Nicholas Faraclas
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Community Based Research in Language Policy and Planning

The Language of Instruction in Education in Sint Eustatius

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Language Policy

Volume 20

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Preface and Acknowledgments

In this book, we provide a concrete example of how sociolinguistic research utilizing a community-based approach can successfully mobilize communities to participate in the formulation and implementation of major changes in language policy and planning with the goal of addressing problems resulting from antiquated colonial education policy and practice. The focus of this book is the methodology implemented and the results obtained over the course of an action research project on language and education in Statia (St. Eustatius), one of the islands of the Dutch Caribbean.

Most of the students on the island speak English and English-lexifier Creole but find themselves in a situation at school where Dutch is used as the language of instruction, even though the overwhelming majority of them almost never encounter written or spoken Dutch outside of the classroom. The use of Dutch as a language of instruction has effectively limited the numbers of students in Statia and the rest of the Dutch Caribbean who manage to succeed at school to a small minority. The rest of the students are left behind.

In order to help find solutions to this problem, our research group was approached in 2012 first by a network of Statian community workers and then by the educational authorities in both Statia and the European Netherlands to work with them in dealing with the question of the language of instruction in the schools. As a condition for accepting the task of carrying out the research project eventually proposed by the government, we insisted on a community-based approach that would actively build on previous efforts by our community-based partners to involve all of the community members (students, parents, teachers, educational authorities, etc.) in the education system on the island in the process of identifying, analyzing, and finding solutions to the problem at hand.

We also decided to complement this approach with a multipronged set of research strategies including the following: (1) language attitudes and use survey of a representative sample of all of the community members, (2) a narrative proficiency test to gauge students' levels of productive competence in Dutch and English, (3) in-depth interviews with community members of different groups, (4) numerous classroom observations at all levels in all of the schools on the island, and (5) a

review of the scientific literature about societies who face similar challenges regarding language of instruction as those found on St. Eustatius.

In the pages that follow, after describing how and why these various research and community mobilization activities were carried out, the results are presented and analyzed. We end the book with an overview of the recommendations we made based on our dialogue with the community and our other findings. In 2014, these recommendations were accepted by the government, which is now in the process of changing the language of instruction in the schools.

First and foremost, we would like to thank the people of Statia for all of the time, energy, and determination that they have demonstrated in their panoramic description, insightful analysis, and effective resolution of the problem of the language of instruction in their schools. We would also like to take this opportunity to express our most sincere and deepest gratitude to the following: Camelia Berkel, Jacinta Lopes, Elaine Marchena, Elvin Henriquez, Maritsa Silberie, René Reehuis, Samantha Buijink, and Maria Koutiva.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

This book is about community based research, as a robust alternative to traditional academic research approaches in postcolonial societies. In this volume we report on the successful adoption of this approach in our implementation of a government mandated research project on the choice between Dutch and English as languages of instruction in the educational system in the small island community of Statia. There are several aspects of this study that make it of particular interest to theorists and practitioners in the areas of literacy, multilingualism, educational policy, research paradigms and community organizing. This study shifts the focus of research from the relatively well studied parts of the world, such as Europe and the US, to the relatively understudied region of the Caribbean.

The island communities of the Caribbean are multilingual societies, inhabited by multilingual individuals. In the case of the six Caribbean islands that are part of the

The island of Statia has two names: in Dutch it is called Sint Eustatius, in English it is commonly called Statia. As the majority of the island's inhabitants call their own island by the English name, we also adopt this name in this volume. However, in the report as it was presented to the Government of the Netherlands, the name Sint Eustatius/St. Eustatius is used

Kingdom of the Netherlands,[1] the majority of the population speaks either Papiamentu/o[2] (Leeward Islands or ABC islands: Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao) or a variety of Caribbean English lexifier Creole and/or Caribbean English (Windward Islands or SSS islands: Saba, Statia and Sint Maarten) as their mother tongue. In 2003, the Aruban Official Languages Act ensured the recognition of both Dutch and Papiamento as official languages for Aruba, and in 2007, the government of the former Netherlands Antilles passed a law that declared Dutch, English and Papiamentu to be the official languages. However, Dutch has a dominant position in the administrative, legal and educational systems, and plays a role in other formal domains of the public sphere. Global languages such as English and Spanish play an important role as well, due to migration, tourism, trade and the influence of the contemporary media and social media.

The patterns of language use of the populations of the islands manifest different levels of proficiency, and daily communication in more than one language characterizes their lives. The language situation is complex and so are the attitudes toward individual languages, as language attitudes are largely determined by intergroup relations and stereotypical opinions about speech communities and their members. In the Dutch Caribbean, attitudes toward Dutch are influenced by the colonial history of unequal power relations and ambivalence toward the (former) colonizer and its citizens. Knowledge of Dutch is perceived to be important for the job market in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, as well as for tertiary studies in the European Netherlands. In the Dutch Caribbean there is skepticism toward the use of other languages, especially the majority home languages, as languages of instruction in the education system.

The research project reported on in this book was initiated first by community groups in Statia and then by the educational authorities in the Dutch Caribbean and the European Netherlands, due to alarmingly low performance results signaled in

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[1] LPP [Language Policy and Planning] in the Caribbean countries and territories of the Kingdom of the Netherlands can only be understood within the context of the quasi-federal structure of the Kingdom. 'The Kingdom consists of four countries, namely the Caribbean countries of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten, and the Country of the Netherlands. It is important to bear in mind that the Country of the Netherlands is just one of the four Countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The three Caribbean countries are rather small: they have only 40,000 (St Maarten), 105,000 (Aruba) and 160,000 (Curaçao) inhabitants; the Country of the Netherlands has 17,000,000 inhabitants. Since 2010, when a restructuring within the Kingdom took place (and the Netherlands Antilles was dismantled), the much smaller islands Bonaire, Statia and Saba, with 17,000, 3550 and 2000 inhabitants, respectively, became part of the Country of the Netherlands. Therefore, the Country of the Netherlands has a European part as well as a Caribbean part, the so-called Caribbean territories. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is Member of the European Union. Nevertheless, European law is only fully applicable in the continental European part of the Kingdom. Since the beginning of the European Union, all Caribbean islands have had Overseas Country and Territory (OCT) status. Today they still have this status. At the same time, the people of the OCTs of the Kingdom have European citizenship. The relations between the three Caribbean countries and the Country of the Netherlands, as well as the relations between the European part and the Caribbean territories of this country, are complicated for a variety of reasons.' (Bröring and Mijts 2017).

[2] In Aruba, the name of the language is officially spelled as 'Papiamento', while in Bonaire and Curaçao, the language is officially spelled as 'Papiamentu'.

inspection reports in 2012 Inspectie Onderwijs 2012a, b, c, d, e). According to these reports the school results of Statian students in primary education revealed backlogs in decoding skills for reading comprehension and mathematics of two to 4 years in comparison to the standards for European Dutch students. The reports indicated that school materials for teaching Dutch as a foreign language were not available and that Dutch was not systematically introduced to the students. Moreover, there were many behavior problems affecting the classroom environment, disrupting and obstructing the activities of teachers and students. Teachers were insufficiently prepared to solve these problems. In the case of secondary education, the reports indicated similar or even more serious problems. There was a lack of qualified teachers, frequently leading to the cancellation of classes. Teaching materials were insufficiently available for certain subjects and in general they did not match the students' interests, due to the fact that the teaching materials were developed for use in a European Dutch context. The reports also revealed high numbers of students who were repeatedly coming late or who were absent. The results of the students indicated backlogs of 2 years in Dutch and mathematics and 1.5 years in English. The passing rates in final exams varied from 41% to 64% (whereas scores below 90% are very exceptional in the European Netherlands). This situation had resulted in overall dissatisfaction and disappointment with formal education throughout the community. The poor results were often assumed to be caused by the language policy in the education system, in particular by the use of Dutch as a language of instruction.

At the time of the research project the four primary schools[3] in Statia used English as the main language of instruction. In all primary schools, at least the final 2 years were dedicated to the transition from English to Dutch, in order to prepare the students for Dutch language of instruction secondary education. At the time, the Gwendoline van Putten (GvP) school, the only secondary school[4] on the island, officially used Dutch as the only the language of instruction. In an attempt to solve the backlogs and high dropout rates of the students, an additional year of remedial education focusing on Dutch and mathematics inserted between primary and secondary education (known as the *Schakelklas*) was introduced in 2011. Despite the fact that the students and teachers dedicated at least 3 years to the transition from English to Dutch as medium of instruction, the language competencies and the school results were dissatisfying.

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[3] The four primary schools in Statia were largely distinguished by religious affiliation and varied in size from 44 to 120 students at the time of the research project. The largest schools were the Lynch Plantation Seventh Day Adventist School and the Bethel Methodist School, the smaller schools were the Catholic Golden Rock School and the public Governor de Graaff School.

[4] The Gwendoline van Putten school is organized in accordance with the system for secondary education in the European Netherlands, offering different tracks in preparatory vocational education (Praktijkonderwijs, VMBO), secondary vocational education (MBO) and High School (HAVO). The HAVO-track prepares students for higher vocational education (also referred to as 'professional university' education) to be pursued abroad. The school does not offer the VWO-track which prepares students for 'research university' education.

Although the central problems and questions addressed in this project are related to fundamental questions concerning language policy and education in multilingual contexts, this volume will not be concerned with specific details regarding models of (bilingual) education, the debate on the use of Creole languages as languages of instruction and other related topics. The principal goal of this case study is to highlight the value of community based research as an approach to the scientific study of education in a multilingual context in postcolonial small island states.

Because this project led to an important change in societal attitudes, governmental policy and classroom practice, a conscious decision was made on our part to embed in the chapters of this volume as much as possible of the text of the official report containing the results of the study as it was presented to the government. Where necessary, the text of the original report has been modified to improve accessibility and understandability. We consider it of crucial importance for the understanding of the full impact of the project as it was designed and conducted, and the way the results of the research project were presented, that the reader can access as much as possible the original document that finally led to the adoption of a new language policy for the island. The full report can be found online.[5]

Chapter 2 of this book deals with the role of community based research in small island states and communities, presenting guiding principles and focusing explicitly on language and education. Chapter 3 describes the components of the project, the composition of the research team, the selection of the methodology and the execution of the project during some seven site visits by one or more of the research team members from 2012 until 2015. Chapter 4 contains the results of the fieldwork carried out by the team, as reported on in Chaps. 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the original report. The literature review in Sect. 4.1 presents an overview of case studies and theory concerning societies and educational systems that have had to cope with challenges in language and education that are similar to the ones that Statia has been confronting, and the effects of educational policy and practice on language attitudes and proficiency in those societies. Sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 cover the three components of our government sponsored field research. Each of those sections begins with some introductory comments on how our work was informed by a community based framework and approach.

Chapter 5 provides the recommendations of the research team concerning the language of instruction in Statia. This chapter also describes the way in which the research team presented the results and recommendations of the project during their fifth visit to Statia in January 2014. The chapter concludes with a report on the implementation of the recommendations in the Statian schools. Chapter 6 is the concluding chapter, which summarizes our reflections concerning the entire project with a focus on how a community based approach was incorporated at as many stages and at as many levels as possible in our work. The chapter ends with comments on how our adoption of a community based research framework maximized the quantity and quality of the results and maximized the chances for a successful transition from Dutch to English as the language of instruction in Statian schools.

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[5] https://www.eerstekamer.nl/overig/20140619/language_of_instruction_in_sint/meta

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Chapter 2
Community Based Research in Postcolonial Communities

2.1 Background

In this work we focus on postcolonial communities in which the former colonizer's language (still) plays a dominant role in education, governance and law. The possibility of using the students' home language as medium of instruction in these settings is continuously up for discussion and is subject to fierce societal and political debate despite the fact that research overwhelmingly demonstrates the value of L1 teaching for maximizing educational opportunity and impact.

In this volume, the benefits of L1 education are not up for discussion. Language rights have been affirmed in article two of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights

> Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

and the education of a child shall be directed to the development of and respect for, among others, a child's language, according to article 29 of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child.

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

   (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
   (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

(c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

(e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

The 1953 UNESCO monograph "The use of vernacular languages" proposes that it be taken 'as axiomatic, […], that the best medium for teaching is the mother tongue of the pupil' (p. 6) and in the 2003 UNESCO Education position paper "Education in a multilingual world", the 'support for mother tongue instruction as a means of improving educational quality by building upon the knowledge and experience of the learners and teachers' is reconfirmed (p. 30). According to this report, based upon Dutcher and Tucker (1997), Mehrotra (1998) and Dutcher (2001), 'studies have shown that, in many cases, instruction in the mother tongue is beneficial to language competencies in the first language, achievement in other subject areas, and second language learning' (p. 15). However, 'the application of the principle of mother tongue instruction nevertheless is far from the rule' (p. 15). Based upon the numbers of pupils being taught in a foreign language in educational systems in Asia, Africa and the Americas it has been estimated that up to half of the world's school population is taught in a weak second language or a completely foreign language (Faraclas 2011). This lack of compliance with the fundamental right to education in the mother tongue is often justified by managerial, political, economic and academic challenges and fails to underscore the educational, political, economic and academic benefits of education in the mother tongue.

The drawbacks and challenges listed by UNESCO are primarily discussed in relation to the protection of mother tongue education for minorities and migrants, but do not pay sufficient attention to the contexts of postcolonial states in which the former colonizer's language is - by far - a minority language, but is used as the language of instruction, and as the language of governance and the judiciary.

The study of LPP has seen big changes over the twentieth and twenty-first century, due to theoretical shifts fueled by globalization, neoliberalism and hybridization in a world of superdiversity (Watson-Gegeo et al. 2018, p. 401) and also by a growing sense of the importance of perspective, state traditions and language regimes (Cardinal and Sonntag 2015). The interdisciplinary character of the field and the methodological shift towards critical studies (Tollefson 2013) and ethnographic approaches (Canagarajah 2006, p. 154) has opened the field to new interpretations that take into account the ideological and multi-layered character of LPP.

The theoretical shifts in LPP pose methodological challenges. Pérez-Milans and Tollefson (2018) emphasize that 'the challenge for future research is […] to sort through and make explicit the underlying ontological, epistemological and personal/social underpinnings for researchers' claims. This effort may involve engagement

with approaches that no longer privilege discourse in the study of social change, but instead focus more explicitly on the material realities of people understood not merely as disembodied life forms embedded in discursive systems, but rather as concrete human beings with substantial and inescapable material needs' (Pérez-Milans and Tollefson 2018, p. 731). To achieve this goal of minimizing the reification of the population that typified the approach of research in St. Eustatius' past and of maximizing meaningful input from all groups in society in the design, implementation and analysis of the research, a community based approach was adopted. This approach carefully integrates Statian traditions of church meetings and town hall meetings in which everybody's voice can be heard, and is not based on an exclusive set of key informers that the researchers deem to be representative of the voice of the island. As a result of this approach, the research project became an integrated thread in the fabric of Statian society.

The case study of Statia presented in this volume is a remarkable example of this state of affairs: in an island society where a variety of English is the majority language, and where varieties of English are the majority languages of the surrounding islands, the choice for Dutch as a language of instruction is hard to justify on the basis of educational, social or economic arguments. Supporters of the use of Dutch in education policy justify this by the fact that the island is part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and follows the educational traditions of the Netherlands, including the employment of Dutch teachers, the adoption of Dutch school books and educational materials, and preparing the children in schools for further studies in Dutch in the Netherlands.

In many postcolonial island settings, such as those found in Haiti (DeGraff 2016, p. 436), Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu (Faraclas et al. 2016, p. 173) and Cabo Verde (Baptista et al. 2010, p. 276), the medium of instruction in education, especially at post-primary level, is the former colonizer's dominant language. These practices illustrate the way in which the state tradition of the former colonizer is perpetuated in the postcolonial state. This leads to a situation in which L1 teaching is not (or marginally) adopted and the foreign language of the former colonizer is used as the medium of instruction in schools instead. Although not all failure in education can be attributed to this policy and practice, it can be identified as one of the main factors contributing to lack of educational success, as well as a lack of ownership of and a general disenfranchisement from the formal education process.

Teaching in the former colonizer's language, more often than not entails that the majority of children of these societies are taught in a foreign language and that the home languages of the peoples of these decolonizing regions have no place in the school systems. Such practices have a negative effect on the acceptance, recognition and promotion of these home languages. This imposes a triple burden on the children as well: the value of their home language is denied, their proficiency in their home language is neither acknowledged nor valued and access to academic content is blocked or is at best severely limited. Despite their investment of significant amounts of time and effort in the development of proficiency in the foreign language of instruction, many fail. This reflects a stunning denial of the importance of the use of home languages in education. Alarming educational statistics (Migge et al. 2010)

notwithstanding, the misconception lives on that the use of a foreign language as the language of instruction and initial literacy somehow leads to a better understanding of content matter and… proficiency in that language. These ideologies, which promote the use of a foreign language as language of instruction at the expense of the home languages of the students, fail to take into account key insights from research in education and language learning, and are based on misunderstandings and misrepresentations of the differences between first, second and foreign language learning (e.g. Lightbown and Spada 2013), childhood bilingualism (e.g. Orioni 2017), the multilingual classroom (e.g. Stan 2017, Le Pichon-Vorstman and Baauw 2017) and the critical period hypothesis (e.g. Paradis et al. 2011).

Traditional research methods in education, linguistics and sociolinguistics have more often than not yielded forms of evidence and recommendations that are not readily accepted and embraced by the societies in which that research has taken place. As such, this research has failed to contribute to sustainable, equitable and inclusive change in postcolonial societies, especially not in small island states where the allegedly more prestigious former colonizers' languages are the media of instruction as well as the languages of governance and law, and the often less prestigious languages spoken as the home language by a majority of the population are tolerated at best and sometimes even excluded from use in formal and educational settings.

Research is not often well received by the societies that are subject to the investigative gaze, due to the fact that the populations of researched societies are often not informed about the purpose, results and potential consequences of the research, nor are they involved in any significant way in research design, implementation, analysis and interpretation. These negative attitudes toward research are magnified in the case of research done by institutions and individuals identified with the former colonizer in postcolonial societies. Questioning the ethical responsibilities of the researcher in the research process, Smith (1999) remarks: 'from the vantage point of the colonized … the term 'research' is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. The word itself, 'research', is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary.'

