

Ruurs LANGGWU, Nyuu TAIM SAPII AN FñLINZ FO
NEESHANI

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Fo Staat Aaf

Piipllaik de wid piipl wa dem fiil se iz dem matii. If piipl fain deself togeda an dem no waan de faitin wan anada, dem gun ga fo staat fiil se dem iz matii. An if yu ga piipl wa fiil se dem iz matii, dem gun du dem watsmata fo de wid wan anada.

In dis worl hee, yu gat konchrii wa don set op aredii, bot we di piipl-dem no fiil dem iz wan nee shan kaaz dem taakin aal kain a difrent wee. An den yu gat piipl wa fiil se dem iz wan neeshan bot no gat konchrii. Dem hoslin fo chrai set op konchrii fo aal huu biilangs to dem neeshan.

Hou piipl taak iz wan ting doz prapa mek dem fiil se dem biilaangs togeda. HUU taak laik matii doz fiil se dem iz matii. An huu doz doon taak laik dem, no dem matii. Nof taim, wan set a piipl doz mek op dem main se hou dem taak speshal. An den, dem doz staat biiliiv se a no jos di taak wa speshal bot di piipl wa taakin, to. An az fo huu no taak speshal taak, dem no speshal niida. Wel, iz so fiilinz fo langgwij doz staat. An fiilinz fo langgwij doz ton fiilinz fo neeshan. So, fo yu biilaangs to wan neeshan, nof taim di neeshan langgwij ga fo bii yu routs langgwij.

In plentii konchrii, di piipl-dem no taakin di seem langgwij an no fiil se dem iz seem neeshan. So, dem wa in chaaj a di set-op in di konchrii doz chrai mek di piipl-dem get fiilinz fo neeshan.

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(ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

Introduction

People like to be with others who they consider to be like themselves. If people are going to be together without conflict, they have to feel that they share some kind of common identity. And where people feel that they have a common identity, they know no limits in their efforts to be with each other.

In thii world, there are many states which are already established (jut whose populations do not feel themselves members of a single nation because of language differences. There are, as well, cases in which people feel themselves to constitute a single nation but have no state. Such people are usually involved in trying to establish a state for the members of their national group.

Shared speech is a very important means of creating common identity. The absence of shared speech, on the other hand, serves to exclude those who do not belong within the common identity. It is very often the case that a group of people come to regard their speech as in some way special. They then begin to transfer this feeling of specialness from their language to themselves, its speakers. As for those who are not perceived as sharing the special common speech, they come to be regarded as the very opposite of special. It is by this means that language consciousness becomes converted into national consciousness. Often, therefore, to belong to a national group, the language of that national group has to be ones native/vernacular language.

In many countries, the populations do not speak the same language and, therefore, do not feel they belong in the same nation. In these circumstances, those who run the state apparatus often try to create a shared national consciousness. To achieve this, they try to create a consensus within the population

Fo du dis, dem doz chrai mek evriibadii grii se wan langgwij iz *di* bes an dem mos lam am. Huu no taakin di langgwij no biilaangs to di neeshan, an no gat no biznis fo iivn de ins aid di konchrii. Dem chrai-in fo push wan neeshan langgwij fo aal di piipl in di konchrii. Di set-op in di konchrii tekin fiilinz fo langgwij an yuuzin am fo mek fiilinz fo neeshan.

So, wen wii doz taak bout langgwij dis aar langgwij dat, wa wii miin? Aftaraal, noo tuu badii, iivn wen dem tingking se dem taakin di seem langgwij, doz doon taak di egzak seem wee. Mii fiil se piipl doz get langgwij wen dem main staat gii dem se dem taak speshal. Iz main mek langgwij. Aaz dem fiil se hou dem taak speshal, dem main gun staat get aal kain a aidee bout dis ting wa dem taakin, hou it staan, hou it doz wok. Iz main doz mek wan langgwij.

Mali

In Wes Afriika, dem gat speshal taak-piipl wa chreen fo gi laang-taim stoorii. Iz dem taak-piipl-da doz paas aan di stoori-dem from wan jenareeshan to di neks wan. No buk no yuuzin, ploor breen an mouL Mongs di Mading (Maninka, Mandinka) piipl-dem, taak-maan doz gi stoorii bout hou laang-taim Mali set op. Dem stoorii-da no chrii sents 001, kaaz laang-taim Mali set op rong 1217-37 A.D. Niane (1965), rait dong wan a di nof-nof vorzhan a di stoorii wa de. Ii heer am from wan taak-man, Mamadou Kouyate.

In di stoorii, nof nof fait-man wa gyada rong dem liida, Sundiata. Dem gain go fait waar fo bring di hool plees anda wan roul. Bot a huu dem? Di taak-man gi wan laang lis a huu an huu. Den, ii se, 'Fo mek a laang stoorii shaart, aal a Mali man-pikni bin de a Sibi, aal badi wa tong kliin an kyan taak Mali langgwij an kyan se "N'Ko" ("ini noo" in Mading)'. (Niane 1965:55) (Mii bring am kraas from Ingglish) Di taak-maan se dis kaa Mading piipl fiil se dem tong kliin an dem langgwij kleeer. Aal badi wa kud taak

that one particular language is the best and that it ought to be learnt by everyone. Those who do not speak this language do not belong in the nation being created nor even within the borders of the state. By attempting to create a single national language, the state apparatus is trying to use language consciousness as a lever for creating national consciousness.

When, therefore, one speaks of this or that language, what are we really talking about? No two people ever speak quite exactly the same way, irrespective of how much they think they speak the same language. It is my view that people acquire a particular language when they begin to think that the way they speak is in some way special. Whether a particular language exists or not is a psychological construct. When speakers feel that their speech is in some way special, they begin to construct within their minds all kinds of beliefs about the nature of the speech form they are using, what it is like and how it functions.

