorated the walls. In the observed session, students found writing in Creole difficult, with one pupil complaining that they were not accustomed: *"Madame j'ai pas l'habitude de faire les phrases en créole"*. Teaching written expression was also the greatest difficulty reported by the teacher, reinforcing the criticism discussed earlier that training for teachers is insufficient. Moreover, the relatively recent introduction of Creole-French bilingual ideologies in education has meant that many teachers have had little education or experience writing Creole themselves. In addition to struggles with written Creole, the teacher observed that some pupils were initially reluctant to speak in Creole, probably out of embarrassment or fear of using the language outside of its usual domain. Meanwhile, others had started to participate and speak more in class. The new-found confidence translated over into French sessions also. In addition to this, some of the francophone pupils had begun making an effort to speak in Creole with the other children, contributing to better cohesion between classmates and breaking down potential language barriers.

The development of Creole-French bilingualism marks a shift away from identity and politically oriented ideologies and towards more pedagogical motivations. *"Pendant très longtemps on était sur des argumentations politiques, sur des prises de positions militantes […] et non pas du tout sur des aspects pédagogiques, sociolinguistiques"* (Isabelle Testa: teacher, policy officer for primary). Moreover, the bilingual initiative has allowed teachers in bilingual classes to embrace Creole as a first language and emphasise the social, psychological and academic benefits of mother tongue literacy and bilingualism. For many participants, Creole-French bilingualism is seen as the most beneficial education for Réunionese students; "*le truc c'est que l'appauvrissement il vient de l'unilinguisme"* (Participant: teacher, association member). Similarly, by focusing on Creole as a first language, actors strengthen their arguments to officialise it in public education and justify their actions with research into language acquisition and bilingualism in education.

Academic and former teacher, Fabrice Georger (2011), discusses two hypotheses developed by Cummins in 1981 which support the need for Creole in education. The first is that of developmental interdependence in which the development of second language competency is dependent on competency in the first language at the time the second language is introduced (Georger, 2011, p. 333). This hypothesis supports motivations to facilitate Creole education by suggesting that the acquisition of French is dependent on competency in Creole. Réunionese actors have appropriated this hypothesis as a justification for teaching oral competency and written literacy in Creole alongside French, especially in early years. This genre of research is one of the reasons behind the focus on bilingual, and increasingly plurilingual, education at primary level in La Réunion.

The second hypothesis is that of minimum linguistic competence threshold. This hypothesis suggests that a minimum threshold of linguistic competence must be attained in order to avoid cognitive disability, and that a second threshold must be surpassed in order for bilingualism to have a positive cognitive influence (Georger, 2011, p. 333). This distinguishes additive bilingualism from subtractive bilingualism or replacive bilingualism (May, 2011), in which one language is developed at the expense of another. Georger (2011) also discusses a theory in which the status and value attributed to different languages in a bilingual context affects the positive or negative impact of bilingualism on an individual. For example, subtractive forms of bilingualism often arise among individuals of ethnolinguistic minorities, whose first language is devalued (Georger, 2011, p. 334). While Creole cannot be described as a minority language in La Réunion, its historical marginalisation in comparison to French has led to negative attitudes towards the language and a degree of linguistic insecurity or inferiority complex among some Creole speakers in the population (Gauvin, 1977). Avoiding subtractive bilingualism is also listed among reasons in favour of Creole in schools in a text by *Lofis* (Gauvin, 2006). Bilingualism has increasingly been favoured as a term used to describe the relationship between Creole and French in La Réunion in an effort to convince members of the public who fear a degradation of French. In the words of one teacher and former policy officer, *"on voulait mettre en place un bilinguisme épanoui entre le créole et le français"*. By framing their arguments in terms of bilingualism instead of focusing uniquely on the Creole language, actors distance themselves from representations which might be viewed as nationalist or separatist and position themselves firmly on the side of the majority

political view. Moreover, for actors working outside of the formal or official spheres, it could be a way to convince public institutions to embrace their ideas.

Another motivation for bilingual education in La Réunion are the problems of illiteracy among many Creole speakers in La Réunion. According to statistics in the early 2000s, 110-120,000 people could be classed as illiterate in La Réunion (Daleau *et al.*, 2006). On top of this, 26% of educated young adults have serious difficulties reading (Daleau *et al.*, 2006). Another study conducted by INSEE in 2011 found that this figure had fallen to 16% of Réunionese who had severe difficulties reading, compared to 4% of Metropolitans (Michaïlesco and Le Grand, 2013). However, the rate of illiteracy had not clearly changed, with 116,000 people illiterate or 22.6% of sixteen to sixty-five year-olds (Michaïlesco and Le Grand, 2013). Several actors have invoked these issues as important factors in their own motivations for the importance of learning Creole in school. As teacher, academic, and association member, Laurence Daleau-Gauvin claimed, the absence of formal Creole education has negative implications for French literacy ability; *[les élèves] vont comprendre à déchiffrer [les textes français], mais l'oral français ne sera pas structuré dans leur tête. Donc il y a énormément d'illettrés à La Réunion"*.

In order to combat the problem of illiteracy among Creole-speaking students in La Réunion, teachers in bilingual classes employ exercises which compare grammatical and linguistic differences between Creole and French. In this way, aspects of the bilingual teaching initiative correspond to the contrastive component of the 'awareness-raising approach' described by Siegel (2005, 2006). Several teachers reported using puppets, flags or colours as visual aids in order to help pupils distinguish between the two languages. According to Creole teachers these strategies follow the *One Person One Language* (OPOL) method, a well-known approach also known as the *One Parent One Language* approach, which is often advised as a method for bilingual families (Venables, Eisenchlas and Schalley, 2014). However, it has been adapted to Réunionese classrooms through the use of symbols and fictional characters. The effectiveness of the bilingual teaching initiative for improving literacy and academic achievement in La Réunion has been demonstrated by scientific studies and the first-hand experiences of teachers. In an anecdote, one teacher described the difference in grades achieved in a Baum test when the test was taken in Creole

compared to French.[74] The pupils received an average of 40% when they completed the test in French, however, the average increased to 65% when they sat the exact same test in Creole. Having opened the first bilingual class at CP level, the same teacher observed a stark progression in the number of pupils who could read and write in both languages. *"On s'est rendu compte que là pratiquement on était à 80, 90% de lecteurs en décembre quoi. Ça n'était jamais vu dans notre école"*. In a study of primary education in La Réunion, using ethnographic fieldwork in a CM1 class in the West of the island, Pourchez (2009) observes a similar academic advancement among pupils following the introduction of Creole to the classroom. In an educational project which strongly resembles the contrastive element of 'awareness-raising approaches' (Siegel, 2005, 2006), teachers aimed to teach pupils to be able to identify mixed Creole-French utterances. Habitually, between eight and ten pupils were obliged to re-sit the class every year, however, only two pupils re-sat following the introduction of Creole initiatives. This confirmed Pourchez's (2009) hypothesis that a recognition of the children's first language facilitates and improves literacy learning.

Currently, bilingual classes are only opened where there is demand from students and parents and are dependent on staff availability and the support of the establishment directors. This has led to ongoing debates among official and grassroots actors concerning whether Creole education should follow demand or *vice versa*. Some Creole teachers are arguing for the implementation of Creole teaching or bilingual classes systematically across all establishments in La Réunion. According to actors in favour of this approach, this would respond to the sociolinguistic reality of the island, of which 80% speak Creole as their mother tongue. Moreover, offering a systematic Creole teaching would integrate Creole as a discipline alongside mainstream subjects and further consolidate its role in formal and official public Réunionese society. However, some teachers sympathise with parental hesitation, claiming that *"l'école […] c'est parfois aussi un des [seules] espaces priviligiées de la maitrise du français"*, and therefore for families who speak little to no French at home, it is understandable why they may not want to compromise on the number of hours their child speaks French at school. The counter argument for this highlights that for other

[74] Also known as the Tree-Drawing Test or the Koch's Baum Test, the test evaluates abstract concepts and is sometimes used to diagnose cognitive impairment and psychological development. The test does not evaluate vocabulary or linguistic development specifically.

subjects there is never any question of waiting for social demand, and that it is the role of education to broaden people's perspectives through knowledge, rather than the other way around. This debate is discussed in more depth later in the chapter.

Another complaint among teachers is that the *habilitation* to train teachers for bilingual teaching offers an insufficient number of hours; forty or less, with only six to seven hours dedicated to teaching grammar and written Creole. For the majority of teachers, who never received any formal education in the Creole language or literature, this is frustratingly little, and this lack of support continues after qualification. According to one teacher, the lack of ongoing assessment for bilingual classes has led to divergences in approaches and teaching content, resulting in inconsistencies across classes. To combat this, some teachers are demanding a greater uniformity through increased moderation of classes and support for teachers. Nevertheless, these are obstacles which are arguably easily resolvable and do not obscure the clear advancements made in favour of Creole through bilingual teaching initiatives.

La sensibilisation et la valorisation de la langue et de la culture régionales

A third initiative for integrating Creole into public education in La Réunion is *la sensibilisation et la valorisation de la langue et de la culture régionales* (Académie de La Réunion, 2022b). The initiative is open to more interpretation that the others in that it can take the form of specific workshops or sessions or be incorporated into other disciplines and subjects. As it does not focus on the Creole language as a subject or as a medium of instruction, teachers from all disciplines are able to contribute and participate. Consequently, this initiative diversifies the place of Creole in education by opening up links between aspects of Creole language and culture and French literature, foreign languages, geography and history (Académie de La Réunion and Marimoutou, 2020) and embedding the language throughout education. By identifying parallels between other disciplines and the Réunionese language, culture and heritage in mainstream education, the initiative situates teaching within its regional context and contributes towards a positive change in attitudes towards Creole among the Réunionese public. The initiative allows students to understand their own sociocultural, linguistic and historical context, which in turn, enables them to widen their perspective towards different cultures and languages. As one teacher argued, *"pour moi, c'était vraiment cette idée que la langue c'est le ciment qui va bâtir la*

personne dans son identité". Interviews with teachers reveal a strong sense of attachment to a regional identity and culture through the Creole language. Historically, assimilation politics denied the cultural and linguistic heterogeneity which has shaped the regional identity of La Réunion (Glâtre, 2020). For some people, initiatives which accommodate and endorse Creole in education allow them to reclaim a sense of regional identity by re-visiting cultural and linguistic traditions and practices which had previously been marginalised. For example, a workshop for *Somin kréol* which was attended as part of participant observation, incorporated exercises aimed at informing *sixième* students about archaic vocabulary and phrases in Creole. In this way, the initiative contributes towards efforts to preserve and protect the authenticity of the language and aspects of regional heritage.

As an initiative which focuses on promoting the Creole language across all subjects in education, it can be considered an example of an 'awareness-raising approach' (Siegel, 2005, 2006) and a ground-level status planning strategy. Initiatives such as this are considered particularly necessary in order to combat persisting prejudices and negative perceptions towards the language. While the stigmatisation of Creole is rarely explicit in schools these days, according to one teacher, it stills takes place *"à bas bruit"*. *"A l'époque [...] c'était le créole makot [...] maintenant, on vous dit que vous parlez bien [si vous parlez en français]".*[75] Awareness-raising initiatives can help break down implicit depictions of Creole as an incorrect French. While studies have shown a considerable increase in regard for the Creole language (SAGIS and Lofis, 2021b), teachers testify that a continued reluctance among students and teachers remains one of the most important obstacles to overcome; *"je pense que les mentalités n'ont pas évolué aussi qu'on les voudrait"*. Negative perceptions of Creole or mixed-language utterances in schools have arguably contributed towards the widespread phenomenon of mutism, especially among younger creolophone children (Académie de La Réunion and Manès-Bonnisseau, 2021, p. 28). Similarly, a reluctance or refusal to speak in class has been documented even at higher levels. One researcher and teacher related an anecdote in which Creole-speaking Réunionese students refused to speak in their Master's class due to the presence of Erasmus students. *"Ils avaient peur de passer pour des gens francophones… mais qui [ne] savent pas parler français. Ils étaient en totale insécurité linguistique […] il y avait bien ce côté-là de mutisme"*.

[75] *'Makot'* means 'dirty' or 'impure' in Creole.

Awareness-raising initiatives and an increasing accommodation of the language, especially in early education, are seen as ways of increasing children's confidence and self-expression, thereby combatting problems of mutism.