Tollefson (2006: 44–45) concludes that 'a critical examination of research methodology raises several fundamental questions'. Based upon Blommaert (1996); Pederson (2002) and Ryon (2002), he asks 'how different discourse communities, including language-policy researchers, establish and maintain their preferred forms of knowledge?' Based upon (Gegeo 1998; Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo 1999; Williams and Morris 2000), he also asks 'what "counts" as legitimate research questions, acceptable research methodologies, and persuasive forms of evidence?'. Finally, following Canagarajah (2002) he asks 'how are preferred forms of knowledge created and sustained among groups affected by language policies?' and following Ryon (2002) he questions 'what role […] others [should] play in the research process, especially in evaluating research.' Based upon these fundamental questions, he concludes, following Williams and Morris (2000) that 'people who experience the consequences of language policy should have a major role in making policy decisions'.

To Tollefson's three questions, we add the following three: (1) What is the relationship between research and social change? (2) Can research be considered separately from the communities studied and their agendas for social change? and (3) To what extent can we achieve instant valorization of the research on the part of the researched community by forging partnerships between them and the researchers for study design and execution?

Community based research (CBR) addresses these questions in such a way as to create a community of co-researchers and co-learners in order to ensure that the expertise and agency of the researched community are maximally acknowledged and mobilized, not just for the traditional academic research tasks of description and analysis of their problems, but also in achieving maximally viable and sustainable solutions to those problems. This heightened community involvement increases the likelihood of community wide valorization of a given research project and the acceptance of its outcomes and recommendations.

The challenges faced by island societies are in some ways different from those faced by non-island societies. This is particularly true in areas such access to resources, technical expertise and backup systems. As a consequence, island peoples have traditionally had to rely on themselves to meet their medical, educational and technological needs. This has fostered the development of a high degree of autonomy, self-reliance and collective responsibility in many island communities. By recognizing and respecting local knowledge and expertise, the community based approach is able to mobilize and build upon such strengths.

2.2 Guiding Principles and Best Practices

The fundamental principle of community based research is critical dialogic praxis. This involves replacing traditional research ethics that are primarily focused on institutional acceptability of the research outcomes with inclusive research ethics that are primarily focused on the acceptability of the research outcomes to the researched community, without violating the basic research principles of validity and falsifiability. In our approach to the research that we carried out in Statia, critical dialogic praxis was operationalized through the following four guiding principles:

1. Acknowledging and valorizing the expertise of the researched community,
2. Applying multiple methods, not only through a traditional process of triangulation, but also through the development of different perspectives to which the researched community can relate,
3. Integrating different research backgrounds to ensure the broadness of the approach and the extent to which the results fit the society as a whole,
4. Combining insights from the literature and from other times and places with those that the researched community has gained from real-life experience.

These guiding principles translate into the following five best practices:

1. Co-creating the research design in context, replacing a more traditional academic research design that is rooted in the research needs, traditions and capacities of the former colonizer's academic and political worldview and agenda with a research design that is formulated, accepted and adopted by the researched community in such a way as to minimize the alienation between researchers and researched community.
2. Using multiple research methods and an interdisciplinary approach that acknowledge the complexity and multi-faceted nature of community problems, while avoiding narrow approaches which may yield more concrete data on a specific aspect of the community's problems, but which are not likely to lead to results that help societies or communities resolve these problems in a balanced way.
3. Mobilizing the population in such a way as to maximize community involvement and research outreach, thus contributing to the acceptance and successful implementation of research outputs.
4. Using multiple modes of communication, not only academic platforms (such as this one) but town hall meetings, radio broadcasts, flyers, newspaper interviews, and newspaper articles, in order to make the purpose, design, implementation, results, analysis, interpretation, and recommendations as accessible as possible to the highest possible number of members of the researched society.
5. Adopting a strong ethical posture as researchers, by acknowledging the researcher's position and influence over the beliefs, the perception of truths and other aspects of the discourse and lived realities of the researched community.

2.3   The Roots of Community Based Research

> Once again, there is no such thing as teaching without research and research without teaching. One inhabits the body of the other. As I teach, I continue to search and re-search. I teach because I search, because I question, and because I submit myself to questioning. I research because I notice things, take cognizance of them. And in so doing I intervene. And intervening, I educate and educate myself. (Freire 1998. p.35).

It is difficult to discuss formal academic writing on community based research (also called 'community based participatory research,' 'action research,' 'participatory action research,' or 'praxis research') without discussing critical pedagogy (also called 'popular education' or 'critical literacy'), since key contemporary actors in both areas are often the same. In the work of Paulo Freire, the best known and most influential modern exponent of both community based research and critical pedagogy/literacy, it is by no means easy to make any clear distinction between the two approaches. This is in no small part due to the fact that Freire saw both research and education as processes which emerge from the fundamental human activity of problem solving. Indeed, one aspect of Freire's critique of the dominant paradigms of Western scientific investigation and education revolved around what he

considered to be the artificial separation of these two activities and the emergence of a class of 'expert' researchers and teachers whose professionalization has trivialized and/or replaced the investigative and educational work in which all humans have always been engaged, in order to solve the problems of daily life and in order to prepare the younger generations to do the same.

Although the literature on community based research and critical pedagogy is extensive, it can be said that those who study and advocate these frameworks for investigation and education often do so without questioning some key aspects of the dominant patriarchal, ethnocentric and economically accumulative/exploitative discourses that these approaches were in many cases originally formulated to challenge. When one considers the archaeologies of knowledge that are generally done to explain the origins of these critical orientations to research and education, their roots and resonances in the praxes of women, people of non-European descent, members of non-accumulative indigenous societies, and non-propertied people of European descent are more often than not rendered invisible and silenced.

As mentioned above, most accounts trace community based research and critical pedagogy back to the emancipatory work of Paolo Freire in the second half of the twentieth century. Some go further back in time, identifying Freire's antecedents in the work of other European descended males of the intellectual and propertied classes, such as Orlando Fals Borda, Myles Horton, Kurt Lewin, John Dewey, Antonio Gramsci, Karl Marx, N. F. S. Grundtvig, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Few, however, identify a source for critical education in the diverse pedagogical praxes of women of all ethnic and class backgrounds that have ensured our social, cultural and biological survival as a species from time immemorial. As a source for community based research, perhaps even fewer acknowledge the multiplex investigative praxes of indigenous communities worldwide, despite the fact that for most of human history they have provided just, equitable and ecologically sustainable solutions to the myriad problems faced by communities everywhere on the planet, and could play a pivotal role in addressing many of the seemingly intractable problems involving violence, inequality, and environmental degradation that typify contemporary societies (Smith 1999).

The Platonic episteme that underpins Western hegemonic discourse insists on the separation of research, education and social action into distinct areas of human endeavor, each with its own set of experts, such as scientists, teachers and politicians. Although the claim is made that these distinctions are empirically based and universal, they are in fact highly artificial and represent a relatively recent division of tasks which has emerged as a tool for social control by the dominant classes in what started out as a mere handful of hegemonic societies, such as those of the (former) colonizers. In the praxes of most societies for most of human history, all three of these activities have been inseparable and indistinguishable, and have formed part of the epistemic commons that has been the basis of the subsistence powers shared by all of humanity. In order to raise children and manage families and communities, we as human beings traditionally devise and deploy scientific praxes that seamlessly merge pedagogy (education), the identification, description and analysis of problems (research) and the resolution of problems (social action).

The lifeways by which some indigenous peoples have chosen to define themselves as 'indigenous' suggest that in the non-accumulative societies in which all but the most recent of our ancestors lived, everyone was a scientist, a teacher, a learner, a researcher, a politician and an agent for social change (Faraclas 1998b). The rise of patriarchal, ethnocentric and accumulative societies has been made possible through the usurpation of these epistemic powers once shared by everyone and their concentration in the hands of classes of symbolic elites specialized in areas such as research, education and policy formulation/implementation. The 'professionals' or 'experts' who make up these elites have been carefully selected and cultivated to establish and propagate a monolithic 'truth' and a set of norms that correspond with the interests of the privileged minority that constitutes the dominant classes, rather than with the interests of the community as a whole (van Dijk 2002: 148).

Of the many metaphysical traditions of antiquity, it is not surprising that the ideas of Plato and his disciples are the ones that have played the predominant role in defining and shaping 'Western' thinking, science, religion and academic work, including the ways in which we conceptualize research and education. This is largely because Platonic metaphysics have provided politically dominant classes with tools designed to maximize social control. It is this metaphysics that has been used to justify colonialism in the past as well as to justify neo-colonialism in the present.

Plato argued that we can only really know something when we know its essential and pure form, which exists above and beyond our sensory experience in the world. Plato's idealized and universal worldview asserts that there is one true, universal, essential and normal reality and one true, universal, significant, and normal way of knowing the world. In a forced choice, zero-sum game scenario which sets up polarized binaries which are mutually exclusive and conjunctively exhaustive, all other understandings of reality are considered to be false, illusory, trivial, superficial, or abnormal. Platonic epistemology has allowed politically dominant classes and the clerics and academics who serve their interests to seize control and declare a monopoly over our understanding of what is 'true'.

On the basis of this metaphysics, Plato proposed that the ideal form of the 'good' constitutes a norm to which we all should conform. But this norm is not only a goal for human behavior, it is the one and only true, real, universal, normal, way of being in the world. All other ways of being are therefore not only false, illusory, superficial, and abnormal, but also evil. Platonic morality has allowed politically dominant classes and the clerics and academics who serve their interests to seize control over our understanding of what is good. Patriarchal, ethnocentric and economically exploitative norms have been established and enforced on all of Western society as well as on the societies colonized by the 'West' as the only true, universal, significant, normal, and good ways of being.

The internalization of Platonic normative binaries is fundamental to the perfection of systems of hegemonic rule, where coercive force is largely replaced by internalized discursive force to establish and maintain asymmetries of power in society. When we spend our entire lives trying to conform to artificial, idealized patriarchal, ethnocentric, and economically accumulative norms established not in our own

interests, but in the interests of politically dominant classes, we spend our entire lives striving to become who those ruling classes want us to be, instead of who we want ourselves to be; serving their interests instead of our interests; shaping reality in their image instead of our own; and projecting and imposing their norms on ourselves and on all with whom we come into contact, such as our colleagues and students.

Both community based research and critical pedagogy have played an enormous role in challenging hegemony because they attempt to erase the artificial borders that separate education, research and social action which have been created by the dominant classes and policed by the symbolic elites. In critical pedagogy, the hierarchical 'banking model of education' (Freire 1970/1993), where the teacher has the monopoly on truth and knowledge and the students are empty receptacles in which the teacher 'deposits' that truth and that knowledge, is replaced by a community of co-learners, where everyone's truths, knowledges and experience are acknowledged, valorized and mobilized. This community of co-learners is also a community of co-researchers and social actors, whose learning process includes the identification, description, analysis and resolution of community problems.

Most of the academic and political discussion concerning community based research and critical pedagogy view these approaches as both revolutionary and innovative, because they break with hegemonic understandings of investigation and education. While it would be difficult to overestimate the revolutionary potential of community based research and critical pedagogy to subvert the epistemic construction of asymmetrical social relations, the view that these are 'innovative' orientations to investigation and education is more problematic. By viewing them as new and without substantive precedent in human history, not only do we erase rich traditions of pre-hegemonic human epistemic and social agency, but we also unnecessarily limit our sense of our own powers and possibilities for assuming control over how and in whose interests we know and change our world, as well as over how and in whose interests we make up and change our minds (van Dijk 2008).

Freire is rightly credited with a radical re-interpretation of literacy as the ability to 'read and write the world' instead of the more conventional understanding of literacy as the ability to read and write texts, as prescribed by the symbolic elites in the image and interests of the dominant classes. In their efforts to implement critical literacy and popular education programs, however, some indigenous peoples have attempted to radically re-historicize and deepen Freire's understanding of literacy by asserting that before the advent of hegemonic societies and of print literacy, all indigenous peoples had the scientific ability to 'read and write life' as well as the pedagogical praxes that allowed them to pass on this ability from one generation to the next (Faraclas 1998a,b). In this re-formulation of what it means to be literate, indigenous peoples claim in a manner not dissimilar to Roland Barthes (1957), that all of life can be subject to inter-pretation, *lexis* or reading. They contend that part of the learning process in indigenous societies is to acquire the ability to read the soil to know when it is time to plant, to read the sea to know when it is time to fish, to read the movements of animals to know when it is time to hunt, to read the faces of other humans to discern their thoughts and feelings, to read their utterances in order to discern their intentions, etc.

Indigenous peoples have also used this idea of 'reading life' to describe their approach to community based research. In indigenous communities, everyone is involved in the processes of identifying, describing and analyzing community problems, which can be seen not only as a prime example of community based research, but also as another instance of 'reading life', that is, the interpretation or *lexis* of their living and lived reality. But in indigenous communities, this research process does not limit itself to the identification, description and analysis of problems. It also includes mobilizing the community to solve these problems, which indigenous peoples have termed 'writing life'. Thus, community involvement and problem resolution, the key elements that differentiate Freire and others' conception of 'living' community based research from the conventional 'dead' academic research paradigm that it challenges, have been an integral part of indigenous research and science ('reading and writing life') for millennia.

With all of the caveats expressed above, we turn our attention back to the various intellectual and social movements in Europe and the US that could be considered to have contributed to the emergence of community based research. It is interesting that Socrates is best known at present for an approach to education that incorporates key elements of community based research and critical pedagogy. Based on questions formulated to acknowledge and mobilize the knowledge and problem solving capacity of the learner, the Socratic method transforms teachers and students into a community of co-learners, where all are actively engaged in the processes of identification, description, analysis and resolution of problems. As such, Socrates can be seen as the last exponent of the indigenous ancestral Greek tradition of 'living' community based research/critical pedagogy. After Socrates, Plato and Aristotle re-assigned investigation and social action to separate spheres of activity, reconceptualized research as the search for an idealized, universal and unchanging (therefore 'dead') 'reality' and redefined learners as passive consumers of knowledge provided by an 'expert' teacher. Plato and Aristotle were thus responsible for setting the stage for the emergence of the dominant paradigms of Western academic thinking on research and education which community based research and critical pedagogy seek to problematize and challenge. Freire articulated this challenge in various ways, including the following:

> The investigator who, in the name of scientific objectivity, transforms the organic into something inorganic, what is becoming into what is, life into death, is a person who fears change. He or she sees in change (which is not denied, but neither is it desired) not as a sign of life, but a sign of death and decay. […]. However, in seeing change as a sign of death and in making people the passive objects of investigation in order to arrive at rigid models, one betrays their own character as a killer of life. […]. I cannot think *for others* or *without others,* nor can others think *for* me. Even if the people's thinking is superstitious or naïve, it is only as they rethink their assumptions in action that they can change. Producing and acting upon their own ideas — not consuming those of others — must constitute that process. People, as beings "in a situation," find themselves rooted in temporal-spatial conditions which mark them and which they also mark. They will tend to reflect on their own "situationality" to the extent that they are challenged by it to act upon it. Human beings *are* because they *are in* a situation. And they *will be more* the more they not only critically reflect upon their existence but critically act upon it. (Freire 1970/1993 pp. 81–82)

Within the dominant Western paradigm, perhaps the first influential attempt to break with the concept of the learner as passive consumer of knowledge was the publication of the multi-volume novel-treatise *Emile* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in 1762. In *Emile*, Rousseau argued for new perspectives on the education of children which were centered on their natural curiosity and goodness, in explicit opposition to the corruption of society, the church and its Platonic/Aristotelian educational institutions. From the second half of the eighteenth century onward, and especially after the French revolution, educational theorists and practitioners in Europe and the US, such as J. B. Basedow, C. G. Salzmann, J. H. Pestalozzi, J. F. Herbart, Friedrich Froebel, N. F. S. Grundtvig, J. M. Bosco, Cecil Reddie, Helen Parkhurst, Rudolf Steiner, Maria Montessori and John Dewey became part of what at least in hindsight can be identified as a movement for Progressive Education, which to one degree or another incorporated a number of approaches which can be found in critical pedagogy as well, such as a focus on experiential learning/problem solving, the encouragement of cooperative learning, an insistence on critical thinking, the cultivation of social responsibility, a commitment to democracy, and preparation for lifelong learning. The impact that the Progressive Education movement has had on pedagogy for both children and adults worldwide has been significant.

The Progressive Education movement, however, was generally not focused on radical social change beyond the confines of the school itself. From the mid-nineteenth century onward, especially after the socialist uprisings throughout Europe in the 1840s and 1850s, a more socially engaged Popular Education movement for adults and adolescents emerged. One of the pioneers of this movement was liberal theologian N. F. S. Grundvig, who in 1844 founded the first of what was to become a national network of folk high schools in Denmark, with the goal of making lifelong education accessible and relevant to the non-propertied classes. The curriculum of these schools was designed to stimulate a community of co-learners, where dialogic interaction between teachers and learners was focused on the realities lived by the people and their everyday problems.

Thereafter, folk schools and other popular education initiatives spread rapidly in Europe and the US. Some of these initiatives were inspired by socialist intellectuals and social activists such as Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin. During the early and mid twentieth century, the critical elaboration of Marx' and Lenin's analyses of systems of domination to include the control exerted by the formulation, propagation and internalization of hegemonic discourse by Antonio Gramsci, Kurt Lewin, Mikhail Bakhtin, Pavel Medvedev, Valentin Voloshinov and Lev Vygotsky proved to be influential on the thinking and practice of social psychologists, sociologists, educators and community activists. A number of these, such as Orlando Fals Borda, and Myles Horton formulated and implemented various models that might be seen as precursors to what is now commonly understood to be community based research, as part of their efforts to bring about social change through popular education.

Paulo Freire's work is a dynamic synthesis of progressive and popular education, radical theology and radical politics, and activist psychology and sociology. Therefore, his work can be said to have been influenced directly or indirectly by the thinking and social engagement of all of the proponents of these tendencies

mentioned above, from Socrates to Karl Marx to Myles Horton. From the later part of the twentieth century until the present, Freire's ideas and activism have inspired countless intellectual reflections and concrete social interventions that incorporate the principles of community based education and critical pedagogy worldwide. Those whose thinking and work have been inspired consciously or unconsciously by Freire number in the millions and can be found promoting social transformation everywhere on the planet. Freire's impact has been particularly significant in neocolonial/postcolonial societies.