Mali

In West Africa, there is a special group of 'people of the mouth' who are trained specially to relate stories of the past. These 'people of the mouth' pass on these stories from one generation to the next. Books are not used, merely brains and speech. Amongst the Mading (Maninka, Mandinka) people, 'people of the mouth' tel stories of how ancient Mali came to be established. These stories are rather old since ancient Mali was established around 1217-37 A.D. Niane (1965) provides us with a version in writing of one of the many spoken versions, one which he heard from a particular 'man of the mouth', Mamadou Kouyate.

In the story, large numbers of warriors gathered around their leader, Sundiata, the aim being to fight a war to bring the entire region under one rule. But who were these warriors? The 'man of the mouth' gives us a list of the warriors. Then, he says, 'In short, all the sons of Mali were there, all those-who say "N'ko" ("I know" in Mading), all who speak the clear language of Mali were represented there.' (Niane 1965) The Mading people had an image of their language which was that it was clear and easy to

kleer laik dem biilaangs to Mali. An no oonlii fo se dem langgwij kleeer. Dem konchrii, to. Itnode a bush. It de aopm savana, kleeer an brait, jos laikdem langgwij. (Niane 1965:87 fn 12,93 fn 61)

Huu gyada rong Sundiata fo set op Mali a piipl wa tingk se dem taak di seem langgwij. Dem mek op dem main se if dem taak laik matii, dem iz matii, dem iz neeshan. Iz da gun mek dem tek op wepan go fait fo set op wan konchrii fo dem neeshan. Bot di stoorii no jos gat in huu Mading iz dem ruuts langgwij. Sundiata step-modan bin ron ii out from di plees we ii baan, laang taim. Hii chravl chravl go til ii riich, Wagadou an Merna, tuu plees faar faar naat-iis a we hii kom from. In dem plees-da, ploor Soninke taakin. Iz dem piipl-de ruuts langgwij. Di tuu langgwij, Soninke an Mading, iz famlii bot dem difrent. Bot Sundiata fain out se di Wagadou king an ii broda bin lam fo taak Mading. An in Merna, di king sista an nof piipl bin noo fo taak di langgwij, to.

Sundiata spen bout sevn yeer a Merna. Hii reez wan aarmii an kyai dem go bak dong we ii kom from. Wen ii annii gyada a Sibi, haaf a di Wagadou king aarmii an haaf di Merna king annii de de wid ii, redii fo akshan. Wel, Sundiata an ii aarmii biit op di aarmii wa bin kom geens ii an win di waar. Den, aal di king-dem pon ii said mek ii king oova aal king. Sundiata ton king fo di Wagadou an Merna king-dem, to. So, Sundiata ton king oova aal king fo di hool plees. Di konchrii wa hii ruulin an wa dem wa fala hii ruulin, gat tuu kain a piipl. Ii gat dem wa taak Mading fo dem ruuts langgwij. An den ii gat dem from Wagadou an Merna, wa lam taak Madingillfiadem lamdem oon ruuts langgwij, Soninke. (Niane 1965:34-6,55, 73-8)

Fo piiplaik dem in Wagadou an Merna, ruuts langgwij yuuzin wen dem taakin insaid hous an wid famlii an fren. Bot wen dem diilin wid eniting wa gat fo du wid di govament an di set-op wa ronin di hool konchrii, iz Mading ga fo yuuz. Iivn doo raitin no de, wa wii sii-in hee so iz wan langgwij paat-aaf. (Ferguson 1959) Soninke yuuzin fo insaid taak an wen yu taakin frii. Mading yuuzin fo taak wid piipl from outsaid yu oon plees, laik

understand. Since their language and their only was clear, anyone who could speak clearly belonged to Mali. They linked this clarity with what they considered the clarity and brightness of their land, open savannah, by contrast with neighbouring forested areas. (Niane 1965:87 fn 12,93 fn 61)

Those who rallied round Sundiata to set up ancient Mali all saw themselves as speakers of the same language. They had decided that, given their common speech, they were a single nation. That provided the basis for a call to arms to establish a single state. The traditional story, however, is not restricted to those who spoke Mading as a native/vernacular language. Sundiata's step-mother had chased him away from the place of his birth. He had travelled far to the north-east, until he reached the towns of Wagadou and Merna. There, Soninke was the language spoken by the general population. Soninke and Mading, although related, are quite distinct languages. Sundiata was to discover that, in spite of the widespread use of Soninke in the area, the king of Wagadou and his brother were both able to speak Mading. In Merna, he found that the sister of the king of Merna, as well as many other people, were also able to speak Mading.

Sundiata spent about seven years in Merna. He managed to raise an army with which he returned to the region of his origins. When his army had gathered at Sibi, he had with him half the army of the king of Wagadou and half that of the king of Merna, all ready to fight. Sundiata and his army prevailed on the field of battle, defeating the army that had marched against him. Then, the kings who had supported him all came together to make him emperor over them all. Sundiata came to be the emperor ruling over the kings of Wagadou and Merna as well. He ruled the entire area of West Africa. Sundiata and his successors had an empire which consisted of two kinds of people. There were those who spoke Mading as their native/vernacular language. There were others, those in Wagadou and Merna, who learnt Mading as a second language in addition to Soninke, their native/vernacular language. (Niane 1965:34-6, 55, 73-8)

For people such as those in Wagadou and Merna, their

dem wa wokin fo di Mali king oova aal king an ii govament.

