

Université de Montréal

Creolising Translation, Translating Creolisation

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Université de Montréal
Faculté des arts et des sciences

cette thèse intitulée
Creolising Translation, Translating Creolisation

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"I Speak because nobody else can speak for me but me"
—Keith Boykin, "I Speak: A Poem",
The Millennium March, April 30, 2000.

RÉSUMÉ

Il semble que les réflexions sur la traduction se fondent principalement sur des conceptions des langues comme étant des entités normalisées et uniformisées et ne prêtent que rarement leur attention aux langues provenant de contextes socio-culturellement métissés, telles que les créoles. De ce fait, nous nous sommes proposé dans cette thèse d'explorer, dans un premier temps, le lien existant entre la traduction et les langues normalisées et, dans un deuxième temps, de savoir si l'on peut concevoir la traduction de telle manière qu'elle se relie non seulement aux langues stables et homogènes mais aussi aux langues hybrides et non standard.

Au terme de cette étude, il apparaît que la conception conventionnelle de la langue sur laquelle les théories de la traduction se fondent est née du contexte précis de l'homogénéisation et de la standardisation linguistiques. Nous explicitons comment ce contexte a évolué et son rôle dans l'élaboration des notions de base en traduction et nous remettons en question la validité de définir implicitement toute pratique traduisante à partir de ce contexte linguistique à l'exclusion de situations d'hétérogénéité et de frontières linguistique floues.

En contrastant le contexte linguistique de la langue normalisée avec celui des variétés polylectales telles que les créoles, nous mettons en exergue les défis que les continuums linguistiques posent aux théories conventionnelles de la traduction et signalons comment les contextes marqués par des langues non standard peuvent fournir de nouveaux outils discursifs qui aideront à (re)définir le rapport inter-textuel qu'on dénomme traduction. Ce faisant, ce travail tente de faire avancer la discussion sur la traduction des variétés métissées telles les créoles en dépassant la simple question de comment traduire les créoles pour arriver à une conception de la traduction qui en tienne compte implicitement.

Mots-clés : créole, traduction, théorisation conventionnelle, standardisation, creolisation

ABSTRACT

Reflections on translation seem generally to be based on conceptions that assume languages to be uniform and standardised entities, with little attention being paid to languages such as creole continua, which come from mixed socio-cultural contexts. Against this background, this study seeks, first, to identify the underlying link between translation and standardised languages and, second, to determine whether translation can be conceived in such a way that it relates not only to stable, internally homogenous languages but also to non-standard polylectal entities such as creole continua.

The thesis argues that the conventional concept of language used in translation studies is that which emerged from the specific context of linguistic homogenisation and standardisation. It explicates the evolution of this context and its role in shaping conventional understandings of translation. Further, it contests the validity of using this language context, to the exclusion of situations marked by heterogeneity and a lack of clear and distinct language boundaries, to define all translation practice.

By contrasting the language context of standardised languages with that of polylectal varieties such as creoles, this thesis attempts to shed light on the challenges continua languages pose to conventional translation theories and shows how contexts marked by non-standard continua languages might provide new insights into and shape or re-define the discourse on the inter-textual relationship called translation. In this way, it seeks to move the discussion on translation and mixed languages away from the question of how to translate creoles, towards a conception of translation that implicitly accommodates such languages.

Keywords: creole, translation, conventional theorisation, standardisation, creolisation

PREFACE

European nationalism has left a lasting impact on the definition of language, which has served as the framework within which activities such as translation have been defined. With the waning of European hegemony and the reorganisation of cultural spaces across the globe, alternative conceptions of identity have emerged and have influenced the manner in which language and language relationships are perceived. One such alternative identitarian frame is found in the synthesis implied by creolisation (Bolland 1998: 17), which constitutes a cultural unity evolving from the blending of diverse original elements (1998: 2). The social, cultural and political consciousness that called this unity into being, like European nationalism, has had important consequences on linguistic practices. Brererton describes the evolution of this consciousness in the Caribbean and the importance of language to the process:

the decades since the 1940s have been marked, in the French Antilles as well as in the English-speaking territories, by a search for an original and authentic Caribbean culture. The elites were largely preoccupied with demonstrating their command of European culture and their intellectual 'equality' with their metropolitan counterparts, but after the war a minority split away and made contact with the people, drawing inspiration from popular cultural and religious forms and trying to express in literature and art their aspirations and their anger. This movement, which had first begun in the islands with political independence (Haiti, Cuba), slowly spread to the colonial Caribbean, first to the British islands, finally to the French colonies, where, we have seen, the attachment to French culture was especially deep. It was characterized by an interest in popular languages (*Créole*, English Creoles), in Afro-Christian religion, in folk forms of dance and music, and in the daily lives of the masses. By the 1960s and 1970s this movement toward cultural authenticity was in full bloom. It was the counterpart of the contemporary search for effective national sovereignty, self-propelled economic development, and substantial social justice ... (Brereton 1989: 109).

Informed by this socio-cultural backdrop, this thesis argues that the inherent heterogeneity of creolisation can legitimately serve as a means of reflecting not

only on language but also on translation. Here, the view is that conceptions of language and translation arise from and are defined by social and cultural dynamics such as (European) nationalism. The investigation in this thesis constitutes part of a larger project aimed at interrogating the manner in which that form of nationalism has influenced language and generated conceptions that have been used to nullify and exclude other discourses (cf. Niranjana 1992: 49). For, I argue, this is what results when language studies make the products of the European cultural matrix the norms by which practices such as translation are defined. Besides, when norm meets power it becomes prescription, reified as systems which are imposed without interrogation or analysis.

To say that translation is the product of the relationship between derivative communicative schemas used by human beings may seem facile. Nonetheless, to contend otherwise requires a conception of what distinguishes translation from other communication practices. Till now, doing this has required hedging around the question of 'languages' and 'texts'. Yet, no satisfactory conception of 'a language' has been articulated in linguistics, though the acceptance by orthodox instituting authorities of what normally constitute languages seems sufficient for most translation theorists, whose mantra is that translation is an operation on a text in one language in order to produce a text in another language, or some variation on that theme.


Despite this consensus—unanimity even—concerning the nature of translation, cultural milieux, where language is not divided into 'languages' in the traditional sense, with their deployment of multifaceted repertoires, serve as a reminder (Mehrez 1992; Price 2000; Tack 2002) that translation theorisation has further to go in accounting for relationships between texts in language (as opposed to text in *languages*). The constant and rapid evolution of multivariate linguistic forms, guided by individual and communal choices, leave the notion of 'a language' increasingly in a limbo space or in a space reserved for

specialised discourses such as the writing of a thesis, where the hegemony of unilingual norms is enforced by instituting authorities such as universities.

The suggestion here is that prescriptive translation theory cannot productively generate conceptions of translation without assessing the historical, social, cultural and political context that shaped the core concerns upon which translation is based. Such a call is made particularly relevant, it seems, against the backdrop of the view that translations are essentially determined by the norms of the cultural areas into which they are received and that translatability and ancillary notions are epoch sensitive.

This thesis assumes that there are processes of transformation between all language varieties, whether they are whole languages, partial languages or hybridised languages. These processes of transformation are basic to communication between different groups and different individuals, who, because of their familiarity with language varieties (or elements of these) are able to construct meanings from texts generated by others. Yet, this process of making meaningful texts from other texts cannot be disconnected from other processes, such as those by which people learn to construct meaning in the first place and by which they, through formal and informal social structures, learn the manipulation of language. It is through these processes of socialisation that individuals build their linguistic repertoire and are able to create and understand texts, which often have only tenuous connections to neatly delimited entities called languages.

Part of what is needed in translation theory is a perspective which, when treating the question of translating non-standard languages, long seen as problematic, can implicitly account for the 'linguageness' of these varieties. The need for elaborate explanations of how to address the 'problem' of achieving 'equivalence' when these varieties are involved in translation arises because of the dominance of a particular conception of language. It seems that



the more logical solution would be to redefine translation to suit the language contexts of the peoples of the world, not vice versa. This work, therefore, calls for the creolisation of translation, that is, for a view of the linguistic variables involved in translation as being, at least partially, inherently heterogeneous and not constituting target language texts in the traditional sense, but simply 'texts'.

Additionally, it calls for a theoretical framework based on a discourse on (re)-cognition rather than one based on source and target languages. In this regard, translatability can be understood, particularly as it relates to polylectal, non-standard language varieties, ultimately as an attempt by a third person to close the recognisability gap between a reader/hearer's competence and a particular manifestation of a text. Indeed this is reminiscent of much of the work done in translation theory up to the present, but with the crucial difference that it eliminates the notions of target language and source language.

In light of the foregoing, this thesis points to a number of questions related to conceptions of language and translation, many of which cannot be answered here. However, it seems necessary to allow the investigation to call forth a new kind of reflection on linguistic processes that are fundamentally social and cultural but which are not reducible to language, culture or society. It is hoped that this call will generate responses within the academic community and beyond that will add to our understanding of the phenomena treated here.

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DÉDICACE

The amaZulu say: "*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*":

"a person is a person because of other persons".

It is in this spirit of *ubuntu*, humanness, *l'humanité*,

that I dedicate this work to

Donald, for the insight;

André, for the inspiration;

Richard, for the love,

malgré tout ...

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thanks to her for dreaming that one day one of her "grands" would tell a story; to my uncles and my cousin-brothers, who await my return ... thanks for being a faithful source of love and joy.

Tenki no brok no skwier!

Ro/

INTRODUCTION

0.1 The Opening ...

There seems to be no more opportune moment to speak from a creole space than the present, when the transformations wrought by globalisation, manifested notably in so-called 'hybrid' or mixed social, cultural and ethnic forms (language, music, religion, the 'browning' phenomenon, etc.) that resist traditional dominant conceptions of purity are being accorded unprecedented attention in the human sciences. From cultural studies to philosophy, linguistics and theology to sociology, the hybrid and the mixed have become objects of study or important tools in the analysis of the hegemonic and universalising biases that have underpinned theorisation in many academic disciplines.

The increased attention being accorded to mixed forms has been the result of a number of critical events and trends in the 20th century, primary among which have been World Wars I and II and the massive migration of people from developing to industrialised countries. The wars had important social consequences for Europe, its colonies in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, as well as for the rest of the Americas. They triggered assertive processes which sought to bring non-Europeans—particularly African Americans, Creoles, Caribbeans, mestizos—fully into discourses on what it meant to be human. Most emblematic of this "socio-cultural revolution" (cf. Alleyne 1980: 1-14), perhaps, was the change in perception about race, brought about primarily by the coming together of Afro-American¹, indigenous and other colonial servicemen in the fight against German ethnocentric nationalism².

¹ Afro-American is used here to refer to persons of African descent in the Americas.

² It must be noted, though, that Africans were particularly interested in fighting in the Second World War because it was a battle for their own freedom from colonisation by Fascist Italy, which had annexed parts of the horn of Africa. When Italy entered World War II on the side of the Germans, its designs on other parts of the continent were interrupted by Allied Forces (cf. Merah 1998: 91-92)

The wars saw the division of regiments along racial or ethnic lines, with non-European regiments often facing harsh and degrading treatment from their European counterparts and officers. Such treatment and the hostile reception many servicemen received upon their return to countries where Europeans dominated fed a growing sense of frustration with the ideals of democracy and liberty among these racialised groups across the globe. After the First World War, disillusionment with the continued marginalisation of non-Europeans was translated into action aimed at changing living conditions in many parts of the world. Among Africans and Afro-Americans, for instance, the experience of exclusion during the First World War and the manner in which Germany's African possessions were distributed after the war prompted renewed calls for action to counter institutionalised racism in the U.S. and the revitalisation of the Pan-Africanist Movement, starting in Paris in 1919 with the first of a series of Pan-Africanist Congresses. One of the chief agitators for change in the U.S., W.E.B. Du Bois, lashed out against the treatment of African Americans in the War. He enjoined them to commit to the struggle to rid themselves of such oppression. He pleaded with his confreres to recognise the urgency of the need for change, declaring: "By the God of heaven we are cowards and jackasses if now that the war is over we do not marshal every ounce of our brain and brawn to fight a sterner, longer, more unbending battle against the forces of hell in our land" (Du Bois 1968, quoted in Astor 1998: 126).

The fight for equality taken up post-World War I was carried over to the Second World War, which served as the real battleground on which the question of exclusion was fought and, to some extent, won. In the U.S., preparations for World War II brought to the fore a number of race related challenges. As the need for fighters grew, the military was forced to enrol "physically able African Americans in vast numbers" (Astor 1998: 161). While some communities in the South welcomed the establishment of training installations for African Americans, others, resisted them. Astor notes that "for the most part, not even money could persuade locals that a large number of

African Americans in their neighborhood was desirable" (1998: 161). Thus, participation in the war had once again triggered concerns about the justice of systems of exclusion based on race.

Despite these concerns, World War II, in contrast to World War I, became the context in which the practical implications of the ideals of freedom, democracy and justice were made real. In the aftermath of the war, divisions based on race increasingly became meaningless. The participation of different ethnic and racial groups in the war effort, fighting and working side-by-side, and the social and sexual relationships—even marriages—that developed between Europeans and non-European eventually forced new perspectives on race and the social and cultural barriers based on it (cf. Astor 315-316). By the end of the war, the process of transformation had gathered momentum, with ex-servicemen adding their voices to the calls for desegregation in the American South and for independence in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. Fresh from the war, African American ex-servicemen found themselves in the politically advantageous position of being able to demand equal treatment in the land of their birth. After all, they had helped to win a war against ethnocentrism and racial exclusion. The same was true for indigenous ex-servicemen, who took advantage of the political and social weaknesses of colonist Europe to demand their own liberation (Marah 1998: 93). Consequently, ex-servicemen from both World Wars contributed significantly to the birth of the civil rights movement in the United States and to the global decolonisation movement that followed the defeat of Nazi Germany and its allies.

The civil rights and the decolonisation movements represented two facets of the claim by marginalised groups for social, cultural and political legitimacy, each born of a specific type of relationship between Europeans and non-Europeans. On the one hand, the nationalist and independence discourse articulated by African and Asian colonials was predicated on the existence of indigenous polities and cultures of recourse. On the other hand, the discourse

on civil rights by the non-European peoples of the Americas, particularly Afro-Caribbeans and African Americans, was based on the right to be recognised alongside members of other groups as legitimate representatives of wider national entities. The countries to which American and Caribbean ex-servicemen returned had been marked historically by imported cultural forms which had replaced, grafted onto, or superseded native cultures; theirs were homelands defined simultaneously by Africa, Asia, Europe and indigenous America. As inheritors of this mixed background, Afro-American ex-servicemen had no indigenous forms to which to return. For them, then, the fight for freedom could not revolve around sovereignty and self-determination—although West Indians became integral to the postcolonial movement—but around redressing the social, political and cultural imbalances that characterised their lives in societies built on racial, cultural and social exclusion.

In addition to these struggles for a place for the 'hybrid' cultures of both African Americans and Caribbeans as legitimate components of the life and history of wider national communities (American, West Indian, etc.), there were factors such as the migration of workers to Europe following World War II. This migration served as the catalyst for according legitimacy to diversity and difference. After the war, there was an urgent need to rebuild Europe, a task which fell partly to the thousands who occupied the large colonial underclass. Already bad or declining socio-economic conditions in the colonies made the opportunity of post-war work in the Metropole particularly attractive. Much like poor Europeans, who had in previous decades seen migration to the Americas as a way out of social and economic hardships, migrants from the colonies saw the move to Europe as a means of improving their material condition. This migration—aptly described by Jamaican poet Louise Bennett-Coverly as "colonisation in reverse", a process which "tun history upside dung" (1966: 178)—resulted in the implantation of foreign religions, languages and

cultures in the Metropole. A recognisable—and in later years increasingly recognised—diversity had come to the colonial Centres of Western Europe.

Yet, if the increased interest in diversity, mixture and hybridity has been the result of the sea change which saw peoples such as Afro-Americans seeking to empower themselves and the entry of large numbers of immigrants into Europe, it was also the result of Europe's questioning of itself and the model of progress it had imposed on the vast areas of the planet that it had colonised. The magnitude of the Hitlerian adventure, which had sought to link Europeanness to a putative pure Aryan bloodline and attempted to cleanse the continent of groups such as Jews, Romas, Slavs, and homosexuals, classified as 'bastards' or 'sub-humans', had shocked Europeans into recognising the dangers of ethnocentrism and imperialistic ideals based on purist and essentialist readings of identitarian categories such as race, culture and civilisation, and the cult of a certain kind of particularism. Indeed, the grave consequences of Nazism and its twin Fascism had placed in question the long espoused hegemonic agenda that lay at the heart of many European projects.

0.2 ... Statement

It was within the social, political and cultural climate that followed World War II that greater space was made in academia for the study of forms which were not describable in terms of the nativist/Western dichotomy. The cultural forms of Caribbeans and African Americans, in particular, made it clear that mixed forms, long neglected by disciplines such as anthropology and linguistics, could no longer go unnoticed or unacknowledged. Pidgin and creole languages, for instance, after being overshadowed by indigenous languages for almost 400 years, were finally being paid attention that went beyond dilettantism. The syncretic religious, art and musical forms of Haiti, Jamaica, Cuba, Brazil, Trinidad etc., were also receiving attention. Despite the new consciousness, however, it took fields such as translation studies—the research area of this

study—a long time to begin examining questions linked to mixture in a consistent and serious manner. Consequently, these fields became home to research that was generally totalising and monolithic if not hegemonic in outlook.

When the question of mixture was taken up in conventional translation studies, the primary focus was on *how* to translate mixed language varieties such as creoles, with the assumption that translation involving such varieties differed in important ways from that of 'normal' languages. There seems a tacit understanding that in order to achieve normal results in extraordinary linguistic situations, alternative solutions should be sought. This thesis argues that before it can be assumed that the translation of mixed varieties is problematic, a preliminary question must be asked and answered, that is, whether the problems assumed to be linked to the translation of mixed varieties are attributable to the presence of these varieties in translation processes *per se* or to the manner in which language and translation have been traditionally conceived. Put another way, the question is whether the presence of mixed varieties in translation warrants different or special translation approaches or whether translation has been conceived in such a way that it implicitly excludes these varieties.

0.3 Mixed Languages

The language types that are the subject of this study are those variously qualified as vernacular, dialectal, mixed, creolised, pidginised, etc. In contrast to standard languages, which claim to be uniform and stable, these varieties, with their lexical, morphological, phonological and syntactic mixtures, tend to display more obviously the processes of mixture that have shaped them.

The term 'vernacular' refers to the common language of a place, while 'dialect' refers to "the uncultivated speech of the masses, changing from one locality to another" (Holm 2000: 2). These varieties, which result from both horizontal and vertical systems of interpenetration, often form continua transcending social, geographic and political borders. They are by nature heterogeneous and are more effectively defined by community-based and historical rather than structural variables.

Horizontal interpenetration refers to the mixing of two or more (assumedly homogenous) languages in such a way that the lines demarcating them as separate entities are blurred, as in the case of American-Mexican border 'Spanglish' and other such mixed varieties, while vertical interpenetration takes the form of (dia)lectal layering, in which different varieties coexist in a hierarchy that may include standard forms and, progressively, less standard forms. Examples of this kind of (dia)lectal layering are the Guyanese, Jamaican and Scottish language continua, each of which consists of a number of varieties, ranging from a standardised form of English on the one hand to various (dia)lects distantly related to it. These forms, which fulfil different social or cultural usages and functions, coexist and operate as a single, heteronomous system in the sense defined by Trudgill (1995 [1974]: 4).

Classifying mixed languages has been extremely challenging for modern language studies, which has been dominated by the structuralist and transformational/generative traditions, both of which stress the importance of language as system. Against the background of the emphasis on systematicity and structure in the description and categorisation of languages, Thomason asserts that "not all products of language contact can be unambiguously classified into one type or another" (1997: 75), though she proposes three broad descriptive categories for such 'languages'. These are bilingual mixed varieties, pidgins and creoles. Sebba proposes six descriptive categories, each a consequence of language contact. These are: 1) borrowing 2) code switching 3)

language convergence 4) pidginisation 5) creolisation and 6) language mixing. Four of Sebba's categories, borrowing, code-switching, language convergence and language mixing, are equivalent to Thomason's category of bilingual mixed varieties.

For Sebba, constant contact between languages increases the possibility of grammatical and lexical borrowings. Drawing on the example of Norman French and Anglo-Saxon (*circa* Norman Conquest) in England, he argues that borrowing (adoption and naturalisation are his preferred terms) occurs usually in instances where at least a portion of the linguistic community is bilingual. In the case of English, he notes, the small size of the Norman (French)-speaking population and the short period of contact ensured that borrowing would take place primarily at the lexical level. The mixing of grammar, he claims, is only likely to occur "when a large proportion of the population has a knowledge of both languages and/or the contact continues over a very long time" (1997: 11).

Code-switching is described as involving the switching between two languages by fluent bilinguals, assuming the social norms relating to language permit them to do so (1997: 12). According to him, this practice occurs in instances where large sectors of a community know the languages involved very well. A high level of fluency in both languages is essential since code-switching is assumed to have no effect on the grammar of the relevant languages. What results, however, is a "finely modulated personal blend of languages" each time a code-switcher speaks. Although the practice may seem haphazard, Sebba describes it as being "systematic and often purposeful" and based on choices such as which language is seen as more authoritative, intimate, or demonstrative of solidarity in particular situations (1997: 12).

One of the main differences between code-switching and language convergence as described by Sebba is that the former relates to individual usages while the latter involves community usages. Additionally, code-switching leaves the

'codes' intact, while convergence results in radical linguistic change. Convergence is the merging over time of the grammars of a number of languages. This process is usually a consequence of a high degree of bilingualism or multilingualism. The resulting unified grammar is used by members of all the relevant linguistic communities but each language retains its separate vocabulary and "individual members of [each] community may or may not be bilingual" (1997: 13).

Whereas the first three kinds of language contact phenomena described by Sebba require that some or all community members be at least bilingual, pidginisation involves speakers, particularly adults, who do not share a common language and, therefore, need to devise a means of bridging the communication gap between them. Pidgins are, thus, temporary languages whose speakers already have a native language (1997: 14). There are, however, conditions under which pidgins may persist under new forms. In situations where "a settled community comes into being quite rapidly" and where "the pidgin is the general language of communication", the pidgin may nativise and become a creole. According to Sebba, this nativisation is usually driven by children. Pidginisation and creolisation are discussed extensively in chapter 4.

Sebba's category of language mixing (or language grafting) is described as resulting from the grammar of one language being grafted onto the vocabulary of another (1997: 16). He observes that there are similarities between this kind of mixing and pidginisation and creolisation. However, while pidginisation and creolisation assume grammatical simplification, language mixing (grafting) does not. Rather, the grammar of one of the languages involved in the process "is taken over intact", with much of the lexicon of the other being incorporated into the new system.

While the focus in this thesis is on creoles, it constantly refers to other forms of mixed languages, since they pose the same problems in translation studies as creoles.

0.4 Structure

In addition to this introduction, the thesis comprises five chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter outlines the problem to be studied and sets out its theoretical framework, hypotheses, objectives and the approach taken to presenting the arguments. Chapter two deals with core theoretical concerns related to translation, while chapter three examines the influence of language standardisation on the emergence of dominant conceptions of translation. Chapter four traces the socio-historical development of creolisation, while chapter five, through an examination of the discourse on the translation of creolised materials, highlights the challenges that creolisation and linguistic heterogeneity pose not to translation *per se* but to conventional conceptions of translation. The chapter also examines the conventional treatment of mixed and non-standard varieties in translation and places special emphasis on identifying the differences between standardised and creolised contexts and on the manner in which translation studies has tended towards explanations that come from situations involving standardised languages. The conclusion, in the form of a synthesis of the main arguments of the thesis and a tentative proposal for translation as reformulation and transformation of text in language (and not in *languages*), a model which accounts more adequately for linguistic heterogeneity and indeterminacy, completes the thesis.

CHAPTER 1:

SETTING THE PARAMETERS

Beneath the turbulence of *árbol*, *arbre*, tree, etc., there is an island that repeats itself until transforming into a meta-archipelago and reaching the most widely separated transhistorical frontiers of the globe. There's no center or circumference, but there are common dynamics that express themselves in a more or less regular way within the chaos ...

—Antonio Benítez-Rojo (1992: 24)

1.1 Foregrounding

Most definitions of translation treat the practice as involving a relationship between two languages, where a message or meaning expressed in one is converted into a message or meaning in the other. This understanding of translation makes the separateness of languages a *sine qua non* of translation practice and translation theory. Thus, translation is an operation which attempts to bridge the intelligibility gap between two separate and distinct entities called 'languages'.

While translation scholars generally accept this as a sacred principle, few have sought to determine the validity of making conceptions of translation dependent on the difference between *languages*. Basing conceptions of translation on lingual differentiation has one of two consequences for mixed varieties: either they are excluded from theorisation because they do not qualify as 'languages' or they are treated as variants of varieties which can be treated as separate languages. Considering that vast sectors of the world's population use language in such a way that it is difficult to delimit their speech into closed systems, it is important to examine the manner in which translation theory has used lingual differentiation as foundational to the definition of translation, and

why. Tack points out the significance of this question in translation studies but notes that despite abundant theorisation, little attempt has been made "to conceptualise the sociological grounds of the lingual differentiation processes which drive people to translate in the first place" (2000: 213). This suggests that the difference between languages forces people to translate but that the social factors surrounding the differentiation between languages has hardly been addressed in the study of translation.

1.1.1 Devising Languages

The best known study of linguistic differentiation has been that of Heinz Kloss, who argues that speech varieties are treated as separate and distinct entities—languages—based on the principles of *Abstandsprache*, "language by distance", and *Ausbausprache*, "language by development". Kloss uses *Abstandsprache* to refer to the typological/grammatical differences between speech varieties, while he uses *Ausbausprache* to describe the social processes by which differences between speech varieties, usually sharing a common history or ancestry, are distinguished from one another. Thus, *Abstandsprache* serves to designate differences between languages based on mutual non-intelligibility while *Ausbausprache* serves to designate differences, often between partially mutually-intelligible varieties, which arise from conventions or norm setting processes (cf. Heinz Kloss 1967: 29).

Abstandsprache and *Ausbausprache* may be described as relational or (op)positional principles. A speech variety is seen as a language only in relation to another speech variety or in opposition to it. Thus, Euskara, because it is unrelated to Spanish, is seen as an *Abstandsprache* in relation to Spanish, and vice versa. Catalan, on the other hand, because it developed and was normalised from the same Latin base as Spanish, is seen as an *Ausbausprache* in relation to Spanish, and vice versa.

An examination of the notion of *Abstandsprache* suggests that it does not represent a type of lingual differentiation, as Kloss' commentary suggests, but a state of mutual non-intelligibility between different language varieties. To explain why this is so it is necessary to examine one situation to which *Abstandsprache*-type differentiation most commonly referred in the past, that is, colonial contexts involving standardised European *languages* and non-standardised indigenous 'languages'. While the distance between these languages was enormous, the assumption that this distance was indicative of the presence of different 'languages', one standardised and the other indigenous, masked important facets of the question of how languages have normally been defined. To begin, it must be acknowledged that standardised and non-standardised languages were not 'languages' in the same sense of the term. Non-standardised language varieties were often not definable in terms of the single, atomised entities that conventional linguistics studied. Standardised languages, on the other hand, were seen as constituting single cohesive language systems. Considering this state of affairs, the difference between standardised European languages and non-standardised indigenous languages could not be seen as that between two *languages* in the same way as one would describe Russian and English as two separate languages, for instance.

An additional challenge arises when dealing with the 'languageness' of non-standard indigenous varieties. In examining these varieties, the question of variability surfaces, introducing the problem of what *actually* constitutes the indigenous language, that is, according to traditional linguistics. No such problem exists for the standardised European language, since it is defined by its normalised variety, with related varieties being relegated to the status of 'variants' or 'dialects'. Thus, contact between a standardised European language and a non-standardised indigenous language raises questions of whether such situations involve a relationship between two languages—the standardised language and the putative indigenous 'language'—one of which had multiple dialects, or whether they involved a relationship between one language and

several 'languages'. The argument here is that if *Abstandsprache* is to be useful as a term designating lingual differentiation, it must be able to point to the languages that are being distinguished from one another.

Another reason for discounting the importance of *Abstandsprache* as a type of lingual distinction is that it fails the 'translatability' test, assuming translatability is conventionally defined. To assume that *Abstandsprache*-defined varieties are languages, would be to also assume that they are varieties that can enter into translational relationships. This, however, is not the case, since concerns related to linguistic/dialectal variability can never be avoided when dealing with non-standard languages. Decisions regarding actual lingual differentiation between the varieties comprising these 'languages' such as the determination of whether a variety is a dialect and what its relationship is to other varieties usually need to be made before or during translation. It is precisely because of the absence of differentiation between varieties—varieties which are components of polylectal networks—that is specifically lingual that conventional translation practices involving the language varieties of many pre-literate societies are usually construed as posing such great difficulties. In such instances, the need to find the 'language' amid multiple varieties makes it necessary to 'formalise' a stable entity on which interlingual relationships such as translation might be based. It is only after this variety is 'created' from the ambient lingual mess that there can be any meaningful conception, in the sense relevant to language theorists, of lingual differentiation. Thus, lingual differentiation, in the true sense, is primarily a process involving *Ausbausprachen*, 'languages by development', which has to be distinguished from the state of lingual non-intelligibility implied in the concept of *Abstandsprache*.

Yet, distance between language varieties has been perceived as being important to conceptions of translation. If translation is assumed to be the bridging of the intelligibility gaps between 'languages', then translation between unrelated

languages—assuming that these 'languages' can be identified—may be said to constitute the bridging of the 'natural' gaps existing between varieties (for example Russian and Italian). In such instances, translation may be seen as a necessary act because it is the most effective means by which an impenetrable text in one language variety is made comprehensible in another. By contrast, translation between related languages, depending upon how close the relationship is, may seem either necessary or superfluous. For example, in instances where language varieties, such as German and Dutch, are separated by relative distance, translation is deemed as simultaneously bridging the gaps predicated on intelligibility and those based on conventions such as standardisation. There is relative intelligibility between German and Dutch, hence, there may be instances where translation of a text written/spoken in either language is not an absolute requirement for understanding by a reader/speaker of the other. In this situation it is the intelligibility gap between these languages and the fact that they constitute two separate standards (they exist in different polities, have different writing systems and literary communities, etc.) combine to produce the German/Dutch lingual differentiation on which translation between the two varieties rests.

At the other end of the lingual differentiation spectrum are languages which are even more closely related than German and Dutch and which, except for historical and political reasons, would be considered dialects of the same language. Such is the case for isiZulu and isiNdebele, closely related Nguni languages, and Danish and Norwegian, closely related Scandinavian languages. Indeed, it is important to note that at some point each of these language pairs constituted what could have been considered a single polylectal language. If the need for translation were seen as depending on the existence of intelligibility gaps between these closely related 'languages', the practice would seem superfluous, since the differences between them is primarily conventions and community-based (the existence of different polities or different standards). All this points to the fact that translation between distantly related language

varieties and that between more closely related varieties constitute different kinds of interlingual practices, at least in terms of the types of gaps they bridge. This might be a difference of degree rather than a difference of kind; it is, however, critical to the debate on translation, since the practice has been conceived in such a manner to exclude activities called 'adaptation', 'transliteration' and 'rewriting', since they have been perceived as taking place within the same language. In this way, the limits of translation have been determined by whether the language variety in which a source text is written is considered the same as that of its target text. However, as the above examples demonstrate, the notion of difference or sameness of language is not premised on objective 'linguistic' criteria but on factors which change according to time, place and community dynamics.

The conception that translation depends on lingual differentiation arises from the view that languages by nature constitute mutually unintelligible entities. This idea ignores a number of critical dimensions of language. It, for instance, fails to consider that even within entities considered the same language, different specialised discourses may display a high degree of non-intelligibility. Non-intelligibility is, therefore, not specific to the differences between 'languages'. And, again, as suggested earlier, the level of intelligibility between varieties classified as separate languages may be so high that comprehensibility between them does not suffer for lack of 'translation'. It may, therefore, be concluded that intelligibility gaps are not essential to the distinction between varieties called languages, meaning that conceptions of translation which depend upon lingual differentiation rest on distinctions that mean very little. Ultimately, such conceptions make the interlingual differences resulting from lingual conventions such as divergent standards more important in delimiting translation and translatability than those resulting from intelligibility gaps. It seems, however, that translation theory has become fixated on languages because it has been accustomed to examining contexts where divergent standards coincide with intelligibility gaps (Italian and Russian, for example)

or even with relative intelligibility gaps (Dutch and German), making translation based on lingual differentiation the standard by which all other practices called translation are to be judged.

1.1.2 Dividing *Language*

The notion of *Abstandsprache* is more amenable to the description of state of non-intelligibility between individual language varieties (once those have been identified or 'created'). In the colonial context, this distinction between standardised European languages and indigenous languages was taken as a given. The fact that the differences between these varieties were so remarkable, representing situations of virtual non-intelligibility, made it relatively easy to see them as constituting separate languages. In fact, this understanding was consistent with the tendency in language studies to view mutual exclusivity, manifested and understood as the lack of mutual intelligibility, as delineating the existence of separate languages. Of course, this was at a time when indigenous languages were accorded significant attention, primarily by anthropologists and (ethno)-linguists. Bloomfield, in his introduction to the first issue of the American Society of Linguistics Journal, *Language*, points to the early nexus between ethnology and the study of indigenous languages. He claims that linguistic research at the time, certainly in the U.S.A., was conducted "chiefly by the ethnologic-linguistic school" (1925: 2).

The interest in indigenous languages was part of anthropology and ethnology's general mission of studying and describing indigenous non-European peoples, the intelligibility gap between their languages and European languages being seen as emblematic of the social and cultural distance between them. Yet, there were sufficient grounds on which to view indigenous and European languages as instantiations of the same underlying language reality, which, according to Bloomfield, "disregards the use or non-use of writing" (1925: 2). This meant that European and indigenous languages, despite their manifestation as

culturally different entities, could essentially be treated in the same manner. Even if indigenous languages were regarded as being inappropriate for use in particular fields, at least some of them were seen as having the potential of being used in expanded ranges and thereby, in a Darwinian sense, achieve the status of full 'languages'.

While indigenous languages fall within the framework under which linguistic differences were evident, mixed languages presented perceptual challenges. Clearly a mixed language, say the Jamaican mesolect, is not mutually intelligible with Russian. It therefore, could be treated, under Kloss' understanding, as a 'language', but only if Russian or languages as different from it as Russian were the only ones with which it had contact. However, because the Jamaican mesolect is in contact with a language—a standardised language—to which it is related, its 'linguageness' is called into question. If the Jamaican mesolect were to be compared to languages such as Russian alone, it would be treated as a separate linguistic entity. Compared to Russian and English, however, it is more likely to be treated as a version of English. This means that 'linguageness' is accorded based on social relationships within communities and not on intrinsic features such as distance, illustrating the unsuitability of concepts such as *Abstandsprache* and *Ausbausprache* as categories for defining languages generally. Ultimately, then, whether language varieties are treated as separate and distinct from one another is not a question of how mutually-intelligible they are but how they are seen by particular communities. This view accords primacy to human actions as the main ways in which 'languages' are named and defined.

A more adequate conception of lingual differentiation, therefore, is one which privileges the view that languages, including standard languages, exist as social and cultural artefacts. Linguistic anthropologists Irvine and Gal are two of the scholars who share such a view. These authors see the borders separating languages as open and, depending on prevailing social and cultural conditions,

susceptible to being changed. Their work focuses on the manner in which relationships such as those of power consolidate and change language borders. For Irvine and Gal, lingual differences often result from what they refer to as 'semiotic processes', of which they identify three: iconisation, fractal recursivity and erasure (2000: 36-37). Iconisation is the practice whereby outsiders distinguish themselves lingually from a community by 'indexing' the members of that community to particular linguistic traits. Distinguishing southern African groups (Khoi/San³ and Nguni speakers), for instance, by consonantal clicks is one form of iconisation (cf. 2000: 37).

Fractal recursivity describes the process of applying differences from one kind of intra- or inter-group relationships to another kind of group relationships. The adoption by the invading Nguni, for instance, of click consonants from the indigenous Khoi/San people as an additional marker of Nguni intra-group differences is one example of fractal recursivity (cf. 2000: 36-39). Among the Nguni, distance, *hlonipha* (respect), between different groups based on age, royal or non-royal status, gender and group relatedness was traditionally marked linguistically by the suppression of particular terms or by their substitution with other terms. When the Nguni came into contact with the non-Bantu Khoi peoples they borrowed and integrated the conspicuous click sounds which distinguished the Khoi/San from them. Consequently, what initially constituted a marker of distance (foreignness) between the Nguni and the Khoi/San was transformed into a marker of distance (*hlonipha*) between social groups among the Nguni themselves (2000: 39-46⁴).

Erasure describes the attempt by a community (and, one supposes, individuals acting on its behalf) to repress or ignore features which fall outside a stipulated linguistic framework. Aspects of these frameworks are often repressed in order

³ Irvine and Gal do not mention the San, but since they, too, make use of clicks in their languages, and, like the Khoi, are indigenous to southern Africa, I thought it necessary to include them here.

⁴ Irvine and Gal draw on the work of Herbet (1990) and Irvine (1990).

to represent the language of a community as a homogeneous entity. This practice results either in the effacement or active disregard of difference, unless that difference becomes part of an alternative social framework which threatens the position of the regulating community (2000: 38-39). Irvine and Gal cite as an example of erasure the attempt by colonial linguist Robert Needham Cust to document the language varieties of parts of West Africa. Cust declared that unless his cartographer could find a place on his map for a tribe (and by extension its language), it could not be included in his schedule (Cust 1883: 8). Irvine and Gal comment that Cust's approach suppressed a whole range of language situations, including the use of functional or superposed varieties, multilingualism, polysemous language labels and contested boundaries (2000: 51). He had effectively erased variables which did not correspond to his view of how the language situation of that part of West Africa should look.

By focussing on the flexibility of language frontiers, Irvine and Gal highlight the fact that entities called languages are socially constructed and that contact can change them. A different but related view of languages comes from Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, for whom languages are not homogeneous systems but focussed or diffuse practices related to acts of identity. According to these authors, focussing, which is the process by which speech varieties converge around specific norms may occur as a result of a) close daily interaction in a community b) an external threat or any other danger which lead to a sense of a common cause c) the influence of a powerful model such as a leader, a poet, a prestige group or a set of religious scriptures and d) the education system. These focussing agents help to shape conceptions of language, which themselves, are shaped by other social conventions (1985: 116). One such convention is writing, which, through its metamorphosis into printing which "hastened the standardization of orthographic conventions" (Holm 2000: 2), has led to the stabilisation of focussed language varieties. This has had two interlinked consequences: first, related language varieties which were formerly parts of heterogeneous networks ended up becoming atomised entities linked to

particular communities with a written/literary standard from which to draw a notion of 'a language', and second, linguistic studies of the grammar of languages became possible by resorting to this fixed written form of language.

1.1.3 Diffusing Language

Focussing is only one facet of the linguistic equation outlined by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller. Its opposite number is 'diffusion', which entails individuals' (for individuals are the loci of language in Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's conception) possessing and calling upon a "repertoire of marked systems", each of which is seen as belonging to different groups (1985: 116). The deployment of these multiple varieties by different individuals from different groups is what produces situations of linguistic variability and instability.

Diffuse varieties such as creoles, originally perceived as transitional aberrations destined to die a natural death were, for a long time, excluded from study in traditional linguistics. Their neglect, even erasure, was the result of attempts to fit the language situations of the rest of the world into a European-defined linguistic schema. Against all expectations, however, contexts marked by languages that appeared to lack order and that did not "fit a static model of artificial homogeneity based on standardization" (Holm 2000: 2) persisted and even flourished, forcing linguistics to re-evaluate conventional conceptions of what counted as languages. Already in the late 19th and early 20th century, Hugo Schuchardt, one of the pioneers in creole studies, had insisted that creoles were new language forms that called into question conventional theories not only about what languages were but also how they supposedly behaved. Schuchardt had seen creoles as offering significant possibilities for advancing the general study of language. Thirteen years before his death in 1927, however, he lamented the fact that the importance of creole languages had not yet been fully appreciated (1980 [1914]: 91).

Before Schuchardt, the linguistic establishment had acknowledged the possibility of language change, however slow, over time. Explanations of such change, however, relied on questionable theories and methods. Philology's claim, for instance, that language evolution was attributable to regular and rule-governed principles operating within languages and glottochronology's assumption that sounds changed in predictable ways over a specified number of generations were eventually deemed invalid and discarded. Creoles played no small part in demonstrating the unreliability of these theoretical positions. The fact that changes in creoles, especially in their phonology, followed a different trajectory from the projections of glottochronology and philology suggested that language change was not as predictable as previously thought and that it involved not one but multiple factors. In his summation of the critique of glottochronological analyses, De Camp observes, for instance, that although the time depths between 'Jamaican English' and 'Haitian French' must be less than four hundred years, the probable results of a glottochronological comparison between them "would enormously exaggerate this figure" (1968: 34).

1.2 The Project

1.2.1 Setting up

The idea that translation relates to languages, entities such as English or French, has been constant in the writing of most Western theorists, from Cicero to Vinay and Darbelnet to Mounin. While more recent theorists such as Hatim, House and Neubert and Shreve argue that translation relates to text or discourse and not to language, theorisation continues assuming that translation relates to languages as separate and distinct entities. Al-Shabab summarises the concerns implicit in traditional conceptions of translation very well when he writes:

Translation is the interpretation of linguistic/verbal text in a language different from its own. 'Language' is not used here in the sense of a dialect; nor is it used in a metaphorical sense to mean the language of music or dance; nor is it used in the sense of artificial language such as a computer language.... 'Language' is

used here in the ordinary everyday meaning of the word. Namely, it is the tongue—verbal code—used by a human community, large or small, for instance English, Arabic, Aramaic, etc. (1996: 8).

The understanding of translation as an operation on languages such as English, Arabic and Aramaic makes the practice dependent on two kinds of dichotomy: one between texts and one between languages. In this conception, source and target texts are perceived as belonging to distinct and clearly defined entities. Furthermore, the definition opposes the tongue of a "human community, large or small" – 'language', to the undefined 'dialect', giving deference to languages which have been shaped by specific kinds of social and historical processes (e.g., English) or which have been accorded a particular status as languages with the passage of time (e.g., Aramaic). By specifying the type of languages involved in translation (English, Arabic, Aramaic), Al-Shabab points, unwittingly, to the deficiency inherent in conventional conceptions of translation: they are essentially concerned with texts written in stable and homogeneous entities. Definitions of this kind, which privilege dominant languages to the exclusion of what Venuti calls minority varieties or, relying on Lecercle (1990), 'the remainder', continue to be the basis of both research into, and the teaching of, translation (cf. Venuti 1996: 103).

If differences between 'languages' are what translators seek to mediate, it is important to determine what constitutes those languages and whether the language situations of vast sectors of humanity such as those using mixed, creolised or hybridised language varieties have any place in the study of translation. If texts in these varieties get considered in theories of translation, how are they considered?

1.2.2 Hypotheses

Considering that vast numbers of the world's peoples, because of globalisation/internationalisation, are increasingly using mixed languages, it seems indefensible to adopt an approach to the study of translation that fails to

examine texts from these varieties as autonomous entities. Following, then, Venuti's view that consideration of the 'remainder' is critical to a more productive and less restrictive view of translation, this thesis seeks to insert heterogeneity into the study and practice of translation. Unlike Venuti's work, however, it seeks to connect translation to heterogeneous languages by focussing on the texts produced in them rather than on their relationship to entities identifiable as English or French and so on.

The above considerations have led me to formulate the following hypotheses:

- That the Western defined modern practice referred to as translation grew out of and is defined by the particular context of language normalisation/standardisation;
- That the conceptions upon which conventional translation research and pedagogy are based account only for translation between distinct and homogeneous languages;
- That adequately accounting for contexts involving internally heterogeneous polylectal continua, such as creoles, demands a view of translation as involving texts in *language* and not texts in *languages*.

1.2.3 Objectives

Mixed and hybrid languages such as creoles make use of a wide variety of lects, which may operate together as single but diffuse systems. Over the years a number of linguists, among them Labov (1971), De Camp (1968, 1971), Bickerton (1973, 1975) and Patrick (1999), have argued that the treatment of polylectal varieties must be different from that of languages traditionally seen as uniform entities. While it is possible to assume (however incorrectly) that a standard language context is homogeneous or that it is defined by a dominant homogeneous variety, the social and political variables typical of polylectal language situations often work to resist attempts at homogenisation, forcing meaning to become fragmented and unstable. It is against this background that

this thesis undertakes to examine the dominant cultural and language contexts that have shaped notions of translation as well as the potential contribution of creolisation and other forms of linguistic heterogeneity to shaping or reinforcing alternative conceptions of the practice.

Thus, this thesis seeks to explore how the language setting of the non-standard creole continua, as opposed to that of formalised, standard languages, might provide new insights into or re-define the discourse on translation. More specifically, it attempts to shed light on how non-standard continua languages such as those of many Commonwealth Caribbean territories (Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, to name just these) might contribute to our understanding of the inter-textual relationship called translation. These general statements of intent may be broken down into the following specific objectives:

- 1) To examine how the particular context within which certain kinds of language relations occur have come to shape and define conventional conceptions of translation;
- 2) To examine how the context of continua languages differs from the conventional contexts used to delineate practices called translation, and
- 3) To examine how polylectal creolophone continua contexts might help to re-define translation.

1.2.4 Theoretical Framework

This thesis draws on three kinds of theoretical considerations to examine translation: translation studies, historical linguistics and creole studies.

The first part of this examination is in line with Roy Harris' concerns that many language-related practices in the West, including translation, are based on totalising but questionable assumptions about how language actually works. According to his thesis of the 'language myth', developed primarily in his trilogy *The Language-Makers* (1980), *The Language Myth* (1981) and the

Language Machine (1987), Harris asserts that the Greco-Roman tradition has propagated a central falsity that languages are fixed and closed entities used by communities to communicate meanings. This falsity derives from the association of 'a language' with a written language. Harris claims that despite the insistence in modern linguistics on the primacy of speech, the field has remained "consistently and irredeemably scriptist in orientation". Conventional language studies, he argues, presents writing simply as the representation of speech without evaluating the important differences between speech and writing (1980: 6-8). Succeeding generations of linguists, by uncritically accepting and adding to the falsity, have created a linguistic edifice in service of a political structure that privileges writing and the cultural, social and political advantages it provides as the basis for defining language. Invoking Bacon, Harris decries this tendency in linguistics as being another means of paying homage to the idols of the marketplace.

The point of departure of this study is, therefore, Harris' claim that:

The advent of writing was the cultural development which made the most radical alteration of all time to man's concept of what a language is. It opened up the possibility of regarding articulated sounds as a dispensable rather than an essential medium of expression for languages; and even as being an intrinsically defective or imperfect medium (1980: 6).

Another consequence of writing has been the fixing of codes—languages—the differences between which translation is assumed to bridge. This thesis contends that translation studies, like conventional linguistics, has failed to interrogate this scriptist conception of language on which it implicitly relies and from which it derives its core concepts.

A second dimension of the interrogation of the conception of language used in translation is the examination of language varieties which do not conform to the traditional conditions of 'languageness' or grammaticality. Because creolisation initiates processes that delineate new types of relationships

between, but also within, cultures and what have traditionally been called language systems, it seems to be an appropriate conceptual tool, in the post-modern, post-colonial context, for analysing how messages can be communicated in spite of the divisions of oral/literate, non-standard/standard and homogenous/heterogeneous inscribed into a single text or discourse.

1.2.5 Creole Discourse

1.2.5.1 An Archipelago, Unlinked

Creolisation may be seen as being typified by the Cuban context described by Benítez-Rojo, which is one that "has for many years had African, European, Asian, and American components" approaching or withdrawing from one another "according to situations created by unpredictable forces". This Cuban paradigm, he explains, "repeats itself through the Caribbean" (1998: 56).

