
Honoring Languages: Review of *Creole Composition: Academic Writing in the Anglophone Caribbean*, edited by Vivette Milson-Whyte, Raymond Oenbring, & Brianne Jaquette

Pauline Baird

Dr. Pauline Baird is a teacher, sister, scholar, friend, and book author. Her research interests include Caribbean village women's oral histories, community-based rhetorics, and English Language Education. Her writing has appeared in *JALT*, *The Micronesian Educator*, *Callaloo*, and *Creative Engineering Design Education*.

The bell crier: [In the voice of a Caribbean street market vendor]
Biling Bang! Biling bang! [Sound of the School Bell he rings]
Notaaace!
Read it 'ere! Read it 'ere!
Teacha dem a-teach Reggae inna school
Pickney dem writin 'bout dem tings
Dem a-call it Creole Kampa-zi-shan
Dem seh, it gat value inna U-Wee [UWI!]
An' value inna village, tuh!
Deh using we own ting!
Read it! Read it! Read inna dis book
- Creole Kampa-zi-shan!

Dear Reader,

In traditional Caribbean villages such as Buxton Village, where I grew up, a bell crier went from street to street ringing a school bell. In a booming voice he proclaimed important announcements and news beginning with the word "Notaaace." Children imitated him shouting, "Notaaace"; mothers stopped hanging out their washing; men halted their bicycles; everyone within the hearing of the bell crier's voice stopped and listened. After listening, they carried the news further, by word of mouth: *Mattie tell mattie an' frien' tell frien*. Before the bell crier reached the outer areas of the village, many villagers would have already heard the news. Furthermore, many of those people continued to circulate the information by word of mouth.

Like traditional bell criers, Vivette Milson-Whyte, Raymond Oenbring, and Brianne Jaquette, along with 14 contributors to *Creole Composition*, announced, "We are here. And we doin' dis—'write [ing] our way in" to academic spaces (2019, p. x). After reading this book, I shared their news with my community via Facebook and YouTube.¹

¹ See "Yuh Mean Yuh Go Write Am Too?: A Tale of a Note Composed in Class" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2YuovWjTuw&t=1s> and "Wah Lisa Bin Seh?" < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ckeNMEdEteY&t=19s>>



Abstract

Ways of valuing and celebrating Caribbean creole languages and their users present challenges to educators, students, regionally and internationally. *Creole Composition* focuses on how to foster composition pedagogy among Creole-influenced language users. In this groundbreaking book, classroom teachers, scholars, and administrators offer an eclectic array of approaches with the aim of writing "in" Caribbean ways of composing." Teaching composition that is mindful of the impact of Caribbean Creole can have profound implications for ongoing scholarship, pedagogical frameworks, and writing program administration.

Key Words

creole composition, caribbean rhetoric, creole-influences languages, creolese, teaching composition

Consequently, this story, in which I use Creolese, is referenced in social discourse by people at university in language and linguistics, women and gender courses, and on other public social media platforms. Indeed, our Creole composition practices can carry all our cultural experiences with flexible and relatable ways of doing so! Dear Reader, as you read, please bear in mind the role of the bell crier and do likewise—take the news further to raise consciousness, to enhance pedagogy, and to transform communities.

Creole Composition (2019) provides current perspectives on postsecondary composition pedagogy, academic literacies, and research across multiple academic disciplines. Indeed, this intersectionality addresses Kevin Browne's (2013) argument that Caribbean vernacular orientations and practices fly beneath the radar of the discipline of rhetoric and composition. Caribbean institutions of higher learning must embrace Anglophone Caribbean students' Creole-influenced languages. In 366 pages, six sections, and 12 chapters, 17 classroom teachers, scholar-practitioners, and researchers propose ways of creating "uniquely Caribbean" writing pedagogies.