^{142.} Insaid di Sundiata stoorii self, wii sii dis langgwij paat-aaf stoorii kopl taim. Wen Sundiata, ii moda an di res a ii famlii fon go Merna and Wagadou, wii heer se dem no eebl anadastan di langgwij piipl taakin pan di rood. Aaz Sundiata an ii famlii miit in front king broda, king sista ar king fo get griit, baps. King broda, king sista, iivn king, gyaafin wid Sundiata-dem in Mading. (Niane 1965:33-6)

From di taim Sundiata bring togeda ii solja-dem a Sibi, ii doz doon muuv widout ii taak-man. Di taak-man gat ehrii wok. Ii ga fo riimain evriibadii bout laang taim stoorii an hou dem riich to we dem de. An den, ii ga fo waeh wa go aan an spred di nyuuz bout wa hapmin. Sundiata setin op wan konehrii we hii iz king fo aal di ada king-demo An iz di taak-man wok fo si wa hapm an paas di stoorii aan word a mout, from tara to tara, from wan jenareeshan to di neks. Wok nomba ehrii iz fo spred fiilinz fo di Mali langgwij, Mading, an fiilinz fo di Mali neeshan. If dem fiilinz no de mongs di piipl-dem, di set-op in Mali konehrii gun brok dong. Iz so Sundiata an aal dem wa roul aafta ii yuuz taak - man. Iz so dem mek shoor se di hool set-op in Mali laas fo kopl honjred yeer we!. (Niane 1965:41,58,63)

Taak-man wok in Mali iz seryas wok. Yu ga fo ehreen fo du am. Yu no jos ga fo noo stoorii bout wa go aan laang taim. Yu ga fo lam dem so yu kyaan foget. Den, yu ga fo eebl tel dem so piipl kyan heer, andastan an no get disgos fo heer yu mout gain nain naats a owa. Milman Parry rait bout taak-piipl in laang taim

Griis an hou dem yuuz fo tel stoorii laik di Illiad. (Parry, 1971) From wa hii se, wen taak -piipl staat taak stoorii, no mata wa stoorii telin, ii doz fala wan set patan. Plos, dem doz put togeda di worddem in wan wee wa ii lam from in front. Di word-dem ga fo fit in wid bakgrong myuuzik wa pleein, an wid di ridim an di raim wa di taak-maan yuuzin fo diiliva di stoorii. Raim, ridom, myuuzik, sehriing a word wa faarm op from in front, aal iz sapii wa taakmaan ga fo lam fo ii du ii wok prapa. If ii no yuuz aal dem sapii

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native/vemacular language was being used in private interaction amongst family and friends. However, in transacting business involving the central government and the imperial state, it is Mading which would have been required. Although writing is not involved, what we see here is a form of diglossia. (Ferguson 1959) Soninke was being used for private and informal interaction. Mading, on the other hand, was the language of interaction with outsiders, notably those transacting official imperial business.

Within the Sundiata story itself, we see evidence of this diglossia on a few occasions. When Sundiata, his mother and the rest of his family fled to Mema and Wagadou, we are told that they were unable to understand the language spoken on the streets. However, as soon as Sundiata and his family arrive before the king's brother, his sister or the king himself, to be greeted, these royal personages begin to speak to Sundiata and party in Mading. (Niane 1965:33-6)

From the time Sundiata brings together his soldiers at Sibi, he does not do anything without the presence of his 'man of the mouth'. The 'people of the mouth' had three functions. The first of these was to remind everyone of their history and how they had arrived at their present situation. Secondly, was to spread by word of mouth amongst the population, news of what was taking place, the establishment of a single Mali empire under the rule of Sundiata. The third task was to spread language consciousness among speakers of Mading, with a view to also spreading national consciousness. For as long as such consciousness remained strong within the population, the state structure of imperial Mali would also remain strong. With the help of the 'people of the mouth', the Mali empire managed to survive for a considerable period of time. (Niane 1965:41, 58, 63)

To be a 'man of the mouth' in Mali was a serious undertaking. They had to train to carry out their job. They did not simply have to know the various historical accounts but also had to learn these stories so they would not forget. Then 'people of the mouth' had to be able to relate these long stories in a manner which would bring on boredom. Milman Parry writes about 'people of the

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da fo taak ii stoorii, tuu ting gun hapm. Fos, ii na gun eebl riimemba aal dem laang laang stoorii tuu gud. Den, wen ii taak am, ii stoorii gun steel an piipl na gun lisn.

Gaiyana/Jameeka
Wa bout di konchrii dem in di nou-taim Kamanwelt Kyaribiiyan, espeshalii Jameeka an Gaiyana. Ingglish iz di hai-langgwij wa di set-op in dem konchrii doz yuuz. Bot Iingglisch no di routs langgwij fo mos a di piipl in di plees. In dem plees-da, wen yu taakin frii ins aid, moos piipl doz do on yuuz Ingglish. Iz schriklii di ruuts langgwij, Jameekan an Gaiyaniiz, taakin. Jos laik in Wagadou and Merna in laang-taim Mali, langgwij paat-aaf de. Bot no evriibadii eebl jomp kraas di langgwij paat -aaf wen eva dem waant. Evriibadii noo fo yuuz di routs langgwij bot iz oonlii huu get nof skuulin from di set-op in konchrii, noo hai-langgwij. Huu no noo hai-langgwij get lef wen dem diilin wid set-op an govmnt.

Yu kyan si se aal dis suut huu noo aal tuu langgwij. Iz dem ronin di set-op in di konchrii. Bot memba wa wii taak bout wen wii staat aaf. If iz no ~ neeshan set op di konchrii, di set-op gun chrai mek wan neeshan out a di piipl-dem wa livin in di konchrii. Eva sins Ingglan legoo Gaiyana an Jameeka, tel dem se dem de pon dem oon, di piipl ronin di set-op in dem tuu plees se dem bilin neeshan. Dem in chaaj mek op neeshan parabl ('national motto'), laik 'One people, one nation, one destiny' an 'Out of many, one'. An dem chrai di langgwij ting, to. Bai yu gat di langgwij stoorii paat-aaf, dem kyaan yuuz routs langgwij fo bil dem neeshan. Mtaraal, iz Ingglish iz di langgwij fo di set-op dem lukin neeshan fiilinz fo. So, iz Ingglish dem ga fo yuuz. Bot hou yu gun mek neeshan fiilinz wid wan langgwij wa yuuzin in nof ada konchrii, Ingglan, Yangkii lan, Kyanada, Aastreelya, aal oova?