As the establishment of bilingual classes is reliant on social demand, in primary education awareness-raising initiatives are essential for generating this demand. In sociolinguistic contexts where there exists a language hierarchisation, the substrate language is often associated with a lack of opportunity and the past; "In these perceptions are mingled objectively accurate judgements as to the relative balance of economic opportunities, but also elements of self-denigration" (Ferguson, 2006b, p. 73). In order to dispel this self-denigration and provide reassurance of the benefits of Creole education, some Creole teachers are expanding status planning efforts through information sessions with parents and the public. Sessions target negative preconceptions through a range of interactive and participatory games and activities and allow parents an opportunity to raise concerns, ask questions and discuss Creole education with other parents and teachers. Often workshops are formed following proposals to set up a bilingual class as an opportunity to open up dialogue between parents and teachers and inform parent of the process. Teacher-parent dialogues are frequently continued throughout the academic year as a way of including parents in their children's bilingual journey, monitoring responses to Creole education and maintaining support and social demand. Workshops for parents demonstrate how Creole teachers have recognised the importance of public support and parental participation in the officialisation of Creole in schools. Teachers have thus extended awareness-raising initiatives to non-student audiences in an attempt to establish a continuity between representations inside and outside of formal education. For one teacher, her parent workshops and discussion forums offer *" une espace à la population pour qu'elle fasse le point sur son rapport à* son *identité, à* sa *langue"*. Through these initiatives teachers are recognising the role of social attitudes in dictating linguistic practices and are engaging with the public to promote the Creole language. By increasing parental and public support this initiative also offers vital reinforcement for other Creole teaching practices.

Enseignement de la langue vivante régionale, option créole

The fourth initiative, *Enseignement de la langue vivante régionale, option créole* (LVR) is a language programme which follows the national curriculum for regional languages of

France. LVR is offered as a language option alongside foreign language options and is therefore considered part of general language education. It is offered as part of the *Brevet* for *collège* and the *Baccalauréat* (general and professional), as well as the *Brevet de Téchnicien Supérieur* (BTS). Along with bilingual education, LVR is reserved for teachers who have qualified from the *CAPES de Créole* or the specialist LVR *habilitation*, and follows a programme orientated towards the teaching and learning of the Creole language itself. Creole is also considered as a medium of instruction, aligning it with other 'instrumental approaches' in creole and pidgin education (Siegel, 2007; Migge, Léglise and Bartens, 2010). LVR allows the acquisition of linguistic and literary-based knowledge of the students' own first language and contributes significantly to the officialisation of Creole by developing it as a discipline in its own right.

The LVR initiative allows Creole to be taught as a subject alongside other languages. This involves the study of Creole as a language with a focus on the core skills and competencies important for all language-learning. For example, the development of competencies in oral and written communication as well as listening and comprehension skills. Reflecting Cummins' 1981 theories on first language competency in bilingualism as discussed above, Creole teachers argue that Creole literacy and oral proficiency are as important for Réunionese students as French grammar and literacy education are for francophones. In the words of one teacher, *"mon objectif est vraiment la réussite des élèves. […] c'est vraiment le côté pédagogique. C'est qu'en France, on apprend le français, donc c'est très important d'apprendre sa langue maternelle"*. The importance of this in the Réunionese context is supported by the vivacity of the language and its role as a mother tongue for 80% of the population. However, one teacher explained that many students choose the option without realising that it involves grammar and examination and are reluctant to study Creole seriously. According to another, students often lack confidence in LVR lessons because they are not accustomed to using Creole in formal settings or to viewing it as an official language. While it is common to see Creole in comedy or light subjects, *"dès qu'on rentre dans le créole écrit, dans la littérature, dans les sérieux [...] plus ça fait peur"*. By introducing Creole as an official language subject, the LVR initiative helps students to build their confidence in formal Creole and bilingual communication and literacy. Furthermore, formalising Creole through language education is viewed as a way of protecting the Creole language; *"garder*

aussi une authenticité au niveau de la langue" (Participant: Creole teacher). Creole is also seen as tied to culture and collective memory; *"l'objectif aussi c'est […] d'être gardiens de cette mémoire du passé en tous les cas du territoire"* (Participant: Creole teacher).

As well as parallels with other 'instrumental approaches', the initiative also overlaps with the contrastive and sociohistorical components of 'awareness-raising approaches' (Siegel, 2005, 2006). Language and grammar elements of the programme equip students with the linguistic knowledge they require to master Creole and to distinguish it clearly from French, demonstrating a 'contrastive' component. Meanwhile, a sociohistorical element is introduced as the study of the language is contextualised by a study of literature, theatre, music and oral history. The vivacity of Réunionese Creole is demonstrated in part by its prevalence in cultural scenes; a reality which reinforces the teaching. As one teacher and association member argues; *"on fasse vivre notre enseignement de façon attaché à une réalité culturelle"*. In another sense, as with foreign languages, an important element of language-learning is accessing the cultures and societies which accompany that particular language. In the case of Creole, LVR programmes are also about enabling students to acquire an understanding of their own region, history and culture, thereby developing a self-awareness. Teacher and policy officer, Isabelle Testa, explained, *"pour moi, franchement, l'enseignement de LVR c'est au-delà de la langue. C'est un enseignement qui est avant tout citoyen, parce qu'on apprend à se connaître et à connaître l'autre"*. The use of LVR programmes to develop ideas around regional and national identities, citizenship and improve social cohesion is recognised by many actors as a reason to officialise Creole in education and other public domains. Furthermore, regional language education as a tool for social cohesion is also mentioned in the 2019 report by the *Conseil économique, social et environnemental*, see Chapter Four.

As the LVR, *option Créole* programme is considered under the national curriculum for regional languages of France, the initiative benefits from guidance documents and policies which legitimise the programme and officialise the role of Creole in education. For some teachers, these national curricula are useful for offering a structure from which to base their own Réunionese-specific teaching. However, others find that the lack of adaptation to the specific regional context leads to inaccuracies and inconsistencies. For example, the level of language required for assessment is A1 at primary level (Académie de La Réunion, 2021) and

B1-B2 at secondary level, in accordance with the European Common Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2022). These levels are provided under the assumption that most regional languages are revived and taught as second languages. This overlooks the fact that in La Réunion Creole is a mother tongue for the majority of pupils, who attain an average level of B1 at primary (Académie de La Réunion, 2021). Similarly, as Creole is offered as a subject alongside the foreign language options it competes with more popular languages; *"le créole a toujours été en concurrence avec l'anglais"* (Participant: former teacher, academic). As a result, many Creole teachers rarely get the opportunity to teach Creole, more often using their other qualified subject.

Despite the difficulties experienced by some teachers involved in the LVR programme, the initiative is an effective approach to Creole education as it integrates the language as a subject alongside others. By combining language and grammar with literature and culture, the initiative contributes towards the officialisation of Creole in Réunionese education and language planning in many areas, such as literacy, standardisation and preservation of the language, and the development of its role in social and cultural spheres. The future of Creole education and these initiatives according to participants is discussed in the next section.

The future of Creole education: "une nouvelle réflexion sur la place du créole dans la société réunionnaise"[76]

The Creole teaching and promotion initiatives developed in La Réunion reveal a drive to integrate the language formally and officially into public education. Initiatives made possible by a growing support for Creole education in the *Académie de La Réunion*, have been realised by teachers working on the ground. The perspectives shown by some of these teachers demonstrate their determination in driving advancements in the domain further still. While progress has been made in the last twenty years, the teachers interviewed were able to clearly identify areas for improvement. Some teachers are already participating in these developments through their involvement in research and policy. Teacher experiences can give an insight not only into the current role of Creole in education and its evolution over the last couple of decades, but also into the possible future for Creole education in La

[76] (Participant: Creole teacher)

Réunion. The developments suggested by actors reflect measures commonly found in status planning and corpus planning for creole languages (Bartens, 2001), situating the Réunionese context within a global trend for the officialisation of creoles.

Development and improvement of existing Creole teaching initiatives

> *"Il y a un domaine dans lequel les choses devraient avancer, et c'est le problème de la standardisation et l'aménagement. Il faudra qu'un jour on arrive à une graphie commune, il faudra qu'on ait des dictionnaires qui soient adaptés, ça c'est une chose extrêmement importante. Et puis ensuite, il faut […] qu'on continue la préparation de manuels scolaires"* (Axel Gauvin: writer, president of *Lofis*)

Status planning for Creole has progressed since 2000 through awareness-raising and public information projects and legislation officialising Creole in education. There are now a number of initiatives and programmes in place to deliver Creole teaching and promote the language and culture in education. These initiatives form a basis of status planning from which to expand and develop Creole education in La Réunion. Much of the debate among Creole actors today concerns the consolidation of Creole teaching and its diversification across all establishments and levels. According to one academic in the LCF, *"l'Académie de La Réunion, fait beaucoup, beaucoup de choses, elle a mis en place des projets, mis en place beaucoup d'actions, beaucoup d'aide"*, however, these are not always widely accessible or available due to lack of support from parents, other staff and establishment directors. As a result, some teachers argue there is a need for *"une vraie considération de la langue créole comme étant un enseignement à part entière"*. This could be achieved by extending its availability throughout establishments and cementing a Creole education and training pathway from primary to higher education.

The right to regional language teaching throughout the whole of education is affirmed in the *Code de l'Éducation*, see Chapter Four, Table 2 (JORF, 2000b). Nevertheless, teachers report that this is not always possible; *"un élève ne peut toujours pas aujourd'hui suivre un enseignement de la LCR de la maternelle jusqu'au lycée, même quand les parents en font la demande"* (Filain, 2010, p. 50).[77] Many Creole teachers remain in temporary posts (Filain,

[77] *'Langue et culture régionale'* (LCR) is the former name for the programme now known as '*Langue vivante régionale'*.

2010), meaning that Creole and LVR options are not always consistently available and many teachers qualified with a *bivalence* in the *CAPES de Créole* rarely have the opportunity to teach Creole alongside their other specialist subject. Teachers involved in policy are currently working to resolve this issue and to establish a continuity between Creole education programmes at primary level and those at secondary level. The policy officer for primary-level Creole claimed, *"jusqu'à là on n'avait pas réfléchi à quelles écoles vont alimenter quels collèges"* (Isabelle Testa). Following communications with primary school Creole teachers, she was able to collaborate with the secondary school policy officer to identify possible pathways between primary and secondary schools offering Creole education. In the future, this project will hopefully ensure that students who attended bilingual or Creole education at primary are able to continue this education in *collège* and *lycée*.

Propositions to expand existing Creole initiatives have involved discussions among some Creole teachers and actors around possibilities for introducing a more systematic, and possibly even mandatory Creole teaching. Demands are supported by arguments concentrating on Réunionese Creole as a mother tongue rather than just a regional language. One teacher argues that there is a need for the *Académie* to establish *"des heures de créole dans tous les établissements, tout simplement, de façon systématique, de façon logique. Et aussi naturelle que 80% de la population réunionnaise parle créole"*. This move would involve a divergence away from the more centralised model for regional language education in France, and towards a model more specific to the Réunionese context. For this, many Creole actors in La Réunion have drawn inspiration from the Corsican model ('Salon Culture et Identité Réunionnaise', 2022). A separate article of the main *Code de l'Éducation* affirms that *"la langue corse est une matière enseignée dans le cadre de l'horaire normal des écoles maternelles et élémentaires de Corse"* (JORF, 2013), with the intention that all students receive an education in Corsican. A move in this direction would involve a degree of administrative diversification away from French national education in favour of a system which places more emphasis on regional language and culture and is perhaps better adapted to the geographical, cultural and sociolinguistic context of La Réunion. The emergence of discussions of this nature reveals a drive among some teachers towards a more established model of Creole-French bilingualism. Nevertheless, they remain, for the moment,

hypothetical and are not necessarily representative of a majority intention or desire among the general teaching population or wider public.

Production of resources and development of the language

In order for the Creole teaching initiatives to develop and improve in public education crucial progress must also be made in terms of corpus planning. As discussed in Chapter Three, while some progress has been made through orthographical propositions and the production of dictionaries and linguistic resources, some essential work remains. One of the first steps in corpus planning for creoles is the creation of an orthography (Bartens, 2001). In La Réunion, the publication of the G*raphie Tableau* (see Chapter Four) demonstrates an important development in this area. However, this could be officialised further through continued research and legislation. For teachers, there is a need for "*une normalisation aussi des pratiques écrites"*. Currently there is general consensus among principal actors in both formal and informal domains that standardisation must not interfere with the protection and encouragement of variation within the language. Corpus planning measures in Creole education reflect this desire, including the *Graphie Tableau* which allows variation and tolerances for differences in accent within a more standardised written framework for Creole. The importance of linguistic variation is also highlighted by associations such as *Lofis* who claim they are working towards developing *"un standard souple"* (Axel Gauvin: writer, president of *Lofis*). More on protecting linguistic diversity in La Réunion can be found in the conclusion.