MY INTEREST IN CREOLE COMPOSITION

I am interested in *Creole Composition* because I, too, have and use my Creole-influenced languages. I was raised and educated in the Caribbean, in Guyana, a former British Colony, where we speak Creolese, English, and a mixture of both. Writing was a part of my elementary and secondary school education. However, process writing prevalent in first-year composition instruction in many tertiary institutions in the United States had not taken hold when I was a student in Guyana during the 1980s and the 1990s. Writing expectations were high. In the top-tiered secondary schools, students' written language had to measure up to the Standard British English. Some say we had to be *more British than the British*. At university, teachers assumed students could write essays well, using Standard British English. However, students' writing was heavily Creole-influenced, and those students who used "bad English" got red ink marks on their assignments. Teachers made those marks to highlight the errors the students made. Common remarks about who speaks "bad English" or "broken" English are still prevalent today, in Guyana.

In a letter to the editor of the *Kaiteur News* in Guyana, the final-year students of the class Language and Society II, at the University of Guyana, Berbice Campus, wrote their perspectives on the functions and values of Creolese in Guyanese society. They argued that Creolese language is governed by linguistic systems that are distinct from English and that "Guyanese Creole is not a 'broken' or 'substandard' dialect of English" (para. 5). Three years earlier, Henry Singh (2019),² in a letter to the editor of *Kaiteur News* titled "Creole versus Standard English," concluded that users of

Guyanese creole are "unfairly stigmatized." In the same article, Singh (2019) concurred with Hubert Devonish, a distinguished professor of linguistics at the University of the West Indies, Mona campus, who revisited the role and value of Creole languages in March 2019. Devonish argued that the "pervasive and longstanding false perception that those who can only use the Guyanese Creolese are 'not bright' has naturally stymied the educational and social progress of these 'lesser than'" (para. 2). In essence, Devonish and Singh contest the commonly held belief that not only do students who speak Creole languages lack confidence, but also they face a future likened to a "wasteland" due to effects of their Creole-language dominance. These observations indicate continuing concerns about how the "standard and nonstandard, allowed or stigmatized affect[ed] the speech and writing choices" on people in academic and civil society (p. x). Teachers still castigate students about their "broken English," even though such English is dominant in the home, in commercial transactions, and in social life.

APPROACHES TO CREOLE COMPOSITION

The need for writing pedagogies that bridge the gap between Caribbean rhetoric and composition pedagogy in the Caribbean have become apparent, with composition instruction gaining prevalence (Baker-Bell, 2013; Bell & Lardner, 2005; Canagarajah, 2006, 2009, 2013; Haddix, 2015; Milson-Whyte, 2015; Nero, 2013, among others). However, the question remains, Where do we start? Carmeneta Jones and Jacob Dryer Spiegel note that in the discussion of composition pedagogies, personal and academic experiences must not be viewed as remote and "separate strains of our existence" but rather part of an integrated curriculum (p. 19). However, what can pedagogies of integration look like? Integrated strains of composition pedagogies invite, include, and celebrate Caribbean people's personal experiences, reflections, and languages.

As an example, in Section One, "Reflections on Linguistic Turmoil," Jones and Dryer Spiegel address postsecondary educational pedagogy and regional controversies to give a cursory background to their Creole composition pedagogy. These teachers use reflection to illustrate the value of personal narratives in composition. Jones teaches students to draw on their own language histories as material or subject matter for composition. Jones reflects on her Jamaican Creole language-learning histories to challenge the notion that local languages should be abandoned at the school-house door. Her work adds to the efforts of building up Caribbean studies writing scholarship.

Jones proposes a bilingual framework for Caribbean writing instruction and various strategies to teach writing to build literacies. For example, she uses student-generated stories based on African

2 A University of Guyana lecturer in the Use of English.

stories, teacher-created poetry of mixed Creole and English, reader's theater, and videos. Students and teachers can use the Creole languages of the wider community and English to carry out all their cultural experiences as a means of developing literacies and teaching strategies.