Because Caribbean societies have been founded on this negotiation of proximate difference, they have evolved as integrally composite entities. The Caribbean, with its relationship to Africa, Asia, Europe, indigenous America and the Middle East, is a blend that is "the syncretic process of transverse dynamics", endlessly reworking and transforming cultural patterns of "varied social and historical experiences and identities" (Kathleen Balutansky and Marie Agnès Sourieau 1998: 3). This syncretic and transformative process, most clearly seen in the language varieties of the Caribbean, has been transformed into the discourse of *créolité* [creoleness]. Creole languages, fashioned by African/Afro-Caribbean slaves, have become the emblems of *créolité*. Pépin and Confiante remind us that *créolité*, through its relationship to the creole language, "rediscovers another history of the world—the history of its multiplicity" (1995: 98). However, it took a very long time for this discourse on diversity to take full form in the Caribbean.

Although united by a common history, which counts among its chapters, "the decimation of the Indigenous people, metropolitan rivalry and wars, the plantation system, slavery and indentureship" (Girvan 2002) and common creole cultural forms, such as Afro-Christian syncretic religions, creolised languages and Carnival, the Caribbean is largely defined by, and in relation to, the its former or current colonisers or the American metropolis that has sought to replace them. The language, cultural and political institutions and habits of the mother countries have, to a large extent, determined the nature and level of contact between different territories. This historical fact is depicted succinctly in Glissant's observation that "la colonisation a divisé en en terres anglaises, françaises, holandaises, espagnoles une region peuplée en majorité d'Africains : constituant en étrangers des gens qui ne le sont pas" (1981: 16).

Not only did the European nationalist agenda succeed in linking the territories' interests and development with those of the respective mother countries, it succeeded in putting in place systems and structures that effectively separated the different European holdings in the Caribbean from one another. As a result, Anglophone territories, in the main, have had less contact with Francophone, Hispanophone and Netherlandophone territories (and vice versa) than would have been expected had cultural and historic roots been the main factors driving inter-regional relations. The importance of the relationships between colonies/former colonies and different European polities and the North American centre has given rise to different discourses on similar issues in various parts of the Caribbean, often in different languages. Even when the language is the same such as that of Haiti and the French *départements d'outre mer* (that is French), the status of the territories in relation to different centres influences how much communication takes places between them. Consequently these territories often communicate little with one another within the Caribbean but with and via the European or American Centre. The message is then filtered by the Centre and disseminated second hand to the rest of the region. Typical of this disconnection between the discourses in the territories were the early

20th century movements that sought to resist Euro dominance and forge a Caribbean identity in terms of 'Black' nationalist ideologies. These included the Anglophone Garveyite United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), with its discourse of return to the African homeland, and the Négritude of the French Antilles, which sought to (re)claim the civilisational force of Africa through her children on the continent and in the Diaspora. Although these Pan-Africanist movements captured the imagination of African descended Caribbeans, whose collective sense of dispossession and social alienation had led them to seek psychic redress in a discourse on possession and return to African roots/*les racines africaines*, they rarely dialogued with one another, since they were separated by languages imposed by different mother countries or by the overarching presence and/or influence of the United States. Kutzinski, treating the question of the "balkanisation" of the resistance movements in the Caribbean (and in African America), summarises the problems thus:

While the Afro-Antillean 'movement' that began to flourish in Cuba and Puerto Rico in the late 1920s also profited from the literary production of the Harlem Renaissance, it was mainly a response on the part of predominantly white local elites to U.S. military and political interference in Hispanic Caribbean affairs after the Spanish-Cuban-American War (1896-98). The almost simultaneous rise of Haitian *indigénisme*, another ideology of national consciousness centered around journals such as *Les Griots* and *La Revue indigène*, can be attributed to the invasion of the U.S. marines in 1915. Francophone Caribbean Négritude, with *Tropiques* as its focal point, was partly a response to the racism of the French army that occupied Martinique and Guadeloupe from 1940 to 1943. The presence of the Shell petroleum refinery in Aruba prompted Dutch-Caribbean publications such as Frank Martinus Arion's *Stemmen uit Afrika* (1957) (Kutzinski 1997).

Invoking Ian Smart, she mentions one instance where the movement managed to cross the traditional boundaries separating the Caribbean from the rest of the (developing) Americas. This was the export of Garveyism to Central America. However, the ideology did not manage to penetrate Hispanic culture, since it was the large Jamaican and Haitian population in Panama and Costa Rica that generated interest in it. A similar situation obtained in the United States, where

Garveyism penetrated African American culture but not the wider American culture.

Beyond the rise of the Black Power Movement and the spread of the Pan Africanist ideals of thinkers such as Marcus Garvey and Aimé Césaire, who sought to see their people as conscious historical agents rather than as footnotes to Europe's history, a new engagement was called forth when a generation of thinkers began taking the diversity inherent in the Caribbean seriously. As the Caribbean grappled with understanding itself as a product of multiple (ex)changes, conceptions of 'Caribbean society' continually changed, moving from the idea of a Plantation Society to that of a Plural Society and finally, to that of a Creole Society.

Beckford sees the concept of Plantation Society as being critical to the dissemination and mixing of 'races' across the globe in the modern era, from the Caribbean to Sri Lanka and Fiji.

The presence of Africans and East Indians in the New World, and East Indians in most other plantation areas is a direct legacy of the plantation. So also is most of the European presence. In addition to these two groups, we should also expect to find a sizeable proportion classified by the censuses as 'mixed' (1971: 10).

One of the consequences of life on the plantation, Beckford argues, was that proximate relationships between different groups did not lead to significant cultural contact but to relative social isolation for the relevant groups.

Black people throughout the New World plantation belt have a cultural identity distinct from that of the white plantation owner and manager groups. In Trinidad and Guyana the East Indian and African groups live together with different cultural traditions. The same is true of the 'Fijians' and the Indians, the Sinhalese and the Tamils in Ceylon, the Indians and the white planter class in Mauritius, and the Malays, Chinese, Indians and white people of Malaya (1971: 11).

Bolland observes that the Plantation Society model "identifies the institution of the plantation, and along with it the experience and legacy of slavery, as

central in Caribbean social life". In this way, the plantation, with its rigid system of social stratification that included "a high correlation between racial and class hierarchies, a weak community structure, the marginality of peasants who engage in subsistence production as well as periodic work on the plantations" became the template for constructing Caribbean life (1998: 5).

Criticisms that the Plantation Society model was monolithic and too abstract and, thus, limited in its capacity to describe Caribbean societies gave rise to the concept of the Plural Society, popularised primarily by M.G. Smith. According to Bolland, Smith built on the notion of cultural pluralism in Beckford's model, which, though stressing the cultural isolation of the groups on the plantation, recognised the inherent plurality of these groups. Indeed, Beckford comments that Caribbean societies have the "unique characteristic of exhibiting both cultural pluralism and social integration" (1971: 15). In Beckford's view, the cultural pluralism of the Caribbean derives from the differences between the communities making up the plantation society, while its social integration derives from the aspirations by those at the bottom of the social ladder for improved social conditions (cf. 1971: 16). In Smith's model, Bolland notes, the tripartite ethno-racial division of the plantation is adopted to define Caribbean cultural groups. The cultural pluralism of the Caribbean is associated with this plurality of cultural groups. In Smith's conception, however, there is a difference between cultural pluralism and plural society. Whereas cultural pluralism assumes the existence of diverse communities in a given society, the plural society model suggests that a culturally diverse society is governed by dominant demographic minorities whose peculiar social structures and political conditions set them apart from the rest of that society (cf. 1984: 29). Bolland sees Smith's model as suggesting that in the Caribbean the formation of different cultural zones associated with different groups was the result of the lack of consensus between these groups about the kind of society they wanted.

Bolland dismisses Smith's thesis as being reductive, taking class-based divisions to be equivalent to ethno-cultural divisions. He rejects Smith's attempt to label groups by colour, arguing that in the Caribbean, since groups share in the same institutions, they are best defined in terms of social classes (cf. 1998: 8–9). Bolland places greater emphasis on the dynamism of the social structure, pointing out that relationships between ethnicity and class in the Caribbean could change and have changed. A similar point is raised by Beckford, when he notes that barring "emigration, the only significant scope for social mobility open to [Afro-Caribbeans] was education" (1971: 14). Though discounted in his model, this admission by Beckford represents a key dimension of the view that Caribbean societies have evolved and that people at the bottom of the plantation construct have increasingly become empowered.

The concept of creole society was first articulated by Barbadian historian Kamau Brathwaite, particularly in his work on the Jamaican slave society of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Later, the notion was used by Glissant in his *Discours antillais* (1981) and refined by Bernabé *et al.* in their *Eloge de la créolité* (1989), dubbed 'the creolist manifesto'. Bolland notes that the creole society model, in contrast to that of the plural society model, is "predicated on a concept of social and cultural change" (1998: 10). This change is not only that which already manifests itself in Caribbean by virtue of the displacement of its peoples but that which must be called forth in the attempts to construct a space for themselves in the world. As a consequence, the discourse on creolisation has resisted Eurocentric impositions at the same time that it has generally avoided replacing them with Africanist ones, focussing instead on making the shared cultural forms of the displaced peoples of the Caribbean the centrepiece of the debate on oppression, liberation and cultural identity. As part of this process, Caribbean linguists and cultural theorists—Alleyne, Bailey, Bernabé, Brathwaite, Chamoiseau, Confiant, Glissant, Rickford, to name a few—have sought to recognise and valorise creole language and culture by placing them on the global stage. This assertiveness was first given local definition in 1959

at the Mona (Jamaica) campus of the University of the West Indies, where the first international conference on pidginisation and creolisation was held (De Camp 1968: 25). A second conference took place in 1968. Dell Hymes, editor of proceedings of the latter conference, described it and the book which emerged from it as symbolising "the legitimacy and importance of the study of pidgin and creole languages, and [reflecting] the extension of linguistic work, descriptive and historical, that is already under way" (1971: 8).

1.2.5.2 Creating Links

Creole's conception of multiplicity is deployed in response to movements seeking to build a Caribbean identity based only on the cultural expressions of the region's racialised 'Black' majority. Bolland views Brathwaite's conception of creole as a critical response to such tendencies in the arguments of social theorists such as Orlando Patterson. According to Bolland, Brathwaite saw Patterson as presenting a "disintegrationist concept of [Caribbean] society" (Bolland 1998: 10, citing Brathwaite 1968: 336), a concept which largely ignored "the white group of masters and the role of the free coloured population who could be seen as an integrating force (Brathwaite 1968: 333, cited in Bolland 1998: 10). A similar critique of Africanist historiographies is discernible in the work of the framers of the créolité discourse. Though they strenuously deny that theirs is a critique of Négritude, it is clear that their praise of the movement, typified by the declaration in *Eloge de la créolité* that it is "la Négritude césairienne qui nous a ouvert le passage vers l'ici d'une Antillanité désormais postulable et elle-même en marche vers un autre degré d'authenticité qui restait à nommer" (1989: 18), masks attempts to assert their independence vis-à-vis that movement, which is valued primarily as the precursor to créolité. Pépin and Confiant's statement that, although the objectives of both Négritude and créolité are similar, "their perspective is different", is crucial in the evaluation of how Négritude has been perceived by creolists. The authors go on to argue that whereas in Négritude "[t]he black man's outcry was to redeem Blacks and black African cultures", it became necessary following

decolonisation to "address the question of cultural identity not from a global perspective but from specific perspectives conveying particular situations" (1995: 97). Thus, according to this view, Négritude's attempt to claim a place for Africans and the Afro-descended peoples of the Americas had to be replaced by the recognition of the Caribbean composite of créole, which identified and located the peoples of the region in their particular socio-geographical history.

A deeper engagement with the creole discourse reveals the extent of the cleavage between it and pan-Africanist movements. In their attempts to undo the damage of colonialism, movements such as Négritude propagated a totalising Africanist counter-discourse that overlooked the diversity inherent in Caribbean societies. Although seeking to be inclusive and liberative, pan-Africanist thinking sought to suppress and erase or ignore the cultural forms of Caribbeans who did not claim (or wish to claim) Africa as their cultural centre. Créolité not only chided Négritude for this posture, it also suggested that pan-Africanism perpetuated a marginalisation of Caribbean peoples, depriving them of a culture and centre of their own. According to Bernabé et al., Négritude

[o]riginellement saisie du vœu de nous domicilier dans l'ici de notre être, ... fut, aux premières vagues de son déploiement, marquée d'une manière d'extériorité: *extériorité d'aspirations* (l'Afrique mère, Afrique mythique, Afrique impossible), *extériorité de l'expression de la révolte* (le Nègre avec majuscule, tous les opprimés de la terre), *extériorité d'affirmation de soi* (nous sommes des Africains) (1989 :20).

Although the programme of valorising and claiming Africa was an indispensable path towards the recognition of Caribbean self and history, its shortcoming was its failure to recognise the diversity inherent in the Caribbean at large and among Afro-Caribbeans in particular. This concern is echoed in Nettleford's conclusion that the liberation for which Black Power fought rested on the paradoxical contest between communal unity and individual differences in the Afro-Caribbean community. Pointing to the dangers implicit in an

attitude which privileges communal unity over a recognition of diversity, Nettleford suggests that despite the unifying experiences of dispersion, slavery and colonialism, "factors of time, place and circumstances have produced differences of lifestyle, of orientations and even of aspirations" among people who may look alike. In underscoring the importance of these differences, he concludes, instructively, perhaps, that the richest cultures of "black Africa, as of other peoples, are the fruits of cross-fertilization" (1993: 526).

In creolisation, the identification of the Caribbean with diversity was a signal attempt to eschew constructions of an Africanist singularity into which all Caribbean forms were assumed to fit. The idea proposed by creolists was of an identity that did not derive from an essentialist dichotomisation of the world, which pitted the Rest, who, as Négritude conceived it, fell under the umbrella of Africa, against the West. This dichotomisation had the inadvertent consequence of locking the people Négritude was trying to free from Eurocentric oppression into an alternative but equally oppressive discourse on purity, in which notions such as race and culture were transformed into monoliths and imbued with 'objectively' definable qualities. It is this uniformist response to European oppression that Nettleford warns against when he claims that the blocking of

black creative wellsprings by the tyranny of dependence may now be perpetuated by the tyranny of a 'black culturalism' which sets goals without due concern for the feelings of the people involved and the objective factors that might go contrary to those goals (1993: 526).

Créolité, rather than placing the Caribbean into this framework, where identity is "defined in the mode of the One: one language, one territory, one religion, one history, one single root" (Pépin and Confiant 1995: 97), opted for the pluralist view, seeing the multicultural heritage of the region as suggesting a polycentric approach to the question of identity. According to the authors, not only is it necessary to see Caribbean identity as based on co-existence, it is also "an imperative to reject the exclusiveness of the One and its militant isolation"

(1995: 98). Here, one may be forgiven for reading in the words of Pépin and Confiant a critique of Pan-Africanist discourse, aspects of which were articulated by Marcus Garvey, whose epigram of 'One God, One Aim, One Destiny' had come to represent an important facet of the discourse on Caribbean progress. In creole, Oneness is replaced by the recognition of the "heterogeneous reality" (1995: 98) of the Caribbean. It celebrates the region's social, cultural, linguistic and ethnic mixture as not only emblematic of its history but also as indivisible from its definition. The ultimate aim in créole is the establishment of a mosaic "affirmed by idioms, languages, places, systems of thought, histories fertilizing one another and untying the unpredictable" (1995: 97-8). Créolité has, therefore, become the recognition and naming of processes of métissage over which Caribbeans had little initial control but which, in the face of the overarching and totalising presence of an external Centre, have been transformed into active forces of resistance.

While creole thinkers concede that the characteristic of métissage marks all the cultures and peoples of the world—not just those of the Caribbean—in the most elemental of ways, they argue that créolité as a socio-historical and "anthropological" construct differentiates creole métissage from that of other places. In fact, it is for this reason that the framers of the créolité manifesto include all the mixed peoples and cultures of France's sphere of influence in their concept of *créole*. In this way they distinguish their notion, which they claim is a more general term, from that of Antillanité [Caribbeanness], which they see as a primarily geopolitical rather than an anthropological descriptor (Bernabé *et al.* 1989: 32). For these authors, the difference between creole métissage (Caribbean and Indian Ocean) and that in other places rests in the fact that the former 1) occurs "en général au sein d'une économie plantationnaire", whose populations are forced to invent new cultural frames resulting from the non-harmonious and incomplete (therefore non-reductive) mixing of "pratiques linguistiques, religieuses, culturelles, culinaires, architecturales, médicinales, etc., des différents peuples en presence" that

permit them to co-exist (1989: 31) and 2) it consciously works towards self-knowledge by recognising and actively cultivating difference. Typical of this awareness is the call of Bernabé *et al.* to Creoles to

Prendre langue avec nos bourgs, nos villes. Explorer nos origines amérindiennes, indiennes, chinoises et levantines, trouver leurs palpitations dans les battements de nos cœurs. Entrer dans nos puits, dans nos jeux de « grenndé », dans toutes ces affaires de vieux-nègres à priori vulgaires. C'est par ce systématisme que se renforcera la liberté de notre regard (1989: 40).

This is in direct contrast to the cultural outlook of many societies, which have sought to suppress or mask difference, preferring, however unfoundedly, to speak of themselves and their pasts in terms of common lineage.

1.2.5.3 Attenuating Creole

Although the creole discourse⁵ is central to the approach taken in this thesis, it is important to underscore that the focus on métissage as integral to an understanding of Caribbean particularity has a number of dangers. Despite its embracing of the multiple and its mistrust of essentialist Eurocentric discourse, créolité can become a means of subtly excluding discourses that legitimately connect the peoples, languages, social and cultural practices of the Caribbean to an organic, if syncretised, past. If Africanist discourses tended towards erasing the inherent mixedness of Caribbean peoples and cultures, some elements of the creole discourse have sought to erase the memories of prior forms from which these peoples and cultures derive. Indeed, the attempt at erasure seems to be the subtext, if not the constant preoccupation, of the reflection of some creolists. The ambivalent notion of Caribbean "newness"⁶,

⁵ Bernabé *et al.* argue that areas of the Caribbean, namely parts of Cuba and Puerto Rico, because of their mono-ethnic compositions, are not creolised. This is not a view that I share. I prefer the view that sees creolisation as the product of plantation relationships between different ethnic and linguistic groups. However, I will concede that there are different degrees of creolisation in different parts of the Caribbean.

⁶ Benitez-Rojo, though agreeing that there is a certain sense of newness to the Caribbean, seems wary of its glorification. He argues for a vision of the Caribbean that understands and remembers the different founding cultures of Indigenous America, Africa, Asia and Europe. In

for instance, could (inadvertently) become a means of disconnecting Caribbeans from their African past. One finds in some of the arguments of Derek Walcott, for example, elements of this attempt at disconnection. In the Caribbean, he writes,

history is irrelevant, not because it is not being created, or because it was sordid; but because it has never mattered. What has mattered is the loss of history, the amnesia of the races ... what has become necessary is imagination, imagination as necessity, as invention (1993b [1974]: 53).

The placing of history in an antagonistic relationship with invention and novelty seems to be a return to Eurocentric dichotomies that have failed to validate the dynamism of creole, the same dynamism that Walcott alludes to when he speaks of the Caribbean's "historical bastardy" (Hirsch 1993: 79). Perhaps, this explains the ambiguity of his embrace of "amnesia" on the one hand, and his concern with "fragments" of history, with "echoes" and "shards" (1992: The Nobel Lecture, 11th page) on the other. If all is amnesia, where do the fragments of history come from? Which initial sounds return as echoes?

It would seem that the preoccupation here is not with forgetting (all) the places from which Caribbeans come. Rather, it is a call specifically to let go of that "historical sentimentality" (Hirsch 1993: 79) that has made Caribbeans, in their quest to find themselves, yearn for Africa's mystique. Indeed, asserts Walcott, it is artificial for the "Negro (sic) in the Western World, so long cut off from Africa, with his language, religion, customs and politics an entirely different experience, attempt to force a fusion" (Hirsch 1993: 20). Walcott's position displays an ambivalence that suggests that he has forgotten that Africa, like everywhere else, can and should legitimately contribute to feeding the diversity of the Caribbean. Moreover, like Europe, Asia, Indigenous America and the Middle East, Africa is very much a component of Caribbean creolisation. As

what he calls a "re-reading" of the Caribbean (see for instance, his "re-reading" of the Cuban "Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre") (1992: 13), he sees links that go way beyond the traditional Europe-Africa divide in an empty land. Rather, he sees the fusion of Indigenous cultures with those of Europe, Africa and Asia as defining Caribbeanness.

Molefi Kete Asante points out: "One cannot study Africans in the United States or Brazil or Jamaica without some appreciation for the historical and cultural significance of Africa as source and origin" (1990: 15). Ironically, creolists committed to erasing the "memory" of Africa in order to construct a new Caribbean identity, have no problems with pulling on European ideals in their conception of creolisation. There is hardly any concern that it is contradictory to cast "memory" of Africa as nostalgia for an irrecoverable past, while embracing European forms as contributory to the diversity of the open-ended creole construct. Nor is there a sense that the openness to Europe and the concomitant resistance to Africa risk opening up the Caribbean to penetration by the forces from which it has been seeking to liberate itself. If, while these forces are inserting themselves into the Caribbean, creole seeks to disregard any of its component elements, such as the cultural presence of Africa, it is not impossible or unlikely that these forces could elaborate new processes of marginalisation and oppression of the African element within the creole social-cultural continuum. In this manner, attempts at disconnecting Caribbean peoples of African descent from their ancestral cultures do not only block the continued socio-cultural cross-fertilisation that takes place in the Caribbean but also contributes to global processes that marginalise Africa and Africanness. This is an even greater risk as Euro-American/European alliances seek to protect the cultural, economic and political interests of those connected to that macro-Culture while a post-modern discourse insists on the incommensurability of Africa-African Diaspora alliances. Many African diaspora intellectuals, through their acceptance of the terms of engagement in a system recalibrated to deal with the hybrid, the acceptable other (Afro-creoles, for instance), are unable or unwilling to see and challenge the agenda of eliminating what is construed as the unacceptable other: Africa (distinct from the Diaspora). Thus, all the struggles of Africans in the Americas, from slave revolts to civil rights movement, are reduced to attempts by "blacks" to claim citizenship within History, understood only as beginning with entry onto the

European Plantation⁷. Such a posture, repudiated by Asante because it "disconnects the African in America from thousands of years of history and tradition" (1990: 15), is attributable, Ngũgĩ argues, to a colonial process that has led some people in the developing world to see "their past as one wasteland of non-achievement". This process makes them "want to distance themselves from that wasteland. It makes them want to identify with that which is furthest removed from themselves" (1981: 3).

The weakness of *créolité*/creoleness lies in the fact that it relies too heavily on the Africa to Europe deculturation continuum from which it was born. This social history can lead to the continued denigration or devaluation of one or other of creole's components. When the rejected component is that which Euro-dominant society has always rejected and continues to reject, *créolité* becomes a kind of mask for undermining its own objectives of liberation. On the other hand, if it operates cognisant of and unapologetic about the Africa syncretised in the Americas, it will be able to turn its back on the universalist and universalising Europeanist discourse (cf. Kubayanda, 34-39) seeking to assimilate Caribbeans while simultaneously maintaining a link with Africa that transcends identity categories that lock Afro-Caribbeans into essentialist modes. I believe that use of the *créolité* discourse as a tool of resistance must be cognisant of what it is resisting, and careful to avoid contradictions. Thus, rather than seeing creole as the necessary move from African to European forms, I assume that in the Caribbean, like everywhere else, syncretism and diversity are integral to questions of identity. For this reason, the thesis rejects the Africa→Europe deculturation construct implicit in much of the literature in creole theory. If 'curry goat' (African goat, East Indian curry) remain two of the most important dishes in Jamaica, it is because the creolisation process has gone beyond the Africa to/and Europe continuum. Thus, for creole to be meaningful, it must privilege notions of diversity and syncretism that look back

⁷ The Plantation (with a capital 'P') is the term used by Benítez-Rojo to describe the social machinery that came into being in the Caribbean with the start of plantation slavery.

as well as forwards. In light of such considerations, this thesis resists attempts to efface history from creolisation. Indeed, it takes the view, like Bilby, of history as dynamic, and as such, views creolisation as the heritage of a process "characterized by a simultaneous newness and oldness" (1985: 182).

This thesis asserts that beyond its role as a vehicle for social and political engagement in the contemporary Caribbean and in the rest of the world, the discourse on heterogeneity, 'hybridity', indeterminacy and instability that creole represents can serve as a frame through which to examine phenomena such as those within and between language varieties. The dynamism of the old and the new is used here as a device to (re)locate translation within broader practices of culturally modulated linguistic transformation. It is hoped that this work will help to remove the discussion on translation and linguistic heterogeneity from the framework of *how* to translate mixed language varieties such as creoles and take it towards a conception of translation that implicitly accommodates these varieties.

1.2.6 Approach


This thesis is qualitative in nature. Its primary concerns are to reveal the links between conceptions of translation and the notion of linguistic separateness and the necessary link between linguistic separateness and the core notions such as equivalence, faithfulness and meaning, which are consistently used in translation studies. Of particular importance are the translation theories which emerged from the structuralist linguistic school as well as those from the pragmatic schools which challenged it. Examples of the latter theories are those which came from persons such as Nida, Taber and de Waard's (Nida 1964; Nida and Taber 1974 [1969]; Nida and de Waard 1986; Nida 2001) which focus on notions of dynamic or functional equivalence. Treatment of these concerns begins with an examination of their place in translation research. This is followed by an attempt, using sociolinguistics and historical linguistics, to

identify the social, historical and cultural processes that have (implicitly) defined the modern conceptions of language used in pragmatic translations. This thesis also examines alternative attempts at theorisation such as Toury's (1980, 1987, 1995) and Hermans (1995, 1999) notion of norms and House (1981) and Neubert and Shreve's (1992) view of translation as being related to texts. These studies, while offering the possibility of moving beyond traditional conceptions of translation, are limited by their failure to adequately interrogate the assumptions concerning language (and culture even) upon which translation studies is founded.

Because this thesis assesses the role of standardisation in the definition of translation and the potential role of non-standard continua languages in redefining translation, an attempt is also made to describe the cultural and linguistic context of creolisation, which is sustained and increasingly valorised by systems of inter-national flows, migrations and mixtures. Within the framework of a broad discourse on cultural and linguistic mixture and heterogeneity, particularly as reflected in the works of Alleyne (1968, 1971, 1980, 1985, 1994), De Camp (1971, 1973), Escure (1997), Mufwene (1986, 1993, 1999) and Patrick (1999), it looks at the challenges the instability inherent in composite forms pose to linguistics and how these challenges relate to translation and translatability.

The varieties treated in this study are primarily the (dia)lects of the Jamaican continuum, of which I am a 'native' speaker. The texts used are typical of the Jamaican creole continuum. However, there is no pretence that these are representative of Jamaican usages. The texts, which come from two situational ranges: a newspaper article and a traditional Anancy story, simply serve as examples of how the continuum may operate in different situations.

Owing to the fact that Jamaican creole is essentially an oral language, no distinction will be made between the oral and the written in delineating



translation phenomena, especially since written representations of the spoken language are based on extremely arbitrary orthographies.

CHAPTER 2: TRANSLATION

Translation is a linguistic (verbal) phenomenon independent of other linguistic phenomena. While language, any natural language, is generally used to represent concrete objects in reality, to express what is felt and sensed by an individual, or what is realised and conceived of as theoretical knowledge, it is noticed that translation starts from a given language realisation, a verbal text, to move towards a new language realisation, another verbal text. The intertextual relation is also found in other linguistic processes such as summarising or paraphrasing. If one realises that language is a highly complex phenomenon, that translation presumes the existence of language, and the mediation of the translator between two languages in the translation process, one starts to understand the complexity of translation.

—Omar Sheikh Al-Shabab 1996: 5

2.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to examine the primary underpinnings of conventional reflections on translation and to interrogate their universalising tendency. It is argued here that despite the recognition that the early structuralist linguistic framework within which translation was defined was excessively restrictive, translation studies has remained constrained by reflections which are structuralist in orientation.

Rather than attempting an exhaustive review of conceptions of translation in this chapter, I will provide an overview of the general themes that have

become integral to the debate on translation. Some of the conceptions of the practice that are emblematic of this debate will be outlined.

2.2 Theorising Translation

In *After Babel*, George Steiner asks provocatively whether translation is in fact a subject, whether the material it covers is of "a kind and internal order which theoretical analysis, as distinct from historical scholarship and descriptive review, can deal with" (1998 [1975]: 286), for, despite the calibre of those who have written about the art and theory of translation, he claims, "the number of original, significant ideas in the subject remains very meagre" (1998 [1975]: 251). Steiner castigates scholars in the discipline, from Cicero to present day theorists, for continuing to address the same theses, claims and refutations in the study of translation. Similar concerns to those of Steiner have been raised by other scholars. Vermeer, for instance, writes:

Whenever one takes the trouble to peruse the hundreds of publications on translation theory and practice today and in former times, one cannot help being assailed by a feeling of frustration. The same problems and the same affirmations about the same problems are repeated again and again (1994: 3).

Steiner offers the seemingly pessimistic conclusion that it may be that there is no such thing as 'translation' in the abstract. There is, he argues, "a body of praxis so large and differentiated as to resist inclusion in any unitary scheme" (1998: 286).

The absence of an "acceptable theory of translation", Nida claims, is not surprising, given the complexity of the phenomenon referred to as translation. He suggests that the absence of a unified theory is due to the fact that the field of translation studies can draw and has drawn upon insights from a diversity of disciplines ranging from linguistics and psychology to communication theory and literary criticism (2001: 107). In tracing the history of translation

theory, Nida identifies three broad types of reflection: the philological, the linguistic and the sociosemiotic. He places reflections by persons such as Cicero, Horace, Catullus and Quintillian into the philological category, which he claims dominated research in translation for twenty centuries (at least in the West). The importance of philological concerns in translation waned when modern linguistics, with its structuralist, transformational-generative and sociolinguistic approaches gained ascendancy in the study of language (cf. 2001: 111-112).

For Nida, the sociosemiotics tendency in translation research has perhaps been the most important. The advantage of its contribution to translation studies, he argues, is that "it deals with all types of codes and signs", of which the language and cultural systems to which translation relates are two. Nida's appreciation of the sociosemiotic approach leads him to commit to the view that no "holistic approach to translating can exclude semiotics as a fundamental discipline in encoding and decoding signs" (2001: 113). Indeed, he refers to the importance of semiotics in helping to advance understanding in a range of disciplines, including sociology and the life and natural sciences (2001: 113).

The categories identified by Nida overlap with those suggested by Chau in his brief overview of translation theory. Chau's research categories comprise the philological, the formal linguistic, the ethno-semantic and text linguistic, each representing a particular stage in the evolution of the discipline of translation studies. Though these stages do not necessarily represent successive periods in the history of the discipline, they are important markers of the direction of its evolution since systematic reflections on translation began in the West.

The first stage identified by Chau runs from the time of Cicero to the 1960s. According to Chau, research in this phase was mainly prescriptive, placing significant emphasis on "the aims and results of translating", while paying

little attention to the linguistic operations involved in the practice. Works in this stage also tended to be dominated by several recurrent themes: "whether poetry translation should be free or literal", "whether poetry should be translated by prose or verse", "whether translating [was] an art or a science", "whether translation [was] after all possible" (1984: 71).

The second stage identified by Chau was that which leaned heavily on language studies, taking advantage of "many of the insights of linguistics to devise an empirical account of the translating process" (1984: 71). This stage, which started becoming important in the 1950s, saw translation as a purely linguistic operation, explainable in terms of the conceptual frames provided by contemporary language studies.

The ethno-semantic stage, according to Chau, gained prominence with Nida's works [1964 and 1969], which he lauds as the "first important treatises on translating which placed ethno-semantic concerns in the forefront" (1984: 72). In this phase, meaning, rather than being seen as a property of the linguistic code, was contextualised within social, cultural and anthropological relationships.

The text linguistic stage was that in which the translation unit was seen as a specific text rather than as a component part of a language (1984: 74). This stage began towards the late 1960s and lasted till the early 80s. It was during this stage that much of the work on text types was conducted and theories about translation based on text formulated.

The stages identified by Nida and Chau, have been marked by different emphases and approaches to the study of translation, often resulting in tensions between different theoretical schools. In addition to the evolutionary tension between the linguistic and the pragmatic school, one sees, particularly in the latter half of the 20th century, a clash between concurrent theoretical

schools, the pragmatic and the literary. These clashes emerged primarily from two historical facts. The first is the rise in translating since the middle of the century. The increase in the number of nation states, the deepening of international relations and the creation of more far-reaching international organisations gave a boost to technical, institutional and legal translation. Additionally, according to Wilss, there was a link between the burgeoning of pragmatic translations and the "international avalanche of information made in the natural and technical sciences since 1945" (1982: 20). Bible translators also took advantage of the entry of new countries on the global scene to intensify their evangelisation efforts and thereby increase translation output. This highly pragmatic context gave rise to attempts to sideline literary reflections, which had long been the focus of translation studies.

The second historical fact relates to the rebound of literary theory and the rise of cultural theory, both of which grappled with complex questions such as meaning and textuality. The approach was one which generally situated concepts historically and socially; but it was also one which interrogated and challenged orthodoxies. This pointed necessarily to the existence of alternative constructions and the possibility of their forming the bases of research in fields such as translation studies. Within the context of a decolonising and rapidly globalising world, such considerations became not only more attractive but also more accessible.

The increase in pragmatic translating necessarily made theories relying on structural linguistics redundant. However, the calling into question of traditional structures of understanding by literary and cultural studies gave rise to a new type of tension, one related to situating practices such as translation in their historical and cultural contexts. Pragmatic approaches tended to emphasise the importance of meaning transfer in translation while the more literary and cultural approaches tended to focus on the volatility of meaning. This situation has manifested itself most patently in the tension between

reflections concerned with 'professional' considerations and those aimed at highlighting and explaining trends and processes in translation practice over time. Nida's emphasis on the need to orient translation programmes towards professional training confirms that there is a large gap between the two tendencies.

In view of the unsatisfactory nature of many translation programmes and the failure of many translation theories to provide the kind of help that professional translators can appreciate and that students can creatively employ, more and more persons concerned with translating and interpreting are turning to translation studies to form the empirical basis for a more creative approach to translating and interpreting (2001: 6).

Nida sees many translation programmes as being unhelpful to students because they are "heavily front-loaded" with courses on translation theory (2001: 1-2), many of which, he argues, are irrelevant to the task of professional translating. While his critique of 'theory' is general, he is particularly concerned about those theories which he finds least helpful because they relate to concerns far removed from what he considers the basic practice of translation.

Franck calls for a shift away from the pragmatic approach, typified, he claims, by Nida's notion of the "science of translating". In contrast to Nida and "all his willing and unavowed followers with their respective interests in contrastive and textual linguistics" (1998: 16), Franck proposes a historical descriptive approach capable of situating translation as a cultural practice. The overly pragmatic approach to the reflection on translation, he contends, harms both translator and translation researcher.

As long as proponents of the 'science of translating' believe that they deal with nothing but a mediating skill, and that the 'best' contemporary practice, by-passing the accumulated experience of literary studies⁸, can be immediately transposed into teachable

⁸ Although Nida stresses the practical skills necessary for the training of professional translators, he does recognise the importance of literature to translation (cf. 1964: 176 and 194; 2001: 75-77).

lessons, a difference between the translator's knowledge and ignorance and the researcher's knowledge and ignorance tends to become a contrast of perspective (1998: 16).

One sees in the tension between pragmatic and non-pragmatic approach to translation studies two contending positions, each claiming an important role in shedding light on what constitutes translation practice, how research into that practice ought to be conducted and the purpose of that research. The one privileges practical skills because those are what translators are assumed to need for their jobs as professionals, while the other suggests an approach that situates translation within its historical contexts. This, Franck remarks, is an attempt to account for the choices made by translators at particular periods in history (1998: 18). Although the contest between this approach and that of persons like Nida continues, it is the 'pragmatic' prescriptive approach espoused by persons such as Nida which has come to influence both translator training programmes and popular conceptions of translation practice.

2.2.1 Prescriptive and Descriptive Theorising

Modern translation theory has defined different practices—from the transfer of meaning between languages, the replacement of textual material in one language by textual material in another to the crossing of cultural frontiers—as 'translation'. Conceptions of translation, while presenting fairly accurate depictions of the social practices of translators in different contexts, provide no viable framework for linking these practices to one another or for distinguishing them from other language practices. Despite the absence of a theoretical foundation upon which to make judgments about translation and translating, it is assumed that the patterns observable in a given set of practices called translation are, at least potentially, universal and relatable to other practices called translation. When Vinay, for instance, claims that an adequate theory of translation should be geared towards enhancing the practice of translation (1975: 17) and Newmark states that the main concern of

translation theory is to determine "appropriate translation methods for the widest possible range of text or text-categories" (1986 [1981]: 19), one is led to believe that there is consensus on what translation is or that that consensus has some theoretically justifiable basis. If, however, one should ask from which of the numerous linguistic context(s) typical of human language behaviour such a theory should come and which practices it should seek to improve, one would begin to understand the weaknesses of the sweeping remarks by Vinay and Newmark. This statement needs to be explained further.

It is clear from Vinay's argument that what he calls translation is already a given and, therefore, needs no elucidation or interrogation. Likewise, Newmark assumes that translation theorisation should seek to provide the necessary tools for unearthing the underlying principles of a practice called translation in order that these may be applied to future texts. The views of these authors mask the reality that the practices upon which translation theory is generally based are dependent on linguistic entities that have been shaped by particular social, historical and cultural contexts to the exclusion of others. No suggestion of an all-encompassing translation theory is, therefore, possible, without prior examination of the contexts from which such theory has emerged. To the extent that Vinay and Newmark have not sought to evaluate the linguistic contexts upon which their understandings of translation are based, they make these understandings prescriptions, and prescriptive theories are generally characterised by their relationship to dominant or hegemonic contexts.

Researchers such as Toury and Hermans—who share Steiner's concerns about the possibility of arriving at an adequate theory of translation—contend that examining translation from another angle, that is by viewing it as a practice based on and defined by social norms, making it primarily amenable to descriptive analysis, opens the door to a more fruitful kind of reflection

(Toury 1980: 52; Hermans 1999: 59). Although this view raises the question of who sets the norms, it seems to be one means of removing translation theory from its generalising and prescriptivist tendencies. Anticipating the question of who set translation norms, Hermans admits that translations are by nature "opaque, complicitous and compromised" and that they tell us more about "those who translate than about the source text underlying the translation" (1999: 59). This means that what is called translation is not determined by the absolute or intrinsic operational properties assumed by Vinay and Newmark but by the pressures and requirements of contexts in which persons called translators operate.

2.2.2 Post Theories

The attempt to move away from universalising tendencies includes the postmodernist critique of translation and conventional translation theory. It focusses on the uniqueness of different translation contexts rather than on identifying underlying translation principles. In highlighting the main aspects of this trend, Gentzler observes that the emphasis has shifted from "the abstract to the specific, from the deep underlying hypothetical forms to the surface of texts with all their gaps, errors, ambiguities, multiple referents, and 'foreign' disorder" (2001: 4). What is key in Gentzler's analysis is the fact that presuppositions in translation research about issues such as language universals, which have long dominated theory and prevented alternative discourses from claiming a place within the field, are now being discarded (cf. Robinson 1997a: 12), making room for disciplines such as post-colonial studies (Bassnett and Trivedi 1999), gender studies (Sherry Simon 1996) and queer studies (Keith Harvey 1998, 2000), etc., to become arenas from which to (re)define translation. In addition, methodologies such as deconstruction are being used as tools to interrogate the assumptions underlying conventional conceptions of translation.

The new consciousness in translation studies has been typified by an openness to inserting concerns related to difference, mixture and heterogeneity into discussions of translation (Venuti 1992, 1996, 1998). This is the continuation of a trend started by researchers such as Derrida (1985, 1988) and Berman (1984, 1985), who had already brought the question of heterogeneity, via mixed language and cultural contexts, to bear on the theorisation of translation. Additionally, a number of journal issues, particularly in *TTR* and in *The Translator* (see bibliography), have been devoted to the question of heterogeneity in translation.

Undoubtedly conceptions within these alternative frameworks are generally more productive, since they broaden the discussion on translation and force it to include questions from cultures (in the general sense of the term) other than those that dominate. Yet, even with the insertion of the question of heterogeneity into the study of translation, Chan argues that "serious consideration of the issue [of mixed language] ... is still lacking in the literature" (2002: 50). This consideration is lacking because of the dominance of traditional linguistic frame in which translation has been located. The problem of mixed language in translation has generally not been raised in a manner such that it interrogates the dichotomous theoretical frame in which translation is traditionally located but as a set of questions to be solved within that very frame. Thus, when the challenges of mixed languages are identified, attempts to deal with them employ conventional concepts, which privilege dominant language types. The inevitable consequence is that researchers continue seeking to apply the terms of a theoretical construct derived from and designed to explain one type of language situation to another type of language situation. It is, thus, evident that there is an urgent need for more research into the relationship between linguistic/cultural heterogeneity and translation, with a change in emphasis from how to translate mixed languages such as creoles to a more radical examination of the social and cultural parameters that have conventionally shaped conceptions of translation and made consideration of

mixed language varieties problematic in the study of the practice in the first place.

2.3 Faithful = Equivalent = Translation

Translation is conventionally seen as process and/or product. As process, it involves clearly defined properties, the first of which is a *text* in a given language (source), which, after undergoing a prescribed series of procedures (transfer, re-expression etc.), yields a text in a second language (target). The text in the second language is the translation product. Translation may, therefore, be broken down into concrete and abstract component properties. Both target and source language texts (TLT and SLT) constitute the concrete properties, while the relationship between them involves the abstract properties, namely *meaning*, which is replaced/reproduced/transferred or re-expressed in order to achieve '*equivalence*'/'*faithfulness*'. Good translations have traditionally been defined in terms of their '*faithfulness*' and/or '*equivalence*' to their source language texts. In spite of the importance accorded to these concepts in translation studies, however, there still is no consensus on what they mean. I will begin this discussion with a look at the concept of '*faithfulness*'.

2.3.1 Faithfulness

Savory locates the use of the concept of translation faithfulness in the historic tension between the presence of the author as the generator of an original text and the effacement of the translator as the interpreter of that text in a second language. He stresses that the notion of faithfulness does not imply that translations must be word-for-word or literal renderings of source language texts, "for this is the most primitive type of translation". Rather, he claims, they should be reproductions which signal the force and presence of their

authors, whose voices are made present through translators who, by effacing themselves from the creative process, act as conduits to convey meanings from the minds of authors to the minds of readers (1959 [1957]: 50). In Savory's conception translations should not be free or literal but should "read with ease and pleasure", otherwise they might as well never have been produced (1959 [1957]: 52).

Placing faithfulness within the framework of the capacity of languages to convey meanings expressed in other languages, Poisson argues that the notion relates to the correspondence of both formal (linguistic) and usage components between source and target languages. He stresses, however, that the notion is always relative, since "il n'y a pas d'une langue à l'autre, de correspondance entre les moyens d'expressions" (1975: 139). A similar view of translation faithfulness is found in Delisle *et al.*, according to whom faithfulness is a property of translation which, depending on the translator's intention, respects the presumed sense of the source text as much as possible and conforms to appropriate target language usages (1999: 140).

For St-Pierre, terms such as faithfulness ('fidelity'), though vague, "can be considered to form part of a set of fairly stable criteria determining the translation process". He is quick to point out, however, the temporality of these criteria, arguing that they should not be viewed as 'transhistorical' or as somehow defining the essence of translation (1988: 255). Basing his arguments on the re-translation of certain texts, he points to the changing use of the concept throughout the centuries, especially as manifested in the way that it has generated new translations of works for which there were existing translations. The works were re-translated, St-Pierre claims, not necessarily because they were previously badly translated but because

the historical nature of the criteria involved in the production of a translation inevitably means that other criteria—whether they be additional criteria, or the same criteria in different form—will come into play at other points in time (1988: 256-57).

According to St-Pierre, then, conceptions such as faithfulness are epoch dependent. By extension, he argues, the very notion of translation, which derives its definition from these conceptions, is epoch-dependent (1988: 256-257).

2.3.2 Equivalence

Shuttleworth and Cowie acknowledge the vagueness of the concept of faithfulness but tentatively define it as describing the extent to which a target text can be considered a fair representation of a source text "according to some criterion" (1997: 57). The more important point the authors make, however, is that there is a crucial link between conceptions of faithfulness and equivalence. The concept of equivalence, they claim, has superseded that of faithfulness, becoming the pivotal concern in translation studies. Many other researchers in translation studies agree. Tack observes that from a historical and disciplinary point of view "focus on equivalence to define translation is probably the most common feature of translatology" and that definitions of translation seem "to be based on the premise of an equivalence in the translational relation from Target Text to Source Text" (2000: 213). Likewise, Gorlée states:

it is generally claimed that original text and translated text are ideally placed in a one-to-one correspondence, meaning by this that they are to be considered as codifications of one piece of information, as logically and/or situationally interchangeable (1994: 170).

Bassnett comes to a similar conclusion, though she cautions that the term has been often misused in translation studies (1995 [1980]: 25).

Bassnett's caution is indicative of the concern that many theorists express regarding the use of the term 'equivalence' in reference to translation. One such theorist is Wilss, who, while conceding that equivalence has been given an important role in translation studies, insists that it is definitionally problematic, since it is "characterized by relatively inoperative, difficult-to-harmonize concepts" (1982: 135). Furthermore, he observes, translation

studies has not been able to make any definitive pronouncements on how a translator must proceed in order to arrive at "an adequate, qualitatively evaluable transfer result" (1982: 136). It is precisely because equivalence is so hard to define that a growing number of theorists, particularly those who see translation as the mediation of cultural differences, have argued that the term should be discarded. Assessing the varying conceptions of equivalence used in translation studies, Snell-Hornby contends that these are based on the faulty premise that there is symmetry between languages, and warns that since there are crucial differences between the terms used in any two languages, the assumption of symmetry between languages implicit in the notion of equivalence is dangerous (1995 [1988]: 16-17).

Rabadan scoffs at definitions of translation that privilege equivalence, claiming that they are generally static and fall within the framework of (structural) linguistics and not translation studies proper. Such definitions, she contends, only account for *fixed* relations between terms, in which a target language (and not a target text) expression is given for a source language expression. In other words, she claims, what some authors consider 'equivalents' are in fact semantic units of meaning at the abstract level of the linguistic system (1991: 61). Thus, she concludes, conceptions of equivalence and the translation approaches born of them reduce translation to an act of terminological substitution.

Yet, scholars such as Pym defend a conception of translation that privileges the notion of equivalence, arguing that equivalence-based definitions of translation, although problematic—since equivalence can be taken to mean "all things to all theorists"—are essentially correct (1992: 37). Koller, too, seeks to justify use of the term, though he stresses the proliferation of views concerning its definition and use. In his quest to "specify the concept of equivalence more precisely", he points out that while it postulates a relationship between a source language and a target language, it "as such does not say anything about the *kind* of relation[ship]" between them. For Koller,

light must be shed on this relationship, with the conditions for treating one text as equivalent to another being clarified. For him, such conditions relate to aspects such as "content, style, function, etc.". He concludes that equivalence requires that a quality (or qualities) in a source language text must be preserved in the target language text (1989: 100).

Five factors, in Koller's view, are relevant to coming up with an adequate conception of equivalence. These are the extralinguistic content, connotations, text and language norms, (reader) reception and what he refers to as the formal-aesthetic features of the source language text. For Koller, extralinguistic content refers to the denotation or the "invariance of content" in translation. Connotations regard the choices made by text authors relative to words, terms, level and register of language, etc. Text and language norms relate to text types, while reader reception deals with the effect of the text on its target audience. Finally, his category of formal-aesthetic features regards elements such as word play and the metalinguistic aspects and individual stylistic features of a source text (1989: 100-101).

Denotative equivalence in translation is, in principle, possible, Koller insists, even if languages "may not always be very economically used in attaining it". This possibility lies in the lexicons of the languages involved in a translation process, "since it is here [in the lexicons] that languages are (or should be) at their most productive (particularly regarding the use of existing or new methods of word formation)". Koller's insistence, however, is nuanced by the admission that denotative equivalence is possible to the extent that other factors, such as the readability and comprehensibility of a text, its receiver, the connotative and formal value of the text, etc., which play a role in translation, are disregarded (1989: 101-102).

Concerning connotative equivalence, Koller identifies, following Rossipal (1973) and Baldinger (1968), at least nine types of connotation, from that associated with speech level to that associated with geography. He suggests

that one of the major tasks of translation theory is "to characterize the connotative dimensions of individual languages ... to analyze their features and structural elements, and then relate these to the connotative dimensions of a given target language" (1989: 102).