Remaining corpus planning measures include "the compilation of dictionaries, grammars, teaching materials and the creation of a literary canon" (Bartens, 2001, p. 30). Currently, one of the challenges Creole teachers are facing is a lack of pedagogical resources to support their teaching; *"il manque d'outils pédagogiques concrets"* (Participant: Creole teacher). While guidance documents for Creole teachers do exist (Académie de La Réunion and Terret, 2014; Académie de La Réunion, 2020b, 2022c; Académie de La Réunion and Marimoutou, 2020), these are mainly administrative and offer little in the way of support for teaching practices and course content. The national curriculum for the LVR programmes in *lycée* level education (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Jeunesse, 2019b, 2019a) offers more concrete guidance in the form of subject content and assessment criteria. However, these documents were not created specifically for Réunionese Creole, but for all

four creoles in the DOM. The production of teaching resources and aids has often been carried out by associations and grassroots organisations. *Tikouti*, now a part of *Lofis*, was created primarily to publish texts and educational resources in Creole. *Lofis* in particular have continued this work through various collaborations and partnerships. According to their president, this work remains one of the principal aims of the association for the future; "*il faut […] qu'on continue la préparation de manuels scolaires"* (Axel Gauvin). Some teachers are arguing for associations to be given greater public support from bodies such as the *Académie de La Réunion*, in the form of specific guidance and information; *"le travail des associations est immense et il pourrait également être enrichie de missions d'information"*.

Alongside teaching aids, corpus planning for Creole education also involves the expansion of the Creole literary canon; "a virtually essential attribute of a standardized language" (Bartens, 2001, p. 30). In the same way that the *Créolie* and *Créoliste* cultural movements were instrumental in increasing recognition for Creole in the 1970s, the body of literature produced in the past couple of decades remains an essential influence on the language's continued consolidation within public education. When asked about the importance of cultural texts for teaching practices, one teacher affirmed, *"c'est la base qui fait consensus […] c'est ça qui fait le lien entre les générations"* (Isabelle Testa). Another Creole teacher describes how the presence of Creole in modern-day music has flourished; *"on a des jeunes qui font de plus en plus de musique […] et énormément ils se reconnaissent dans un discours en créole réunionnais"*. The continued production of Creole literature, music and theatre will advance Creole education by contributing towards the standardisation and development of the language, consolidating and diversifying its status in other public spheres, and thereby providing further educational resources which contextualise Creole teaching and learning. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, it will build a pride and confidence in the language which will enable it to further root itself in public Creole society and culture.

From Creole-French bilingualism to plurilingualism

As status and corpus planning for Creole advances, their scope and conceptualisation also evolves. Amid the officialisation of Creole in education, European education practices emphasising plurilingualism (Council of Europe, 2022) are being reinterpreted by Réunionese teachers to encompass local sociolinguistic complexities. Réunionese academics are drawing on these concepts to develop the idea of individual linguistic repertoires among

Réunionese students (Georger, 2011).[78] Plurilingual teaching practices provide Réunionese teachers with a framework from which to consider variation within Creole and the complex interplay with French. In this way, some teachers have been able to justify their initiatives using pedagogical frameworks implemented by European and French education policy. Former primary school teacher and policy officer, Fabrice Georger, explained that framing Creole initiatives within the concept of plurilingualism made his arguments more convincing for local officials in the *Académie de La Réunion*, whose principal concern is enacting national law in the region. *"Il fallait pas aller trop à l'encontre du dispositif national [...] donc je vendais le plurilinguisme"* (Fabrice Georger).

Similarly, an investigation of Creole teaching initiatives in Réunionese education reveals clear parallels with plurilingual-inspired pedagogy developed in European literature such as the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2022). Plurilingualism in education is often characterised by "the raising of students' awareness and self-esteem", "the creation of synergies between languages" and by "challenging traditional views of the languages of the learners" (Marshall, 2021, p. 51). In the Réunionese context, Creole initiatives which aim to increase awareness of Creole, dispel traditional stigmatisations and create harmony between the Creole and French languages can be viewed more broadly as a local continuation of European plurilingualism strategies in education. The recognition and officialisation of Creole in public education in La Réunion can therefore be viewed as a successful example of how plurilingual pedagogy can be integrated into a regional language context.

Furthermore, some Creole teachers are now turning their attention to other mother tongues spoken by pupils in La Réunion. Some teachers have adopted a plurilingual approach to validate languages such as Shimaore and Kibushi; the Comorian and Malagasy languages spoken by immigrant communities from Mayotte and Madagascar. One teacher in a bilingual primary class sees this recognition as equally important for those pupils; *"même si je les parle pas personnellement, elles [Shimaore and Kibushi] sont prises en compte aussi et c'est une nouvelle forme de lutte"*. Similarly, another teacher and researcher

[78] Concepts of 'linguistic repertoire' within the context of plurilingual teaching practices are emphasised in other regional language education systems. For example, the new Curriculum for Wales emphasises the importance of plurilingualism for "drawing on a learner's whole linguistic repertoire" and for enabling students to "increasingly understand and learn from the relationships between different languages" (Welsh Government, 2019).

sees this recognition as a new frontier for research and activism; *"le problématique langue régionale ne doit plus se faire seulement avec la prise en compte du créole, c'est aussi la prise en compte des langues mahoraises"*. Policy which is implemented from the top-down is thus being re-shaped and adapted from the bottom-up to widen the scope of regional linguistic politics. Existing Creole initiatives and the actors involved in enacting them are contributing towards their expansion and reinvention in favour of a plurilingual awareness in Réunionese education.

Conclusion

Literature on creole language education developed globally provides frameworks for bilingualism (Craig, 1985) and approaches for integrating and promoting creoles in schools (Siegel, 2005, 2006). These frameworks provide a valuable reference point when examining initiatives for Creole teaching and learning in La Réunion and contextualises them within an international trend in favour of their recognition and officialisation. The four main initiatives for Creole in Réunionese public education reflect common approaches favoured in other creole-speaking countries (Craig, 1985; Bartens, 2001; Siegel, 2005, 2006; Migge, Léglise and Bartens, 2010). Furthermore, Creole initiatives created as a result of French regional language legislation and policies since 2000 are examples of status planning measures (Bartens, 2001) which have officialised the language in public Réunionese education. Initiatives such as EFMC and *enseignement bilingue* recognise Creole as a mother tongue and consider its importance as a medium of education. Meanwhile the *La sensibilisation et la valorisation de la langue et de la culture régionales* and LVR initiatives have contributed greatly to Creole education by challenging negative perceptions of the language and establishing it as a discipline alongside other subjects in schools. As well as persisting stigmatisations surrounding the Creole language, Creole teachers have faced other obstacles such as a lack of teaching resources, training and support from colleagues and establishments.

Teachers have played an instrumental role in driving and enacting initiatives offered by the *Académie de La Reunion* and have used their experience to suggest new developments to overcome some of the challenges and obstacles in the domain. Teachers involved in policy are working to harmonise Creole programmes across primary and secondary education.

Similarly, others are contributing through their participation in research or informal roles in associations. The teacher perspective offers an insight into the way in which grassroots movements and ground-level actors are significant drivers in advancing efforts to officialise the Creole language in La Réunion. Furthermore, interviews with teachers reveal some of their suggestions for the evolution of Creole teaching and learning in the future, and how this must be accompanied by its expansion and diversification in other public spheres such as culture and linguistic research. The future of Creole education and its emerging status as an official language in the public sphere will depend on the current and future generations of Creole students in Réunionese schools and universities.

General Conclusion

Thesis summary

This research has examined how and why the Creole language has emerged in public education in La Réunion through processes of recognition and officialisation. It has addressed a gap in literature on La Réunion written in English and a global lack of focus on identity movements, sociolinguistics and language planning in La Réunion. The core literature which has contributed to academic discussion on the question of Creole education, identity and language planning in La Réunion, as well as some key literature on creoles and regional languages from the global academic field, are discussed in Chapter One as part of an examination of the existing and emerging literature in the field. Chapter One revealed that while previous literature has contributed greatly to knowledge on Creole education in La Réunion, the research questions specific to this thesis had not yet been sufficiently answered. Chapter Two introduced the methodologies and conceptual frameworks which have underpinned this research. Through an analysis of thematic literature, official legislation and policy documents, and ethnographic research this project has offered an extensive and profound understanding of the idiosyncrasies and complexities of Creole education in La Réunion, while equally identifying broader patterns among creole languages, cultures and regional language planning generally. Language planning has been applied throughout this thesis as the principal conceptual approach which has underpinned the analysis and contextualisation of the emergence of Creole in Réunionese public education. The processes described in this thesis as the recognition and officialisation of Creole overlap with common status and corpus planning actions, and thus the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion can be seen as the result of widespread language planning by actors in the domain.

Chapter Three discussed the cultural and linguistic *maronaz* which took place in the form of identity movements in the context of struggles between assimilationist and autonomist politics between the 1970s and 1990s. During this time, the Creole language was appropriated as a symbol of divergent political narratives and agendas, more often than not concerning the relation between La Réunion and mainland France. Creole became indicative of Réunionese harmony within *francophonie* by the *Créolie* movement, while the *Créoliste*

movement established Creole as a linguistic standard for regional political and linguistic autonomy. These movements occupied the cultural realm through literature, music and theatre, as well as fuelling linguistic research and political debates. Furthermore, a grassroots resistance to the French monopoly of the public domain found its mouthpiece through, what was at the time, the clandestine use of Creole in public spheres such as journalism, the media and, occasionally, education. The emergence of Creole in public spheres through cultural and linguistic movements acted as a form of unofficial status planning, by increasing recognition for the language among the wider population. Moreover, increased scientific interest in the language sparked initial corpus planning developments which retain their significance today.

Chapter Four identified some of the key legislative developments which have influenced the status of Creole in La Réunion through French national law on regional languages and education. Arguably the most significant of these laws was the official recognition of Creole as a regional language of France in 2000 (JORF, 2000a). This law paved the way for another important legislative change. The creation of the *CAPES de Créole* in 2001 (JORF, 2001a) marked the first formal integration of Creole into public education and sparked its further officialisation through policy documents and measures introduced by the *Académie de La Réunion*. Developments in legislation and policy have provided essential status planning actions which have officialised Creole as a formal public language in Réunionese society. The focus of these official status planning measures has been public education, as a vital institution for the introduction of bilingual literacy, awareness-raising initiatives and standardisation projects. Chapter Four also identified the key actors in both formal and informal domains who are implicated in the recognition and officialisation of Creole in education. The roles of these actors were viewed as forming an intricate network which draws on many fields of expertise and spheres of influence.

Chapter Five studied the on-the-ground implications and impact of linguistic politics and language planning in Réunionese education through a closer examination of the teaching practices and initiatives for Creole. This understanding was drawn from ethnographic interviews with Creole teachers and ground-level actors, as well as participant observation in classrooms and the university. This fieldwork contributed an authentic teacher perspective which focused on their experiences, concerns and interests. Teachers were also

considered among the best-placed actors for identifying and suggesting possibilities for the future development and expansion of the Creole language in education and beyond. Chapter Five can be seen as the core of this investigation, because it highlighted how, alongside status and corpus planning, the passion, drive and dedication of grassroots actors such as teachers have been essential for ensuring that the Creole language survives and thrives in a public role.

Having summarised this research thesis, we will now discuss some of the characteristics and strengths of the Creole education movement, according to participants in this research, and some of their suggestions for the future of Creole in La Réunion, and for this research.

From *maronaz* to official language

The cultural and linguistic *maronaz* which characterised early movements to recognise the Creole language in La Réunion often took the form of acts of resistance among fringe elites and clandestine activities. As *Créolie* and *Créoliste* literature, music, theatre and linguistics gained in recognition to occupy a more mainstream position in Réunionese society, the Creole language expanded out of the private and domestic sphere and rooted itself in the public sphere. This transition was consolidated when Creole was officialised as a language alongside French in the public education system. The role of Creole thus transformed from an act of cultural and linguistic *maronaz* to an official language of La Réunion. This transformation was the result of several decades of language planning, dedication and drive among grassroots actors and drivers, most notably in the domain of education.

As the key domain for the recognition and officialisation of Creole in public Réunionese society, education was chosen as the focus for this research. Public education has become a collective site for the exploration, creation and exchange of ideas of regional identity, regional language and plurilingualism among formal and informal actors. However, the emergence of Creole in public education has paved the way for potential opportunities to expand language planning actions into other public domains. Creole teachers recognise the importance of establishing a place for Creole in professional spheres to provide direction and purpose to their teaching and learning. Ferguson (2006a) claims that “while minority language schooling is helpful […] it is insufficient and likely in fact to be ineffective in the absence of actions in other domains that reinforce the effects of teaching” (Ferguson,

2006a, p. 34). In this way, while language planning in education is vital, it must be accompanied by the expansion of language planning and awareness-raising strategies in other domains. Some teachers are arguing that sectors such as social work, public services, justice and health care would be more effective if employees were required to have proficiency in both Creole and French. One teacher suggested that employers in these areas could demand a bilingual Creole-French CV or proof of linguistic competencies in both languages. Not only would this generate more demand for Creole teaching and qualifications, but it would also help avoid possible miscommunication and misunderstanding between professionals and the public. Other possible domains suggested by participants for the diversification of Creole included economics, public information, tourism and publicity and marketing.