To explore the sociocultural impact of Creole language use in higher education, like Jones, Dryer Spiegel's students examine language through their cultural lenses and learn about varieties of languages, including their own—to embrace or not to embrace them. Overall, Jones and Dryer Spiegel's work opens the door to early intervention at the preuniversity level. These examples illustrate that students do not have to wait until they get to graduate school to experience composing with Caribbean rhetorical practices, as I did. In my dissertation and projects that followed, I used an "asking methodology" practiced in my village to enact a cultural rhetorics approach to Caribbean rhetoric. This methodology is called "Wah dih story seh?" It is a saying and question Guyanese use to greet each other and to share news. I used the question to gather stories, which I delivered to my professors, my fellow graduate students, and my village community. I did not translate my Creolese language because I believe I created opportunities for my audience to ask questions and to learn.

My dissertation, "Towards a Cultural Rhetorics Approach to Caribbean Rhetoric: African Guyanese Women From the Village of Buxton Transforming Oral History," is written in English and Creolese. It consists of several letters written in Creolese and English language to "Young Buxtonians" (natives of Buxton Village, Guyana) and my dissertation committee. I recorded, told, and explored the theories behind Buxton Village women's stories after interviewing Buxton women living in the Bahamas, New York City, and Buxton Village.

My purpose for addressing the young Buxtonians directly in Creolese language is to affirm that our stories matter and that those stories have a place in tertiary education. Further, I demonstrated how I could bear our stories and culture using our Creolese language and village women's stories to teach the dissertation committee. Indeed, as the editors of *Creole Composition* opine, our Creole languages can bear all our experiences. In essence, I transported our stories—the women and my stories—and wrote them in, thereby making space for our oral histories, language, and voices to be seen and heard.

Making space for Creole composition endeavors requires allies in the discipline of rhetoric and writing, the village, and Caribbean scholar-mentors. Here is a story: When I decided to conduct oral-history research to showcase the voices and stories of the women of my village, I lost my dissertation chair. Weeks before writing my dissertation proposal, I consulted with several Guyanese scholars at a meeting of the Guyana Cultural Association, New York, asking their perspectives on my writing about the subject

of voice. I wanted to know if that kind of research was needed. It was, they said. Next, they asked me who I was going to interview, and I explained I would conduct research only in archival written texts—there would be no interviews. They did not support my idea of not talking to village people.

As I regard them now, those scholar-mentors implored me to *write our people in* by talking to villagers directly. Hence, my conviction grew that I should write our people's stories in our language *in my dissertation*. I shared this story of how I came to my conviction—that not only should I talk, I should write about voice by involving human subjects—with my dissertation chair. She told me in no uncertain terms that she could no longer be my chair.

I was determined to defend my dissertation that included oral histories of women from the village, and I did. My new dissertation chair, Andrea Riley-Mukavetz, is an Indigenous scholar who understood the need for my research that included Creolese. My story is just one example of scenarios that both deter and inspire students at the tertiary level when pursuing writing studies in and with their Creole languages. I wrote a dissertation in a format I had never seen before. It includes the natural Creolese language of the women. Many Caribbean people appreciate the passing on of their oral traditions in their particular forms and manners. For example, the maxim "as mih buy am suh mih sell am" is a way of providing verbatim records and transcripts of women's oral stories. Thus, I enacted "as mih buy am suh mih sell am" to demonstrate how to write Caribbean people into composition, thereby celebrating our languages in composition, teaching, and research endeavours.

Dear Reader, many people remain disdainful of Creole-language use for academic purposes. Hence, to extend this discourse of making composition work for Caribbean students in postsecondary education, I envision professors supporting more writing projects that use Creole languages. Like Jones, I use personal experiences, situate family stories, and make visible hidden, forgotten, and practiced traditions that are part of Caribbean rhetoric to provide digital storytelling weekly on Facebook. My public pedagogy teaches my community inside and outside the academy that village people deh right 'ere, and we/I bring dis language wid me/us and straddle multiple educational domains and media. It is vital for our stories of how we compose our narratives to exist on social media, where young people socialize. Our stories and language must take their places alongside other dominant stories. If not, students will come to think they are not valued.