Wel, dem noo se dem taak Ingglish difrent from hou aal dem outs aid piipl taak am. So, dem tek Gaiyaniiz ar Jameekan Ingglish

mouth' in ancient Greece and about the stories which they told such as the Iliad. (Parry 1971) According to his analysis, when 'people of the mouth' tell stories, the story follows a particular line of development, irrespective of which story it is. In addition, words are assembled together in pre-set patterns, as oral formulae. The words have to be put together in such a way that they fit in with the background music being played, and the rhythm and rhyme being used to perform the story. Rhyme, rhythm, music, oral formulae, all these are forms of technology employed to help the 'people of the mouth' to perform their task efficiently. Without these forms of technology, such persons would tend to forget portions of their extremely long stories, or, when the stories are performed, the audience would refuse to listen.

Guyana/Jamaica

What of the countries of the modern Commonwealth Caribbean, especially Jamaica and Guyana. English is the official language of state in these countries. It is, however, not the native/vernacular language of the majority of the population. In these countries, English is for most not a language of private informal interaction. The native/vernacular language, Jamaican or Guyanese, is normally reserved for such functions. As in Wagadou and Merna in ancient Mali, diglossia exists. However, not everybody is able to function within the diglossia, switching language as appropriate. It is usually only those receiving high levels of education from the state system who would know the High language. Those without control of the official language are simply excluded when it comes to dealing with the state apparatus.

The diglossic set up, of course, favours the bilinguals within the society. However, there is the issue with which we started this discussion, that of creating ~ nation out of the people living within the boundaries of a given state. Ever since Britain granted independence, those in charge of the state have claimed to be nation building. National mottoes such as 'One people, one nation, one destiny', and 'Out of many, one', are commonplace.

I-II

II

I

I

an chrai mck piipl get fiilinz fo am. If ting wok out, den, di piipl in di konchrii gun staat fiil se aal badii wa taakin Gaiyaniiz aar Jameekan Ingglish iz matii an iz seem neeshan. Bot wa bout di nof-nof badii wa no taak di Ingglish? Hou dem gun get fiilinz fo am?

Yu gat fo yuuz di raitin stoorii pon demo If yu kyan get piipl fo biiliiv se oonlii hai-langgwij kyan rait an routs taak kyaan rait, dem gun mck op dem main se hai-langgwij moo beta dan ruuts langgwij. An if yu kyan mek dem fiil se langgwij iz langgwij oonlii wen ii rait dong, beta yet. Le dem fiil se if dem gun get fiilinz fo langgwij, ii no meksens fo get fiilinzfo taak wakyaan raitdong.

Yu kyan get piipl fo biiliiv dis kaa beer mout taak gat prablem. Wen yu oopm yu mout an taak, if no badii no de de fo kech wa yu se..in, wa yu taak gaan an kyaan kom bak. If di badii wa taakin an di badii wa lisnin no de togeda, seem plees, seem taim, dem kyaan gyaaf wid matii.

Raitin mek op fo help out mout taak. Wen yu gat alfabet raitin, yu doz put dong maak pon peepa fo stan fo di song-dem wa de in wan langgwij. Jos laik wen yu tek waata friiz am mek ais blak, maak doz friiz song pon peepa, stap dem from jos floo we. Eniitaim dem waant, wan badii kyan fain wisaid di mesij rait dong an riid am. Bot, bai di song-dem in wan langgwij difrent from song in wan neks langgwij, yu fain se yu kyaanjós tek op raitin in wan langgwij go yuuz am in wan neks langgwij. Ii doz kaal fo sapii fo tek wan raitin, kraas am oova from wan langgwij to wan neks wan. An den ii doz tek taim fo lam piipl fo riid an rait dem Don langgwij. Dem taakin di langgwij bot ii doz kaal fo sapii fo tek mout song mek maak pon peepa.

Raitin doz mek langgwij moo powaful. Wel, in plees laik Gaiyana an Jameeka, Ingglish, di hai-langgwij wan doz rait dong. An iz di raitin l'0 Ingglish, war), doz tiich in skuul. So, di set-op in nowadiiz deez Gaiyana an Jameeka no gat taim wid di kain a mout-taak sapii wa taak-maan bin gat in laang-taim Mali an Griis. Iz mooslii Ingglish rait dong doz yuuz fo ron di set-op in dem tuu

Efforts were made at the level of language, as well. There is a difficulty since the native/vernacular language cannot be used, given the use of English as the language of the state. English, therefore, is what had to be used. However, how does one create national consciousness manipulating as a symbol a language which is used in many other countries, Britain, the USA, Canada, Australia, etc.?

Those in charge of the state know that their brand of spoken English is distinct from that of others outside of their own countries. They there took Guyanese or Jamaican English, and attempted use it as a focus of language consciousness. If this succeeded, the people of the country would start feeling that all those who spoke Guyanese English or Jamaican English have a common identity and belong to the same nation. What, however, of the many who do not speak English? How will they develop any emotional attachment to English?

Here is where the issue of writing can be manipulated. If people can be made to believe that only the official High language can be written, and that the native/vernacular language cannot, they may come to the view that the former is better than the latter. Better yet if they can be convinced that a form of speech only becomes a language when it is written. This suggest that, if one is going to develop language consciousness, it does not make sense to do so for a language which cannot be written.

People can be brought around to believing this since it is a fact that speech has important limitations. If one speaks, and there is no one to hear, the spoken word disappears, never to come back again. If the speaker and the listener do not share the same time and space, no communication can take place.