Such a view suggests that connotative correspondence, even if not easily attainable, is, at least in principle, attainable. Yet, Koller concedes that the achievement of "connotative equivalence is one of the hardest problems of translation". He suggests that one way of solving the problem is to set up corpus-oriented studies of individual languages and texts (1989: 102).

In referring to text and language norms, Koller points to specific types of texts such as legal texts, which "follow particular lexical and syntactic norms of both selection and usage (i.e. norms of style)" (1989: 102). Research into usage norms and text types, Koller argues, should be helpful in translation research, particular that linked to the comparative study of two languages (1989: 102-103). The examination of texts in specific usage situations, he adds, is beneficial to this research.

The study of the pragmatic dimensions of a text, with due attention to the functional situations in which it is used, is important for the text readership, Koller asserts, since a translator is expected to meet the "linguistic/textual expectation norm, the expectations that the reader brings to a given type of text" (1989: 103). To the extent that readership expectations in a particular target language are different from those of a source language, the denotative, text-normative or connotative equivalence of a text may be displaced by communicative considerations. In other words, the conceptualisation of equivalence must pay attention to whether readers understand the texts which are being translated.

The formal-aesthetic dimension of a text might be used to achieve what Koller calls 'formal equivalence'. He cites Reiss' (1976: 21) definition of this kind of equivalence as being one in which a translation

orients itself towards the particular character of the work of art, taking as its guiding principle the author's creative will. Lexis, syntax, style and structure are manipulated in such a way that they bring about in the target language an aesthetic effect which is analogous to the expressive individual character of the source text (Koller 1989: 103).

According to Koller, it is necessary to examine formal categories such as rhymes, verse forms, rhythm, word plays etc., to determine whether it is possible to find formal equivalences for them in translation.

2.3.2.1 Structuralist equivalence

Equivalence has been viewed as a static concept in translation theory because of its theoretical antecedents. In modern translation theory, the concept may be traced back to structuralists such as Catford, for whom one of the central tasks of translation theory was “defining the nature and conditions of translation equivalence” (1967 [1965]: 21), and comparativists such as Vinay and Darbelnet, who defined it as a translation procedure where “deux textes rendent compte d'une même situation en mettant en œuvre des moyens stylistiques et structuraux entièrement différents” (1968 [1958]: 52). Catford suggests, for instance, that translation is a process of replacing source language grammatical structures with comparable target language structures. For him, translation equivalence can be either formal or textual, the former being “any TL category (unit, class, structure, element of structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the ‘same’ place in the ‘economy’ of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL”. Textual equivalence is tautologically defined as any TL text or portion of text category which is observed on a particular occasion to be equivalent to a given source language form (text or portion of text) (1967 [1965]: 27). His advice on how to evaluate whether equivalence has been achieved is equally weak, since it relies on the consultation of a

calls hopelessly inadequate for a "rigorously scientific discipline" (1995 [1988]: 19-20).

By defining translation as the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language, Catford makes fixed linguistic forms and structures central to the conceptualisation of translation. While he does not reduce translation processes to the mere replacement of linguistic forms by other linguistic forms, he makes translation processes contingent upon the interchangeability of these forms. Thus, the structures of a target language text, insofar as they can stand in replacement of the structures of another text, help to define translatability.

2.3.2.2 Dynamic/Functional Equivalence

Responses to structuralist conceptions of translation as the correspondence between source and target texts came from a number of theoretical schools. One such was the dynamic/functional equivalence school, which argued that because languages used different structures and mechanisms to encode messages it was impractical to base a notion of equivalence between them on structural variables such as grammatical categories and units. Proposed by Nida, de Waard and Taber, dynamic/functional equivalence argues that social and cultural contexts, particularly those of the receptor language, are important and must be taken into consideration in elaborating approaches to translation. These scholars suggest that translation success is determined not by correspondence of form but by the reproduction in the target language, what they call the receptor language, of the closest possible natural equivalent of a source language message (Nida and Taber 1974 [1969]: 12). Rejecting the structuralist paradigm, their theory is based mainly on Chomskian notions of universalism and innatism (Larose 1992 [1989]: 99), which assume the existence of underlying structures shared by all languages. This conception of language views linguistic differences as individualised surface manifestations of the

underlying structures shared by all languages. Applied to a theory of translation, this conception makes the practice, in the first instance, a search for the core meaning (deep structure) of a source text message and secondly, an attempt to identify the surface structure manifestations in the receptor language of that message. Thus, the translation process proposed by functional/dynamic equivalence involves the search for the 'kernel' or deep structure meaning in a source language text. After identifying the kernel, the translator transfers it to the receptor language and through a process of transformation, arrives at progressively less general meanings until he or she is able to produce a communicative text that conveys the same meaning in the receptor language as that conveyed in the source language. According to functional/dynamic equivalence theory, the transfer of meaning is characterised by the *effect* that a translated text has on its receivers. Nida stresses that in a dynamically based translation, "one is not so concerned with matching the receptor-language message with the source-language message"; rather what is important is that the effect of the message in the receptor language community be equivalent to that in the source language community (1964: 159).

According to the theory, the message in the receptor language is more important than its form (Nida and Taber 1974 [1969]: 12), even if that form is not deemed inessential in the communication of meaning. In fact Nida and Taber caution that in translation the grammar and stylistic devices of the receptor language must be respected in such a way that "any form of awkwardness or strangeness" is avoided (1974 [1969]: 13).

The understanding of equivalence offered by the functional/dynamic theorists' is problematic, since it assumes that similarity in response to a receptor language expression implies that the message behind that expression is similar to a source language message. Similarity of response to expressions in different language varieties cannot be seen to imply that the *messages* generating those responses are themselves equivalent, since similar responses exist in different languages for a variety of different expressions. It is, therefore, necessary to

distinguish between responses and the actual meanings or messages that generate them. Without the possibility of distinguishing between actual meanings and responses, the functional/dynamic equivalence theory has contradictory implications. If meanings are linked to and are determined by specific receptor responses, then meanings must have fixed connections to the terms which generate particular responses. In reality, however, there is no way of knowing beforehand that a given effect is produced by a particular meaning. In this regard Pym's critique of the theory as being based on "correspondence between use values which are rumoured to exist in distinct languages, societies or cultures" (1992: 46) is particularly relevant. Newmark, too, views the principles of dynamic equivalence, which he calls communicative translation, as being subjective, since they seek to achieve a certain effect on readers which can only be verified "by a survey of [readers'] mental and/or physical reactions" (1986 [1981]: 42). Indeed, the translation activity about which dynamic equivalence theorists speak may be defined, in the words of Pym, as "the matching of one use or function with another, rather than as a productive function in itself" (1992: 46). In the final analysis, no one is able to definitively determine that a response or effect in one linguistic community is equivalent to a response or effect in another, even if those responses are, superficially, similar.

Hu, criticising the notion of equivalent effect, states that since Nida's theory assumes receptor feedback, it rests on "an incalculable basis" (1992: 300), a view shared by Bassnett, who states that dynamic equivalence involves speculation (1991: 26). According to Hu's analysis, Nida's model makes feedback possible only after receptors have reacted to a particular rendering of a message. Thus, it anticipates possible feedback from receptors "before a specific translation is even published". This, Hu claims, "must necessarily amount to guesswork" (1992: 300).

Notwithstanding the criticisms, dynamic/functional equivalence has brought beneficial insights to translation research. The distinction between form and usage/function that the theory introduced into the field seems particularly important in helping theory transcend traditional conceptions of how language worked in translation. This was attributable to the fact that the scholars involved in the school worked in milieux typified by linguistic diversity, which highlighted the impracticality of viewing languages from the structuralist point of view. However, by opting to participate in processes that consolidated prevailing conceptions of translation as the negotiation of difference between two languages, proponents of the dynamic/functional equivalence school remained linked to the preceding structuralist tradition.

In an age defined by the evangelisation mission, the concern of Nida *et al.* was to make the Bible, the 'Good News', available to groups of non-Christian peoples across the globe in the languages of these people. Beyond the cultural penetration that this theoretical tradition clearly represents, it was also a means by which a specific conception of languages—that is to say, as separate and relatively homogenous entities—was passed into the cultures receiving the Bible. Nida, de Waard and Taber's intent was to propagate a particular message geared towards eliciting a very specific response on the part of persons hearing/reading the message in the receptor culture: conversion to Christianity (cf. Gentzler 2001: 57). For Nida *et al.* then, a successful translation was one in which the message of the Bible took precedence over the means by which it was transmitted. It is for this reason that they point out that if loss is necessary in translation, it should occur at the level of the form rather than at the level of content.

2.4 Faithful, Equivalent, Language

Faithfulness and equivalence assume the existence of parallelisms between the languages involved in translation acts. Parallelism implies similitude or analogy. Similarities are not only based on functional or usage relationships

between the terms in source language texts and those in target language texts but also, in some instances, between the concepts that these terms represent. Nida distinguishes between functional correspondences, which he calls the formal level of translation, and the conceptual correspondences, which he calls the semantic level of translation (1964: 112).

The possibility of basing translation on similarities between functional and conceptual relationships in source and target languages arises from what Nida refers to as the linguistic and cultural 'relatedness' of languages. Relatedness may manifest itself in four situations: 1) between closely related languages and cultures (e.g. Hebrew and Arabic) 2) between unrelated languages with shared cultures (e.g. Swedish and Finnish) 3) between related languages but disparate cultures (e.g. English and Hindi) and 4) between languages that share neither linguistic nor cultural similarities (e.g. English and isiZulu). A common history and a common culture make it more likely that languages will share concepts and, thus, possess the terminology to express them. In such situations, Nida notes, "one should expect to encounter the least number of serious problems [of equivalence]", though he cautions that languages that are too closely related may pose problems of superficial similarities leading to equivalents that are 'false friends' (1964: 112).

Whereas a similar linguistic and cultural history gives rise to a series of parallelisms on which equivalence may be based, situations of limited cultural contacts present fewer instances of parallelisms. Commenting on this fact, Nida observes that when the translating cultures are related but the languages are not, translation is proportionately less difficult than when the languages and cultures are disparate (1964: 160-161). Nida's comment is similar to that of Prince, who, discussing the translation of Brunetto Latini's *Li Livre dou tresor* from medieval French into Aragonese, remarks that a "common stock of Romance culture and lexis circumvented the need for the lengthy glosses and

commentaries that were almost always necessary for the comprehension of Latin prose" (1995: 64).

It may be concluded from Nida's arguments that since equivalence is dependent on linguistic and cultural parallelisms and translation is dependent on equivalence, translation is itself dependent on languages and cultures being parallel. Since parallelism implies separateness, this understanding would suggest that translation concerns separate languages and separate cultures. Wright's thesis regarding translation between Latin and its derivative, Romance, seems to correspond to this view, since it stresses the importance of linguistic dichotomy to a conception of translation. Translation, "in the normal sense of the word" Wright claims, was not required between Latin and Romance until the 12th century, since, before that time, Latin and Romance "were not two independent languages required for translation" (1997: 7). Wright's comment is essentially a reference to the principles of *abstandsprache* and *ausbausprache* dealt with in chapter 1. The growing distance between Latin and Romance, he assumes, separated them into two distinct varieties (languages by distance) yet they remained related through a shared history and common practices regarding how languages operated (language by development).

If translation is implicitly defined as the replacement, transfer, reproduction or re-expression of meaning between languages and if these languages, according to Wright's understanding, must be autonomous, then translation must rely on the possibility of symmetry between texts written in autonomous languages. Yet, the autonomy of languages—and by extension the distinction between source and target languages—does not exist in a social or historical vacuum; it results from particular processes of language creation which translation studies has generally ignored. For instance, translation theorists generally do not ask what determined that varieties such as Latin and Romance were separate languages, and when this occurred. They simply take the results of the process

of separation—the 'languages'—for granted and elaborate theories about translation from or into these languages. This theorisation often pretends to be independent of the mechanisms by which languages are created and maintained as separate entities in the first place. There is, however, an important sociolinguistic concern which must be taken into consideration. Sociolinguists caution that any practice based on an understanding of languages as separate and distinct entities cannot escape the debate implicit in the treatment of the question of the concept of *a language*, what is called the dialect/language problem. Conceiving translation as relating to source language and target language without addressing the language/dialect problem is to make historical and political choices without acknowledging them or their implications. Furthermore, it implies the acceptance of the products of specific historical and political contexts as universal while neglecting other contexts which might provide alternatives in helping to define translation. Pergnier appears to be conscious of this fact when he states that it is impossible "de trouver ... une homogénéité à l'intérieur de ce qu'il est convenu de considérer une seule et même langue" (1993: 248). However, despite this admission by a leading translation theorist, translation studies has remained decidedly rooted in a tradition which takes conventional linguistic separation for granted and has not investigated its implications for the study and conception of translation.

2.5 Testing Language, Texting Language

Pym notes that translation theory views interlingual and intralingual translation as radically different operations. As a result, it is often "assumed that the kind of transfer most pertinent to translation is that which take place between different languages" (1992: 25). If conventional theories regard interlingual transfer as being most relevant to translation, why do these same theorists so strenuously resist attempts to link translation to the study of languages? The answer lies in the fact that translation studies has generally attempted to free itself from the stranglehold that structuralist views of language held over

translation for some time. The attempt to move beyond structuralism is typified by the continued efforts to displace theorists such as Catford from the field.

The trend away from linguistic considerations is epitomised by theories which proclaim that translation is an operation on texts and not on languages. Neubert and Shreve, for instance, argue that translation involves "text-induced-texts" (1992: 43) and insist that it is "within the framework of a science of text production and text comprehension that translation process has to be studied" (1992: 43-44). These authors claim that unlike linguistics-based definitions of translation, their view has more room for dealing with the complexities of the translation process, allowing for it to be conceived as involving more than a relationship between linguistic units. In contrasting linguistically-oriented approaches to translation with the pragmatics/text-linguistics approach, Neubert and Shreve conclude that the former are bottom-up processes, which see translation as a transformation of smaller to bigger units. These kinds of approaches, they claim, "can never yield acceptable target language texts". In their top-down pragmatic text-linguistic approach, translation is seen as the construction of "a new semantic and pragmatic totality in the target language community". This process of target text creation, one is told, involves the "purposeful selection of target language resources" (1992: 23).

The differences between linguistically-oriented approaches and those which privilege more pragmatic textual considerations seem important enough to assume that they derive from radically different conceptions of texts. However, although many theorists have been stressing that translation involves transfer between texts or discourses (which themselves are contained within language, the general), they remain tied to a view of translation that is essentially structuralist. Neubert and Shreve openly admit that there is a relationship between their position and that of the structuralist linguistic school. They argue that while the communicative and systemic views of language and translation

may seem mutually exclusive, closer examination reveals that they are in fact complementary.

Language in use and language as system presuppose one another. Both approaches assume that human interaction is a patterned, rule-governed use of linguistic signs. The formal structures described by linguists are internalized through communicative interaction. Alternatively, the communicative events described by sociolinguists presume an underlying language system (1992: 38).

For her part, House, argues that translation processes are "concerned with acts of speech" and that translation products are primarily pragmatic reconstructions of their source texts (1981: 28). This is an important distinction which could lead to broader conceptions of translation. But House limits the possibilities of her understanding of translation by defining text, following Dressler (1972) as "any stretch of language in which the individual components all relate to one another and form a cohesive whole" (1981: 29). At first glance this definition appears justifiable, innocent even. However, beneath it lies a fundamental definitional problem. One may assume that House is referring to language in the general sense but since she sees translation as relating to source *language* text and target *language* text, as illustrated by her definition of translation as "the replacement of a text in the source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language" (1981: 29-30), one must assume that text is constrained by, and defined within, the framework of *a* language and not of language in the general sense.

With this understanding of translation, the possibility of going beyond languages and dealing simply with texts (including those which do fall not within the parameters of what is conventionally referred to as languages) evaporates from House's definition. For, as long as researchers continue to see translation as involving source 'language' text and target 'language' text, they remain tied to the structuralist conceptions of language and translation. House is, therefore, more closely aligned to the restrictive linguistics school than she first appears.

Even for pragmatic theorists, then, conceptions of translation entail processes in which source texts do not simply yield target texts but target *language* texts. In this way the conventional view of translation makes a transfer of meaning between texts necessarily a transfer of meaning between texts in languages, and the latter, in large part, are structuralist constructs. The emphasis placed on text in translation studies has, therefore, not reduced that placed on languages.

Whether translation is based on language (in the sense of 'a language') or on text/discourse, the question of how text/discourse relates to source language and target language must be answered. Scholars who speak of 'text' yet spend an inordinate amount of time referring to source and target languages implicitly reinforce the structuralist underpinnings of translation theory. This suggests that removing translation from the strictures of structuralism requires more than an insistence that the practice is an operation on text/discourse and not language. In order for translation theory to be truly liberated from structuralism, it must be disconnected not from a conception of text as the stringing together of words or sentences but from text as being necessarily contingent on languages. The problem with the linguistic approach to translation is not only that it is concerned primarily with text units but also—and perhaps more importantly—that it relies on a conception that sees source texts as belonging to source languages and target texts as belonging to target languages, and that these languages are necessarily separate and supposedly mutually unintelligible entities. This is especially important if the frame of reference of a text is, as Neubert and Shreve insist "not the linguistic system but the textual systems of two communicating communities" (1992: 24). It seems, then, that the lack of regard for the question of language in translation makes theorisation of translation as a text-defined operation as opposed to a linguistically-oriented one guilty of what Price claims is a failure to sufficiently critique the structuralist basis

upon which linguistic approaches to translation have been elaborated (2000: 25).

2.5 Meaning Signifying Language

In attempting to remove translation from the grips of structuralist linguistics, House considers meaning in translation to involve more than linguistic forms. Unlike Neubert and Shreve she makes a sharp distinction between the semantic, pragmatic and textual aspects of meaning. The semantic aspect of meaning to which she refers corresponds to Neubert and Shreve's linguistic meaning, while her pragmatic and textual aspects of meaning may be treated as alternatives to their text-linguistic conception of meaning. For House, the semantic aspect of meaning is denotative, involving "the relationship of linguistic units or symbols to their referents in some possible world" (1981: 25). The pragmatic aspect of meaning refers to "the correlation between linguistic units and the user(s) of these units in a given communicative situation" (1981: 27). Thus, whereas the semantic aspect of meaning is abstract, the pragmatic aspect is concrete.

2.5.1 Apprehending Meaning

The kind of concrete meaning treated in House's work has been used by the interpretive theorists in their response to the linguistic-oriented approaches to translation. Their theory of meaning stresses the importance of the re-expression of meaning or message in translation and has pointed to certain critical gaps in the conceptions of translation that rely primarily on linguistic considerations. Theorists in this tradition, who include scholars such as Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer and Jean Delisle, insist, like Newmark and Nida *et al.*, that early 20th century conceptions of translation paid excessive attention to language forms as the determinants of meaning and consequently disregarded the pragmatic communicative dimensions of

a translation approach based on the apprehension and re-expression of meaning, paying attention to linguistic considerations but highlighting so-called *extra-linguistic* considerations.

Like theorists such as Neubert and Shreve and House, Lederer and Seleskovitch and Delisle claim that meaning is not derived from isolated text fragments or words but from a totality of linguistic and contextual components. The 'linguistic' conceptions of translation that these pragmatic theorists critique are those seen as treating translation as a language-based operation. For them, atomised units, such as words and sentences, only point to possible significations, not to meanings. For Delisle, signification is concerned with the concept(s) to which a particular term points. According to him, discovering the *signification* of language units or signs is not sufficient for the purposes of translation. Instead, what is required is the apprehension of meanings in source texts and their re-expression in target texts. This makes it necessary to distinguish between the mere signification of terms and their 'meanings' (1984: 58-59). For while it is possible for terms in texts to have multiple significations, their meaning is unique, arrived at only after discounting all other possible significations. Delisle conceives meaning as arising from "la combinaison et l'interdépendence des significations pertinentes des mots syntagmes qui le composent enrichies des paramètres non linguistiques et représentant le vouloir-dire de l'auteur" (1984: 59). This view of meaning is reminiscent of that of Seleskovitch, who contends that "la polysémie se situe ... au niveau de l'analyse de la langue et non à celui de son emploi" (1975: 35). She claims elsewhere that:

une traduction qui se fourvoie devant des significations linguistiques simples parce que le traducteur ne possède pas les connaissances non linguistiques nécessaires à la compréhension du sens, nous montrera l'importance de ces dernières dans la réussite de la communication (1993: 75).

In the same vein, Lederer offers a perspective of meaning as being not primarily a grammatical entity but "la rencontre dans l'esprit de la formulation

linguistique qu'on voit sur le papier et des connaissances dont on dispose à la lecture" (1993: 22). She refers disparagingly to translation approaches that rely on comparisons between significations in languages as useful only for 'transcodage', which, according to her, must be distinguished from translation proper, a practice which relies on the re-expression of meaning. In fact, analysis of the similarities and differences between the formal structures of languages in translation, Lederer claims, can lead to the misapprehension of the *real* meaning of a source text. Linguistic analysis, she claims, is not only insufficient for translation but risks "même d'y faire obstacle" (1993: 35). Thus, she argues, one of the main skills a translator should possess is "la capacité de rejeter les équivalences verbales pour établir la concordance entre le sens et la langue, la pensée et la parole" (1993: 36). Like Lederer, Seleskovitch cautions against the reliance on linguistics as a guide to translating.

Les théories de la traduction qui se situent au seul plan de la langue sont condamnées à aboutir dans une double impasse. D'une part, inéluctablement, elles doivent constater que tôt ou tard la transposition des significations se heurte à une impossibilité ... d'autre part, elles devront constater, si elles se penchent sur les résultants de traductions réalisées par transposition des significations que, si correctement que celles-ci aient été cernées en langues, elles n'assurent pas pour autant avec certitude la transmission des messages (1993: 92).

According to the perspectives of Lederer and Seleskovitch, translation is an endeavour whose primary if not sole purpose is communication of information. Apprehending and re-expressing meaning are, therefore, the priority of translators, who must examine words and terms with multiple significations in order to grasp and convey appropriate, contextually derived meanings.

The apprehension of meaning is contingent on the production of meaning, which, according to the theorists of meaning, is the task of the author of a source language text. This meaning manifests itself as the *vouloir dire* or intent of the author of the text. The intent of the author comprises what is said in the text as well as what is left unsaid. Comprehension of this intent, then, is only possible after precise contextual readings. Lederer reminds us that sentences,

"séparées de leur contexte, n'ont que de virtualité de sens" (1993: 17). It is for this reason that she and Seleskovitch stress the importance of the extra-linguistic knowledge on the part of translators, since it falls to them to (re)construct the meaning of a source language text after making judgements about authorial intent.

The value of extra-linguistic knowledge derives from the fact that translation is perceived as an operation on *parole* and not on *langue*. *Parole*, unlike *langue*, is apprehensible only by the human subject. It is for this reason that Lederer sees the relative failure of machine translation, which relies on *langue*, as an indictment of the structuralist approach to translation. She concludes triumphantly that machine translation has failed because it is not "inspirée du mode opératoire de l'homme". The human translator, by contrast, she argues, "ne transpose pas un code en un autre mais appréhende et réexprime un sens" (1993: 18). Translation, then, is defined as a process in which translators apprehend meaning, that is, they free it from its linguistic and extra-linguistic forms (its expression in a source language) and connect it to expressions in a target language. It is the "dissociation de la forme et du sens, la réexpression de ce dernier de préférence à la transposition du signifié original" (Seleskovitch 1993: 93).

St-Pierre notes that translation, at a certain level, "ne s'occupe que du contenu, du message, des intentions de l'auteur". To this extent, he contends, translation and literary criticism can pretend to objectivity. However, he adds, "cette conception à la fois de l'écriture et de la traduction se base sur un oubli nullement innocent, l'oubli que le texte en plus d'avoir une fonction communicative a aussi une fonction de signification" (1978/79: 77). In his view, even if "l'on admet que dans un texte il y a un vouloir-dire ... cela n'entraîne pas la réduction du texte à ce vouloir-dire" (1978/79: 73). Thus, the text is more than the intent of the author. Readers, therefore, including translators, may draw meanings from a text which differ from the *vouloir dire* of the author. This dynamism of meaning is conditioned by the background of the reader, who

looks at the text through the prism of his or her own "position historique et sociale" (1978/79: 75).

The positioning of translators in their own historical and social space means that they can and do make choices not only about what they translate but also how they translate, resulting in what Maria Tymoczko calls partial translations. She observes that translators select "aspects or parts of a text to transpose and emphasize". In her view, "[t]his *partiality* is not merely a defect, a lack or an absence in a translation—it is also an aspect that makes the act of translation *partisan*" (2000: 24). The implication, then, that translation involves the transfer of an objective authorial intent is mythical. Lederer seems to concede this when she admits that "[t]oute compréhension est ... par définition subjective et le sens ne peut être qu'une approximation au vouloir dire de l'auteur" (1993: 25). However, she appears less concessionary when one reads: "Pour que le sens du dire soit celui que veut l'auteur, il faut que celui-ci ait correctement jugé du savoir de ceux auxquels il s'adresse et qu'il ait proportionné en conséquence l'explicite de sa formulation par rapport à ce qu'il laisse non dit" (1993: 22). Lederer places the onus of communicability on authors, assuming that they and their readership share a common set of determined linguistic behaviours which must be respected if texts are to be understood. Such a view undermines the role of readers as interpreters of texts.

Closer examination of the above shows some of the deficiencies of the interpretive theory. The first problem is that it makes the 'meaning' it argues for a definitionally inoperable concept. To comprehend and then transmit a meaning implies that such a meaning is at a minimum an identifiable entity. However, Lederer and Seleskovitch do not provide a clear road map as to how to identify this meaning. Lederer's suggestion that meaning is the meeting in the mind of the translator of linguistic sign and extra-linguistic knowledge, provides very little insight into what is actually to be apprehended. While one may read her conception of meaning as a search for authorial intent, "le sens qui est le message à transmettre" by means of "significations linguistiques" (1993: 22),

she insists that authors need to be precise about what they wish to say before their messages can be apprehended. This raises the questions of what specifically links clarity of expression to meaning and what or who determines the clarity of a message. Lederer explains her position by stating that meaning does not correspond to an object but a process (1993: 25). However, it seems impractical for a translator to seek to re-express a process in a target language. In fact, if meaning is the meeting of 'dit' with the knowledge of the translator, which comprises the 'non-dit', what Lederer and Seleskovitch refer to as meaning apprehension is actually the process of meaning constitution. Apprehension of meaning suggests that meaning is pre-existent, whereas constitution of meaning assumes meaning has to be constructed. Such a construction puts a premium on text and not on considerations such as authorial *vouloir dire*. For, if meaning is constituted and not apprehended, the translator has little need to seek out the author's intent; since it is in reading a text that meaning is constituted.

2.5.2 Le dit, le non-dit et le contre-dit

Despite the fact that the theoretical currents stressing meaning point to the need to go beyond linguistic forms in theorising translation, they fail to engage concretely with the factors which condition the 'meaning' of a given text. In the conception of Lederer and Seleskovitch, for instance, the social, cultural and temporal variables which affect the translation process and product are reduced to the 'dit' and the 'non-dit'. The fundamental problem with the concerns these theorists outline lies in the fact that they assume that 'meaning' can cross linguistic frontiers and, by extension, move from one culture or society to another. This characterisation of meaning masks a number of contradictory assumptions.

While interpretive theorists claim to argue for a conception of meaning that considers linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, their arguments tend to present meaning as being disconnected from linguistic forms. This meaning seems

somehow to lie behind or beyond the words of a text. In fact, this is the only way that meaning could ever be transportable in the way suggested by Lederer and Seleskovitch. This view of meaning—understood as the essence of a text, the intent of the author, etc.—suggests that the core of any message is reproducible or transferable in isolation from its linguistic vehicle. Such an understanding implies that there is no necessary relationship between words/terms and the concepts they represent, since concepts may be represented by other words/terms in other languages. And since words/terms may be separated from their meanings, labels used for concepts in one language may be removed and replaced by the labels of another language.

The interpretive theorists join a long tradition of thinkers reflecting on the question of meaning and its relationship to words and concepts, much of which is influenced by dualistic philosophies. Long before Lederer and Seleskovitch wrote, Haas pointed to the dangers of this kind of conception of meaning. His critique was formulated in a series of questions about where such a disembodied meaning could be found, how it could be observed and whether it was ever found in its natural state, *without* its verbal clothes (1976 [1968]: 88).

Assuming, as the interpretive theory does, that concepts used in one language community are expressible in the terms of another language community, it is reasonable to expect that the relationship between these concepts and the language of the receiving community to be defined. Do the concepts already exist in the language of the receiving community? If they do not, can they be created or imported into that language and how? Failure to specify the nature of the relationship between concepts and particular languages leaves room for a view that the concepts expressed in any language are expressible in all other languages, regardless of the social or cultural specificities attached to those concepts in their source communities. We know, however, that not all concepts are universal, that some are specific to particular communities. These concepts are marked by the cultural frameworks from which they arise as well as by the times in which they are used. Culturally determined items such as curse words,

jokes, wordplays and idioms, depend upon very specific contexts for their production and meaningfulness. The context and rules of production for curse words in Jamaica are not the same as those for Québec; what is funny in Lapland is not necessarily so in Mpumalanga Province. It is, therefore, unsound to speak of meaning in a manner that implies that it can only relate to concepts which can be divorced from their linguistic vehicles. More generally, since all human communities do not live, share or express the same experiences or ideas, the meaning of a text cannot be divorced from its production framework.

Although Delisle and Lederer and Seleskovitch stress the importance of context in delineating what they call meaning, their framework is limited to pragmatic texts. This position, coupled with the view that meaning is not attached to any language in particular, leads to neglect of the role of cultural differences in communication, since culturally specific elements linked to language forms are more likely to appear in non-pragmatic texts. The interpretive theorists also ignore the fact that meaning can be linked to different formal elements, manifested in texts such as (Semitic) acrostic verses, with horizontal and vertical messages embedded in the written text (Nida 1964: 195).

The trend towards increased translation of pragmatic texts has been accompanied by the heavy use of specialised terminology. But the style of pragmatic texts (discourse) is inspired and driven not only by the standardising tendencies of industrialism but also by the homogenising forces of globalisation. For this reason, pragmatic texts are highly value-laden, favouring the transmission of information according to primarily standardised and standardisable modes. Ironically, Lederer's claim that machine translation has failed because it cannot replicate the human operation of apprehending meaning in *parole* is more relevant to non-pragmatic texts than to pragmatic texts, on which her theory is based. The increased homogenisation and standardisation of technical information makes pragmatic texts the most easily processed via automation. This is increasingly the case with the setting up terminological databases and other instruments of formalising or fixing language, linking

translatability increasingly to the facility with which one to one matching of concepts and terms is possible both within and between languages. In this way the 'translatability' of texts is enhanced by ridding them of culturally specific markers and by dispensing with 'useless' significations that limit precision in meaning.

Ultimately then, the interpretive theory, despite claims to the contrary, treats meaning as a fixed entity existing independently of form. This is ironic, since the primary intent of the interpretive theorists was to argue against the fixity of meaning implied in the linguistic theories and to demonstrate that meaning is indeed a dynamic, context-dependent entity.

2.6 Restructuralised Theories

Despite the difference in emphases, there are underlying similarities between structuralism and the theoretical traditions that have challenged it. The structural linguistic tendency assumes that a text, playing a particular function in one language, can be replaced or be equivalent to a text in another language playing the same basic function, with equivalence being assumed to exist at the level of language units. Translation approaches questioning structuralism such as the theory of functional/dynamic equivalence, theories involving text and discourse analysis as well as the interpretive theory, assume that meaning or message remains constant and can be communicated via any text, since it is not associable in any necessary way to the original text that communicates it. What these tendencies share with structuralist approaches is the supposition that translation relates to the distinct entities of source expression and target expression and the meaning behind each (cf. Haas [1968] 1976: 86-87), where source expression is replaced by, transferred to, or re-expressed as target expression, while meaning remains constant. Such replacement, transfer or (re)expression is possible because the target/receiving system either has a corresponding space that that meaning can occupy or has a different expression that may adequately convey the same meaning. In the final analysis, such

understandings of translation assume that the meaning expressed in one language is always (perhaps, *must* always be) replaceable by, transferable to, or (re)expressible in another language.

The above constitutes the conventional view of translation, premised on a specific kind of relationship between language and meaning, which Harris locates within the European culturo-linguistic framework of *surrogationalism* and *telementation*. Surrogationalism is the view that words in language "are essentially surrogates or substitutes for other things" (Harris 1980: 33), while telementation is knowing "which words stand for which ideas. For words ... are symbols devised by man for transferring thoughts from one mind to another" (Harris 1981: 9). Telementation, which is concerned with the function of language, is more closely linked to medieval modistic grammarians but can be traced even further back to Aristotle, who, according to Harris, sees all human beings as being endowed by Nature with the same ideas and, therefore, need only "to agree upon some fixed set of correlations between ideas and verbal symbols, in order to provide themselves with a viable system for exchanging thoughts" (1981: 10). Thus, according to the telementational perspective, linguistic knowledge is about which words stand for which ideas.

Since both surrogationalism and telementation relate to representationality, they constitute, in theory, the basic framework for conceiving and—provided the necessary cultural tools such as writing are in place—articulating a notion of translatability, at least in the conventional sense. Minimally conceived, according to many existing theories, translation is the correspondence between meanings—concept and/or terms—in two languages or the naming in a second language of a thing already named in a first. Conventional theories of translation, therefore, seem to conceive the practice in a manner that corresponds, at least partially, to Harris's notions of surrogationalism and telementation. Structural linguistic conceptions of translation, for example, may be seen as a kind of surrogationalism expanded to include an additional language. The replacement of textual material in one language by textual

material in another suggests that there is the potential for perfect matches between the realities behind the terms of one language and those of another. If one relates this to the communicative understanding of translation espoused by pragmatic theorists, one could say that what speakers need to do in order to communicate with one another is to translate or represent their ideas or the realities in the natural world by means of conventionalised symbols (words) in another language. Likewise, the idea that texts which convey ideas in one language can be re-expressed in another suggests that the thoughts represented in the words (or discourse) of a person using one language can be communicated to the mind of another—a form of *tele-mentation*. For Harris, the involvement of a second language in the telementation process may make the task more complex, "but it does not affect its essential nature". This is so because telementation assumes a context-neutral⁹ set of verbal equivalences, "which are determinately adequate to the task of reformulation in all conceivable circumstances, because those equivalents identify the thoughts transferred in the telementation process" (1981: 148).

Surrogationalism and telementation fall within what Harris describes as a "complex of interconnected errors", which constitute his "language myth". Surrogationalism and telementation are reinforced by another dimension of the myth, which Harris calls the *determinacy* or *fixed code fallacy*, that is, the recourse to "recurrent instantiation[s] of invariant items belonging to a set known to all members of the community" (Harris 1981: 10). By fixed code Harris does not mean one that is invariant from speaker to speaker but one that is "fixed in the sense in which the institutionalized rules of a game such as chess are fixed" (1990: 29). This fixed code is necessary, since "[k]nowing the forms of sentences enables those who know the language to identify the thought thus

⁹ Again, although Lederer and Seleskovich's theory of meaning stresses the importance of contextually derived meaning, its assumption that what is said clearly in one language can be said in another makes it (at least partially) implicitly context neutral. Languages do not exist in one-to-one functionally equivalent relationships, and texts produced in specific language situations (such as elements of polylectal continua) are not functionally equivalent to texts in other language situations (such as standard languages).

expressed" (1981:10). Hence, surrogationalism and telementation are possible only if there are conventionalised codes indicating which meanings are to be accorded to which expressions.

To the extent that conceptions of translation rely unquestioningly on the notions of source language and target language, they implicitly rely on historically defined, 'fixed' codes. This way of perceiving languages seems to be common sense. But Harris reminds us that its fundamental flaw is that it sees a language as a finite set of rules generating infinite sets of pairs, "of which one member is a sound-sequence or a sequence of written characters, and the other is its meaning" and that individuals' shared knowledge of the rules for generating these pairs sets them apart as members of one linguistic community and not of another, the speakers of *a language* (1981: 11). The problem with this conception is that logically it leaves no room for innovation in language use. In the true sense of the term, it is a closed linguistic system, with meanings pre-determined and passed on from one generation to the next. Pointing to the shortcomings of the conception of languages as fixed systems, Harris states that in a communication situation involving speakers A and B, if "A attempts to introduce a new word, B will certainly fail to understand it since *ex hypothesi* the word is not part of the code they share" (1990: 34). By contrast, if either speaker is able to successfully introduce new terms into the communication situation, the code both use is not fixed. Harris' model of language, therefore, attempts to account for the link between what has traditionally been conceived as succeeding varieties over time (linguistic diachrony) without needing to resort to the notion of 'a language' (1990: 45). This view implies that what was called 'English' in Shakespeare's day cannot be called the same language as what is called 'English' in the 21st century, at least not if notions such as 'English' and 'French' are predicated on systemic linguistic variables. In fact, this view argues against the marshalling or erasure of types of differences in language as a means of demarcating entities called 'languages', such as that achieved through the Saussurean distinction between diachrony and synchrony.

Harris posits that it is not "by discounting the passage of time that you validate the notion of different linguistic systems; nor by appealing to temporal continuity that you can discount linguistic differences" (1998a: 42).

Drawing on his language experience as a student during World War II, Harris argues that language innovation conflicted with the manner in which the "linguistic orthodoxy" of his generation saw and treated language. The war, he outlines,

was a time when innovations of all kinds abounded in spoken usage and could not be ignored. The conflict between what we were taught and what we could observe for ourselves was blatant and pervasive, even if it went apparently unnoticed by our teachers. It affected the most elementary doctrines concerning grammaticality and vocabulary. Wartime English was clearly *not* the English described and exemplified in our school books. *There was a war on* was itself a sentence that defied orthodox parsing. It was a time when familiar expressions abruptly and inexplicably acquired new and sometime contradictory meanings ... Ubiquitous slogans suddenly appeared which it would have been hard to make sense of at all in peacetime...Old lexical patterns were thus disrupted. The language seemed suddenly to have been jerked out of its pre-war rut. Dictionaries were outdated virtually overnight. Americanisms flooded in and German words became English from one day to the next (1997: 238).

Thus, for Harris, *a* language, the stable entity in the conception of Europeans and their Greco-Latin predecessors, does not have a real existence but is an abstraction of a community phenomenon. In his view, orthodox linguistics has provided increasingly elaborate explanations for this non-existent thing, which in reality serves no purpose but to perpetuate the system of myths in honour of what he calls, invoking Bacon, the idols of the marketplace. Harris' contention is that what passes for the study of language excludes the examination of variables that are integral to human communication, leading to languages being treated as objects of study existing in their own right. In his view, conventional linguistics has taken language, with its multiple and complex layers and strands and its interactability with a multiplicity of human phenomena and distorted it by making it into a 'scientific' monolith relatable to Saussurean *langue*.

Harris castigates the structuralist and generative traditions for seeing renewal (and thus variability) in language as accidental, thereby "relegating the essential features and conditions of language to the realm of the non-linguistic" (1981: 166). His 'integrational' linguistics sees language as being "continuously created by the interaction of individuals in specific communication situations" (1981: 167). This language is not constrained in any way by dichotomies such as fixed code/dialects or diachrony/synchrony, which make linguistic renewal theoretically impossible. Harris' aim in proposing an integrational linguistics is not merely to change the priorities in language studies, from system to idiolect or from from *langue* to *parole*, but to challenge the basis of these dichotomies in the first place (1997: 237) and to integrate language into the various human activities with which it normally interacts.

2.7 Translating Structuralism

The same forces governing conventional linguistics might be said to be at work in conventional translation studies. First, the notion of a language as a closed system linked to a community (French in France, for instance) ignores the fact that languages interact all the time in spite of the political, cultural and social frontiers separating them. The attempt to fix codes and to stabilise the speech of communities, and by extension prescribe how those communities should use language, masks the reality of linguistic heterogeneity and the shifts and changes which characterise language use. More importantly, it creates the illusion of potential symmetry between meanings in different languages.

Following Toury and Hermans view that the parameters of translation are set by consensus rather than determined by factors intrinsic to the translation process, one may argue that the parameters of 'a language' are also based on norms and not on factors intrinsic to language. This suggests that norm setters are important in both the formation of languages as well as in the definition of translation. An evaluation of the social and cultural devices that have helped to

shape conceptions of translation and the conception of language underlying it may yield some answers as to why some practices and texts, within a limited range of options (cf. Hermans 1995: 14), are considered translation(s), to the exclusion of others. The fact that translation relates to language, perhaps, explains the persistence of linguistic norms (such as the separation of language into 'languages') in its theorisation. Some of these linguistic norms are based on devices such as (standardised) writing, treated by Harris as "a relatively permanent form of expression" (1980: 6), which has provided the means of establishing and fixing relationship of correspondence between concepts and the terms that denote them. Any civilisation, Harris writes, "in which writing was unknown was hardly likely to develop the concept of a language as words potentially expressible in other than vocal form" (1980: 6). Writing, thus, allows for language to be conceived as representable in other than transient, dynamic forms. This has led to the establishment of abstract language relationships in which correspondence is assumed to exist not only between language and ideas but also between the ideas expressed in different languages. The Westerner, Harris writes, from the start of his or her education is inclined to regard "the words of his native language as items which have their equivalents, more or less, in other languages" (1980: 4). By contrast, an "isolated monoglot community having only the most tenuous contact with linguistically alien neighbours would have no reason for supposing that languages were in principle translatable" (1980: 4-5), at least not the conventional understanding of translatability.

It is necessary to stress here that for Harris' argument to be valid, it must be assumed that the monoglot speech community is primarily—if not exclusively—oral, since if a language does not possess tools that provide the stability that can help to separate it from other languages, it cannot enter into effective relationships of equivalence. The "transience of speech" (1980: 6) and the fluidity of linguistic boundaries (cf. Trudgill 1995 [1974]: 43) are not conducive to shaping adequate conceptions of correspondence, which means

that speech is an ineffective basis from which to construct a notion of (fixed) equivalence. The permanence accorded by standardisation, however, for as long as the standard is recognised, can serve as a basis for the establishment of relationships of correspondence.

The importance of the stability that standardisation, particularly writing, provides in translation is best demonstrated by reference to Luther's translation project, the feasibility of which depended upon the existence—or at least the possibility—of equivalence between a stable source language code and a stable target language code. The equivalence Luther achieved in his translation of the scriptures was attributable, at least in part, to the 'fixing' of a target language that could produce a text corresponding to that in an existing fixed language. Here, one is not speaking of equivalence only at the level of terms but equivalence of functions in 'systems'. Translating the scriptures into German presented Luther with the problem of non-equivalence between the source system, a literary ('fixed') language, and its target, an unstable language, comprising a multiplicity of dialects. Luther had to create a stable system, where previously none existed, in order to meet the 'equivalence' needs of translating his texts. Translators like Luther were, to borrow Baggioni's term, *faiseurs de langues*, of very specific types of *langues*, ones that were imbued with literary functions and, thus, the ability to enter into relationships of equivalence. Latin, having been the known literary language, became the model for codifying new languages such as German, giving rise to a generalised notion of what a language was and how it should function. In the words of Holm, as "western European languages came to replace Latin in serious writing, the idea that there could be only one correct form was transferred to them after an initial period of flux" (2000: 2). The influence of Latin on the grammatisation of vernacular languages led to them being gradually seen as possessing the full range of linguistic tools necessary for formulating and conveying meaning.

The transmission of a particular grammatical tradition to vernacular languages was one facet of the exchanges that took place within a common European macro-cultural area. It is this fact that makes Europeans intrinsically accommodating of the principle that ideas expressed in one language can be expressed in another. Although de Pedro claims that this "tacit consensus as to the interchangeability of linguistic codes" (1999: 556) lasted until the eighteenth century, Harris argues that it still pervades much of the thinking about language in the West, and that it has even been exported to other cultures.

2.8 The Empirical Empire

Studies in translation have traditionally been criticised for not having clearly defined objects and for using terminology such as equivalence and faithfulness that lacks specificity. Critics such as Holmes and Toury argued that the impreciseness in translation research has been the result of an approach that sees translation more as an appendage to disciplines such as linguistics than as an area of study in its own right. According to this view translation research should become autonomous, a move which required, it was argued, a shift of focus from approaches to translation to the examination of translation products.

The argument that translations must be treated primarily as products falls within the framework of descriptive translation studies, one of the branches of the field of translation research proposed by Holmes, whose complex mapping of the field of activity he called "Translation Studies", ironically, bears some resemblance to that of linguistics. The area of specific concern here, descriptive translation studies, deals with reflections on translation as both process and product. Translation process comprises clearly defined elements, the first of which is a *text* in a given language (source), which, after undergoing a prescribed series of procedures (transfer, re-expression etc.), yields a text in a second language (target). The text in the second language is the translation product. It is here that the notion of norms becomes particularly relevant, since

Holmes' descriptive translation studies seeks to account for the norms governing a particular process called translation and to identify the function or value that a receiving culture ascribes to the products of such a process. In Holmes' classification, there are three types of descriptive translation studies: Product-oriented, Function-oriented, and Process-oriented. Product-oriented descriptive translation studies "describes existing translations", with the starting point being the description of individual translated texts. Further examination involves the comparison of texts by type or by language. Function-oriented descriptive translation studies looks at the function of translated texts "in the recipient socio-cultural situation" (1988: 72). It, therefore, examines the circumstances of text reception rather than how to translate the texts themselves, addressing questions such as which texts are translated in which era and why. Finally, process-oriented descriptive translation studies looks at the mental processes involved in translation (1988: 72-73).

2.8.1 Norms

Toury develops on Holmes' work, formulating the norms theory that he and others like Hermans employ in translation scholarship. Since translation is seen as a social practice and norms are central to "the study and description of social phenomena" (Toury 1980: 52), Toury argues that they are critical to research into translation. He defines norms as the translation into performance instructions of general values or ideas shared by a community (1980: 51; 1995: 55). The norms school, unlike many of the theoretical trends already mentioned, recognises and stresses the social and historical factors governing the choices translators make. In fact, Toury places the study of translation within a theory of norms because translation behaviour is a "function allotted by a community" and because translations are defined by and the result of cultural or social interaction" (1995: 24). In other words, the choices translators make are not necessarily determined by intrinsic meanings in source texts but by the socio-historical context in which they are located.

Toury underscores that norms are set on a continuum between objective, absolute rules such as laws and subjective idiosyncrasies, and are internalised by members of a community through socialisation. Likewise Hermans, relying on the work of Niklas Luhmann (1995), presents norms as nothing more or less than "kind[s] of loaded expectation". In keeping with this view, he claims that a translation is a product of the "structured interaction between individuals, as clients, patrons, producers, consumers, teachers or critics of translation", and stresses that it is "a degree of interaction, of cooperation, among those involved" (1999: 7). In this sense, what is called translation derives from the consensus of a community that opts to assign particular texts to the translational mode. This choice, Hermans adds, falls within a "limited range of options", making practices falling outside the boundaries of these predefined options something other than translation, as defined by the group "that sees itself as ... having a legitimate claim to the definition of 'translation'" (1999:13).

According to Toury, there are two major sources for the study of norms in translation: these are textual, that is the translated texts themselves, and extra-textual, that is the body of prescriptive writings about translation. He contends that textual norms present "the results of actual norm-regulated behavior, that is, with a primary product of their activity, out of which the norms themselves are to be (and can be) *reconstructed*". Extra-textual sources, on the other hand, "are already *formulations* of the norms, that is by-products of their very existence and/or of their activity[;] ... objects for norms" (1980: 57). Thus, these sources play a role in determining adequate choices in translation processes and determine the acceptability of texts as translations in receiving cultures.

Prescriptive norms, that is, the norms of adequacy, are important in translation processes, but Toury points out that even more important than these are the norms of reception of translation products. According to this view, it is target language cultures that determine which products count as translations, for translations exist as "facts of the cultures which host them" (1980: 24). It is because many translation researchers fail to acknowledge this fact and instead

focus on source texts or source languages that Toury is critical of some translation scholarship. His concern is that too much translation research has focussed on translating and translatability, rather than on translations themselves, which are "actual textual-linguistic products (instances of performance), which belong first and foremost to the system of texts written in TL (in spite of the undeniable relationships obtaining between them and SL texts)" (1980: 35). This tendency he blames on the "overriding orientation towards practical applications" (1995: 2).