HOW CREOLE COMPOSITION INFLUENCES MY COMPOSITION PEDAGOGY AT UNIVERSITY

As a teacher of the first-year composition course at the University of Guam, I use integrated pedagogies. For example, in the introductory course material, I share Caribbean proverbs: *Waan*

Dutty Build Dam and *Waan Cocoa Full Basket*.³ In doing so, I set my expectations that the students should persist and progress by taking small steps towards writing their essays. I explain that the proverbs are words of wisdom from African Caribbean grandmothers, passed down over generations. I invite the students who are mainly from the Asia Pacific region to share what they bring to the classroom from their own cultures. The students' answers become part of their first written assignment. Students write letters to themselves in which they explain the histories of their names after researching within their families. For this assignment, students are encouraged to use their languages. Many of the students express pleasant surprise. Many say it is the first time they have been asked to examine and use (any and all) languages. The students use Chamorro, Tagalog, gaming language, Janglish, religious language, slang, and the like. The students also conduct Internet research on World Englishes, code meshing, code switching, and translanguaging and share their reflections during their in-class discussion forum. Consequently, the students make connections to their linguistic and geographic communities, identity, language and composition, among others. Indeed, *Creole Composition* can advance efforts to open doors for students in the Caribbean and globally to see and hear each other's communities and humanity.

[Street Corner 1] *The bell crier: Biling Bang! Biling bang! Notaaace!*

Take notice!

Trouble deh a-dih classroom.

Plenty trouble, mih seh!

But plenty remedy deh inna dis book, tuh!

Read wah it seh

Hear wah it seh!

The authors in *Creole Composition* alert readers to the idea that in teaching composition studies, one must be aware of certain conditions, namely 1) students' Creole-influenced language in written discourse persists and often affects students' writing processes; 2) students' Creole-influenced language can also affect students' ease of access to education and their achievement of social equity; 3) many students live with the constant reminder that their native tongue is a hindrance; 4) some students place marginal value on Caribbean Creole-language use and its role in their own linguistic diversity; 5) even Caribbean academics do not hold the use of Creole-influenced language in school in high regard; 6) academics also use Creole-influenced languages, unconsciously. What these conditions highlight is that there are opportunities for more development of visible scholarship on Caribbean-oriented postsecondary writing pedagogy. Teachers can use this resource to learn more about composition pedagogy and the needs of Caribbean writers at home and abroad. Due to migration, many Caribbean students attend university overseas and *Creole Composition* is a valuable resource for meeting the needs of those students. *Creole Composition* (2019) should be part of the assigned readings of all

students in teacher training. Likewise, it should be a part of graduate school reading and seminars for Ph.D. students in rhetoric and composition, at the very least.

Having taught in the Caribbean, Guam, Japan, and Palau, I wish I'd had a book like *Creole Composition* earlier in my career because I would have learned how to navigate teaching writing to students with Creole-influenced languages. With this book as a resource, classroom teachers can use the examples provided to help students negotiate meaning and written expressions in their home and school languages. The compound effect will be that we, educators, will develop our own strategies and broaden our practices that reflect how people "do" language in life, pedagogy, and scholarship (Pough, 2011).

As a Caribbean Creole-influenced person, teacher, and scholar, my interests are intersectional scholarship, theories, classroom exercises, discourses, case studies, and autobiographies. Hence, I welcome the use of poetry, song, and drama as writing inventions and composition starters. Students interact with a Caribbean writer by reading excerpts from Jamaica Kincaid. For example, in one of my university's advanced composition classes, students examined voice in poetry, letters, video essays, and their writing alongside scholars' works. I have used Jamaica Kincaid for discussion about voice and composition among first-year college writing students. Going forward, I could include excerpts from Amy Carpenter Ford or several of the scholars mentioned earlier to situate and constellate how they and others do composition.

In my experience, undergraduates can and do want to read scholarship about writing that informs them of how others write. I envision that if teachers take an integrated or eclectic approach of including scholarship from African American and Caribbean writers, among others, they will open up conversations on inclusion, identity, equity, and empowerment even at the undergraduate level (Baker-Bell, 2013; Carpenter Ford, 2013; Gilyard & Richardson, 2001; Haddix, 2015; Jackson, Michel, Sheridan, & Stumpf, 2001; Kincaid, 1978).