Community based research does not prescribe a specific methodology. Instead, it is a general *approach* that problematizes and re-unites the artificially separated fields of education, scientific research, and politics. An indispensable and fundamental principle of all community based research, however, is *critical dialogical praxis*. Dialogue, or the establishment of dynamic communities of lifelong co-learners, can be seen as the aspect of community based research that corresponds to what the dominant Western episteme has conceptualized as education, while praxis, or the dynamic lifelong interaction between reflection and action, can be seen as the aspect of community based research that corresponds to what the dominant Western episteme has conceptualized as scientific research (reflection) and politics (action). The critical dimension of community based research insists on the lifelong questioning, problematizing and challenging of systems of domination, such as patriarchy, ethnocentrism and economic accumulation/exploitation. In our work on the island of Statia, we attempted as much as possible to adopt a community based research approach based on critical dialogic praxis.

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Chapter 3
Project Background: Language Policy and Language Endangerment in the Caribbean: The Language of Instruction in Statia 2012–2014

3.1 The Assignment

In 2012, because of his experience in community based research and popular education, a member of our research team was invited by a group of Statian community workers to come to St. Eustatius to participate in a process which they had initiated of promoting dialogue around the issue of the language of instruction in the schools among all stakeholders on the island. Their goals were to help improve Statian students' performance as well as to help heal some of the divisions that had separated the population of the island over the previous decades into two opposing camps, those who wanted to retain Dutch as the language of instruction in the schools versus those who wanted English to be the language of instruction. Due to their efforts and to an approach of dialogic praxis, over the course of that year great strides were made in moving the discussion forward from one typified by zero-sum polemics to one which was focused on an island-wide mobilization to address the educational concerns, needs and goals of the community.

Toward the end of 2012, a team of specialists with different backgrounds was requested by the Dutch government to: "… investigate the benefits of and the attitudes towards Dutch and English as languages of instruction in primary, secondary and vocational education on the island of Sint Eustatius" by carrying out the following tasks: a literature research, surveys and interviews on attitudes and the formulation of conclusions on language of instruction. When the three authors of this volume were first approached by the authorities to carry out this research, we had some misgivings about becoming involved in the project. While we had not hesitated when we were invited to participate in the community-driven dialogue process described above, an invitation to participate in a process driven in many respects by the colonial government was another matter entirely. Statia had just been compelled to change its political status from an overseas territory to a municipality of the Netherlands in 2010 and despite the fact that the great majority of the children of

Statia do not in fact speak Dutch as a first or even a second language, for most of the years since the establishment of state-sponsored universal education, Dutch had been the language of instruction in most classrooms.

From the year 2007 onward, however, some limited changes in policy had been made to allow English, which is much closer to their children's mother tongue than Dutch, to be used in the early years of primary school. Since their full incorporation into the European Netherlands in 2010, many of the people on the island were becoming concerned that these limited reforms in favor of the use of English in the schools would be reversed in favor of Dutch. We were hesitant to become involved in this situation as university based researchers, being fully aware that in our efforts as academics and community workers to reverse the process of language endangerment that has resulted from the imposition of colonial languages on the peoples of Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Americas, it is of utmost importance that we look critically at the approaches and practices that we adopt, to make sure that we are not unconsciously replicating the colonial ideologies and relations of power that created the problem in the first place.

3.2   The Research Design

In their proposal, the Dutch Ministry of Education had requested that we do a review of the literature on the use of the mother tongue in education in multilingual societies worldwide, that we conduct a survey on language use and attitudes on Statia, and, on the basis of our results, that we formulate recommendations as to which language should be used as the language of instruction on the island. After consulting with our previously established networks of community workers on the island who encouraged us to take up the offer by the Dutch government, we decided to make a counter proposal to the Ministry. In that proposal, we advocated for a community based research model based on the work that our partners in the community had already done, designed to involve the community more directly in the process of identification, analysis and resolution of the problem under study.

In the framework for research that we put forward, we envisioned a continuation and expansion of the ongoing dialogue among all community members whereby their own understanding and insight would be actively elicited, acknowledged and integrated into the findings and recommendations. In consultation with our Statian partners, we proposed that beside a literature review and a survey, it would be necessary to conduct multiple focus group meetings with students, teachers, parents, educational authorities, and educational support professionals, that classroom observations be made, and that proficiency testing in both Dutch and English be done to gain an overview of what the students were actually learning in the classroom. The Dutch Ministry of Education studied our suggested modifications to their original proposal and accepted them, and we began our work on the island in 2013.

With both official approval and a re-affirmed community based approach, the research project quickly picked up where the previously successful dialogue process

had left off, to become a popular venue for input, discussion and reflection on the part of the people of the island, a considerable number of whom were eager to participate in sometimes lengthy discussions and focus group meetings. As the process unfolded, people came to realize that, no matter which camp they identified with, in the end they all shared quite a number of basic understandings of the educational problems faced by the students, the root causes of these problems, and the results that they wanted their schools to achieve.

The guiding principles of community based research as well as the Best Practices that were recognized by the research team and which have been laid down in Chap. 2 of this book, were applied in the research design. After the three visits made by members of the team on the invitation of island based community workers in 2012, a preparatory visit of the now government-sponsored research team took place from 21 February to 2 March 2013. The visit was planned to lay the groundwork for the team's research visit, which was going to take place from 12 to 27 April 2013. To prepare for the second research visit, the team intended to achieve the following objectives:

1. Brief all of the relevant population on the nature and purpose of the proposed research.
2. Answer any questions and clarify any doubts that the population might have concerning the proposed research.
3. Allow the population to provide input into the research process at all levels from the procedures to be followed to the actual research questions that were going to be answered by the study.
4. Reconfirm the willingness of the population to participate in the proposed research.
5. Gain a preliminary, global, and qualitative understanding of how the population viewed the situation on the island at that time in terms of language and education.
6. Allow the research team members themselves to establish a working relationship and to share their past research work and experience in the field of language and education.
7. Provide the research team with the opportunity to elaborate a working plan for the entire research project in general and for the second visit in particular.

In doing so, the research team set out to (1) acknowledge and valorize the expertise of the community on the island. Apart from that, they set the ground for (2) the application of multiple methods, not only through a traditional process of triangulation, but also through the development of different perspectives to which the Statian community could relate, and (3) the integration of different research backgrounds - to ensure the broadness of the approach and the extent to which the results fit the society as a whole - would be appreciated by the community. Finally, the research team attempted to (4) combine insights from the literature and from other times and places with those that the community on Statia had gained from real-life experience.

3.3   The Execution of the Second Phase of the Research Project

As stated before, the research team did not only do what the government had asked it to do, but went beyond that in order to obtain an overview of the insights and perspectives that was as encompassing as possible in the time allowed for the team to produce the research report. On the basis of the guiding principles of community based research, and on the basis of the input of the Statian community in the research design during the first visit in February 2013, the final research project consisted of the different components described in the next paragraph.

The first component involved the team conducting the requested literature research (the focus of Sect. 4.1 of this book), which included the comparative analysis of the educational and social impacts of language policy in Statia and other societies worldwide where the language of instruction is not one of the first languages of the majority of students. The second component involved a language attitudes and use survey (the focus of Sect. 4.2 of this book), which included the statistical analysis of a set of questionnaires administered to a highly representative sample of stakeholders in the education system in Statia. The third component involved the administration of a narrative proficiency test (the focus of Sect. 4.3 of this book), which included the analysis of a test on proficiency in Dutch and English given to all students at the *groep* 7 and 8 levels [the rough equivalent of primary grades 5 and 6 in the US system] in all of the primary schools, to all students in the *Schakelklas* sections at the secondary school, and to a representative sample of first through third year students at the secondary school. As part of the fourth component, the team performed classroom observations in primary and secondary schools to witness how language and education interact at the 'chalkface' itself. The other part of the fourth component involved conducting focus group interviews with parents, teachers, students, school board members, principals, governmental institutions, NGOs and other interested citizens who responded to the public invitations made via radio, television, posters and flyers. These interview sessions served as a tool for a qualitative interpretation of the other research data and as a means to give direct voice to as many members as possible of the population of Statia in this complex matter. In doing so, the research team created a context where as many members as possible of as many particular communities of practice related to the education system, such as teachers at a particular school, students in a particular class, workers at the office of a particular educational support services provider, etc. could meaningfully interact in the identification, description, analysis and resolution of issues related to the language of instruction in the schools (this, together with the results of the classroom observations, is the focus of Sect. 4.4 of this book).

Taken together, the research activities were carried out consistently with the intention both to provide continuity with previously initiated community based efforts to deal with the issue of language of instruction in the schools as well as to embody the guiding principles and best practices of community based research, as identified by the research team. Acknowledging the researcher's position and

influence over the beliefs, the perception of truths and other aspects of the discourse and lived realities of the researched community, the research project was formulated and constantly re-formulated in such a way that it utilized multiple modes of communication and operationalized as many strategies as possible to maximize community involvement. The Statian community's input was incorporated into as many aspects of the research design as possible, chiefly through the process of critical dialogue. This in turn led to high levels of understanding and ownership of the research process and low levels of alienation between the research team and the community.

By strengthening our previous links with the Statian community and by striving to shift our position from observer and extractor of data to that of fellow researchers in dialogue with the community, we did what we could within the time and resource limitations imposed on the government sponsored study to make sure that the research was likely to lead to results that would help the community to resolve the problem under study in a balanced way. The fact that the recommendations made as a result of this research project were not only accepted by the powers that be, but were also accepted and embraced by the community itself is, in our opinion, strong evidence in support of the effectiveness of a community based research approach.

After our government-sponsored research visits to Statia, we made it clear to the people of the island that our commitment to supporting them in the process of dealing with the issue of the language of instruction in the schools was by no means at an end. Since the official end of our work for the Dutch Ministry of Education, one or more members of our team have returned to Statia several times, both to help share the results of the literature review, the survey, the narrative proficiency tests and the focus group interviews as well as to make sure that the process of community based identification, analysis and resolution of this problem continues.

3.4   The Context

What is known today as the special municipality of the Netherlands of Sint Eustatius (Statia) is located in the north-eastern Caribbean, close to Saba and Sint Maarten, two other islands of the former Netherlands Antilles, but also close to the island territories of Saint Barthélemy, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, Montserrat and Guadeloupe. This small island experienced a turbulent colonial past that has greatly influenced the look and feel of the island today. After Europeans reached Sint Eustatius in 1493, it was claimed by many colonizing empires over the next 150 years. Statia officially became part of the Dutch colonial empire in the 1630s, however, over the following centuries, it changed hands multiple times, and it was only in 1828 that it came under Dutch rule for good.

The strategic location of this 21 sq./km island, which was surrounded by colonies of the British, Danish, French and Spanish, made it an attractive regional trading post. As a custom duty free port from 1756 onward, it became a major transshipment harbor, earning the island the nickname *The Golden Rock*. It was in

the eighteenth century that trade in Sint Eustatius grew to such a level that the island welcomed between 1000 and 1500 ships a year, rivaling the harbor of Willemstad in Curaçao in volume. Illegal private slave trade with ships of any flag was at the core of this prosperity. For the rest, the trade varied, sugar was important, mainly from the French islands, as well as was the transshipment of various types of cargo between the Americas and Europe (Emmer and Gommans 2012, p. 196–197).

The Anglo-Dutch war (1780–1784) was allegedly caused by the fact that the *first salute* in recognition of the red-and-white flag of the American rebellion against the British came from Sint Eustatius. This resulted in the British conquest of Sint Eustatius by Rodney in 1781 (Goslinga 1990, p. 142). Next came the French revolution, the liquidation of the Dutch West India Company in 1791, and the war between the Dutch and France that started in 1793, all of which ultimately led to a devastating British occupation of the three Dutch islands in the northern Caribbean and ended Sint Eustatius' unique role in the Caribbean region (Enthoven 2012. p. 242; Goslinga 1990. pp. 144–152).

In 1816 colonial rule over the islands was restored to the Dutch and after several administrative experiments, in 1845 the islands in the Dutch Caribbean became the colonial administrative entity of *Colonie Curaçao en onderhoorigheden* (Colony Curaçao and dependencies). The once glorious island of Sint Eustatius was degraded to the status of a dependency reflected in the lamentations of one of the island's governors who complained that there was no more capital, communications with the so called Mother Country had disintegrated and the plantations were languishing. Statia never recovered economically from the loss of its importance as a trading center, and it never recovered politically from the shift of the colonial administration to the far away island of Curaçao (Goslinga 1990, p. 155&162).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, high prices on the international markets made cotton cultivation a lucrative endeavor on the island. Unfortunately, during the early 1920s, a disease ruined the crop (Knappert 1930, p. 168) and cotton cultivation was abandoned. Subsequent agricultural projects did not yield satisfactory results, and the island remained a quiet backwater throughout the rest of the century. The new structure of the Kingdom of the Netherlands that came about in 1954 after the independence of Indonesia, did not change the situation of Sint Eustatius: the Netherlands Antilles became the new governmental structure in the region within the Kingdom, but the island of Sint Eustatius remained under the governance of Curaçao until the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles in 2010.

The establishment of an oil transshipment facility in 1982, the opening of an American medical school in 1999, and the subsequent emergence of a modest ecotourism industry have become the chief sources of income for the island at present. Agriculture, despite its historically proven potential, remains neglected. The transshipment facility, the medical school, the tourism industry and high levels of mobility among Caribbean islands have had a major impact on Statian demographics. The Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics reported that in 2016 3200 people lived on the island (CBS 2016). Considering that the island was home to as much as 10,000 people in its heyday in the eighteenth century, this demographic collapse is emblematic of the economic and political decline of the island. Some 75% of the young

people on the island were born in the former Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, 15.5% were born in Central and South America and 8% were born in the European Netherlands (CBS 2018, p. 89).

As is the case for all of the territories colonized by the Netherlands in the Caribbean, Dutch has never been a first language for the great majority of the inhabitants of Sint Eustatius. There are many circumstances that contributed to this state of affairs, but one of the main factors was the reluctance of the Dutch to share their language, culture and religion with their non-Dutch descended colonial subjects during their first two centuries of imperial rule. This resulted in the establishment, first by Sephardic traders and plantation owners and then by Latin American Catholic missionaries, of Papiamentu/o (a Creole language with a lexicon based on Portuguese and Spanish) as the main language spoken in Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao (the ABC Islands or Dutch Leeward Islands), and the establishment of Creole languages with English-based lexicons by traders and missionaries from the British Isles as the main languages spoken in Sint Maarten, Saba and Sint Eustatius (the SSS Islands or the Dutch Windward Islands).

By the time the Netherlands changed its colonial policies to promote the spread of Dutch language and culture among all of its colonial subjects in the Caribbean at the end of the eighteenth century, it was too late. Although Dutch has been the official language of instruction and initial literacy in Statia and the rest of the former Netherlands Antilles (which originally included both the ABC and SSS Islands) for more than a century, the children of these islands have very limited exposure to Dutch outside of the classroom, and most finish their formal education with very limited academic proficiency in Dutch or any other language. Predictably, the educational consequences of these language policies have been disastrous (Mijts et al. 2017, pp. 109–110).

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Chapter 4
Literature Review, Survey, Narrative Proficiency Test, Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations

4.1 General Remarks

4.1.1 Introduction

During our work on Statia, one of the points on which there was total agreement among all of those involved in the educational system on the island (including students, parents, teachers, educational administrators, school board members, social workers, community members, and politicians, see Sect. 4.4 below) was that the system was in deep crisis and that things were going from bad to worse. The consistently and shockingly low levels of academic performance of Statian students in comparison to their counterparts in the European Netherlands and the alarming and rapidly escalating social problems experienced both by students then in the system and by young people who were no longer students, but whose lives had been shaped by the system, provided independent and empirical evidence for these observations by community members. Many people on Statia had given profound and serious thought to the identification and analysis of the causes of this crisis and all agreed that the current situation is the result of a complex configuration of historical, social, political, economic, and pedagogical factors.

Our focus was on the pedagogical factors, not because the other factors were not important, but because our mandate from both the community and the government was to address questions of educational policy. While educational policy can have only limited effect on the operation of historical, social, political, and economic forces in the short term, it can have dramatic and immediate effects on results in the classroom which can eventually yield important social and economic benefits over the longer term. We consider our focus on language policy in education in Statia, as appropriate because educational policy is one of the things that can be changed relatively quickly and easily and the impact of these changes can make tangible, positive and measurable differences in educational outcomes within a relatively

short time span. While we all agreed that addressing many of the historical, social, political, and economic causes of the problems faced by the education system in Statia would require massive and comprehensive change at all levels of society over a long period of time, we were fortunate to be focusing on some of the causes whose eradication would require nothing more than some changes in educational policy and some reorientation of classroom practice. In other words, *if we wanted to begin somewhere in addressing the problems in education in Statia, this was a logical and relatively manageable place to start*.

On the pages that follow in this section, we present the passages from the original report that contain the literature review that we carried out in preparation for and during our field research. What appears below are excerpts from the text found in the original report, with some supplemental material and clarifications added, and with superfluous details deleted.

4.1.2 Literature Review: The Educational and Social Impacts of Language Policy in Statia in Comparison with Other Societies Worldwide

4.1.2.1 Introduction

One of the underlying principles of modern education is that it is universal. This means that a modern education system such as that of Statia has as its official aim to equip all citizens with the abilities and skills that they need to lead satisfying and productive lives. The idea of universal education is a fairly recent one and among the countries which historically played a pioneering role in the establishment of universal education is the Netherlands. Before the 1800s, formal education was restricted to a very small elite class in the Netherlands and the rest of the world.

One of the main educational policies and practices that ensured that education would remain the exclusive privilege of the elite ruling classes was the use of a language of instruction that was not a first language of the students, such as Latin in pre-modern Europe, Koranic Arabic in the Muslim world, Sanskrit in South Asia, Mandarin in China, etc. For example, in the pre-modern Netherlands, non-clerical access to formal education was largely restricted to those whose parents knew Latin, the special language of education, and therefore could teach it to their children, or whose parents had enough money to hire tutors who could teach Latin to their children. One of the major changes in educational policy and practice that allowed the Netherlands to make formal education universal was to change the language of instruction from an exclusive language that was not the first language of its citizens (Latin), to an inclusive language that was a first language of most of its citizens (Dutch).

In the very contentious history of educational theory, one of the facts upon which all can agree is that without the transition in educational policy from Latin to the various modern European languages, it would have been impossible to extend

formal education from a small economically and socially privileged elite to all of the citizens of Europe. The fundamentally sound pedagogical logic of assuring all citizens the opportunity to have one of their own first languages as language of instruction and initial literacy was the driving force behind changes in language and education policy in the Dutch speaking parts of Belgium to allow Dutch to be officially used in schools where the majority of the students have Dutch rather than French as their first language, and in the Fries speaking part of the Netherlands, where students are now given the option to have their own Fries language as their first language of instruction and literacy.