2.8.2 The Norm Makers

Despite Toury's attempts to go beyond strict prescriptivism to present a descriptive frame, critics such as Schäffner argue that the underpinnings of his target-oriented theory of translation suggest elements of prescription. Schäffner draws attention to the fact that the force of a norm "is built up in the relationships between norm authorities, norm enforcers, norm codifiers, and norm subjects" (1999: 2). She argues further that norms "are binding and their violation usually arouses disapproval of some kind [in] the community concerned" (1999: 26). The implication here is that translators' actions are influenced and sometimes determined by their social and political environments and by extension, by those who control those environments. In this sense, translators are creatures and functionaries of the socio-political macro-contexts in which they 'perform their duties', since they often agree "to becoming nearly fully subservient: to the author, to the text, to the language itself or even, in certain situations of close contact, to the culture or subculture within which the text is required to make sense" (Simeoni 1998: 12). This subservience is the very essence of the translator's invisibility that Savory describes in his conception of faithfulness and against which Venuti protests. Tracing the evolution of the translator-servant, Simeoni, following Elias (1996 [1989]), notes that translators have moved from being in situations

of overt coercion, initially imposed from the outside because of the ways in which the politics of writing, translating and literacy began to take form (the first patrons were the monarchs and protectors of the day; the first texts were religious or/and commercial, potentially threatening the integrity of the power structure and therefore, not to be tampered with; the politics of translation always came second to the politics of writing, to issues of literacy, and to politics *tout court*), all the way to the current state of things in which external pressures have been internalized by the practitioner to such a degree that they have come to be seen as desirable (1998: 12).

The ways in which patronage delineated the forms that translation took may be seen in the translation of *De Civitate Dei* into medieval French. The translation, done by Raoul de Prestles, was commissioned by Charles V. Jeanette Beer, while insisting that the servitude of patronage was never as extreme as the conventions of patronal homage suggested¹⁰, nevertheless points out that

the relation between commissioned and commissioner remained one of close understanding and of mutual trust throughout. Raoul ... was happy to perform this literary service of translation for the king, and Charles knew that Raoul could be relied upon to fulfill the charge appropriately (1995: 93).

Further, Beer explains, Presle's "explicit charge was to translate the *De civitate Dei* as a service to Charles's kingdom, Charles's subject, and all Christendom" (1995: 93). She concludes that Presle's cooperation with the king's "political interest could be counted upon, and the mutually beneficial interaction of patron and translator never faltered throughout the work" (1995: 99).

St-Pierre points to the importance of power structures and community expectations in the formation of norms in his treatment of the question of equivalence in early translations of biblical texts. His examination of the criteria used to determine translation equivalence between these texts reveals that the decision to accept or to reject specific translations was made not based on their intrinsic accuracy but based on the prevailing social and political (institutional)

¹⁰ Beer cites de Presles as acknowledging his patron in the prologue to his patron in the following words: "A vous tres excellent prince, Charles le Quint, roy de France, je Raoul de Praelles, vostre humble serviteur et sujet, tout vostre et tout ce que je sais et puis faire a vostre commandement"

climate. Jerome's translation of Old Testament texts from Hebrew, for instance, met with resistance from Augustine, a bishop of the church, since parts of this translation were not concordant with the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Seventy, in use for centuries in both Eastern and Western Christendom. The dispute regarding Jerome's texts arose because, according to Augustine, in the matter of translating the scriptures, "an overwhelming authority should be accorded to the [Seventy], without question". In Augustine's opinion, the translation of the Seventy was inspired of God, who guided them to a "unity of thought and intention", which was not possible in the work of a single individual such as Jerome (cited in St-Pierre 1985: 229). As the tension over Jerome's translation grew, Augustine warned him not to have his work used by Western or Eastern Christians, a choice which St-Pierre notes was not strictly based on the question of "faithfulness to a text, at least to an original text, but rather one in which choices are to be made in terms of the people who are to use the texts" (1985: 231). With the passage of time, some 1100 years, however, Jerome's translation gained legitimacy, becoming the approved text for Latin Catholics following a Tridentine declaration to that effect. As with the translation of the Seventy, St-Pierre notes, the approval of Jerome's work came not as a result of its intrinsic accuracy but from "the long use made of it in the church" (1985: 233).

In the last half of the 20th century, another debate on translation norms broke out in the (Roman) Catholic church. For some time it was the practice in some English-speaking communities to use neutral or 'inclusive' language in liturgical texts in translation. This practice was part of the attempt to expunge or suppress discriminatory language from sacred texts and to promote an ideal of equality of persons, especially women, in (Roman) Catholic communities. The Vatican, concerned about what it saw as the damage such a practice could cause to the integrity of the Christian message, issued, in 2001, instructions for the use of the vernacular in the liturgy. The instructions included, among other things, the manner in which translation of sacred and other liturgical texts

should be carried out. In addition to discouraging the "systematic resort to imprudent solutions such as a mechanical substitution of words, the transition from the singular to the plural", the document called for translators to avoid 'inclusive' practices such as "the splitting of a unitary collective term into masculine and feminine parts, or the introduction of impersonal or abstract words" for these "may impede the communication of the true and integral sense of a word or an expression in the original text. ... [and] introduce theological and anthropological problems into the translation" (§ II, 31). The document points-out that

it is the task of catechists or of the homilist to transmit [the] right interpretation of the texts that excludes any prejudice or unjust discrimination on the basis of persons, gender, social condition, race or other criteria, which has no foundation at all in the texts of the Sacred Liturgy. Although considerations such as these may sometimes help one in choosing among various translations of a certain expression, they are not to be considered reasons for altering either a biblical text or a liturgical text that has been duly promulgated (§ II, 29).

The document further states that even if it may be necessary by means of catechesis to ensure that terms assumed to be discriminatory continue to be understood in the 'inclusive' sense, "it may not be possible to employ different words in the translations themselves without detriment to the precise intended meaning of the text, the correlation of its various words or expressions, or its aesthetic qualities" (§ II, 29).

By issuing such strong instructions to translators, the church asserts its right to set and enforce translation norms. These norms are used to ensure the attainment of a particular mission. This is clearly outlined in the following:

Just as has occurred at other times in history, the Church herself must freely decide upon the system of language that will serve her doctrinal mission most effectively, and should not be subject to externally imposed linguistic norms that are detrimental to that mission (§ II, 30).

The church's instructions to translators fall within the framework of what Dollerup describes as norms of imposition, where a source community forces a text upon a target community to which it pays scant regard and instead privileges "the intentions or the intentionalities behind the original text manifestation" (1995: 46-47). Such practices are based on the need within the source community to propagate a message. However, the need to propagate this message conditions the means by which it is transmitted, often resulting in the norms of dominant communities determining communication practices of the less powerful.

Norms similar to those which inspired the issuing of the Vatican instructions guided Nida *et al.* in their recommendations regarding the translation of the Bible into the polylectal languages of non-literate, non-Christian societies. In the language contexts described by Nida *et al.* work, two types of translation problems come to the surface. These relate to cultural and temporal differences between source and target texts. The authors assume that the problems associated with differences in cultures and times can be and must be overcome, and provide a theoretical framework for translatability that achieves this. However, like the framework of the Vatican, their approach is determined by an overriding evangelical mission.

De Waard and Nida propose that the response to the question of how to translate the Bible into non-standard polylectal languages should be arrived at based on what they refer to as religious and linguistic need (1986: 46). While acknowledging that the relationships between competing languages/dialects and the complex patterns of interrelationship between dominant and subordinate varieties make it difficult "to determine in which language one should translate or how much should be produced in a particular form of a language or dialect" (1986: 49), they suggest that transmission of the Christian message is paramount and propose ways to deal with the challenges of translation into these languages. In accounting for dialectal variation, De Waard and Nida argue that translators should also consider "the political attitudes of local authorities

and the language policy of national governments" (1986: 46-47). In Nida and Taber it is argued that the 'democratic solution' of amalgamating dialects is not particularly fruitful. Their preference, therefore, is that translators "accept one dialect as being the culturally more important and linguistically more central form of speech and to translate exclusively in this dialect" (1974 [1964]: 130). The authors assume that the existing social relationships between language varieties provide an adequate framework for determining how translation should be carried out.

The solutions proposed by Nida *et al.* to the problem of translating biblical texts into the non-standardised languages of non-literate peoples are pragmatic in that they recognise the social dimensions of language construction. In this way, the mutual intelligibility of language varieties is given some prominence in relation to the question of translation. In this way, the existence of the language/dialect problem is at least dealt with in arriving at translation solutions. What is questionable about their proposals, however, is the notion that a language community not reached by the gospel can have a 'linguistic need' for biblical texts. This approach by Nida *et al.* points to the manner in which decisions about the need to translate influence decisions about how to translate. No language community ever needs a religious or other text in a vacuum. In the context of an expansionist religion such as Christianity, the 'linguistic need' for translating the Bible hardly, if ever, arises from the receiving (non-Christian) culture. On the contrary, it is the evangelical quest by Christian communities to propagate the gospel that precedes and creates the linguistic need for translation of the Bible, meaning that what is projected as a linguistic need on the part of the receiving community is in fact an evangelical desire on the part of the source community. Obviously, then, in the contexts to which the authors refer, it is the standpoint of the translator or of the translating community that matters in deciding whether to translate, and their interests that are served by the choice of dialect/s into which translation takes place. Such a situation points not only to the fact that the norms of translation are often set by translating communities

but also to the fact that conceptions of translation and translatability can be—and often are—ideologically determined (cf. Bassnett 1998: 129-130).

If translation is defined by who has power to set translation norms, then it is appropriate to ask what happens to those who do not have the power to establish translation norms. Traditional questions, thus, need to be replaced by concerns about translation as an activity susceptible to social, cultural and political pressures (Bowker *et al.* 1998: v) both at the macro and micro levels. It seems that this can only happen with the empowering of those who speak from marginalised spaces, making them into agents who can shape and name the communication enterprises in which they participate.

2.9 Others translating, Translating Others : Translation and Culture

The questioning of translation theory over the last quarter century has led to the examination of social, political and historical factors which have shaped translation. This process has resulted in, Robinson notes, the pushing back of the boundaries of what can be legitimately considered 'translation studies' (1997b: 12). Some scholars have gone as far as to propose that properties such as meaning subsist more generally in cultural systems and not in languages. This trend, which has been termed the 'cultural turn' in translation (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990, 1998), is marked by a reflection on translation not only as a social and cultural product but also as constituting the actual negotiation of differences between cultures. Following this current, Ivir firmly places translation within the context of cross-cultural relationships, declaring that translation "is a way of establishing contacts between cultures" (1987: 35) and, relying on Casagrande (1954), that translating means "translating cultures, not languages" (Ivir 1987: 35). In the same vein as Ivir, Bassnett and Trivedi

conceive translation as being a highly manipulative process of intercultural transfer that is embedded in a particular social context (1999: 2). The impact of power differentials in defining communication processes as translation have also been introduced into the field, forcing theorists to consider and account for questions such as how minority languages are treated in translation operations as well as the manner in which linguistic heterogeneity affects conceptions of translation.

The questioning of the foundations of conventional translation theory has seen theorists such as Derrida and Venuti calling for the discarding of old assumptions about translation, and proposing altogether new ways of conceiving it. Like them, Niranjana has sought to distance herself from the traditional approach to translation studies. "Writers on translation", she states, "have always been concerned with *how* to translate, and their evaluations and assessments belong properly to the question of 'method'" (1992: 49). New attempts to theorise translation have been accompanied by the realisation that the influence of historical, sociological, geographical and political contexts may be as important as—sometimes more important than—disembodied notions such as meaning, equivalence and faithfulness in determining what practices are called translation. For this reason, there have been moves to produce more elaborate conceptions of translation practice, conceptions which give consideration to the fluid contact zones between not only languages but also cultures as legitimate areas of translational activity. Thus, the turn away from the simple question of translation method has sought to place translation fully within the sphere of cultural, social and political engagements (cf. Venuti 2000: 333). This has included an examination of issues such as the role of the colonial experience in (re)defining translation. Niranjana, for instance, zeroes in on the role of power relations in translation in the post-colonial context and examines not only the questions posed through the conventional reflection on translation but also those "which are displaced, excluded, or repressed" (1992: 49) by it. Like Bassnett and Trivedi, and Hermans and Toury, she asserts that translation

must be viewed from the context within which it is practised: *How, for instance, has colonial history (in her case that of India) determined the nature of translation? How did translation participate in the colonial project?* For their part, Bassnett and Trivedi draw our attention to the fact that translation in colonised lands, has, for centuries, been a one-way process, "with texts being translated *into* European languages for European consumption" (1999: 5). Ojo, writing about publishing houses' refusal to promote the translation of European texts in African languages amplifies the statement of Bassnett and Trivedi that translation in the colonial context was always one-way. According to Ojo, with the exception of "such religious texts as the Holy Bible, the Koran, the catechism, hymn books and such high-pitched religious propaganda writings as John Bunyan's *The Pilgrims Progress* translated into some Indigenous African languages" (1986: 293), translation was from African to European languages. In the same vein, St-Pierre (2000), relying on Cohn (1996), states that the colonial conquest (of India) took place "through the translation of one space into the other, both literally and figuratively" (262). This situating or siting of translation (to borrow Niranjana's expression) replaces traditional universalising concerns with those that see translation practice as an inter *and* intra-cultural communication activity susceptible to and determined/defined by social, cultural and political pressures, and which, to cite Bassnett and Trivedi once again, is part of a highly manipulative process of continuous "transfer across linguistic and cultural boundaries" (1999: 2).

Even with the conception of translation as cultural interchange, it seems that translation studies still needs to go further in its assessment of how translation is defined. The cultural framework may, if taken to extremes, lead to problematic conceptions of translation and produce indefensible positions such as the view expressed by Pym that "if a text has been translated it represents distance between at least two cultures" (1992: 26). Depending on what Pym means by 'cultures', this statement might be reductive, even simplistic. It seems to suggest that languages mediate cultures, which is an innocent comment. However, the

implication that languages *necessarily* represent cultures and vice versa is untenable. It is known that people sharing the same culture may make use of more than one language and that peoples having different cultures may make use of the same language. The fact that Haiti has two standardised language varieties, Haitian French and Kréyol, means that translation between them is possible and in fact done all the time. But translation between Haitian French and Kréyol does not necessarily represent a distance between two cultures, at least not two *separate* cultures. Conversely, Haitian writers living in the United States and writing in American may have crossed the linguistic divide but not necessarily the cultural divide. They may share the same language with other American citizens/residents, but this in no way suggests that the culture mediated by that language is the same for all language users. Furthermore, the fact that Haitian writers writing in American do so in a language other than that which is usually associated with their culture means that their works have to be translated for home audiences. Does the translation of their works from American to Kréyol/Haitian French represent a distance between two cultures? In what way? Finally, the nature of mixtures in these contexts easily make conceptions of transfer 'between cultures' irrelevant, since there are often no well-defined cultural borders. It seems, then, that a definition of translation that appeals to necessary links between cultures and languages and the negotiation of differences between cultures is inadequate for dealing with the challenges implicit in conceptions of translation.

De Pedro, assessing the cultural turn in translation, makes another, perhaps, more telling observation:

The notion of taking culture as a translation unit is very attractive. However, whereas it is easy to comprehend the translation of a text as a self-contained process, it is possible to argue that culture cannot be translated. Culture can be explained or interpreted in its specific manifestations, but it would appear that "translation" is too restrictive a concept to be applied in this case (1999: 556).

Thus, culture may be too broad a category to be used in any meaningful redefinition of translation. Besides, translation as practised, even if conditioned

by cultural and social variables, has been defined by more specific variables within cultural and social domains.

Arguing from a sociological perspective, Tack claims human groups are fundamentally marked by the distinctions they make among one another. This is because human beings are "anthropologically compelled to create borders [and] distinctions" (2000: 212). This "intrinsic differentiation process" (2000: 212) among human groups generates and makes practices based on the negotiation of difference possible. One form of difference negotiation is translation. For Tack, a theoretical distinction has to be made between translation and other forms of negotiation in the social or *cultural* arena. He insists that although translation is based on the negotiation of difference, this negotiation "does not possess sociologically *distinctive* features" to allow it to be considered as a "specific object of sociological analysis" (2000: 212). In other words, the fact of being a kind of difference negotiation is too general a basis for distinguishing translation from other practices, since difference mediation is general and affects all types of engagements between human beings. At the same time, specifying that translation is a kind of negotiation of cultural differences is not specific enough to say what it is in relation to other practices. For this reason, Tack argues, a definition of translation can only be meaningful if it relates to more specific forms of mediation, which for him lies in *language*. Hence, Tack sees the specificity of translation as deriving from its definition as an interlingual activity. Whether Tack is right or not is beside the point at this stage of the discussion. What matters is that his view is an accurate characterisation of how translation is typically conceived, as the numerous definitions in the literature on the practice indicate.

2.10 Synthesis

The traditional discourse on translation sees the practice as both process and product. As process, it involves clearly defined properties. First, it involves a

text in a given language (*source*), which, after undergoing a prescribed series of procedures (*transfer, re-expression etc.*), yields a text in a second language (*target*). In this conception of translation, there are two opposing dynamics at work, that of change, on the one hand, and constancy, on the other. The text at the start of the translation operation is not the same as that which results from it. It is assumed, however, that the underlying meaning communicated in the source text is maintained in the target text. It is, paradoxically, the fact that message is assumed to be constant¹¹, despite the change in the surface of texts, that translation is at all possible. In summary, then, conventional theory sees translation as involving the accurate replacement, transfer or reproduction of a meaning expressed in a source language text by, to, or in a target language text. That is, it sees translation as consisting of transmitting "un même contenu selon un code différent" (Bénard and Horguelin 1979: 17), where *code* is assumed to be *a language*. This implies a relationship of similitude between expressions in 'A' and expressions in 'B', in which the contents of a text in 'A' (the source language) are converted into a text in 'B' (the target language).

Following Toury and Herman's conception of translation as a socially-defined practice and Jakobson's description of what he calls inter-linguistic translation or 'translation proper', it is possible to set aside, for the moment, conceptions of translation that do not relate to text in *language* and see translation not as the search for relationships of correspondence between systems of signs, at least not in the general sense, but as a socially defined subset of such more general relationships, that is, relationships of correspondence *between languages*. This is an understanding of translation not as a relationship of correspondence between two messages under different forms or the correspondence between messages within a particular linguistic system (Jakobson's intra-lingual translation); rather, it is the search for *equivalence* in a second language of a *meaning* uttered in a first.

¹¹ But see Toury, who says translation assumes "the presence of two distinct messages" (1980: 63)

CHAPTER 3: LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATION

3.1 Introduction

One would assume that since translation theory deals with texts in language, it would address concerns related to texts in the different possible culturo-linguistic situations of the world. Research has, however, been dominated by considerations from the West and the language types studied have primarily been Western (or other European). Where the languages have not been European, they have been viewed from the perspective of Western/European languages. This is not surprising, since most of the world, at one time, was colonised by Europe. In instances where European colonialism did not ignore the language context of the peoples it colonised, it sought to impose its particular conceptualisation of language and language development on them. Alluding to the standardisation of Shona in (the former) Rhodesia, for instance, Dwyer notes that as a result of mission activity and subsequently the Doke Commission, charged with providing a "settlement of the language problems involving the unification of the dialects into a literary form for official and educational purposes, and the standardization of a uniform orthography of the area" (Doke 1931: iii), Shona was "crystallized in the European mold as a single language with a common literary dialect and a common name" (Dwyer 1999). Le Page and Tabouret-Keller note that Doke's work was based on a conception of language that differed from that of the Shona, who had been accustomed to thinking of the linguistic behaviour of all Bantu as part of one language continuum (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 240). The result of standardisation exercises such as those embarked upon by Doke is what Harris describes as an attempt, in the name of linguistic science, "to impose a technically sophisticated but essentially Western concept of a language upon the descriptive analysis of all languages" (1981: 30). In this way the description

and analysis of non-European languages become contingent upon their meeting European-based criteria, primarily those of normalisation and standardisation.

Normalisation generally refers to the selection of a social, regional or other dialect (or elements of any of these) as the model on which educated speech is to be patterned. The reduction or elimination of differences between dialects and the creation of a 'neutral' variety (homogenisation) results in a stabilised and grammatised—written and described—dialect, which is imposed on the population of a given territory. The imposition of this variety is what is called standardisation (Baggioni 1997: 28), a practice which is linked historically to the birth and spread of nationalism. The transplanting of this kind of standardising project to the colonised world meant that the context from which Western-style linguistic analysis had emerged and in which it had been made possible was being replicated in the colonial world.

Traditionally, normalisation and standardisation have occurred not only as the basis for analysing languages but also as a means of facilitating translation. In colonial contexts, for instance, translation required the presence of languages that were not susceptible to the volatility characteristic of contexts dominated by orality and polylectal continua. For translation to be possible, colonisers, usually missionaries, needed to 'create' the necessary languages. They would identify a 'dialect' (or elements of several lects) considered worthy or capable of forming the base of a standard indigenous language. This new 'dialect' would be stabilised through writing and become the language of education and of formal discourse. As a consequence this kind of process, the translatability of non-European oral languages became linked to their normalisation and standardisation. This points to the role of normalisation and standardisation in determining translatability generally, but more specifically as it related to many of the world's non-literary languages.

This chapter will trace the history of the Euro-dominant context that has come to define translatability and the concepts related to it such as equivalence, faithfulness and meaning.

3.2 Long Ago, Far Away

Although systematic research into translation did not begin until the middle of the twentieth century (Mounin 1976: 80; see also Steiner 1998: 249), reflection on practices called translation have long been a part of the literate tradition of the West, though Mounin treats conceptions before the first half of the 20th century as "un empirisme de la traduction, jamais négligeable, mais un empirisme" (1963: 12). From as early as the 2nd century BCE, Cicero offered thoughts on what he considered to be the best methods of translating. Referring to his translation of Aeschines and Demosthenes, for example, he claimed that his approach was to preserve "the general style and force of the language" and not to render the Greek text "word for word" into Latin (reproduced in Robinson 1997a: 9). But the practice of translation as conventionally understood was not born in the West. Among literate civilisations that predated the Greco-Roman civilisation, translation (both written and oral) was a very common practice. Robinson (1997b), invoking Kurtz (1985), refers to records from Egyptian tombs dating from the mid to late third millennium BCE that show that "dragomans" or interpreters travelled between Ancient Egypt and the countries of Nubia and Sudan, working as translators/interpreters on behalf of the Pharaohs. Elsie Chan (2000) dates translation in China to at least 1100 BCE. At the time, the practice involved texts in language varieties used/spoken within the confines of the Chinese territory. With the arrival of Buddhism in China from the Indian subcontinent, however, things began to change. Relying on Liang (1994), she notes that after the translation of the Buddhist scriptures, translation in China increased exponentially, with some 1690 titles and 6420 volumes being produced by 200 translators in the period

between the 11th century BCE and the 2nd century. Meanwhile, in India, more than three hundred years before Cicero, around the birth of Buddhism, translation flourished (Gopinathan 2000), with exchanges between the language varieties within what is now called the Indian subcontinent.

It was, however, the Arab-Muslims who gave a place of prominence to the study of translation. Throughout Islam's expansive phase, the Arab-Muslims used translation as a means of gaining access to the knowledge of the literate world around and pre-dating them. Observes Said Faiq:

Shortly after the establishment of the Islamic polity late in the seventh century, Arabs recognized the importance of translation for their endeavours as they spread their faith and strengthened their new state, and translation became a matter of official concern. It could even be said that Arabs were among the first communities to establish translation as a well-organized government enterprise (2000: 84).

From Mathematics to Astrology, from Medicine to Philosophy and Engineering, the accumulated knowledge of other Cultures, notably Persian, Indian and Greek, was converted into terms understandable to the Arab-Muslims. By the eighth century, translation was made a government function, with successive Arab-Muslim rulers according it its own budget and offices (Faiq 2000: 84). In 830 CE, the Abassid Caliph, al-Mamun started the *Bait al-Hikma*, House of Wisdom, which gave birth to the Baghdad School, the definitive translation institution in the Arab-Muslim world at the time. For the next four centuries, the Arab-Muslim civilisation became the repository of written knowledge in numerous fields and from multiple Cultures, translation being the primary means through which this was achieved.

Arab-Muslim translating was accompanied by what, according to Faiq, might be called "religious and cultural elitism". It was usual for the Arab-Muslims to translate technical and philosophical material, but not literature or religion¹².

¹² It may be argued, however, that it was difficult to draw lines of demarcation between different disciplines during Medieval times.

Faiq quotes Bernard Lewis, who explains this behaviour on the part of the Arab-Muslims as being motivated by a cultural chauvinism which saw the "literature of an alien and heathen society" as offering "neither aesthetic nor moral guidance" (presumably) for the followers of Islam, since the producers of such a literature had neither prophets nor scriptures and their history "was a mere sequence of events, without aim or meaning" (Lewis: 1982: 75, quoted in Faiq 2000: 87). On the other hand, the conquerors, interested in spreading their culture, translated material from Arabic into the languages of the conquered peoples, giving the latter access to the considerable knowledge the Arab-Muslims had by then amassed. Southern Europeans were chief among the conquered peoples who benefited from translation from Arabic, with the Arab-Muslims establishing a translation school in Palermo (in modern-day Italy) and influencing the founding of another at Toledo (in modern-day Spain) (Foz 1998: 8).

While many parts of the old Christian world such as the territories consisting of modern-day Palestine, Israel, Egypt and Tunisia had fallen to the Arab-Muslims, advance beyond the Iberian peninsula was mostly foiled. The reclaiming of Iberia—the *Reconquista*/Reconquest—which began with the retaking of Toledo in 1085 and Valencia in 1094 and ended with the fall of Granada in 1492, saw the expulsion of the Arab-Muslim colonisers from Iberia. Following their departure, the Kingdom of Castilla, ruled by Queen Isabella, and the Kingdom of Aragon, ruled by King Ferdinand, were united into the Christian Kingdom of Spain. In what is perhaps one of the most dramatic ironies of history, 1492 was the year that the Spanish monarchs gave permission to Don Cristobal Colón/Cristoforo Colombo to set sail on a voyage of exploration, which triggered a process of European colonisation which had, by 1885, resulted in Western Europeans and their descendants controlling more than 80 percent of the lands on Earth.

After the *Reconquista*/Reconquest, the Spanish set about making greater use, through translation, of the wealth of knowledge that the Arab-Muslims had left.

Foz claims that the expulsion of the Arab-Muslims

donna lieu à des travaux de traduction qui ... ne surgirent pas d'un jour à l'autre mais qui constituent le prolongement et l'apogée d'une activité amorcée dès le Xe siècle. Dès cette époque, en effet, les Occidentaux s'intéressèrent à la science arabe (1998: 17).

Thus, what had once been Arab-Muslim was soon converted to Latin-Christian, paving the way for the dominance by the inheritors of the Greco-Roman tradition of practices such as science, mathematics, philosophy as well as translation.

The inheritors of the Greco-Roman tradition had something of their own to build on. The 4th century conversion of Rome to Christianity, a scripture-based religion, demanded that the new way be 'translated' into Roman life. Written in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic, the scriptures of the religion had to be captured and converted (in)to Latin, the imperial language, which by the time of the Christian conquest of Rome had gained tremendous confidence and was asserting its dominance as a language of learning. The confidence of Latin culture, based on—but relatively independent of—the Hellenistic culture that preceded it, helped to shape a series of relationships with the languages of the Bible that determined, to a large extent, the manner in which the practice known as translation was conceived in Latinised and Latinising Europe. Owing to the fact that the scriptures were the primary literary texts available to the population, they and the discourse about them gradually became the context within which translation was defined, though the relationship between Greek and Latin was also important in determining language relationships generally.

At the end of the 4th century, the translator-priest and secretary to Pope Damasus I, Jerome, repeated Cicero's counsel that texts be translated *sensum de sensu* and not *verbum pro verbo*. Jerome also relied on Cicero's work to defend himself against accusations of unfaithfully rendering Greek texts into Latin.

One example of such a defence came in a letter he wrote to Pammachius, in which he stated his commitment to the Ciceronian approach. He wrote: "I have always been opposed to sticking to words, from the days when I was young", reiterating that he has always translated "the sense" (cited in Lefevere 1992: 48) of his texts. Nonetheless, Jerome abandoned the Ciceronian sense for sense approach in his most famous work, the authorised translation of biblical texts into Latin, commissioned by Damasus. In the above cited letter to Pammachius, Jerome noted that he approached the translation literally because in scriptures, "even the order of the words is a mystery" (Lefevere 1992: 47). In her provocatively titled article "The Fortunes of 'non-verbum pro verbo' or Why Jerome is not a Ciceronian", Copeland argues that given the religious nature of Jerome's enterprise (1989: 29), his literal approach was no surprise. As pointed out earlier, the finished translation, despite controversy, displaced and eventually replaced the Septuagint, finally becoming the standard biblical text of the Western branch of the Roman Empire, until the Protestant Reformation challenged the continued use of Latin in Christianity and Luther produced his German translation of the Bible.

For centuries after Cicero and Jerome, the parameters of the debate on translation in the West were still defined in terms of faithful versus free. In the Middle Ages and beyond, translations involving Romanic vernaculars were often characterised by these approaches. Shore depicts late medieval translations as being on a continuum ranging from "literal and mechanical to loose and idiosyncratic" (1995: 27). In describing the style of the Aragonese translator of the *Li livres dou tresor*, Prince points out that "A one-to-one correspondence with the French model is maintained and stylistic embellishment is avoided" (1995: 83). By contrast, the translation of the *Civitate Dei* was a work in which translator Presle openly disagreed with his source in order "to defend his monarch" (Beer 1995: 108) who had commissioned the translation.

3.3 Translation and Language: The Early Context

Any evaluation of modern translation theories must appreciate the centrality of religious figures, since Western discourse has been significantly shaped by translation of the scriptures (Bassnett 1991: 45-46). Adequate assessment demands an identification of the context within which translation of the scriptures took place and the manner in which that context helped to define later conceptions of the practice.

While Jerome worked within the framework of an expanding Imperial juggernaut, with a dominant literary language, the epoch of the Reformers was characterised by the formation of autonomous sub-imperial units—remnants of the lost Empire—and by the creation of linguistic entities that corresponded, more or less, to each of these. This situation constituted a nascent form of nationalism which, spurred on by the Reformation, added a novel dimension to the conception of translation and its role in the broader context of inter-lingual/inter-cultural relations. Luther's translation, as will be seen later, became an important tool in defining how language operated within the new ideological framework of nationalism, which initiated and directed a process that ultimately determined modern perceptions of nation but also of language.

3.4 Homogenising Language

Modern conceptions of language go far back into the socio-history of Western societies. The normative status acquired by metropolitan European varieties is directly relatable to attempts to suppress non-metropolitan varieties within the European and colonised margins. This dominance has given metropolitan varieties a *de facto* advantage in determining how languages work and which language varieties should be treated as normative. The paramountcy of the notion of language as system in the structuralist and

transformational/generative schools, for instance, Harris argues, is traceable to the history of languages as grammatised entities.

Saussure was the first to seek to distance himself from the (neo)-grammatical tradition of his time by identifying what he thought were the aspects of language that were most amenable to scientific description. To do this, he found it necessary to conceive language, the general, as constituted by *langue*, language as system, and *parole*, language as speech or communication. This abstraction was in fact a dichotomisation of language, since the stable *langue* had to be separated from the variable *parole*. This dichotomisation served the important function of providing a means of dispensing with the troublesome and volatile elements of language in order that Saussure could focus on what he saw as the more systematic components of language. For Saussure, the object of linguistic study is not *langage* (general language) or *parole* but *langue*, because it is the only element which "paraît susceptible d'une définition autonome" (1967 [1916]: 18). Consequently, he argues, even if one could speak of a "linguistique de la parole" it should not be confused with real linguistics, "celle dont la langue est l'unique objet" (1967 [1916]: 21).

Saussurean linguistics is often contrasted with transformational generative linguistics. Unlike Saussurean linguistics, however, generative linguistics considers the mind as central to any conception of language. Language is seen as being the species-specific biologically-determined means by which human beings come to know things around them. Internal language is governed by the rules of Universal Grammar, which provides the transformational bases upon which externalised-language manifests itself. Noam Chomsky, summarising the main currents of generative linguistics, lays emphasis on the questions not only of what constitutes language but also what constitutes knowledge of language. The shift from structural to generative linguistics, he claims, was a shift from

the study of [externalised] language to the study of [internalised] language, from the study of language regarded as an externalised object to the study of the system of knowledge of languages attained and internally represented in the mind/brain (1986: 24).

Chomsky, rejecting structuralist constructions of language, claims that "languages in this sense are not real world objects but are the artificial, somewhat arbitrary, and perhaps not very interesting constructs" (1986: 26). The shift of focus to internalised language, thus, represented a move away from seeing language as a community phenomenon to seeing it as a phenomenon that primarily concerned the individual, though there is a Chomskian notion of the ideal hearer/speaker. In the generative model, language learning is the accumulation of rules or the modification of the internalised language system as new data are processed. Externalised language is only possible through the calibration of language input by Universal Grammar or the language faculty "an innate component of the human mind that yields a particular language through interaction with presented experience" (1986: 3). Chomsky treats the externalised component as the manifestation of the underlying internalised component according to rules of transformation. This transformation is generated by a finite set of rules, but can result in infinite rule-based structures. It has been argued that the notions of internal and external language both are closely related to the Saussurean distinction of *langue* and *parole*.

3.4.1 Language and Variation

The rise of the linguistic sub-field of sociolinguistics led to alternative perspectives on what *a* language was. This branch of linguistics gave importance to the fuzzy areas of language such as linguistic variation and change which the Saussurean dichotomisation in linguistics, by according *langue* an intrinsic unity, or the Chomskian notion of a homogenous language community, failed to address. Sociolinguistic theory saw variation as inherent in language and, therefore, treated the concept of *a* language, and by extension the distinction between languages, as deriving primarily from social and

political considerations. Accordingly, beyond the question of mutual intelligibility, the tools used to describe languages have been treated as socially determined.

Traditionally mutual intelligibility has been assumed to respond to the following criteria: "if two speakers cannot understand one another, then they are speaking different languages. Similarly, if they *can* understand each other, we could say that they are speaking dialects of the *same* language" (Trudgill 1995 [1974]: 3). Clearly this qualification of *a* language is inadequate, considering that many societies qualify and name varieties 'languages' based on factors that have little to do with levels of mutual intelligibility. This Trudgill admits, stating that many speech varieties that are treated as separate languages are in fact highly intelligible, one with another as the Scandinavian examples cited in Chapter 1 indicate. Conversely, many speech varieties (such as those used in China) which do not display high levels of mutual intelligibility (orally) have been treated as the same language. Consideration of these factors reduces the difference between languages to primarily social and political distinctions, whence the question of linguistic autonomy/heteronomy (Trudgill 1995 [1974]: 4). In other words, the cultural and political independence of the communities in which varieties are used determines their status as 'languages'.

A variety is said to be autonomous if it is linked to an independent polity or cultural community. This is true even if it is closely related to, or displays a high level of mutual intelligibility with, other varieties (Danish and Norwegian or Afrikaans and Dutch, for example). On the other hand, a variety is said to be heteronomous if it is in a relationship of dependence with another variety having an independent political/cultural centre (Scots in relation to British English, for instance) (Trudgill 1995 [1974]: 4).

3.4.2 Common Language, National Language

If sociolinguistics tells us that linguistic homogeneity does not exist and that no language has a single, unitary form, how, then, do we explain the existence of language standards based on linguistic homogeneity? There exist processes through which differences in and between language varieties are minimised or neutralised and a linguistic form is made into a consistent, uniform entity that is imposed and taught as a norm. The normalisation of a variety into a 'language' and its dominance in a geographic space are not spontaneous phenomena but the result of social relationships of power and language 'planning' efforts aimed at eradicating specific forms of speech. In Europe, Baggioni writes, it is known that there has been "l'objectif plus ou moins avoué ... d'aboutir à des espaces unifiés linguistiquement par une langue commune" (1997: 87).

Linguistic norms are imposed by those who have the power of imposition, while those upon whom norms are imposed usually have little or no means of resisting them. Besides, since norms are often accompanied by promises of power and prestige, usually through formal education, they are extremely attractive. The result is that prestige dialects, provided the conditions for their acquisition are right, eventually prevail socially and sometimes even numerically in a geographic area and come to assume the role of 'common' language.

Linguistic normalisation as known to modern linguistics dates back to European nationalism, which involved social and cultural changes that led to the creation of entities that, by the 18th/19th centuries, had become formal Nation-States. Normalised language was one of the main criteria conferring the identity of Nation on a people, meaning that the unity of a Nation (State) depended on how well it managed to shape, promote and protect its official language, often to the detriment of competing, divergent or non-standard forms. Over a period of centuries, and at different times in different countries, norms were established through nationalised schooling, the writing of

grammars and dictionaries, and, in some instances, through the establishment of language Academies, such as the *Académie française* (France) and the *Real Academia* (Spain) (see Offord 1990: 3-4 and Trudgill 1995 [1974]: 132).

Harris argues that the division in modern linguistics between *langue* and *parole* was influenced by this nationalist movement and, hence, was a retrograde step. By distinguishing between *langage* and *langue* and by insisting that *langue* was the proper object of study for a science of language, Harris writes, "Saussure anchored the development of [linguistics] firmly to the antecedent Western grammatical tradition" (1981: 45). According to Harris, the *langue* that Saussure treats as "un tout en soi" and which he abstracts from *langage*, which "ne se laisse classer dans aucune catégorie des faits humains, parce qu'on ne sait comment dégager son unité" (1697 [1916]: 18), is not an objective phenomenon but a historically defined construct. Harris contends that prior to the rise of nationalist movements in the late Middle Ages, there was no conception of language in the sense of *langue*, though its seeds were already present in the Greco-Roman grammarian tradition. As time progressed, he suggests, and as a certain conception of language took hold in the Western consciousness, knowledge of language became contingent upon knowledge and use of *langue*, the abstraction derived from normalised entities, which were, according to Harris, updated versions of the concept of national language. For Harris, any echo of the notion of national language is problematic, since it is based on the "central fiction" that the people of one nation spoke one language, with the related consequence of the suppression of non-standard varieties, since anyone who spoke differently from the national standard "was simply not speaking the language correctly" (1981: 46). In the final analysis, Harris argues, attempts at arriving at a scientific notion of language, by distinguishing *langue* from *langage*, remained within the framework of an unscientific political structure. He derides such attempts as products of post-Renaissance Europe, reflecting "the political psychology of nationalism, and an educational system devoted to standardising the linguistic behaviour of pupils" (1981: 9).

At first glance it would seem that Harris' claims are overstated, since Saussure rejected the historical grammatical tradition, whose primary concern was the search for purer past forms of languages, which would reveal their real roots and the meanings hidden in them. Yet, Harris argues convincingly that the promotion of the concept of *langue* was a skilful way of appearing to abandon history without actually doing so. In Harris' words, Saussure, in his attempt to "free language studies from the tyranny of the historian" (1981: 46), took the view that synchronic rules, presumably generated by languages themselves, should be studied instead of diachronic patterns. However, although *langue* was supposed to be seen through the eyes of the living language speaker and assumedly much closer to reality than the diachronic language of the historical grammarians, there was no way in which it could be defined in relation to individual speakers. Since *langue* is an abstraction, Harris points out, there is no clear sense in which an individual could be said to be using it or in which he or she could be said to be using the same language as other members of his or her speech community. Harris concludes:

All the structuralists did in describing *la langue* was to 'freeze' some historically evolving system at an arbitrarily chosen point, and ignore the inconsistencies which might show up at that point from competition between older and newer usages (1981: 49).

For Harris, then, Saussure's focus on languages as coherent systems, as opposed to being continuously changing sets of usages, was a sign of an inability to think outside the frame of the Western tradition. Additionally, he sees Saussure's reliance on *langue* as a demonstration of an inability or unwillingness to recognise the history that had shaped the concept of *langue* itself. In Harris' view, Saussure, by placing emphasis on the notion of *langue*, unwittingly placed theoretical constraints upon the individual speaker that were no less rigid than those of the historical grammarian before him. Thus, he describes the linguistics of *langue* as "historical grammar without the history" (1981:48).

The linguistic normalisation associated with nationalism usually leads to standardisation but not before the norm is nationalised. Baggioni deems nationalisation to have occurred when a norm becomes the 'langue commune-véhiculaire interrégionale' of a particular territory (1997: 86). As a consequence, a multi(dia)lectal 'language' loses much of its variability by dropping features furthest from the prestige variety, becoming a more or less uniform language that is sufficiently widely used in a territory to deserve the descriptor 'national' (1997: 87). In this way, the 'norm' becomes the precursor and generator of the national language, which in turn becomes the standard.

Perhaps the most notable person to influence the development of 'a language' was Martin Luther, who, by translating the Bible, single-handedly normalised the German language. Luther's translation, praised by Baggioni as constituting "l'action primordiale d'un individu sur la détermination de la norme d'une langue commune" (1997: 88), was the quest to bring the 'Word of God' to the people—the 'volk'—and an attempt to make the Bible truly German (Rosenzweig 1994: 48), in opposition to the clericalism and elitism that surrounded the Latin-only Bible. Through his translation of the Bible into the dialect of the Saxon Chancellery, Luther helped to homogenise the language of a community, which resulted in the normalisation of what came to be called High German (Bornkamm 1965 [1958]: 282). But Luther's translation and linguistic feat was not politically innocent. Behind it lay a consciousness of history akin to what Rosenzweig describes as the coming forth of a people to meet a foreign work of their "own desire and in [their] own utterance". Such receptiveness to a new text is usually "motivated not by curiosity, by interest, by edification, not even by aesthetic pleasure, but by the whole range of a historical movement" (1994: 53). For the Germans, that historical movement was nationalism. Cognisant of the surging nationalist sentiments around him, Luther seized the moment to defend a religious cause that cut the German people off from an increasingly irrelevant relationship of spiritual and cultural dependence on Rome. Thus, through translation, the Lutheran Protestant

Reformation managed to challenge existing notions of authority and autonomy by replacing the Roman (Latin) centre with a new, German one and building a discourse on nationalism that has echoed into the present.

3.4.3 Nationalism, Standard Language

According literary status to High German gave Germans a *Schriftsprache* or what Rosenzweig calls a literary or scriptural language. Literariness has traditionally been associated with the 'fixing' of a language, which makes it less prone to spontaneous change and, according to Rosenzweig, prevents it from taking its course exclusively in response to what it encounters in its environment (1994: 51). Since the Bible was the most widely available and most widely read document, the language used in it was ideal for modelling language behaviour across the national territory. Baggioni argues that Luther's linguistic norm, which formed the basis of the German national language, was also a standard, since the language of his translation would serve as the basis for the diffusion of "la norme écrite sur laquelle seront alphabétisées les populations ... de l'aire qu'on appellera « germanophone »" (Baggioni 1997: 88). This view of Luther's work comes from the fact that Baggioni, despite his observation that the notion of standardisation is used in sociolinguistics to refer to "le processus rationnel d'imposition d'une variété stabilisée et « grammatisée » (une variété écrite et décrite évidemment) sur un territoire donné, unifié par des institutions, entre autres culturelles-linguistique" (1997: 85), is reluctant to draw lines of demarcation between standardisation, normalisation and linguistic nationalisation. In his view, a standard language is any language that has passed through a process of normalisation and/or nationalisation (1997: 92), thus any language 'fixing' process results necessarily in the creation of a standard.

But if Baggioni downplays the nuances between standard language and other forms of homogenised language, Joseph presents a compelling historical reason

why these nuances are important. He argues that 'national' language and 'literary' language connote the same idea: that of a politically fixed, rule governed linguistic entity. He notes, however, that the spread of European languages via colonisation made it no longer suitable to use those terms. According to him

'Literary language' was wrong, as it kept the standard squarely in the purview of philology, not of the scientific linguistics whose existence had been defined in part by its concentration on spoken rather than written usage. 'National' and 'common' language might be appropriate for an internally diverse nation like Italy, but could only be an embarrassment if applied in the British colonial situation (1987: 5).

Thus, the term standard language was used to describe the stable, uniform European languages used both inside and outside Europe. Later application of the term 'standard language' to include even non-European languages, Joseph claims, was the legacy of colonialism or the linguistic influence of Europe in places where non-European languages were used. The notion of standard language, he maintains, is "dependent upon ... cultural institutions which represent specific historical developments within Western civilization" (1987: 20), a view echoed by Romaine, for whom the defining criteria of standard languages "are based on the attributes of European standard languages and cultural values" (1994: 20). For Joseph, the notion of standard language in societies that have been touched by Latin or languages standardised on its model is very different from those of other societies with a long literary history such as China and India. In the latter cases, he argues, standard language is not an analytical category but rather a goal to be attained.

3.4.4 The First Eco-linguistic Revolution

The role of language in European nationalist movements fell within the ambit of what Baggioni calls eco-linguistic revolutions, of which he claims there were two.

Linked to the Protestant Reformation and Catholic Reformation, the first revolution occurred during the early nationalist movements of the 15th and 16th centuries, which swept much of Western (primarily Latin) Europe—except Italy—and helped to define its languages. Baggioni contends that the revolution involved substituting a European communication ecology dominated by Latin in formal contexts with an ecology based on multilingualism "où coexistent les langues communes en voie de grammatisation dans des espaces découpés plus ou moins « stato-nationalement »" (Baggioni 1997: 74-75). This splitting up of (Western) Europe into Nation-States with emerging national languages was reinforced by the translations of the Protestant Reformers, which led to the rejection of Latin, the language of the Imperial Roman Church. At the same time, this Church, desiring to regain lost ground, was forced to respond to Protestant challenges in emerging national languages, unwittingly legitimising them and, by extension, the nationalist cause (Baggioni 1997: 108 - 111).

3.4.5 The Second Eco-linguistic revolution

Linked to the Post-Enlightenment phase of secular nationalism in the 19th and early 20th centuries CE, the second linguistic revolution was characterised not only by the existence of, use of, and claim to, national languages but also by the need to identify them with particular 'root' cultures. This was the era of bringing national languages closer to the forms in popular use, where the command was no longer "l'imitation des Anciens mais le retour à l'authenticité de la langue populaire" (Baggioni 1997: 207). These languages were, therefore, disconnected from the classical tradition. However, through processes of abstraction and codification similar to those of that tradition, they were 'intellectualised' and 'atomised' and eventually modernised. Baggioni concludes that the process was:

En somme, un mouvement symétrique à celui de la grammatisation des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles, où les écrivains et grammairiens croyaient reproduire le modèle latin lorsque, bon gré mal gré, ils inventaient tout de même une langue écrite nouvelle, avec sa forme propre (1997: 208).

By this time, too, the nations of Eastern and Central (Slavic) Europe, in addition to Rumania, had joined what was a centuries long and Europe-wide language defining process. Calvet attributes the difference between the rate of movement towards linguistic nationalisation and standardisation in Western Europe, on the one hand, and Eastern and Central Europe on the other, to differences in rates of urbanisation. Pointing to places such as England and France, where London and Paris, the largest English and French urban centres of the time, shaped the emergence of the English and French languages respectively, Calvet argues that early and rapid urbanisation, especially that typified by dominant urban centres, favoured the emergence of normalised/standardised languages (1993: 43-44). By contrast, in areas where there were no rapidly expanding urban centres, such as Eastern and Central Europe, no dominant linguistic norms emerged.

3.5 Secular Nationalism

Within Europe, the unity of emerging Nation-States came to be associated with, and dependent upon, the successful expansion of national languages. In fact, Joseph reminds us that whether or not language was one of the fundamental unities originally motivating a particular nationalistic ideology, the possession of a common national language became a crucial symbol of it (1987: 47). Rumanian nationalism, for instance, which emerged centuries after the first nationalist movement in Germany, and which, according to Calvet, lacked any territorial basis, was strictly defined in terms of a normalised language. Calvet asserts that "[t]ous les intellectuels [roumains] pensent ... que l'unité nationale n'est possible qu'autour d'une langue standardisée" (1993: 60).