Creole Composition (2019) celebrates hybrid approaches to composition that incorporate the linguistic diversity of Caribbean people. A pluralistic approach advances effort aimed at enhancing writing studies that is more "agile" in "meeting the needs of "diverse student populations" around the world (Milson-White, Oenbring & Jaquette, p. 7). However, what are some ways of advancing more inclusive Creole-influenced language pedagogies? Educators can do the following:

- 1). Use reflective writing and draw on their own teaching experiences, case studies, and research to learn the best ways to teach writing to students with Creole-influenced languages. Provide students with readings about Edward Kamau Brathwaite's use

³ Waan = One

of Nation Language. Nation Language includes African language retentions, diaspora languages, and everyday expressions of Caribbean people. I envision students examining their language with fresh eyes to negotiate their written voice and identity, among others (Dryer-Spiegel, p. 99).

2). Include students in the discussions of research and practice to demonstrate how Creole-influenced languages of Caribbean students can be celebrated, used, and valued in academic writing courses. More discursively, advocates of code meshing in composition seek to empower students to communicate using their knowledge of various Englishes (Milson-White, 2015; Young & Martinez, 2011). That said, what are some ways of teaching students with Creole-influenced languages?

BACKGROUND, PAIN POINTS, VISIBILITY

Milson-Whyte, Oenbring & Jaquette (pp. 3-7) argue that the state of postsecondary writing pedagogy in the Anglophone Caribbean is in flux due to a dearth in three key areas:

- 1) the application of composition scholarship and a rhetorical base,
- 2) outmoded Anglophone writing instruction, and
- 3) dueling systems of education (British and U.S.).

Furthermore, although writing is taught at the postsecondary level, scholarly writing in the Anglophone Caribbean has mostly come from applied linguistics and U.S. institutions. Scholarship addressing composition outside of the United States tends to be situated in studies on the communicative aspects of language use—translanguaging and translanguaging, as noted in the works of a leading scholar, Suresh Canagarajah. In sum, imported composition models continue to influence composition pedagogy unduly.

Traditionally Caribbean postsecondary educators adopted colonial and neocolonial models of composition. Educators drew on pedagogical principles from Britain and the United States, respectively. Teachers placed heavy emphasis on the current traditional model of written discourse. Written fluency was determined by grammatical correctness, lofty language, and elegant style in colonial models of academic writing and overall students' writing as finished products was privileged (*Creole Composition*, 2019).

Currently, some Caribbean higher education institutions are adopting U.S. composition pedagogy. Students experience an iterative process in which they produce several written drafts of their essays; however, there is no unified approach to the teaching of composition.

Three overarching concerns are:

- 1) How we teach students to view themselves as writers;
- 2) How pedagogy is “inextricably linked to how we teach them to view themselves as people and as citizens of their countries and the world”;
- 3) How we can create a praxis for teaching writing that is both uniquely Caribbean and also draw[s] on previous international studies regarding best practices at the post-secondary level (p. xi)

The good news is that Milson-Whyte, Oenbring & Jaquette place Caribbean Creole language studies in the discipline of composition studies and expose several ways of being heard and seen. The authors advocate for Caribbean Creole-influenced writing. A strong pro-Caribbean writing focus is a “view of the writing classroom [that] has not historically been part of writing instruction in the Caribbean, but it is gaining prevalence as the pedagogy of composition is being more widely considered in the region” (p. xi). Hence, *Creole Composition* is a welcome resource that situates students' writing with(in) both national and global educational conversations.

The bell crier: Biling Bang! Biling bang! Notaaace!
[Street Corner 2]

Take notice!

Bad feelings 'bout dem writing

is wah dem pickney does feel, inna school.

Island time a-cause plenty trouble.

Dem teacha fed up wid dih late coming

and dih late assignment, from college pickney!

Plenty trouble?

Plenty remedy deh inna dis book, too!

Read it inna Section Two!