The expansion of Creole into other official roles in La Réunion is already becoming a new frontier of research and interest for the new generation of Creole students. During a conference at the University of La Réunion attended as part of fieldwork, a PhD student gave her perspective as a researcher into the use of Creole in the justice system. She pointed out that in France, an interpreter is legally required in cases involving a foreign individual with insufficient proficiency in French. However, the same did not apply for French citizens whose mother tongue was a regional language of France. In June 2017, the *Commission Nationale Consultative des Droits de l'Homme* (CNCDH) reported that *"la barrière de la langue constitue un frein important à la connaissance du droit dans les outre-mer"* (Bertile, 2020, p. 127). By recognising and permitting the use of regional languages such as Creole, law and justice systems could become fairer and more accessible for French citizens whose first language is not French. Further research is required to investigate the extent of existing or potential actions to expand Creole into the domains of justice and health.

Furthermore, during participant observation in a final year university class, students studying Creole and media delivered group presentations on the emergence of Creole in publicity. In recent years, the language has been increasingly used by Réunionese brands such as *Pardon, L'Éffet Péi, Nou La Fé, Piton des Neiges* and regional public services such as the intercity transport system, *Car Jaune*. The use of Creole by local companies has become a marker of their authenticity, regional identity and proximity to the Réunionese public.

However, students noted that Creole has appropriated a more serious and official purpose through Covid-19 information campaigns. During the pandemic, Creole was employed to ensure mass communication and understanding, and perhaps more importantly, to generate a sense of community and solidarity against Covid-19. The campaign launched by the *Agence Régionale de Santé La Réunion* (ARS) used the Creole hashtag, *#NOUBATAYANSAMB* (Agence Régionale de Santé La Réunion, 2020).[79] The campaign featured other slogans in Creole on posters and leaflets, such as the pun, *"Si zot i aime zot proches, approch' pas trop!"* (Agence Régionale de Santé La Réunion, 2020).[80] Students observed that an etymological spelling is used to maintain a close resemblance to French and arguably render the Creole more accessible and formal. Thus, the public agency evokes a sense of Réunionese identity with minimum divergence from French.

The Réunionese retail brand *L'Éffet Pei* also published public information fliers during the Covid-19 pandemic, such as *Koman protez a nou?* (L'Éffet Péi, 2020).[81] The brand often uses Creole on their website and the publication of a poster informing the public of Covid-19 symptoms and precautions could have been part of an objective to promote the brand and affirm their solidarity and regional identity. This time a phonetic spelling further confirms their Réunionese identity and distinguishes them from public institutions such as the ARS. The increased necessity for public information campaigns and importance of regional unity during the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the official use of Creole in public spheres and its formal use by public organisations such as the ARS. Further research should be conducted to ascertain whether the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant lasting impact on the use of Creole in public Réunionese society. This exercise by university students reveals a growing engagement with the development of Creole in other public domains. As mentioned, several PhD students are writing their thesis on similar topics such as the diversification of Creole into the fields of medicine and justice. The officialisation of Creole in education will give rise to new generations of researchers, policymakers, civil servants, writers and artists who will lead the future of Creole in public Réunionese society. This leads us into another possible development for the future of Creole.

[79] The hashtag translates as "we fight together".
[80] The slogan translates as "if you care about those close to you, don't get too close to them!"
[81] Flier translates as "How can we protect ourselves?"

A linguistic pact and the creation of a Creole institute?

The officialisation of the language through the public education system is one way in which the Creole language has become more rooted in contemporary public society in La Réunion. However, many participants argue that Creole language planning and policy could be made more effective in the future by the signing of a linguistic pact and the subsequent creation of a public institute for Creole in La Réunion. A linguistic pact between the state and the region proposed for 2021 (Académie de La Réunion, 2020a) remains unsigned. During the opening address of the *États Généraux du Multilinguisme* in La Réunion in 2021, members of the regional and departmental assemblies, as well as representatives of the association for mayors, declared their support for the proposed public institute and affirmed their intention to sign the linguistic pact. Drawing inspiration from public offices for other regional French languages such as Breton, the institute is seen as a necessary step in the officialisation of Creole in the public domain.

Language academies have historically played a role in expanding and regulating the functions of a language (Ferguson, 2006a, p. 26). As one teacher argues, a public office or institute for Creole *"va aider, piloter, impulser une politique linguistique plus affirmée en faveur de l'espace public, la presse, la communication et l'école aussi"* (Fabrice Georger: former teacher and policy officer for primary, academic). Until now the task of driving and enacting linguistic politics for Creole has been primarily carried out by teachers and informal actors through grassroots organisations. Some actors have hesitations regarding the creation of a public Creole institute, which they feel could risk implementing an overly structuralist and regimented standardisation and development of the Creole language. However, limited resources and funding opportunities for private and informal organisations and the increasing demand resulting from the official integration of Creole into education since 2000, has led to growing arguments in favour of further public intervention. As the president of *Lofis* explains, *"Lofis, notre office à nous […] qui est une association privée, […] il n'a pas […] les mêmes hautes possibilités d'action. Quand on est office public, on est beaucoup plus écouté"* (Axel Gauvin). An institute which is publicly funded and run by full-time specialist personnel would provide an official voice for the promotion of Creole and facilitate its expansion in Réunionese public society. The potential creation and subsequent regulation and impact of such an institute on Creole education, attitudes and language

practices could form a new frontier of research in the future. Moreover, research on this future development would contribute to literature on plurilingual and pluricultural contexts across Europe and the world.

Plurilingualism and standardisation of the Creole language

In European literature on applied linguistics, plurilingual and pluricultural competence are increasingly celebrated as "the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction" (Marshall, 2021, p. 48). In a pluricultural society such as La Réunion, the Creole language represents a form of plurilingual mediation and communication, being a composite language of hybridised and varied forms. In recent decades, this concept has been recognised and officialised through the development of plurilingual Creole teaching initiatives in public education (as discussed in Chapter Five). The predominance of oral expression in Creole and its historical restriction to the domestic sphere has shaped the diversity and variety within the language. The variation which defines the linguistic repertoires of Réunionese speakers forms a 'free space' for the expression of individual and collective representations and creativities (Georger, 2011). This 'free space' in language and communication is a source of pride which is defended by Réunionese people.

Creole language varieties are deeply embedded in identities and cultures which, while mutually comprehensible, are steeped in individual meaning and value for the speakers to whom they belong. This is a common obstacle to language planning in regional contexts, where there is a "reluctance speakers may experience in accepting a standard based on a dialect quite different from their own, and one that they feel does not, therefore, adequately acknowledge their particular identity" (Ferguson, 2006a, p. 26). This reflects my own personal experience learning the Welsh language, in which the diversity between the North and South varieties is quite marked in both orthography and dialect. This variety is acknowledged and accepted as an expression of regional identity within the same language. The recognition and officialisation of Creole in public education has offered an opportunity to mediate between the different identities and language varieties among Réunionese pupils, and to improve self-confidence and social cohesion through the Creole language.

Nevertheless, some parents, students and teachers remain hesitant. Resistance to the introduction of Creole to public education in La Réunion has partially stemmed from fears

that it will be detrimental to French literacy. However, while these arguments are easily rebutted by research into the benefits of mother tongue literacy and additive bilingualism (Georger, 2011; Daleau-Gauvin, 2021), other arguments offer a more convincing riposte. Among these are challenges to the standardisation and codification of Creole in the interest of protecting and preserving linguistic variety and the importance of oral traditions. For some, the expansion of Creole into the written domain through literature, dictionaries and glossaries poses a threat to the traditional orality of Creole expression in La Réunion. The flexibility harboured by oral traditions in Creole forms another 'free space' for the creation and expression of individuality of which Réunionese people are protective.

Protecting the flexibility provided by plurilingual oral expression in Réunionese linguistic repertoires is possibly one of the most significant challenges which actors working in the domain of Creole education face today. However, many participants in this study highlighted that the growing production of Creole literature and written texts has thus far not hindered the continuation of oral productions in Creole. Oral traditions such as the *Kabar Fonnker* and *Lofis*' *Kabarliv* maintain their prevalence as performances of poetry and storytelling. Moreover, as discussed in Chapter Three, the (re-)appropriation of music, especially *Maloya*, as a channel for poetry and historical narrative has diversified the role and contribution of Creole to the local cultural scene. The progression of the Creole language into both oral and written forms has expanded its repertoire as a plurilingual language, which can be used to mediate between different varieties, social contexts and public roles.

Furthermore, through collaboration and consensus, the recognition and officialisation of Creole through public education has echoed this concept, by becoming a plurilingual 'free space' for Réunionese actors to re-evaluate and create historical, political, cultural and linguistic narratives on Réunionese identity. Relations between the Creole and French languages are found at the heart of these narratives as an echo of linguistic, social and ideological relations between La Réunion and mainland France. Since the 1970s, cultural and linguistic movements have emerged as a creative and linguistic re-expression of Réunionese bilingualism. The official recognition of Creole as a regional language of France in 2000 consolidated this ideological shift on both a national and local level. Subsequently, the expansion of Creole in public education has been partly driven by an affirmation of the

importance of plurilingualism, as a cohesive ideology in Réunionese society. This realisation of linguistic plurality through education can be seen as an extension of the realisation of a cultural plurality integral to Réunionese collective values; *"tolérance, solidarité, plasticité pour construire un vivre ensemble"* (Vergès, 2008, p. 28). The unity expressed through these values can also be seen in the collaborative and interdisciplinary nature of Creole language planning and plurilingual pedagogy in La Réunion.

The interdisciplinary and collaborative nature of Creole language planning

As the Creole language roots itself in public education, future discussions on language planning turn to the officialisation of a written standard. In a linguistically diverse society, the acceptance of language planning processes is made easier where standardisation happens organically and protractedly and where it is based on strong ideological foundations (Ferguson, 2006a). The language ideologies that are expressed through literature, music and the arts are essential for the progressive emergence of a linguistic standard which represents the plurality and fluidity of Réunionese language and culture. Education has become another medium for a more official expression of this plurality. However, it is the interdisciplinary participation and collaboration between these domains which will allow the development of language education and standardisation which protect the linguistic 'free space' significant for the Réunionese population. A study of the emergence of Creole in public education in La Réunion reveals the vast diversity of different fields of expertise and experience which contribute to its recognition and officialisation. Creole actors, such as the participants in this thesis, occupy both formal and informal spaces across culture, research, education and grassroots associations. These form spheres of influence which are mutually dependent and interlinked. The diversity of actors embedded in movements for the emergence of Creole in Réunionese public education is a reflection of the diversity within Réunionese cultures, ethnicities, religions and linguistic practices. Thus, like other aspects of Réunionese society, the implementation and development of Creole education feeds into a collective regional identity built on a sense of 'unity in diversity' (Picard, 2010).

The nature of this web of actors has occasionally complicated decision-making processes. One of the spheres in which debates are most polarised is the issue of orthography and

standardisation. Nevertheless, more often than not the diversity and interdisciplinarity integral to Creole movements has created collaboration and compromise and strengthened the movement by drawing on a range of perspectives and proficiencies. It is possible that, *"les rapports de forces initialement frontaux et violents aboutissent de nos jours à une communauté de pratiques, tous les acteurs scellant un même amour de la langue depuis cinquante-huit années"* (Lauret, 2020, p. 194). Standardisation projects such as the *Graphie Tableau* (Académie de La Réunion, 2020a), as discussed in Chapter Four, are testament to the success of consensus between actors in both formal and informal spheres. Interdisciplinary collaboration on language planning has been solidified further by the participation of teachers in associations, research and the local cultural scene. As Fabrice Georger argues, *"si une « écriture officielle » devait être un jour adoptée, en plus de son aspect politique, les solutions viendront certainement d'un consensus entre les scientifiques et les scripteurs et lecteurs du monde de la publicité, de la musique et des arts, du journalisme et de l'enseignement"* (Georger, 2011, p. 310). Cooperation between different participants has not only been made possible by a shared passion for the Creole language but has also been fundamental to the success of efforts to recognise and officialise it through education and other public areas. This interdisciplinary collaboration will continue to be the foundation for the development of a standardisation and education which reflects the diversity and plurality central to Réunionese society, culture and ideology. Suggestions for further research and the impact of this thesis in the future now need to be discussed.