The linguistic changes in Rumania occurred after those in Western Europe. As noted earlier, the period between the 15th and 16th centuries saw the rise of movements that resisted feudalism and questioned the traditional socio-religious order. This fed a discourse on self-determination and autonomy, leading to the toppling of oppressive political structures and the formation of societies that privileged the rights of individuals over the tyranny of the 'community'. These movements gained momentum with the increased availability of books—a spinoff from the invention of the printing press—the diminishing influence of the Roman Church and the rise of the Nation-State and mercantile capitalism. This marked the beginning of a new era for Western Europe, where the notion of rule by divine right and the subjugation of people to monarchs and layers of nobility began to give way to ideas about individual agency. As the Age of liberty and personal rights dawned, the influence of the Imperial Centre and its language weakened, with vernacular languages, particularly French, gaining greater importance in royal courts and among the educated elite of much of Europe. By the turn of the 17th century, French was effectively the dominant language of Europe, not only in the West, but in the Centre and the East as well, becoming the *de facto* international language "dans laquelle la plupart des actes internationaux seront rédigés exclusivement jusqu'à l'entre-deux-guerres, où l'anglais commencera à s'imposer à ses côtés en attendant de le supplanter" (Baggioni 1997: 189/190).

The ubiquity of French suggested that it was a prime candidate for assuming the role of prestige language formerly played by Latin. French dominance was short lived, however, since users of other vernacular languages, particularly English, developed a respect for, and loyalty to, their own languages, providing these with the means to guarantee their viability in a post-Latin context. French, therefore, never really managed to replace Latin or displace other vernacular languages.

Attempts in France to reform the French standard in the 18th century were followed by similar moves in a number of other countries, starting with English, then the Iberian languages and German. These attempts culminated in the definitive standardisation of these languages, which, Baggioni writes, was motivated by two factors. First, there was resistance to "l'usage excessif du français en place de la langue maternelle, parée de qualités préférables à celles de la langue de Versailles dénoncée comme porteuse d'immoralité". The second factor related to a kind of linguistic purism, where the elite in specific communities was concerned not only with the maintenance of the 'mother tongue' but also with protecting it against contamination from French by guarding against "l'invasion de mots de calques français dans la langue nationale" (Baggioni 1997: 196).

By the 18th century CE, the era of secular nationalism, standardised language was conferred with clearly defined political functions, many of which are relevant even today. It still provides the means of managing the Nation-State, giving it a sense of unity and a medium through which to create and recount a common, sometimes mythical, history. Consequently, more than any other tool of State control, standardised language carries the essence of a homogenising political project, summarised aptly by Offord in the following manner:

For a government to govern effectively, for the mass media and purveyors of literature—writers and publishers—to reach and inform or entertain maximum audiences, for educators to produce pupils who can participate fully and intelligently in national life, for the armed forces to control their personnel efficiently, for justice to be dispensed with authority, a single, unified nationally accepted language is required (1990: 3).

In essence, then, Nation-States, in their efforts to establish or to reinforce identity systems that differentiate them from others, need the control that normative or national language provides. Additionally, the imposition of a language throughout a national territory effectively prevents other varieties from undermining the power and influence of the State.

3.6 Stable Language and Translation

The creation of independent linguistic systems and their stabilisation are important in determining how notions of translatability have been shaped and consolidated. That translatability rests on the idea of the possibility of equivalence between languages means that it assumes that the meaning expressed in one language can be transferred or expressed in another. This view, I have argued, following Harris, is premised on a specific kind of relationship between language and meaning. An examination of the historical roots of this relationship is, therefore, apposite. In this regard, Latin (or Latinate, which will be taken here to include both standard and non-standard forms of the language) played a crucial role. First, through its dialectalisation, Latinate gave rise to vernacular languages throughout much of Europe. Secondly, standardised Latin served as the model for the eventual grammatisation of these vernaculars, leading to their emergence as independent or 'closed' linguistic systems. The distance between Latinate and vernacular languages (and between these languages themselves) and the political autonomy of the nations claiming each of these as its official language formed the basis for regarding them not only as separate languages but also as translatable from/into Latin and one another, at least in the sense suggested by Wright (1997: 7).

3.7 The Greco-Latin heritage

The history of language studies in the West and in the countries influenced by it through colonial contact has been dominated by the Greco-Latin heritage of linguistic normalisation, with the idea that there are single, correct forms of languages. While Greek never existed as a norm in this sense of the term but rather as several *koinè*—"il y a autant de grecs que de cités et d'époques grecques" (Casevitz and Charpin 1983: 46)—by the 4th century BCE, the Ionian-Attic *koinè* had become dominant (Casevitz and Charpin 1983: 45).

Through religion and a shared patrimony, but particularly through education, which aimed at forming "un citoyen (πολίτης, le membre de la πολις, cité) capable de participer à la vie de la cité sur l'ἀγορά, lieu de réunion", the Greek managed to attain a sense of linguistic unity (1983: 49). Eventually, during the Hellenic period, when the Greek world was united under the Macedonian polity, a notion of unitary grammatical correctness emerged.

The Greeks viewed language primarily as a tool for reasoning, and taught it according to the skills of rhetoric, logic and grammar. When Greece fell, the Romans inherited the Greek view of language, which, with the growth of the Roman Empire, was rapidly imposed on much of Europe. According to Harris and Taylor, with the expansion of the Roman Empire, "Latin became adopted as the spoken language of one conquered population after another, in a way that Greek had never been". By the start of the Middle Ages, when Rome started its decline, "what had originally been an insignificant Italic dialect of the plain of Latium in Central Italy, was spoken from the British Isles to North Africa and from the Atlantic to the Black Sea".

The spread of Latin throughout the Roman Empire constituted an unprecedented process of linguistic expansion via colonisation. This, in the view of Harris and Taylor, has left a permanent mark on the psyche of the European inheritors of the Greco-Latin Empire, since down to "the Renaissance and beyond, all thinking about language was to remain dominated by the unique status achieved by this ubiquitous, versatile, all-purpose language" (1994: xv).

For the important reason that Latin was a mother tongue for very few people, its use as a model for the 'grammatisation' of its descendant languages had a number of noteworthy consequences on perceptions about language and, ultimately, perceptions about translation. To begin, Latin was learnt by doing *grammatica* the "art de la langue écrite", itself modelled off the Greek

*grammatikē tekhnē*¹³. It was a rigidly governed language, transmitted unadulterated from generation to generation with the purpose of facilitating the transmission

d'un message que l'on veut immuable—la parole divine—et pour débattre entre *litterati* des vérités essentielles dans une langue que l'on veut fermement réglée dans son usage, tant dans sa forme que dans les significations attachées aux signes qu'elle requiert (Baggioni 1997:74).

Thus, Latin provided a model of linguistic stability essential to a conception of the faithful transmission of meaning, which was passed on to the vernacular languages within its sphere of influence such as German, Spanish and French. Additionally, as vernaculars took on the function of official languages from Latin, they, like Latin, were codified and began to be perceived as self-contained, homogenous entities.

Owing to the fact that the languages of Western Europe all derived, to a lesser or greater extent, from (or were influenced by) the same Latin dominated culturo-linguistic space and shared the same cultural history, and the fact that the lived experiences of one emerging Nation-State approximated that of another, concepts that existed on one side of a newly created linguistic frontier, existed—to a lesser or greater degree—on the other, or could be placed there by recourse to borrowing from what was common to them, Latin or, in some instances, its Romance derivative. An example of this may be seen from the previously cited work by Prince, whose commentary on the Aragonese translation of *Li livres dou tresor* suggests that parallelisms between Latin derived languages played an important role in their definition as vernaculars and in defining translation between them. Prince suggests that the "common stock of Romance culture and lexis" (1995: 64) aided not only in the literal approach to the translation project undertaken by the Aragonese translator but also served as a means of enriching the language into which the translation was

¹³ This work is usually attributed to Dionysius Thrax, but not without controversy (see Even Hovdhaugen, *Foundations of Western Linguistics*, 1982 pp. 53-61).

being made. The emerging conception of translatability, therefore, involved identifying shared concepts across the borders separating entities that were beginning to be called languages. A cultural transference process also occurred, with the Greco-Latin practice of establishing correspondence between a concept and the term that denoted it becoming the norm across languages. Thus, concepts and terms in one vernacular became common to the cultural zone shared by most or all vernacular languages. In this way, European languages have come to assume the existence of relative homology across linguistic frontiers.

The scenario presented above suggests that the concept-term relationship is vital for translation and translatability as traditionally conceived. Both demand the concurrent existence of concepts and terms in both source and target languages. Implicit in this model is the primacy of the concept, since its absence or presence in a target culture determines whether the relevant terminology for it exists in a target language. David Katan presents three options for solving the problem of terminological deficiencies in a (target) language: a) borrowing a term b) doing without it or c) inventing a term (1999: 80-81). In the European context, the translatability of vernacular-turned-standard languages for a long time lay primarily in recourse to borrowing from Latin either directly or through Romance. In cases where a language lacked a term and translators routinely resorted to borrowing from Latin or Romance, their actions constituted the introduction of new concepts and new terms into their languages and the reinforcement of the idea that terminological equivalence is important in translation.

There are two important considerations associated with this process. The first relates to the actual transfer of concepts and terms to these vernaculars and the role of this transference in the 'translation' process. The second consideration relates to the translation of such the relevant terms subsequent to their introduction into a vernacular. The introduction of terms into a language as part

of the 'translation' process is different from the translation of pre-existent 'equivalents' in translation. Yet, the emphasis in translation has traditionally been placed on the translation of pre-existent equivalents rather than on the history of the creative process of negotiation that takes place between translators and translation texts. While the approaches to translation which focus on the search for equivalence are linked to closed systems, those which emphasise the creativity of the process are more productive in terms of their capacity to address questions related to a multiplicity of language contexts.

3.8 Synthesis

It has been argued here that the conceptions typical of translation have been defined to a large extent by the evolution of standard languages in Europe and from the relationships between those languages. Yet the relationship between standard language and translation is symbiotic. As the case of Luther's translation from Latin to German demonstrates, translation is in fact one of the processes through which standardisation occurs. On the other hand, countries standardising languages often do so in order that these languages will be able to meet defined norms associated with translation. In this way, the norms of translation are linked to the norms of 'language'.

CHAPTER 4 CREOLISATION

Tu ne sais pas ce que réveille
En moi cet étrange parler
Souple instrument, profond, ailé,
Qui me pénètre et m'émerveille...

La trouble héréditée qui veille
Dans les veines du sang-mêlé,
C'est un peu cela que réveille
En moi cet étrange parler.
—*Dominique Hyppolite*

4.1 Introduction:

In his book, *Comparative Afro-American*, Mervyn Alleyne speaks of the time when Creoles were neglected by academia because they were viewed as aberrant languages. Holm, treating the same question, suggests that this disregard was due, in part, to the fact that creole languages were perceived as "corruptions of 'higher', usually European languages". Prevailing attitudes towards creole speakers, "who were often perceived as semi-savages whose partial acquisition of civilized habits was somehow an affront" (2000:1) also contributed to the manner in which creole languages were perceived.

It was Schuchardt who broke rank with the general discourse and began seeing creoles as offering new insights into old questions. Glenn Gilbert, who has edited a collection of Schuchardt's essays, praises his anticipation of a number of later developments in creole studies, including the hypothesis that African American Vernacular English ('Black English' in Gilbert's text) has creole antecedents and the theories of decreolisation and the post-creole continuum (1980: 11). For Holm, too, Schuchardt's work was exceptional because of its concerns with the social aspects of language, a fact, Holm argues, that marks Schuchardt as being nearly a century ahead of his time (2000: 3).

Creolists generally agree—Schuchardt aside—that much of the early work on creoles sought to validate and perpetuate stereotypical and hegemonic modes of thinking about languages, cultures and races. This fact pointed to the need for a new discourse not only on creole languages but also on the totality of cultural expressions of peoples whose lives and histories had been shaped by processes of 'contamination', which placed them outside the dichotomous constructions of the Euro Centre and its Opposite, the exotic—sometimes savage—Native fringe. The survival of mixed languages, such as creoles, did not in itself pose a significant threat to the hegemony of the conventional linguistic paradigm under which indigenous and standardised European languages were described and treated as counterpoints of each other. It was not until a shift in linguistic discourse occurred, where languages were perceived as an individual's "set of habits for communicating that have largely been determined by ... social experience, guided by an innate ability to decipher and learn the language habits of other humans" (Holm: 2000: 2), that the way was paved for mixed language varieties to enter into the general study of language and for the emergence of creole studies (or creolistics) as a branch of linguistics. As Schuchardt had imagined, increased study of creoles proved beneficial for general linguistics. Over the last fifty years or so, the examination of questions related to creoles has shed light on theoretical concerns such as universal grammar, language acquisition and second language learning. Additionally, through the examination of decreolisation and the (post)-creole continuum, creole studies has led to wider use of tools such as implicational scaling in the evaluation of linguistic phenomena. It has also opened new vistas in dialectology and influenced the direction of the sub-discipline of sociolinguistics as well as brought into question theories related to the linguistic evolution and the language family tree (Holm 2000: 3).

In addition to providing an overview of the main concerns raised in the major theoretical trends in creole studies, this chapter argues, by drawing on the conclusions of Mufwene (1986, 1993) and, to a lesser extent, Alleyne (1980,

1985, 1994), that creolisation is a multi-dimensional phenomenon whose existence is not explainable in terms of a single theory. In keeping with the general trend in this thesis of bringing to the fore social and historical factors which influence language (and translation), particular attention is paid to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and the related plantation economic systems of the Caribbean, not only because the language varieties in this study are from the Caribbean but also because, as de Graff points out, the Caribbean is perhaps the most important matrix in any discussion on creolisation (1999a: 3). The Caribbean is so important to creolisation because it was there that the Plantation system, designed solely to supply goods under the European capitalist experiment, ended up giving birth to societies in which differences within and between groups were successfully negotiated to produce cohesive systems. From the Plantation system, "dominated so singularly by bare economic considerations and populated by such a diversity of individuals thrown together so suddenly" (Bilby 1985: 181) emerged forms that proved the irrepressibility of the human urge to create and sustain culture and society. The discussion contained in this chapter is a prelude to the examination in chapter 5 of decreolisation and the creole continuum, which, I argue, pose a challenge to conventional notions in translation studies that derive from stable and homogenous languages.

4.2 Creolisation

Creolisation is often defined in terms of linguistic creolisation, traditionally understood as involving two phases, the first, known as pidginisation (Hall 1962), supposedly entails the bridging of the communication gap arising from the co-existence of several mutually unintelligible linguistic and cultural forms in a context where a single form dominates. A British Caribbean plantation, for instance, might have comprised populations of Asante, Fongbe or Igbo persons brought from West Africa as well as persons with English or Irish backgrounds.

These groups would have, at least initially, each maintained their separate languages. This situation would have been compounded by relatively limited contact between Europeans and Africans on the plantation. However, the fact that Europeans owned and ran the plantations meant that their language would have been macro-socially dominant. At the same time, Africans who spoke a common language were kept apart for fear that they might plot or incite rebellion. Yet, effective production required a functional language arrangement, meaning either that one of the languages used on the plantation had to become the language of work or that a rudimentary work language had to be created. According to the pidginisation→creolisation hypothesis, the latter situation is assumed to have been the case, with English, along with elements of the other languages used on the plantation, forming the base of a simplified and unstable plantation tongue. This language, restricted in scope and existing only as a code for communication on the plantation, was known as a pidgin.

The second phase of the creolisation process, known as creolisation proper, supposedly consists in the nativisation of the pidgin. Owing to the fact that the language fashioned for plantation use was assumed to be viable only in restricted situations of work, succeeding generations born on the plantation, with its multiplicity of linguistic forms, made even more complex by the constant inflow of newcomers, found it necessary to "create" their own language in order to lend some semblance of systematicity to the confusion of the plantation. This, it is claimed, was done by recourse to the most recoverable and useful part of their linguistic context, that is, the pidgin. Immediately or over time, these communities fashioned full-fledged native "languages" from the pidgin as well as from what Bickerton has called, in Chomskian terms, their language bioprogramme. Under the pidgin hypothesis, these newly fashioned native languages and the ways of behaving that came to be associated with them have come to be known as creole (Holm 2000: 9).

The situation presented above depicts creolisation as a situation involving radical linguistic reduction (pidginisation) followed by nativisation and expansion (creolisation). Although a large number of creolists and other linguists implicitly agree that there are such cases of reduction and nativisation/expansion, many now suggest that it is difficult to present a clear picture of what actually happens in creolisation, a fact which has led to the emergence of diverse theories about the historical, cultural and linguistic forces that give rise to creoles. The catalyst for creolisation, some creolists argue, is the disruption in the natural transmission of language and culture to succeeding generations. Such a disruption might have been the result of geographic displacement of peoples or the establishment of social relationships of dominant/dominated. All of these factors were present in the Caribbean. People were transported from far afield with little means of preserving their languages to live and work in situations defined by master/slave relationships. Since very few situations of actual creolisation have been analysed by linguists, theories about creole genesis have generally been retrospective, examining creole phenomena from linguistic and cultural artefacts. Bickerton used an actual situation of creolisation (that of Hawaiian Creole English) to support his view of creolisation against speculative theories. However, examination of Hawaiian Creole English left many questions unanswered, adding fuel to the debate between the two major creolist schools or universalism and substratism.

4.3 The Finding a People, the Founding of a People

Brathwaite refers to the ancestors of Caribbeans as "the people who came": some voluntarily, others more reluctantly. Most were brought, forcibly.

The people assumed to have first set foot in the Caribbean, a geographic and cultural space comprising an archipelago of more than a thousand islands, islets and cays—from the Bahamas in the north to Trinidad, Aruba Bonaire and

Curaçao in the south—separating the Caribbean Sea from the Atlantic Ocean, and the continental territories of Belize, Guyana, Guyane and Suriname, were members of various indigenous Americans groups, among which were the Tainos, the Caribs, the Ciboneys, the Maya, the Wai-Wai¹⁴.

Creolisation, emerging from and beyond the initial contact between indigenous Americans and Europeans, was framed by 1) the decimation of the former (particularly Tainos and Caribs) by the latter, and 2) their replacement by Africans via the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The story began in 1492, when Genoese sailor Christopher Columbus set off for the Indies under the flag of the united Iberian kingdoms of Castilia and Aragon. Columbus' voyage set in motion events that would dramatically change the course of history. In Euro-centric discourse it is referred to as 'The Discovery of the Americas'. Others, less inclined to see Europeans the only ones capable of Discovery, especially of places already inhabited by human beings, refer to the event euphemistically as 'Encounter' or 'Contact', emphasising the fact that Columbus' arrival was more a meeting of peoples who had hitherto known little or nothing of each other. Still others characterise the 1492 event as 'Conquest', since Columbus set sail from Iberia with the express mission of penetrating Asia in order to bring back gold and spices to Europe. Additionally, the quest for supremacy over the Arabs, who had controlled land and sea trade routes to Asia, and over Islam, which had just been forced out of the Iberian peninsula, was implicit in the voyage. If the Iberians could make it to Asia by sailing West, they would rob the Arabs of the ability to impose heavy levies on traders using caravan routes to the East. A sea route to the East would also eliminate the banditry that accompanied caravan trade. More important, ships could transport more goods than caravans,

¹⁴ The Taino were one of the groups of indigenous peoples living in the Insular Caribbean at the time of Columbus' arrival. They lived in the northern Caribbean territories of Lucaya (contemporary Bahamas or parts thereof), the Greater Antilles of Kolba (Cuba), Kiskeya/Ayiti/Bohio (Hispaniola), Xaymaca (Jamaica) and Boriken (Puerto Rico). There is also evidence that they might also have lived in parts of Florida and the Lesser Antilles. The Ciboney occupied Cuba before the Taino, while the Kanima (Caribs) occupied/occupy the Lesser Antilles and the northern coast of South America. The Maya occupied/occupy parts of Central America.

making trade by this means a more profitable venture. In the deal Columbus reached with the Crown, he would receive 10% of the profits from his trips, be made governor of newly 'discovered' lands and be given the title 'Admiral of the Ocean Sea'. With these promises of glory and Conquest in mind, Columbus set out to find the East by sailing West. What he happened upon on the fateful morning of October 12, 1492, was not the shores of Cipango¹⁵ or the Indies but those of the tiny northern Caribbean Taino island of Guanahani, which he dutifully claimed and christened, on behalf of the Crown and Christ, *San Salvador*: Holy Saviour. Columbus made three other trips to the Americas, before his death in 1506. By then, the Spanish had begun establishing plantation settlements in the Caribbean and with them the writing of the chapter of modern history called European colonialism. The Portuguese followed the Spanish into the Americas and like them, set up colonies. By the mid-sixteenth century, the indigenous populations of many of the territories they settled had been practically wiped out, killed for sport or having succumbed to hard work and diseases brought from Europe to which they had no immunity. Others, reportedly, committed suicide.

Europe's desire to explore came as a result of growing domestic demands for exotic products. Tea, spices and sugar, and the system for their production and trade, had become part of a new and exciting reality, not only for upper class Europeans but also for members of the middle and lower classes. For the middle class, the Americas represented the promise of new economic opportunities through the establishment of plantations, while the lower classes saw in the demise of the indigenous peoples the opportunity for employment in production and trade, which would allow them to cast off the lingering effects of feudalism from which Western Europe was emerging at the time. Soon, significant numbers of middle class entrepreneurs, from their bases in Lisbon and Madrid—and later Paris and London—had invested in plantations in the Americas while many of the poor were shipped off to work in near servile

¹⁵ Name used to refer to Japan at the time.

conditions in tropical environments far away from home. But the tropics were not easily tamed and before long it was clear that Europeans, unaccustomed to the climatic conditions of places like the Caribbean, would not do well on its plantations. The system looked East, to Africa, for an inexhaustible and inexpensive supply of labourers. Already the Portuguese, following the example of the Arabs, had been using (sub-Saharan) Africans as unpaid labourers on plantations in Portugal as well as on its island colonies in the Azores, the Canaries, Cape Verde Islands, São Tomé and Madeira. Since 1444, the Portuguese had been capturing Africans off the coast of contemporary Mauritania, later establishing what is commonly referred to as the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

Africans were perceived to be more capable of handling tropical cultivation of the kind carried out on sugar plantations; they had worked well on the Portuguese colonies. Although the Portuguese imported Africans into the Caribbean for more than a century following Columbus' arrival, it was not until the British, the Dutch and the French started establishing colonies and plantations (mainly sugar, but also tobacco and spices) in the 17th century that the tremendous advantage of importing these labourers was realised. Consequently, the importation of Africans only reached critical proportions around the middle of the 17th century.

The manner in which Africans were removed from their homes led inevitably to a disconnection from their cultural matrices. Captured from communities as far north as Senegambia, as far east as the Congo and as far south as Angola (Arends *et al.* 1995: 18; Pradel 2000: 41-45), often in raids by hostile communities which themselves practised a form of slavery, they were traded to Europeans for manufactured goods, including guns for inter-ethnic warfare. Groups fighting one another were sometimes enticed into purchasing these weapons from Europeans as a means of assuring victory (Rodney 1974 [1972]: 95). This ploy ensured that Europeans had a ready supply of slaves from among

peoples that would normally have been taken captive by the victors of war. The captives, possessionless, were led to holding areas such as El Mina in contemporary Ghana and Gorée island off the coast of contemporary Senegal, where they met other Africans from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and with whom they were loaded onto the slavers. At this stage, the practice of separating slaves with a shared tongue from one another was employed to prevent the plotting of revolts and to assure the safe arrival of the cargo in the Americas, after the crossing of the Atlantic in what has come to be known infamously as the Middle Passage.

Most Africans would never see their native lands again. Once in the Americas, they were placed on the auction block and sold to European planters as slaves. Along with the poor Europeans who performed low-level jobs, they formed the base of the plantation social structure, while the owners, along with other Europeans occupying mid and management level positions, formed the middle and upper layers. Before long this social hierarchy solidified into a social continuum based not only on occupation and class but also on European or African origin and freedom or slavery. The table below, adapted from Arends *et al.* (1995: 19), which shows the social stratification of a typical Surinamese plantation, is representative of the structure of most slave societies in the Caribbean from the 17th to the 19th centuries.

Table 1: Social Structure of Surinamese Plantation Society

European/Free		African/Slave
owner ¹⁶		
manager		
overseer	-----	overseer
skilled worker	-----	domestic slaves
		skilled slaves
		field slaves
		unproductive slaves

¹⁶ Many Caribbean plantations were owned by absentee planters.

While the various populations that made up Plantation society brought elements of their cultures to the Caribbean, Europeans, in general, had greater access to theirs. Africans, on the other hand, who, within a short period of time, comprised the majority population in most Caribbean territories, had comparatively limited access to the cultural forms that had survived the Middle Passage. "The conditions of transit for ... Africans", Knight and Crahan write, "were not conducive to the coordinated transfer of a total African culture, even had such an integral culture existed" (1979: 10). At the same time, the constant change in demographics, resulting from increased numbers of incoming African-borns, called *bozals* or *bossals*, and the relative distance between slaves lower down the social structure and freed persons at the higher end, prevented the establishment of stable or unitary social and cultural forms. Coming from different language groups such as Kwa, Mande, Akan, (Alleyne 1980: 147), the slaves' inability to communicate with one another was put to good use by the masters who grouped slaves together according to language differences (De Camp 1971: 20). But this arrangement was doomed to failure from the start, since it would have militated against the cooperative work necessary for production on the plantation.

In what can be characterised as normative situations of linguistic contact, a dominant language is eventually acquired by most, if not all, speakers in the community through institutions established for its transmission. This was not the case in the Caribbean. The fact that life in the Caribbean revolved around planting, tending and harvesting sugarcane, made the plantation, a European construct, controlled and dominated by Europeans, the *de facto* centre of Caribbean society. Consequently, there was, at least initially, little space for the formation of social structures beyond the plantation. In concrete terms, the macro context of the plantation provided little space for the socially dominant language to be formally or effectively transmitted across the social divide from the dominant Europeans to the subjugated Africans. This situation was

amplified by the fact that Africans, except for encounters with overseers in work situations in the fields, rarely had social contact with Europeans. Consequently, most Africans were never able to effectively or completely acquire the dominant language, the exception being the few slaves who were taught to read because of their work as domestics and nannies in the masters' houses. On the other hand, Africans were the numerically dominant population, hence the fact that they did not acquire the European language meant that the linguistic forms that they fashioned for communicating in the micro-context of the fields was effectively the language that dominated the linguistic space of the colony¹⁷. For this reason, slaves' acts of agency were manifested primarily in the use of the language of the fields, one of the areas of life over which Europeans had little direct socio-cultural influence.

The complex language situations on plantations were not only the result of the presence of a multiplicity of tongues; they were also due to the mix of native born slaves and bossals, who arrived in the Caribbean with their languages. In order for bossals to fall quickly and smoothly into the plantation routine, they were often placed in apprentice relationships with more experienced slaves, usually Caribbean-borns, who would introduce them to the plantation system and teach them everything they needed to know in order to survive, including the language of work (Alleyne 1980: 185, Arends 1995: 20 - 21). This language was a work in progress, since Caribbean-born slaves, without the benefit of effective social mechanisms for the transmission of either European or African languages, had no fixed means of communication. The plantation

¹⁷ It seems creolisation does not take place in contexts where there are only two languages, or where speakers of non-dominant languages are a numerical minority. Where persons coming from the two cultures meet and need to communicate, they do so by using reduced linguistic and cultural codes, such as occurs in pidginisation. However, because of limited numbers, persons using the minority language would eventually be linguistically absorbed into the dominant community. Additionally, where there are several communities in contact, if there is a dominant language with a numerically dominant population, that language will prevail and there will be no creolisation. That seems to have been the case in most of Latin and North America and Australia, areas where the languages of the numerically dominant Europeans prevailed. However, there are isolated parts of Australia and North and South America where creolisation occurred because the numerical difference between different linguistic groups favoured it.

language, which turned out to be the most useful and necessary language in their immediate environment was most probably what they fashioned into the new means of communication that came to be known as creoles.

Over time, the fashioning of new, properly Caribbean linguistic varieties, came to involve more European elements. While the social context of slavery served as the mould that shaped creoles, African as well as European languages and dialects served as the primary material. The fact that slaves had close or distant relationships with Europeans and their language depending on the type of job they had on the plantation—drivers and domestics, for example, themselves Africans or Afro-Caribbeans, had closer relationships with Europeans than praedials (field slaves)—led not only to the creation of a social but also of a linguistic hierarchy. Arends asserts that the differences in function "correlated not only with differences in status and power within the black community, but also with the amount of linguistic interaction with whites (1995: 19 - 20).

Later, a new category of persons "who were the results of sexual relationships between white men and black women" (Arends 1995: 20) was added to this social hierarchy of the plantation, changing its dynamics by bridging the 'racial' gap between Africans and Europeans, according "a position of uneasy privilege to the child of mixed race" (Ormerod 1998). Owing to its relationship with the dominant ethnic group (class), this new group occupied a space above Africans/Afro-Caribbeans and just below the Europeans/Euro-Caribbeans on the social ladder. This socio-ethnic continuum constituted the basis for what is today known in common parlance as creole society, the word 'creole' deriving from the Portuguese term "*criar* 'to raise (e.g. a child),' whence the past participle *criado* '(a person) raised; a servant born into one's household'". The word *crioulo*,

with a diminutive suffix, came to mean an African slave (sic) born in the New World in Brazilian usage. The word finally came to refer to the customs and speech of Africans and Europeans born in

the New World. It was later borrowed as Spanish *criollo*, French *créole*, Dutch *creol*, and English Creole (Holm 2000: 9).

The word would later be adopted to describe Caribbean society and culture, inclusive of the language forms proper to them. M.G. Smith, who defines creole as "a complex that has its historical base in slavery plantation systems, and colonialism", suggests that there is an essential link between being Caribbean and being creole. "Creoles are natives of the Caribbean" (1965: 5), he writes, pointing out that, perhaps, the "combination of European and African traditions is the most important feature of Creole life. As we know, slavery defined the initial circumstances of this cultural accommodation" (1965: 6). In summary, then, the socio-historical view of creolisation describes the process as the struggling in a new land by the offspring of different peoples bound together by power relations of oppressor and oppressed, dominator and dominated, and their attempts to construct social and cultural forms that are meaningful in their new, sometimes terrifying, environment.

Like many linguists, Alleyne notes the impreciseness of the term and its varying usages in different parts of the Caribbean (1985: 159). The problem of definition is exacerbated by the fact that it is not only groups born of mixture and contact in foreign lands without native cultural forms of recourse that are treated as creole. Cultural areas with continuing indigenous populations, such as Cameroon, Hawaii, Liberia¹⁸, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea¹⁹ and Sierra Leone²⁰, among others, have had contact phenomena that have been described as creolisation, suggesting that factors such as cultural and geographic displacement and the existence of multiple language or cultural forms in a context in which one language/culture dominates are more important in the process of creolisation than the absence of recourse to indigenous social and cultural forms.

¹⁸ Creole populations from the United States were transported to Liberia in the 19th century.

¹⁹ The language in Papua New Guinea is regarded by some as an expanded Pidgin and not a creole.

²⁰ Like Liberia, Sierra Leone was the destination for creole populations from the Americas (especially from Jamaica, via Canada) in the 19th century.

Determining how creolisation results from the combinations of different factors is one of the enduring challenges of creole studies. However, since this study is primarily concerned with Caribbean creolisation, which generally occurred in contexts with little or no indigenous populations²¹, the feature of nativisation will be treated as a given in the creolisation process. Indeed the discourse on creolisation and the claim to creole identity in the Caribbean revolve around questions of mixture and nativisation.

4.4 Chaotic Stability: Social and Cultural Creolisation

Though the pattern of creolisation in each territory was unique, there were trends that affected all the territories held by specific European powers, and other trends which defined creolisation as a general phenomenon in the Caribbean. The process of creolisation in one territory would, therefore, follow a similar trajectory to that of most other holdings by the same power. Jamaica will be used as an approximate model of how creolisation occurred in the Caribbean, but particularly the British Caribbean.

Burton identifies four phases of development of creole cultural forms—which he sees as being primarily an African-driven process—in Jamaica. The first period followed the British capture of the island from the Spanish in 1655 and their establishment immediately thereafter of a plantation society. This first period ended at the turn of the 18th century, when the British began consolidating their presence on the colony. The second period, according to

²¹ Some territories in the Lesser Antilles had indigenous populations (Caribs) which were absorbed into the wider population. These include the 'black' Caribs (Garifuna) of St. Vincent, many of whom were deported to Belize between 1796 and 1832. In addition, the continental Caribbean territories of Belize, Guyana, Guyane and Suriname have both creole and indigenous populations. This is due to the fact that Europeans only managed to partially penetrate these territories, thereby creating relatively little disruption in the way of life of the indigenous populations inhabiting the interior. Coastal areas were, however, settled by Europeans and plantation slavery was established, creating creole societies from populations of displaced Africans and Europeans. It is, therefore, correct to speak of Caribbean creolisation as occurring in regions where there was no indigenous population.

Burton, lasted until 1750. The third phase, what Burton refers to as the fulcrum period, "when for the first time the demographic balance began to shift in favour of creole as opposed to African-born slaves" (1997: 14), between 1750 and 1780, is what is critical for the purposes of this study. This is when nativised African input began to take hold in Jamaica, shaping the island's creole future. The final period that Burton identifies is from 1780 to Emancipation.

Burton cites the 1760 rebellion by African born slave Tacky as a watershed in the way African practices were treated on the Jamaican plantation. Tacky, leading an Ashante-style uprising, sought to overthrow the British and establish an Ashante run government (Burton 1997: 25, citing Craton 1982: 122)²². Tacky's rebellion was the last African revolt in Jamaica, since, according to Burton, the traumatised British "identified the uprising with Africans and African cultural practices and, the rebellion quelled, took steps to eliminate what they saw as its origin and focus, the practice of 'Obeah'²³" (1997: 25). A law banning obeah and witchcraft was passed, the penalty for which was death or deportation. But as long as there was a constant flow of new arrivals from Africa to the plantations, restrictions on Afro-based religious practices failed. As the years went by, newcomers infused fresh vibrancy into African practices, giving the slave population an increased sense of autonomy outside of the plantation and implanting elements of African culture into the fabric of everyday life. This led to further efforts by the British/British-Jamaican population to de-Africanise African-born slaves (Burton 1997: 26), a task made easier by the fact that many Jamaican-born slaves felt themselves superior to those born in Africa. It was only when the former came to outnumber the latter that hegemony was established and the creolising logic gained ascendancy.

²² Interestingly, the ceremonial start of the Haitian Revolution was led by Boukman, an African-born slave from Jamaica, who held the first Vaudou ceremony in Haiti at Bois Caïman. The Haitian Revolution owed its success to the high proportion of African-born slaves in the colony at the time.

²³ This is an African-based religious form present in a number of Commonwealth Caribbean territories.

Knight and Crahan identify a number of demographic factors as leading to the stabilisation of the plantation society and the resulting creolisation (nativisation) of slaves. First, the importation of more female slaves led to greater reproduction. Before the late eighteenth century

the incoming African slave population consisted predominantly of male adults. The initial high demand, coupled with the general belief that males were more effective at clearing the forests and establishing the plantations resulted in about 80 percent of all early arrivals being male Africans (1979: 12).

More women were imported when it was realised that "women were just as effective on the plantation as men" (1979: 13).

The change in demography in favour of Afro-creoles was accompanied by a number of social changes. In Burton's view, the most important among these were the attempts of creoles to acculturate African-born slaves to the ways of plantation society. For him, cultural creolisation, "like linguistic creolization that preceded it and rendered it possible, took place primarily not between Whites and Blacks, but between one group of slaves and another" (1997: 27). He remarks that the speed and extent of cultural creolisation was striking but that even more striking, and paradoxically so, was the fact "that it should have left so much untouched or only barely transformed in its wake" (1997: 27). A whole series of practices, such the Afro-based Christian-type syncretic religious forms of Kumina in Jamaica, Kele in St Lucia, Shouters in Trinidad and Shakers in St Vincent, for example, which Pradel claims emerged around the late 18th century (2000: 94), testify to the endurance of the Africa that was brought to the Caribbean. The use of local versions of African instruments such as drums and gourds, giving rhythm to local oral art forms (Kubayanda 1990: 90), were also signs of the persistence of Africa in the Caribbean. The omnipresent art of storytelling, typified by Anansi (Spider) stories, a spin-off from the Akan *Anansegoro* about Kwaku/Kweku Ananse/Anansi, a member of the Akan pantheon, is also another component of Africa's gift to the Caribbean. Anansi stories are found in many forms across most of the Caribbean as well as

in parts of the United States. Pradel suggests that Anansi's popularity in the Americas derives from the fact that Spider (under diverse names) is present in the pantheon and myths of many West and Central African peoples from among whom Afro-Americans descended (2000: 113). The adaptation of these forms to the Caribbean context and their mixing or syncretisation with European forms made them examples of the cultural creolisation for which the Caribbean is known.

4.5 East comes West, Again: Emancipation and Indentureship

It is important to mention Emancipation here, since it changed the cultural and ethnic mix of the Caribbean and provided the basis for a new, more dynamic, if often unrecognised, conception of creolisation.

Emancipation²⁴ led to new possibilities for Afro-Caribbeans, breaking "the stranglehold that slavery had held over the society and its institutions ... [setting] free new forces and new energies" (Knight and Palmer 1989: 86). In the Anglophone territories in particular, it provided the opportunity to build a new social structure, though its foundations lay in the plantation with its ethno-class divisions. Despite the importance of the plantation to the construction of Caribbean society, significant numbers of ex-slaves cut their ties with it and formed free settlements, leading to the establishment of a vibrant and autonomous Afro-Caribbean peasant class (Knight and Palmer 1989: 9). Even before slavery was abolished, Africans and Afro-Caribbeans had lived in communities where they had some degree of autonomy and where formerly banned Afro-cultural forms encountered fewer encumbrances. This made these communities important sites of Afro-directed creolisation processes.

²⁴ Emancipation was granted in the Danish territories in 1803, claimed in Haiti by revolting slaves in 1804 [the Haitians abolished slavery in the Dominican Republic in the early years of their revolt, but this lasted a short time. The Haitians abolished slavery definitively in the territory in 1822.] and granted by Britain to its colonies in 1838. The French freed their slaves in 1848 and the Dutch in 1863. Slaves in the Spanish territories of Puerto Rico and Cuba were not freed until 1873 and 1886 respectively.

If Africa had made its way to the Caribbean against tremendous odds, it survived life on the plantation against even more serious threats. Sugar production was labour intensive, which meant that little time could be devoted to the maintenance or rehabilitation of specific African cultural forms. Cultural policies were based on enhancing productivity, thus singing, which lessened the monotony of labour in the fields, was allowed, but drums were banned. Burton (1997: 18) notes that the beating of drums was associated with warfare in Africa and, therefore, was seen by the masters as posing the danger of inciting the slaves to rebellion. Burton writes that by the early 1800s, slave villages "showed every sign of being autonomous, self-regulating communities" (1997: 36), meaning that they were now free to play a more active role in the creolisation of Caribbean society. Slaves contributed to the creolisation process to the extent that their communities were "still essentially African in their physical form but beginning to incorporate European elements into an emerging, if still unstable, creole synthesis" (Burton 1997: 36). Raymond Smith contends that the integration of slaves into a community took place outside the social, cultural and organisational framework of the plantation and was based "partly upon the slowly evolving system of non-slave relations and partly upon developments forced upon the planter-dominated [British Caribbean] colonies by Britain" (2001: 91)

After Emancipation, Afro-Caribbean populations used their autonomy, strengthened by the possession of agricultural and technical skills, to redefine social and economic relationships. With the formation of free villages, especially in the larger territories, agricultural diversification followed and the cost of African labour increased. The planter class, desperate to fill the labour void, began importing Chinese, Indians, Malays and new groups of Africans and, even Mexicans, as indentured wage labourers. The arrival of these groups, Bilby and Brereton opine, "further complicated" the creolisation process (Bilby 1985: 183; Brereton 1989: 95). East Indians²⁵, representing the largest group of

²⁵ East Indian is a term used in the Caribbean to refer to West Indians of Indian ancestry.

indentured workers to enter the Caribbean, went mainly to Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Jamaica. The next largest group was the Chinese, most of whom went to Cuba. These labourers' contracts bound them to work on particular plantations for set wages and set periods of time, after which they had the option of returning home. At the end of their contract periods, however, close to two thirds of indentured workers remained in the Caribbean, the passage home proving to be beyond their means.

The newcomers added to the diversity of Caribbean society through the practice of their religions and through their involvement in commerce and agriculture. Their integration into the Caribbean creole complex, however, was extremely troubled. This was primarily due to the economic impact of their entrance into the plantation system. Tensions between Afro-Caribbeans and Indo-Caribbeans also stemmed from perceptions about who identified with or belonged to the Caribbean. Indo-Caribbeans generally maintained their distance from creole society, which they saw as implying Afro/Euro relationships from which they were necessarily excluded. Creoles, on the other hand, particularly Afro-creoles, viewed Indo-Caribbeans' failure to absorb cultural elements of their new homes as a sign of disloyalty and as indicative of the untrustworthiness of the East Indians. Indo-Caribbeans' insistence on remaining separate can be explained primarily in terms of the context of their arrival in the Caribbean. Having come to the region as free people, Indians managed to escape the cultural and social disruptions which characterised the existence of Africans. Additionally, many came from societies with literate traditions, a fact that made their cultures less vulnerable to disruption. The non-integration of Indo-Caribbeans into the creole social system elicited an exclusionary response from Afro-Caribbeans, who began defining Caribbean identity almost exclusively in terms of its pre-existing creole components, dominated by Afro-creole culture. Summarising the mood of the Jamaican society in the 1930s, for instance, Shepherd writes:

the general feeling was that Indians should neither dominate, nor benefit from, Jamaica's economic resources, particularly since even as settlers, their adaptation to the Jamaican environment did not extend to a complete assimilation or identification with creole society (1988: 109).

Similarly, Haraksingh, explaining Indo-Trinidadians wariness of Trinidadian or Caribbean cultural identity, states: "Trinidad culture—whatever that was—came to have a special meaning which seemed not to incorporate but to be a counterpoint to Indian culture" and that as for Caribbean culture, "that was considered more insidious—a device by which the national community could leap-frog the Indian presence in Trinidad in the name of some greater entity" (1988: 114). That greater entity was and remains primarily Afro-Creole. Although Afro-Creole culture has made persistent attempts to absorb Indo-Caribbeans, it has done so on terms defined by the Afro/Euro creole relational dynamic (Shepherd 1988: 102). In Suriname, tensions based on language (the persistence and eventual dominance of Hindi in the country) and culture spilled over into the politics and have framed the relationship between Indo-Surinamese and creoles into the present. Similar tensions exist in Guyana and Trinidad. Haraksingh castigates those wishing to force the integration of Indo-Caribbeans for seeking to put together a cultural jigsaw puzzle "without any examination of the pieces that made it up" (1988: 114).

The nature of creolisation, broadly speaking, is such that no group in a new society can remain untouched by it. It was, thus, only a matter of time before the creole logic—no longer that of an Afro/Euro continuum but a Caribbean composite—would overtake even the East Indians. Since Independence (*circa* the 1960s), this kind of creolisation, to a lesser or greater degree, has become an important force affecting Caribbean peoples of all backgrounds. Of Indo-Jamaicans, Holm, invoking Le Page and De Camp (1960), writes: "In Jamaica the East Indians have to a large extent been assimilated culturally, though not racially" (Holm 1989: 471). And Mohammed, though noting the exception that Indo-Trinidadian women might take to being called 'Creole'—since it is "a

particularly daring, even offensive word to use in reference to Indian women in Trinidad" (2001: 403)—uses the term to describe the level of interculturalisation, a term borrowed from Brathwaite (1985), that has taken place between Indo- and Afro-Trinidadian (women). Mohammed witnesses to the changes that political factors such as Independence and the quest to belong (or to no longer be excluded from) to national or cultural entities have brought to the way Indo-Caribbeans participate in the national life of southern Caribbean territories. One of the manifestations of the broadening of the process of creolisation may be seen in the way in which East Indian identity has become more assertive of its right to represent Caribbeanness. This assertiveness, however, has come at the price of some loss of 'purity'. For instance, despite rather successful attempts to maintain linguistic continuity, Indo-Caribbeans have generally had to take on the language of the wider pre-existent creole society, speaking whatever creolised language varieties they found around them. Even the most striking example of Indo-linguistic resistance in the Caribbean, that of Sranami in Suriname, is the result of processes of creolisation. Another form of Indo-creolisation has been the 'racial' mixing between Afro and East Indian groups, resulting in what has been referred to pejoratively in Trinidad and Guyana as "douglarisation".

4.6 Creolising Language

From their relatively illegitimate position in linguistic discourse, creoles have been exalted to the position of tools of investigation into human language and cognitive capacity (Andersen (ed) 1983 and De Graff (ed) 1999). The debate on the processes at work in creolisation has generated much discussion and many theoretical positions, some placing emphasis on the role of African communities and languages in the process, others stressing the dominance of Europeans and their languages; still others point to the role of the innate language faculty in generating creole languages. All of these positions can be placed under the umbrella of one of four theoretical trends: monogeneticist, superstratist, substratist and universalist. While many elements of these

positions are irreconcilable, a number of creolists have argued that they are not all mutually exclusive, and that any successful attempt at explaining linguistic creolisation must consider elements of more than one approach, since an approach may yield answers where another fails. In fact, Mufwene (1986, 1993) has argued very strongly that theories of creole genesis, particularly the dominant universalist and substratist positions, are complementary. This study adopts Mufwene's approach, which seeks to synthesise the more reasonable elements of different discussions on creolisation. This presentation on linguistic creolisation will begin with a brief look at the concept of pidginisation.

4.6.1 The Pidgin

At the beginning of the chapter I mentioned that the classic conception of creolisation sees it as a two-stage process, beginning with pidginisation followed by creolisation proper. The contention that pidginisation necessarily precedes creolisation falls within the creole-lifecycle theory proposed by Robert Hall. According to Hall, pidgins are exceptions to what he calls 'normal' languages. 'Normal' languages, he argues, do not have lifecycles. But pidgins do. A normal language is one that has a community of speakers and is transmitted from generation to generation through children who learn it as a first language. Pidgins, on the other hand, are the languages of no one and are not passed on from generation to generation. They "normally come into existence for a specific reason, last just as long as they situation which called them into being, and then go quickly out of use" (1962: 151; 1966: 126). However, according to this theory, under exceptional circumstances, a pidgin may become a 'normal' language by being acquired by a native community. When this happens, it is no longer a pidgin but a creole (1962: 155; 1966: 130). The native community using this language necessarily expands its structure and vocabulary primarily by borrowing from a prestige language, either the one to which the creole is

related or one of different structure, as was the case with Taki-Taki²⁶ in its borrowings from Dutch (1962: 156).

While there is some consensus that pidgins are reduced, restricted language varieties, there is confusion as to whether they are autonomous languages or varieties of other autonomous language systems. There is also no agreement on whether creolisation is necessarily preceded by a process of pidginisation. Holm observes that definitions of pidginisation and creolisation often leak but stresses that the same is true of many other notions in linguistics, such as those of dialect and language. Nonetheless, the definition of pidginisation that he offers is useful. He defines a pidgin as "a reduced language that results from extended contact between groups of people with no language in common" (2000: 5), suggesting that pidgins emerge as language forms from different ancestors, not as disintegrated forms of particular languages.

Yet, the most enduring and stable definition of pidginisation is that offered by Valdman a quarter century ago. Strictly speaking, Valdman notes, all pidgins are characterised by: 1) simplification of external forms 2) reduction of internal forms 3) bilateral or multilateral use in a multilingual context 4) interpenetration of co-occurring linguistic systems and 5) restricted usage domain (1978: 5). None of these characteristics is unique to pidginisation, so none of them can individually define a pidgin. For instance, the first criterion may be used to identify child language, with its simplification of morphological and phonological forms. It could also be applied to the 'interlanguage' of second or foreign language learners, with its reduced forms. With regard to Valdman's second criterion, all languages reduce their internal forms over time, for instance transforming units marked for gender or number into unmarked units, resulting, possibly, in the expansion of the semantic fields of formerly specific terms. The third criterion refers to the use of language as *lingua franca* (bilateral or multilateral use) in bilingual or multilingual

²⁶ An older term for Sranan.

contexts. Many languages, spoken non-natively, such as kiSwahili in East Africa and Hausa in North West Africa, serve as lingua francas in bilingual or multilingual contexts. The issue raised by the fourth criterion is related to the borrowing of language elements, a common occurrence with groups of languages in contact. The reference to domain of use suggests that languages, as opposed to pidgins, are used for a variety of functions and in multiple domains. However, this is not always the case. In some multilingual contexts, different languages are used in very specific domains.²⁷ What is important about Valdman's definition is that no other language form is characterised by a combination of *all* of the features he mentions. Their occurrence together as a language phenomenon is what he describes as constituting the presence of a pidgin.

