Dedication

We humbly dedicate this volume to

Paul Dijkstra

whose expertise in publishing and enthusiasm for the promotion of the languages and cultures of the ABC-Islands made this series of publications possible.

Creolization and Commonalities
Transgressing Neocolonial Boundaries in the Languages, Literatures and Cultures of the Caribbean and the Rest of the African Diaspora

Volume 2

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The islands that form the Puerto Rican archipelago were populated by aboriginal peoples who had been grouped together as the Taino. The Spanish, whose ethnology and indigènes language, 'arica,' disappeared with the advance of Caribbean civilization by Spain, which was named for the Spanish Crown on the 10th of November in 1493. Despite this, the Spanish spoken in Puerto Rico is mainly a product of immigration from Andalusia. Although the island was populated by various languages, including Carriacou and St. Vincent, the Spanish spoken in Puerto Rico is mainly a product of immigration from Andalusia. The Spanish spoken in Puerto Rico is mainly a product of immigration from Andalusia. Although the island was populated by various languages, including Carriacou and St. Vincent, the Spanish spoken in Puerto Rico is mainly a product of immigration from Andalusia.
The language of Puerto Rico, as expressed in the preamble, was to confirm its historical status as a Spanish-speaking area. At the same time, it expressed a commitment to the acquisition of English as a second language. This was a constitutional amendment approved by Governor Pedro Rossello Gonzalez, re-establishing Spanish and English as official languages of the island. The motivation to approve this legislation was a pragmatic need, as the language policy outlined in Law 68 of 1981, which required that both Spanish and English be taught as a second language, had been challenged. The proposal was to transition the island to a bilinguistic society, where both Spanish and English were to be used as official languages.

Several proposals were introduced to the law, including one that the public school system be reorganized. Among these, the proposal to use Spanish as the language of instruction in public schools, while English would be taught as a second language, was considered. This was in line with the general trend in the United States to promote English as the primary language.

In the 1990s, the use of Spanish in schools began to decrease, and English became more dominant. This was a result of changes in federal policy and a shift in the educational system towards more English immersion programs.

The language policy in Puerto Rico has been characterized by a struggle between Spanish and English. While Spanish remains the primary language, English has gained significant influence, particularly in institutions of higher education and the public administration.

In conclusion, the language policy in Puerto Rico reflects a complex interplay between historical, cultural, and political factors. The transition from being a Spanish-speaking island to a bilinguistic society has been gradual and continues to evolve in response to changing social and political conditions.
very limited linguistic competence in the language. Multiple interpretations have been made of this state of affairs, the most prominent one being that because English has been used for ideological purposes to Americanize them, Puerto Ricans have developed a heightened sense of Hispanophilia, and see Spanish as a symbol of their national identity. In other words, Puerto Ricans have come to view the language issue as one of conflict and opposition between ideologies of Americanization versus Hispanicization (Ortiz López, 2006; Ortiz López & González Rivera, forthcoming).

The development of a comprehensive language policy involves the formulation of several sub-components, including an external language policy which defines the role that any given language plays in society; an internal language policy which establishes grammatical standards; and an educational language policy which stipulates how any given language is to be used in the school curricula (Hamel, 1988). In the case of Puerto Rico, external language policy has been framed within the context of the island’s political relationship with the United States, the Language Law of 1902, and the laws enacted by the local government. The responsibility for the formulation of internal language policy has fallen on the Puerto Rican Academy of the Spanish Language, the universities (in particular, the University of Puerto Rico) and other authorities on the Spanish and English languages. The elaboration of educational language policy for Puerto Rico, which is outlined below, has not been without controversy (López Laguere, 1989; Ornaña, 2011). In the hundred years of political relations with the United States, there have been several initiatives put forward for the development of bilingualism in Puerto Rico, but none of these initiatives have attended to the matter in a comprehensive way. Before 1948, while the legal language of instruction at the elementary level could be Spanish or English, in secondary and higher education English was the only legal language of instruction (López Laguere, 1989; Ortiz López, 2000; Torres González, 2002). While this was the legal reality, the facts on the ground and classroom practice often differed, with monolingualism in Spanish prevailing. In spite of this, Puerto Rico has been considered a bilingual territory, since Spanish and English share official status (Pousada, 1989). The language policy from 1948 to the present has maintained Spanish as the medium of instruction at all levels of public education, but this policy could be substantially modified or repealed at any moment (López Laguere, 1989). For example, in 1997 the government, under the auspices of the Department of Education, implemented the Proyecto para Formar un Ciudadano Bilingüe (Project for Developing a Bilingual Citizen), an initiative which promoted the following objectives (Ortiz López, 2000):

1. Begin literacy in English and in Spanish during elementary school.
2. Allot 90 minutes of instruction in Spanish and in English at the intermediate level of instruction.
3. Utilize the English language to teach the sciences and mathematics.