Future implications for this research

This research has addressed a gap in literature on La Réunion and identified links between Réunionese Creole education practices and approaches to bilingual and plurilingual education in other creole-speaking contexts and beyond. Further research should be conducted in this field to follow the evolution and development of these approaches, and how they accompany an emerging emphasis on plurilingualism in transnational educational policy, such as in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2022). New research in this field will be essential for understanding how plurilingual initiatives in education impact ideologies around national identity, globalisation and international collaboration. For La Réunion, further research on plurilingual education will help inform teachers and policymakers of

possible adaptations to their practices to accommodate a constantly evolving plurilingual population, especially with the growth of the Kibushi and Shimaore languages.

This research has revealed that, for Réunionese teachers, one of the main objectives of Creole education has been to address the issues of illiteracy, mutism and lack of self-esteem among pupils. This has been supported by studies suggesting that such concerns are more prevalent among first language Creole-speakers in La Réunion (Monteil, 2010b; Daleau-Gauvin, 2021). Future studies should continue to investigate to what extent the officialisation of Creole in public education has impacted statistics on illiteracy and mutism among Réunionese students. Moreover, this research field could be expanded to consider the possible benefits of welcoming and celebrating mother tongues and plurilingualism for mental health, self-confidence and social cohesion in classrooms in La Réunion, France and beyond.

This research sits within an important era for Creole education in La Réunion and its findings will have repercussions for future developments in the domain. The publication of this research accompanies a continued expansion in the number of texts regarding Creole in Réunionese education. The release of a new academic policy for the promotion of Creole in establishments across La Reunion has been announced by the *Réctrice* for the start of the upcoming academic year, 2023-2024 (JCTS and Elma, 2023). Among others, this policy introduces an increased emphasis on Creole education, the creation of Creole ambassadors and greater importance given to welcoming primary-aged pupils in their mother tongue (JCTS and Elma, 2023). This thesis will provide an insight into the impact of regional language legislation and Creole education policy between 2000 and 2022. Further research should include an analysis of future developments such as the new academic policy for Creole in 2023-2024.

By examining Creole education as the result of cultural and linguistic *maronaz* in ideological movements in the Seventies, Eighties and Nineties, this thesis has highlighted links between culture, identity and education constructed through language. This has also reinforced the Réunionese perspective in global literature on language, culture and identity in the French *départements d'outre-mer*. This research will be useful for building part of a detailed picture of the impact of national legislation and policy affecting regional languages and education in the French overseas territories. To add to this understanding, future research should focus

on other under studied territories, such as the relatively new overseas department, Mayotte, which became an overseas department in 2011 following a referendum. Mayotte is not often considered alongside the other DOM, whose shared histories as the four *vieilles colonies* bind them together. For this reason, research into the application of regional language education policy in Mayotte could form another useful point of comparison for La Réunion, French Guiana and the Antilles. Moreover, due to its relative geographical proximity in the Indian Ocean and its growing relation to La Réunion through recent migration to the island, future research on Mayotte could shed a light on how language practices and ideologies can impact relations between the two regions. Studied alongside this thesis, these future investigations would also contribute further insight on regional and local interpretations of plurilingual and pluricultural approaches to pedagogy in the French overseas territories and beyond.

Through fieldwork and ethnographic practices, this thesis accompanies other literature produced by Réunionese academics and researchers in expanding intellectual discussions on the Creole language and its status and role in Réunionese society. Nevertheless, while an external perspective is valuable for offering an objective and comparative observation, the future of Creole research lies primarily in the hands of the next generations of Réunionese students. As discussed above, alongside a continued investigation into the role of Creole in education, research remains to be conducted on the potential expansion of Creole into other public domains including justice, health, social work and public services. In all of these potential future implications, research on the Creole language in La Réunion should reflect and reinforce the priorities, interests and desires of the Réunionese population in relation to their mother language.

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Appendices

Appendix A

FEUILLE D'INFORMATION POUR LES PARTICIPANT·ES – Version 1, 10/02/2022

L'ÉMERGENCE DE LA LANGUE KRÉOL DANS L'ÉDUCATION PUBLIQUE À LA RÉUNION PENDANT LA PÉRIODE 1970 À 2022.

Vous êtes invité·e à prendre part à un projet de recherche. Avant que vous ne décidiez si vous voulez y participer, il est important que vous compreniez pourquoi cette recherche est conduite et ce qu'elle implique. Prenez le temps de lire les informations suivantes et d'en parler avec d'autres personnes, si vous le souhaitez.

Merci de lire ceci.

1. Quel est le but de ce projet de recherche ?

Ce projet de recherche est conduit dans le cadre d'un Master 2 (MPhil) en Français à l'Université de Cardiff. Le but de la recherche est l'enquête sur l'émergence de la langue Kréol dans l'éducation publique à La Réunion. L'analyse sera effectuée sur la littérature entre les années 70 et 2022 pour comprendre dans quelle mesure les mouvements littéraires, artistiques et politiques ont contribué aux mesures et aux arrêtés qui ont introduit le Kréol à l'éducation publique depuis 2000. Ce projet examine le cas du Kréol dans l'éducation publique pour appréhender plus profondément l'émergence du Kréol dans le domaine public à La Réunion, aussi que la valorisation des autres créoles et des langues régionales et minoritaires sur l'échelle internationale. De plus, une partie de la recherche enquêtera sur les opinions et les attitudes parmi les enseignants envers la langue Kréol à l'école à La Réunion.

2. Pourquoi ai-je été invité·e à participer ?

Vous avez été invité·e car vous êtes enseignant·e ou car vous êtes lié·e à l'éducation du/dans le Kréol à La Réunion. Grâce à votre occupation et votre position, vous pouvez contribuer une perspective sur la langue Kréol, les bienfaits et les problèmes liés à son usage à l'école,

et vos opinions envers ces enjeux à partir de vos expériences personnelles dans l'éducation à La Réunion.

3. Suis-je obligé·e de participer ?

Non, votre participation au projet est totalement bénévole, et il est totalement de votre droit d'accepter ou de refuser d'y prendre part. Si vous décidez de participer, nous vous expliquerons le projet de recherche et vous ferons signer un formulaire de consentement. Si vous décidez de ne pas participer, vous n'avez pas à en expliquer la raison, et cela n'affectera pas vos droits.

Vous avez le droit de rétracter votre participation au projet de recherche n'importe quel moment, sans avoir à donner de raison, même après avoir signé le formulaire de consentement.

4. Qu'est-ce que participer implique ?

Si vous êtes d'accord de participer dans cette recherche et vous avez rempli un formulaire de consentement, on vous demandera de remplir une fiche sur des informations personnelles considérées comme importantes pour le projet. Celles-là comprendront votre tranche d'âge, votre profession, votre syndicalisme et vos compétences linguistiques. Une fois que ces informations seront obtenues, on vous invitera à participer dans une conversation informelle avec la chercheuse au sujet du Kréol à l'éducation et dans la vie publique à La Réunion. La conversation aura lieu en ligne en utilisant Zoom ou Microsoft Teams et elle durera entre 30 minutes et une heure 30 minutes. Si le·la participant·e est d'accord, il est possible qu'il·elle sera également invité·e à participer dans un groupe de discussion avec la chercheuse et d'autres participants. Cela aura lieu également en ligne et durera environ une heure/une heure 30 minutes. Les conversations et les groupes de discussion en ligne seront enregistrés en utilisant un dictaphone et transcrits afin d'analyser les données et les informations qu'ils contiennent. Une fois que la conversation et le groupe de discussion seront complétés votre participation dans ce projet ne sera plus requise. Tout·es participant·es dans cette recherche gardent le droit de rétracter leur participation au projet de recherche n'importe quel moment jusqu'à la date de remise, le 30 septembre 2023.

5. Serai-je payé·e pour participer ?

Non. Malheureusement, étant donné que cette recherche fait partie d'un diplôme de troisième cycle universitaire et que les financements pour le projet sont limités, il ne sera pas possible d'offrir des paiements ou des remboursements aux participant·es.

Vous devez savoir que toute donnée sera considérée comme un don, et vous ne serez pas rémunéré·e dans le futur si ce projet de recherche mène au développement d'un nouveau traitement/test/examen/une nouvelle méthode.

6. Quel est l'intérêt de participer ?

Il n'y aura ni avantage ni bénéfice direct à votre participation, mais votre contribution nous permettra de mieux comprendre les opinions des enseignants envers le Kréol dans l'éducation publique à La Réunion. De plus, votre participation nous aidera à tirer des conclusions sur la relation entre les attitudes envers les langues Kréol et Français et les pratiques linguistiques sur l'île qui déterminent le statut du Kréol dans la société réunionnaise contemporaine. Il est possible que les conclusions de cette recherche aient de l'importance pour les études et les débats sur l'éducation, les langues créoles, et les langues régionales et minoritaires dans le futur.

7. Quels sont les risques à participer ?

Aucun risque majeur n'est prévu pour les participant·es de cette recherche. Néanmoins, étant donné les liens intégraux entre la langue et l'identité, certains sujets discutés pendant les conversations et les groupes de discussion auront un aspect potentiellement sensible. Par exemple, il est possible que certaines des questions posées comprendront les enjeux de race, d'ethnicité et des intérêts politiques. Dans ces cas, les données personnelles ne seront pas publiées dans le cadre de la thèse, et toute information considérée importante pour la recherche sera gardée confidentielle. Le·la participant·e garde le droit de refuser de répondre aux questions à chaque fois qu'il·elle ne sent pas à l'aise. Dans cette éventualité, le·la participant·e pourra demander « une pause » de la recherche, ou bien pourra se retirer de la recherche complètement.

8. Ma participation à ce projet sera-t-elle confidentielle ?

Toute information recueillie de (ou sur) vous pendant le projet de recherche sera gardée confidentielle, et toute information personnelle que vous partagez sera gardée conformément aux législations de protection des données. Référez-vous à "Qu'adviendra-t-il de mes données personnelles ?" ci-dessous pour plus d'informations.

9. Qu'adviendra-t-il de mes données personnelles ?

L'Université de Cardiff est la gestionnaire des données, et est dévouée à respecter et protéger vos données personnelles conformément à vos attentes et aux législations de protection des données. Plus d'informations concernant la protection des données, y compris :

- Vos droits
- La base juridique selon laquelle l'Université de Cardiff traite vos données personnelles pout la recherche
- La politique de protection des données de l'Université de Cardiff
- Comment contacter l'officier de protection des données de l'Université de Cardiff
- Comment contacter le bureau du Commissaire à l'information

Sont disponibles à cette adresse https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/public-information/policies-and-procedures/data-protection

Immédiatement après participation, l'équipe de recherche anonymisera toute donnée personnelle recueillie de (ou sur) vous en relation avec le projet, à l'exception de votre formulaire de consentement [ainsi que les détails des données personnelles qui devront être conservées]. Votre formulaire de consentement [ainsi que les détails d'autres informations qui permettent de vous identifier qui doivent être conservées] seront conservés pendant 5 ans après la publication de la thèse et pourront être accédés par des membres de l'équipe de recherche, et, si nécessaire, par des membres de la gouvernance et des audits de l'Université, ou par les autorités. Les informations anonymisées seront gardée au minimum 5 ans, et pourront être publiées pour soutenir le projet de recherche et/ou conservées indéfiniment s'il est probable qu'elles soient valables pour de futures recherches.

10. Qu'adviendra-t-il des données à la fin du projet de recherche ?

Les enregistrements vocaux et les formules de consentements, ainsi que toutes données personnelles (à l'exception de l'âge, la profession, le syndicalisme et les compétences linguistiques) sur les participant·es ne seront pas publiés dans la thèse de recherche. Les extraits des transcriptions des conversations et des groupes de discussions seront publiés dans le cadre de la thèse sous des pseudonymes afin de soutenir la discussion et l'analyse de la thèse. Les données personnelles ne seront partagées qu'avec l'équipe de surveillance au sein de l'Université, et elles ne seront pas partagées en dehors de l'Université.

11. Qu'adviendra-t-il des résultats du projet de recherche ?

La date de remise pour la thèse est le 30 septembre 2023, après laquelle les résultats du projet de recherche seront partagés au sein de l'Université pour le processus d'évaluation. Une fois que le diplôme sera complété, il est notre intention de publier les résultats de cette recherche dans les recueils de thèses, dans les journaux académiques et de présenter les découvertes dans les conférences. Les participant·es ne seront identifié·es dans aucun rapport, aucune publication ou présentation. Il est prévu d'utiliser des citations verbatim des participant·es autant que nécessaire, et dans ces cas, les citations seront publiées sous un pseudonyme. À la fin du projet, un lien pour procurer une copie de la thèse sera partagé avec les participant·es s'ils·elles le veulent.

12. Que faire en cas de problème ?

Si vous souhaitez formuler une plainte, ou si vous êtes préocupé·e par la façon dont vous avez été approché·e ou traité·e pendant la durée du projet, contactez Madeleine Phillips, étudiante de recherche en Français à troisième cycle universitaire (*MPhil*). Si votre plainte n'est pas réglée de manière satisfaisante, contactez la faculté de langues vivantes (*School of Modern Languages*) sur modernlanguages@cardiff.ac.uk, ou par téléphone, +44 (0)29 2087 4889.