The culture of “island time” and traumatic learning experiences present a challenging teaching environment. In Section Two, “Empirical Studies of Attitudes and Time Management,” Christine Kozikowski and Melissa Alleyne call for more empirical studies on time management and attitudes towards composition. In “Academic Writing in the Caribbean,” Alleyne argues that attitudes matter. No doubt is actual student engagement in writing important; however, a composite of sociocultural conditions is integral to her belief, such as the Creole-influenced language user's motivation, preparedness, beliefs about writing and performance, and academic expectations to be considered. Indeed, an approach to writing that considers how students writing “practice” drafts will raise students' self-confidence, lower anxiety, and heighten their regard for the value of skill building in writing. Kozikowski's study “Teaching on Island Time” can help teachers connect procrastination, island time, and final grades to demonstrate to students the mismatches between their perceptions and the realities of their performance. In the Jamaican context, teachers overuse the term *expression* to classify various errors in student's writing. That said,

teachers' written feedback often lacks uniformity and tends to be harsh and vague.

Overall, *Creole Composition* gives teachers and researchers examples of frameworks for change and growth, including exploring pedagogy and research on Creole-influenced composing practices, with(in) and outside of the classroom located physically in the Caribbean. Bear in mind that many Caribbean students attend school in the United States, where they are stigmatized, misunderstood, and placed in remedial classes. A broader understanding of their literacies extends research in Caribbean students' writing (Nero, 2006). Consequently, the authors make appeals for more empirical studies on a) current attitudes towards educating students who use Creole languages inside and outside of academic settings, b) Caribbean people's perspectives on promoting multilingualism, and c) teaching strategies within postcolonial Anglophone Caribbean education. A postcolonial hybrid framework advances Caribbean Creole-influenced writing at the postsecondary level, at home and abroad. For interventions, they draw on empirical studies, classroom pedagogy, and personal reflection to outline a more visible approach for recognizing and incorporating Caribbean rhetoric in schools and civil discourse (Browne, 2013).

The bell crier: Biling Bang! Biling bang! Notaaace!
[Street Corner 3]

Listen nah!
Nuff-nuff language deh in dih inna classroom.
How fuh grade dem pappa?
Dih scholars got good news!
Dis story good fuh all kind people from all ova, dih world!
Here nuh, if you eva got problems
wid how dem teacha does mark
yuh writin' and gramma,
find out some a-dih reason dem!
Mouth open, story jump out!
Look-oo 'ere
Eye-tellin' yuh!
Leh we talk 'bout Section Three
Inna dih book

In Section Three, "Perspectives on Language and Error," Annife Campbell addresses the systems for grading and student's and teacher's attitudes towards writing. Campbell's essay "Understanding the Shifting Marking Community's Response to Students' Writing" provides quantitative and qualitative data gathered from teachers in three disciplines at one campus of the University of the West Indies. If classroom teachers and administrators are interested in interdisciplinary writing, they can leverage these interdisciplinary research data on assessment, grammar, and translanguaging Campbell provides.

Daidrah Smith and Michelle Stewart-McKoy argue for "Balancing Composition and Grammar." A bilingual approach in early formal education to teaching grammar can teach a wide range of

Creole-influenced students. At a teacher's training college in Guyana, one of my professors argued that we must teach English with an English-as-a-second-language approach. Doing so, we would position our students as multilingual. The extent of her conviction ended with the argument. She presented no methodology nor training on how to implement her view.

Many student's first language is Caribbean English Creole (Ali, p. 258). Indeed, we spoke English and Creolese, with the latter not formalized and used in written discourse. However, the absence of formal bilingual instruction in schools does not mean children receive no instruction. I remember my parents and other children's parents continually translating our Creolese into the English language in my home or on the street. For example, if while walking down the road we remarked, "look wah duh man ah-du," an adult might instruct us this way: "Say after me. Look at what the man is doing." We had to obey. Sometimes their version of Standard English was not accurate; nevertheless, those parents or adults would still instruct us. Thus, even while I did not speak Standard English for most of my childhood, I understood the differences between the two languages because of my parents' informal instruction and instruction in school and church. These kinds of speech acts and pedagogy occur among many Guyanese and Caribbean people.