Writing acts as a means of extending the scope of speech. In alphabetic writing system, marks are put on paper, each representing a sound in the language. This operates to freeze human language in time. As a result, anyone wishing to have access to a written message simply needs tCil locate where it is written and read it. However, it should be noted that sounds in one language are different from those in another. As a result, it is not possibly to take a system of writing used in one language

konchrii. Di set-op se ii chraii fo bil neeshan bot da neeshan bilin pon fiilinz fo Ingglish, di hai-langgwij wa rait dong. Di ruuts langgwij, bai ii no rait dong, no langgwij. So, noobadii kyaan gat langgwij fiilinz fo am.

Langgwij Paat-Aaf Geens Langgwij Sheed-Aaf

Mii jos taak bout Jameeka an Gaiyana laik if wa dem gat iz langgwij paat-aaf. Moo dan torti yeer nou, langgwij stodii piipl bin wachin an tingkin bout wa gain aan wid langgwij in plees laik Gaiyana an Jameeka. Wa dem se dem si? Langgwij sheed-aaf. Pon tap, yu ga reel-reel Ingglish, 'hai-taak'. Den, IiI bai IiI, yu si di langgwij staat sheed aaf. Di reel-reel Ingglish tonin, cheenjii sheed. Ii laasin ii Ingglishnis piis, piis. An seem taim, ii a get moo an moo laik wan difrent langgwij. Yu riich 'haaf-wee-taak' wen yu de in di midl a di sheed-aaf bitwiin hai-taak an loo-taak. Bii di taint yu riich batam, yu hit di 'loo-taak'. Dis wan moo faar from Ingglishdaneni taak wa taakin indi plees. (Bickerton 1975; Craig 1980; Rickford 1979, 1983)

Hai-taak supooz fo gi yu nof riispek wen yu taak am. Piipl doz tingk se yu gat nof skuulin an biilangs to hai klaas. Wen yu staat muuv dong di taak-dem pon di sheed aaf, di amongk a riispek yu get fo yu taak kotin bak. Bii di taint yu paas haaf-wee-taak an gain dong bai loo-taak, piipl no gi yu noo riispek an staat fiil se yu no gat noo klaas.

Di sheed-aaf doz wok tuu kain a wee. Fos,~ badii doz eebl yuuz taak wa de laangsaid wan anada pon di sheed-aaf. Ifyu doz

muuv wid aal kain a piipl in di plees, yu gun noo an eebl yuuz taak wa spred out waid kraas di sheed-aaf. If yu doz doon muuv rong tumoch, yu gun oonlii eebl yuuz taak pon wan nara spred. Di moo skuulin yu gat aar di moo hai klaas yu bii, di moo yu gun eebl yuuz taak wa neerreel..reel Ingglish, di hai-taak. Huu no gat skuulin aar huu no hai klaas, gun gat taak moo neer Kriiyool, di loo-taak.

Bot wa doz mek enii wan badii pik out wan taak from mongs

and apply it to another language. In addition, it takes time for people to learn to read and write their own language. They may speak the language but will have to become familiar with the technology used for representing it on paper.

Writing increases the effectiveness of language. In countries such as Guyana and Jamaica, the High language is the only one which is written. And it is writing in English, exclusively, which is taught in schools. Therefore, the state in modern Jamaica and Guyana, does not concern itself with the technologies associated with the 'people of the mouth' in ancient Mali and Greece. Written English is the main means by which the state apparatus functions. The state is attempting to build national feeling, but that feeling is being built on language consciousness linked to English. The native/vernacular language, as an exclusively oral language, is not considered a language. In theory, therefore, no one can have any language consciousness associated with it.

Diglossia Versus Continuum

I have discussed Jamaica and Guyana as if they were diglossic communities. For more than thirty years, linguists have studied the language situations of places like Guyana and Jamaica. Their conclusion is that linguistic continua exist in these places. At the top, occupying acrolectal position, is standard English. Then, bit by bit, one sees the language changing as one moves away from the acrolect. It is losing its English features bit by bit. At the mid-point in the process, one passes through the mesolect. Eventually, when one reaches the bottom of this continuum, one is at the basilect, occupied by forms of speech maximally deviant from English. (Bickerton 1975; Craig 1980; Rickford 1979, 1983)

Using the acrolect is supposed to grant status to the speaker. People assume that use of such speech indicates high levels of education or high social position. As ones use of language moves down the continuum, the respect induced by ones choice of language variety diminishes. As one moves past the mesolect, heading in the direction of the basilect, ones speech is supposed

aal di taak-dem wa dem eebl yuuz? Wan ting iz huu yu taakin to. If yu waan shoo se yuu an dem iz matii, yuu yuuz di taak wa dem yuuzin aar di wan yuu tingk se dem gun waan yuu yuuz. If yu waan shoo se yuu an dem no matii, yu yuuz wan taak wa difrent from wa dem yuuzin aar wa dem ekspek yu fo yuuz. Wan neks ting iz E\ yu taakin bout. Yu mait de taakin bout somting wa gat fo du wid piipl aar plees wa tai op in yuu main wid Ingglisch aar Kriiyool. If yu waan shoo se yu laik wa yu taakin bout, yu gun yuuz taak wa moo neer di taak wa yuu tingk gat fo du wid di stoorii yu taakin bout. An if yu waan shoo se yu no laik wa yu taakin bout, yu gun pik wan wa moo faar. We yu taakin, insaid aar outsaid, hou yu taakin, frii aar stif, doz help yu mek op yu main wa fo taak. Moos taim, wen yu taakin outsaid, yu doz rada yuuz taak wa neer di hai taak en a di sheed-aaf. An insaid, yu doz rada yuuz taak neer di loo-taak en. Bot yu no bong an blaij. Yu doz pik out--akardin to wa yu main gi yu.

Oi hool pik-outstoorii de in yu main, an langgwij stodii badii no iivn beerlii staat andastan hou piipl main doz wok. An piipl doz cheenj dem main stedii .seem taim dem taakin. So dem aalweez 'taak-cheenj'in' pikin out wan taak, cheenj'in to wan neks wan, komin bak to di wan dem yuuz bifoor an so aan, iivn insaid di seem sentens.

