# Re-shaping language policy in Vanuatu education

A symposium at





### Languages and status

1980 Constitution

National language: Bislama

Official languages: English, French, Bislama

Main languages of education: English, French

+ 135 vernaculars

#### Sessions

1. Language policy across Pacific polities (Robert Early)

- The development of the language policy (Robert Charley)
- A donor perspective: Investment in education as a poverty reduction strategy

(Christelle Thieffry)

4. Relief and acceptance

(Helen Tamtam)

- 5. Let the creole come (officially) into school (Leslie Vandeputte-Tavo)
- 6. Corpus development of Bislama

(Fiona Willans)

# Re-shaping language policy in Vanuatu education

# Language policy across Pacific polities

- Robert Early, University of the South Pacific and VESP
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National multilanguage education policy opens up ideological and implementational space for MLE – top-down legitimisation.

- The need for Pacific languages to have a significant and meaningful role in education is no longer contested.
- -The limitations of transitional model of bilingual education are understood: subtractive bilingualism.
- —PRIDE project has fostered the development of Strategy Statements, Workplans, all kinds of Frameworks, on the PADDLE database.
- -But are they "explicit, comprehensive, and public" (JLB)?

Local actors may open or close spaces for implementation – need bottom up support.

- Community awareness and ownership.
  - Cultural and social argument for use of vernaculars is usually understood.
  - Pedagogical argument is not easily embraced.
  - Economic argument against vernacular education is misguided, but powerful.
- NSAs have shown that it can be done.
- Support can be withheld at levels below that of national policy – PNG.

- Policies must account for power relations among languages, and planning must be for all languages in all social spaces
  - Without support, all Pacific languages are ultimately endangered by the international strength of English
  - Language-in-education policy making must not occur in isolation, but must be integrated into broader national agenda
  - National Language Commissions (Vanuatu, Samoa, Niue)

MLE fosters the transfer of subject knowledge, language development and learning for all 4 language skills in L1 and L2.

- Learning can take place through languages other than English and French!
- But, "the words, expressions and technical terms need to be separately taught in the mother tongue" (JLB)

For a just and fair world, MLE provides

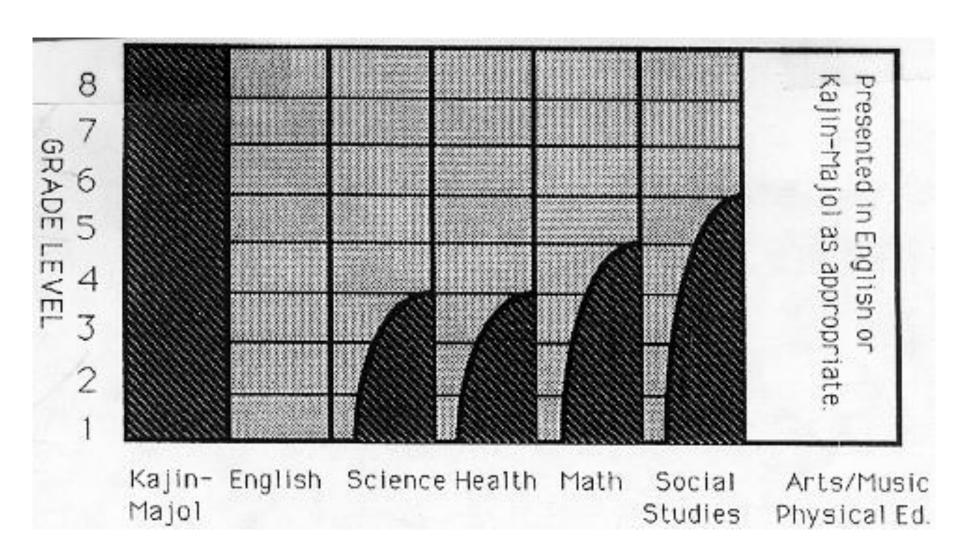
- voices for reclaiming the local
- choices for reaffirming identity
- spaces for revitalising indigenous ways of being and doing.

"Employability" yes, but even on best case scenarios, what proportions of Pacific school leavers can be absorbed into paid employment?