Si vous êtes blessé·e pendant le projet, il n'y a aucune compensation spéciale de prévue. Si vous êtes blessé·e à cause de la négligence de quelqu'un, vous pouvez agir juridiquement, mais vous devrez le financer.

13. Qui organise et finance ce projet de recherche ?

La recherche est organisée par Madeleine Phillips et la faculté de langues vivantes (*School of Modern Languages*) à l'Université de Cardiff. La recherche est financée par Madeleine Phillips, The James Pantyfedwen Foundation, et la faculté de langues vivantes à l'Université de Cardiff.

14. Qui a examiné ce projet de recherche ?

Ce projet de recherche a été examiné et approuvé par le comité d'éthique de la recherche de Langues Vivantes à l'Université de Cardiff.

15. Plus d'informations et coordonnées

Pour toute question concernant ce projet de recherche, vous pouvez nous contacter pendant les heures normales d'ouverture : 8h30 à 18h00 (BST)

Nom de la chercheuse : PHILLIPS, Madeleine

Email de la chercheuse : Phillipsmj@cardiff.ac.uk

Téléphone de la chercheuse : 07443642899

Merci d'envisager de participer à ce projet de recherche. Si vous décidez de participer, une copie de la Feuille d'Informations pour les Participant·es vous sera donnée, ainsi qu'un Formulaire de Consentement signé à conserver.

Appendix B

FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT

Titre du projet de recherche : **L'ÉMERGENCE DE LA LANGUE KRÉOL DANS L'ÉDUCATION PUBLIQUE À LA RÉUNION PENDANT LA PÉRIODE 1970 À 2022.**

Référence et comité du SREC : 202122/288/PGR, vérifié par *The School of Modern Languages Research Ethics Committee*.

Nom du·de la chercheur·euse principal·e : **MADELEINE PHILLIPS**

Paraphez ici

Je confirme avoir lu la feuille d'information datée au 10/02/2022 version 1 pour le projet de recherche susmentionné.	
Je confirme avoir compris la feuille d'information datée au 10/02/2022 version 1 pour le projet de recherche susmentionné, avoir eu l'opportunité de poser des questions, et avoir reçu une réponse satisfaisante à ces questions.	
Je comprends que ma participation est bénévole, et que je peux me retirer du projet à tout moment, sans donner de justifications et sans craindre de conséquences (légales ou médicales par exemple).	
Je comprends que les informations collectées dans le cadre du projet de recherche puissent être consultées par des membres de l'Université de Cardiff ou par des autorités de réglementation si nécessaire au projet. Je donne ma permission à ces individus d'accéder à mes informations.	
Je consens au traitement de mes données personnelles (âge, profession, syndicalisme, compétences linguistiques, enregistrements vocaux) pour les raisons qui m'ont été expliquées. Je comprends que ces informations seront gardées conformément aux législations de protections des données qui s'appliquent et en	

toute confidence, à moins qu'il soit nécessaire de les révéler par obligation légale ou professionnelle.	
Je comprends qui aura accès à mes informations personnelles, comment ces données seront gardées, et ce qu'il adviendra de ces données à la fin du projet de recherche.	
Je consens à être enregistré·e pour le bien du projet de recherche, et je comprends comment ces données seront utilisées dans la recherche.	
Je comprends que des extraits anonymisés et/ou des citations verbatim de de ma conversation enregistrée puissent être utilisés dans la publication de recherche.	
Je comprends comment les découvertes et résultats du projet de recherches seront écrits et publiés.	
Je consens à prendre part à ce projet de recherche.	

Nom complet du·de la participant·e	Date	Signature
Madeleine Phillips	20/03/2022	M.J.Phillips

Nom complet de la personne obtenant le consentement	Date	Signature

Rôle et position de la personne obtenant le consentement : Étudiante de recherche (MPhil), Université de Cardiff

MERCI DE PARTICIPER À NOTRE RECHERCHE

UNE COPIE DE CE FORMULAIRE VOUS SERA DONNÉE

Appendix C

CONVENTION RELATIVE À UNE VISITE DE CLASSE EN MILIEU DE RECHERCHE

Titre du projet de recherche : La reconnaissance et l'officialisation de la langue créole dans l'éducation publique à La Réunion pendant la période 1970 à 2022.

Nom de la chercheuse : Madeleine Phillips

Courriel de la chercheuse : PhillipsMJ5@cardiff.co.uk

Numéro de la chercheuse : +447443642899

Nom de l'Université : Cardiff University

Nom du département de recherche : Modern Languages

Référence et comité du SREC : 202122/288/PGR, projet vérifié par *The School of Modern Languages Research Ethics Committee, Cardiff University.*

Date de vérification des visites par l'université : 02/09/2022

Nom de l'établissement :

Nom du·de la responsable de l'établissement :

Nom du·de l'enseignant·e/accompagnant·e :

Date de la visite :

Nom·s de la·des classe·s concernée·s :

Informations sur le projet de recherche :

Ce projet de recherche est conduit dans le cadre d'un Master 2 (MPhil) en Français à l'Université de Cardiff, Royaume-Uni. Le but de la recherche est l'enquête sur les processus de reconnaissance et d'officialisation de la langue créole réunionnais dans l'éducation publique à La Réunion. L'analyse s'effectue sur les recherches linguistiques et les mouvements politiques et culturelles pendant les années 70 qui ont propulsé la prise en compte du créole dans le domaine public. Ce projet examine également les lois, les arrêtés

et les dispositifs qui ont intégré la langue dans l'éducation depuis sa reconnaissance en tant que langue régionale de France en 2000 jusqu'à aujourd'hui. Les recherches focalisent sur les acteurs principaux dans le milieu du créole dans l'éducation, comme l'Académie de La Réunion, les enseignants de créole du premier degré à l'éducation supérieure, autant que les associations pour la langue créole.

Les buts des visites de classe :

Ce projet de recherche emploi des méthodologies sociolinguistiques et ethnographiques, en effectuant des entretiens avec des acteurs dans le domaine de créole dans l'éducation. L'objectif est de se concentrer sur les motivations et les expériences de ces acteurs, d'analyser leur travail sur le terrain, y compris les obstacles et les réussites qu'ils ont rencontrés. Les visites de classe mènent à une recherche plus riche et affinée, à travers la méthodologie anthropologique d'*observation participante* qui permette une expérience de terrain. L'observation des cours de créole à La Réunion remet la recherche dans son contexte réel et donne à la chercheuse l'opportunité d'avoir des échanges valables avec les acteurs principaux comme les enseignants de créole.

Implications pour l'établissement :

La visite pourrait comprendre :

- Observation accompagnée des cours de créole ;
- Accès aux supports/ressources pédagogiques ;
- Prise des notes sur les méthodologies d'enseignement, les sujets, et les interactions avec les élèves ;
- Entretiens et échanges avec les personnels de l'établissement, surtout le professeur de créole, avec le consentement signé de la personne en question ;
- Photos des supports/ressources pédagogiques.

La visite ne comprendra pas :

- Entretiens ou échanges individuels avec les élèves ;
- Collection de données personnelles des personnels de l'établissement ;

- Collection de données personnelles des élèves ;
- Enregistrement des conversations des élèves ou de la classe entière ;
- Enregistrement des conversations des personnels de l'établissement sans le consentement signé ;
- Photos des élèves, des personnels ou des professeurs.

Signatures:

Madeleine Julia Phillips	19/10/2022	*M.J.Phillips*
Nom complet de la chercheuse	**Date**	**Signature**

Nom complet du·de la responsable de l'établissement	**Date**	**Signature**

Appendix D

Sample Questions for Interview

Bonjour... Koman i lé ?...

Questions générales

- Comment vous-êtes arrivées dans le domaine de créole dans l'éducation et que faites-vous dans le domaine ?
- Pensez-vous que le créole a vu une reconnaissance dans le domaine public pendant les années récentes, en particulier dans l'éducation publique ?
- Selon vous, quels sont les facteurs principaux qui ont contribué à cette émergence ?
- Les mouvements culturels et la linguistique réunionnaise, quels rôles ont-ils joué dans la reconnaissance du créole ? Les exemples ?
- Quels sont les mesures et les actions politiques qui ont avaient l'impact le plus important sur l'enjeux du créole à l'école ?
- Les mouvements et les évènements internationaux, surtout dans les autres DOM, aux Seychelles et à Maurice, dans quelle mesure ont-ils influencé les efforts pour promouvoir/minoriser le kréol dans l'éducation publique ?
- Quelles sont les personnes ou les groupes qui ont vous influencé le plus dans votre mission personnelle ?
- Comment les objectifs et les approches envers le créole aujourd'hui ont changé depuis les premiers mouvements créolistes pendant les années 70 ?
- Que pensez-vous de la possibilité de créer un office public pour le créole ?
- Quels sont les difficultés ou les obstacles principaux pour l'avancement du créole à l'école ?
- Quels sont les travaux principaux qui restent à faire pour continuer à avancer le créole dans l'école ?

Questions spécifiques

- Est-ce que vous pouvez décrire vos rôles et votre travail dans l'Académie de La Réunion/*Lofis*/*Lantant LKR*/comme professeur de créole/LCF de l'Université de La Réunion ?

- Parlez-moi de vos expériences dans le monde associative/le monde culturel/la recherche... Quel est l'importance de ces autres rôles pour vous/quel impact ont-ils pour le créole dans l'éducation ?

- Sur quels projets travaillez-vous en ce moment et dans le futur ?

Pour finir

- Est-ce que vous connaissez d'autres personnes que je devrais contacter pour un entretien ? Comment pourrais-je les contacter ?

- Est-ce que vous êtes consciente de quelque chose d'important ou de pertinent pour cette recherche que je n'ai pas mentionnée ?

Appendix E

Further questions for participants – Research Trip October 2022

- Le premier *Plan d'action* pour le LVR à La Réunion était en 2014, pourquoi le retard ?
- Est-ce que vous lisez les textes officiels/êtes-vous conscient de leur contenu ?
- Suivant la précédente : Trouvez-vous les documents officiels utiles ?
- Pensez-vous que les objectifs (eg. parcours créole tout au long de la scolarité, formation pour les profs - Plan d'action 2014-2019, intégration du créole dans les autres disciplines – Feuille de route 2020-2024 etc.) pour le LVR/enseignement bilingue présentés dans les textes officiels ont été respectés ? Pourquoi ?
- Comment vous interprétez/comprendrez le terme « plurilinguisme/enseignement plurilingue » dans les textes officiels récents eg. Feuille de route 2020-2024 ?
- Suivant la précédente : Quel rôle le plurilinguisme joue-t-il dans votre enseignement bilingue/ LVR?
- Est-ce que/comment vous célébrez la semaine créole cette mois ?
- Suivant la précédente : Quel est l'importance des célébrations, comme la journée internationale de la langue maternelle ou la semaine créole, pour la prise en compte de la langue créole ?
- Question pour Lofis/Lantant LKR: Comment travaillez-vous avec les autorités dans les établissements scolaires et les législateurs pour consolider la place du créole dans l'éducation publique ?

Appendix F

Creole teaching/learning resource (i): See following pages.

Taken from: PC, and Académie de La Réunion Mission LVR 1D. “Kisa La Vol de Sully Andoche, Par PC.” Académie de La Réunion, n/d. https://pedagogie.ac-reunion.fr/fileadmin/ANNEXES-ACADEMIQUES/03-PEDAGOGIE/01-ECOLE/langue-vivante-regionale/Kisa_la_vol.pdf.

Kisa la vol ?

Kisa la vol lo soir veni
Tout zèf ti pintad gri?
Mi sa ni fol
Pintad la di
Mi sava boir pétrol

Piaf piaf piaf
La fé volay
Sa la pa mon travay
Si mi fé sa
La di volay
Kik i vèy mon marmay?

(Rofrin) Kisa la vol lo soir veni…

Kon kon konk
La fé dindon
Mwin ton pli gran dalon
Soré kouyon
La di dindon
Fé sa in gran dalon

(Rofrin) Kisa la vol lo soir veni…

Bè, bè, bèl
La fé kabri
Mwin na bonpé sousi
I mankré plu
La di kabri
Mi fé so salopri

(Rofrin) Kisa la vol lo soir veni…

Koink , koink, koink
La fé kanar
Mwin, mwin lé pa kanyar
A ti koné bien la di kanar
Mwin mi sort pa lo soir

(Rofrin) Kisa la vol lo soir veni…

Ou, ou, ou
La di gro bèf
Mwin mi manj pa dé zèf
A koman ti vé
La di gro bèf
Mwin mi pé souk out zèf?