Oi langgwij stodii piipl fiil se dis Ingglisch/Kriiyool sheed-aaf stoorii wa de in Gaiyana an Jameeka, difrent from paat-aaf. Oem fiil se di Ingglisch/Kriiyool biznis speshal. Fos ting, dem se aal di taak-dem in di sheed-aaf a yuuz neerlii aal di seem word-demo Moos a di word-dem baara from Ingglisch. Wen wan badii cheenj from wan taak pan di sheed-aaf to di wan laangsaid am, dem no kraasin oova no lain from wan taak to di neks. Oem jos slaidin kraas, iizii, iizii. An dem no iivn noo se iz da dem duuin.

Moos a di langgwij stodii piipl wa diilin wid di Kyaribiiyan doz tekdi sheed-aaf stoorii yuuz fo shoo se Jameekan an Gaiyaniiz an dem no separeet from Ingglisch. So, yu kyaan chriit dem laik separeet langgwij. Oem taak-da kyan neva ton langgwij fo di set

to gain no respect and to lead to the assumption on the part of listeners that the speaker is of low social rank.

The continuum functions in two ways. Firstly, an individual usually has a repertoire which takes in contiguous lects on the continuum. Persons with wide social exposure would tend to control a band of lects spread over a wide span of the continuum. If one's exposure is more limited, the spread of one's repertoire will be narrower. The more education one has or the higher one's social class, the more likely one is to be able to use standard English, the acrolect or High language variety. Those without education or high social class are more likely to use varieties closer to the basilect, the Creole end of the continuum.

What causes speakers to select one lect from the range available in their repertoires? One factor is who is being addressed. If one wants to express solidarity with the listener, the speaker tries to use the variety used or expected by that listener. If one wishes to express distance, one shifts one's choice of lect in the opposite direction. Another issue is that of subject. One might be dealing with a topic which, in one's mind, is linked to either English or Creole. If one wishes to express a positive attitude to one's subject, then one will select a lect closer to that with which the topic is linked. A negative attitude would have the opposite effect. The situation in which speech is taking place, whether public or private, formal or informal, all influence the choice of variety or lect from within the speaker's repertoire. Private and informal type situations tend to favour the choice of more acrolect varieties, public and informal ones more basilectal ones.

The whole issue of selection from within one's repertoire is psychological. Linguistics has barely started to arrive at an understanding of how the mind works in such situations. As it is, people change their minds constantly in the course of a single interaction. As a result, code-switching is common. Speakers are constantly choosing one variety, switching to another, then shifting back to the original, even within the same sentence.

The general view among linguists is that the English/Creole continuum in Guyana and Jamaica is distinct from diglossia. They view the continuum as being in some sense **special**.

op an di skuul in dem konchrii. Dem se, in plees laik Aruba, Boneer an Kyuurasou, Papiamentu, di routs langgwij de get moos a ii word-dem from Spanish an Potagii. Di hai-Ianggwij iz Doch. Evriibadii noo wen dem taakin Doch from wen dem taakin Papiamentu. Di wok wa di tuu langgwij du paat-aaf an, pon tap ada, di word-dem in wan langgwij difrent from di word-dem in di neks langgwij. So, if di konchrii mek op ii main se,lik dong di paat-aaf an gi di loo-langgwij di hai-Ianggwij wok, dem noo se di loo-taak de pon ii oon an no miks op tumoch wid di hai-Ianggwij. Dem se di seem kain a ting fo Surinam, wid di Ingglish word-dem in Sranan maakin am aaf from di hai-Ianggwij, Doch, aar St. Luusha we di loo-taak, Kweyol, mooslii tek ii word-dem from French an we di hai-Ianggwij iz Ingglish.

livn dong to Heetii dem se difrent from Jameeka an Gaiyana. Wel, di loo-taak, Heeshan, tek mos a ii word-dem from French an Frenchizdihai-Ianggwij. Valdman (1978,1982) taakboutsheedaaf wid di song-demo In reel-reel Heeshan, yu no ga front vowil wa rong. French ga tuu set a front vowil, dem wa rong an dem wa no rong. Den, yu ga wan set a in-bitwiin taak we dem bilin sentens laik in reel-reel Heeshan bot dem drapin in Frenchii rong front vowil, to. Bot Valdman fiil se, wen yu kom fo luk at hou di word-dem yuuz fo bil sentens, wan kleeer lain jraa bitwiin French an Heeshan, maakin dem aaf from wan anada. Dem langgwij stodii piipl wa diilin wid plees laik Gaiyana an Jameeka fiil se no lain kyaan jraa. bitwiin Gaiyaniiz/Jameekan an Ingglish. Izdat mek Gaiyana an Jameeka gat langgwij sheed-aaf. An iz da mek laa kyan paas in Heetii fo reez op Heeshan mek am du hai-Ianggwij wok, bot notn so kyaan hapm fo Gaiyaniiz aar Jameekan.

Le wii luk dis aagyuument geens Gaiyaniiz/Jameekan gud. Sheed-aaf stap routs taak in Gaiyana an Jameeka from ton hai-langgwij, Y u kyaan se yu routs taak a separeet langgwij wen ii gat sheed-aaf wid wan neks langgwij, Ingglish. Bot hou yu kyan get da neks langgwij, Ingglish, wen ii de pan wan sheed-aaf wid Kriiyool? Reel-reel Kriiyool no supooz fo de kaa piipl aIweez

The first part of their argument is that all the varieties on the continuum use more or less the same vocabulary. Most of the items are of English origin. When a speaker shifts from one variety on the continuum to an adjacent one, it is a case of a slide rather than a jump. Movement is almost imperceptible.