Evaluations of what qualifies as pidgins/creoles and the processes generating them were not possible until recently, when documented cases of pidginisation/creolisation were matched with the various hypotheses and theories about them. The data came from the pidginisation/creolisation of Hawaiian Pidgin and Creole English, (Bickerton 1999; Roberts, 1995, 1998). These data have proven useful in helping to advance the study of creoles.

Bakker (1995: 27-28) identifies four types of pidgins. The first he calls maritime or nautical pidgins, which are used between sailors and the people from different coastal communities with whom they come into contact. Relying on Schuchardt (1909) he cites the Romance-based Lingua Franca, used in the Mediterranean basin from the Middle Ages onwards, as one example of such pidgins. The second type of pidgin Bakker identifies is what he calls a trade pidgin. He acknowledges that there is often no clear demarcation between a maritime/nautical pidgin and a trade pidgin, since the former often doubles as

²⁷ In many parts of East Africa for instance, Swahili is used for specific functions, English for others, and native languages such as Gikuyu for still others. In many countries European languages are used in the fields of science, economics and diplomacy, while national and Indigenous languages are restricted to more 'cultural' fields such as literature.

the latter. He cites Arctic Pidgin Eskimo, used for whaling in the 19th and early 20th centuries as one type of trade Pidgin. Another trade Pidgin, according to him, is Pidgin Ojibwe, used in the early 1800s by Indigenous North Americans in the Western Great Lakes region. Two other types of pidgins he points out are interethnic contact languages, used in instances such as "the spread of religion, political negotiations, or ceremonies involving people with no common language", and work force pidgins. These arise in contexts where people of different linguistic communities are brought together for work in such settings as the plantations of the Caribbean or Hawaii or the mines of South Africa (1995: 28).

4.6.2 Beyond the Pidgin

If a pidgin is used as a maritime or trade language, it means its speakers have other native languages. If the trade or travel that generates the pidgin stops, the language will usually disappear. However, in contexts where there is an intensification of relations between two or more groups using the Pidgin, it is likely that some members of the contact communities will acquire competence in a second language and act as interpreters in intercultural contact (Bakker 1995: 30), making the pidgin redundant. Otherwise, in the presence of multiple native languages, the pidgin may expand and stabilise, as in the case of Tok Pisin in Papua New Guinea, where the language has become a lingua franca linking the diverse communities in what is perhaps the area in the world with the highest language density. Other examples of stabilised Pidgins, according to Bakker, are Pacific Pidgin English and West African Pidgin English. However, if there are no native languages available to those who use the pidgin most, it may become their native language and expand from a rudimentary communication-driven language to a more complex language, thereby creolising (Bakker 1995: 38). This seems to have been one of the aspects at work on Caribbean plantations.

The question of nativisation, fundamental to many conceptions of creolisation, is hotly debated, since some creolists argue that creolisation is simply the expansion of a pidgin, which does not necessarily involve the use of the pidgin as a native language by children. Mufwene and Lumsden posit, contra Bickerton, Hall, and others, that children are not the only creolisers. Mufwene, relying on the work of Arends (1986) and Carden and Stewart (1988), states that plantation creolisation took place gradually from the 18th to the 19th century "under the agency of adults who were imported massively to the plantation to sustain and/or increase the labor force" (Mufwene 1999: 98). Along with Alleyne (1980), Mufwene (1999) and Lumsden (1999) argue that the shaping of creoles was the work of a community of adults who passed it on to other adults entering the plantation system. In fact, Alleyne expresses grave doubts that the concept of a pidgin is useful in creole studies.

4.6.3 The sole Generator: The Monogenetic Theory

Creoles from different parts of the world share a vast number of features. Writing about French lexicon creoles, Valdman observes: "Les parlers créoles français de l'Océan Indien et des Antilles, pourtant distants de plusieurs milliers de kilomètres, partagent les mêmes traits structuraux ... et le même vocabulaire de base" (1978 : 13). Additionally, Holm notes that the level of mutual intelligibility between French-lexified creoles is very high compared to that between any of these creoles and French (2000: 50). Even more striking is the fact that an overwhelming number of creoles with different lexifier languages are structurally similar. Valdman points out, for instance, that creoles generally use the third person plural to form plural markers. Consider, for example, the following French-lexicon Haitian expressions and the corresponding English-lexicon Jamaican expressions and the accompanying comments, borrowed and adapted from Alleyne (1985: 163-164):

1. Both verbs and adjectives are predicates, and they are used syntactically in the same way.

mwē malad

mi sick

mwe kuri

mi run

mwē va malad

mi wi sick

mwē va kuri

mi wi run

m'ap malad

mi a sick

2. Plurals are formed by placing the third person plural pronoun after the noun.

nom yo

di man dem

3. Verbs and adjectives can be emphasised by being placed at the beginning of a sentence and then repeated

se kuri li ap kuri

a run him a run

4. Verbs can be strung together without any connecting word.

kuri ale lese li

run go lefim

5. Particles are placed before the predicate to express tense and aspect.

m'ap kuri

mi a run

mwẽ te kuri

mi en run

mwẽ t'ap kuri

mi en a run

Some of these commonalities have been used as typical features of creoles. These structural similarities between creole languages, combined with their history in plantation slavery seem to suggest that they derive from a single common ancestor, a belief held by many early creolists. It is this belief that is referred to as the monogenetic theory.

While more than one version of the monogenesis theory exists²⁸, the best known holds that creoles emerged from a relexified Portuguese proto-pidgin, a rudimentary trade language whose lexicon was replaced by items from other European colonial languages as the countries in which those languages were used became involved in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and the establishment of colonies in the Americas. One of the first proponents of the argument was Hancock, who presented his views at the second Mona conference on pidginisation and creolisation. According to him,

the English derived Creoles spoken ... on the West African coast, and in South, Central, and North America, represent the modern descendants of a single early pidgin spoken probably with local variants along the West African coast from the early sixteenth century (Hancock 1971: 7).

²⁸ Den Besten *et al.* (1995) point to a version of monogenesis theory that suggests that Pidgins developed from Lingua Franca.

But how did Portuguese, as opposed to Spanish, come to have such an important role in the formation of this proto-pidgin? While the Spanish initiated the Trans-Atlantic contact, it was their rivals, the Portuguese, who started sugar plantations on islands off the west coast of Africa, mentioned earlier in this chapter. This production of sugar matured into the Triangular Trade, which involved the passage of slaves from West Africa to sugar plantations in the Americas, the transfer of sugar from the Americas to Europe and the shipment of manufactured goods from Europe to slave trading societies on the west coast of Africa. The proto-pidgin was ostensibly the language used between the Portuguese and the Africans involved in the slave trade. Under the monogenesis theory, it is argued that the language penetrated well beyond the West African coast all the way into interior societies along the routes where slaves and goods were traded. In fact, it is sometimes claimed that some Africans captured in the West African interior for sale to traders from other European territories were already familiar with the proto-pidgin. When these captured Africans made their way to the coastal holding areas, they would meet other captives who also had some familiarity with the language and so, according to this theory, the common language of communication at these holding areas became a version of the Portuguese proto-pidgin.

According to the theory, as the slave ships left the coast of Africa for the Americas, the Africans would come to rely increasingly on this Portuguese-based proto-Pidgin for communication among themselves, since they were placed together according to ethnic and language differences. Europeans on the ships would also use this language to interact with the Africans. Over time, however, depending on the country of origin of the ship's crew, the words of their language would gradually replace the Portuguese words of the proto-pidgin. The ostensible result was the relexification of the proto-pidgin into a variety based on another European language such as English or French. Creolisation, then, was the expansion of the relexified pidgin when a new generation was born in the Americas without the benefit of a mother tongue.

4.6.4 Dese be Deformed European Language: The Superstratist Side

Defining creoles by their lexifier (or superstrate) languages is what is referred to as the superstratist approach. In its better-known forms, this conception does not treat creoles as languages in their own right but as bastardised or improperly acquired forms of standardised European languages. In this view, standardised European languages served as the model for speakers on a curve towards language acquisition. This understanding, referred to as the "baby-talk hypothesis" or the "baby-talk theory", influenced by the fact that creoles, at least superficially, resembled the European languages from which they drew their lexicon, saw creoles as the manifestation of the improper acquisition of standardised European languages. It assumed that the communication challenge arising from the multilingual context of the plantation elicited "conscious simplification" on the part of the model [European] language speakers (Koefoed 1979: 38), who either simplified their language in such a way that it "imitated the learners' errors" or simplified it based on their perceptions of the areas that might pose difficulties for learners (1979: 41). The baby-talk theory may be traced to Bloomfield, who suggests that speakers of "a lower language (sic) may make so little progress in leaning the dominant speech, that the masters, in communicating with them resort to 'baby-talk'" (1933: 472). What may result from this kind of behaviour between the speakers of the dominant language and speakers of the 'lower' language, according to Bloomfield, is a "conventionalized *jargon*" (1933: 472).

The baby-talk theory is usually rejected as an attempt to denigrate the framers of creole languages. However, the shifts in the language habits of the East Indians in Trinidad from Trinidad Bhojpuri towards English suggests that some form of simplification on the part of the target language speaker did help to shape Trinidadian speech varieties. According to Mahabit, by the turn of the 20th century, the language of East Indians was being transformed more and

more towards English, though this was mixed with Hindi and other Indian languages (1999: 16). Members of the non-East Indian community referred to this language as 'coolie English'. Mahabir relates that in their efforts to communicate with East Indians, "European estate officials sometimes found it necessary to adapt their own use of English" (1999: 17). Mahabir quotes Underhill, who documents the indignation expressed by a Baptist missionary visiting Trinidad in 1860 at Europeans' use of the language of the 'Negroes' and the 'coolies'.

Negro and Coolie English is most barbarous stuff, and ought everywhere to be discouraged. There can be no reason why the Coolie, whether Chinese or Indian, should be addressed in the ridiculous style which constitutes the usual medium of intercourse between him and his employer (Underhill 1970 [1862]: 27, cited in Mahabir 1999: 17)

Clearly, then, the employers were not simply speaking to the indentured workers as if they were average speakers of English, but were modifying their speech to suit the assumed level of understanding of their interlocutors.

Another form of the superstratist argument sees creolisation as one type of change that European languages undergo as a result of contact. This view sees non-European languages, though a part of the social context within which creolisation occurs, as playing a minor or secondary role in the formation of creoles. Other strands of the superstratist position have treated creoles as offshoots of specific dialects of European languages spoken at certain points in the past (den Besten *et al.* 1995: 90)

4.6.5 *A Afrikan Langgwig Dem-ya: The Substratists' Perspective*

In response to superstratist theories, researchers such as Woolford called for a re-examination of the question of creole origins, especially "in light of a broader range of data" which has called into question "commonly accepted assumptions [which] exist in the creole literature concerning what kinds of

social contexts induce pidginization and creolization" (1983: 1). Proponents of approaches challenging these commonly held assumptions have been described as substratist because they maintain that creolisation is the product of sociolinguistic contact situations in which structural elements of dominated languages are gradually displaced and/or replaced by the structures of dominant languages. Their methods involve comparative examination of creoles and languages spoken by populations in areas from which the ancestors of most creole speakers came. The view is that such comparisons could yield information that points to a relationship between the underlying structures of creoles and the structures of the languages spoken by the ancestors of creole speakers. In line with this view, a considerable body of work has been done by creolists such as Alleyne (1980), Boretzky (1983), Singler (1986, 1988, 1993) and Washabaugh and Greenfield (1983), all of whom provided what they claimed was evidence to show the similarities between African languages and creoles. Holm describes the work of Boretzky as pointing to "widespread parallels in the phonology and syntax of certain West African languages and the Atlantic Creoles" (2000: 63).

Alleyne, rejecting the pidgin→creole lifecycle theory, sees a direct filiation between West African languages and Atlantic creoles. His position views Atlantic creoles as a historical point on the transformational continuum between (proto-) West African languages and European languages. Thus, for Alleyne, creoles are not "simplified, aberrant forms of European languages" (1980: 121). Rather, they are parts of a lengthy process of language shift (1980: 220), a position with which Singler seems to agree when he states that "[t]he slow nativization of plantation societies argues for the slow nativization of the creoles that developed there, and the long period of creolization would have involved a long period of coexistence with African languages" (1993: 235).

TABLE 2: *Creolisation as the replacement of African language elements by European language elements*

Lexicon	Morphology	phonology	Syntax
African lang	African langs.	African langs	African langs
European langs	African langs	African langs	African langs
European langs	European langs	African langs	African langs
European langs	European langs	European langs	African langs
European langs	European langs	European langs	European langs

Some of the reasons given for assuming that creolisation occurred in a protracted manner are the rapid turnover of slaves on the Caribbean plantation owing to high adult mortality rates and the low fecundity which resulted from the imbalance between the sexes and the high rate of infant mortality due to malnutrition (Singler 1993: 238-239).

Alleyne hypothesises that the number of African features in an Atlantic creole is directly linked to the amount and length of contact between Africans and Europeans in the territory in which that creole is used. His evaluation of a wide variety of Atlantic creoles seems to confirm this hypothesis. For instance, the language in territories which had greater and/or longer contact with European languages exhibited fewer recognisable African elements but more European ones, while the languages in territories with less and/or shorter European contact displayed larger numbers of African features. Indeed, Alleyne's research reveals that communities that were isolated from Europeans have not just more lexical items derived from identifiable African languages but more phonological, morphological and syntactical items as well. Saramaccan, for instance, the Portuguese- and English-lexified creole of Surinam and the Atlantic creole with the least contact with European languages, possesses more identifiable African features than its sister language, Sranan, which had greater and longer contact with its European lexifier language, English (1980: 156).

From as far back as the mid 17th century, the creators of Saramaccan lost contact with, and have largely remained outside the sphere of influence of, European languages. Similarly, in Jamaica, until recently, the descendants of escaped slaves, the Maroons, maintained a 'spirit language', comprising items relatable to dialects of Akan in today's Ghana. Alleyne's study suggests that there is a direct correlation between the amount of contact between European and African languages and the extent to which elements of African languages persist. This would indicate, according to him, that at the start of the linguistic contact between Africans and Europeans in the Caribbean, rather than a (total) loss of African languages in favour of pidginised varieties of European languages, there was the co-existence of various African and European languages. Eventually individual varieties of African languages came to dominate and were transmitted to newcomers from Africa, particularly those working as praedials or field slaves. Since praedials had limited contact with Europeans, their language was not modelled on the European norm. On the other hand, domestics or house slaves and drivers who were in far greater contact with Europeans needed to have greater command of the European language. But these domestics and drivers also had to know the language of the praedials, since there was greater communication between different groups of slaves than there was between slaves and masters, meaning that while domestics had a greater opportunity to interact with and learn the master's tongue, field slaves were almost totally separated from European language forms, creating a language system bound by the extremes of the European variety and the praedial variety, with fluid mixing between these by domestics and drivers.

Under the substratist view of creolisation, children born of miscegenation play a crucial role. The progeny of African/Afro-Caribbean mothers and European/Euro-Caribbean fathers as well as the children raised by Afro-Caribbean domestics spoke language varieties that were somewhere on a continuum between European languages and the speech of the slaves. This was

a direct result of their interaction with both communities. By mixing the language forms of slaves and masters, mixed and Euro-Caribbean children raised by nannies added new varieties to the linguistic pool, further diversifying the continuum that had already been established along the fault lines of contact between the masters and domestics and between domestics and praedials.

Owing to the pressures linked to prestige and privilege, European language elements began 'conquering' and replacing African elements, starting with the lexicon, through to the morphology then the phonology and finally the syntax, resulting in a continuum of speech forms that has been divided into three basic layers, comprising, on one extreme what has been referred to as the basilect, and on the other the acrolect, with intermediate varieties being globally referred to as the mesolect. The basilect contains more identifiable elements of African origin, while the acrolect has more European elements. Mesolectal varieties contain elements from the acrolect and the basilect. Here, again, the children of mixed ancestry played a key role. Being the children of enslaved mothers allowed them a certain relationship, even affinity with the slave population. Yet, their closeness to the ruling class, evidenced by their lighter complexion and their ability to use elements of the European languages made them socially envied by Africans. The privilege associated with being 'brown' relative to being 'black' made it more attractive to aspire to all things brown, which, besides, was vicariously attainable through progeny. Thus, through this form of mixing, features of language, culture and biology associated with Africa that were depicted as oppressive were rejected in favour of those that were as close as possible to the European. In this way a premium was placed on being 'brown' or 'near-white' and on speaking the European language. Thus, social survival in the Caribbean was linked to the distance from the marks of respectability, identified as 'high colour' and 'high language', both of which drew their importance from a European standard. Arends remarks that the difference in function on the plantation "correlated not only with differences in status and power within the black community, but also with the amount of

linguistic interaction with whites" (1995: 19-20). For all intents and purposes, then, creolisation was the attempt to replace the Africa that lacked prestige with the Europe from which it was accorded.

4.6.6 Not European, Not African. It's Just Language: The Universalists

The set of approaches referred to as universalist places considerable emphasis on the fact that Atlantic creoles shared "many structural features not found in their different lexical source languages" (Holm 2000: 58). These approaches attribute such shared features to the workings of universal processes of language acquisition and development. For theorists in this school, the sociolinguistic context of creolisation—the absence of a model language for transmission to a new generation—provides a laboratory for testing hypotheses about universal grammar. It is for this reason that the universalist view of creolisation places so much emphasis on the role of children in the "creation of a language".

The most ardent proponent of the universalist theory of creole genesis has been Derek Bickerton, who sees universal grammar and not superstrate or substrate languages as being responsible for the commonalities among creoles. In contrast to those whom he calls "substratomanics" (1981: 48), he argues that creolisation was not the result of an orderly relexification of substrate languages by European languages. Drawing on observations from Hawaii, "the one case on which we have direct knowledge" (1091: 4), he claims that the evidence suggests that "individuals who found themselves [on the plantation] attempted to learn useful fragments of one another's languages—in particular, those languages that were socially dominant or that had the highest numerical representation" (1999: 52). He refers to the language that emerged as a "*macaronic jargon*" lacking in any kind of "systematic grammar" (1999: 52).

Taking the situation in Hawaii as his point of departure, Bickerton argues that creoles developed rapidly from the preceding 'macaronic jargon', "within twenty or thirty years after first settlement of the areas concerned" (1981: 4). According to him, there was no "stable, systematic, or referentially adequate pidgin" within a generation of contact between the various European and non-European populations in Hawaii (1981: 4-5). There is no reason, he contends, to suppose that the situation in Hawaii was unique among regions where creoles developed.

We can assume, therefore, that in each of these regions, immediately prior to creolization, there existed, just as there existed in Hawaii, a highly variable, extremely rudimentary language state ... rather than a developed pidgin (1981: 5)

The rapid expansion of creoles, according to Bickerton, suggests that children played a pivotal role in their development. He argues that under 'normal' circumstances, children learn the parameters of grammar from their native languages. They acquire language rules by processing linguistic input from their environment, which produce rules similar to those of their elders. In contrast to children born into 'normal' language learning situations, children in creole contexts begin life with a distinct disadvantage.

Since none of the available vernaculars would permit access to more than a tiny proportion of the community, and since the cultures and communities with which those vernaculars were associated were now receding rapidly into the past, the child born to pidgin-speaking parents would seldom have had any other option than to learn that rudimentary language, however inadequate for human purposes it might be (1981: 5).

Despite the inadequacy of the linguistic input in the child's environment, he or she usually ended producing a full-fledged language that had elements that were not found in the rudimentary pidgin. In Hawaii, Bickerton claims, "we have empirical proof ... that the first creole generation produced rules for which there was no evidence in the previous generation's speech" (1981: 6). Bickerton hypothesises that the development of creoles from limited language input is the result of a process distinct from normal language acquisition. He

claims that the absence of full-fledged languages to be transmitted via the usual language acquisition/development route suggests that such children are forced to fall back on more basic means of generating grammatical rules to systematise and expand the sparse and disorganised input they encountered in their surroundings.

The above arguments form the basis of Bickerton's bioprogramme hypothesis, according to which insufficient external language input switches on the internal human language-generating faculty, triggering the production, following a universal template, of a basic language. This 'language faculty' is not, however, "some vague, abstract 'general learning capacity,' or even some highly-specified 'language learning capacity'", since biological evolution "does not trade in nebulous concepts like these" (295-296). According to Bickerton, biological evolution has handed down

the capacity to produce a particular, highly-specified language, given only some (perhaps quite minimal) triggering in the form of communal language use. This capacity has attained the level of contemporary creoles when the computational power it bestowed on its owners triggered the cultural explosion of the last ten millennia; and since cultural evolution works far faster than biological evolution, and since it operates at a far more abstract level, the effects of cultural evolution on language could not be transferred to the gene pool. Therefore, biological language remained where it was, while cultural language rode off in all directions. However, it was always there, under the surface, waiting to emerge whenever cultural language ever hit a bad patch ... and the worst patch that that cultural language ever hit was the unprecedented, culture-shattering act of the European colonialists who set up the slave trade (1981: 296)

Thus, for Bickerton, creolisation is solid evidence of the existence of a species-specific language generating capacity.

A variation on the universalist theme comes from Givón, who, in criticising what he calls the 'creolization hypothesis', points to what he considers the implicit problems in defining creolisation in terms of the reduction and

subsequent expansion of linguistic forms. Givón notes that processes such as relexification, the reduction of inflections and reduced grammar do not themselves define a linguistic type or represent features attributable solely to creoles (1979: 22). He also criticises the idea that creoles bear the grammatical traces of the putative substrate languages (or language systems) which played a role in their formation. According to him, contrary to what is suggested by substratist approaches, language systems do not borrow grammar. While he does not argue against the notion of substrata *per se* he claims that it would not be possible to identify such substrata in creole contexts marked by contact from vastly different languages and language systems. For him, resort to a specific substratum is conditioned by the absence of a common language among groups of speakers, the lack of effective bilingualism among them, and when they share a common language system background. Referring to Krio, the creole that he studies, Givón notes that speakers come from the Kwa linguistic group and this makes it possible to identify particular traits in Krio as deriving from a particular substratum. However, if speakers are from diverse linguistic systems, such as was the case in many creole areas of the world, there is only "one common denominator to fall back to—the *universal substratum*, universal grammar" (1979: 23). Offering an alternative creolisation hypothesis, he argues that "one might say that universal grammatical changes may become *accelerated* during the rise of a Creole". This, in his view, is the result of the "great *communication stress* which must characterize the time of inception of a Creole language" (1979: 22).

Givón's work hinges on a critique of one of the main principles underlying much of the study of creoles, the conventional assumption that creoles are primarily the products of linguistic mixture resulting in the transfer of grammatical features from several systems to other systems or in the creation of entirely new systems from the fusion of features from different systems. Givón holds that languages do not borrow grammars because such borrowing would be too chaotic. When languages come in contact, he notes, the greatest

conflict occurs at the level of their lexicons. The capacity of languages to drop or add words in instances of contact proves advantageous, since it makes the language more adaptable to its environment. Whereas the borrowing of words results in little or no interferences in a language, the borrowing of grammar could result in serious disruptions, since, unlike words, grammar is more consistent and has more features that are specific to languages and language systems. According to Givón, the problems that would result from grammatical borrowing would change languages so radically, it would make communication difficult or impossible. It is for this reason, Givón concludes, that languages do not borrow grammar. However, since speakers have both specific and general grammatical competence, instances of grammatical conflicts are resolved by resort to the more general grammatical competence. Thus, what is perceived as similarity between creoles and attributed to grammatical borrowing, is in fact the result of recourse to universal grammar.

Gumperz and Wilson would not agree with Givón on this point. They write that although "lexical items are by far the most frequently borrowed, it seems clear that borrowing extends to all aspects of the grammatical system". In fact, they claim, studies have shown "some striking cases of grammatical borrowing among otherwise unrelated languages" (1971: 151) in situations of linguistic convergence. It is this kind of empirical examination of language mixing which continues to feed research into the manner in which languages transcend the boundaries imposed by a certain theoretical tradition.

4.6.7 The Real, Real Creole: Radical Creole

Radical creole describes two things. The first is a creole little influenced by or resembling its lexifier (standard) language. In this regard, Saramaccan is regarded as the most radical of the Atlantic creoles since it reputedly has the highest proportion of words (Bakker *et al.* 1994 169-170) or morphosyntactic structures identified as deriving from African languages (Alleyne 1980: 156).

The second notion of radical creole, related to the first, refers to the language form that is furthest from the lexifier or superstrate language within a polylectal speech community. Escure (1997: 58), referring to Bailey's work on Jamaican creole (1966), states that the radical or "core" creole is the language spoken by older people or persons in rural communities. The assumption is that these speakers are outside the direct sphere of influence of the superstrate language and are thus able to maintain its integrity.

4.6.8 Becoming Creole, Creole's Becoming

Escure observes that creole languages may evolve in two general directions, depending on the social context in which they exist. Limited contact with superstrate/lexifier languages may result in the emergence of autonomous languages with expanded functions and domains, as is the case with Kréyol in Haiti, Tok Pisin²⁹ in Papua New Guinea and Papiamentu in Aruba and the Netherland Antilles. On the other hand, it has been argued that creoles that co-exist with their lexifier languages, in contexts where the lexifier language speakers are socially and numerically dominant, may become extinct through absorption into the lexifier languages. The disappearance may be relatively rapid, as supposedly occurred with Negerholland in the U.S. Virgin Islands or with the putative creole antecedents of Barbadian English and African American Vernacular English, or it may be much slower, resulting from the gradual the absorption of/by standardised forms. This process in which creoles absorb or are absorbed by standardised languages is referred to as decreolisation.

²⁹ For some creolists, Tok Pisin is not a classic creole but an expanded or stabilised pidgin. The difference between an expanded or stabilised pidgin and a creole is not really very clear. The confusion in the definitions arises from the fact that pidgins such as Tok Pisin, which existed for some time as a lingua franca, remain pidgin lingua francas in some of the geographic areas in which they are used, co-existing with other languages. At the same time, some members of the population using the pidgin grow up with no language but the pidgin and expand and nativise it. As a result, the language still serves pidgin functions but has a community of native users.

4.6.8.1 Unbecoming Creole: Decreolisation

Decreolisation is generally understood by creolists as the process of language shift that occurs after a creole has stabilised. According to this view, whenever a creole is in contact with its lexifier language and there are sufficient social pressures on creole speakers to abandon the non-standard features of their speech in favour of more standard ones (Holm 2000: 9-10), that creole may be said to be decreolising. The motivation to drop features furthest away from the standard often results from the notions of progress and privilege associated with mastery of the lexifier language, which always has much greater prestige and a larger sphere of influence than creolised languages. In addition, creoles generally have no norms of orthography or literary tradition, making them the least likely vehicles of literacy. Like most other non-standardised languages they are, thus, excluded from use in formal contexts and consequently restricted to the domain of the oral.

The notion that decreolisation follows creolisation is problematic for Alleyne, whose description of creolisation as "a lengthy process of language shift" (1980 : 220) suggests that what is called decreolisation is in fact the process of creolisation. Alleyne argues that the language attrition represented by creolisation has always been a feature of the linguistic contact between Europeans and Africans in the Caribbean. In his conception, (modified) African languages remained viable on the plantation, especially among field slaves. According to him, the progressive replacement of African features by European features began when the slave entered the plantation system, with its social pressures to de-Africanise. For Alleyne, then, there existed from early on a linguistic continuum between (proto-)West African language varieties and European languages. His strong critique of the decreolisation thesis comes from his view that creolisation does not involve stable entities which become unstable via contact. For him, creolisation is by definition unstable.

4.6.8.2 Remaining but not Remaining Creole: The Continuum

The process referred to as decreolisation supposedly results in the formation of a continuum of speech varieties ranging from the standard to a form least resembling it. This spread of speech varieties is referred to as either the 'post-creole continuum' or the 'creole continuum'.

The notion of a post-creole continuum suggests that there existed a stable variety called 'creole' which at some point became connected to other varieties, thereby forming a continuum. The term was coined by De Camp to distinguish between situations where creoles mixed freely with their lexifier languages and situations in which both languages were kept (ostensibly) separate and used diglossically. According to this view, the post-creole was the spectrum from creole (one assumes this to be the radical creole) to the standard lexifier language. The conditions under which a post-creole continuum comes into being are given by De Camp as 1) the presence of the dominant official language of the community, "which must be the standard language corresponding to the creole" (1971: 351) and 2) the rigid social stratification must have partially broken down.

The term 'post-creole continuum' relates to three other terms used by De Camp. These are 'post-creole area', 'post-creole community' and 'creole continuum'. De Camp treats the language situation of Barbados, Belize [formerly British Honduras], Guyana and Trinidad³⁰, like that of Jamaica, as constituting creole lectal continua. He uses the term 'post-creole continua' to refer to these territories (1968: 39). The contexts in which these so-called 'post-creole continua' exist are themselves treated as 'post-creole communities' or 'post-creole language areas' (cf. 1968: 38). An examination of the three terms reveals

³⁰ To that list, Alleyne (1985) adds Antigua, St. Kitts, Montserrat and St. Vincent.

that while they supposedly describe variants of the same thing, they can in fact be ascribed differing meanings.

While many creolists concur with De Camp's assessment of the language situation in Belize, Guyana and Jamaica and, to a lesser extent, Trinidad, others treat Barbados as an exceptional linguistic situation in the Anglophone Caribbean. There is evidence that like most Caribbean territories, Barbados at one point had creolised varieties. These have, however, disappeared (cf. Alleyne 1985: 165-166), leaving a restricted number of lectal varieties closely related to the English of the Caribbean (commonly referred to as West Indian Standard English). For this reason Barbados vernacular varieties are generally treated as dialects (assuming the conventional treatment of dialect and language) of 'English'. The territory might, therefore, be termed a 'post-creole area'. However, Belize, Guyana and Jamaica, where 'deep' or 'broad' creole varieties (the so-called 'radical creoles') co-exist and interact with standard English, cannot be described as 'post-creole areas', at least not in the same sense as Barbados.

It may seem that the term 'post-creole continuum' more meaningfully describes contexts such as Belize, Guyana and Jamaica, since it highlights the continuum dimension of the post-creole dynamic in these territories. But even the term '*post-creole continuum*', which De Camp uses as a synonym for 'creole continuum' (1971), has its problems. As Bickerton comments, "since something marginally, if at all, different from the original creole language frequently constitutes the basilect of the continuum, 'post-' can be misleading" (1973: 640). Likewise, Escure, pointing to "the highly unstable conditions which gave rise to pidgins and creoles", notes that this static notion of the creole is unrealistic. She concludes that the notion of "an original creole is a vague concept at best because there is no evidence of earlier stages beyond sparse written fragments" (1997: 62). Thus, she argues, the *post-* in the notion post-creole continuum, is of little value to researchers. Furthermore, as Alleyne (1968, 1971, 1980, 1985

and 1994) has consistently argued, there is no evidence to suggest that there was ever a single, crystallised form of any of the creoles: their creolisation has been and continues to be a process of mixing, enculturation and acculturation. For clarity, then, neither the terms 'post-creole area', 'post-creole community' nor 'post-creole continuum' will be used here. Following Alleyne's view that the continuum existed from the initial contact between Europeans and Africans, I will stick to the term 'creole continuum'.

4.7 Synthesis

Before drawing a conclusion about what constitutes creolisation and attempting to use it as a prism through which to view translation, it is important to make some general comments about the major themes in the debate on creolisation.

From the monogenetic to universalist theories, the debates on the nature and genesis of creoles all point to features that are not mutually exclusive. It seems, therefore, that the areas of contention are primarily ideological. Monogeneticists and superstratists, for instance, seek to deprive African languages of any significant role in creolisation. Monogeneticists who support the thesis that creoles emerged from a Portuguese proto-pidgin present as evidence for their position, the presence of many core Portuguese or Portuguese-like terms, such as *sabi/sabir* "know" and *pikin/pikni* "child" and perhaps *ina/na* "in", in disparate creoles. Indeed while this suggests that Portuguese had some influence on the formation of creoles it by no means provides evidence that Portuguese was the sole or primary force in creolisation. Indeed, it would be absurd to suggest on the basis of the few Portuguese words in creoles that these derived from Portuguese while at the same time discounting the influence of African languages, which have demonstrably contributed far more lexical items to (Atlantic) creoles than Portuguese, in creolisation. Moreover, as substratists argue, Atlantic creoles display not only greater lexical but also phonological, morphological and syntactic similarities

with African languages than they do with Portuguese. Thus, the early emphasis on the Portuguese proto-pidgin can be dismissed as part of the attempt to place Africa on the periphery of history. The same is true for superstratist arguments, which, preferring to refer to the lexical similarities between creoles and their superstrate languages, fail to account for the phonological, morphological and syntactic differences between them. By contrast, the structural similarities between creoles and many African languages are common and striking (Taylor 1977: 7).

The fact that there are African substrate influences in creoles does not, however, reduce creolisation to a process that is driven primarily by African languages, as the work of Alleyne suggests. Alleyne's depiction of creolisation as a move away from African forms towards European forms does not explain all the structural similarities between Atlantic creoles, which have African antecedents, and non-Atlantic creoles, which do not. This suggests, as universalists such as Bickerton state, that creolisation is the long awaited substantiation of the existence of universal grammar. While Alleyne does not deny that universal grammar may play a role in creolisation, he concedes, rather grudgingly, that the similarities between different creole contexts can only logically mean "that a substrate input explanation is not the only possible one or that geographically separate instances of one phenomenon may have different explanations" (1985: 304). Although Alleyne's concern is that the diversity of social contexts in which language contact takes place has been underestimated for too long and that the pidginisation hypothesis is a way of disregarding the African input in creole (1985: 301), his position sometimes seems excessively defensive.

While Alleyne's argument in favour of African substrate influence is strong, Mufwene contends that it is not incompatible with the universalist position. In fact, in Mufwene's conception, only the extreme forms of the substratist and universalist theories necessarily exclude elements of the other. Declaring that

"the adequacy of the universal hypothesis in accounting for world-wide common features of pidgins and Creoles does not rule out the role of substrate influence in the genesis and development of these languages" (1986: 145), Mufwene calls for an integration of these two major theoretical trends in creolistics. Additionally, substratism, in its broadest sense, does have a place for a Portuguese variety being one of the early substrates for Atlantic creoles. However, the evidence presented by both the substratist and the universalist schools casts doubt on the possibility that Portuguese was the sole of primary generator of creoles, since creolisation has occurred in situations where there was no Portuguese influence. The idea of relexification used in reference to the Portuguese monogenetic theory seems to be salvageable for use in an integrated conception of creolisation. Alleyne's de-culturation/acculturation is one form of the relexification argument, the difference being that Alleyne and other substratists see relexified African languages as opposed to a relexified proto-Portuguese pidgin varieties as constituting the source of creoles. An integrated conception of creolisation leaves very little room for a superstratism which claims primary European influence in creolisation. The evidence suggests that multiple underlying non-European influences are found in creoles. This does not mean, however, that there is no place for European languages in creolisation. However, these must be appropriately situated within a broader conception of the process, such as that identified by Alleyne in his deculturation/acculturation model. Where neither substratism nor superstratism can explain the numerous similarities between creoles, and particularly where these creoles have different historical geneses, it seems more plausible, as Bickerton suggests, that they are the result of universal language principles. Yet, it must be cautioned that this does not make creolisation the result only, or even primarily, of universal language phenomena.

4.7 Conclusion

Plantation slavery ended up transforming the Caribbean—a milieu of multi-lingual, multi-ethnic contact—into a society with multiple co-existing and

intersecting cultural and linguistic systems which defied the imposition of dominant single languages or cultures. The plantation, which united and divided all the peoples of the Caribbean, provided the basis for the establishment of a new society characterised by cultural mixing. In this society Walcott sees the gift of “a virgin world, a paradise” (1993a [1965]: 36). The forms forged on the plantation were neither European nor African, but combinations that were “understandable in terms of neither alone” (Washabaugh and Greenfield 1983: 117). The creole and creolising view of language is one which espouses indeterminacy, chaos and flux, opposites of the monolith, the standard and unitary. Typically creole is a rejection of pretensions to purity and an embrace of synthesis and heterogeneity as the premises upon which cultural realities are constructed. Indeed, the capacity of culture to adapt, advance, change, recycle, etc. depends to a large extent on indeterminacy. In creolisation, difference is not conceived *in opposition to* anything but *in addition to* everything else. From ‘race’ to language to cultural forms, creole celebrates the multiple, the different, the indeterminate. At one level, creole stands as a reminder that abstracted reality was itself born of ‘hybridity’.

The role of orality in Caribbean societies, born of its early relationship with literacy, is critical to the indeterminacy of creole. In a sense, orality is one of the mechanisms contributing to the instability of creole. Whether creolisation is perceived as a gradual linguistic shift—and creoles the synchronic view of that shift—or as the nativisation and stabilisation of mixed and reduced languages (pidgins), the result is usually the same: the existence of unstable multi-layered language varieties co-existing as single ‘systems’ or parts of multiple systems. As argued in chapters 1 and 2, translation can readily deal with languages as homogenous and discrete entities, source and target. How, in light of the languages which are not fixed, existing as ever changing continua, can translation be conceived?

CHAPTER 5

CREOLISING TRANSLATION

[...] since any translated text marks a line between at [least] two languages and cultures, it posits the separation and thus the possible purity of both.

--Anthony Pym (*Letter in response to Christine Schäffner and Beverly Adab, 25-29 June 1996*)

5.1 Introduction

Thus far I have contended that conventional definitions of translation generally place emphasis on the presence of clearly delimited source and target languages and on assumed relationships of equivalence/faithfulness and meaning transfer between the two. I have outlined some aspects of the social and cultural histories, namely the normalisation and standardisation of languages, upon which these definitions are based. I have also detailed the social and cultural history of an alternative context, namely that of creolisation, which generally comprises heterogeneous and inter-stitched language varieties.

The purpose of this chapter is to contrast the conventional conception of language used in translation theory with that of creole continua languages to determine whether it is possible, in situations involving the latter, to postulate a translational relationship based on the notions of equivalence, faithfulness and meaning. Briefly, then, this chapter will attempt to show whether conventional conceptions of translation are applicable to non-standard, continua or polylectal varieties such as creoles.

The chapter first explores the challenges that highly variable creoles pose to conventional conceptions of language as well as the (socio)linguistic tools which have traditionally been used to bring these languages fully into the general field of linguistics. Owing to the centrality to this discussion of the question of what constitutes 'a language', I return to the 'language/dialect debate' but bring creolist and integrationist concerns to bear upon it.

In order to situate non-standard texts in the broader framework of questions linked to linguistic variability and translation, there will be an examination of the problems that theorists identify as arising more generally from the translation of texts written in non-standard varieties. It is my intention to argue that translation theory generally places such texts into interlingual (and sometimes interlectal) relationships that serve to maintain the dominance of standard varieties. This comes from the perception that texts in varieties such as Québécois are written in variants of standard languages (for example, French). Examination of creole continua brings to the fore similar concerns, since many creoles are thought of as variants of their lexifier languages.

Consideration of creole continua brings a new kind of non-standard language context to theoretical discussions on translation thereby increasing the number and types of language contexts about which translation-related questions may be raised. It is for this reason that the focus here is not only on features of creole continua languages that typify what is treated in Labovian terms as variation of standard languages but also on precisely those features which make it impossible for creole continua to be completely subsumed under (standard) language systems. Patrick (1999) and Escure's (1997) conclusions about the nature of creoles are used as the basis for inserting the question of creolisation into the theorisation of translation.

5.2 Creole , Language, System

5.2.1 Categorically Speaking

The fact that creoles are mixed varieties presents major classification problems for linguistics. *The Ethnologue's* (14th edition) treatment of creoles reveals one such problem. The editors identify 81 languages, from the 'Afrikaans-based' Fly Taal to the 'Kongo-based' Kituba, as belonging to the category 'creoles', despite the fact that these languages share no obvious genetic relationship. This kind of classification represents a departure from the traditional 'mother language/daughter language' principle of genetic relatedness according to which languages are grouped. This system of linguistic classification links languages by regress to putative single ancestors, placing emphasis on the transmission of syntactic, phonological and lexical features from older to newer languages, and on the existence of structural similarities between contemporary language varieties. It is this principle of classification that allows languages such as English and Spanish to be placed in the Germanic and Italic branches respectively of the Indo-European family of languages. In opposition to these languages, however, creoles often display features that mark them as deriving from *multiple* linguistic sources and are, therefore, not relatable to single ancestors.

Attempts to classify creoles based on genetic relatedness have often sidestepped the question of their ancestry. Even if defined in terms of their core basilectal elements, creoles are generally linked to the languages from which they have historically drawn their lexicons. This generally leads to classification that privileges the relationships that creoles share with their lexifier languages, with the result that languages which have a lot in common grammatically with parts of a creole spectrum often become irrelevant in the definition of creoles (cf. Alleyne 1994: 10). Thus, creoles prove how inadequate and inconsistent linguistic classification can be, since it needs to provide one system of classification for 'normal' languages and another for creoles. In this regard, De Camp's comment about the treatment of creoles as

being '*x-language*-based' (for instance, English-based) has some relevance. De Camp argues that the system of classification which refers to a creole as being based on some other language does not denote the same kind of link between a creole and its lexifier language as that between two other languages traditionally classified as belonging to the same family. Few linguists, he asserts, would argue, for instance, that a 'French-based' creole is 'genetically' related to French in the same way that French is related to Italian (1968: 26).

The lack of consensus on how to classify creoles is symptomatic of the general lack of agreement on the conditions for determining genetic relationships between languages (Alleyne 1971: 176). In the absence of agreement on such conditions, Alleyne recommends that linguistics define creoles in terms of the cultural contacts that have generated them. Although he assumes that languages have "parent/daughter" genetic relationships (1971: 177), he stresses that the variability emblematic of creoles is the result of language change, which he sees as merely one aspect of cultural change arising from contact (1971: 175).

Regarding creole cultural and linguistic forms in the Americas, he writes:

Everywhere in the New World we find that specific cultures have emerged which in some ways pose the same problems of genetic identification that the linguistic forms pose. Some forms may be considered to be pure European in their derivation, and other pure African, but the majority are reinterpretations. It is not always clear what determines the reinterpretation. (1971: 178)

Alleyne's use of essentialist language ("pure forms") does not diminish the value of his insight, which is that the search for genetic relationships (in the conventional sense) in the context of creole languages might not only be fruitless but also irrelevant. In the final analysis, his position sees creoles as instances of socio-cultural mixtures, syncretisms which must be treated in their own right as heterogeneous entities derived from and related to multiple entities at the same time.

5.2.2 Systematically Speaking

The systematicity of creole continua has been at the heart of discussions on how to classify creoles. A number of important contributions have been made to the debate on this question over the last few decades, among them the exploratory paper by Labov (in Hymes 1971) on continuum systematicity at the 1968 conference of pidgins and creoles at the University of the West Indies (Mona) and Bailey's (1966) pioneering attempts to apply transformational/generative principles to the language situation of Jamaica as well as her presentation on dialect boundaries in polylectal creoles at the Mona conference. As groundbreaking as the contributions of these researchers have been, they represent two poles of a problematic conception of continua languages.

A linguistic system, as defined by Labov, following Saussure, is "a set of elements which are so tightly organized that one cannot change the position of one without changing the position of the others" (1971: 447). Another way of viewing the linguistic system, he claims, citing Homans (Homans 1951: 251), is in terms of a 'system in equilibrium'. Such a system in equilibrium is characterised by "resistance to change", meaning that within a totality, the pressure exerted upon any member produces little movement because that member is anchored in a set of relations with other members. Labov recognised that such a view of a linguistic 'system' needed to be revised, since, in light of the variable nature of many creoles (and pidgins), it was no longer possible to assert that "any area of linguistic structure [was] immune to hybridization and outside influences" (Labov 1971: 447). The revision he proposed remained, however, anchored in the traditional view of system as being standard defined.

The notion of language as system comes from the linguistic tradition that divides language varieties into 'language' and 'dialect'. While languages are viewed as stable entities, dialects are seen as being volatile and susceptible to

change (Holm 2000: 2). In Saussurean terms, the study of a language as system rests upon the examination of the stable component, which is *langue* not *parole* or as a synchronic not a diachronic entity. *Parole*, with its inherent variability, can manifest as dialectal forms. And although *langue* itself has no intrinsic stability, it has historical links to the normalisation and standardisation of languages which systematised it. In this sense, the question of systematicity in contexts of creole continua must relate to one of two things: either to the imposition of a notion derived from a language context whose variability has been reduced through normalisation or to the discovery of the 'natural' system underlying these varieties.

Labov opts for the first possibility, placing the so-called 'regular' and 'rule governed' instability of non-standard varieties in a relationship of dependence on a stable norm. An alternative to Labov's view is found in Bailey's work. Eager to demonstrate that creoles are in fact separate from their lexifier languages, she resorts to a model that disregards the intrinsic heterogeneity of creoles and produces a homogenous grammar that describes the speech of no one. Her *Jamaican Creole Syntax*, in addition to setting out to address the question of how to improve the teaching of English in a creolophone context, seeks to "explode" the notion that [Jamaican] Creole is not a language. Underlying this attempt is the idea that the basilect/standard mixture typical of the Jamaican language context is an indicator of "extensive cross-interference" (1966: 1), hence, an aberration of a supposedly 'normal' bilingual situation.

Labov finds Bailey's approach lacking in explanatory power. He contends that it is not sufficient to state that opposing variants belong to different systems; it is necessary, he insists, "to show how [speakers move] from one system to another" by examining actual, not hypothetical, speech. Drawing on the variation in African American speech³¹, he proposes the idea of co-variation, that is, the kind of "regular variation which is rule-governed, but [which]

³¹ Called Non-standard Negro English in text

cannot be reduced to categorical form". Since the speech habits of many communities naturally involve co-variation, constituting "irreducible and regular variation which is rule-governed" (1971: 462), it seems to him more probable that the variation present in creole continua is attributable to co-variation within a single system rather than to the presence of co-existent systems. Bailey concedes that dialectal boundaries in continua creoles are difficult to define (1966: 1; 1971; 341) but stresses that for her purposes, which are pedagogical, a distinction between dialects is necessary. Her response to the criticisms levelled against her is that the idea of a creole continuum "may be a very useful concept for the sociolinguist" but not for a language teacher. If she has preferred to operate with two distinctly divergent poles, she claims, "it is because contrastive analysis remains the single most valuable tool with which linguistics has provided the pedagogue" (1971: 341)³².

More recent critics such as Escure and Patrick find Bailey's insistence on an idealised creole distinct from the lexifier language to be a misrepresentation of the language situation of Jamaica. Echoing the sentiments of De Camp, they point to the fact that the speech habits of creole speakers in places such as Jamaica typically cross whatever idealised variety boundaries are established. While Patrick recognises in the formulation of idealised creole grammars

³² Bailey's concerns find resonance with Alleyne (1994) and Devonish (1986), both of whom argue strongly for the standardisation of Anglo-Caribbean creoles for use in areas normally restricted to standard English. Unlike Bailey, however, they do not sidestep the question of variability, acknowledging the very real problem of 'dialect' selection it poses. Alleyne writes, for instance:

... in the case of the continuum, there are some important ideological factors present in the formulation of Jamaican as an autonomous language, factors that become very important when code-related problems of the standardization of Jamaican are considered. The actual description of the language situation then impinges on the question of whether standardization should serve the function of emphasizing the autonomy of the creole or whether it should reflect socioeconomic realities that place urbanized forms of the creole language in a dominant position (1994: 12).

Devonish points out that a democratic approach has to be taken to the question of the continuum in order to "avoid imposing a single variety of Creole on everyone in society. Otherwise, the language planner would be copying the very same intolerant attitudes they are in the process of rejecting" (1986: 44).

attempts to rescue from probable extinction the African linguistic heritage of the Caribbean, he contends that since these are not based on actual speech habits, they contribute little to the understanding of creoles (1999: 5). His view is shared by Escure, who accuses Bailey of contributing to limiting the development of the field of creole studies by forcing an artificial label onto what is in fact "a continuum that cannot be clearly separated into distinctive codes" (1997: 61).