4. Provide immersion programs in English for high school students, as well as writing workshops in Spanish.
5. Promote opportunities and incentives to teachers who are teaching English so they may develop professionally and obtain certifications in teaching English.
6. Develop an exchange program which permits Puerto Rican teachers to improve their English skills in the United States and bring North American teachers to Puerto Rico in order to help Puerto Rican teachers on the island to improve their English.
7. Provide technical assistance and supervision in English and Spanish in all school districts.

To date, there has been no comprehensive study carried out to gather and analyze qualitative and quantitative data concerning the scope and achievements of the Project for Developing a Bilingual Citizen. This project has, however, been criticized by various centrist and left-leaning cultural and academic institutions in the country. These critiques hold that that the project’s definitions of bilingualism were based on personal opinion rather than scientific study and that the theoretical framework adopted by the project was designed to address linguistic and cultural realities that do not correspond to those of Puerto Rico. Given such findings, the Academia Puertorriqueña de la Lengua Española (APLE) recommended the following educational policy guidelines (Ornaña, 2011): the use of Spanish as a the language of instruction and the initiation of English learning only once communication skills in Spanish have been developed. These strategies are more appropriate to the monolingual situation in Puerto Rico than are the strategies proposed under the Project, which are more appropriate to a classic bilingual society (De Houwer, 2009). The APLE proposal not only defends Spanish from the nationalist and cultural perspectives as the vernacular language which serves all social functions in Puerto Rican society better than does English, it also advocates for the teaching of English as a second language (L2) or foreign language. It does so, however, without clearly delineating the differences between the L2 and foreign language, and without advancing a concrete proposal on how to achieve success in both languages, given the current sociolinguistic realities in Puerto Rico. Moreover, it makes no reference to the members of the Puerto Rican diaspora in the United States who, when they return to their home country, would not encounter room for sociolinguistic integration under the APLE proposal. Any viable educational language policy should incorporate both the latest scientific advances in second language acquisition as well as the needs and concerns of the Puerto Rican diaspora.

Torres González (2002) has proposed “an imperfect language policy” framed by official policy of bilingualism and an educational strategy which “recognizes the primacy of vernacular Spanish and the importance of English as a second language” (translation by the authors). This proposal responds to current trends towards
globalization, which on the one hand promotes the expansion of lingua francas, like English, and on the other hand favors strong tendencies toward cultural and linguistic heterogeneity which manifest not only in ethnic, national, regional or territorial terms, but also in terms of class, gender, generational and other social groups. That is to say, Torres González defends a type of additive bilingualism which takes into account all the components of the Puerto Rican society. Beyond the debate that has mainly, but not exclusively, been generated in the public sphere between politicians and intellectuals, it is important to consider what the Puerto Ricans think about the language policy of their country: Do they really experience the dilemma between Americanization and Hispanization?; With which (if any) of these positions do the majority of Puerto Ricans align themselves?; Are Spanish and English seen as being in conflict by Puerto Ricans?; Is Spanish a symbol of identity for Puerto Ricans?; Does bilingualism represent a threat to their ethno-sociolinguistic existence? These and many other questions emerge from the ethno-sociolinguistic tensions which have characterized debate among certain groups in the Puerto Rican society. There have been some studies concerning these issues. Here we will compile data from two studies: the first, sponsored by the Puerto Rican Athenæum during the 1990s, years of linguistic efferesence; and the second, a study carried out by Ortiz López (2000). For reasons of economy of space, we will not discuss the methodology of the two studies, nor will we present exhaustive data from them here.

The inquiry sponsored by the Puerto Rican Athenæum in 1990 found that 86% of Puerto Ricans accepted the current policy of both Spanish and English as official languages, with some 40% ready to accept a change to Spanish only and some 6% ready to accept a change to English only.

According to the Athenæum's findings, economic progress is linked with learning English, since some 90% consider English very important and important (60% and 30% respectively). That said, 96% consider Spanish as important as English.

Ortiz López (2000) presents similar data collected from university students: 83% believe that given the trend towards globalization, bilingualism in Spanish and English is becoming more prevalent among Puerto Ricans and more acceptable to them. Some 88% are aware that bilingualism opens doors to better paying jobs. These findings show that linguistic coexistence is emerging naturally, with fewer of the conflicts of the past. We can cautiously conclude then, that Puerto Ricans are increasingly accepting both languages, despite controversies concerning identity and officiality, without questioning or denying the fact that Spanish is their mother tongue (Pabón, 2002; Vélez Ancho 1991).