### Language Policy for Education: Samoa

Year	Content subjects				Sāmoan (hrs/week)	English (hrs/week)		
1	100	<i>(</i>	~	0	7.5	1.5 oral (Term 3)		
2	100	SĀMOAN		0	7.5	1.5 oral		
3	80 M		20		5	5		
4	70			30	5	5		
5	60			40	5	5		
6	50		000	50	5	5		
7	50		ENGLISH	750	5	5		
8	50		Mol	50	5	5		
9	50			50	4	4		
10	50			50	4	4		
11	50			50	4	4		
12	50			50	4	4		
13	50			50	4	4		

#### Language Policy for Education: Marshall Is (former)



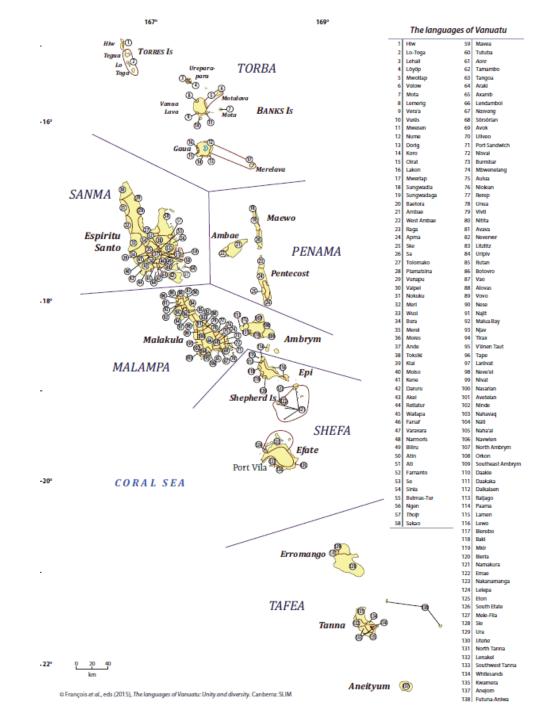
#### **Language Policy for Education: Marshall Islands**

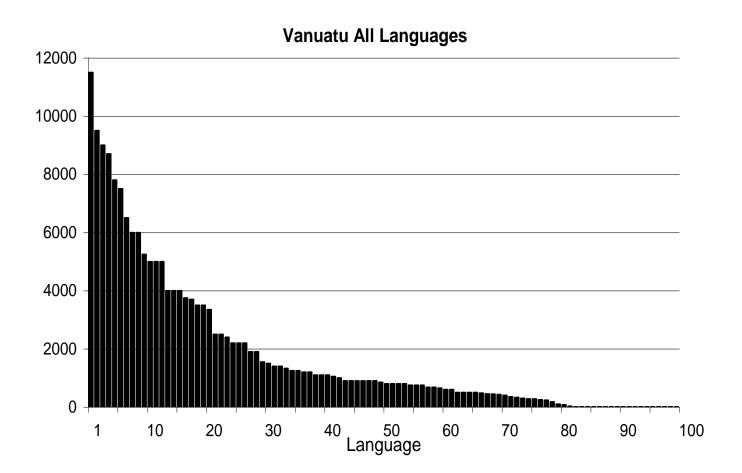
Grade	English Language Arts (hrs/week)	Kajin Aelōñ Kein Language Arts (hrs/week)	Other School Subjects				
12	5	5					
11	5	5	OIES		PE/ ART	МАТН	
10	5	5	SOCIAL STUDIES	НЕАLТН			SCIENCES
9	5	5	SIAL 9	HEA			
8	7.5	7.5	200				
7	7.5	7.5					
6	7.5	7.5					
5	7.5	7.5	Kajin Aelōñ Kein as LOI Including outcomes for English use			use	
4	7.5	7.5	merading outcomes for English use				
3	7.5	7.5	Kajin Aelōñ Kein as LOI Math, Science, Health, Social Studies, PE, Art, Project- based learning				
2	7.5	7.5					
1	7.5	7.5					
K	7.5	7.5					

# Language map of Vanuatu

135 active languages

population: 275,000





### Language Policy for Education: Vanuatu

YEAR	CONTENT SUBJECTS	TEACHING OF LANGUAGES									
K		100									0
1-1											oral
1-2				L1							oral
1-3											oral
2-1	L1										
2-2	MOI										
2-3											
3-1			20	80							
3-2											
3-3						Щ					
4						.2		70	30		
5											
6											
7							60	40			
8											
9	L2										
10	MOI								L	.3	
11											
12											
13											

### Implementation Challenges



What language is spoken by children in Year 1?