At home in Guyana, in my childhood, adults allowed us to speak Creolese language at home. If educators embrace the notion that students are multilingual, as my former professor implied, I envision teachers pivoting to teaching both Creole and English. They would lead with a direct understanding that students are writing to be heard and not merely to acquire a homogenized or monolingual standard. What is at stake then is students' positioning for writing with power and flexibility, having a strong cultural understanding of their language in a globalized context. Student writing samples, in Chapter 7, highlight, bridge, and extend discourse to include diversity and freedom in using "linguistic cyphers" transnationally (Mitchell, pp. 211- 216). Indeed, situating scholarship of Caribbean Creole languages and African American language broadens the scope of national conversations on students' rights to their own language. Overall, a framework based on more sociocultural understandings can inform a developmental approach to writing and marking writing. What would a regional approach to writing entail, however?

[Street Corner 4] *The bell crier: Biling Bang! Biling bang! Notaaace!*

One Caribbean, many languages!
One Caribbean, how fuh manage dih-writing administration
inna dih university?
How fuh do dih languages?
Section 4 got dih tings!

In Section Four, Clover Jones McKenzie, Beverly Josephs, and Tyrone Ali, content teachers and university administrators,

address some perspectives on academic literacies in “Institutional Contexts.” Ali, an administrator, showcases “Solving Problems and Signaling Potential in Writing Program Administration at the University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus (UWISTA)” over 15 years. What I appreciate is his clear overview of the immense work, direction, growth, and challenges of managing a writing program in a Caribbean university. Ali clarifies my understanding of the challenges administrators face. Writing in nested contexts in the Caribbean has comprised the academic programs, the writing center, the historical background of UWISTA since 1966.

Additionally, the current issues about and solutions to writing program administration (WPA) on several other campuses on various sites in Caribbean nations, and funding to operate them, all merge in a challenging mix. Ali offers a WPA’s perspective that educators can model to set up a similar venture. Ali outlines a multipronged approach that resembles a recipe for making a dish. His recipe draws on 14 years of well-marinated successful practice for change.

Ingredients and Method

First, carefully gather 7 academic writing courses and 3 language workshops and fold them into a mixture. Set aside to marinate.

Second, harvest input from the 9 full-time faculty, 20 part-time instructional staff, 3 clerical staff, and 1 research assistant. Examine carefully, and add these to the marinade for flavoring.

Next, sprinkle exactly 3 sittings of an English Language Proficiency Test. Annually ONLY!

Then, open up your web-enabled learning educational framework and add all the ingredients.

Let simmer consistently for 14 years.

Caution: Be sure to eyeball the whole dish and sprinkle in some oral and written communication exams for incoming students from time to time. It’s all good!

From time to time, scoop up and add some blended learning based on sound linguistic and pedagogical theories and drop them in, like dumplings, alongside several teaching practices.

Before plating, cool down with the limited services of the Writing Center.

Be careful when lifting the pot, as large programs are hard to manage, and successes get easily spilled.

Finally, plate and decorate against the backdrop of a campus that is evolving and using scarce resources. Be sure to take a side of harmonizing goals. Pick from the various disciplinary side dishes, as you like (p. 250). Overall, Ali’s recipe for the writing-program-administration plate makes space for supporting strategies, with a sprig of fresh spiral learning, and garnished with varied writing assignments and assessments.

Big-up oono self!

This dish is fit for all palates, including those of finicky and picky faculty, among others.

[Street Corner 5] *The bell crier: Biling Bang! Biling bang! Notaaace!*

If they like to tell stories, let dem talk in class!

Join up dih classical wid dih Caribbean.

Nothing wrong wid dat?

Gud, gud strategies fuh do dat! Inna dih book!

Read dem in 5 and 6!