The impossibility of demarcating lectal boundaries in situations of continua makes it difficult to treat creolised varieties as autonomous or atomised entities. Thus, while it is possible to assume that standardised languages are closed systems or entities used in Chomsky's homogeneous speech community by his ideal speakers/listeners (1965: 3), it is not possible to see creole continua as other than unstable and open-ended entities. In fact, such a situation makes treating continua as 'systems' or as 'languages' in the conventional sense extremely problematic. De Camp attempts to resolve the problem by placing the entire creole speech continuum, including "the extreme acculturated varieties" under the category 'creole'. However, lumping all the lects of a continuum together and calling them 'creole' leads to what are perhaps meaningless conclusions about language relatedness. For instance, De Camp states that the acrolectal component of the Jamaican continuum, a "speech variety which is no more deviant from standard British than is standard American or standard Australian" must, according to his classification, "still be related genetically to Papiamentu and to Cape Verde Portuguese, not to English" (1968: 39). This treatment of the Jamaican continuum conflates the questions of linguistic systematicity and linguistic relatedness, which are two separate, if related, problems. The question of whether continua operate as variable entities in contrast to standard languages, which are treated as unified, discrete systems, should not be confused with the question of whether continua languages or standard language are related to one another or to other 'systems'. Classifying "acculturated varieties" of the Jamaican continuum with

Papiamentu and Cape Verde Portuguese does little to clarify what the creole continuum is as a linguistic entity or to explain the nature of its relationship to English or to other creoles. De Camp's treatment ends up masking the real difficulties behind language classification and the challenges that creole continua pose to the study of languages as 'homogeneous' systems. The difficulties implicit in treating a continuum as a system do not make that continuum, or any part of it, genetically dissociable from the standard language from which it draws its lexicon. Since continua languages possess no prescribed grammars, they comfortably integrate a diversity of language elements and permit a degree of internal heterogeneity that undermines conventional conceptions of languages as systems. By contrast, standard languages, which permit heterogeneity mainly at the lexical level, have been made into fairly inflexible entities³³.

The problem of variation has other dimensions that are ignored or suppressed by the variational and implicational approaches. Working from their identitarian perspective of language, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller observe that these approaches are insufficient for dealing with the challenges implicit in defining heterogeneous linguistic entities. According to Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, the Labovian position that heterogeneity is explainable in terms of variable rules within individual language systems is untenable since it takes the 'language' on which this system is based as a given (1985: 1), meaning that Labov assumes that where variation occurs it does so within the same language (1985: 114). Harris has a similar critique of the tradition from which Labov's perspective emerges. According to him, beside taking a language as a given, the approach typified by Labov uses this language "as a basis for distinguishing types and degrees of variation" (1998a: 46). Such an approach to language variation, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller argue, cannot be applied to many of the language contexts of the Caribbean, where it is not possible to know, put a

³³ Note, however, Labov's admission that "working systems must encompass means of style shifting and internal variation" (1971: 456).

boundary round or even name a distinct, discrete language system (1985: 114). Le Page and Tabouret-Keller level a similar criticism at Bickerton³⁴ (1975) (and by extension of De Camp 1971), whose implicational model they claim

necessarily implies a linear sequence of varieties within 'a language', with the implication that all innovation starts from the same source and travels in the same direction; and that innovation in phonology is paralleled by a similar sequence of innovation in different parts of the grammar and lexicon (1985: 198).

Based on their work with St. Lucian, Belizean and London (Jamaican) creoles, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller argue that the linear sequencing of varieties assumed by the conventional continuum model does not occur in reality. Their observations lead them to the view that multiple social and cultural variables contribute to shaping the language of individuals in communities. It is for this reason that they stress the importance of the notion of group identity, which for them [Le Page in particular] is the basis upon which individuals form their language habits. The focussing (convergence) or divergence of varieties that result from these acts of identity are, for them, the basis of conceptions of 'languages' and linguistic variability.

An even more radical view of the study of languages as 'systems' is found in Harris (1980, 1981, 1990, 1992, 1998a), whose rejection of "segregationalist linguistics" (1990: 46), a synonym for conventional linguistics, is premised on the view that it "misrepresents the relationship between language and communication, and in so doing misrepresents language" (Harris 1998a: 9 - 10). The assumption behind segregationalism, according to Harris, is that linguistic and non-linguistic phenomena

constitute two academically segregated domains of inquiry, and that within the former a domain pertaining to languages is to be

³⁴ Bickerton argues that the 'languages' vs. 'dialects' divide may, in fact, be misleading, since language is "a dynamic process evolving through space and time". He rejects the structuralist notions of synchronicity and diachrony on which these concepts are based, arguing that these concepts freeze arbitrary moments and seek to "coalesce into an arbitrary whole, phenomena which in nature are ongoing and heterogeneous". According to this view, it is not the variability of continua languages that is aberrant but the attempt in linguistics to segment "what is really a seamless whole" (1973: 643).

segregated from the rest. The study of languages thus has its own autonomy within the study of language. (1998: 10)

This dismembering of language results in the study of abstract entities called 'languages' (instances of *langue*) through which language, the general, is assumed to manifest itself. A further distinction between various instances of *langue* results in the removal of the study of speech (*parole*) (1980: 4ff) from language.

In place of segregationist linguistics, Harris' proposes an integrationist linguistics, which altogether abandons the notion of 'a language' as conventionally used. He contends that there has been no demonstration of "whether the concept of 'a language', as defined by orthodox modern linguistics, corresponds to any determinate or determinable object of analysis at all, whether social or individual, whether institutional or psychological" (1990: 45). Harris argues that the only necessary concept of 'a language' is that held by the average language user (1980: 4).

This thesis follows Harris' critique of conventional language studies and agrees with him that "language itself is open-ended" (1998b: 18). It does not assume, however, that the lack of justification for notions such as 'a language' or 'languages' in the sense used in conventional language studies implies that there are no historically-defined entities, comprising texts and patterns of speech that have been treated as languages or dialects. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller provide what might be considered a more historically contextual conception of how 'languages' come into being. According to them, vernacular norms emerge from a process of initial contact between different communities and different varieties. The diffusion which occurs in the context of contact, eventually gives way, under pressure from a number of social entities, such as education, scriptures, etc., to focussing or convergence of those varieties:

Then subsequently – possibly under the influence of literacy or (today) of broadcasting or television, there is focussing towards more regional norms, and the subsequent *institutionalization* of

some *prestige* norms as standard languages which may form the basis of education systems and become the basis of prescriptivism within a society (1985: 187).

Thus, while the separation of language into 'languages' may be theoretically unjustifiable, it in no way means that the entities that linguistics treats as 'languages' do not exist. Besides, the existence of standardising institutions such as Academies, dictionaries and the media suggests that there are entities being standardised. Unlike Harris, then, this thesis does not question the existence of 'languages' but the basis on which they are defined as such and on which practices, such as translation, are determined.

5.2.3 Decreolisation

Decreolisation is one of the most used explanations for the mixture inherent in polylectal creoles. The decreolisation hypothesis is an expansion of Hall's pidgin lifecycle hypothesis. In contrast to pidgins, which, according to the theory, go extinct abruptly, creoles, when they die, do so slowly by becoming more like their lexifier languages. Thus, as stated in the previous chapter, decreolisation assumes a context in which the standard language from which the creole draws its lexicon is present and that that standard language, because it is normally the language of education, law, the media, etc., exerts pressure on speakers to modify their behaviour away from creolised forms towards more standardised ones (cf. Holm 2000: 50-51).

In the idea of decreolisation one finds that instead of a progression from pidginisation to pidgin extinction assumed in the pidgin/creole lifecycle or from pidginisation to creolisation, there is the additional option of moving from pidginisation and creolisation to the transformation or the rapprochement between creole and lexifier language.

Criticisms levelled against proponents of the notion of decreolisation come primarily from those who view it as being too simplistic a model of language

change. This criticism comes from the fact that the model assumes that there exists an entity called "creole", which is systemically distinct from the standard lexifier language. However, the extreme mixing characteristic of so-called decreolising varieties undermines this view of creoles and their lexifier languages, making it necessary for their existence to be explained. The typical explanation resorts to the notion of the 'post-creole', a series of transitional forms between one closed system, the "creole" and another closed system, the standard/lexifier language. 'Post-Creole' necessarily implies incursions from one 'system' into another. Because creolised forms dominate speech in creole contexts, it is assumed that the incursion usually comes from the standard. There is evidence, however, that the picture is more complex than this; that the language mixture evident in situations labelled decreolisation and the behaviour leading to it are not as determined as the 'post-creole' model assumes. For instance, the Caribbean language situation described by Alleyne is one in which

the Black cultural revolution is reversing the general trends of linguistic acculturation that have been taking place over the past centuries. In a word [...] standard English is no longer the terminus ad quem of the linguistic movement, neither in real terms nor as an ideal goal in the value system of Afro-American (1980: 221).

The question of whether decreolised varieties are the manifestation of language change only or primarily from a 'pure' creole towards the standard is related to the number of dimensions involved in the formation of creole continua. This subject is addressed later in this chapter.

5.2.4 Standardised vs. Continued Language

De Camp describes the Jamaican language situation as being one that displays "no sharp cleavage between creole and standard". Rather, there is, he asserts, "a continuous spectrum of speech varieties ranging from 'bush talk' ... to the educated standard" (1971: 350). Individual speakers are said to be competent in

the use of a range of varieties on a lectal continuum, which comprises varieties approaching or diverging from the lexifier/substratum varieties. The language situation that De Camp describes has become the identifying trait of what has become known as the 'creole continuum'. The existence of such a continuum, it has long been argued, is the product of decreolisation, though Alleyne has argued consistently against this view.

According to the proponents of the decreolisation view, a number of social and political conditions ensure the persistence of situations of continua. These are outlined by De Camp.

First, the dominant official language must be the same as the creole vocabulary base; if it is different, then the creole either persists as a separate language with little change (e.g. the English creoles of Surinam and the French creole of St. Lucia and Grenada) or becomes extinct, as Negerhollands is now doing. Second, the social system, though perhaps still sharply stratified, must provide for sufficient social mobility and sufficient corrective pressures from above in order for the standard language to exert real influence on creole speakers; otherwise the creole and the standard remain sharply separated as they do in the French areas (De Camp 1968: 38).

These conditions are based on inferences drawn from Caribbean sociolinguistic data at the time De Camp wrote. Similar inferences may be drawn today but some exceptions are to be noted. In the Caribbean, two types of creoles are generally treated as distinct from their lexifier languages. These are creoles which have been separated socially or geographically from their lexifier languages for a long time and creoles which exist in the presence of standard European languages which are not their lexifier languages. In both situations, the creoles eventually end up being normalised and/or standardised. In Haiti, for instance, Kréyol, which long lost contact with its lexifier language [French], was normalised and has been made the country's second official language. In Curaçao and Aruba, where Dutch has been the official language for some time, the Iberian-lexified [Spanish, Portuguese] creole, Papiamentu, has been

normalised. The language situations of Martinique and Guadeloupe, however, remain counter-examples of De Camp's analysis. In these *départements d'outremer* the creoles are in constant contact with French, their lexifier language, and although there are sufficient opportunities for Martiniquais and Guadeloupéens to move up the socio-economic ladder, they generally remain committed to keeping French and creole separate, a distinction resulting from the desire on their part to maintain cultural autonomy within a larger French polity. Another exceptional situation is to be found in St. Lucia, not noted by De Camp, perhaps, because of the point at which he wrote. Although the French-lexified creole exists in the presence of English, the island's official language, a creole continuum has developed comprising a French-lexified Kwéyol basilect and an English acrolect with a mixed Kwéyol/English mesolect.

De Camp (1968, 1971) is credited with bringing the issue of the continuum fully into the discourse on grammaticality, using the language situation of Jamaica as his template. Language in Jamaica, he claims, operates on two dimensions of variability: a geographical dimension, which manifests itself as regional dialect variation, evident primarily in lexical items, with many localisms totally unknown even in adjacent villages, and a socio-economic dimension, which manifests as "a continuous spectrum of speech varieties whose extremes are mutually unintelligible but which also includes all possible intermediate varieties" (1968: 37). Regional variation occasionally operates independently of socio-economic variation but, according to De Camp, the former is often conditioned by the latter, with some geographical patterns being attributable to acculturative diffusion such as that produced by the penetration, to varying degrees, of urban forms into the central parts of Jamaica, "leaving conservative areas in the east and west". In De Camp's view, the linguistic variability evident in this kind of diffusion is part of the same linear continuum, "for isolation from Kingston is merely one of the socio-economic co-variables of the continuum" (1971: 357). For De Camp, then, there is little need to

consider regional variation independently of socio-economic variation, since examination of socio-economic variation captures data relevant to regional variation.

5.2.4.1 Discreteness

One of the main concerns which arises when considering the variable nature of creole continua is that of discreteness. Discreteness relates to whether there is linguistically a clear line of demarcation between entities called languages. Rickford (1987), borrowing Labov's (1973) scale to illustrate the principle of discreteness, notes that grammatical categories have traditionally been used to mark discreteness. In table II, categories X and Y represent either different grammatical or language varieties, while items a-h represent individual lexical items or speech samples.

Table 3: *Properties Defining Discrete Languages*

Item	Property								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
a		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Category X
b		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
c		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
d		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
e		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Category Y
f		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
g		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
h		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

The presence of certain properties 1-7 in certain items a-d and the absence of those same properties from certain other items e-h, demarcates one set of items from the other and by extension qualifies the system counting items a-d as a

separate system from that counting items e-h. This demarcation of grammatical properties may be used in setting languages apart (Rickford 1987: 17, citing Labov 1973: 343).

Table 4: *Properties Defining Non-discrete Languages*

Item	Property						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
B	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
C	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
D	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
E	+	+	+	-	-	-	-
F	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
G	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
H	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The question of discreteness arises particularly in creole contexts such as Belize, Guyana and Jamaica, where clearly identifiable (though not clearly defined) basilectal and acrolectal forms constantly interact. Earlier linguistic studies of Guyana and Jamaica ignored the interaction between varieties, describing the situations in these countries in Fergusonian terms as being diglossic (cf. Ferguson 1959). In a diglossia it is assumed that two disparate language varieties are used in separate domains, one in 'low' in-group/informal settings and the other in 'high' formal settings. Recognition by persons such as De Camp that the language situations of these territories did not constitute diglossia but situations of continua (Rickford 1987: 18) laid the groundwork for research into continua as instances of variation. Table III, in which the discrete boundary shown in Table II between a-d and e-h is absent, graphically illustrates how one polar variety progressively gives way to the other (through intermediate varieties), with features from each pole becoming more or less

present or absent throughout the spectrum. Unlike the scenario presented in Table II, there is no possibility of distinguishing 'languages' based on the clustering of several properties assumed to belong to one or other system. Consequently, any given number of items a-h may display +/- properties 1-7.

The eight versions of the following Jamaican sentence borrowed from Alleyne (1980: 192) demonstrate how the continuum might operate.

- 1) *ĩ a nyam ĩ dina* 'he/she/it is eating his/her/its dinner'
- 2) *ši a nyam ši dina* 'she is eating her dinner'
- 3) *im a nyam him dina* 'he is eating his dinner'
- 4) *shi a nyam ar dina* 'she is eating her dinner'
- 5) *im a iit im dina* 'he is eating his dinner'
- 6) *(h)im iitin (h)im dina* 'he is eating his dinner'
- 7) *(h)im iz iitin (h)im dinner* 'he is eating his dinner'
- 8) *hi iz iitin hiz dinner* 'he is eating his dinner'

In his evaluation of the sentences, Alleyne points out that in (i) there is a no gender marker and the nasalisation of personal pronouns; in (ii) and (iii) there is gender distinction; in (iv) there is case distinction between *shi* and *ar* and in (v) there is the distinction between short and long vowels in accented syllables; in (vi) the creole pre-verbal habitual marker *a* is replaced by the suffix *-in*, and in (vii) the complement *iz* is added, and a phonological change: the presence of the English /ə/. He does not comment on (viii), but it is worth noting that this sentence is more or less English. Creole continua thus comprise a progression of lects between a superstrate language and the basilect.

Of course, the two tables and the different versions of the sentence borrowed from Alleyne are purely illustrative of the type of mixture that could take place on a creole continuum. It should be noted that other types of mixings are possible with different results. The illustrations, therefore, do not represent discrete dialects, each corresponding to a distinct group of speakers. It is

probable that the average Jamaican speaker would mix several of these hypothetical varieties in his or her daily speech, using a language comprising lexical, morphological, phonological and syntactic elements from different places on the continuum.

5.2.4.2 Implicational Relations

In addition to graphically illustrating how a continuum would manifest itself, Table III also represents a classic implicational scale. This scale is used to provide information about the variability of, and lectal relationships in, polylectal languages. This model, similar to that used by De Camp (1971) for Jamaican creole and Bickerton (1973, 1975) for Guyanese creole, presents the implicational relationships between different lects on the creole to standard continuum. De Camp provides a practical example of the implicational relationship between lectal items on a continuum by examining the presence/absence of six particular features in the language of seven Jamaican informants. The features, listed from A to F below, are lexical (A, B and E), phonological (C and D) and syntactic (F). A plus sign (+) is used to indicate that the feature is standard and a minus sign (-) to indicate that it is 'creole' (basilectal).

+ A child	- A pikni
+ B eat	- B nyam
+ C /θ ~ t/	- C /t/
+ D /ð ~ d/	- D /d/
+ E granny	- E nana
+ F didn't	- F no ben ³⁵

Analysis of the speech of De Camp's seven speakers revealed the following patterns:

³⁵ The marker 'ben' has a number of variants, among them *ẽ(n)*, *mẽ(n)*, *mĩ(n)*, *ĩ(n)*, *wẽ(n)*, *we-in*. (cf. Adams 1991: 31; Cassidy 1961: 60).

1	+A	+B	+C	-D	+E	+F
2	-A	+B	-C	-D	+E	+F
3	-A	+B	-C	-D	-E	-F
4	-A	-B	-C	-D	-E	-F
5	+A	+B	+C	+D	+E	+F
6	+A	+B	-C	-D	+E	+F
7	-A	+B	-C	-D	+E	-F

Speakers 4 and 5 stand out, since the former uses all the basilectal features in De Camp's sample, and the latter uses all the standard features. The other five speakers, however, use more or less standard/basilectal features.

The key concern to bear in mind about the variables on this scale, De Camp claims, is that the loss of basilectal features in favour of standard features is not *ad hoc* but governed by particular implicational relations between different lectal items. Thus, according to his view, certain base lectal features in a person's speech predicts the presence or absence of other features. Thus, the person who uses the deep basilectal forms *nana* or *pikni* is also likely to use /t/ instead of /θ/ or /d/ instead of /ð/. From this perspective it is possible to draw up implicational rules about the relationship between different lectal varieties, which De Camp insists constitute "an ordered series such that the difference between any variety and its neighbor is minimal". This, he concludes, results in a language spectrum arrangeable in the same manner as the colour-spectrum (1971: 357). To make the implicational relations between the speech varieties of De Camp's informants clearer it is necessary to rearrange the scale, following Sebba (1997: 215):

5	+B	+E	+F	+A	+C	+D
1	+B	+E	+F	+A	+C	-D
6	+B	+E	+F	+A	-C	-D
2	+B	+E	+F	-A	-C	-D
7	+B	+E	-F	-A	-C	-D

3	+B	-E	-F	-A	-C	-D
4	-B	-E	-F	-A	-C	-D

The scale is thus, analysable as follows: a speaker whose speech includes feature +E, has necessarily added feature +B. Likewise a speaker whose speech includes feature +F has already added features +E and +B to his or her speech, and so on.

5.2.4.3 Dimensionality

The question of discreteness in situations of continua is generally accompanied by that of dimensionality. Consistent with the model which sees the continuum as the product of the movement away from creolised varieties towards standardised varieties, the basilect is seen as yielding, under social pressure, to increasingly standardised varieties. Varieties on the continuum are, thus, seen as being "linearly orderable" in terms of the single dimension of 'creole' to 'standard' (cf. Rickford 1987: 23). This view implies that movement on the continuum is necessarily measurable in terms of the number of basilectal features lost and the number of acrolectal features gained.

The idea that 'creole' to 'standard' is the primary factor involved in shaping creole continua is rejected by a number of theorists, foremost among them Patrick, whose research into the language of a Kingston community indicates that changes along the continuum involve "multiple social dimensions" which are "unlikely to co-vary along a single 'creole-to-standard' plane throughout the whole course of change" (1999: 294). Rickford (1987: 28) suggests the possibility of including a number of other dimensions in the treatment of creole continua, such as that of rural/urban. Bickerton (1975: 17), treating the Guyanese continuum, claims that elements such as education and ethnicity are also critically important in describing the continuum. Finally, Alleyne's (1980: 221) view that English is not necessarily the end point of what has been called decreolisation is also instructive.

The urban/rural divide reflects that of educated/uneducated and by extension that of standard/basilectal. These considerations could, therefore, be discounted as factors determining the 'standardness' or 'creoleness' of particular speech varieties. As De Camp's comments on variability in Jamaica suggest, the movement from basilect to standard is governed by socio-economic variables. Creolisation has been marked historically by the interplay between the literary and the oral, which are related to the urban and the rural and ultimately to opportunities for social progress. These factors have been critical determinants of which elements—standard or non-standard—became or remained parts of the cultural and linguistic repertoire of speakers. During slavery, Caribbean speech forms corresponded (more or less) to the different social and ethnic layers of plantation society. After Emancipation, language remained an important marker of ethnic and/or class origin. In most territories, this was made possible only through the formal education system, which did not recognise the language varieties fashioned by Afro-Caribbeans. Given the low social status accorded creolised varieties, Afro-Caribbeans had no avenues of gaining social legitimacy except through learning European prestige varieties. The learning of the standard language gave ex-slaves the opportunity to participate in the formal institutions of society which had previously been reserved for Europeans and their descendants, allowing them to move from their exclusively oral world to that of letters. It is argued that these instances, where literacy and education produced changes in the linguistic repertoire of ex-slaves, sped up the formation of the creole continua by reinforcing perceptions that creolised forms were backward and limiting. The abandoning of creolised forms gave rise to situations whereby persons learning European standards refused to speak more creolised forms, which in turn led to succeeding generations losing touch with the 'radical creole', making the rural areas the repository of these varieties. Seen from this perspective, De Camp's conflation of geographic and social variables seems justifiable.

It must be noted, however, that education and social mobility have never led to the complete transformation of Caribbean societies or to total disconnection from rural realities. The acquisition of standard varieties and the loss of creolised varieties have, therefore, always been partial. Furthermore, as long as the rural base of basilectal varieties remained vibrant, especially in contexts where the domains, practices and functions associated with the basilect were kept separate from those associated with the standard, there would be instances in which basilectal forms would be learnt and transmitted. Many Caribbeans, after being educated, have continued enriching their language from both the standard and the basilect. In urban varieties of Jamaican creole, for instance, reduplication of creolised forms remains a very productive feature. The old term *cha-cha bwaai* (fashionable guy), for example, may be compared to the very recent expression *chi-chi man*³⁶ (homosexual).

Another concern raised about the postulated basilect → standard nature of the continuum is that it focuses too narrowly on predetermined conceptions of linguistic behaviour. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller view variation in Caribbean creole continua as involving, as in all language situations, what they call projection, focussing and diffusion of verbal performances (1985: 181). Individuals are seen as projecting their inner views of the universe and inviting others to share in them. By verbalising in particular ways, they seek to reinforce their models of the world and hope for verbal acts of solidarity from others. Reception of their verbal projections signals the affirmation of a shared identity. If verbal projections are constantly reinforced in particular communication contexts, they may "for a time become more regular, more focussed". If, however, individuals have to modify their behaviour to accommodate others, their language may become more variable and more diffuse (1985: 181). Thus, the authors argue,

we may speak of focussed and of diffuse, or non-focussed, linguistic systems, both in individuals and in groups, with each

³⁶ May also be an extension of semantic range, since *chi-chi* exists in the language as the term for 'termites', or a borrowing from some other language/culture.

individual's knowledge of the systems of his groups the lynch-pin upon which the shared concept of communal languages or varieties turn (1985: 181-182).

This view seems to be the most productive explanation of situations of continua.

Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's perspective raises the question of why people are directed towards or away from particular language habits. Beyond questions such as education and social milieu, they stress the issue of identification with a group as being a strong driving force behind linguistic behaviour. The emergence of a Belizean national identity to replace varying local ethnic identities, for instance, and the idea that "Belizeans speak Creole" (1985: 183) have increasingly become some of the factors shaping the language habits of persons wishing to be identified as Belizeans. Similarly, Alleyne, in reference to Jamaica, makes the point that socialist/nationalist and Rastafarian movements have led to greater identification of basilectal forms with Jamaicanness. The use of basilectal varieties, he claims, has become one of the main means by which middle- and upper-class Jamaicans as well as members of ethnic groups "whose loyalty and commitment to Jamaica may be suspect (whites, mulattoes, Chinese, Middle Easterners)" attempt to demonstrate their loyalty to the island as it develops a new and aggressive form of national culture (1985: 170).

Still in Jamaica, further instances of basilectal elements being used to define national identity may be seen in the overwhelming presence of creolised forms in the island's popular music, Dancehall³⁷ (Raga). Emerging at the turn of the 1980s among Kingston's poor, Dancehall rode on the success of its predecessor, 'Roots' Reggae. Deejays (Dancehall artistes) took the protest against the Babylon 'shitsem' one step further with increased usage of the language of the slums, giving new life to basilectal forms that lay dormant among the pockets of rural migrants who had made Kingston their home. With the success of

³⁷ Dancehall is sometimes classified as a sub-genre of Reggae.

Dancehall locally and internationally, hitherto stigmatised forms began to be claimed and valorised. In a twelve line stanza of the 1997 Dancehall hit "Dancehall Queen" (from the movie of the same name), for instance, seven 'deep' and stigmatised basilectal forms, used ten times, are to be found³⁸.

The practice of recuperating deep creole forms, though seemingly linguistically conservative, goes hand in hand with an inventiveness that makes Dancehall the primary means by which innovations enter language in Jamaica. Terms such as *mampi* (a fat woman) and *kukumkum/kru-krumkum* (a slim person), which follow basilectal phonological patterns have come into use in Jamaica relatively recently because of Dancehall. These terms have arisen despite the existence of English lexified expressions (*fat uman* and *maaga smadi* [or the older version, following basilectal or rural phonology *maaga sumadi*, the result of epenthesis]) that have been absorbed by the language and assigned basilectal phonology. Deejays have, therefore, been deeply involved in the 'language making' process by introducing new vocabulary and structures into the language and consolidating old vocabulary and structures. Undoubtedly their input has resulted in a changed linguistic reality in Jamaica, so that Alleyne's remark almost a quarter century ago that "standard English is no longer clearly and definitely the terminus ad quem of the linguistic movement [of the Creole]" (Alleyne 1980: 221) is even truer today than ever.

The presence of stigmatised basilectal forms in Dancehall may be relatable to the manner in which Rastafarians (the driving force behind Reggae) have used language in Jamaica. Pollard insists that although Rastafarians use the continuum in much the same way as the average Jamaican Creole speaker (2000 [1994]: 5), the language of Rastafarians, what she calls 'Dread Talk', is an example of "lexical expansion within a Creole System" (2000 [1994]: 4).

³⁸ These are: 'gal' [gyal] from 'girl' (gloss, woman), used three times; 'halla' [ala] from holler (gloss, cry out/shout), used two times; the following forms were used once: 'fus' [fos] from 'first', 'tun' [ton] from 'turn' (gloss, make), 'tan' from 'stand' (gloss, rise up), 'tinking' [tinkin] from stinking (gloss smelly) 'mumma' (gloss mother). See Appendix for song.

Gilman, reflecting on Pollard's previous work (Pollard: 1983) and that of others on Rastafarian discourse, observes that the continued distinctiveness of Rastafarian speech "relies not only on the preservation of older creolisms but also on the continued innovation in directions distinct from the metropolitan varieties" (1993: 391). This continuous (re-)creolisation process he attributes to the resistance of Afro-descended people in the face of "continued hostility and persecution by Euro-Americans who have made decreolizing aspirations unrealistic in most situations" (1993: 391-392). The context referred to by Gilman is similar to that described by Alleyne when he writes that Rastafarian language has come to serve as "perhaps the most important means whereby youths of [Jamaica] demonstrate[d] their 'roots', that is their 'blackness'" (1980: 221). Pollard confirms this point years later when she states: "the youth who spoke Patwa (J[amaican] C[reole]) for peer group acceptance with or without their parents' assent, today effortlessly speak the same language but with D[read] T[alk] phrases and lexical items" ([1994] 2000: 15).

A creole continuum, therefore, entails more than the movement of language forms from basilect through mesolect to acrolect. It is a combination of creolised and standardised elements relating to one another based on a complex set of social and cultural variables.

5.3 Continuising Text

By drawing on the language situation of Jamaica, I will attempt to show the practical implications the study of linguistic systematicity and variability have for translation.

Beginning with a Jamaican newspaper article, I will identify how varying lectal items on the continuum may co-occur in a text. A short analysis will be made of the types of elements used in order to relate them to the standard/creole divide.

Dem seh dankey noh business ena cow fight far him don't ave horn.

Soh mi noh business ena a hintellectual fight since di ongly time dem dat mi go ah igh school is fi goh cova tings fi newspaper. But den again dem seh fools rush in whey angel fraid fe trad, an soh mi really ave a licence fi rush in to.

Soh jack mandora mi noh really choose none but di agument between di two siid meck mi rememba a story ah hear when mi did ah goh a Faam School. Meck sure yuh undastan mi, far mi noh seh mi did ah goh a famitory school, mi seh Faam school. Eny way accadin to di story mi did a cum fram maakit wan day an big, big agument staat between di ooman dem bout a wah a di baddis pain.

Wan ooman seh is headache, nedda wan seh is baby bawning pain, an de odda wan seh is teethache. Well, dem chat, chat, chat but dem cuddn't cum to eny understanding. Soh dem tun to di man weh nevah bisniss wid di agument soh far an ask im fi umpiah it. Di man schups him mout an den him tell dem: Di ole ah unno ah taak piss. Eny ah unno eva mash unno balls? Lawd ah massy story dun, far dat deh is di ongly pain I kno whey can stap yu breat.³⁹

[English Translation⁴⁰]:

It is said that the donkey should stay out of cow fights, since he has no horns.

I should, therefore, not get involved in a fight between intellectuals, since the only occasions on which I have been to high schools were to cover stories for the newspaper. But then again, they say fools rush in where angels fear to tread, so that gives me licence to rush in.

Well, let it be understood that I hold no brief for either side; but the argument between the two reminds me of a story I once heard while attending Form school.

Get it clear: I did not say 'while attending the Re-*Form*-atory, I said 'while attending *Form* school'. Anyway, as the story goes, I was returning from the market one day and witnessed the beginnings of a very heated discussion between some market women about what the most intense pain was.

³⁹ Taken from "Look to di pill, PJ". The Daily Gleaner, Tuesday, March 20, 2001.

⁴⁰ My translation.

One woman said it was a headache, another said it was childbirth, and a third said it was a toothache. Well, they continued talking but could come to no agreement. They turned to a man, who, up to that point, had stayed clear of the argument, and asked him to play umpire for them. The man hissed his teeth and said to them: "You're all talking garbage. Has any one of you ever mashed your balls? My God, that is the ultimate in pain! It is the only pain I know that can make you stop breathing!"

This text comprises many basilectal elements. However, Reynolds also makes use of mesolectal and acrolectal forms. The word 'don't' in the expression 'him *don't* ave horn', depending on pronunciation, is either mesolectal or acrolectal usage. Basilectal usage would be '[h]im naav no [h]aan'⁴¹. The word 'fools' in the phrase 'dem seh *fools* rush in', with its plural morpheme /s/, respects acrolectal and mesolectal rules of pluralisation. Plural is indicated in the basilect only in very precise situations "when there is a clear need to indicate a plural" (Adams 1991: 10) and by postposition of the particle 'dem'. Otherwise a plural is inferred contextually as in the sentence "di agument between di two *siid*", 'siid' being logically a plural by virtue the modifier 'two' which precedes it. The reduplicated adjective '*big, big*' in '*big, big* agument staat', relates to the intensity of discussion and as such may be seen as containing an implied adverb of intensity. As mentioned earlier in relation to the use of certain forms from Dancehall, reduplication remains a very productive linguistic tool in Jamaica. As many have suggested, reduplications in Jamaica represent African forms masquerading in European vocabulary (cf. Adams 1991: 16) and might, thus, be seen as cases of relexification (calquing), African words having given way to English words without changing the underlying African morphology⁴².

⁴¹ I use the Cassidy-Le Page writing system for Jamaican creole here. The /h/ sound in Jamaican varieties (usually with the exception of the acrolect) is used for emphasis in words beginning with vowels or an aspirate. This means that all borrowed English words with or without initial /h/ and with vowels may be aspirated, depending on context.

⁴² While this is speculative, the presence of a number of West and Central African reduplicated forms which remain current in Jamaica lends credence to the claim. Some examples of these are *pese-pese* [Twi], and *poto-poto* [Twi, Kikongo, etc.] ("a word in wide distribution in Africa", according to Cassidy and Le Page (1967: 361)), which have the same meaning and which are used alongside their English lexified reduplicated homologues *muddy-muddy* and *wetty-wetty*. These terms are usually used contextually in reference to things such as mud, porridge, cakes, etc., which might be 'slushy', 'pasty', or 'soggy'. If reduplication in Jamaica is

A clear case of relexification can be seen in the phrase 'Wan ooman seh is headache, nedda wan seh is baby bawning pain, an de odda wan seh is teethache', where the acrolectal form 'is' replaces the basilectal form 'a', which, in context, may be glossed as 'it is'. The word does not function acrolectally but according to basilectal rules. This type of relexification is similar to that involving the use of 'did' and co-variants 'di' and 'id', which have almost completely replaced 'ben' and its co-variants as past or past before past markers in Kingston and many other parts of Jamaica⁴³.

While the above article has a variety of mixing of the three lectal bands discussed, the following story demonstrates another type of interaction between them.

Anansi Mek Grong (Taken from Patrick 1995)

Mek mi tel yu som?m boot Breda Anansi. Im iz a veri smaata man yu noo. A gwain tel wa hapm to him tu di en. Noo in faam a laa ina in konchri wans dat evribadi dat faas in anada wan biznis mos get hort. Bot akaadin tu im him sapuos tu get dem fi iit. So him gu op an a rak tap wans an se wel den im gwain mek grong bika im nuo piipl mos faas wid im. So wail ii woz deyr working az yu paas aan yu se "Ai Breda Anansi wa yu a du op de?"

Iyr: "mi naa du somting an se ef mi kyan get eniting oot a it fi mi waif an pikni dem."

An bai i taim yu riich roon di kaana Yeyr dem se, "Bot wat a fuulish man. Dat man kyan wok op an blak raktap laik dat?"

productive (Bailey 1966: 16), these terms might be examples of the practice at its most productive. Other terms used for them are *meke-meke*, *pyaka-pyaka*, *plaka-plaka*, and *ploko-ploko*. Cassidy and Le Page speculate that the last three terms might be variants of *poto-poto* (1967: 369).

Todd (1974) identifies three types of reduplication. These are 1) to reduce homophones ('bak-bak', to reverse, go backwards, from 'back') 2) to extend the meaning of a simple term ('nyami-nyami', a person who eats about, from 'nyam', 'to eat') and 3) to intensify a verb or an adjective ('ben-op-ben-op', 'crooked', from 'ben-op', bent; 'big-big', from 'big', etc).

⁴³ Sebba reports a similar situation in Guyana. He writes that for speakers emerging from the basilect "it is clear that this morpheme [did] has acrolect-like form, but it functions as part of the basilectal T[ense] M[ood] A[spect] system" (1997: 223).

Bai yu seso chru yu faas yu jrap doon ded. Breda Anansi kom dong an iit yu. Wel im kyari aan fi a wail siem wie antil Sista Gini En hiyr boot im an plan fi im. An wan die wen shi kom nou--Shiiz a veri drai ed wuman yu nuo--. An chru Anansi sii m kom wen im kom insted a shi faas wid im him fors faas wid ar. An im se, im se "Sista Gini En, we yu a go Sista Guinea-hen say?"

"Me nah go a met?" Sista Gini En se, "mi naa ga a met." Wel afta shi a ga a met shi gaan, bai shi riich roon di kaana hin figet di laa. Hin se ee "A we dat de drai ed sinting a go Im kyaan ga a met tu?"

Siem taim Breda Anansi jrap aaf a di rak an kom dong Sista Gini En jos kom bak kom pik im op. An dat was di hen av Breda Anansi him tuu smaata.

[Anancy Prepares a Plot of Land

Let me tell you a story about Breda Anancy. He is such a cunning man. I'll tell you all the way to the end what happened to him. Now, he once made a law in his country that anyone who interfered in other people's business or passed a bad remark about them should meet a bad end. But this was his plan to get victims he could eat. Anyway, he decided to climb atop a boulder, where he would make a field, knowing full well that by doing so he would attract the attention of passers-by who would notice him and make pass a remark. Anyway, while he was there working, people would pass by and say: "Hi Breda Anancy, what are you doing up there?"

He'd respond: "I am here working my field to see what I can take home for the wife and children."

By the time they rounded the corner, they would inevitably say: "What a stupid man. How can anyone have a field on top of a boulder?"

Of course, by saying this, they were passing a bad remark about him. So they would keel over and die, and Breda Anancy would come down from the boulder to pick up the body and eat it.

Well, this went on for quite some time until Sista Guinea Hen heard about what was happening and planned for Breda Anancy. So one day she came along—she was a very dry head⁴⁴ woman, you know—. So, there she was coming along with her dry head, and as she came along, it wasn't she who passed a remark about Anancy ... no, it was *he* who passed a remark about her. He said to

⁴⁴ 'Dry head' means 'bald' but is used generally to suggest the possession of magical powers.

her, he said to her: "Sista Guinea Hen, where are you heading off to now?"

She responded:

"I am off to the fair! Indeed, I am heading to the fair".

Well, there she was, on her way to the fair. Just before she rounded the corner, Anancy forgot the law he had passed and said, "Hehehe, Fancy the likes of that dry head so-and-so going to the fair!"

Immediately Anancy rolled from atop the boulder and fell to the ground. Sista Guinea Hen went back for the body. That was the end of Breda Anancy. Too cunning for his own good!]

Much of the narrative in this text is mesolectal, not in the sense of a mixture between acrolectal and basilectal varieties but in the sense of a variety *sui generis*. Among the elements that mark this variety are the complementizer 'is/iz', the past tense 'was/woz', the indefinite article 'a' and the conjunction ('that/dat'). This text is interesting because the narrator introduces, primarily in dialogue, but also in parts of the narrative, basilectal features as a stylistic device. This is made evident in the contrast between the forms 'gwain' and 'a du'. Anansi's compatriots greet him with: 'wa yu a du op de?'. Considering the use of the continuous form 'gwain' as opposed to 'a go' early on in the text, it would be consistent if the form 'doin', which is mesolectal, were used instead of 'a du', a basilectal form. Despite the use of this basilectal form, however, the sentence may not be termed a 'deep' basilectal realisation. To be so, it would need to include the introductory verb 'a' (cf. Bailey 1966: 88-90 for rules on how 'a' is used in interrogation), thus 'a wa yu a du op de?' as in Anansi's question to himself 'A we dat de drai ed sinting a go[?]' Anansi's response, though not a fully realised basilectal form, goes even deeper into the basilect than his compatriots' question. The sentence '**mi naa du somting** an se **ef** mi kyan get eniting oot a it **fi** mi waif an **pikni dem**' contains important basilectal markers, such as use of the negative emphatic '**mi naa**'⁴⁵ as an affirmative

⁴⁵ 'Naa' is an obligatory contraction of **no** + **a**. According to Bailey, 'no' (implied in this context) is used in such instances as a rhetorical device not to negate but to a) "assert beyond

(literally 'I am not' to mean '*actually* I am ...'), the rural/archaic form 'ef' for 'if'; other forms such as 'a' for 'of', 'fi' for 'for' and the plural form 'pikni dem' (as well as the lexical item 'pikni', cf. De Camp's scale *supra* p...). Four more important basilectal features are used in this text. The first is 'm/im' as a pronoun to refer to a female in 'An chru Anansi sii **m** kom. Wen **im** kom'. This is one marker of the 'deep' basilectal end of the continuum (cf. Alleyne's sentences *supra*, p 218). The second item to be noted is the use of 'a' to mean 'to' in 'a ga **a** met'. A third important form is the 'dat de' in 'A we **dat de** drai ed sinting a go'. The fourth important form is the serial verbal form 'kom bak kom' as in 'Gini En jos *kom bak kom* pik im op', where the second 'kom' is used, following the first, conjunctionally or to transform 'pik' into an infinitive (cf. Alleyne 1985: 164). A similar process is possible with the construction involving a form of 'go' [for instance *go/go bak/go we*] + **go** + verb', what Bailey calls 'co-ordination with verbs of motion' (1966: 133-134).

5.3.1 Source/Target Language, Source/Target Text

Although the relationship between non-standard language varieties and translation has been explored by generalists in the field of translation theory such as Catford (1965) and Pergnier (1993), it is more often studied by theorists dealing with literary and biblical translation (see for instance, Berman (1984, 1985), Brisset (1996) and Venuti (1994, 1998), who treat literary translation and Nida (1976), who looks at biblical translation). The examination of non-standard language usage within the framework of these sub-areas of translation studies is the result of a particular perspective on the relationship between non-standard varieties and literary and biblical texts. Literary texts are seen as reflecting, to borrow an expression from Chan, the "linguistically pluralized" (2002: 50) nature of vernacular usage or as exposing the "radical heterogeneity" of language (Venuti 1996: 92). For the Bible to be understood,

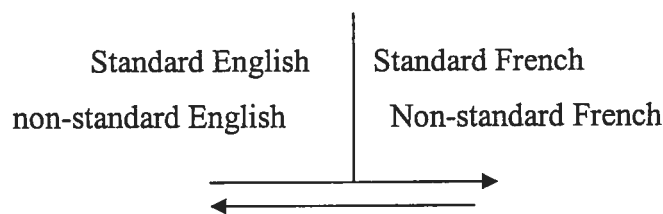
reasonable doubt the truth of the proposition to which it is added" and to b) "elicit surprise on the part of the addressee" (1966: 93). In speech the distinction between this affirmative meaning of the sentence and a negative meaning is marked by pitch.

Berman, citing Luther, notes that it must be translated "à l'écoute du parler populaire, du parler de tous les jours" (1984: 46). This suggests that successful transmission of the Christian message (for Protestants, post-Reformation, for Catholics primarily post-Vatican Council II) is contingent on use of the language of the people, the vernacular.

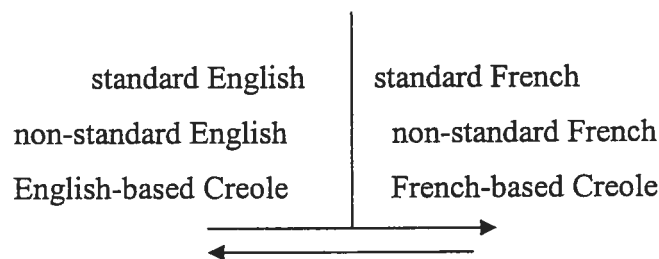
Focus on non-standard varieties in these sub-areas of translation studies is part of a larger attempt to counter the quest to impose a kind of linguistic homogeneity on texts. Use of non-standard varieties is seen as the move necessary to arrive at linguistic plurality in text. But non-standard language does not have to be brought into this struggle; it simply has to be recognised, since there is no possibility of text without the non-standard. As Lambert argues, attempts at homogenising text through standard usage fail precisely because the tendency towards standardisation is normally accompanied by its opposite, "la tendance à la dé-standardisation" (1989: 224). In the same vein Venuti notes that linguistic heterogeneity in text brings out what he calls, following Lecerle, the 'remainder', which exposes the "contradictory conditions of the standard dialect". In Venuti's view, this heterogeneity does not only affect the manner in which a text speaks but also its content. For although it may transmit the intentions of its author, who "may indeed have a psychological investment" in it, its heterogeneous forms, by nature, "depersonalize and destabilize meaning" (1996: 92).

Venuti insists that attempts to expose the remainder in texts cannot be equated to a conception of a minor language "as merely a dialect" (1996: 93). However, while this general perspective on textual heterogeneity draws attention to the fact that non-standard varieties transgress the rules that standardisation seeks to impose, there is little to suggest that non-standard varieties are seen as communication vehicles in their own right. Rather, they are seen as always acting as the junior partner in relationships with the standard. In this sense, their translatability remains linked to the translatability of the standard defined

language systems to which they are related. The question raised by Mounin of whether "il faut ou non traduire un argot par un argot, un patois par un patois" (Mounin 1963: 165) brings home the challenge implicit in not liberating non-standard varieties from their dependence on standard varieties. If the response to Mounin's question is yes, as it often is, the central concerns of translation such as the search for equivalence and faithfulness and the transfer of meaning pertain only obliquely to non-standard varieties. Patois for patois translation or argot for argot translation assumes that the patois and the argot already belong to some language system, a standard language-defined system. In line with this view, a source text written primarily in a non-standard variety, for example 'Pidgin/Creole English' is often seen as requiring translation into a non-standard variety linked to a standard language-defined target system, for example a 'pidginised/creolised French' variety (cf. Bandia 1994: 103-110).



Translation often attempts to reproduce degrees of non-standardness across traditional language frontiers. The diagram may thus be altered to look like this:



Implicit in this model is the idea that the translatability of non-standard varieties depends on their treatment as variants of standard systems⁴⁶. There is the additional idea that features such as levels of standardness/non-standardness are reproducible across linguistic frontiers and that the social function of varieties in a continuum is an important factor in the translation of a text.

The model is limited for two main reasons. First, it assumes that the most important difference in translation is that between the systems (languages) in which texts are supposedly written. It also assumes that the power relationship between language varieties should determine whether texts written in them are treated independently in translation. These assumptions minimise the importance of the texts as products of specific groups or communities, causing these communities and their languages to be seen as appendages of dominant groups and languages. This accords primacy to standard language, for it is its system which determines the role that non-standard varieties can play in translation. In this way the language habits of non-standard speakers are constantly referenced to those of standard speakers. In the long run it treats non-standard varieties as nothing more than manifestations of the dialectal variation inherent in standardised language systems. Yet, such referencing is never done for standardised varieties; no historical or power differentials are invoked when texts in these languages are involved in translation operations.

It is partly for this reason that in 'translating' the article and the story I have not attempted to dialectalise the English. Rather, I have attempted to produce texts that are largely recognisable for particular readerships (in this instances, those reading this thesis). In my conception of translation, there is no need to attempt to reproduce the relationship values between creolised and standardised elements, since those relationships are not essential to the re-telling of the story

⁴⁶ Alternatively, non-standard varieties may be seen as translatable into the standard languages to which they are related if the intelligibility gap between them seems to warrant their treatment as 'separate' languages.

or the article. However, a term such as 'Sista Guinea Hen' was integrated into the target text in order to enhance its dialogue with its source.

Besides depriving texts written in non-standard varieties of a claim to independent communicative capacity, an approach based on an attempt to dialectalise engenders stereotypical (re)presentations of both source and target systems and reduces non-standard varieties to poor reflections of dominant standardised varieties, regionalising and ghettoising them in both systems (cf. Venuti 1996: 93–94). Hence, it may be argued that the approach retains the linguistic barriers upon which traditional source and target texts have been based, doing little to unveil the mythical underpinnings of notions such as source *language* and target *language* in translation.

It is true that vernacular varieties share important relationships with standard varieties, among which are social relationships as parts of continua in the same geographic locale. In fact, it is in these relationships that the most significant challenges to conventional understandings of translation lie. However, the relationships between vernacular varieties and standard varieties in instances of contact are not essentially different from the relationships between and among "languages" in heteroglossic or multilingual situations. The use of one language as opposed to another because of specific socially-functional constraints in a place like Tanzania (local Bantu language, kiSwahili), for instance, may resemble the use of vernacular vs. standard in Scotland (Scots⁴⁷, standard English). In situations involving kiSwahili, a major Bantu language, and the local Bantu languages of Tanzania, the former is socially dominant. Like kiSwahili and the Bantu languages of Tanzania, English and Scots are genetically related, with English being the socially dominant language. If the

⁴⁷ Scots was, at one point, a standard language. As Görlach points out, it was "the only Germanic dialect of the British Isles outside English that developed into a historical standard language" (1991: 73). The standardisation of Scots began at the turn of the 16th century. The language eventually lost its standard status due to continued incursions from English and by the early 20th century was "reduced to virtually the same peripheral position as the English dialects" (1991. 74).