Even with the preponderant importance of English today as a worldwide *lingua franca* and with the rapidly growing numbers of people who in fact have English as one of their first languages, especially in areas such as northern Europe, there is little or no debate about, let alone any eventual prospect of, English replacing the languages which have been and remain the first languages of the overwhelming majority of Netherlanders, Germans, Swedes, etc. as the language of instruction in the public schools. As one of our interviewees pointed out, a proposal to replace Dutch by English as the language of instruction in the schools of the European Netherlands, for example, would be roundly and overwhelmingly rejected by the Dutch people.

Such a rejection of the elimination of Dutch as the language of instruction in the European Netherlands, while having some of its basis in nationalist feeling, would nevertheless also be based on reasonable pedagogical theory. One of the main grounds for the idea that the optimal language of instruction for Netherlanders is Dutch is one of the most fundamental principles, if not *the* most fundamental principle, of education, that is: "Go from the known to the unknown." This principle, which formed the basis for Socrates' pedagogy in Ancient Greece has withstood the test of time, re-surfacing as a basic element of didactic theory and practice up until the present day (see, for example, Vygotsky's 'zones of proximal development' (1978) and Krashen's input hypothesis (1985)). This principle simply states that learning is optimal when what is already known to the learners (for example, their first language) is utilized as much as possible to teach them material that they do not as yet know.

Perhaps the greatest educational challenge faced by the world's children today is the fact that some 50% of them find themselves in classrooms where the language of instruction and/or the language of initial literacy is not their own. It is no coincidence that those countries where the students' first language is used as the language of initial instruction and literacy are also those countries that have the most successful education systems and whose workforces are maximally equipped to achieve a high level of independent technological, scientific, and economic success. Some of the characteristics shared by Statia and many of the other countries and territories where this is not the case include: (1) very low levels of academic performance in public schools; (2) extremely high school attrition rates; (3) the effective exclusion of the majority of the population from access to the minimal degree of education sufficient for effective participation in the globalized economy; (4) the extreme concentration of wealth and educational opportunity among a very

small elite class; and (5) excessive dependence on expatriate professionals and skilled (and even semi-skilled) labor from other countries where the language of instruction in schools is that of the majority of the students.

Instruction and initial literacy in one's first language are not only a matter of good pedagogy, they have also been recognized and ratified as human rights. The declaration by UNESCO in 1953 that all children have the right to education in their first language has been followed by similar conventions agreed upon by the majority of the members of various international organizations. As illustrated below, increasing numbers of societies similar in one way or another to that of Statia, have been working toward changes in educational policy which acknowledge and fulfill the rights of their children and young people to a maximally effective education in their first language. Before we consider these initiatives however, we must mention a necessary cautionary account of language policy gone terribly wrong in Puerto Rico, which is Statia's largest neighboring island.

4.1.2.2 A Negative Example: Language Policy in Puerto Rico

From the point of view of language policy and education, the case of Puerto Rico is similar to that of Statia in many ways. While the population of both islands speak a Caribbean variety of a major European language (Caribbean English in Statia and Caribbean Spanish in Puerto Rico), both islands have experienced the imposition of another European language as language of instruction and initial literacy by an imperial power (Dutch in Statia and English in Puerto Rico). Although the English-only policy was abandoned in Puerto Rican schools as a dismal failure some 65 years ago, Dutch-oriented policies persist in one form or another in all of the schools of Statia. The disastrous effects that the English-only policy had on attitudes toward education in general and the learning of English in particular are still very strong in Puerto Rico, and there are signs that in Statia similar attitudes toward education, the learning of Dutch, and the Dutch presence on the island have already taken root and are spreading (see Sects. 4.2 through 4.4 below).

In her recent study of attitudes toward English in Puerto Rico, Myers (2013: 1–3) states that:

> The original intention of the United States government was to Americanize Puerto Rico via the imposition of the English language. In fact, between 1904 and 1916 (under the Falkner policy), English was the only means of instruction in all grades in public schools. During this period, English was taught at the expense of Spanish; in other words, subtractive bilingualism (Lambert 1977) was taking place. This was later corrected in 1948 when the language of instruction in the schools changed to Spanish, and English became a mandatory subject at all grade levels. Nonetheless, after more than a hundred years of exposure to English, there are still many Puerto Ricans that do not consider themselves to be bilingual. Resnick (1993) states:

> For nearly a century, since Puerto Rico was ceded to the U.S. in 1898, the majority of the population of Puerto Rico has remained functionally monolingual in Spanish despite the compulsory study of English in Grades 1–12 and an expressed positive attitude toward the

> learning of English. Census data from 1980 indicate that less than 20% of the island's population claims to speak English fluently. Fluency rates in English range from less than 7% of elementary-school-age children to 27% of those between 25 and 44 years of age. The highest rates of claimed fluency in English are for those who have lived on the mainland (57%) and college graduates (70%). With less than 20% of the population having achieved fluency in English, including those who have lived on the mainland, the school language policy has failed in its goal of creating a bilingual population. (260)

Vélez (1999) offers evidence from the 1990 census indicating that 20% of the Puerto Rican population is proficient in English, and another 20% can handle the language reasonably well (74):

> Similar figures can be found in the 2000 U.S. Census. Of those residents 5 years of age and over, only 15.9% believe that they have the ability to speak English "very well;" 17.9% report speaking English "well," 21.0% report speaking it "not very well," and 45.2% report not speaking it at all. If we add together those who claim to speak it "very well" and "well," we see that only 33.8% consider themselves to be reasonably fluent in the English language and 66.2% consider they have problems speaking English. While self-report data have to be taken with a grain of salt due to the tendency of people to over- or under-estimate their language abilities, the figures are still of concern to English teachers and language policymakers.

Meyers provides the following concise history of language policy in Puerto Rican schools from 1898 to 1948:

To better understand the role English plays nowadays in Puerto Rico, let us take a quick look at the major events of the history of English in Puerto Rico (Pousada 1996; Resnick 1993; Negrón de Montilla 1970).

1898 – Puerto Rico was yielded to the United States as part of the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898.

1900–1904 – Brumbaugh policy: classes were taught in Spanish in Grades 1 – 8, and English was the medium of instruction in the few high schools that existed.

1902 — Official Languages Act declared Spanish and English the co-official languages of the government of Puerto Rico.

1904–1916 – Falkner policy: English was the sole medium of instruction in all grades. This policy required teaching reading in English in the first grade, although the number of elementary school teachers who spoke English was limited.

1916–1934–Miller policy: Spanish was employed as the medium of instruction from the first to the fourth grade, Spanish and English, in the fifth grade, and English, from the sixth to the twelfth grade.

1934–1947 – Padín & Gallardo policies: Spanish was the language of instruction from the first to the eighth grade, and English was taught as a subject. However, English served as the language of instruction from ninth grade to twelfth grade.

1948 –Luis Muñoz Marín became the first elected governor of Puerto Rico. Under Commissioner MarianoVillaronga, Spanish was made the language of instruction in all grades, and English was taught as a required subject in all grades. This policy remains in effect today. (3–6)

Meyers goes on to make the following observations regarding attitudes toward English in Puerto Rico:

> There are mixed feelings towards English in Puerto Rico. Vélez (1999) distinguishes between individual and societal bilingualism and explains that most Puerto Ricans favor individual bilingualism. Puerto Ricans admire people who speak more than one language, and they also foster the idea among their children. 'It is assumed that English has great importance and that anyone wishing to get ahead must attain proficiency in its use' (75). On the other hand, societal bilingualism is seen quite differently since it 'challenges the primary status of Spanish and it would be seen as opening the door for language shift into English' (75). Pousada (1996) underscores that 'though islanders acknowledge the importance of the language, many covertly resist learning it out of nationalistic loyalty to Spanish.' (1)

> Some Puerto Ricans may feel that learning English threatens their cultural identity, and for this reason they have negative attitudes towards the language. However, there are many other factors that affect students' attitudes towards learning a second language, including: (1) parents' attitudes, (2) teachers' attitudes, (3) personal motivation, (4) membership group, (5) peer attitudes, (6) circumstances in which the subject learns a second language, and (7) past experiences learning the language. The current employment of Spanish as language of instruction in all grades is supposed to leave space for additive bilingualism to occur, but the truth is that English is required as a mandatory subject, and Puerto Rican students are not allowed to choose if they want to learn it. The lack of freedom of choice makes resistance inevitable (Pousada 2009). Even though both Spanish and English are the official languages in Puerto Rico, Spanish is the language which expresses the people's cultural identity and nationalism. As a result, the two languages are often seen as conflicting, and attitudes toward English are negatively affected. (6–8)

In another recent and insightful study of attitudes toward English in Puerto Rico, Domínguez (2012) concluded that it is only now, after over 60 years of resisting the learning of English, that Puerto Ricans are finally beginning to feel more comfortable with the language. If the Dutch-oriented language policy on Statia at the time of our work on the island, which incorporated the essential aspects of each and every one of the failed English-oriented policies put forward by the US government in Puerto Rico from 1904 to 1948, were not to be substantially changed, was there any reason to expect outcomes different from the highly negative attitudes that emerged and so stubbornly persisted in Puerto Rico? Would language policy in education in Statia eventually provoke an all-sided resistance and hatred toward all things Dutch among the next several generations of Statians?

4.1.2.3   *Educación Intercultural Bilingüe*: First Language Education in Latin America

Over the past two decades, the indigenous and African-descended peoples of Latin America who do not speak Spanish as one of their first languages have spearheaded a movement for bilingual intercultural education (*Educación Intercultural Bilingüe)* throughout Central and South America. As part of PROEIMCA, a Central American

regional bilingual intercultural education initiative, one of the present researchers worked together with a coalition of 6 indigenous groups (the Miskito, Tahwaka, Tol, Ch'orti, Lenca, and Pech) and 2 Caribbean African descended groups (the Garifuna and the English speaking Bay Islanders) in Honduras from 2004 to 2010, all of whom had established preschools and primary schools in their local communities where children were being taught their own languages and cultures before transitioning into Spanish.

As part of this initiative, a research study was carried out by community members themselves in 2007 to measure the impact that these programs were having on stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, educational authorities, community leaders and cultural workers. Questionnaires were designed for each one of these target groups as well as a set of criteria for class observations. The sample included a total of 46 schools, some 400 students, 130 teachers, 400 parents, 40 educational authorities (headmasters, etc.), 40 leaders and cultural workers, and 60 class observations.

By gauging the extent to which the program was being implemented in each school, and using the responses on the questionnaires and the class observations, a statistically significant set of results were obtained which indicated the extent to which the goals of the program were being achieved. Some of the more remarkable results are summarized in the tables below, where *mucho* refers to schools where the program was being implemented fully; *bastante* refers to schools where the program was being implemented substantially; *algo* refers to schools where the program was being implemented to a modest extent; *poco* refers to schools where the program was being implemented only slightly; and *nada* refers to schools where the program was not being implemented at all.

As can be seen from Fig. 4.1, the more local language and culture were being taught, the higher the levels of satisfaction with the educational process in general on the part of all of the stakeholders.

Figure 4.2 demonstrates that the more local language and culture were being taught, the higher the levels of confidence and the lower the levels of fear on the part of students in the classroom.

Figure 4.3 shows that the more local language and culture were being taught, the greater the levels of parental involvement in their children's education.

These and the other results obtained indicate the multidimensional benefits of first language education, which include a better grasp of sound-symbol correspondence at the cognitive level; a more pro-active approach to learning at the level of agency; a more pleasureful association with learning at the affective level; a greater sense of ease in learning at the level of fluency; a greater sense of confidence in learning at the psychological level; maximal chances for grasping content at the level of comprehension; less mechanical and rote learning at the creative level; and greater motivation for learning as one success leads to another, are summarized in Fig. 4.4.
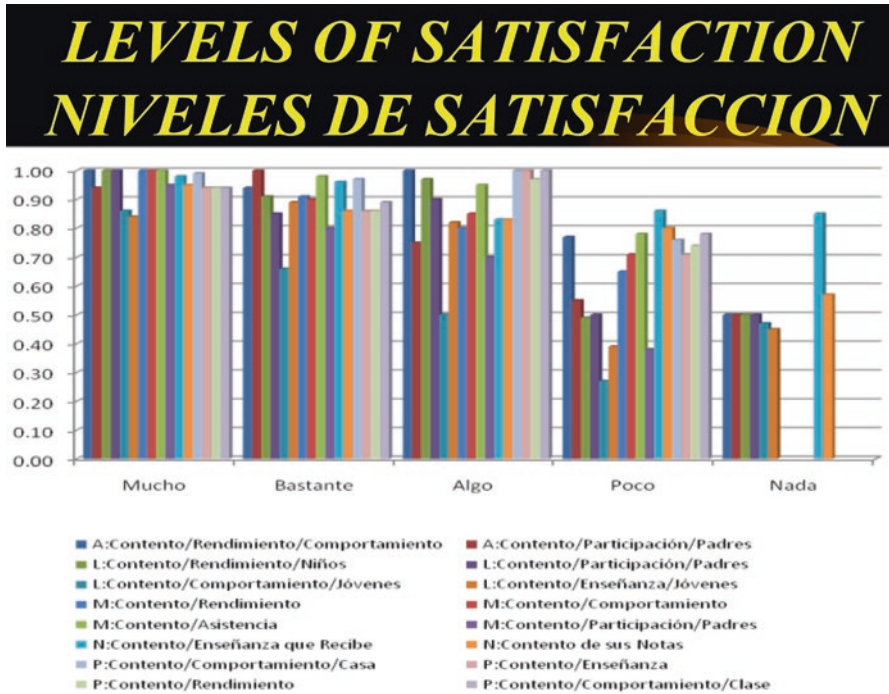
Fig. 4.1 Correlation between levels of stakeholder satisfaction with the educational process in general and level of implementation of bilingual intercultural education programs

4.1.2.4 Tokples Priskul in Papua New Guinea

With over 800 distinct languages (Ethnologue 2013), Papua New Guinea is one of the most linguistically diverse nations of the world. Although English is one of the official languages of the country, less than 15% of the population speaks English as one of their first languages. By the 1980s, the attrition rate in Papua New Guinea was among the highest in the world, with less than 50% completing primary school and only 20% passing the secondary school entrance examination given at the end of Grade 6 of primary school. Many did not continue in school because they could not cope with English as the language of instruction and initial literacy. Yet when these students were forced to leave school because they were being taught in a language that they did not understand, they were often called 'drop-outs' or 'failures' by the people in their communities, including their parents.

Names such as 'drop-out' or 'failure' place the blame on young people for not completing their schooling. These names make it seem as if these young people did not want to finish school or as if they were not intelligent enough to finish school. Most Papua New Guinean parents knew very well that their children had both the desire and the intelligence to finish school, but they continued to call their children 'drop-outs' and 'failures', even though in reality these young people were being
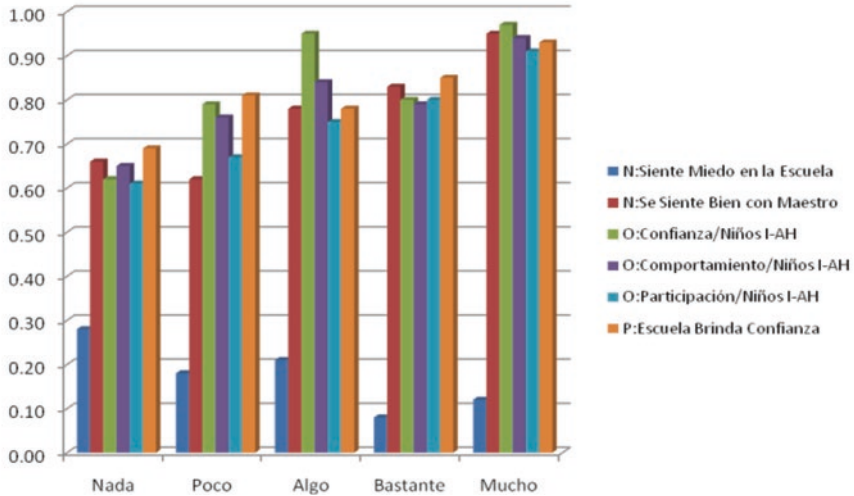
Fig. 4.2 Correlation between levels of confidence and fear on the part of students in the classroom and level of implementation of bilingual intercultural education programs

'pushed-out' by the system. As more and more parents began to reflect on the real reasons as to why their children could not finish their schooling, they began to stop using the words 'drop-out' or 'failure' to refer to their children. Over the past decades, in many areas of Papua New Guinea, the word 'push-out' has been replacing the word 'drop-out' to refer to young people who do not have the chance to complete their formal education.

As in most of the other countries where the language of instruction is not a first language of the students (including Statia), the curriculum in Papua New Guinea focuses on the language and culture of the imperial power that colonized the country (English-speaking Australia) rather than on those of the students. As a result, while most students learn very little about mathematics, language, social studies and science because these subjects are all taught in a language that they do not understand, they do learn one basic lesson: that their own culture and language are inferior and not worthy of being taught in school, and therefore should be rejected. (see Interview section below and Ahai and Faraclas 1993; Faraclas 1994, 1996, 1998).

The result is that most students turn away from their own language and culture without having the opportunity to properly master the foreign language and culture that is being taught to them in school. This has produced generations of young people who are no longer able and/or willing to play a productive role in their traditional cultures and societies, but who are not equipped with the language,
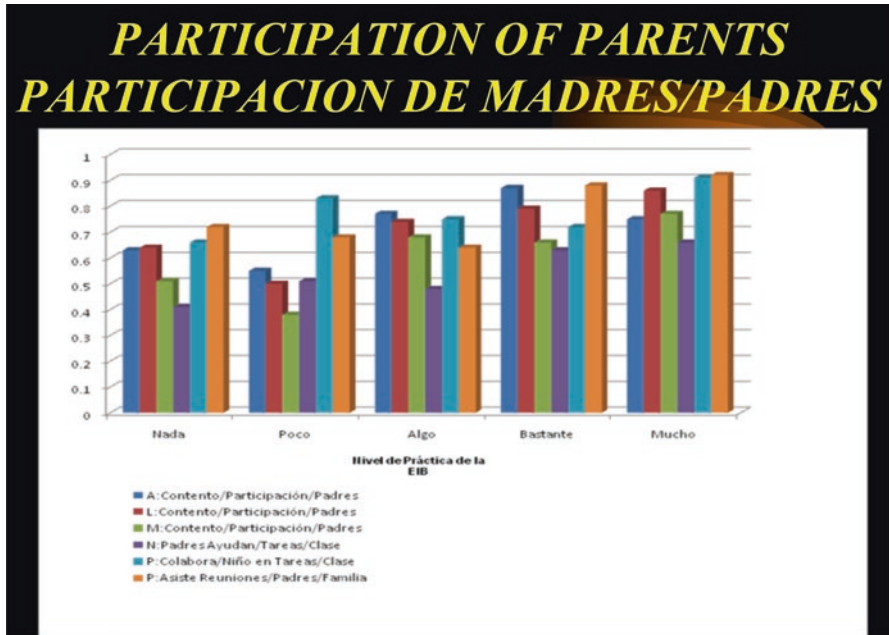
Fig. 4.3 Correlation between levels of parent involvement in their children's education and level of implementation of bilingual intercultural education programs

Fig. 4.4 Summary of benefits to students of instruction and initial literacy in their first language

culture, and diplomas necessary to go to an urban center or abroad and play a productive role in a more globalized culture and society. Just as in Statia, crime, drug abuse, prostitution, early pregnancies and other social problems that were previously relatively rare, have become alarmingly common since young people have had access to formal education in a language that is not their own and who neither fit into the traditional culture that they have been taught to despise or into the globalized culture that they have been taught to worship.