Most linguists concerned with the Caribbean take the view that the Creole/English continuum establishes that Guyanese and Jamaican have no existence separate from English. They, therefore, cannot receive treatment as a separate language. These forms of speech can never be converted in languages of state and school in the countries where they are spoken. They argue that in countries such as Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, the native/vernacular language derives most of its vocabulary from Spanish and Portuguese, while coexisting with the High language, Dutch. It is clear to all when Papiamentu is being used and when Dutch is being spoken. The two languages have functioned in diglossia and the difference in vocabulary serves to keep them distinct. Therefore, in the event that a decision is taken to destroy the diglossia, elevating the native/vernacular language to official status, this is an easy enough task. The same is true of Surinam. The vocabulary of English origin in ~ranan, the native/vernacular language, serves to mark it off from Dutch, the official and High language. St Lucia provides another example where the vocabulary of the native/vernacular variety, Kweyol, of mainly French origin, distinguishes it from English, the official High language.

Even a language situation like that of Haiti is considered distinct from that of Jamaica or Guyana. The Low language variety, Haitian, derives most of vocabulary from French. It coexists alongside French, the High language. Valdman (1978, 1982) does refer to the existence of a continuum with regard to the phonological systems of the two languages. In basilectal Haitian, there are no front rounded vowels. French, on the otherhand, has two sets of front vowels, one set unrounded, the other set rounded. There is, as well, mesolectal forms which are Haitian in their syntax but which distinguish between rounded and unrounded front vowels. However, Valdman feels that, in relation to the syntax of the two languages, there is a structural gap which

taakin an miksin Kriiyool an Ingglisch. Bot, da miin se nobadii no taakin reel-reel Ingglisch niida. Wen piipl taakin, dem slaidin aal di taim kraas di sheed-aaf. Wan en gat reel-reel Ingglisch, di ada en ga reel-reel Kriiyool. Kriiyool no de kaa ii de pan sheed-aaf. Bot Ingglisch no de pon di seem sheed-aaf. Hou sheed-aaf haambog Kriiyool an no haambog Ingglisch?

Dem langgwij stodii piipl mait ansa se Ingglisch de kaa wii kyan noo wa iz Ingglisch. Wii noo kaa Ingglisch ga word-buk an ruul buk. Kriiyool no gat dem ting-dci so Kriiyool no langgwij. Bot if word-buk an ruul-book iz wa doz mek langgwij, den if wii rait di word-buk an ruul-buk fo Gaiyaniiz an Jameekan, dem ton langgwij jos laik Ingglisch. Wii kyan den tek dem routs langgwij dis, brok dong paat-aaf an shub dem in fo du hai-langgwij wok. Iz no sheed-aaf stapin Kyaribiiyan routs langgwij from ton hai langgwij. Iz powa. Huu gat powa ins aid di set-op wa ronin dem_ konchrii laik ting jos hou dem staan. Dem gun du dem watsmata fo kiip di langgwij paat-aafwa de. Di seem hai-langgwij wayuuz fo ron di set-op yuuzin fo chrai mek piipl get fiilinz fo neeshan. Bot wa kain neeshan? Wan neeshan wa gun fiil se ii biilangs to di seem set-op wa hoolin dong dem routs langgwij, Nyyu Langgwij, Nyyu Neeshan?

In Jameeka, it gat nof neem, Dob myuuzik, Diijee myuuzik, Daans Haal myuuzik. Piipl kaalin am myuuzik bot mii link se iz biikaaz dem kyaan fain wan beta word fo yuuz. Iz reelii taak, dis. Taak wid raim, taak wid eidom, taak wid myuuzik bakgrong, jos laik di taak-piipl dem in laang-taim Mali. Bot nyuu taim mashiin de fo riikaard an plee bak rid om chrak. Di nyuu taim Jameeka taak-piipl, di diijee-dem, nou kyan jos mek op liriks an chaant dem geens wan ridom chrak wade pan rekaard. An dem kyan yuuz wan song sistem fo montiplai di song wa dem mekin, so dem kyan pafaam biifoor big big kroud. An dem kyan go a rekaard schuujo go mek rekaard wa kyan sel fo piipl plee in dem hous aar in daans

serves to distinguish quite clearly between the two languages. The established position on Guyana and Jamaica is that no demarcation exists in the syntax. It is this which makes these situation. continua rather than diglossic. Therefore, whereas a law can be passed in Haiti elevating Haitian to official functions in Haiti, no such law would be possible in Guyana or Jamaica.

Let us examine properly the argument being made against Guyanese and Jamaican. The continuum prevents these varieties from ever being elevate to the position of High language. These native/vernacular varieties cannot be treated as distinct when they are part of a continuum with English. How is it possible, however, that English exists, when it also exists on a continuum with Creole. Basilectal Creole is supposed not to have an autonomous existence because speakers are constantly mixing it with English. By that same token, however, no one in these societies speaks standard English either. Speakers are constantly sliding across the different varieties within their repertoires spanning portions of the continuum. If the continuum blocks the existence of Creole as an autonomous linguistic system in these communities, it must have the same effect on English.

The response might be that English has a separate existence because we have normative descriptions of English, notably in the form of grammar books and dictionaries. However, if what it takes to produce a distinct language is normative grammars and dictionaries, it would be sufficient to provide these for Jamaican and Guyanese, for them to become autonomous languages as well. It would then be an easy proposition to destroy the existing diglossias in Jamaica and Guyana, inserting these language varieties into the High functions previously reserved for English. The existence of continua is not the reason for Jamaican and Guyanese not being granted official status. It is a question of power. Those who have power within the state like things the way they are. They will do their best to maintain the existing diglossia. They will manipulate the High language to try and develop national feeling but what kind of national feeling? One which encourages people to feel part of a state system which suppresses their native/vernacular language.

aar pon di reejoo.