Section Five offers “Regional Perspectives: Archipelagic Thinking.” The authors Raymond Oenbring and Valerie Combie call for solidarity and purpose. Thus, against the backdrop of Tyrone Ali’s writing program discourse, Raymond Oenbring returns to classical rhetoric and orality and situates Caribbean rhetoric (Browne, 2013). Oenbring, in “The Small Island Polis,” in Chapter 10, suggests the use of code meshing to address the “complex realities” and polarizing factors of how individuals “do language” in context. I admit, when Oenbring drew my attention to the study of classical rhetoric through progymnasmata, he piqued my curiosity. He connects oral presentations to classical rhetors. He uses orality to help students make historical connections to classical rhetoric and Caribbean rhetoric, especially Nation Language. Oenbring uses group discussions and oral presentations as part of students’ independent and class projects to make their arguments in Creole languages. Teachers of first-year writing can follow his step-by-step explanations and examples of how to lay the foundations of developmental and conceptual scaffolding in teaching argument (p. 278–80). That said, Oenbring is concerned that some teachers might fear that discussion-heavy lessons will take away from students’ time on task in class.

On the contrary, I believe time spent on oral arguments as invention exercises and main projects will be well spent. This strategy benefits me, and can do the same for others teaching writing to students from primary oral cultures, such as Pacific Island cultures. For example, my students have made video arguments and clear connections to writing in college. Those students can also examine their oral practices and find the strength to launch into other cultures’ traditions, such as the Greeks. In sum, students of Caribbean, African, and African American cultures, among others, can spend time drawing on familiar rhetorical

practices to understand the unfamiliar and develop critical thinking (Banks, 2011).

In Section Six, “A Way Forward,” Clover Jones McKenzie, Trescka Campbell-Dawes, and Heather Robinson argue for a pluralist approach to composition in the postcolonial era. To that end, Robinson, citing Shondel Nero (2006), posits that students will validate “a multiplicity of Englishes” from within the Caribbean (p. 330). Writing should enable students to construct their identities and position themselves as writers alongside, with(in), and among other languages. The way forward is to cultivate people who manipulate language intentionally to value the writing they produce.

McKenzie and Campbell-Dawes examine Creole language interference and its role in the teaching of Caribbean Standard English (CSE). They argue that teachers themselves struggle to distinguish standard and nonstandard English due to their own Creole-influenced language use. Standards for passing required courses and meaningful learning are some of the solutions the writers offer. Combie suggests that scholars, researchers, and practitioners unite to share resources to build writing studies in the region. Educators should promote multilingualism for the Creole-influenced language classroom as a seedbed. On the one hand, they should capitalize on teaching moments as students use languages. On the other hand, they should implement teacher training, among others. One worrisome suggestion is that students take multiple levels of English composition courses like those in the U.S. higher education system. I wonder if it is worth considering the knock-on effects on values, cost, and access to education within Caribbean economic structures.

The bell crier: Biling Bang! Biling bang! Notaaace!

Take notice!

Good news! Good news!

Dih author dem of dih book *Creole Composition* announce.

Dem seh that Caribbean Creole has value inna academia and civil society.

Read it here! Read it here!

Dem talk story, dem use poems fuh teach everyday literary art forms.

Yes, dem teacha usin’ Reggae, an’ other song, texts, and media fuh teach.

Reggae done been valued around dih worl’. Eh-eh!

Mek mih glad . . . deh using we own ting!

How dem do it? Read it!

Read it inna yuh own book!

Dear Reader, composition remains an urgent topic in Caribbean postsecondary education. *Creole Composition* is a necessary discourse that is long overdue. This book is not a quick read. It offers in-depth research, pedagogy, and personal experiences. Applying and expanding on the subject matter of Creole composition and its approaches will profoundly affect interdisciplinary research literacy and composition pedagogy. I look forward to experimenting with

code meshing in my first-year writing classes in the Asia Pacific region and the Caribbean.

Overall, I hear the authors of *Creole Composition* as bell criers. They have spread the news—scholars, students, parents, and universities worry about the academic literacies of students. *Creole Composition* is a groundbreaking work that does what it asks—to build a writing studies discipline. Moving more closely towards that goal—to write *weself* in—the scholars pooled their resources, showing that Caribbean writing studies programs, scholarship, and civil and professional engagements are possible. *Creole Composition* should be required reading for scholars and teachers working in the Caribbean. It is a valuable resource for Caribbean nationals, including those living in Europe, Canada, and around the world, in light or heavy concentrations, who are looking for ways to build Caribbean pedagogical frameworks.

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