What language is spoken by Year 1 teachers?

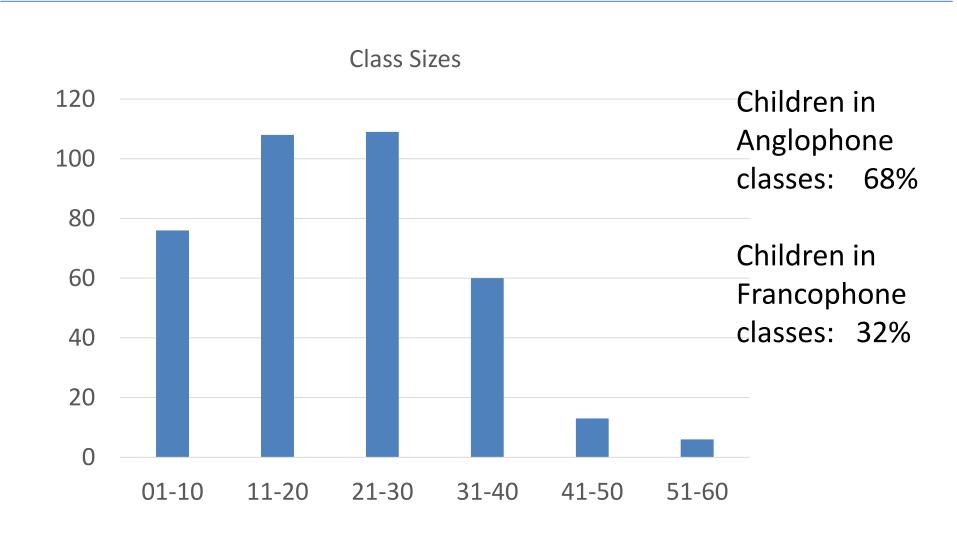
#### **Profile of Schools**



<b>Government primary schools</b>	301
Church primary schools	106
TOTAL	407
Number surveyed	371 = 91%

#### Number of children represented = 8027





### Main language of community



Language	Number of schools
Bislama	56 = 15%
Vernacular	315 = 85%

But there are situations where children may not know the vernacular language of the community.

### Language known by children



Language	Number of schools	
Bislama 100%	54	<b>05</b> 0/
Bislama 70%-99%	40	25%
Vernacular 100%	159	740/
Vernacular 70%-99%	105	71%
Others	14	4%

#### **Profile of Teachers**



Female	76%
Male	24%

#### **Profile of Teachers**



#### In schools were students can use vernacular

88% of teachers know the vernacular

12% of teachers do not

#### **Profile of Teachers**



Education	
Not completed Year 10	14%
Completed Year 10	29%
<b>Completed Year 11</b>	3%
<b>Completed Year 12</b>	40%
VITE certificate	10%

#### **Conclusions**



- The potential for using the vernacular languages in early education is very large.
- There are only a few situations of mixed vernaculars.
- It is already an established practise that the Year 1 teacher is a speaker of the vernacular language spoken by children.

# Re-shaping language policy in Vanuatu education

# The development of the language policy

- Robert Charley, Principal Education Officer, Curriculum, Ministry of Education and Training, Vanuatu
- crobert@vanuatu.gov.vu

# Shaping language policy in Vanuatu

The new Education Language Policy marks a significant shift for the education system in Vanuatu, but where did it start?

- It took a century for Vanuatu to allow teaching vernacular in the classrooms.
- > 74 years of colonial administration and 34 years after independence, Vanuatu decides to use mother tongue for teaching and leaning in early grades.

#### **Chronology of events**

- > 1990, existence of Education Master plan
- first piloting to teach in vernacular in some schools in Vanuatu.
- ➤ The project failed for various reasons (No proper curriculum framework to enhance the project.)
- ➤ 1997, the Vanuatu Government applied a Comprehensive Reform program (CRP) with the perspective for better service delivery. In the Education sector, the quality of the Education becomes an important agenda item.
- Rethinking Vanuatu Education.
- ➤ 2001, the new Education Act, makes provision for introducing mother tongue in schools.