Dijee tekin laang-taim ridom chrak an chaantin fresh liriks pon demo Somtaimz, di ridom nyuu. Nyuu aar 001, wen wan ridom kom in, diijee doz tek am mek neerlii wan honjred difrent vorshan, aal adem faitin geens wan anada fo get papyula. Di kroud-dem wa falarin di diijee-dem kyaan de sarchin fo myuuzik wa nyuu, myuuzik wa fresh, kaaz iz di seem ridom chrak hitin dem in aal dem difrent vorzhan. So, iz wa dem lukin fo? Mii tingk se iz di liriks-dem, wa dem se, hou dem bit an hou dem diiliva. Rait nou, di diijee-dem hool aan pon aal di fansii song mashiin-dem an di sapii wa de fo wok di mashiin-dem, an yuuzin dem fo push dem routs langgwij.

Dem livin wid wan set-op in di konchrii wa wokin wid raitin an langgwij paat-aaf we oonlii di hai-langgwij rait dong. Seem taim, dem routs langgwij no gat no prapa raitin. Bot ii gat nyuutaim sapii an nyuu-taim song mashiin. An aal dem fansii song riikaardin mashiin getin chiip, chiip. Eniibadii kyan set-op wan song sistem an blaas songz loud so nof touzo piipl kyan heer. Ii chiip an iizii fo go in schliujoo an kot wan rekaard. So nof badii duuin am. Seem taim, nof piipl no gat no fiiliinz fo di kain a neeshan wa di set-op chraain fo mek. Fiilinz fo da neeshan doz kaal fo fiilinz fo di hai-langgwij, Ingglisch. Huu no taak am aar huu no taak am gud, gat prablem. Nofa dem fain am haard fo gat fiilinz fo wan langgwij wa dem no noo. Nou, di nyuu taim mashiin wid di nyuu taim sapii kyaan tek di insaid loo-langgwij an put am outs aid so aal badii kyan heer. Huu doz go daans haal, huu dozfala diijee, fain bak somting wa nof piipl foget. Yu no gat fo gat raitin fo gat wan langgwij. If wan set a piipl tingk se dem taak di seem wee an waan mek deself into neeshan, dem kyan du it, sheed-aaf aar noo sheed-aaf, raitin aar noo raitin.

Di diijee-dem a di taak-piipl fo di Jameekan-dem wa a mek wan difrent neeshan from di wan wa di set-op a push. Espeshalii if yu kyan get nyuu taim mashiin an sapii fo help out, mout taak mosii kyan mek neeshan an set-op konchrii in nou-a-diiz-deez.

In Jamaica, it goes by many names, Dub music, DJ music, Dance Hall music. It is being referred to as music for want of a better description. This is all really a form of speech, speech with

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rhyme, with rhythm, with musical backing, just like that produced by 'people of the mouth' in ancient Mali. New technologies,

however, now exist to record and play back rhythm tracks. The modern Jamaican 'people of the mouth', the DJs, can now simply

improvise lyrics, chanting them over a recorded rhythm track. They can also employ electronic sound systems to amplify the

sound, allowing them to perform before large crowds. They can also make recordings in studios, copies of which can be sold for people to play at home, in dances or on the radio.

Many DJs use old rhythm tracks, chanting new lyrics over them. On other occasions, original rhythm tracks are used. However, new or old, when a track becomes popular DJs will take it and make a hundred different versions, each of which is struggling with the other to gain popularity amongst the fans. The

crowds who support the DJs are clearly not looking for musical originality. It is, after all, the same rhythm track hitting them in different versions. What, then, are they searching for? I would suggest that it is the lyrics, what they say, how they are constructed, and how they are delivered by the DJ. The DJ has captured all of the fancy sound recording technology and is using

it to promote the native/vernacular language of Jamaica.

They exist within a state that operates with writing and a diglossic situation in which only the High language is written.

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New Technology, New Language, New Nation?

In Jamaica, it goes by many names, Dub music, DJ music, Dance Hall music. It is being referred to as music for want of a better description. This is all really a form of speech, speech with rhyme, with rhythm, with musical backing, just like that produced by 'people of the mouth' in ancient Mali. New technologies, however, now exist to record and play back rhythm tracks. The modern Jamaican 'people of the mouth', the DJs, can now simply improvise lyrics, chanting them over a recorded rhythm track. They can also employ electronic sound systems to amplify the sound, allowing them to perform before large crowds. They can also make recordings in studios, copies of which can be sold for people to play at home, in dances or on the radio.

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They exist within a state that operates with writing and a diglossic situation in which only the High language is written. Simultaneously, the native/vernacular language has no established writing system. But the DJ has access to all of this new high technology, and it is becoming cheaper to acquire by the day. Anyone with an electronic sound system can amplify sounds so that even thousands of people can hear. At the same time, many people are alienated from the kind of nation being constructed by the state apparatus. Feelings for that nation 'require an attachment to the High language, English. Those who do not speak

English or have a limited command of it, have difficulty feeling

Aaftaraal, laang-taim Mali, laang-taim Griis du am, an dem no bin gat song mashiin an aal da sapii. 001 taim stoorii mosii kyan kom bak ageen. Ada mii tingk se som adem Jameekan a chrai fain out, an dem a chrai am out wid dem oon routs langgwij, Jameekan.

commitment to it. With the new technology has served to help make the private use of the native/vernacular language very public. Those who attend dances or who follow the DJs have rediscovered something which many people have forgotten. One does not have to have writing in order to have a language. If a group of people consider that they share a common form of speech, they can constitute themselves into a nation, continuum or no continuum, writing or no writing.

The DJs are the 'people of the mouth' for those Jamaicans who are attempting to create an alternative national identity from the one being promoted by the state. Particularly if it is possible to lay ones hands on the host of modem sound reproduction technology, speech can in the modem world, perhaps, be the basis for the creation of national identity and a state to go with it. This was possible in ancient Mali and ancient Greece. Perhaps history can be made to repeat itself. It is my view that it is precisely this which some sections of the Jamaican population are attempting to find out, and they are doing so with their native/vernacular language, Jamaican.

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III