Scottish and Tanzanian sociolinguistic realities coincided perfectly, it would be fair to assume that the relationship between the standard language and its 'vernacular' in either context may be reproduced in translation with the other.

The Scottish and Tanzanian sociolinguistic realities are far from mirror images of each other, but they point to some of the problems with conventional approaches to the treatment of vernacular varieties in translation. Whereas the heteroglossia of Scotland comprises two focussed varieties (and intermediate varieties between them), that of Tanzania⁴⁸ typically comprises three focussed varieties, one of which, English, is distantly related to the other two. The linguistic context of Scotland, with its English-Scots sociolinguistic continuum is, therefore, not functionally or structurally equivalent to that of Tanzania, with its English-kiSwahili-other Bantu sociolinguistic continuum. It may be tempting to suggest that the non-equivalence between the systems is due to the fact that English is the only standard variety in the Scottish context, while in Tanzania both English and kiSwahili are standardised entities. One could also argue that the difference between the contexts lies in the fact that there is a greater degree of mutual intelligibility between English and Scots than between English and kiSwahili. This, however, would be to underestimate the role of standardisation in determining how and whether language varieties can act independently in translation operations. The fact that kiSwahili and English are standardised makes them **always** independently translatable, while Scots is optionally independently translatable. So while Scots might be treated as a part of a larger English target or source language system, kiSwahili is not. It is in this key respect of having two standardised varieties that the Tanzanian context differs from that of Scotland.

The case of the contexts cited above raises important questions about how non-standard varieties are treated sociolinguistically as well as in translation. Since

⁴⁸ This assumes a microcosmic sociolinguistic Tanzanian context and not one involving multiple vernacular languages.

the idea that one standard-vernacular socio-linguistic continuum is translatable by a target system with an assumedly similar socio-linguistic continuum derives its legitimacy from the assumption that each continuum is governed by a standardised variety, non-standard varieties remain marginal to the discourse on translation. The distinctions imposed by standardisation are, in fact, the most important elements determining how translation is conceived and its problems addressed. If, for instance, the 'distance' between the basilect and the mesolect in the Jamaican continuum were measurable and turned out to be similar to that between, say, standard Danish and standard Norwegian, the primary factor determining why mesolectal varieties are treated as forms of English while Norwegian is treated as an independent entity is not lack of intelligibility between varieties, but standardisation.

This leads us to the second factor used to determine difference between varieties and, hence, their translatability. Returning to the question of the non-standard language continuum, we find that the polar varieties, because of intelligibility gaps, are treated as distinct entities and hence as translatable. The intelligibility gap between dialectal extremes on a continuum makes it possible to treat them as separate languages, translatable one into the other, with the most non-standard pole even being seen as translatable into some other language. But this leads to other translation concerns. If the dialectal extremes of the continuum may be treated as separate, independently translatable varieties, what determines that the movement between any two varieties within the continuum, whatever their level of mutual intelligibility, should not be treated as translation? Obviously these considerations have implications for translation into or from 'languages' as systems, but specifically for two types of languages. These are 1) highly-differentiated languages comprising multiple mutually-unintelligible dialects and 2) languages that are mutually intelligible.

If one argues that the existence of an intelligibility gap between language varieties is what defines the practice of translation, then one has to assume that

that source language and target language are based on the idea that languages are mutually unintelligible. However, intelligibility between languages has very little to do with translation and translatability. The fact that all languages are not homogeneous entities and that the difference between languages can sometimes be as small as that between varieties within the same language means that the notions of source language and target language mean very little in translation studies. This suggests that conventional translation theory has implicitly conceived translation as the transfer of text between languages without interrogating what constitutes 'a language' or whether it is at all relevant to translation studies, and if so, how.

5.3.2 Faithful, Equivalent

The forces of globalisation bring situations of mixed/hybrid/creolised languages—heterogeneous and unstable by nature—to coexist with, and challenge even, normative language situations. In many post-colonial societies, for instance, Indigenous writers have been making their voices heard by mixing imposed European standard languages with elements of their local languages—many of which are not standardised, or only partially so—to make them more suitable for conveying Indigenous experiences. By so doing, their texts become "a combined version of other literary by-products resulting from an Indigenous speech pattern, thinking patterns and world view ... transliterated into the European language" (Ojo 1986: 295). By passing their stories through the matrix of their own cultures (1986: 294), these writers create texts whose content, as Samia Mehrez notes, is the product of more than one culture, language and experience of the world (1992 : 122). This linguistic situation is the direct opposite of the homogenising process of standardisation.

Translation of such a text into or out of a homogeneous or polylectal language raises a number of questions relating to the determination of the equivalence or faithfulness of that translation. Considering the non-parallelism between texts

between texts involving a polylectal language and a homogeneous language, what would be bases for naming the movement of a text between these two translation? Assuming the text is 'transferred' despite the non-parallelism, what would be the parameters of equivalence/faithfulness in such a context? Could the homogeneous system reproduce any of the values and attitudinal variables that influence the choice to use, in a text, certain aspects of the continuum over others? Which values or attitudinal variables would take primacy and why? Do those values need to be reproduced in order for the translation to be deemed 'equivalent' or 'faithful'?

Three main options have been proposed by Sternberg for treating texts marked by heterogeneity. The first of these he calls referential restriction, which consists of confining "the scope of the represented world to the limits of a single, linguistically uniform community whose speech-patterns correspond to those of the implied audience, sometimes to the point of excluding the interdialectal as well as the interlingual tensions" (1981: 223). Thus, where different varieties are used in a source text, that difference is not transferred to the target. Sternberg's second option is called vehicular matching, which seeks a heterogeneous target text match for the heterogeneous source text. The third alternative he refers to as homogenising convention, which ignores the diversity in the source text and standardises the target. A fourth option presented by Sternberg is that of vehicular promiscuity, which treats the object referred to in a translation text as being heterogeneous and attempts to represent this heterogeneity in the language of the text of the target (1981: 223-24). It is not clear from Sternberg's text what the real difference is between referential restriction and homogenising convention, though in his table of the options he presents the former as having a unilingual target and the latter as having a polylingual target.

Table 5: Options for Translating Polylectal Texts

	Referential restriction	Vehicular matching	Homogenising convention	Vehicular promiscuity
Object	unilingual	Polylingual	Polylingual	Variable, possibly unilingual
Medium	unilingual	Polylingual	Unilingual	Polylingual

A major weakness of Sternberg's model is that it does not address the question of the criteria that go into selecting target varieties. Is it, like conventional approaches, based on recourse to standard-defined systems? Is it an arbitrary selection of varieties? It must be added, however, that Sternberg is concerned with texts which have already been translated and is, therefore, not making suggestions about how translation is to be done. Nonetheless, the fact that reflections on translation represent opportunities for dealing with prospective translations, makes it useful for such reflections to present analyses of the approaches which they treat.

Criticism aside, Sternberg's model may be seen as according the divisions within language (between languages) a secondary role in determining a given translation result. In this way the model, in contrast to more absolutist or prescriptive approaches, makes these distinctions transparent and, perhaps, non-essential. In other words, the differences between the varieties used in a text and between the varieties used in that text and varieties used in other texts are incidental to the realisation of target text and are of even less importance than the difference between the text one form and its manifestation as another form. This does not mean that these differences can never be important and that they never have some weight in determining how a text gets transformed into another text. However, their weight is neither pre-determined or anticipated in the translation process. They are accorded relevance only as factors in the interplay between text, language and understanding. More will be said on these points later in the thesis. Suffice it to say at this point that despite the fact that

Sternberg is concerned primarily with polylingual⁴⁹ speech events in literary texts and claims that multilingual situations are radically different from those he treats, his model, with certain modifications (see table *infra*), seems of some use to the language situations under discussion in this thesis.

Table 6 : Modified Options for Translating Polylectal Texts

	Option1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Source	homogeneous	heterogeneous	heterogeneous	Homogeneous
Target	homogeneous	heterogeneous	homogeneous	Heterogeneous

Option 1 represents the conventional assumptions about language and translation, with the source text being in language A and the target being in language B, both of which are assumed to be homogeneous entities. This option is not our concern here. Standard homogeneous languages, because of the sharp borders distinguishing them from other languages, allow for the parallelism necessary for (relative) notions of equivalence and faithfulness, defined in terms of similarity of language function and usage. Polylectal continua, on the other hand, with their multiplicity of lectal varieties, each being accorded a different social value and being combinable with other varieties to inscribe additional values to a text, provide little possibility of symmetry with other languages. It is for this reason that I will place emphasis on the second, third and fourth options, which represent situations potentially involving translation into (options 2 and 4) and out of (options 3) polylectal varieties.

A new look at the eight versions of the Jamaican sentence used earlier should illustrate some of the concerns that polylectal languages may pose for conventional notions of equivalence and faithfulness:

⁴⁹ Sternberg distinguishes between 'polylingual' and 'unilingual' on the one hand and 'multilingual' and 'monolingual' on the other hand. The former he uses to refer to the "diversity or uniformity of the utterances (usually made by different speakers) within the world of a single text)", while the latter are used to "characterize the linguistic range of a single speaker of community" (n 1, 222).

- i) *ĩ a nyam ĩ dina* 'he/she/it is eating his/her/its dinner'
- ii) *ši a nyam ši dina* 'she is eating her dinner'
- iii) *im a nyam him dina* 'he is eating his dinner'
- iv) *shi a nyam ar dina* 'she is eating her dinner'
- v) *im a iit im dina* 'he is eating his dinner'
- vi) *(h)im iitin (h)im dina* 'he is eating his dinner'
- vii) *(h)im iz iitin (h)im dinner* 'he is eating his dinner'
- viii) *hi iz iitin hiz dinner* 'he is eating his dinner'

These are examples not only of the dialectal layers of the Jamaican continuum, but also of *interdialectal* layerings. Versions ii) to vii) are examples of intermediate varieties, some of which consist of varying degrees of mixtures of i) and viii). Progressively each sentence distinguishes itself from one of its immediate neighbours while becoming more like the other. Each version is set against the other and may represent a specific set of social, cultural and situational values. An attempt to translate any of these versions of the sentence in the conventional sense, i.e. into a standardized language, could not exactly reproduce these values because they exist as such by virtue of their place within the continuum. For this reason, D'Costa says the continuum "offers the native speaker a multiplicity of contrasting, interrelated, or even closely related choices for the expression and communication of any given 'meaning potential' arising within the speaker's environment" (1984: 126). In regard to the above varieties of the sentence, the function and usage values socially assigned to each variety in its relation to the other varieties on the continuum is different and since they are important parts of the meaning of each of the varieties, must be taken into consideration for any productive notions of faithfulness and equivalence.

Treating the question of linguistic hybridisation/mixture within the context of conventional Western conceptions of translation, Jacques Derrida explains that it is impossible to transfer the internal heterogeneity of a mixed source language text into a target language. Commenting on Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*

and Borges' tale of the (re)writing of *Don Quixote* (Cervantes), *Pierre Ménéard*, he points to the translation difficulties that arise as a result of the conventional conception of language that underlies traditional conceptions of translation. Of Joyce's phrase "And he war", Derrida notes that even though "English is indisputably the dominant language in *Finnegans Wake* ... the German word *war* influences the English word" (1988: 99). Turning to *Pierre Ménéard*, he asks whether (conventional) conception of translation can account for the text written in Spanish but strongly marked by French. He observes: "Translation can do everything except mark this linguistic difference inscribed in the language, this difference of language systems inscribed in a single tongue. At best, it can get everything across except this: the fact that there are, in one linguistic system, perhaps several languages or tongues" (1985: 100).

In contexts such as those outlined by Derrida, Mehrez and Ojo, there can be no meaningful notion of linguistic or textual correspondence, since there is no symmetry between this hybridised 'language' and other languages (Mehrez 1992: 121). Mehrez points out that the linguistic fluidity such texts contain effectively effaces the traditional distinction between source and target languages, since a text written in this new 'language', with its 'hybridity' resulting from the interpenetration of several linguistic varieties, no longer belongs to any one language *per se*. Indeed, the hybrid text highlights the fact that utterances/speech can comprise a diversity of language forms or of 'languages'.

Standardisation accords the possibility of at least standard-to-standard functional equivalence, a point which Catford stresses, when he notes that "[t]exts in the unmarked [standard] dialect of the SL can usually be translated in an equivalent unmarked TL dialect" (1965: 87). According to Catford, most major languages have these unmarked dialects. By contrast, polylectal languages comprise marked varieties/dialects which do not have always corresponding forms across 'languages' (systems). The fact that different parts

of a continuum may be used in different functional situations suggests that functional equivalence is only possible if there are functionally relevant forms in the languages involved in the translation process.

5.3.3 Translating Creole

Yet, neither the intelligibility gap between polar varieties nor their relationship with other varieties within the same 'language' system can be taken as the most important factors in the translation of continuum texts. In other words, the fact that a text may be treated as comprising separate lingual entities, because it comprises basilectal and acrolectal elements, for example, or that it is treated as a sample of a single, polyvariant language, is not in itself the most pertinent issue in its translation. This is because continuum texts, like all other texts, are products which display characteristics such as the language competence of their authors and the historical dimensions of the language varieties used by those authors. This competence is never reproducible in another text by another writer; nor are the historical dimensions of a the language of a text parallel or comparable to that in any other potential text.

One of the more practical attempts to specify the problems of translating texts in creoles is found in Lang, who, in his article on translating Atlantic creoles, comments extensively on the translation of 1) creoles into metropolitan languages⁵⁰ (creoles as source languages) 2) metropolitan languages into creoles (creoles as target languages) and 3) creole into creole (creoles as both source and target languages) (2001: 12). According to Lang, most translations from creoles into metropolitan languages are prepared for scholarly and semi-scholarly publications and usually treat issues of folklore and ethnology (2001: 14). Translation from metropolitan languages into creoles are described by Lang as being either 'adversarial' or as falling within the framework of transparent representations of source text meanings. Adversarial translations

⁵⁰ Lang uses this term to refer to the lexifier/superstrate or the dominant standard language in a creole context.

attempt to demonstrate the autonomy of the creole language vis-à-vis the metropolitan language while translations seeking to transparently impart the meaning of source language texts tend to be primarily scriptural (Bible) translations (2001: 16-17). Inter-creole translation is described by Lang as an empty category since it remains "a rarely realized potential rather than a classification of actual texts". This, Lang claims, is due "in part because of the logic underlying adversarial translations (the need to respond to and resist metropolitan literary norms and values), in part simply because very few readers of creole are aware of the variety of texts in other creoles" (2001: 20).

In the translation situations outlined by Lang, creoles most often serve as source languages for texts translated from metropolitan languages. Considering that minority languages—which include creoles—usually serve as target languages for translation, Lang remarks that this state of affairs is anomalous (2001: 11). Yet, the situation presents as an anomaly only if one ignores the fact that Atlantic creoles often exist in contexts in which socially dominant varieties are used and are generally understood. What this means is that messages translated from other languages make their way into the social space of the creole context via these dominant varieties, making it unnecessary for texts to be translated into creoles. This situation persists particularly in contexts where literacy occurs in the dominant varieties and where creoles have no standard orthography. It is necessary here to return to the question of the relationship between translation practice and language standardisation. The reliance on the presence of standardisation conventions in translation can place some speakers of non-standardised varieties at a distinct disadvantage vis-à-vis translation materials originating externally. Translation materials coming from French or Spanish for a Jamaican audience, for instance, would be translated into English. This would occur because it is assumed that Jamaicans understand English but also because English is a standardised language.

While Lang's overview outlines the framework within which translation occurs in Atlantic creolophonia, it fails to explain why these situations are as they are, nor does it provide a programme for going beyond the current state of affairs or say how the translation situations outlined contribute to locating the lingual context in which questions about translation are generally defined. This is particularly important, since the question of translation and creoles arises from the language context in which creoles are located.

5.3.4 Text and Variation

Conventional conceptions of translation assume that the cultural and linguistic context of standardisation is universally reproducible and that the distinctions in language which result in the formation of entities called 'languages' are the only bases upon which valid conceptions of translatability may be formulated. According to such views, a target text necessarily exists in a neatly defined entity called a 'language'. Its translation, it is assumed, is its realisation as a text in another such neatly defined entity. Price, in rejecting this Western structuralist dichotomy which tends to "perceive different linguistic realms as bounded" (2000: 25), opts for a view of languages as being intertwined and interstitched.

The view of languages as interacting and mixed rather than distinct and homogenous systems has very specific consequences for translation. If the language forms involved in a translation act are, in fact, interrelated or traversed by heterogeneity, then there can be no clear linguistic parallelism upon which to build notions of equivalence and faithfulness. For, although there may in fact be a source text with a (potential) target text, there is no language in the conventional sense from which this text is to be translated and by extension none into which it can be translated.

Two important questions arise from consideration of non-standard varieties in translation. On the one hand these varieties may manifest themselves as a single fairly focussed (in the sense of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller) entities, such as may be evidenced in a primarily basilectal Jamaican text. On the other hand they may manifest themselves as polylectal or multilingual texts. In either situation both social and linguistic considerations play a critical role in determining the translatability of such texts. If the variety used in a source text is 'pure' (say the basilect of the Jamaican continuum) it is more likely that such a variety will be treated as an independent entity and the fact that it shares a systemic space with other varieties may be ignored. Thus, a text primarily comprising Jamaican basilectal forms may be treated as if it did not come from a broader Jamaican language system which includes acrolectal and mesolectal varieties. In such a situation, the polar varieties of the Jamaican continuum might be assumed to constitute different 'languages' and be seen as translatable one into the other. A text comprising mesolectal varieties, on the other hand, poses different kinds of translation problems.

If mesolectal varieties are not themselves languages in the conventional sense, they certainly are parts of different languages varieties. While texts written in the mesolect may be treated as comprising stylistic variation within a dominant system (say English), they also—and perhaps more significantly—are marked by linguistic mixture: they are more evidently "linguistically pluralised" texts (Chan 2002: 50). Considering the arbitrariness of determining what constitutes dialectal or lingual differences, it matters little whether the varieties used in these texts are treated as belonging to different dialects or languages. What matters ultimately is the fact that the varieties are seen as belonging to a **single text**. But this view of text as potentially containing multiple varieties (lectal, or lingual) contrasts greatly with the manner in which conventional conceptions of translation see text.

Ultimately, the view of translation as being language based (as in being between French and English) is losing ground. Building on the foundations implicit in Jakobson's tri-partite definition of translation, theorists such as Even-Zohar, Pym and Steiner have argued that it is problematic to view translation as only involving exchanges between systems (languages, for example) since the processes implicit in these exchanges are no different from those which might take place within systems themselves. "[T]ranslational procedures between two systems (languages/literatures) are in principle analogous, even homologous, with transfers of various kinds within the borders of the system" (Even-Zohar 1981: 2).

5.3.5 Meaning

The theoretical questions related to polylectal languages and translation go far beyond the problems of equivalence and fidelity. Traditional conceptions of translation rest on the notion that translators, in order to transfer source text meanings into target texts, must, in the first instance, understand the grammatical forms of the language in which the text is written and second, know the grammar of the language into which they intend to transfer that text. In other words, the receiving language as a system must be able to convey the message of the original and it is incumbent on the translator to respect the target language rules for conveying that message. Such conceptions place tremendous emphasis on the presence of systems that operate in predictable ways. But what happens if those linguistic systems are absent?

Owing to the fact that polylectal continua are mainly oral, they display an extraordinary degree of fluidity, which leads to polysemy and the frequent changes in the 'meanings' of messages. A specific instance of the kind of meaning difficulties that could arise from linguistic instability is evident in the 1998 case of *United States v. Derrick Riley, et al.* Recorded conversations between members of a gang of Jamaicans suspected of committing a murder

were entered into evidence in this case. However, according to linguist Peter Patrick and the lawyer Samuel Buell, co-authors of an article on the problems of translating the Creole in this case, the mixed non-standard language made it possible for the suspects to evade the authorities for a long time. “[They] managed to escape law enforcement efforts in part by conducting their activities in J[amaican] C[reole], which appears to the average police officers to be an impenetrably dense form of an unwritten foreign language” (WWW document Patrick and Buell: 6). The addition of American slang to this non-standard language produced an even stranger mixture.

Translating in such a context required careful effort to build, stage by stage, the **relevant** social and situational edifice underlying the contents of the conversations of the suspects. This situation might seem rare, but as Price (2000: 36 - 37) reminds us, the linguistic mixing that translation theory has consistently denied is becoming more and more commonplace in the context of globalisation. The breakup and reconstitution of metropolitan societies as a result of continuous migrations and interbreedings result in the creation of linguistic varieties that have far-reaching consequences on daily communication.

5.4 Translation, Languages, Dichotomies

In the preceding paragraphs I have attempted to show that language studies (linguistics), like many other fields, has sought to move away from structuralist views of language. However, because of the need to distinguish translation from paraphrasing, adaptation, etc., the conception of translation as involving source 'language' text and target 'language' text remains. In these instances, language is not simply any 'focussed' variety (in the sense used by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller), inclusive any non-standard variety, but a predetermined subcategory of focussed varieties, namely standard languages.

The preference for basing notions of translatability on standard languages is seen not only in the definition of translation to assume the presence of 'languages' but also in the treatment of focussed varieties related to standard varieties as extensions of the standard. As argued above, a text from any part of the Jamaican continuum, for instance, is more often than not, seen as being relatable to standard English. The model also has consequences for the political dimensions of language and translation. Since the line of demarcation indicating the translatability of texts is drawn between the politically-determined entities, the transfer of texts between varieties (say between Jamaican Creole and African American) would hardly be recognised as translation in the proper sense. It is more likely for such to be called adaptation than translation, because both varieties are assumed to belong to the (standard) linguistic system called English. Again, considering the type of differentiation between languages such as Danish and Norwegian, this kind of distinction between translation and adaptation demonstrates the standard language bias of much of the theorising about translation. The persistent reliance on the source language-target language dichotomy makes transfer of meaning or, according to Neubert and Shreve, of "communicative values" (1992: 24) between texts necessarily a transfer of meaning between languages. The emphasis placed on text has, therefore, not reduced that placed on languages. Conceptions of translation that make reference to source and target language texts are, therefore, decidedly based on structuralist constructs.



IN CONCLUSION :
THE BRIDGE AT THE GAP

L'entreprise post-babélique qu'est la traduction interlinguistique ne fait que répliquer, sur une échelle de visibilité et de finalité renforcées, le modèle de transfert au sein d'une même langue. ... Le projet schématique—l'émission du message, la réception *via* l'oreille et l'œil, le déchiffrement interprétatif, la réponse—est le même d'un point de vue intra- et interlinguistique. La source et la cible entretiennent la même relation théorique.

—George Steiner

6.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to provide a general synthesis of the arguments presented in the thesis and to outline alternative possibilities in the theorisation of translation. This aim is twofold, consisting firstly of an attempt to compare the study's hypotheses with the research evidence presented in the preceding chapters and secondly to identify general translational norms which may give heterogeneity and more specifically creolisation a place within translation studies. What I propose is not an outright rejection of the theoretical approaches treated in the preceding chapters of this thesis or even a 'theory' in opposition to them, since this is not, to borrow Even-Zohar's expressions, a quest to perpetuate a "ceremonial act where one always starts from the very beginning, as if nothing has been done before" (1981: 1). Rather, this is an attempt, through recourse to some of the more meaningful contemporary theoretical trends, to articulate a position on translation that dispenses with the notion of language in the sense of 'a language' as used in translation studies and which is one of the properties which prevent a broadening of the discourse on translation to include non-standard/hybridised/creolised languages. Thus, while

the present study shares the preoccupations of theorists working in text linguistics, pragmatics, socio-cultural and postcolonial translation studies, it seeks to go beyond these to arrive at an understanding of translation that implicitly accommodates heterogeneity. In other words, the proposal here is for ways of theorising translation that take into account milieux in which so-called natural languages are used as well as those in which mixed, hybrid or non-standard languages, including creoles, are the norm.

6.2 General Synthesis

At the outset, this thesis hypothesised

- That the modern practice referred to as translation grew out of and is defined by the particular context of language normalisation/standardisation;
- That the conceptions upon which conventional translation research and pedagogy are based account only for translation between distinct and homogeneous languages;
- That adequately accounting for contexts involving internally heterogeneous polylectal continua, such as creoles, demands a view of translation as involving texts in language and not texts in languages.

While it has not been shown definitively that all modern conceptions of translation derive from standardisation and linguistic normalisation, the material presented here suggests that standardisation and normalisation have played and continue to play an extremely important role in determining how the core concepts used in translation derive their meaning, particularly in contexts in which Western models of language dominate or play a significant role in the manner in which language is conceived.

Although the West, because of its colonial reach and its technologically- and culturally-advanced forms of knowledge production and reception, has

dominated the forms and processes of representation globally, it does not have a monopoly on those forms and processes. Other literate Cultures have had an impact on translation practice at some point. This means that the investigation attempted in this study needs to go further in order to determine whether contexts such as Egypt and Nubia, ancient India, ancient China and Persia had specific ways of conceiving translation and what theoretical legacy, if any, they have bequeathed to the modern era.

6.2.1 The First and Second Hypotheses

The thesis has presented an overview of the role that different branches of modern linguistics have played in the elaboration of translation theories, with early trends in the 20th century relying almost exclusively on structural linguistics to provide a systematic and reasoned approach to the practice of translation. Since translation was perceived as an operation on language, conceived as form (*langue*) as opposed to function/use (*parole*) (cf. de Beaugrande 1994: 9), it seemed natural to assume that structural linguistics could explain translation processes and phenomena. It was for this reason that researchers such as Catford (1967 [1965]) and Vinay and Darbelnet (1968 [1958]) paid such great attention to the structural features of languages in their definitions of translation and in their attempts at dealing with the theoretical problems associated with the practice. Additionally, these theorists operated in contexts in which it was commonly thought that the scientific method could be helpful in revealing the principles and procedures underlying translation practice (Vinay and Darbelnet 1968 [1958]: 23). This was based on the view that knowledge of the structural properties of languages was essential for successful translation operations. With challenges from a number of fields, the limitations of structuralism not only in describing languages but also in explaining translation were soon revealed and theorists looked elsewhere for responses to questions related to translation. The advent of generative/transformational linguistics, for instance, with its emphasis on the

biological basis of language production and acquisition and its focus on what have come to be known as language universals and on the distinction between deep and surface structures, presented what some translation theorists thought was a suitable theoretical framework within which to describe translation processes. The expansion of linguistics to include sociolinguistics, discourse analysis and pragmatics meant that translation studies could draw from an even wider range of possibilities in the field of linguistics. Nida and his collaborators, for example, built their very influential theory of functional/dynamic equivalence on transformational linguistics, seeing translation as involving the transfer of meaning from one language to another. To a large extent, their theory relied on the social and cultural contexts of the receptor language.

Besides 'pure' linguistics, a number of other areas of study have influenced the study of translation, leading Steiner to remark that translation has become the point of contact between established and evolving disciplines, providing "a synapse for work in psychology, anthropology, sociology, and such intermediary fields as ethno- and socio-linguistics" (1998: 260). Toury (1980, 1996) and Hermans (1996, 1999a, 1999b), for instance, relying on literary and cultural studies, have claimed that translation is defined by the social norms of the societies in which it is produced and received. Although part of a long tradition of contact between literature and translation, this theoretical trend has advanced the study of translation by raising new questions about how translating and translation are actually located within the social and cultural spheres.

Other schools that have paid little attention to linguistics include the interpretive theory, which stressed the importance of pragmatic concerns such as the re-expression of a source language text meaning in a target language text. This kind of reflection was consistent with one major current in translation research during the latter half of the 20th century. The increase in pragmatic translations in the middle of the century gave rise to tensions between theories

emphasising the practical aspects of translation and those seeking to locate the practice within its social and cultural framework.

While the socio-cultural tendency in translation studies has sought to distance itself from prescriptivism, it shares the view—though tentatively—with the pragmatic theories that translation is a transfer of an invariable meaning (Toury 1980; 1995) from one culturo-linguistic system (a language) to another. Based on the assumption that there is an original meaning that can be reproduced or represented in a receiving society (Gentzler 2001: 146), this conception of translation places significant emphasis on the mutual exclusiveness of the source and target language systems. Within this theoretical framework, translation involves relationships between *norm A* and *norm B*, each constituting a closed, mutually exclusive, linguistic system.

6.2.2 Third Hypothesis

The distinguishing feature of the approaches which emerged in response to structuralism, especially those which appeared in the latter part of the 20th century, was the centrality accorded to the social and cultural dimensions of language. House, Nida, Toury,—even Lederer and Seleskovitch—all paid attention to so-called extralinguistic factors in translation. These approaches conceived translation as a practice which was more contingent on the milieu of the target culture—and thereby on factors affecting *parole*—than on the abstract structural variables implied by *langue*. Yet, because the scholars in this tradition saw the need to distinguish translation from paraphrasing, adaptation, etc., it was necessary for them to treat translation as deriving its distinctiveness from lingual differentiation. They, therefore, based their conception of translation on a notion of language that was implicitly linked to *langue*. Discussions on translation and translatability, at least in the conventional sense, have, therefore, remained within a theoretical paradigm defined by how best to approach practices which involve, explicitly or implicitly, equivalent or faithful

transfers between source and target languages. As a consequence, translation theory has been given the objective of providing best approaches to translation problems as well as the means of extrapolating underlying principles from existing products called translations. Although the question of translation approach is itself important in addressing the problems generally related to translation, the more important question is identifying the assumptions by translation theorists when such approaches are elaborated.

While conventional translation theories are generally limited to the context of clearly delimited languages, they nonetheless tend to present themselves as being universally applicable. This claim to universality has ignored the specificity of certain kinds of language situations. Over the years, a number of linguists have pointed to the fact that some language varieties behave differently from those that have been normalised or standardised. Many non-standard languages, for instance, make use of a variety of lectal options that operate together as a single, if diffuse, system or as individual parts of multiple systems. Against the background of these unconventional language types, one is confronted with the question of whether conceptions of translation derived from the idealised context of standardised languages can apply to non-standard or mixed language. This thesis has looked at some of the attempts in the theory to accommodate these language varieties, but has concluded that such attempts do not seek to conceive translation of these languages in terms other than those drawn from the context of normalised language. What they seek to do is to present a view of translation that accommodates non-standard and mixed varieties as variants of normalised languages.

6.3 The Gap

Sociolinguistics and anthropological linguistics suggest that what are called autonomous languages exist as such only by virtue of the social and political forces that maintain them as stable and (relatively) closed entities. Without the

presence of such social forces, especially in instances where there are neighbouring languages and frequent contact between speakers, languages often become parts of fluid and open-ended linguistic networks. It follows, therefore, that if translation requires independent language systems, there must be a manner in which the open-ended nature of these systems is effaced in order to transform them into the forms necessary for translation. Otherwise, it would have to be assumed that translation texts come not from neatly defined systems ('languages') but from language itself.

Theories that stress the importance of text as opposed to language in translation bring to the fore one of the underlying problems with attempts to avoid the pitfalls of structuralism. The manner in which 'text'—as in source 'text' and target 'text'—is used in relation to translation implies that it is necessarily linked to separate, distinct and closed systems—'languages'. If translation relates to text, as has been advanced by scholars such as House and Neubert and Shreve, this text does not need to be linked implicitly to historically abstracted, closed entities called *languages*. A new perspective on translation would require that theorisation transcend the conventional language paradigm in order to adequately represent the diversity of language contexts typical of human communities.

While many recent theories in postcolonial and post-modern translation studies have provided openings of this kind, stressing the instability of meaning and the heterogeneity of language, the broadening of the discussion on translation has not been radically disconnected from conventional conceptions of language as systems. The usefulness of approaches seeking to deal with plurality in language depends on their being released from theoretical frameworks which privilege a particular social and cultural history in the definition of language and translation. In other words, they must step away from potentially essentialising frameworks such as those implied by standardisation and normalisation. In fact the West has been accused of imposing its standardising

frameworks on the Rest by 'translating' them into modes recognisable to it. Similarly, language and translation studies have assumed that the normalisation principles, which emerged from a particular context, can or must determine the manner in which language and translation are conceived everywhere else. One may, therefore, argue that conceptions of translation have been 'domesticated' by a dominant linguistic context.

6.4 The Bridge

6.4.1 Faithful, Equivalent ≠ Translation

In creole contexts, socio- and culturo-historical variables are particularly important in defining concepts related to language. In keeping with this perspective, Anne Malena comments that creole languages "embody difference and negate equivalence," making it very difficult to translate from one creole to another "without losing the semantic depth their painful origins have given them" (2000: 10). It might have been more apt to say that the fact that creoles embody difference makes it difficult to translate between creoles (and between creoles and other language varieties) *according to conventional translation principles*. The significance of Malena's remark, though, must not be lost. Hers is an invitation to acknowledge that practices such as translation can only be effectively conceptualised contextually, always with a consciousness of the circumstances that give rise to them in a particular era.

6.4.3 Meaning

The theoretical questions relating to mixed languages in translation far exceed the problems of source and target languages or equivalence and fidelity. It is important for the translation researchers who are attentive to heterogeneity and the socio-history of language varieties to show how sense is produced in contexts marked by 'hybridity', such as those from which Caribbeans and

Afro-Americans come. Caribbeans in particular and Afro-Americans generally enter into language relationships which are not purely representational but syncretic, suggesting that meaning is constantly being constructed. This construction of meaning makes use of signifying content from previous moments and contexts, modulating that content for use in different contexts in the present. The meanings which result from these situations are, therefore, tentative, partial and potential, in a sense akin to Derrida's notion of *différance* (1982: 14). The transfer of the Yoruba religious forms from their places of meaningfulness in Dahomey, Ile-Ife, Ibadan etc., (in parts of modern day Nigeria and Benin) and their continuity in multiple transformations in the Americas, from Cuban *Regla de Ocha* (Santería) to Brazilian Candomblé to Trinidadian Shango and Haitian Vodou, for instance, points to creolisation as a series of translative processes whereby forms are remembered and (re)constituted for purposeful use in different contexts.

The heterogeneity inherent in syncretism is compounded, mediated and reinforced by orality. Of the culture of the French *Départements d'Outremer*, Bernabé asserts:

L'oralité est notre intelligence, elle est notre lecture de ce monde, le tâtonnement, aveugle encore, de notre complexité. L'oralité créole, même contrariée dans son expression esthétique, recèle un système de contre-valeurs, une contre culture (1989: 34).

Bernabé's statement finds resonance elsewhere in the Caribbean. In Jamaica, Carolyn Cooper argues, orality, while being "a more narrow taxonomy of verbal techniques" reaches further to embrace "a broad repertoire of themes and cultural practices" (1996: 2). Orality is, thus, conceived as shaping or determining the manner in which cultural forms—particularly language as it moves along the oral-literate continuum—manifest themselves. Throughout the Caribbean from Trinidad to Cuba, from Jamaica to Aruba, cultural forms have depended on the dynamism implicit in the relationship between writing and orality to navigate cultural and social spaces. The Trinidadian social

commentary Kaiso (transformed into Calypso), Jamaica's Reggae (transformed into Dancehall or Raga and Dub poetry), and Cuba's poetry form of the 'son', used extensively by Guillén, are forms that have come to symbolise the strength of the oral in the Caribbean.

6.4.4 From Transfer to Transformation

I have argued in the preceding chapters that the views of translation as the transfer or re-expression of a meaning/message have traditionally made the execution of translation acts contingent on properties such as equivalence and faithfulness, which are themselves defined in relation to the notions of source and target languages. I have also noted that views of translation that privilege these notions are not sufficient for conceiving language varieties such as polylectal creoles.

By focussing on the pragmatic dimensions of translation, conventional theories marginalise the two important dimensions of translation practice. The first relates to the fact that translated texts are creative productions, which involve the calling into being of *new* texts. There are no pre-existent spaces for these texts in the languages of the communities into which they are to be received. In such situations, therefore, it is incorrect to speak of translation as transfer, since transfer implies the presence of a pre-existent system. This fact points to the second dimension of translation that is often overlooked. Since translated texts have to be 'created', there must be processes by which this is done. These processes are not pre-determined but are contextual, changing with the circumstances in which the 'new' texts have to be produced. Thus, the production of translated texts may involve recourse to models in pre-existent 'systems' (such as the production of instruction manuals), but it may also require and depend on the use of features that do not belong to any such system. A look at translation into vernacular languages, for instance, reveals that translated texts, in fact, often contribute to the formation of systems

('languages'). If one recalls the German context in which Luther worked, where translation of biblical texts led to the 'creation' of German, then one understands that translation can occur without the presence of a 'language'.

For this reason, it is important to look again at the value placed on terms such as 'source language' and 'target language' in reference to translation. If translation can take place in vernacular contexts, where there are no languages in the conventional sense, then it means that the practice does not require languages. More importantly, the concept of target language becomes meaningless in such situations. But there are also contexts in which the concept of source language is meaningless. As source text, the mixed or hybrid works of authors such as Gabriel Okara call into question the notion that a text has a necessary relationship to a language.

The difference on which translation has been conceived, has traditionally rested on the separation of languages. Creolisation, which offers no such separation of languages can only be accounted for in translation once difference is no longer located at the level of language but at the level of text, where it ultimately matters most. Thus, translation becomes input (source) resulting in difference in output (target) through process of rejection, adaptation, accommodation, imitation and invention. The defining characteristic of translation is, therefore, not the bridging of linguistic gaps. Rather, it is the attempt to make the same text speak differently. Such a text is always destined for use by the members of an actual community. For this reason, it is important that it be potentially recognisable by members of that community. I will draw on a few central images of reformulation and transformation in American (in the broad sense of the term) history to illustrate this point. Yoruba orixas/orishas have for centuries stood behind Catholic saints in the Caribbean and Brazil, since their 'transfer' to the Americas was forbidden by the Catholic church. Eleggua/Lebga, the guardian of the crossroads and medium of contact between heaven and earth, is a re-interpretation in Haiti of St Peter, the keeper of the

keys to the gate of heaven or in Cuba of San Antonio, the keeper of the road and the gate. In this process of reinterpretation, it is not only Elegua/Legba alone who is transformed; St Peter and San Antonio are also changed by their relationships with this Yoruba deity. No more are their meanings defined solely by the contexts from which they originally came. In fact, their respective journeys through different phases of Christianity to their places in modern Haiti and Cuba have been marked by succeeding moments of reformulation. Similarly, Benitez-Rojo points to the transformation of the *Virgen de la Caridad*, who in *Regla de la Ocha* points to multiply signifying contexts, Yoruba (Oshun), Iberico-Christian (The Virgin Mary) and Taino (Atabey) (1992: 13-14).

Like the history of the transformation of Elegua/Legba/St Peter/San Antonio and the *Virgen de la Caridad*/Oshun/Atabey, creolisation signals the potential for carrying and conveying different messages simultaneously. This is attributable to its open-endedness, which makes it capable of creating meaning from old and new components. Thus, messages are constantly being re-created and re-instantiated to co-vary with other messages.

However, there are always gaps in the knowledge of readers/hearers of any text. They may not 'recognise' particular text elements, for instance. Since meaning involves a constructive and not a static process, text readers are always involved in processes by which they become familiar with new text units from which they derive meaning but to which they also ascribe meanings and in so doing contribute, when they become text producers themselves, to the creation of meaning in language. This is one of the missing facets of the pragmatic reflection on translation. It neglects the fact that understanding, even in the same language, is usually partial, suggesting that the members of a community always engage in processes by which they learn to understand but also learn to mean.

6.5 Translation

Tack, by calling upon structuralist methodology, has pointed to what translation theorists have been attempting to ignore: that conceptions of translation, because they rely implicitly on notions of equivalence, of necessity, rely on a specific kind of difference. Despite the protestations of theorists who argue for a text- or discourse-based approach to translation, the difference specific to translation, as conventionally defined, is that between *languages*, not *texts* or *discourses*. Indeed, it is clear that this understanding requires that there be a change of language in order for the 'transfer of meaning' between texts to be considered a 'translation'. The emphasis on text, therefore, has not diminished the importance placed on languages (cf. 2002: 50).

It seems that one can only describe translation legitimately as dealing with text and not language if textual reformulations, whether they be in the same language or between languages, are described as translations. However, because translation studies has come to distinguish translation "in the normal sense" from practices such as paraphrasing, rewriting and adaptation, translation has come to be seen as involving the mediation of difference between texts in languages, with the consequent disregard for the fact that "there are no natural frontiers between languages" (Pym 1992: 25). Considering, for instance, that the relationship between standard varieties and non-standard varieties is socially-defined and that the distinction between them may be (and often is) similar to that between standard varieties themselves, the continued dependence on the division between 'languages' in translation and the dependence of a general conception of translation on that division (as in source 'language' and target 'language') is yet to be justified.

The notion of 'a language' assumes that there is some distance between the variety in question and some other variety. The same is true of 'source language' and 'target language'. If, as Görlach asserts, there is "no objective

way of measuring the distance between two linguistic systems" (1991: 76), then it is impossible to objectively define the entities called source language and target language. They, therefore, must be determined by socially- and historically-defined variables, a fact which makes them less than reliable bases upon which to build a universal conception of translatability. This matter needs further elaboration. Trudgill and Chambers point out that for the time that Norway was a part of Denmark, the language varieties of the former were treated as dialects of Danish, the historical standard (1998: 4). Following the standardisation of Norwegian⁵¹, the nature of the relationship between varieties used in Norway and those used in Denmark changed. However, this was more a socio-political change than a 'linguistic' change, for Norwegian varieties and Danish varieties remain mutually intelligible.

Socio-political processes such as standardisation usually affect the functions to which language varieties are put. Thus, the capacity of a variety to be used autonomously often depends on its status as a 'language'. Simultaneously, that language loses its status as a dialect of some related standard variety, with the consequence that its use to add dialectal colour to a translation into a standard defined-system is lost. Standardisation, thus, removes former dialects from situations in which they were used as dialectal equivalents in translation operations. Nida speaks of Haitian Creole [Kréyol] as being "essentially a colloquial dialect of French" (1964: 181). Because of standardisation, however, Kréyol is no longer treated as a dialectal variety of French. It has, via standardisation, become independently translatable and is less likely to be used as a variant of French in seeking to translate dialectal equivalence across systems. On the other hand, creoles that are maintained within linguistic continua without the intervention of standardising institutions, creoles such as Jamaican or Trinidadian, are optionally independently translatable and are still regarded as variants in language systems defined by the standard language to

⁵¹ It must be noted that there are two standard varieties of Norwegian. According to Görlach, one is closer to Danish, the other closer to regional varieties within Norway (1991: 73).

which they are related. Thus, the Jamaican and Trinidadian varieties are often used in target texts as if they corresponded to the non-standard varieties in texts originating in other standard defined language systems.

Since the divisions between languages are not objectively defined, entities treated as languages are unimportant as determiners of operations called translation. Indeed, it is only a conception of translation that is rid of the notions of source *language* and target *language* that can be effectively used in relation to a process involving 'linguistically pluralised' texts. The transformation of a text into another text form does not depend on either text belonging to 'a language'. What is important in the translation process is that the text be recognisable and thus potentially meaningful by some person or members of a speech community. The important dimension of text, as Enkvist points out, is that it must be "interpretable to those who can, under prevailing conditions, build around [it] a scenario of text world in which that text either might be true, or seems to conform to certain maxims of human behaviour, or both" (1988: 6). Those prevailing conditions, whether they be the instability of creolisation or the context of official usages, are what determine the way in which text reformulation can be made meaningful.

A conception of translation as reformulation privileges transformation over transfer as the means by which translation operates and is defined, suggesting that the idea of meaning moving from one system to another is abandoned in favour of one where meaning is constructed within a macro-system (language generally) or macro-discourse (texts in particular fields, for instance). Additionally, this conception removes the ideological assumptions underlying dichotomies such as language vs. dialect, standard vs. non-standard, which translation studies, by leaning so heavily on conventional notions of language, embraces. In fact, there is little reason that a conception of translation as relating to text should see text as being implicitly linked to *languages*. Put another way, the conception of translation as relating to text should see any

shift from one language *variety* to another language *variety* as translation. Indeed, this seems the only logical conclusion to be drawn from a conception of translation as involving texts, since texts do not operate necessarily constrained by languages as we have come to know them.

6.6 Conclusion

If translation is concerned with faithfulness and equivalence and predetermined meanings or relationships of transfer between systems, then it essentially entails operations dealing with the products of the long process of linguistic normalisation and standardisation which accompanied nationalist enterprises of the 16th and 19th centuries. The systems emerging from that process were devised "to fit into an educational programme of which both the starting point and the ultimate objective were already fixed" (Harris 1980: 120). Indeed, these systems were the legacy of a certain grammatical tradition in which languages were seen as being defined by internal rules. Recovered by Saussure, who insisted that what we call languages were in fact closed systems, this tradition still influences many academic fields dealing with the study of language, including translation studies. This tradition has also, since Europe—particularly Western Europe—attained world dominance, influenced the way that language in formerly colonised societies has been defined. In this way standardisation and normalisation have served as the bases not only for language planning but also for translatability in many developing societies, especially those that existed for centuries without written languages. The definition of practices such as translation from within its literate tradition of the West resulted in the exclusion of cultural and linguistic contexts, such as those typified by creole continua and hybrid languages, from entering the discourse on translation except as variants of languages meeting the criteria set by normalisation and standardisation. This linguistic tradition has been described by Venuti as projecting "a conservative model of translation that would unduly restrict its role in cultural innovations and social change" (1998: 21). Venuti proposes that

a broader array of social and cultural variables should be considered in arriving at a conception of translation and that this conception should be based on "the heterogeneity of language and its implication in cultural and political values" (1998: 30) since language is not a homogenous whole but "an assemblage of semiotic regimes" (1998: 9).

Against this background and considering more recent evaluations of the foundations of translation theory, this thesis has examined the relationship between languages that appear to lack order (Holm 2000: 2) and translation phenomena, and asked whether cultural and linguistic contexts such as creolophonia and language hybridisation—contexts that are distinct from those of codified languages modelled on the Greco-Latin system and which have remained on the periphery of language studies because of their "impurity" in relation to European and Indigenous languages—can participate in any processes that might be called 'translation'. A component of the response to this question has been the attempt to demonstrate that a broader conception of language in translation allows for the opening up of a number of new avenues of investigation into how the relationship of correspondence between texts may be meaningfully construed.

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APPENDIX

Dancehall Queen

By Beenie Man & Chevelle Franklin

Intro by Beenie Man:

It's a dancehall thing

Chorus by Chevelle Franklin:

She's a dancehall queen for life

Gonna explode like dynamite

And she's moving outta sight

Now she a guh mash up di place like dynamite

Repeat

Beenie Man Verse 1:

Gal how yuh so full a etiquette and yuh so clever

Thru a Selassie mek a you design fi be the dancer

If a fi m alone a woulda tun yuh inna mi lover

Gal mi waan mi name, mi waan fi knock yuh wid mi hammer

Den mek mi get back pon track yah,

Marcia Fus time mi see yuh mi woulda walk inna macka

Now mi see yuh wine mi waan fi bun up inna fire

Tan up inna clothes like a tinkin Fila

Fi da gal yah a wine she look like mumma killa

One touch mi touch mi it bun mi like pepper

But hear di DJ a utter, mi halla

Chevelle now or forever yuh halla

Chorus

Verse 2:

Contest a gwaan fi di dancehall queen

Who a wear di crown nuh di one

Alovene Hell and powderhouse when miss lady come in

Den everybaddi staart screem, seen

Where di girl come from nobody dont know

She's a devil angel and she's a go-go

Ask mi I dont know, all mi know


When mi hitch up dung a African Star

Mi see bus, mi see truck, mi see bike, mi see car

Night time come and video ligit it tun on

Har body staart to alarm, gal because Chevelle Watch mi now

She can cork any session



Wid a cute face a create nuff heat inna di place
An try nuh touch a button
If yuh touch a button she a guh try an duh yuh suppen
An go girl, faah mi naah stop say so
Go girl, to the rhythm whey a throw
Go girl, to the bass whey a blow

Beenie
Chevelle
DJ Repeat
Chevelle part 2x