# MOET Corporate Plans 2009-2017

The ongoing education support to the MOET since 2009, Australia DFAT & NZ MFAT provide financial assistance to improve access, quality and school management thus the decision to review the national curriculum from year 1-13.

This is in progress and in implementation starting from year 1 in 2016. Education Language Policy is implemented starting with the introduction of Bislama and vernacular languages in early grades.

2006 CRP summits

2007 Education Summit

2005 Vanuatu Education Sector Strategy (VESS)

3 main strategic goals: Access-Quality-Management

2009 Vanuatu Education Support Action plan (VESAP)

3 main strategic goals: Access- Quality- Management

2013 Vanuatu Education Road Map (VERM)

3 main strategic goals: Access- Quality- Management

2014 -2017 Vanuatu Education Support Plan (VESP)

3 main strategic goals: Access- Quality- Management

### What process has Vanuatu used so far?

- Bottom up approach-2009, wider consultations for 800 people selected from all socio backgrounds and participated in the national curriculum forum to discuss the content of the national curriculum statement for Vanuatu (VNCS).
- The proposals of the VNCS framework were presented to the participants. The outcomes of their deliberations helped design the Vanuatu National Curriculum Statement.
- The draft was designed and taken back to the second Forum for comments and improvements.
- Out of 29 versions, the document reached its final version and was approved by the NEC and COM. With the assistance of the VNCS to review the National Curriculum, CDU developed the following policies to provide relevant and contextualized teaching content: The Language Policy (VNELP), The Assessment Policy (VNARP), TTP, SCP to assist the review of the national curriculum and assist its implementation.

# Education language policy development process

- 2010, a task force is assigned by the MOET to contact other consultations through the six provinces to get peoples' views on multilingualism/bilingualism in Vanuatu.
- The model that embraces the multicultural context and diversities in Vanuatu.
- The model that embraces the inspirations of the constitution and the provisions of education to teach children in their first language in early years.
- That no other language(s) dominates others for socio-academic reasons.
- The data was collected, presented with different scenarios to the MOET, and the CDU drafted the Education Language Policy.
- The policy was approved by the National Education Commission and the Council of Ministers.
- The whole spectrum of the language engineering task was presented to the national parliament.
- Vanuatu CDU is now engaged to develop materials and teachers supports to implement the new curriculum policy with the assistance of Cofe under DFAT &MFAT funding assistance.

#### Where we are at the moment?

- The VNCS, the ELP, the reporting and assessment policies are informing the current curriculum review and its implementation
- The primary syllabuses are developed and completed from year 1-6 and designed according to OBE model thus respecting prior learning of the students.
- The development of year 1 teachers support materials written in Bislama, processed in sequences, supporting introduction of Bislama and mother tongue in schools.
- Baseline data will be collected for next 4 years to monitor, check, review or improve and inform the next steps for decisions.
- It is anticipated to establish a monitoring mechanism to guide the system achieving the end goals, to raise literacy and numeracy level of the students.

# Awareness of the ELP introduction to schools

- Nation-wide awareness on curriculum reform according to VNCS with its new and relevant policy to drive the new curriculum forward.
- School based management, ZCAs, ISU staff carried out an extensive awareness of Language and Assessment Policies to schools in the country prior the roll out in 2015.
- In-Service Unit and Provincial Trainers trained year 1 teachers for the implementation of the year curriculum.
- VITE is on process to review training modules to match the new curriculum content

# CDU pursue the development of materials in Bialama and mother tongue for early grades

- Language and Communication for year 1 Teacher Guide and Support be implemented 2016.
- Year 1 and 2 Maths TG be implemented 2016
- Year 1 and 2 Living in Our Community be implemented in 2016
- Year 1 and 2 Science TG be implemented in 2018
- The above TG and support resources are developed in Bislama and next year support resources will be available in 46 vernaculars.

# Way forward

- This is a major change in the Vanuatu education system which will help enhance literacy and numeracy development.
- We are now at the point of thinking and anticipating the next steps regarding effective transition to L2 English and French.
- This needs to be explicitly connected for classroom practioners, Teacher Education Centres and the Teachers In Service Unit to allow smooth transition.