(Rofrin) Kisa la vol lo soir veni…

wa, wa, wa
La fé lo shien
Mi koné lé pa mwin
Sa ti torti la di lo shien
Mwin mi pé pas témoin

(Rofrin) Kisa la vol lo soir veni…

Oum, oum, oum
La di torti
Li la pa koni di
Li té koz pa lo pov torti
Pou li la loi la d'ni

(Rofrin) Kisa la vol lo soir veni…

Pèf, pèf, pèf
La fé la loi
Torti sora pandi
Tout zanimo lo soir veni
La manz sivé torti
Tiak tiak tiak
Avèk salad é kari zèf pintad

(Rofrin) Kisa la vol lo soir veni…

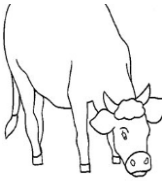
Volay, kanar, dindon, kabri, gro bèf, lo shien osi
La loi osi
Lavé volé le soir veni
Tout zèf ti pintad gri

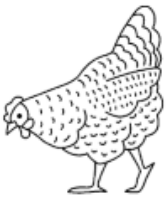
(Rofrin) Kisa la vol lo soir veni…

Ziskakan

Lien pour écouter la chanson : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csNZ38WFNKE

1) **Ecoute puis entoure les animaux qu'on trouve dans la chanson « *Kisa la vol ?* ».**





2) **Retrouve les paroles de chaque animal. Relie l'animal à ce qu'il dit.**

Dindon	« Mwin na bonpé sousi »
Pintad	« Kik i vèy mon marmay »
Kanar	« Mwin mi manz pa dé zèf »
La loi	« Mwin mi sort pa lo soir »
Volay	« Mwin ton pli gran dalon »
Gro bèf	« Mi sava boir pétrol »
Kabri	« Torti sora pandi »

3) **Réponds par vrai ou faux.**

	VRAI	FAUX
▪ L'histoire se passe dans un poulailler.		
▪ Dindon a perdu ses œufs.		
▪ Kanar a l'habitude de se promèner le soir.		
▪ Gro Bèf aime bien les œufs.		
▪ Le chien sait qui a volé les œufs.		
▪ La tortue ne se défend pas.		
▪ Finalement s'est bien la tortue qui a volé les œufs de la pintade.		

Quelle pourrait-être la morale (la leçon à retenir) de cette histoire ? Coche la bonne case.

- La vie est dure. ☐
- Celui qui ne sait pas parler est perdu d'avance. ☐
- Les animaux sont fidèles. ☐

4) **Vocabulaire**

Que veut dire les mots suivants. Entoure la bonne définition en t'aidant du texte au besoin.

kanyar signifie: un ami - un voyou - un parent

dalon signifie: un ami - un cousin - un voyou

souk signifie: vendre - attraper - libérer

Appendix G

Creole teaching/learning resource (ii): See following pages.

Taken from: Daleau-Gauvin, Laurence. “Projé La Kaz Ek Jardin Kréol La Rényon.” Académie de La Réunion, n/d. https://pedagogie.ac-reunion.fr/fileadmin/ANNEXES-ACADEMIQUES/03-PEDAGOGIE/01-ECOLE/langue-vivante-regionale/LVR_Proje_la_kaz_ek_jardin_kreol.pdf.

PROJE LA KAZ ek JARDIN KREOL La Rényon

Depi CP jiska CE2 (ek in gran moune)
Depi CM1 jiska le CM2 (toussèl).

Premié Laktivité : 30 minute : La kaz kréol

1.Dessine out kaz, out lapartman : fé in joli dessin, mète le nom toute le bann pièsse.
2. Lire le tèks « la kaz kréol », réponde le bann kestyon néna dessou le tèks.

2ème Laktivité : 30 minute : la kaz Tikok

1. Lire le tèks « la kaz Tikok », dessine ali, mète le nom toute le bann pièsse.

3ème Laktivité : 30 minute « le baro »

1.Kossa i lé in baro ? Dessine out baro ? sinon si ou i reste dann limèble, dessine le baro ou i rève ?
2.Lire le tèks « in baro, sa i apèl respé » Robert Gauvin, réponde le bann kestyon.
Alé regarde dessou le tèks le bann foto le baro i gaingne trouvé la Rényon.

4ème Laktivité : 30 minute « sou la varang »

1.Kossa i lé in varang? Alé rode dessi Internet ? sinoon demande papa ek manman ?
Fé bann reshershe pou konète oussa le mo i sorte ?
Dessine in kaz ek in varang.

2.Lire le tèks « in varang » Robert Gauvin, réponde le bann kestyon.

5ème Laktivité : 40 minute « Kissa la-di jardin kréol lé farfouyé »

1.Si ou néna i jardin, alé fé in ti tour dedan , note toute le bann pié d'boi, pié d'flèr ou i voi, dessine azot , mète la koulèr .
Si ou na poin jardin, demande manman ek papa , [*ou i gaingne téléphone ossi in moune ou koné (mémé, pépé) néna in jardin]* kossa néna dann in jardin kréol La Rényon, ékri toute le bann pié d'boi, pié d'flèr i di aou, dessine azot , mète la koulèr. Demande in koudmin le gran moune, ou i gaingne ossi alé dessi internet.

2.Lire le tèks « in baro, sa i apèl respé » Robert Gauvin, réponde le bann kestyon.

6ème Laktivité : fé in kaz an karton ek son jardin.

Essèye fée k papa-manman in kaz an volume : anserve bann karton néna la kaz, shoizi out modèle la kaz.. pinde ali.
Oubli paf é in lantouraj (« cloture ») ek in baro.
Essye fé ossi bann flèr, pié d-boi ek çak ou i trouve : an karton, ek bann ti branshe ou la-trouve déor..
Fé in foto kan ou la fini , anvoye ot makète pou : li va mète dessi le blog lékol.

Pou pousse pliss loin :
https://www.reunionnaisdumonde.com/magazine/articles-membres/la-kaz-kreol-materiel-pedagogique-pour-apprendre-le-creole-reunionnais/

<u>Laktivité No 1 : La kaz kreol : (Kristian Fontène)</u> I prétan di, an Frans, la kaz la pa parèy la kaz isi, La Rényon. Daborinn bann zorèy i apèl pa sa : « la kaz » ; i apèl sa : « la maison ». Zot « maison-la » (Zot "maison"-la ?) lé drol sa ! I ansèrv kaziman po tout ! Ladan ou na « la cuisine » ousa i fé kui manzé, épi « la salle de séjour » ousa i rosoi domoun po kas la blag ansanm ; ou na « lo grenier », in léspès farfar-la-kaz ousa i dépoz bann vié zafèr, épi, pardsou la kaz, ou na « la cave » ousa i ramas bann boutèy do-vin… Dann "maison-la", na ziska « les toilettes », kabiné si ou i profèr ! Isi Larényon, tout zafèr lé pa mayé konmsa ansanm ! Isi la kaz sé la kaz ! La kizine : la kizine ! Kabiné : kabiné !… Soman, sa i vé pa di nou na plis la plas laba an Frans ! Sa i vé pa di nou lé plis ris ! Kontrèr ! Souvandéfoi akoz nou lé séré, akoz nou lé maléré minm, n'i fé nout tournéviré* konmsa ! Oi zot minm : la kaz Maksimin, kamarad Tikok, na rienk dé piès, lé kouvèr an pay vétivèr, na poin « la cheminée » konm an Frans… In sipozision alors : monmon Maksimin i rod fé kui manzé an-ndan-la ! Zot i oi in pé kosa i sar fé ! Dofé dan la pay, boukanaz dann zié, kouvèrtir marmit dann bifé linz, lo marmit li minm èk potsanm sou lo li ! Taka po kabiné, koz pi ! Dolo atitré* ousa i tir ? Papié tann, ousa i lé ? Kansréti in flakon grézil po fé fane lodèr, kilé ? Nana ? Hin-hin ! Dann in fo-trin konmsa domié kontant out touf fig ankor, laba dann fon la kour, détroi koton* maï dann out min, in gouni po anbar aou par-dvan ! Boudikont, in kaz konm Maksimin i ansèrv arienk po dormi la nuit. Ankor ! Konm Maksimin na in gran frèr èk troi moiyin gran sèr, i fé lé dé garson lé blizé dor si in kès dan la kizine ! Apark sa, la zourné, Madanm Rafaèl i rant tazantan dann son kaz, rienk kan la bézoin-bézoin minm : po aranz lo li, po ropasé, po rod in papié konsékan. Sé dann la kaz osi li dépoz son tant koutir, soman li sar koud déor sou trèy sousou. Trèy sousou-la i ansèrv konm « salon » osi : la minm li rosoi son moun… sirtou moi désanm, zanvié, févriyé, troi moi ousa la nèz i fonn an Frans, aléoir isi, domoun i rod po fonn èk lo féso i fé !	**<u>1.Lire bien le tèks Kristian Fontène</u>** Kossa bann mo-là i vé di : alé regarde dessi internet, demande manman, téléfone mémé, pépé, tatie, tonton. Farfar : Pay vétiver : Boukanaz : Kouvertir marmite : Flakon grézil : Touf fig : In gouni : Trèy sousou : Dessine la maison en France konm Tikok i dékri ali, mète le nom le bann pièsse. Dessine la kaz kréol La Rénion, mète le nom le bann pièsse. Out kaz i ressanm pliss çat « la maison en Fance » sinon la kaz kréol konm Tikok i dékri. Dessine la kaz Maksimin : kèel problème le manman Maksimin i pé gaingné si li fé kuire manjé dann la kaz ? esplik pou kossa ? **Fé in foto out bann dessin ek out réponse, anvoye pou out lanségnan.** **<u>Pou pousse pli loin</u> :** ***Alé rode dessi Internet si ou néna :*** ***Kissa i lé Christian Fontaine « zistoir Tikok »*** ***Kossa i lé Vétiver ?***

Laktivité No 2 : La kaz Tikok

Promié tan, la kaz bann Biganbé navé dé piès minm parèy sad bann Maksimin, soman té kouvèr an tol. Malérèzman, siklone 48 la ni, la lèv lo ti bikok, la saroy sa an boit zalimèt, la dépoz sa anfoutan, bordaz la ravine laba.

Eré set'ané-la gramoun Biganbé lavé lésans zernionm ramasé : dé lestayon* èk détroi boutèy bien kasièt anlèr park poul. Tout-suit po tout-suit, li la kour la boutik sinoi, la vann lo pé 32 500 F CFA (té i vo plis ke sa, mé-soman kosa ou'a fé ? Kank ou la bézoin ou pé pa fé ti bous !) Séfé èk son ti lékonomi, gramoun Biganbé la yabou romèt son ti kaz dobout. La ziska azout dé piès ansanm. Té i artonm in paviyon kat piès ; troi piès planséyé, inn san plansé (la sanm an tèr, po lav lo pié an-ndan, lo soir).

Apréla, la fami la grandi. An 62, Maryot la gingn son brové, la bèk in plas ranplasant lao Bézav. Séfé Madanm Biganbé la fé in rényon fami, la di :

« In métrès lékol i pé pa rèt dann kaz rienk kat piès !

– Konbien ou i gingn mèt, ou Maryot ? Biganbé la di.

– 10 000F » Maryot i di.

Lo kaz té i fé 6 piès so-kou-si. Pardovan, si la droit anpartan lavé la sanm bann gramoun èk sad bann ti zanfan. Dann milié té lo salon, ek lo tab-ron si in koté, in nti li dann koin po gromèr Tisia, apréla té i tonm lo salamanzé (té i vien n' bati) zistorézon : avansa, tout té i manz dan la kizine, asiz si in tabouré atèr. Déyèr, in sanm an tèr po lav lo pié épi po bann gran garson dor an-ndan. Koté, lavé la sanm bann fi épi in magazin po ramas tout zafèr zot i komans pran angro la boutik.

Po fini, lèrk Maryot la maryé en 65, té fine koz salon n' bal tout, soman gramoun Biganbé, Arsinn, Férié, Zilyinn tout banna, la di porézon : « La pa akoz Maryot lé métrès lékol, ni sar fé lo fièr zordi ! Anon fé in salvert*, na kraz larobé* tèr-la minm, nora plis lanbians, épi moin dépans ! ». Fami lo zann* osi la tonm dakor po in salvert. I fé k' tout domoun la antouré, la donn la min, la parti rod fèy palmis, fèy koko, lantanié, banbou, fouzèr, tousala…Tikok, zot i pé kroir, té pa dernié po mont anlèr pié koko.

Lo salvert, ziskalèr, i artonm lo sétyinm piès lo kaz sis piès.

Kestyon :

Pou kossa Granmoune Biganbé té blijé armète son ti Kaz deboute ? Kossa la-arivé ?

…….

Koman li-la gaingne larjan ?