The typical outcomes of instruction and initial literacy in a language that is not one of the students' first languages include:

1. Defensive Enculturation, whereby students defensively retreat into their home culture and language and xenophobically reject all other cultures and languages (in Statia, as elsewhere, this normally accounts for the small percentage of students who are forced out of school during the earliest years)
2. Alienating Adculturation, whereby students reject their own culture and language and assimilate as well as they can to a foreign culture and language (in Statia, as elsewhere, this normally accounts for the very low percentage – typically 5% – of students who actually succeed in public schools where the language of instruction is not their first language)
3. Deculturation, whereby students reject their own culture and language, and don't succeed in assimilating to a foreign culture and language either (in Statia, as elsewhere, this typically accounts for the majority of students in schools where the language of instruction is not their first language)

These negative outcomes contrast with the goal of first language instruction programs in Papua New Guinea and elsewhere, which is a Balanced Interculturality that provides students with a firm appreciation for their own culture and language which gives them the basis to eventually go on to learn and practice other cultural and linguistic repertoires (including the national language) from a position of strength, rather than from a position of weakness.

Papua New Guinean parents began to realize that the formal educational system, with its emphasis on foreign language and culture, was transforming their children into social misfits. Most of them, however, never imagined that they could do anything to change the formal education system. Since colonial times, formal education had been under the control of agencies from outside of their communities, and community members were convinced that if the system was not serving their needs, they didn't have enough knowledge or resources to do anything about it (a situation which is very similar to that found in Statia and the rest of the Caribbean).

But in one community in Enga province which had only been in contact with the colonial authorities for less than 20 years, some parents began to work together and use community resources to set up their own community-controlled preschool (*Enga Tokples Priskul*), where their children would learn to read and write in their local language and learn to appreciate their local culture before they went on to the formal system (Stringer and Faraclas 1987; Faraclas 1997, 1998). Not all parents in the community were willing to send their children to this new preschool, because

they themselves thought that their own Enga language would be useless in the formal education system and that it would get in the way of their children's progress in English. Because of these disagreements, the children were effectively divided into two groups, those who attended the local language *Enga Tokples Priskul* and those who went directly into the English-only system.

The *Enga Tokples Priskul* was controlled by the community, with little or no funding from outside of the community and no approval at all from the government. This program used the community's own 'push-outs' as literacy teachers, and books that were written and printed by the community members themselves. Once the first students completed the 1 year program at the *Enga Tokples Priskul*, their parents once again went against the dictates and policies of the National Department of Education, and established special bridging classes for their children during the first three grades of public primary school, where the children would gradually transition from their own Enga language as language of instruction and literacy to English as language of instruction and literacy. In this way, the children at the local school were divided into two groups or tracks: (1) The Enga Tokples Priskul Group, i.e. those who had attended the *Enga Tokples Priskul* for 1 year and then attended special transition classes in Grades 1–3 before entering English-only classes in Grades 4–6; and (2) The English-only Group, i.e. those who had no preschooling, and who attended English-only classes from Grades 1–6, as prescribed by the National Department of Education. Since the Grade 1–3 transition classes were given in both Enga and English, by the time the Enga Tokples Priskul Group students had completed Grade 6, they had had only 4.5 years of English instruction during 7 years at school, while the English-only Group had received 6 full years of English instruction during 6 years at school.

The parents and teachers of the Enga Tokples Priskul Group were so impressed by the extraordinary progress of these students, that they decided to test them in English language skills at the end of Grade 4, after only 1.5 years of English instruction. Even at this early stage, their results were superior to those of the Grade 4 students of the English-only Group. Some critics pointed out that these differences could have been due to the fact that by Grade 4, the Enga Tokples Priskul Group would have had a total of 5 years of schooling (including the preschool year) versus the English-only Group's total of 4 years. To control for this difference, the Grade 5 students who were enrolled in regular English-only classes at the school also took the test. The results from the Enga Tokples Priskul Group Grade 4 students were also superior to the results obtained for the Grade 5 English-only students.

But the real test of the results of the Enga Tokples Priskul Group was the national secondary school entrance examination given at the end of Grade 6, where students are tested in English for their competence in language skills, mathematics, social studies and the sciences. As stated above, only 20% of students normally pass this test, and the passing rate for English-only Group students was roughly at this 20% level, that is, only 20% were allowed to proceed to secondary school. But the results for the Enga Tokples Priskul Group were among the highest ever to be achieved in the history of the test, approaching 80%. Once the success of the Enga Tokples

Priskul project became known, other communities began to gain enough confidence to initiate similar projects, and within a decade over one thousand Papua New Guinean communities had started local language preschools, using their own languages, cultures and resources.

In Papua New Guinea as in most of the other nations worldwide where first language education programs are being initiated, children who attend preschool in their own language and go on to primary school in English progress more quickly than children who do not start in their own language. The children who go through the local language literacy preschools not only have a better appreciation for their own culture, but they also do much better than other students once they go on to the formal system in English. Because they have learned to read and write first in their own language, they have a positive attitude toward education and a good foundation in reading and writing, which they are able to transfer during their transition classes into English. Very few of these students are forced out of the system, because they have the best marks in their classes.

Given the success of local language literacy classes, the National Department of Education changed the English-only education system. It became government policy that all children in Papua New Guinea should learn to read and write in their own language first at the preschool level and then gradually be introduced to English in bridging classes.

4.1.2.5   First Language Education in Papiamentu/o in the ABC Islands

On the ABC Islands (Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, or the former Dutch Leeward Islands) the language policy situation is very similar to that found on Statia, given that the Dutch-only education systems of the ABC Islands (where, just as in Statia, Dutch is not a first language or even a second language of the majority of the population) were established by the Dutch colonial authorities and continue to be heavily influenced by trends in policymaking and pedagogical practice in the European Netherlands. Dijkhoff and Pereira (2010:262) claim that the fact that ABC Islands educational authorities' and teachers' assumptions and methods have remained largely the same as those of their European predecessors has had negative consequences for the cognitive, social and emotional development of children on the Leeward Islands. Among the causes for these negative consequences they list:

1. Dutch as the sole medium of instruction (as it is in the secondary school as well as in many primary school classrooms in Statia)
2. Dutch taught as a mother tongue or first language (as it is on Statia)
3. lack of contextualization of Dutch school materials that deny the multicultural and multilingual character of ABC Island societies (also a problem in Statia)
4. absence of the first language of the students (Papiamentu/o) in education and complete denial of its importance in education and absence of in-service training for teachers (also true of English in Statia)

The damaging results of such policy and practice, which are mentioned by Severing-Halman and Verhoeven (2001) in relation to Curaçao, are to be found as well in the other ABC Islands and Statia, including the following:

> Each year, roughly one quarter to one third of the elementary school population does not pass and the number of drop-outs is alarming …. The empirical data on the submersion of Caribbean children in a Dutch … school curriculum show such submersion to not be very successful. More than 70% of the children do not succeed in finishing elementary school without class repetition of at least one grade. At the same time, the number of children being referred to schools for special education continues to grow. (255–256).

Prins-Winkel (1983) makes the following disturbing observations about the situation in Curaçao, which is strikingly similar to the situation in Statia (see Sect. 4.4 below):

> [A]ttention was focussed on the relatively few, who –astonishingly enough!- did succeed: probably aided by intelligence, linguistic abilities, endurance, good memory, a healthy disposition and above all: aided by more or less educated parents or acquaintants, with at least some knowledge of Dutch, who were in a position to rightly stimulate and motivate their children. The greater part of Antillean children were not so fortunate ... (14).

> The myth of educational advantages through using Dutch in schools in the course of time unmistakably took hold of the people's imagination; the privileged few, who did surpass the obstacles and did succeed, those who later on had access to good jobs, important positions or brilliant careers, the ones pertaining to that lucky minority became the examples everyone wanted to follow; the masses of less successful children, who failed because of that same educational system and did not have any advantages, were often rebuked for their hardships, punished at home for being stubborn and they had to suffer their sorrows in loneliness (12).

Following Krashen (1985) and Cummins and Swain (1986: 87), Beheydt (2012: 110) observes that sufficient contact with the target language and sufficient motivation are the two main factors in language learning, and that sufficient contact with Dutch and sufficient motivation to learn Dutch are lacking in Aruba (as is also the case in the other ABC Islands and in Statia, see Sect. 4.4 below). Severing and Verhoeven (1995) indicate that Dutch is increasingly becoming a foreign language for students in Curaçao. Narain (1995) explicitly states that Dutch is not a first or second language in Curaçao and that the education system should therefore not continue to teach Dutch as if it were the students' first or second language. She argues against the use of textbooks in Curaçao which are imported from the European Netherlands for teaching Dutch as a second language to non-native speakers of Dutch there, because while for immigrants living in the European Netherlands Dutch is a second language, for students in the Caribbean (including Statia) Dutch is a foreign language. Narain observes that there are hardly any possibilities for students in Curaçao to use Dutch in natural interaction outside the classroom (this could also be said for Statia, see Sects. 4.2 and 4.4 below).

In a longitudinal study investigating the language development in Papiamentu/o and Dutch of 80 children 4–6 years of age living in Curaçao, Narain (1995) assessed the students by means of a language test measuring phonological, lexical, syntactic and textual abilities in Papiamentu/o and Dutch. The results showed that significant

progress takes place during the kindergarten period, but the acquisition process in Dutch is much slower than in Papiamentu/o. During the whole kindergarten period infants in Curaçao were strongest in their own language on all linguistic levels. The initial competence of the children in their mother tongue played a crucial role in their further linguistic and development, not only in Papiamentu/o, but also in Dutch.

Prins-Winkel (1973) reports on a study which was realized during the school year 1968/1969 among pupils of 24 different elementary schools on Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. 3103 pupils were native speakers of Papiamentu/o, 338 were native speakers of Dutch, corresponding to 90% and 10% of the participants, respectively. The pupils were in first, third and sixth grade of elementary school. The study compares the school records of the children according to their native languages (Papiamentu/o and Dutch), also taking into account their social backgrounds (based on parental occupation) and their intelligence. As becomes clear from the study, Papiamentu/o-speaking pupils were less successful over the years and had a much higher grade repeat status than Dutch-speaking pupils, although the differences between the two groups decreased over the years. The lower success rate of Papiamentu/o-speaking pupils held for working class as well as middle class pupils. An additional intelligence assessment (based on the Chicago Non-verbal Examination test) pointed out that in the group with high IQ-scores, children from Dutch-speaking families were overall more successful than their Papiamentu/o-speaking fellow students.

Severing-Halman and Verhoeven (2001) studied the (oral) production of narratives in both Papiamentu/o and Dutch by 102 children of 4–12 years of age living in Curaçao. The children were randomly selected from kindergarten, Grade 2, Grade 4 and Grade 6, and assessed during two consecutive sessions in the two languages. The main conclusions can be summarized as follows: (i) the Papiamentu/o narratives were consistently longer than the narratives in Dutch; (ii) the children described the events more easily in their mother tongue; (iii) for mean clause length and the numbers of conjunctions, significant positive correlations occurred between the two languages, which point to an underlying growth of syntactic abilities; and (iv) the children were generally more proficient reference trackers in Papiamentu/o than in Dutch, as indicated by the use of full noun phrases and pronouns in the narratives. It is important to point out that the children at the time of the study were taught only 30 min of Papiamentu/o a day (for similar results in Statia, see Sect. 4.3 below).

Vedder (1987) administered language assessment tests to second graders (185 subjects) and sixth graders (227 subjects) in Curaçao. Each class was randomly divided in two subgroups, so that each individual was assessed in either Papiamentu/o or Dutch. The assessment targeted listening and speaking skills in Papiamentu/o and Dutch, making use of a speaker test and a listener test to measure referential communication. A second listener test was used to measure text comprehension and text recall (the so-called story test). The second graders of the Papiamentu/o group performed better on the speaker test and the story test. They also performed better on the listener test, but the differences between the two groups were not significant. In the sixth grade the language did not make a difference on the speaker test and the

listener test, but it still made a difference on the story test, where the Papiamentu/o group performed better. The author observed that the pupils who participated in the assessment spoke no Dutch at all or just a little Dutch at home, and that parents or other educators seldom read stories in Dutch to the children. The researcher stated that: 'Personal experiences with Curaçaoan primary schoolchildren taught the present author that most primary schoolchildren are not confident that they can speak the Dutch language in an acceptable manner. They try to avoid situations in which they have to speak Dutch.' (82).

The study reported on in Severing and Verhoeven (1995) and Severing (1997) presents the results of a language proficiency assessment of 200 Grade 5 (*groep 7*) children living in Curaçao. The assessment consisted of word-decoding tasks as well as language comprehension tasks related to lexicon, syntax (sentence comprehension) and semantics (text comprehension). The results show that the comprehension levels of the children are clearly better in Papiamentu/o as compared to those in Dutch. The authors observe that these results are remarkable as the students receive less instruction in their mother tongue (150 min of Papiamentu/o per week, as compared to 270–300 min of Dutch. Dutch is also the instruction language for all other subjects). The level of decoding, however, was clearly higher in Dutch. According to the authors this difference can be explained by the education system, as students initially develop reading and writing skills in Dutch and start 2 years later with the development of these skills in Papiamentu/o. Dutch is also taught more systematically and consistently over the years. The levels of proficiency in both languages, but especially in Dutch, were found to be related to background factors of students (grade repeat status, reading behaviour, language attitude, learning capacity) and their families (socio-economic status, home language and language practices at home).

Efforts have been underway for some time to establish programs for instruction and initial literacy in Papiamentu/o in the ABC Islands. As in Statia, some school boards, some schools, and some individual teachers have been more pro-active in this process than others. Traditionally, in pre-primary education and vocational education (EIB) Papiamentu/o has been used as the language of instruction. In Curaçao, about half of the primary schools have institutionalized the use of Papiamentu/o as language of instruction and initial literacy, while the other half remain officially Dutch-only, although in practice Papiamentu/o is used by many teachers to explain material in Dutch to the students. In Aruba, there are a handful of pilot schools where Papiamentu/o has become the official language of instruction and initial literacy under the Scol Multilingual project, which aims to eventually transition to Dutch and ensure literacy in Spanish and English (which are strong first and second languages in Aruba) as well. At the secondary level, Papiamentu/o is taught as a subject as part of a Dutch-dominant curriculum in all public schools except for the Kolegio Erasmo on Curaçao, where Papiamentu/o is used as language of instruction at all levels from pre-primary to the end of secondary.

4.1.2.6 The Transition from Kiswahili to English in Tanzanian Secondary Schools

In Tanzania, the language of instruction and initial literacy in primary schools is Kiswahili, which is a first or second language of the majority of the population. In secondary schools, however, a transition is made from Kiswahili to English as language of instruction. Just as is the case in Statia and the ABC Islands, this transition is a difficult one. Brock-Utne (2010) argues that English as a language of instruction in Tanzanian education serves as a barrier for the learning of subject matter for millions of Tanzanian students. In order to help the students understand content taught in English, teachers are forced to employ strategies like code-mixing, code-switching and full translation of texts from English to Kiswahili. The use of these strategies slows down the pace of learning of subject matter, makes it difficult for teachers to cover the syllabus and does not expand the vocabulary of the children in the language of instruction. When exams are being taken, these strategies are prohibited by the school authorities. A student who answers a question posed in English correctly but in Kiswahili will be given zero points. The argument that Kiswahili is not 'developed' enough to serve as a language of instruction in secondary and tertiary education is a false argument, because dictionaries of technical terms in Kiswahili have been written and because any language develops and grows through use.

Brock-Utne and Desai (2010) analyze the results of a narrative proficiency test conducted in South Africa and Tanzania and highlight 'the trouble African children have, even after having had English as the language of instruction for almost 6 years …. Being forced to study through a language they command to such a limited extent must slow down their learning process considerably.' (29) General remarks on the outcome of similar narrative proficiency tests administered as part of the same project include the following:

> Generally all students performed poorly in the English story. … Most of the scripts from students in the upper levels of secondary education showed that they still do not express themselves adequately, despite the high number of years they have spent using English as language of instruction. … All the students expressed themselves adequately at all grade levels in Kiswahili. (19).

These results underscore some general problems with transitional policies such as that adopted on Statia in 2007, where English was supposed to be the language of instruction and initial literacy throughout primary school, with a transition to Dutch as the language of instruction in Grades 5 and 6 (*groep* 7 and *groep* 8) of primary school, and with Dutch as the language of instruction in secondary school. Although this policy has been implemented extremely unevenly in Statia, the results have been similar thus far to those obtained in Tanzania (see Sect. 4.3 below).

These problems can be explained in part by Cummins' (2000) Threshold Hypothesis, which is based on the idea that there are two basic types of linguistic competence: (1) Informal Competence which most children gain at home in their first language(s) before starting school; and (2) Academic Competence which most children gain at school. Cummins asserts that it takes a minimum of 5–7 years of

instruction in a students' first language (for which the student has already acquired an Informal Competence) to guarantee a basic Academic Competence in that language.

Using the basic pedagogical principle of going from the known to the unknown, Cummins contends that:

1. The optimal way to build Academic Competence in any language is to utilize students' Informal Competence in that language. In other words, Informal Competence in a language should precede Academic Competence in that language.
2. The optimal way to build Academic Competence in a second or a foreign language is to utilize students' Academic Competence in their first language(s). In other words, Academic Competence in a first language should precede Academic Competence in a second or foreign language.