As confirmed by the above findings, the growing instrumental and economic value of learning English has modified past attitudes and beliefs and allowed the language to penetrate some domains of Puerto Rican society, without becoming a threat to identity and Spanish (Pabón, 2002). A viable language policy for Puerto Rico must attend to the island's complex sociolinguistic heterogeneity including: (i) Puerto Ricans of the less privileged classes, who are more monolingual in less standard dialects of Spanish; (ii) the middle and upper classes, who are more bilingual, with more dominance of the standard varieties of both languages (although many are already inclined towards monolingualism in English); (iii) members of the Puerto Rican diaspora, some of whom tend to be monolingual in non-standard English; and for some of whom Spanish does not represent a stamp of Puerto Rican identity, Lamboy, 2011), alongside other more balanced bilinguals, belonging to the more recent migrations of professionals, especially to Orlando, Florida (Duany, 2011), and (iv) the many other ethnicities to be found in significant numbers on the island, Dominicans, documented or undocumented Cubans, Anglo-Americans, and foreigners, with their diverse attitudinal and language dominance profiles.

Further research is needed concerning the many faces of Puerto Rican ethno-sociolinguistic reality from new scientific and sociolinguistic perspectives which consider all groups and all of the multiple manifestations of the coexistence of English and Spanish in Puerto Rico. This should contribute to a language policy and planning project designed to address the sociolinguistic realities of Puerto Rico. Among the elements of such a policy we put forward a selection of proposals which, although revolutionary and utopian, can serve as an inspiration to rethink the educational language policy on the island:

1) As an instrument of incalculable value for human development, additive bilingualism must be a fundamental goal of educational language policy (Torres González, 2002). If educators and planners agree to the teaching of both languages and they give both languages the value and sociolinguistic space that they need (as appears to be happening naturally among young people), then this additive bilingualism will have greater chances of success.

2) The teaching of Spanish must be reframed to avoid a defensive and language purist stance that sees Puerto Rican identity as being under threat, in favor of an open, expansive heterogeneous scientific vision of Puerto Rican society, which incorporates advances from the field of second language acquisition as well as inputs from all ethno-sociolinguistic groups (especially the disadvantaged) within a diverse Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and Hispanic-American reality.

3) The canonical focus of language teaching must give way to a multicultural and linguistic focus informed by an ethnolinguistic hybrid vision of Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and Hispanic reality.

4) Language curricula and classroom teaching must go beyond the present cultural, historic and literary perspectives to incorporate contemporary models from applied linguistics which also emphasize
understanding, production, and vernacular writing. For example, Spanish must become an object of study in its own right.

The debate concerning the official status of Spanish and English in Puerto Rico has already lasted for more than a century. A positive aspect of this debate is that it has served to sharpen our understanding of the roles of both languages in Puerto Rican society both on the island and in the diaspora. In our opinion, however, a less positive aspect of this debate is that it has raised the issue to an ideological level which presents us with the dilemma of Americanization versus Hispanicization (Rios, 1995). What is urgently needed at the present moment is a reconceptualization of notions of language and identity on the island, informed by recent research (such as that carried out in Belarus by Brown (2005) in order to move beyond the present impasses toward the formulation of language policy that truly reflects the attitudes, needs, and aspirations of contemporary Puerto Rican society.

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THE IMPACT OF FREIRIAN THEORY AND POPULAR EDUCATION ON ESL EDUCATION IN THE CARIBBEAN

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"Education is fundamentally about love." Paulo Freire

For many years English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in the Caribbean have been trapped in a mechanical and authoritarian educational system characterized by regressive trends that inhibit the process of acquisition and valorization of students’ creole languages and cultures. Sadly, I have seen many colleagues lose faith in their ESL students, but worst of all, they have lost faith in themselves as agents of change. I have found that the use of Freirian methods for empowering ESL learners in the process of acquiring language skills provides both teachers and students with a sense of hope in the power of education as a liberating force. In this process, those involved come to see education as a way of freeing minds that have been enclosed by a system that feeds on the flesh and blood and body and soul of those who have become "neo-slaves" on the neo-colonial globalized plantation. Part of this slavery involves negative and derogatory ideas regarding creole languages and cultures that have been imposed by those who consider themselves more powerful and which have been internalized by many Caribbean teachers and students themselves.

The educational postulate upon which Freirian Theory is grounded situates pedagogy within the real life context of students. Paulo Freire places education in the political and historical setting of the time and insists on the teacher’s responsibility for problem-posing rather than on problem-solving. In Freirian theory, language plays a key role in education. Freire stresses the need for educators to study the everyday language and cultures of their students. Many students in the Caribbean are at a disadvantage in school because the creole languages that they speak as first languages and the creole cultures that they practice are considered ‘inferior’, ‘corrupt’ and inappropriate in the classroom.

This article proposes a departure from conventional ‘banking’ education in favor of a more liberatory approach in the learning/teaching experience of the language classroom. It discusses how educators can break away from the current practices of developing intellectually and linguistically passive students in order to move toward the development of intellectually and linguistically active students, who have been