Thank you

Merci

Tank yu tumas

# Re-shaping language policy in Vanuatu education

# A donor perspective: Investment in education as a poverty reduction strategy

- Christelle Thieffry, Senior Program Manager, Australian Aid Program, Vanuatu
- christelle.thieffry@dfat.gov.au

# Strategy for Australia's aid investment in education 2015-2020

- Education is a priority sector Australian aid policy: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability
- A new Education Strategy released in September 2015
- Effective education systems can contribute directly to poverty reduction, economic growth and stability
- Getting the foundations right & Learning for All

#### Australia – New-Zealand - Vanuatu Partnership

- Australia and New Zealand have been investing in education, in diverse activities to strengthen the sector as a whole
- From 2008-2013, both governments decided to join efforts, partnering with the GoV in a Sector Wide Approach for the education sector, (sub-sector: primary)
- 2013 saw a shift in modalities of implementation

#### Vanuatu Education Support Program

#### some of the inherited challenges

- Language as a barrier to literacy
- Lack of adequate teacher's training
- Non- availability of reading material
- Lack of community's support

#### Some of the actions

- Implementation of the education language policy endorsed by Council of Ministers in 2012:
  - Use in school of languages the children understand
  - Teacher's proficiency in the mother tongue is higher than in the international languages
  - Limit the barrier between the community and the school as they share a common language
  - Recognition from the school of the importance of culture
- Focus on pre-service and in-service training
- Strong awareness campaign in the communities of school based management
- Development of learning and teaching material in Bislama and vernacular languages

- The language policy was treated as a tool to be used to move forward. As it was orchestrated by external actor, technical adviser, the tensions were set aside.
- Its implementation is now seen as a mean to reach out to the children and to offer better access to quality education

## Re-shaping language policy in Vanuatu education

# Relief and Acceptance: Initial response and feedback to the new Language Policy

- Helen Tamtam, Early Years Literacy Specialist, Vanuatu Education Support Program
- helen.tamtam@usp.ac.fj

#### The National Awareness 2015

Before the New Curriculum Rollout in 2015, it was necessary to organise another massive Awareness to inform:

- -teachers who will be the drivers of this new educational reform
- -Communities

(July – October 2014)

#### Information covered

- New Curriculum reform- Reasons why a reform is necessary for education
- The Language Policy endorsed in 2012
- Revised Assessment Policy
- Literacy and Numeracy kit

## Organisation of Awareness (CDU/SBM/ZCAs)

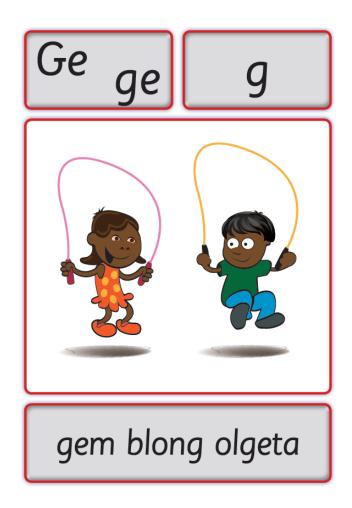
- October 2014
- Preparation of awareness by the CDU Staff (Curriculum Development Unit)
- CDU staff & SBM (School Based Management staff) to manage the implementation.
- Provincial workshops with provinces mainly ZCA (Zone Curriculum Advisers) CDU staff accompanied the SBM to provinces and to evaluate the sessions for feedback. This was necessary to ensure correct information was disseminated.
- ZCA workshops with teachers in the provinces and the first
   3 were attended by the CDU Staff & SBM
- Teachers informed parents about implementation of the new curriculum