Cummins' Threshold Theory describes the different possible outcomes of education in a situation where the official language of instruction is not one of the students' first languages as a house with three floors or three thresholds: In most situations where the language of instruction and initial literacy is not one of the students' first languages, students are forced to do all or most of their schooling in either a second or a foreign language. In such cases, the result for the majority of students is deficient Academic Competence in their first language, because it was never or rarely used as language of instruction in school, and insufficient Academic Competence in the second or foreign language, because the students were never introduced properly to Academic Competence in their first language(s). These students are stranded at the lowest level of the house, unable to cross the first threshold to the second level. Cummins calls this Limited Bilingualism or Subtractive Bilingualism, where students' competences in one language often clash with, rather than enhance their competences in the other language.

In programs where the language of instruction and initial literacy is the students' first language but then a transition is made to a second or foreign language as a language of instruction, the transition is usually made before the students have gained adequate Academic Competence in their first language and/or adequate Informal Competence in the second or foreign language. In such cases, the result for the majority of students is adequate Informal Competence in their first language and barely adequate Academic Competence in their first language, with insufficient Informal and/or Academic Competence in the second or foreign language. These students are stranded at the second level of the house, unable to cross the second threshold to the third level. Cummins calls this Dominant Bilingualism, where students' have relatively adequate competences in one language but not in the other language.

It is only when students are given the time and instruction *first* to build an Informal Competence in a second or foreign language on the foundation of their Informal Competence in their first language, while building an Academic Competence in their first language on the foundation of their Informal Competence in their first language, and *only then* to build an Academic Competence in a second

or foreign language on the foundation of both their Informal Competence in that second or foreign language as well as on their Academic Competence in their first language, that they can proceed across the second threshold to the third level of the house. Cummins calls this Balanced Bilingualism or Additive Bilingualism, where students' Informal and Academic Competences in one language complement and enhance their Informal and Academic Competences in the other language.

Unfortunately, most transitional programs make the transition from the students' first language much too soon and much too unsystematically to achieve the goal of Additive Bilingualism. This is certainly the case with any programs, such as that in Statia, which attempt to make the final transition in the language of instruction from students' first language to a second or a foreign language before the first year of secondary school, before students have an adequate Academic Competence in their first language. It is also the case with any programs which attempt to teach a foreign language as a first or second language (as is being done in Statia and the ABC Islands), or any programs which attempt to teach a second language as a first language, because such programs do not allow students to gain sufficient Informal Competence in the second or foreign language before teaching Academic Competence in that second or foreign language.

4.1.2.7   First Language Education in Dutch in Flanders

Deprez (2000: 22) mentions three main motivational factors for the shift in language policy in the Flanders region of Belgium from French, traditionally the language of formal education in Belgium, to Dutch, the first language of the majority of the people of the region. One motivation is a matter of modernity. In modern societies, states are obliged to organize a system of education which is maximally accessible to every child and, just as in Statia, instruction and literacy in a language that is not a first language of the students excludes most from the educational process. The second motivation is the promotion of Dutch as part of the emancipation of the Flemish people as a group after a period of domination in which French had been the language of power, (just as Dutch has been the language of power in Statia). Thirdly, the option to adopt *territoriality* as an organizational principle was inspired by practical motives related to keeping French speaking Wallonia and Dutch speaking Flanders together by recognizing their diversity. Interestingly, the Belgian government has recognized that the best way to ensure that people appreciate and learn each other's languages and cultures is to give them the chance to gain a strong foundation in their own language and culture first, before they go on to learn those of another group. Cuvelier (2003) states that:

> one could say that Flanders and Belgium have been experiencing a development away from an apparently homogeneous system in which the standard variety of Dutch/French was legally recognised as the one medium. Recent developments focus more on individual people's capacities and needs and on the growing recognition of linguistic and cultural diversity …. At the same time, however, at the level of micro-sociolinguistics, the language use of individuals in particular circumstances has been modifying the ideology of multilingualism and is gradually determining new language policies. (45).

It is interesting to note that the shift in Flanders from French to Dutch has been a complete shift. In other words, Flemish children have the benefit of Dutch as their language of instruction in public schools from kindergarten until the end of secondary school. There is no transition from the students' first language (Dutch) to another language (French) as language of instruction at Grade 3, Grade 5, or Grade 7 as there is in Statia and most other countries where first language education is being implemented for the first time.

The Flemish and Puerto Rican cases discussed above confirm that the pedagogically optimal and politically enlightened right to a full public education in their first language would help offer the people of Statia an opportunity to avoid the risk of alarming educational failure rates, rampant social problems, increasing economic dependence, and political resentment toward the European Netherlands and all things Dutch in the not so distant future. The English speaking population on the neighboring island of Saba has already made this right a reality in their education system, with predominantly positive effects on the academic performance of their students. If Statia follows the model of its smallest neighbor Saba, it can avoid the language policy blunders of its largest neighbor Puerto Rico.

4.2   Attitudes toward Language and Language Use: The Survey

4.2.1   Introduction to the Survey

As they are traditionally designed and administered, surveys are a typical feature of top-down academically-driven research. In the end, however, we decided to include a survey as part of our repertoire of investigative approaches in order to gain both a maximally comprehensive overview, as well as to gain fine-grained insights into the language situation on the island, in particular in the education system, from as large and representative a part of the community as possible. As part of our strategy of adopting multiple research methods, we realized that the collection of very specific data from a large cross-section of the community would be of crucial importance. That said, we also realized that the way in which the survey questions were formulated and presented would need to be subject to critical review to maximize community involvement and ownership of the process. Our incorporation of the survey into our work on Statia was also motivated to some degree by the fact that the research project itself was assigned to us by policy makers, and as such we had to use instruments that would be convincing to them, without compromising the integrity of our approach. It should be noted that community based research is a framework and approach, rather than a specific methodology. This means that it must be adapted to the specific political and social environment in which it takes place. In this sense, there is no such thing as an 'ideal' or 'perfect' form of community based research.

Traditional surveys pose various problems that need to be addressed in accordance with the principles of community based research. Too many traditional surveys constitute a monologue controlled by one of interlocutors, namely the researcher(s), objectifying and reifying the individuals who are interrogated. In order to establish a real dialogue with the community we carried out a preparatory visit to the island during which we organized focus group meetings where community members could individually and collectively describe and analyze the language situation in Statia, and identify the topics and problems most relevant to the language policy at the schools This process provided crucial input into the design of the questionnaire, which consisted as much as possible of questions that reflected the challenges related to language and education faced by the people of the island in their day-to-day lives.

The traditional way in which questionnaires are used by researchers typically reinforces unequal power relations, whereby the researcher or research team are considered to be the experts, whereas the members of the community under study are positioned as passive non-experts. We explicitly tried to reverse these roles, by emphasizing the expertise within the community, among individuals as well as groups, as it is they, rather than the members of the academic research team or anyone else, who are the ones with in-depth knowledge of daily life in Statia.

This does not mean that the research team did not have an input into the process. Instead of positioning themselves as experts on the situation in Statia, the research team deliberately built upon the community based research techniques already being used by our Statian partners of engaging the community in critical dialogue whereby the community itself could analyze the problems which they had identified and described to a level sufficient for equipping them to begin to envision ways to resolve those problems themselves. This dialogical process was instrumental in a transformation of the discourse by the community from a polarized focus on polemics to a constructive focus on points of consensus and community mobilization. In this way the outside knowledges brought into Statia by the research team were utilized not to replace the knowledges of the people themselves about their own situation, but instead to invite the community to enter into ever deeper and more critical analysis of their circumstances. Community based research should not be seen as a framework that allows the academic researcher to sit back and provide no meaningful input into the research process and that absolves the academic researcher from responsibility for the outputs. Instead, community based research requires a quantitative and qualitative increase in the engagement of the academic researcher with the community when compared to traditional investigative theory and practice.

For example, by introducing frameworks for making distinctions such as first language(s), vs. second language(s) vs. foreign language(s); or Statian English vs. Standard/School English, the research team contributed to the transformation of points of contention based on differences among community members in relation to their interpretation of these and other terms to points of consensus founded on a common understanding of terms, based on their collective experience of language and education on the island.

In traditional surveys, little attention is paid to dialogue with the community on the specific goals of the research project, to the meaning of the results and potential consequences of the conclusions in terms of policy and practice. As we distributed most of the questionnaires in person, in the classroom or after focus group meetings, all the participants were extensively informed about the backgrounds of the members of the research team as well as about the goals of the project. In all cases, the research team introduced themselves, explained the goal of the research project, and provided personal assistance where needed. In the case of the questionnaires distributed to the students, the research team actually entered the classroom, introduced themselves, explained the goal of the research project, went through the individual questions, explored the range of answers possible for each question, and provided personal assistance where needed.

In traditional surveys little attention is paid to ethical considerations related to research activities and to the presence of researchers in the community. In general researchers tend to be out-group members and their mere presence can have a major impact on the daily life of community members. In the case of Statia these considerations have become even more urgent as the political reforms of 2010 that involved the integration of Statia into the European Netherlands have not only produced a continuous flow of immigrants from the European Netherlands, but also an influx of researchers employed by governmental and academic institutions. Many of these researchers have adopted traditional research methods, reducing the research process to the interrogation of community members. Little or no attempt has been made to inform the community about the actual goals or potential consequences of the research or to involve them in the research design and, hence, such studies have objectified the members of the community under study.

In the case of Statia, these practices have created sentiments of resistance and indifference toward research and researchers in the community. Our adoption of a community based approach was designed to break with this negative dynamic in such a way as to acknowledge and valorize the expertise and experience of the population so that they could claim and exercise their agency in as many aspects of the research project as possible. We were acutely aware that the research activities as well as the presence of the team would immediately become part of an island-wide discourse due to the large proportion of the population involved in the study as co-researchers and due to the societal impact of the problems addressed, as education plays a pivotal role in any community and even more so in a small island community like Statia that has been characterized by grossly unequal power relations.

The effectiveness of the survey component of this study depended crucially on the use of multimodal communication. Newspaper articles, posters, television spots and radio interviews were deployed to maximally mobilize the community and to include as many participants as possible in the formulation, distribution, administration and the informed and engaged completion of the survey. After the presentation of the report to the policy makers the same means of communication as well as community meetings and focus group meetings were used to disseminate the results of the survey.

On the pages that follow in this section we present the sections of the original report that contain the description and analysis of the survey that we carried out over the course of our field research. What appears below are parts of the text found in the original report, with superfluous details deleted and extensive clarifications added.

4.2.2 Report on the Survey Administered by the Research Team During Their Visit to Statia in April 2013

4.2.2.1 Introduction

This section presents the results of the survey that was carried out by the research team during their visit to Statia (April 13–27, 2013). The main purpose of the survey was to collect quantitative information regarding language use and attitudes toward language and education from different groups of community members, to complement the qualitative research based on interviews and focus group meetings. Data collection by means of a survey is methodologically important, as a substantial amount of information can be anonymously and efficiently gathered from many different participants, and it facilitates a detailed and comparative analysis of the different issues and the different categories of community members that were involved.

The design of the questionnaire itself was based on the input provided by interviews and focus group meetings during the third visit of the team (February 22–28), centering on the following issues:

1. The use of various languages in specific settings
2. The importance of Dutch in different domains
3. Attitudes toward language and education

In the next sections of this document we will present the methodology of the survey (Sect. 4.2.2.2), the results of the questionnaires (Sect. 4.2.2.3), a brief comparative statistical analysis of the data from different groups of community members (Sect. 4.2.2.4) and a conclusion (Sect. 4.2.2.5).

4.2.2.2 Methodology

In order to investigate attitudes and opinions about language and education in Statia, the team developed a questionnaire to be distributed among relevant groups of community members. The survey consisted of four different parts: (1) a general set of questions designed to investigate attitudes toward language and education in Statia; (2) a more specific set of questions concerning opinions about the importance of the Dutch language in different domains on the island; (3) another set of

specific questions about the use of various languages in specific settings in Statia; and (4) a final series of questions on relevant demographic characteristics of each respondent.

As shown in Sect. 4.2.3 below, four different versions of the questionnaire were formulated, designed for each of four categories of community members: (1) students in primary education; (2) students in secondary education; (3) teachers, and (4) parents and other relevant community members. The questionnaire for students in primary education was slightly different from the other versions, as it was formulated for a younger age group. The design of the statements in the first part of the questionnaire (attitudes toward language and education), was adapted to their reading comprehension levels and utilized a three-point Likert-scale for the evaluation of the statements, instead of the five-point scale utilized in the questionnaires filled out by the other categories of community members. This means that in the tables presented later on in this chapter, results measured along a Likert-scale for primary school students are calculated on a scale of from 1 to 3, while results measured along a Likert-scale for all other groups are calculated on a scale of 1–5.

The questionnaires for students were filled out by both primary and secondary students in group sessions in their regular classrooms, in the presence of their teachers and the team members. The team members introduced themselves to the students and briefly explained the purpose of their visit. In the group sessions with primary education students, one member of the research team went through the questionnaire, explaining the individual statements and questions, to make sure that as many problems with interpretation experienced by the students could be resolved in a timely way. The other research team members assisted individual students when necessary. In general, students at both the primary and secondary levels were very cooperative, and had minimal problems filling out the questionnaire. Completed questionnaires were placed by participants in a cardboard box, to guarantee their anonymity.

The questionnaires for teachers were generally filled out during focus group meetings, questionnaires for parents were distributed to all parents with a cover letter and later collected by the schools, and questionnaires for other community members were filled out either during focus group meetings or independently. During the fourth visit of the team there was a central drop off point at the RCN/OCW office, where community members could leave their completed survey forms anonymously in a mailbox especially designed for the purpose.

Table 4.1 lists the education-related communities of practice to which those who participated in the survey belonged. The group numbers correspond to the chronological order in which the questionnaires were collected by the team. Additionally, each questionnaire was numbered individually to facilitate data processing.

Table 4.1 List of categories
and numbers of participants
in chronological order

	Community of Practice	Number
1	Students Governor de Graaff Primary School	18
2	Teachers Governor de Graaff Primary School	3
3	Students Seventh Day Adventist Primary School	27
4	Teachers Seventh Day Adventist Primary School	5
5	Students Bethel Methodist Primary School	35
6	Teachers Bethel Methodist Primary School	9
7	Students Golden Rock Primary School	17
8	Teachers Golden Rock Primary School	2
9	Students Gwendoline van Putten Secondary School	98
10	Teachers Gwendoline van Putten Secondary School	17
11	Parents Gwendoline van Putten Secondary School	48
12	Recreational center	8
13	Parents Governor de Graaff Primary School	9
14	Parents Bethel Methodist Primary School	46
15	Parents Seventh Day Adventist Primary School	30
16	General public (collected at RCN/OCW)	22
17	Parents Golden Rock Primary School	29
18	Teachers (collected at RCN/OCW)	2
19	EduPartners	3
20	Parents Buzzy Bee	2
21	Teachers Buzzy Bee	2
	Total number	432

4.2.2.3   Results

4.2.2.3.1   Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Students in Primary Education

The questionnaire was filled out by 97 students in primary education, corresponding to 18 students from Governor de Graaff School, 27 students from the Seventh Day Adventist School, 35 students from Bethel Methodist School and 17 students from

Table 4.2 Demographic characteristics of students in primary education

Age		Sex		Groep/Grade		
10	12.4%	Male	50.5%	7/5	46.4%	
11	45.4%	Female	48.5%	8/6	50.5%	
12	41.2%					
13	1%					
Birthplaces						
Birthplace student	Statia: 47.4%	Outside Statia: 52.6%				
Birthplace mother	Statia: 37.1%	Outside Statia: 61.9%		Unknown: 1.0%		
Birthplace father	Statia: 35.1%	Outside Statia: 61.9%		Unknown: 3.1%		

Golden Rock School. Some of their demographic characteristics are presented in Table 4.2.

As the data in Table 4.2 indicate, the number of participants is quite equally spread over males and females, as well as over the two grades *groep* 7 (primary Grade 5) and *groep* 8 (primary Grade 6). Most of the students were 11 or 12 years old and the majority of the students as well as their parents were born outside Statia. A closer look at the birthplaces mentioned in the questionnaires reveals that only 28.3% of the students who were born in Statia had two parents who were born on the island as well.

Students in Secondary Education

The questionnaire was filled out by 98 students in secondary education from Gwendoline van Putten School. Table 4.3 presents the number of students according to the different years and the various tracks which correspond to the somewhat complex vocational and academic tracking systems in Dutch secondary education. The education system in Statia is based on the European Dutch system. VMBO prepares students for secondary vocational education and consists of three different levels: the basic vocational program (VMBO-b), the advanced vocational program (VMBO-k) and the theoretical program (VMBO-t). HAVO provides access to higher professional education offered by universities of applied sciences. (Nuffic 2019).

The intervention year referred to as *Schakelklas* was introduced in 2011–2012 and consisted of a 12 month immersion/submersion program in Dutch to facilitate the transition to a secondary education system that used Dutch exclusively as the language of instruction throughout the curriculum. Table 4.4 provides an overview of demographic characteristics of the students in secondary education who participated in the survey.

As the data in Table 4.4 indicate, the number of participants is fairly equally spread over males and females. Most of the students were 13 or 14 years old and the majority of the students as well as their parents were born outside Statia. A closer look at the birthplaces mentioned in the questionnaires reveals that only 30.8% of

Table 4.3 Students in secondary education who participated in the survey, according to year and education level/track

Year	Level	Number of participants
Schakelklas		32
Year 1	VMBO-k/VMBO-t	13
	HAVO	20
Year 2	VMBO-b	8
Year 3	VMBO-t	12
	HAVO	13

Table 4.4 Demographic characteristics of students in secondary education

Age		Sex		Group	
11–12	15.3%	Male	45.9%	*Schakelklas*	32.7%
13	32.7%	Female	53.1%	Year 1	33.7%
14	24.5%			Year 2	8.2%
15	17.3			Year 3	25.5%
16–18	9.1%				
Birthplaces					
Birthplace student	Statia: 39.8%	Outside Statia: 59.2%			
Birthplace mother	Statia: 34.7%	Outside Statia: 64.3%	Unknown: 1.0%		
Birthplace father	Statia: 35.7%	Outside Statia: 58.2%	Unknown: 6.1%		

the students who were born in Statia have two parents who were born on the island as well. The demographic situation in Statia is typical of many island polities in the Caribbean region, which are composed of migrant communities that have "mixed roots", due to the different origins of their parents and ancestors. Migration has been induced by strong family ties and the necessity to migrate for studies or work within the region or to Europe. Many children were born "off island" because of limited local health care facilities. Many mothers in Statia still travel to nearby St. Maarten to give birth at the hospital there.