……

Konbien pièsse néna mintnan ? Koman zot i lé ?

…….

Pou kossa bann Biganbé la-désside rajoute 2 pièsse en pliss ?

……..

Dessine le kaz Tikok ?

Pou kossa la-fé in salle-verte ?

……..

Esplik ék kossa i fé in salle-verte ?

……..

Pran in foto out réponse anvoye pou out lanségnan.

Laktivité No 3 : Sou la varang- Robert Gauvin

Varang, kèl koté le mo i sort ? Lespri i vavang… i majine Pondichéry, Goa, Chandernagor… Sépa kisa la fé mont an premié in varang sï la tér La Rényon ? Son nom la fine pérd dann fénoir, mé jordï ankor, sou la varang, lïmiér i rant a flo, la vérdïr i débord… Dizon ou lé dëor ! Non va ! Lé konm si ou té dëor… Sou la varang i gingn anpar solèy, anpar la plï ; Ou lé an ndan alors' ? Non va, lé konm si ou té an ndan ! An ndan, an dëor, an minm tan : ou lé sou la varang.

Astër pran la pène ogardé koman varang i fé le fiér, koman lï fé dantèl… Soman in vré varang lé toujour paré pou akëy aou dann fotëy rotin, toujour dakor pou ki sérv aou in tass kafé, osinon pou lès aou fé la siès, kank ou la po toufé dann fésho moi d'janvié.

La-minm granpér té i joué kart ; la-minm lï té anvoy pou marmay tout sort kosa-in-shoz pou tak zot bèk. La-minm lï té rakont zistoir té fé për, té fé rir : zistoir Tijan-Grandiab-la-fès-an-or… Na 30 an talër lï la parti, kinmsa son fotëy i atann alï, si jamé défoi lanvi artourné i pran alï !
Sï l'tar, zami i débark : bonbon piman i poik, pistash i akokine, rhum aranjé i démay la lang. Par déryér baro, loin laba, l'ot koté la mér, la guér, la violans, la mizér : la tér i tourn torte…
Astër la brïne i rant… Sak i pass dann shemin, pass azot vitman ! Marmay, fé pa dézord, zafér lé sérië ! Ek dë-troi dalon, sou la varang, kit anou refér le Monn !

Dann la kaz, oussa i mète le varang ?

……..

Kossa i fé dessou la varang.

…….

Kossa i manje dessou la varang ?

…….

Kossa i vé di « Ek dë-troi dalon, sou la varang, kit anou refér le Monn ! « ?

……..

Laktivité No 4 : In baro, sa i apèl réspé ! Robert Gauvin

Demoun-dëor i prétan dir, pou in sharbonié, son boukan-la, lé konmkidiré son shato ! Koz pï pou la kaz in Rényoné ! Pars i rant pa konm sa dan son kaz-la. Avan n'rantré, na lalé é pardvan lalé na le baro. In baro, sa la pa aryienk in baryér… sa in frontièr, plïskesa ankor, s_____
Tansion pangar ou i fé konm demoun san-konprann, demoun fourné, demoun i sort déryér solèy ; se bann demoun i koné pa viv-la, i détak baro, i rant, i pass par koté la kaz, i sava, i sava minm, i sava ankor…
Mé ousa i sava la ?
Talër va rant dan la kïzine !
Akoz pa dan la shanm jïska ?
Oté, non ! i fé pa sa ! Tout Rényoné bien élvé va di aou : in moun komkifo i rèt debout devan baro, épïsa i apèl… i apèl… i apèl minm… I kri in kou, dë kou,… vin kou si i fo :
" Na poin persone ? "
" Na poin persone ? "
" Na d'moun ? "
Apèl aou, kri aou, kass out gozié si ou i vë ! Mé toush pa baro-la ! Mèt pa la min la-dsï ! Baro-la i apèl Réspé…
Défoi, par kou d'shans, in shien - ou la déranj alï dan son somèy - i mèt a aboyé ; in moun i sort dan la kaz, i vien koz sanm ou. Si ou s'tin démarshër, ousinon in fouké-zoizo-malër : bonjour-bonsoir… arwoir Pierre, tak baro ! Mé si ou i tonm moindreman in pë famiy, si ou st'in zami d'zami, si ou st'in moun komkifo, va resevoir aou, le bra, le kër, le baro gran rouvér !

Kossa i lé in baro ?

……

Kossa déssertin moune i fé kan i arive devan Baro ?

……

Koman Robert Gauvin i apèle banna ?

……

Kossa i fo fé kan ou i arive devan in baro issi la Rényon ?

……

Kossa i vé di « Mé si ou i tonm moindreman in pë famiy, si ou st'in zami d'zami, si ou st'in moun komkifo, va resevoir aou, le bra, le kër, le baro gran rouvér ! «

<u>Laktivité No 5 : Kisa la-di jardin kréol lé farfouyé ?_Robert Gauvin.</u>

Rant aou ! Pa bezoin la për !… Sa la pa jardin japoné, sa ; sa la pa jardin pandiyé konm dann tan Babylone ; sa la pa Jardin le Roi non plï ; sa jïs in jardin kréol sï la tér La Rényon !

Avans aou ! Shak koté lalé, ti palmis èk foujér i _____aminn aou l'onër ! In tralé flër i akëy aou : bèk zoizo, kë d'mimite, lang defë, gouyavié-flër, liane darjan, plui d'or…

Pou èt joli, sa lé joli,soman jardin kréol i rod pa rienk la boté… Isi ou lé kab trouv in grap tomat rézin, dë fëy kaloupilé, troi pti piman martin : in rougay, sa la toujour bezoin ! Na pou soigné osi ! Ala in bransh layapana pou la bone dijésion, ala sitronèl pou abat le nér, ala romarin èk matrékér po soign sézisman.

Epï kosak sré in jardin kréol si navé poin in pié gouyav, in pié mang, in pié mouroung ousinon in pié létshi ? Ah ! Sou pié d'létshi-la, bann gramoun la-konï pass le tan laprémidi, kan la shalër té i mont ; la, té i boir kafé, té i kass la blag, té i tri brèd pou l'diné.

Mé kél malfondé la-di jardin kréol lé an dézord, lé farfouyé ? Sa in boug i koz la boush rouvér ! Pars dann jardin kréol na rienk pou woir, pou santir, pou manjé, pou soigné : na jïs sak i fo pou bien viv !

Kossa néna dann in jardin kréol la Réynon ? ékri toute le bann nom le pié d'boi, le pié d'fleur néna dann le tèks ?

…….

……

Toute i anserve pou le même zafèr ? esplik

Appendix H

Creole teaching/learning resource (iii): See following pages.

Taken from: Georger, Fabrice. “Sirandane/Kosa in Shoz: 1.” Académie de La Réunion, n/d. https://pedagogie.ac-reunion.fr/fileadmin/ANNEXES-ACADEMIQUES/03-PEDAGOGIE/01-ECOLE/langue-vivante-regionale/Sirandane_1__C3_voire_C2.pdf.

Langue Vivante Régionale
Kosa in shoz : 1

Activité : 15 à 30 minutes, récréative et culturelle.
Le thème de la semaine : *I rès la kaz soman i kontinié aprann.*
Développer son imaginaire et jouer avec la langue à travers des devinnettes traditionnelles.

1. Li épisa trouv la répons pou bann sirandane. Tout i gingn oir dan la kaz.

1. Dévis mon kolé po trouv mon tèt
2. La barb mon granpapa i sort par la fenèt.
3. Mon dan i pik, i mord pa.
4. Le pti i vien rod manzé dan le vant son monmon.
5. Moin néna in zié dan le bout mon ké.
6. Tiktik dann koin.
7. In grin mayi i ranpli la kuizine.
8. Moin na le pié, mi marsh pa; soman moin lé kapab port demoune.
9. Moin nana kat pat, soman mi gingn pa marshé.
10. Karo lé blan, plantaz lé noir, i ramas èk lo zié.

2. Trouv bann répons la kashièt dan la griy térla.

Sirandane 1

L	Z	A	N	P	O	U	L
F	O	U	R	S	H	È	T
T	A	B	P	I	L	O	N
O	Z	P	A	P	I	É	E
T	F	M	L	I	G	A	Z
H	T	I	M	F	I	M	É
O	I	T	B	A	L	I	É
P	O	I	L	O	N	A	A

3. Poz bann sirandane demoune lé koté ou.

Appendix I

Conference programme for the International Day of Creole Languages and Cultures, October 2022: See following pages.

Taken from: LCF, Université de La Réunion. “Zourné Tout Nasion Pou La Lang Ansanm La Kiltir Kréol - Journée Internationale de La Langue et de La Culture Créoles.” Université de La Réunion, 2022.

40 ANS UNIVERSITÉ DE LA RÉUNION 1982 - 2022
AU COEUR DE TOUTES LES RÉUSSITES

FACULTÉ LETTRES ET SCIENCES HUMAINES
UNIVERSITÉ DE LA RÉUNION

Zourné tout nasion pou la lang ansanm la kiltir kréol

Journée internationale de la langue et de la culture créoles

Lcf UNIVERSITÉ DE LA RÉUNION

PROGRAMME

www.univ-reunion.fr

2000-2022

Dopi la lang kréol la rant dann ron la lang bann réjion la Frans,
kosa la fé & kosa néna ankor pou fé ?

Bilan de 20 ans d'intégration du créole comme langue régionale de France et perspectives

MATIN – 8h30-12h00

Sak i fé an kréol dann lékol, koléj, lisé. *Ce qui se fait en créole à l'école, au collège, au lycée.*

Shemin la fini pasé, shemin la désid trasé pou domin, shemin sré posib maziné.
Les chemins déjà parcourus, les chemins prévus pour demain, les autres chemins possibles

Ariv azot, i prézant la zourné
Accueil, présentation de la journée

Fabrice Georger, Université de La Réunion, LCF, « La politik rénioné parapor la lang », « *La politique linguistique réunionnaise* »

Michèle Nébot, Chargée de mission LVR 2D, Académie de La Réunion, « Partaz lékspérians parapor lanségneman la lang dann kolèj-lisé », « *Retour d'expérience sur l'enseignement du créole dans le secondaire* »

Giovanni Prianon, Lantant LKR, « Lékol, la sosiété, la grafi, … inn ot manièr oir, sat in roprézantan lo mond lasosiasion épila in profésionèl désі térin », « *École, société, graphie, autre regard d'un représentant du monde associatif et d'un professionnel de terrain* »

Logambal Souprayen-Cavery, Université de La Réunion, INSPE, ICARE, « Kréol l'INSPE, mét dobout in DU kréol, kalkil in sértifikasion kréol », « *Le créole à l'INSPE, mise en place d'un DU créole et question d'une certification pour le créole* »

Antoine Du Vignaux, Lerka, « Kréol dann milié domoun, prozé Limazinèr », « *Le créole dans l'espace public, projet Limazinèr* »

11h30-12h00 : Sobatkoz – *Débats* – **Lambert Félix Prudent**, Université des Antilles, créoliste

LAPRÉMIDI – 13h30-18h00

Kréol koméla èk demin : dan la sosiété La Réunion, kisoi pou la zistis, pou la kiltir, pou lékonomi, pou la kominikasion, koman pous pli loin ?

Créole et modernité : les défis à relever, l'implication de la nouvelle génération

Meila Assani, Université de La Réunion, LCF, « Koman Hip-Hop la rant dann la kiltir La Réunion », « *L'adaptation de la culture Hip Hop à la culture réunionnaise* »

Francky Lauret, Université de La Réunion, LCF, « Lir bann tèks fé pou fé ri la boush », « *Lire les textes humoristiques* »

Laurence Daleau-Gauvin, enseignante/Lofis/associée au LCF, « Lékipman la lang kréol (grafi, gramèr, …) », « *L'équipement de la langue créole (graphie, grammaire, …)* »

Shimeen-Khan Chady, Université de La Réunion, LCF, « Kréol ansanm kozman la zénès La Réunion avèk loséan Indien », « *Créole et parlers jeunes à La Réunion et dans l'océan Indien* »

Jean-Philippe Watbled, Université de La Réunion, LCF, « La roshèrsh an kréolistik : total kapital avèk karné pou domin », « *La recherche en créolistique: bilan et perspectives* »

Maéva Permalnaïck, Jérome Louis, Mathilde Ecormier, Université de La Réunion, LCF, « Karné pou domin », « *Perspectives pour demain* »

Sobatkoz épila takaz baro lo zourné travay, *Débat et fermeture de la journée d'étude*

18h00 : Kabar fonnkèr pou W.Z. dan la kour la Fak Lékri & Sians Domoun
Récital pour W.Z., patio de la faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines

18h45 : Lo group la muzik Maël, minm plas
Concert du groupe de Maël, patio

Comité d'organisation

- Laboratoire LCF
- Département des études créoles