#### Awareness – Shefa, Malampa Provinces





#### Syllable cards



#### High frequency vocabulary

Ol wod yumi yusum everi dei									
afta	bigwan	fani	hapi	kam	mi	olsem	saed	taed	wantem
aftanun	bihaen	finis	harem	klosap	mifala	oltaem	samtaem	talem	wea
ale	blong	fored	hem	kolkol	mo	openem	sarem	tangkiu	welkam
andanit	danis	fulap	hot	kros	moning	oraet	semak	tata	wetem
ansa	daon	go	ia	kwik	naet	ova	sidaon	tekem	wokbaot
antap	dei	gud	insaed	lesen	neva	рара	singsing	toktok	yes
aotsaed	dina	had	isi	let	no	plante	slo	testi	yestedei
bae	dring	hae	jam	long	nogud	plei	smol	tedei	yu
be	eli	halo	jenis	lukluk	nomo	raet	sore	tumas	yufala
bifo	emti	hanggri	kakae	mama	olgeta	rid	stanap	tumoro	yumi

#### Feedback

The feedback was very positive generally:

- Teachers were emotional
- A relief because Bislama or vernacular were prohibited earlier and students were punished if caught
- Role of L1 in children's learning (year 1-8). Example: a year 6 French teacher at Norsup School at Malampa Province.
- Parents requested for children to remain in year 1 in 2015 at Lambubu School
- Tangoa children who attended vernacular pre-school could be accepted in the formal system

Jennifer Attison Year 1 at Seaside Primary School- Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015 – International Literacy Day

Teaching year 1 in the national language has made a big difference in my teaching ... the kids and I can really talk and express ourselves freely. It makes a big difference!

I have taught for 18 years but this year is the first time that I have really enjoyed my teaching.

#### Questions still being asked

- Vanuatu evidence is required?
- Should there be pilot schools?
- Will this work?
- Will Bislama threaten other vernacular languages?
- Will Bislama impact on English and French learning?
- Is Bislama a standardized language?

## Re-shaping language policy in Vanuatu education

Let the creole come (officially) into school: The new language policy's impact on the use and representation of Bislama

- Leslie Vandeputte-Tavo, University of New Caledonia-Centre des Nouvelles Etudes sur le Pacifique.
- leslievdp@gmail.com

#### Linguistic ideology and education policy

• Language ideologies:

"link language to identity, power, aesthetics, morality, and epistemology in terms of cultural and historical specificities" (Makihara & Schieffelin, 2007, p. 14)."

 Vernaculars are commonly accepted as a medium of instruction but Bislama (and more generally pidgins and creoles) do not benefit from the same consensus in the population.

#### Pidgins and Creoles in the educational system

- Pidgins and creoles have never seriously been considered as a medium of education
- Three reasons :
  - 1. they are considered "deviant versions" of the former European language (Siegel, 2005).
  - 2. they are looked at as basic languages used only in daily communication (in the street, market, road, or home) that lack prestige (Migge, Léglise, & Bartens, 2010, p. 4).
  - 3. there is no standard writing system or body of literature attached to those languages.

## Bislama into the classroom: a need of standardization?

 In the case of Bislama, no standardization has been established but dictionary and grammar (Crowley, 1995,2000).

• Bislama: a polynomic language?

The concept of "polynomy" (Marcellesi, 1989: 170) corresponds to an acceptance of varieties (oral and written) to approuve plural and diverse standard.

#### Variations of written Bislama

 Issues regarding Bislama's standardization are not recent :

"a further complicating factor is the almost total absence of any pressure for a standard orthography... in the writing of the language, there has been a widespread tendency for everyone to do 'that which is right in his own eyes' (Camden, 1977: vii quoted by Jarraud, 2013: 192)."

4 categories on the variation of written Bislama

#### 1. Bislama with uses of English lexemes.

#### Example :

Olgeta fan mo **family** blong nasonal kipa, Seloni laruel, we hemi kambak long kaontri blong jenisim **passport** blong hem oli bin harem wan **latest developmen** long trial blong laruel long England taem hemi endem **press** konferens wetem toktok ia, "Manchester United oli se bambae mi go trial wetem olgeta." (Article extrait du journal quotidien Daily Post, 10/09/2012)