Parents of Students in Primary Education

The total number of parents of primary education students who filled out the questionnaires is 116, corresponding to 9 parents from Governor de Graaff School, 30 parents from the Seventh Day Adventist School, 46 parents from Bethel Methodist School and 29 parents from Golden Rock School. We also included two questionnaires from parents of the Buzzy Bee Daycare Center in this part of the analysis. 41% of the parents (n = 47) were born on Statia, 48% of the parents (n = 56) were born elsewhere, and 11% of the parents (n = 13) did not mention their birthplace in the questionnaire. The education level of these parents was reported as low (n = 22), medium (n = 31) and high (n = 26); 37 parents left the question regarding their level of education unanswered.

Parents of Students in Secondary Education

48 parents of students at Gwendoline van Putten Secondary School participated in the survey. 48% of the parents (n = 23) were born in Statia and an equal number elsewhere. 4% of the parents (n = 2) did not mention their birthplace. The education level of these parents was reported as medium (n = 19) and high (n = 17); 12 parents left the question regarding their level of education unanswered.

Teachers

40 teachers filled out the questionnaire, corresponding to 3 teachers from Governor de Graaff School, 5 teachers from the Seventh Day Adventist School, 9 teachers from Bethel Methodist School, 2 teachers from Golden Rock School and 17 teachers from Gwendoline van Putten Secondary School. 4 questionnaires were filed anonymously by teachers at the RCN/OCW office.

Table 4.5 presents a summary of information about the birthplaces of the teachers. 70% of the teachers (n = 28) were born outside Statia and only 15% (n = 6) were born on the island. 15% of the teachers (n = 6) did not mention their birthplace in the questionnaire. It is relevant to point out that 45% of the teachers who participated in the survey were born in Holland. The disproportionately low number of Statian-born teachers and the disproportionately high number of teachers born in the European Netherlands is typical of many of the islands that make up the Dutch Caribbean. One of the main reasons for this is that the Dutch-only education policies which have prevailed until now have both barred locally born teachers from qualifying for the higher degrees needed to become a teacher, and have left many of those who have managed to attain higher degrees feeling that their proficiency levels in Dutch are not adequate, leading them to opt for careers other than teaching.

Members of the General Public

The survey included 33 questionnaires filled out by the general public. Most of these questionnaires were anonymously filed at the RCN/OCW office. In this part of the analysis we also included 8 questionnaires filled out by daily visitors to the Recreational Center for the elderly and 3 questionnaires from EduPartners, a center

Table 4.5 Birthplaces of the teachers who participated in the survey

Birthplace	Percentage (number)
Statia	15% (n = 6)
Holland	45% (n = 18)
Surinam	10% (n = 4)
ABC-islands	3% (n = 1)
Elsewhere in Caribbean	13% (n = 5)
Elsewhere outside Caribbean	0% (n = 0)
Unknown	15% (n = 6)
Total	100% (n = 40)

which provides professional services to the schools. 33% of the participants (n = 11) were born in Statia, a majority of 58% (n = 19) was born elsewhere and 9% (n = 3) did not mention their birthplace in the questionnaire. The education level of the members of the general public was reported as low (n = 10), medium (n = 6) and high (n = 12); 5 members of the general public left the question regarding their level of education unanswered.

4.2.2.3.2 Language Use

This part of the report presents data concerning the daily use of the main languages spoken in Statia by the different groups of participants: students of primary education, students of secondary education, parents of students in primary education, parents of students in secondary education, teachers and the general public. Notice that the participants were able to mark several languages for each conversational partner. Hence, the percentages in each cell represent the percentages of participants who confirmed the use of that particular language in conversations with each particular partner listed in the questionnaire.

Tables 4.6 and 4.7 clearly indicate that Statian English/Statian English lexifier Creole, also known as Statian, is widely used by both groups of students. Percentages for the use of Statian English are particularly high (>80%) in informal situations,

Table 4.6 Language use by students in primary education

	Which language(s) do you use every day when you talk to...	Statian English	Standard/ school English	Dutch	Spanish	Another language:
38.	Your mother	73.2%	26.8%	33.0%	23.7%	12.4%
39.	Your father	74.2%	21.6%	15.5%	20.6%	12.4%
40.	Your brothers and sisters	83.5%	21.6%	17.5%	15.5%	7.2%
41.	Your friends	88.7%	20.6%	23.7%	17.5%	10.3%
42.	Your teachers	44.3%	52.6%	66.0%	8.2%	4.1%
43.	Your class mates	86.6%	22.7%	13.4%	8.2%	3.1%
44.	Strangers	64.9%	29.9%	16.5%	11.3%	14.4%

Table 4.7 Language use by students in secondary education

	Which language(s) do you use every day when you talk to...	Statian English	Standard/ school English	Dutch	Spanish	Another language
38.	Your mother	66.3%	19.4%	33.7%	29.6%	10.2%
39.	Your father	65.3%	20.4%	22.4%	20.4%	10.2%
40.	Your brothers and sisters	83.7%	15.3%	22.4%	19.4%	6.1%
41.	Your friends	88.8%	9.2%	12.2%	14.3%	8.2%
42.	Your teachers	44.9%	41.8%	69.4%	11.2%	3.1%
43.	Your class mates	90.8%	14.3%	19.4%	9.2%	5.1%
44.	Strangers	60.2%	42.9%	29.6%	13.3%	9.2%

such as in interaction with siblings, friends and class mates. The use of Statian English is more limited (<45%) in interaction with teachers, where we see that the use of Dutch (and Standard English in case of the students in primary education) is more frequent. This outcome is not very surprising, as at least 70% of the teachers were not born on Statia and almost 50% of them are from the European Netherlands. Tables 4.6 and 4.7 show that Spanish is spoken as a home language, but particularly with fathers and mothers, and slightly less with siblings, which points at a potential language shift among members of the students' generation. Not many students use Dutch as a home language, but those who do use Dutch use it more frequently with their mothers (33%) than with their fathers (15–22%). This observation inspired the team to analyze the original questionnaires more closely in order to see whether these 65 mothers were actually of European Netherlands descent. Notice, however, that only 9 of them were born in Holland, 9 were born in Curaçao, 11 of them were born in St. Maarten and 28 of them were born in Statia. A speculative explanation may be that these mothers use Dutch with their children because they are aware of the dominance of Dutch in the education system and/or to help their children with homework in Dutch.

Tables 4.8 and 4.9 show the patterns of language use of the parents of students in primary and secondary education, which are rather similar to those of the students, although the scores for the use of Statian English are systematically lower. Statian

Table 4.8 Language use by parents of students in primary education

	Which language(s) do you use every day when you talk to...	Statian English	Standard/ school English	Dutch	Spanish	Another language
36.	Your mother	56.6%	31.9%	18.6%	13.3%	10.6%
37.	Your father	50.4%	29.2%	15.0%	8.0%	8.8%
38.	Your brothers and sisters	63.7%	31.0%	14.2%	8.8%	9.7%
39.	Your friends	67.3%	36.3%	25.7%	13.3%	19.5%
40.	Your colleagues at work	53.1%	45.1%	27.4%	13.3%	15.0%
41.	Your colleagues outside work	52.2%	34.5%	20.4%	11.5%	15.9%
42.	Strangers	38.1%	62.8%	27.4%	16.8%	14.2%

Table 4.9 Language use by parents of students in secondary education

	Which language(s) do you use every day when you talk to...	Statian English	Standard/ school English	Dutch	Spanish	Another language
36.	Your mother	54.2%	39.6%	10.4%	12.5%	8.3%
37.	Your father	41.7%	33.3%	8.3%	10.4%	10.4%
38.	Your brothers and sisters	64.6%	29.2%	12.5%	6.3%	12.5%
39.	Your friends	72.9%	47.9%	12.5%	16.7%	8.3%
40.	Your colleagues at work	50.0%	58.3%	29.2%	8.3%	10.4%
41.	Your colleagues outside work	47.9%	47.9%	25.0%	14.6%	12.5%
42.	Strangers	31.3%	70.8%	29.2%	20.8%	14.6%

Table 4.10 Language use by teachers

	Which language(s) do you use every day when you talk to...	Statian English	Standard/ school English	Dutch	Spanish	Another language
37.	Your mother	22.5%	20.0%	55.0%	0.0%	7.5%
38.	Your father	17.5%	17.5%	52.5%	0.0%	2.5%
39.	Your brothers and sisters	20.0%	25.0%	57.5%	5.0%	7.5%
40.	Your friends	27.5%	45.0%	62.5%	7.5%	10.0%
41.	Your colleagues in school	20.0%	67.5%	67.5%	2.5%	2.5%
42.	Your colleagues outside school	22.5%	67.5%	62.5%	5.0%	5.0%
43.	Your students in the classroom	15.0%	72.5%	52.5%	2.5%	0.0%
44.	Your students outside the classroom	25.0%	75.0%	40.0%	2.5%	0.0%
45.	Strangers	12.5%	87.5%	35.0%	7.5%	7.5%

English is the language most frequently used especially in informal situations, such as in interaction with siblings and friends. The use of Statian English is slightly less frequent in interaction with their parents, at work and with strangers. Standard English is used most frequently at work and with strangers and the use of Dutch and Spanish is limited, especially as home languages.

Table 4.10 illustrates the patterns of language use by teachers. As we already observed above, the composition of the teaching work force is not representative of the demographic composition of the Statian population, as 70% of the teachers were not born in Statia. This fact explains the lower percentages in the use of Statian English and higher percentages in the use of Standard English and Dutch in comparison to the students and their parents. The high percentages of the use of Dutch can be attributed to the 45% of teachers who were born in the European Netherlands, because they often use Dutch as their home language (with mothers, fathers, siblings) and also with friends and colleagues who are native speakers of Dutch. The high percentages of use of Standard English may be attributed to their high levels of use of that language in interaction with other colleagues. Interestingly, Standard English is used more frequently with students, in and outside the classroom, in spite of the official language policies of the schools. The high percentage of the use of Standard English with strangers may indicate that this variety of English is used by default, if the identity of an individual is unknown.

Table 4.11 illustrates language use by the general public, who delivered their questionnaires anonymously to the Ministry. Their profile of language use strongly resembles that of the parents, as the highest scores are attested for Statian English in informal domains, such as with siblings and with friends. Scores for the use of Spanish as a home language (with parents and siblings) and for the use of Dutch with friends and with colleagues at work are slightly higher, but we have no straightforward explanation for the diversity of language use within this group.

Table 4.11 Language use by members of the general public

	Which language(s) do you use every day when you talk to...	Statian English	Standard/ school English	Dutch	Spanish	Another language
36.	Your mother	51.5%	36.4%	18.2%	24.2%	24.2%
37.	Your father	54.4%	27.3%	12.1%	21.2%	12.1%
38.	Your brothers and sisters	66.7%	27.3%	18.2%	24.2%	15.2%
39.	Your friends	81.8%	27.3%	39.4%	18.2%	21.2%
40.	Your colleagues at work	48.5%	27.3%	39.4%	9.1%	18.2%
41.	Your colleagues outside work	48.5%	30.3%	21.2%	12.1%	24.2%
42.	Strangers	51.5%	39.4%	18.2%	18.2%	15.2%

4.2.2.3.3   The Importance of Dutch in Different Domains

This part of the report presents the results of the second part of the questionnaire, concerning the importance of the use of Dutch for carrying out different activities. These activities are related to *instrumental* and *integrative* motivation, a distinction Baker (1992: 31) adopted from Gardner and Lambert's (1972) model to study the role of language attitudes in second language acquisition. Gardner and Lambert (1972: 14) defined instrumental motivation as "a desire to gain social recognition or economic advantages through knowledge of a foreign language", whereas integrative motivation corresponds to "a desire to be like representative members of the other language community" (Gardner and Lambert 1972: 14).

Instrumental motivation is related to education and the job market and corresponds to survey items such as passing tests, reading & writing, and earning money & finding a job. Integrative motivation is related to functioning in social networks and integration into the speech community and corresponds to survey items such as making friends, being liked, living in Statia, and raising children. We also include the activity 'talking on the phone' in this category, although we realize that this activity is not exclusively related to integrative motivation. The relation between language use and 'raising children' is somewhat complex, as language choice for raising a new generation may be determined by both integrative and instrumental motivation. Additionally, the questionnaire included activities that were related to use of the media such as watching TV and using the Internet.

In the tables below, the results are presented for the six different groups of participants: students in primary education, students in secondary education, parents of students in primary education, parents of students in secondary education, teachers and the general public. Each table contains the percentages of answers provided along the original four-point scale (varying from 1 = important to 4 = not important), as well as the average score ('Mean') and the standard deviation (SD).

As Tables 4.12 and 4.13 indicate, there is a strong consensus about the domains in which the students in primary and secondary education consider Dutch to be important, as all scores for activities related to instrumental motivation (earning money & getting a job, reading & writing, passing tests) are higher than those for activities related to integrative motivation (making friends, talking on the phone,

Table 4.12 The importance of Dutch according to students in primary education

	How important do you think Dutch is for people in Statia for	Important	Rather important	Less important	Not important	*Mean*	*SD*
	Instrumental						
29.	Earning money & getting a job	84.4%	6.3%	3.1%	6.3%	1.31	0.81
30.	Reading & writing	70.2%	21.3%	4.3%	4.3%	1.43	0.77
37.	Passing tests	90.7%	6.2%	1.0%	2.1%	1.14	0.52
	Media						
31.	Watching TV	10.6%	16.0%	26.6%	46.8%	3.10	1.03
32.	Using the internet	26.6%	22.3%	14.9%	36.2%	2.61	1.23
	Integrative						
28.	Making friends	31.3%	16.7%	21.9%	30.2%	2.51	1.22
33.	Talking on the phone	23.7%	12.9%	23.7%	39.8%	2.80	1.21
34.	Being liked	27.1%	16.7%	18.8%	37.5%	2.67	1.24
35.	Living in Statia	35.1%	25.8%	16.5%	22.7%	2.27	1.17
36.	Raising children	51.0%	21.9%	9.4%	17.7%	1.94	1.15

Table 4.13 The importance of Dutch according to students in secondary education

	How important do you think Dutch is for people in Statia for	Important	Rather important	Less important	Not important	*Mean*	*SD*
	Instrumental						
29.	Earning money & getting a job	76.8%	20.0%	3.2%	0%	1.26	0.51
30.	Reading & writing	61.1%	27.4%	8.4%	3.2%	1.54	0.78
37.	Passing tests	86.7%	12.2%	1.0%	0%	1.14	0.38
	Media						
31.	Watching TV	8.2%	17.3%	41.8%	32.7%	2.99	0.91
32.	Using the internet	21.6%	21.6%	29.9%	26.8%	2.62	1.10
	Integrative						
28.	Making friends	9.3%	25.8%	32.0%	33.0%	2.89	0.98
33.	Talking on the phone	14.4%	21.6%	34.0%	29.9%	2.79	1.03
34.	Being liked	10.2%	13.3%	31.6%	44.9%	3.11	0.99
35.	Living in Statia	18.4%	29.6%	22.4%	29.6%	2.63	1.10
36.	Raising children	27.6%	30.6%	16.3%	25.5%	2.40	1.15

Table 4.14 The importance of Dutch according to parents of students in primary education

	How important do you think Dutch is for people in Statia for	Important	Rather important	Less important	Not important	Mean	SD
	Instrumental						
27.	Earning money & getting a job	63.6%	23.6%	10.9%	1.8%	1.51	0.76
28.	Reading & writing	63.0%	23.1%	3.7%	10.2%	1.61	0.97
35.	Passing tests	70.3%	24.3%	1.8%	3.6%	1.39	0.70
	Media						
29.	Watching TV	14.8%	20.4%	38.0%	26.9%	2.77	1.01
30.	Using the internet	36.7%	12.8%	22.0%	28.4%	2.42	1.25
	Integrative						
26.	Making friends	34.3%	12.4%	20.0%	33.3%	2.52	1.27
31.	Talking on the phone	16.7%	19.4%	35.2%	28.7%	2.76	1.05
32.	Being liked	15.4%	11.5%	29.8%	43.3%	3.01	1.08
33.	Living in Statia	42.1%	16.8%	20.6%	20.6%	2.20	1.19
34.	Raising children	49.5%	22.9%	11.9%	15.6%	1.94	1.12

being liked, living in Statia, raising children). The students also consider Dutch to be less important for media use, which can be explained by the global importance of Standard English in the media. The tables show a decrease in judgements for the importance of Dutch for integrative purposes from students in primary education to students in secondary education. Another important pattern that can be observed in these and the rest of the tables in this section is a consistent shift in judgements for the importance of Dutch from primary to secondary education, among students, parents and teachers whose assessments are slightly but consistently lower than for the general population.

Tables 4.14 and 4.15 illustrate similar patterns for the parents of students in primary and secondary education. Scores for activities related to instrumental motivation are higher than those related to integrative purposes and media use, but the judgements for the importance of Dutch are consistently lower among the parents of students in secondary education as compared to those of parents of students in primary education.

Table 4.16 shows that the judgements of teachers strongly resemble those of the parents of students in secondary education, but in some cases their scores are lower. These results can be related to the results obtained from the interviews and focus group meetings which are presented later in this chapter. These show that parents and teachers consider the role of Dutch to be very limited in everyday life in Statia and observe that the use of Dutch as the exclusive language of instruction in the classroom seriously hampers students' performance. Teachers' high scores for the importance of Dutch in passing tests are obviously related to the language policy in

Table 4.15 The importance of Dutch according to parents of students in secondary education

How important do you think Dutch is for people in Statia for	Important	Rather important	Less important	Not important	*Mean*	*SD*
Instrumental						
27. Earning money & getting a job	40.4%	27.7%	21.3%	10.6%	2.02	1.03
28. Reading & writing	48.9%	21.3%	27.7%	2.1%	1.83	0.92
35. Passing tests	66.0%	25.5%	8.5%	0.0%	1.43	0.65
Media						
29. Watching TV	10.9%	10.9%	39.1%	39.1%	3.07	0.98
30. Using the internet	17.4%	13.0%	30.4%	39.1%	2.91	1.11
Integrative						
26. Making friends	19.1%	8.5%	27.7%	44.7%	2.98	1.15
31. Talking on the phone	4.4%	11.1%	51.1%	33.3%	3.13	0.79
32. Being liked	8.9%	13.3%	31.1%	46.7%	3.16	0.98
33. Living in Statia	14.9%	17.0%	36.2%	31.9%	2.85	1.04
34. Raising children	31.9%	21.3%	27.7%	19.1%	2.34	1.13

Table 4.16 The importance of Dutch according to teachers

How important do you think Dutch is for people in Statia for	Important	Rather important	Less important	Not important	*Mean*	*SD*
Instrumental						
28. Earning money & getting a job	40.0%	40.0%	15.0%	5.0%	1.87	0.88
29. Reading & writing	41.0%	30.8%	23.1%	5.1%	1.95	0.93
36. Passing tests	71.1%	15.8%	7.9%	5.3%	1.49	0.87
Media						
30. Watching TV	10.3%	5.1%	43.6%	41.0%	3.13	0.93
31. Using the internet	5.3%	2.6%	50.0%	42.1%	3.30	0.78
Integrative						
27. Making friends	10.0%	12.5%	37.5%	40.0%	3.11	0.98
32. Talking on the phone	10.5%	10.5%	52.6%	26.3%	2.97	0.90
33. Being liked	10.5%	7.9%	36.8%	44.7%	3.14	0.98
34. Living in Statia	10.5%	28.9%	28.9%	31.6%	2.84	1.01
35. Raising children	25.6%	28.2%	25.6%	20.5%	2.42	1.11

secondary education, where students are prepared for the final exams of the European Dutch system.

