Jeannette Allsopp & Zellynne Jennings (eds.)  
*Language Education in the Caribbean: Selected Articles by Dennis Craig.* Mona, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2014. xx + 171 pp. (Paper US$ 22.00)

Ian Robertson & Hazel Simmons-McDonald (eds.)  
*Education Issues in Creole and Creole-Influenced Vernacular Contexts.* Mona, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2014. xii + 291 pp. (Paper US$ 40.00)

Dennis R. Craig, a prolific writer and highly acclaimed researcher in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, was born in Guyana but “owed many of his accomplishments to his adopted country—Jamaica—where he lived for most of his life” (Allsopp & Jennings, p. viii). He taught at the University of the West Indies, Mona, and served as dean of its faculty of Education. In Guyana he was the first director of the National Centre for Education Research and Development, and in 1991 he became vice chancellor of the University of Guyana. Throughout his career he tirelessly advocated for the improvement of the educational and social conditions of Creole speakers in the Caribbean. His writings inspired many of his contemporaries and continue to resonate with researchers and educators in the Caribbean and more widely. It is therefore only fitting that two volumes have been published in his honor.

*Language Education in the Caribbean* opens with a preface highlighting Craig’s proactive social engagement through a discussion of his popular *Viewpoint* columns written for the Guyana Broadcasting Company and an introduction outlining the main concerns of his academic publications. It then reprints four of his articles dealing with the sociolinguistic context of the English-official Caribbean and four focusing on effective teaching and learning policies and approaches for this context. With respect to the first issue, Craig echoes the creole continuum perspective and argues that the English-official Caribbean is characterized by variation between Standard English and local creoles resulting from Creole speakers’ “striving for social status through English” (p. 17) and inappropriate teaching methods. This has given rise to a third system, the “interaction area” (p. 17) or the mesolect(s); children from Creole dominant homes mistakenly equate it with English and thus face problems in school where Standard English norms are enforced. Craig argues that all three varieties share the same conceptual base but make use of different grammatical principles and lexical forms to express it. The Creole and Creole-influenced varieties (or mesolects) mostly share the same grammar and mainly differ on the lexical level. Thus shifting simply entails substituting English-like lexical forms for creole ones. However, since there are significant structural differences between the Creole and English forms, acquisi-
tion of English requires learning of a set of new procedures, rules, and principles.

Given this situation, Craig argued that traditional teaching and learning models that assume Caribbean children to be native speakers of English and attempt to teach children English through implicit correction are not only ineffective but also contribute to children’s linguistic insecurity and negative representations about their primary language. Instead, he advocated an approach termed “Bidialectal Education” that takes into account and actively raises awareness about the sociocultural and linguistic distinctiveness of creole languages and English while at the same time acknowledging the existence of overlap, or rather similarities, between the two systems. The approach also maintains that effective language education has to be based on children’s actual practices and communicative needs and should introduce new features gradually and in a systematic manner through a combination of structured communication oriented and culturally adapted activities. Instead of an immersion approach, he argued, shared and known features should be practiced before new ones are introduced. Finally, children should at all times be encouraged to freely draw on all their linguistic resources for meaning making.

*Education Issues* is a collection of fifteen original essays introduced by a short foreword and preface which pay tribute to Craig’s important achievements. In the first of the book’s four parts, “Dennis Craig in Caribbean Language Education,” Jeff Siegel and Beverley Bryan discuss Craig’s contribution to Applied Linguistics generally and English language teaching in the Caribbean. Siegel argues that Craig’s work was instrumental in raising awareness about the unique educational issues in the Caribbean and related contexts and in highlighting problematic assumptions underlying traditional educational models, but that his most important contribution consisted in proposing feasible alternative models. Bryan explains how Craig’s research findings spurred educational reform in Jamaica and sowed the seeds for new educational projects such as the Bilingual Education Project.

In the second part, “The Background to Caribbean Language,” Richard Allsopp discusses the contribution of African languages to Caribbean creoles, and Hazel Simmons-McDonald revisits and refutes statements about the deficient nature of creoles and pidgins. Finally, Pauline Christie examines existing language-teaching models in the Caribbean in the light of current research on varieties of English. She argues that Caribbean educational systems need to develop their own set of norms for English based on actual usage in professional contexts.

Part III, “Policy Issues and Perspectives on Vernacular Education in the Caribbean,” includes five articles. Peter Roberts revisits Craig’s 1999 book,