## 2. "Bislamarization" of words borrowed from English

#### Example:

Vanuatu Sport Kansel, Collin Natonga i **admitim** jes afta long **klosing** blong Nasonal Gem se ol tim blong Port Vila nomo i stap **dominetem** kolosap evri kompetisen from oli redi gud be ol tim blong ol nara provins oli no pripea gud, mo i luk olsem se ol provins oli stap **hand pikim** nomo ol athlet long rod mo oli travel wetem olgeta i kam long Gem. Hemia from pefomens blong olgeta i soem se oli no gat **experiens** long **fil**. Nasonal Gem i stap kohed bitim 10 yia, be ol federesen ino mekem work blong olgeta blong draevem level blong spot long ol provins i kam antap. [...] Afta long las Nasonal Gem long Penama, President blong Vanuatu Amata Boxing Assosiesen, Jack Meriango i bin **pointemaot** praktis ia mo hemi mekem apil igo long ol provins blong **rivaevem** ol boxing lik blong olgeta [...] (Article extrait de Daily Post, le 12/09/2012)

#### 3. "Flickering" of Bislama

#### Examples:

- Ded, tet (dead)
- Gat, kat (to own, to got, to have)
- Dog, dok, tog (dog)
- Bakegen, bagegen (again)
- Jioj, chiuj, chioj, Jioch (church)
- Titja, Tija, Titsa (teacher)
- Talemaot, talemaut (to explain, to decry)

#### 4. « Frenchization » of the Creole

#### Examples:

- Tédé instead of tede (today)
- Independens instaed of indipendens (independence)
- Sher preferred to shea (to share)

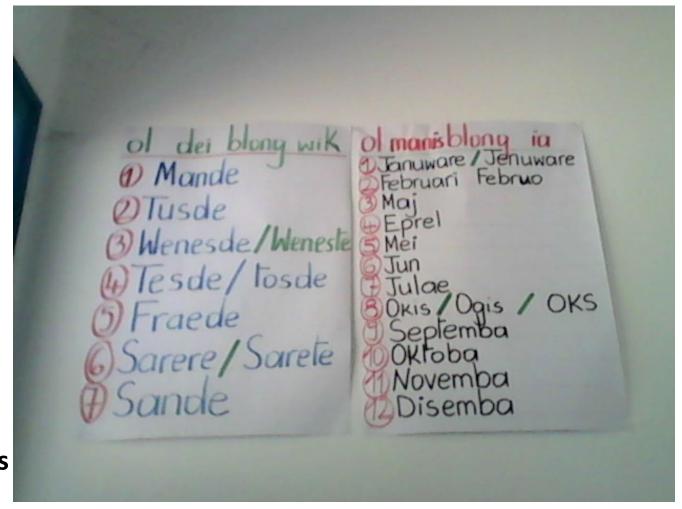
## What written variety is used at school? A first feedback of the introduction of Bislama into the classroom

Sainte Jeanne d'Arc School, Port-Vila

Class 1 (7-8 years old)







Weekdays and the months of the years

#### Not to conclude

- The recent introduction of Bislama into the education system will give the creole a greater visibility and legitimacy.
- The "lack" of standardization seems not to be a problem to teach in Bislama → the polynomy of Bislama?
- Bislama plays wonderfully his role of national language which can adapt itself depending on the speakers.

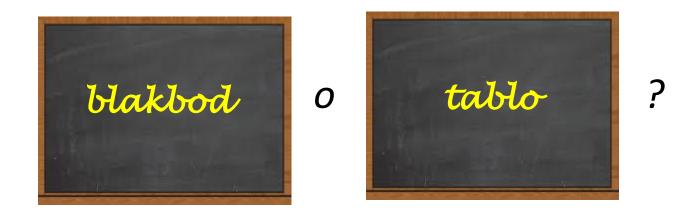
## Re-shaping language policy in Vanuatu education

## Corpus development of Bislama

- Fiona Willans, University of the South Pacific, Fiji
- fiona.willans@usp.ac.fj

### Corpus development of Bislama for Anglophone and Francophone education:

Bae yumi yusum



Fiona Willans: fiona.willans@usp.ac.fj

#### Bislama's role in policy implementation

 The dominant language used to communicate with stakeholders (consultation, dissemination and debate)

 The language in which written materials (e.g. example literacy and numeracy kits) are provided to schools

#### Key issue

 Bislama is being used to talk about educational ideas for which lexical items do not currently exist.

 Given that educational ideas have typically been discussed by 'Anglophones' in English and by 'Francophones' in French, there is no single 'logical' source to borrow or create new Bislama terms from.

• Language policy is sensitive. If the policy appears to be oriented to 'one side', it may be rejected by 'the other'.

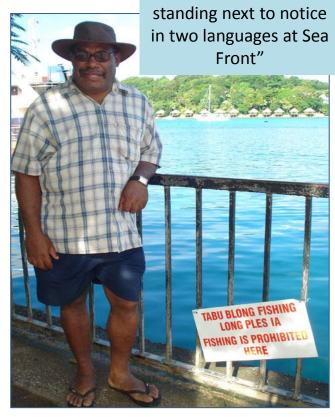
#### Put your public notices in all three languages (Vanuatu Daily Post)

"The Director of the Department of Linguistics Jacques Cedion has called on all responsible citizens, company and property owners and institutions to respect the Constitution and put up their public notices in all three languages.

"Billingual Cedion

"Cedion said it is unlawful to put out a public notice in Bislama only or Bislama and English but none of the same in French.

"He said the law is clear that the Republic of Vanuatu is a bilingual country and that as such a notice has to be put up or displayed to the public in all three languages in order to be seen to be legal, respectful as well as proud of the country's identity."



Two or three languages? Some more equal than others?

## Official language usage: Mediating the pragmatic and symbolic

- English was initially the working language of the curriculum team and its early documents
- Francophone-educated members of the curriculum team reacted by boycotting meetings
- Documents all translated into Bislama ... resulting in a call for them to be translated into French too
- Outcome all documents straight into Bislama

## Some terminology that has been used in the materials (direct transliterations of English)

kurikulum (curriculum)

aotkam beis (outcome-based)

studen senta (student-centred)

asesment (assessment)

lening aktiviti (learning activity)

literasi/litrasi (literacy)

ki freis (key phrase)

silabol (syllable)

- Not transparent in meaning unless you already know the concept and its English term
- Perpetuates the myth of 'broken English' – potential disruption of Bislama's use in education
- Creates negative reactions amongst 'Francophones' – a stumbling block for "harmonisation"

#### An age-old problem?

#### Crowley (1994) Practical issues in Bislama lexicography

- Critique of Bowden's (1986) medical dictionary in Bislama e.g. staflakokas for staphylococcus
- "illicit anglicisms" throughout government and NGO materials produced by translating English resources (p.30)
- "Every lexicographer faces the problem of deciding when a word of foreign origin ceases to be a foreign word and becomes a genuine word in the language ... It is arguable that in a pidgin language such as Bislama, this problem is confounded as the entire lexicon is in a sense 'borrowed'" (p.32)
- "In deciding what sorts of words to include and what to exclude, I was guided by the general principle that if a word is used systematically in informal contexts in town by people with primary education, it should be treated as a genuine Bislama word." (p.33)

A little more complicated: Bislama is <u>used</u> differently to talk about Anglophone and Francophone education

- "Long evri matière, yumi ol professeur yumi mas tingbaot ol contrôle long en blong yia. ... Mi traem bes blong mi blong mi raetem ol vocabulaire we oli nidim long tableau."
- "Long evri subject, yumi ol teacher yumi mas tingbaot ol test long en blong yia. ... Mi traem bes blong mi blong mi raetem ol vocabulary we oli nidim long blackboard."
- (In every subject, we teachers must think about the tests at the end of the year. I
  try my best to write the vocabulary that they will need on the blackboard.)

## Options for curriculum materials that will be make sense in both contexts

- New 'naturalised' Bislama terms that derive from English or French (but, if so, test or kontrol?)
- New 'naturalised' Bislama pairs (test and kontrol, c.f. US/UK English: faucet/tap, pants/trousers)
- Borrowings without naturalisation (test and/or contrôle)
- Coinage or extension of new Bislama terms that may not be cognates with the English or French terms for this concept (e.g. skelem? jekem save?)

#### Moving forward requires:

- balancing the pragmatic and the symbolic
- taking the Anglophone-Francophone issue seriously – making sure that both sides of the system are seen to be equal
- continuation of corpus development work as a principled linguistic activity
- greater rigour in usage within public documents (within the team but also media, government departments and NGOs)

#### Acknowledgements to:

GOUVERNEMENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE DE VANUATU

> MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

> MINISTRY OF EDUCATION