Table 4.17 shows that the general public also considers Dutch to be more important for instrumental than for integrative purposes and media use, but overall their judgements concerning the importance of Dutch are higher than those of the parents of students in secondary education as well as those of the teachers.

Table 4.17 The importance of Dutch according to members of the general public

	How important do you think Dutch is for people in Statia for	Important	Rather important	Less important	Not important	*Mean*	*SD*
	Instrumental						
27.	Earning money & getting a job	64.5%	19.4%	16.1%	0.0%	1.52	0.77
28.	Reading & writing	70.0%	16.7%	6.7%	6.7%	1.50	0.90
35.	Passing tests	84.4%	12.5%	0.0%	3.1%	1.22	0.61
	Media						
29.	Watching TV	30.0%	23.3%	26.7%	20.0%	2.37	1.13
30.	Using the internet	30.0%	20.0%	33.3%	16.7%	2.37	1.10
	Integrative						
26.	Making friends	40.6%	12.5%	21.9%	25.0%	2.31	1.26
31.	Talking on the phone	32.3%	25.8%	29.0%	12.9%	2.23	1.06
32.	Being liked	23.3%	16.7%	26.7%	33.3%	2.70	1.18
33.	Living in Statia	35.5%	22.6%	25.8%	16.1%	2.23	1.12
34.	Raising children	41.9%	32.3%	12.9%	12.9%	1.97	1.05

4.2.2.3.4   Attitudes Toward Language and Education

Introduction

This section discusses the results of the first part of the questionnaire about attitudes toward languages and education. For ease of exposition, we present the results in different sections, combining the relevant questions of the respective question-naires. Notice that we present the results of the questionnaires that were filled out by the students in secondary education and by the adults in three categories: *agree* (combining the percentages of *strongly agree* and *agree*), *neutral* and *disagree* (combining percentages of *strongly disagree* and *disagree*). The results of the ques-tionnaires filled out by the students in primary education are presented in accor-dance with the categories of the original questionnaire: *yes*, *neutral* and *no*. It is important to point out that the average scores (Mean) and standard deviations for the students in primary education were based on a three-point scale (1 = yes, 3 = no), whereas the Means and standard deviations for all other groups correspond to a five-point scale (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree).

Attitudes Toward Dutch Language and Identity

As Tables 4.18 and 4.19 indicate, attitudes toward the Netherlands and toward Dutch are more positive among students in primary education than among those in secondary education, which is presumably related to their lower estimation of the importance of Dutch evidenced in the tables above. Students in primary education agree more often than do those in secondary education with the statements that they feel strong ties with the Netherlands, that they like to hear people speak Dutch and

Table 4.18 Attitudes toward Dutch language and identity on the part of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a three-point scale)

		Yes	Neutral	No	*Mean*	*SD*
2.	I feel strong ties with the Netherlands	38.7%	37.6%	23.7%	1.85	0.78
7.	I think Dutch is a difficult language to learn	43.8%	18.8%	37.5%	1.94	0.90
10.	I like to hear people speak Dutch	53.1%	26.0%	20.8%	1.68	0.80
12.	I think it is a waste of time to learn Dutch	8.4%	7.4%	84.2%	2.76	0.60
16.	I would like to know Dutch better	82.3%	9.4%	8.3%	1.26	0.60

Table 4.19 Attitudes toward Dutch language and identity on the part of students in secondary (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
2.	I feel strong ties with the Netherlands	28.1%	51.0%	20.8%	2.92	0.95
7.	I think Dutch is a difficult language to learn	33.3%	25.8%	40.9%	3.11	1.35
10.	I like to hear people speak Dutch	29.8%	37.2%	33.0%	3.01	1.13
12.	I think it is a waste of time to learn Dutch	13.5%	18.8%	67.7%	3.84	1.21
16.	I would like to know Dutch better	69.1%	18.6%	12.4%	2.18	1.19

Table 4.20 Attitudes toward Dutch language and identity on the part of parents of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
2.	I feel strong ties with the Netherlands	44.3%	29.2%	26.4%	2.77	1.12
5.	I am critical about the Netherlands	37.1%	38.1%	24.8%	2.79	1.01
8.	Dutch is a difficult language to learn	43.0%	6.5%	50.5%	3.05	1.28
11.	I like hearing Dutch spoken	63.6%	28.2%	8.2%	2.31	0.88
13.	It is a waste of time to learn Dutch	4.5%	8.9%	86.6%	4.18	0.87
17.	I would like to improve my skills in Dutch	79.8%	14.9%	5.3%	1.99	0.86

that they would like to know Dutch better. They also express higher levels of disagreement with the statement that learning Dutch is a waste of time.

The results in Tables 4.20 and 4.21 indicate strong similarities between the judgements of students and their parents. The parents of students in primary education agree more strongly than do those of students in secondary education with the statements that they like hearing Dutch spoken and that they would like to improve their skills in Dutch, while they disagree more strongly with the statements that learning Dutch is a waste of time and that Dutch is a difficult language to learn. These results may be attributed at least in part to parents' positive experiences with their children acquiring Dutch by means of learning through play (*spelend onderwijs*) in primary school. Positive attitudes toward the Dutch language seem to correlate with more positive attitudes toward the Netherlands, as the parents of the students in primary education also express stronger ties with, and less critical attitudes toward, the Netherlands than do parents of students in secondary education.

Table 4.21 Attitudes toward Dutch language and identity on the part of parents of students in secondary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
2.	I feel strong ties with the Netherlands	39.1%	34.8%	26.1%	2.85	1.05
5.	I am critical about the Netherlands	62.2%	20.0%	17.8%	2.29	1.12
8.	Dutch is a difficult language to learn	51.1%	13.3%	35.6%	2.84	1.30
11.	I like hearing Dutch spoken	47.8%	37.0%	15.2%	2.63	0.95
13.	It is a waste of time to learn Dutch	2.1%	19.1%	78.7%	4.06	0.84
17.	I would like to improve my skills in Dutch	78.3%	8.7%	13.0%	2.20	0.93

Table 4.22 Attitudes toward Dutch language and identity on the part of teachers (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
2.	I feel strong ties with the Netherlands	48.7%	38.5%	12.8%	2.50	1.06
6.	I am critical about the Netherlands	60.5%	23.7%	15.8%	2.53	0.98
9.	Dutch is a difficult language to learn	32.5%	20.0%	47.5%	3.21	0.96
12.	I like hearing Dutch spoken	82.5%	17.5%	0.0%	2.00	0.62
14.	It is a waste of time to learn Dutch	5.0%	0.0%	95.0%	4.37	0.85
18.	I would like to improve my skills in Dutch	62.2%	18.9%	18.9%	2.34	1.16

Table 4.23 Attitudes toward Dutch language and identity on the part of members of the general public (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
2.	I feel strong ties with the Netherlands	50.0%	20.0%	30.0%	2.83	1.15
5.	I am critical about the Netherlands	59.3%	29.6%	11.1%	2.48	1.12
8.	Dutch is a difficult language to learn	46.7%	6.7%	46.7%	3.00	1.26
11.	I like hearing Dutch spoken	67.7%	22.6%	9.7%	2.19	1.01
13.	It is a waste of time to learn Dutch	20.7%	6.9%	72.4%	3.79	1.35
17.	I would like to improve my skills in Dutch	90.6%	0.0%	9.4%	1.75	0.98

Table 4.22 shows that teachers express very positive attitudes toward Dutch as they like hearing Dutch spoken and strongly disagree with the statement that learning Dutch is a waste of time. They are not very opinionated regarding the difficulty of learning Dutch. However, a majority (corresponding to more than the 55% of the teachers who were not born in the European Netherlands), express that they would like to improve their skills in Dutch and that they are critical about the Netherlands.

Table 4.23 indicates that the general public also expresses positive attitudes toward Dutch as the majority likes hearing Dutch spoken, would like to improve their skills in Dutch and disagrees with the statement that learning Dutch is a waste of time. Opinions about the difficulty of learning Dutch are less polarized, and criti-

cal attitudes toward the Netherlands are slightly more frequently in evidence than feelings of strong ties with that country.

Attitudes Toward Standard/School English

As Tables 4.24 and 4.25 indicate, the students' attitudes toward English are positive. Both groups of students like speaking Standard/school English, although students in primary education show slightly more neutral attitudes in comparison to those in secondary education. Also a majority in both categories would like to improve their skills in English which is reflected in both the results obtained from the focus group meetings and students' performance on the narrative proficiency test, both of which are presented later in this chapter.

Tables 4.26 and 4.27 show that both groups of parents share positive attitudes toward English and would like to improve their skills in English. The more positive attitudes of parents of students in secondary education toward English seem to correlate with more negative attitudes toward Dutch language and identity, as shown in the previous section (Table 4.21).

Table 4.24 Attitudes toward school English on the part of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a three-point scale)

		Yes	Neutral	No	*Mean*	*SD*
6.	I like speaking standard/school English	40.6%	33.3%	26%	1.85	0.81
15.	I would like to know English better	59.4%	8.3%	32.3%	1.73	0.92

Table 4.25 Attitudes toward school English on the part of students in secondary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
6.	I like speaking standard/school English	64.9%	17.5%	17.5%	2.34	1.18
15.	I would like to know English better	77.6%	16.3%	6.1%	1.89	0.93

Table 4.26 Attitudes toward school English on the part of parents of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
7.	I like speaking standard/school English	77.6%	12.1%	10.3%	2.02	0.92
16.	I would like to improve my skills in English	73.2%	16.1%	10.7%	2.17	0.91

Table 4.27 Attitudes toward school English on the part of parents of students in secondary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
7.	I like speaking standard/school English	84.4%	6.7%	8.9%	1.98	0.92
16.	I would like to improve my skills in English	79.2%	8.3%	12.5%	2.15	1.01

As shown in Tables 4.28 and 4.29 the teachers and the general public also express positive attitudes toward English and wish to improve their skills.

Attitudes Toward Education in Dutch

As Tables 4.30 and 4.31 indicate, both groups of students agree that schools in Statia should teach the students to read and write in Dutch, but their levels of agreement are much lower in the case of the students in secondary education. We also see that fewer students in secondary education (27.6%) would like to study overseas in a country where people speak Dutch than do students in primary education (53.7%). The students express less strong opinions regarding the extent to which they feel free to speak Dutch in the classroom, but a slightly higher percentage of students in primary education (38.5%), as compared to those in secondary education (25.5%), feels uncomfortable speaking Dutch in class, which is to be expected, since English is the dominant language used in primary education. Students in primary education express more enthusiasm regarding textbooks in

Table 4.28 Attitudes toward school English on the part of teachers (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
8.	I like speaking standard/school English	73.7%	15.8%	10.5%	2.22	0.87
17.	I would like to improve my skills in English	71.8%	17.9%	10.3%	2.22	0.89

Table 4.29 Attitudes toward school English on the part of members of the general public (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
7.	I like speaking standard/school English	82.1%	10.7%	7.1%	1.86	1.01
16.	I would like to improve my skills in English	90.6%	3.1%	6.3%	1.78	1.01

Table 4.30 Attitudes toward education in Dutch on the part of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a three-point scale)

		Yes	Neutral	No	*Mean*	*SD*
9.	I think that school should teach me to read and write in Dutch	82.3%	6.3%	11.5%	1.29	0.66
14.	When I am older I would like to study overseas in a country where people speak Dutch	53.7%	18.9%	27.4%	1.74	0.87
17.	In classes where the teacher speaks Dutch, I feel free to express myself	39.4%	28.7%	31.9%	1.93	0.85
18.	When my homework is in Dutch, my parents have trouble helping me	27.8%	20.6%	51.5%	2.24	0.86
22.	I feel uncomfortable speaking Dutch in my classes	38.5%	14.6%	46.9%	2.08	0.93
23.	When classes are not in English I sometimes get mad and act out	21.9%	19.8%	58.3%	2.36	0.82
26.	I like textbooks in Dutch	46.9%	22.9%	30.2%	1.83	0.87

Table 4.31 Attitudes toward education in Dutch on the part of students in secondary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
9.	I think that school should teach me to read and write in Dutch	59.4%	24%	16.7%	2.39	1.23
14.	When I am older I would like to study overseas in a country where people speak Dutch	27.6%	45.9%	26.5%	3.06	1.03
17.	In classes where the teacher speaks Dutch, I feel free to express myself	32.7%	35.7%	31.6%	2.98	1.19
18.	When my homework is in Dutch, my parents have trouble helping me	26.8%	12.4%	60.8%	3.54	1.52
22.	I feel uncomfortable speaking Dutch in my classes	25.5%	30.6%	43.9%	3.30	1.28
23.	When classes are not in English I sometimes get mad and act out	16.7%	20.8%	62.5%	3.78	1.27
26.	I like textbooks in Dutch	37.9%	36.8%	25.3%	2.88	1.19

Table 4.32 Attitudes toward education in Dutch on the part of parents of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
10.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in Dutch	90.4%	6.1%	3.5%	1.70	0.84
15.	I would encourage students to study abroad in a Dutch speaking country	60.9%	26.1%	13.0%	2.39	0.96
18.	When teachers speak Dutch in class students feel free to express themselves	41.2%	33.3%	25.4%	2.84	1.09
19.	When homework is in Dutch the parents have trouble helping the students	57.5%	18.6%	23.9%	2.50	1.16
24.	Students like textbooks in Dutch	33.3%	42.6%	24.1%	2.88	0.96

Dutch in comparison to students in secondary education. The majority of the students in both categories express disagreement with the statement that their parents have trouble helping them with their homework in Dutch. Finally, few students affirm that they get mad and act out when classes are not in English, but our classroom observations indicate that instead of getting angry or acting out, many students just 'tune out' and become part of a passive, distracted periphery in classes taught in Dutch.

Tables 4.32 and 4.33 show that a vast majority of the parents think that Statian schools should teach students to read and write in Dutch, with more parents than students in agreement with this statement. The tables also indicate that parents express less agreement than their children with the statement that the students feel free to express themselves in Dutch, that they like Dutch textbooks and that they would encourage students to study abroad in a Dutch speaking country, although this is more pronounced among parents of students in secondary education than it is for parents of students in primary education. As we will see in Sect. 4.2.2.4, the differences in attitudes toward the use of Dutch in education between the parents of

Table 4.33 Attitudes toward education in Dutch on the part of parents of students in secondary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
10.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in Dutch	87.2%	6.4%	6.4%	1.96	0.83
15.	I would encourage students to study abroad in a Dutch speaking country	34.8%	41.3%	23.9%	2.91	0.81
18.	When teachers speak Dutch in class students feel free to express themselves	22.2%	20.0%	57.8%	3.44	1.08
19.	When homework is in Dutch the parents have trouble helping the students	60.4%	16.7%	22.9%	2.42	1.18
24.	Students like textbooks in Dutch	26.7%	46.7%	26.7%	3.00	0.74

Table 4.34 Attitudes toward education in Dutch on the part of teachers (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
11.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in Dutch	89.2%	5.4%	5.4%	1.92	0.84
16.	I would encourage students to study abroad in a Dutch speaking country	59.0%	35.9%	5.1%	2.38	0.72
19.	When I speak Dutch in class students feel free to express themselves	43.2%	24.3%	32.4%	2.89	1.14
20.	When homework is in Dutch the parents have trouble helping the students	59.5%	21.6%	18.9%	2.47	0.97
25.	Students like textbooks in Dutch	15.4%	35.9%	48.7%	3.41	0.86

students in primary and secondary education are statistically significant. Finally, the parents express higher levels of agreement than the students with respect to the difficulties they encounter in helping their children with homework in Dutch. This could be due to parents being more aware of their difficulties than their children.

Table 4.34 indicates that the majority of the teachers think that Statian schools should teach students to read and write in Dutch and they would also encourage students to study abroad in a Dutch speaking country. The teachers show slightly higher levels of agreement than the parents with the statement that students feel free to express themselves in Dutch in the classroom and generally similar levels of agreement with the statement that parents have trouble helping the students with their homework in Dutch. However, the teachers express higher levels of disagreement than the parents with the statement that the students like textbooks in Dutch.

Table 4.35 shows that the general public also expresses high levels of agreement with the statements that schools in Statia should teach students to write and read in Dutch, that they would encourage students to study abroad in a Dutch speaking country and that parents have trouble helping students with their homework in Dutch. Their opinions are more neutral, however, regarding the extent to which students feel free speaking Dutch in the classroom and like textbooks in Dutch.

Table 4.35 Attitudes toward education in Dutch on the part of members of the general public (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
10.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in Dutch	93.5%	3.2%	3.2%	1.55	0.85
15.	I would encourage students to study abroad in a Dutch speaking country	61.3%	29.0%	9.7%	2.29	1.01
18.	When teachers speak Dutch in class students feel free to express themselves	30.0%	36.7%	33.3%	2.90	1.12
19.	When homework is in Dutch the parents have trouble helping the students	70.0%	13.3%	16.7%	2.17	1.32
24.	Students like textbooks in Dutch	30.0%	43.3%	26.7%	2.90	0.99

Table 4.36 Attitudes toward education in English on the part of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a three-point scale)

		Yes	Neutral	No	*Mean*	*SD*
8.	I think that school should teach me to read and write in English	69.8%	11.5%	18.8%	1.49	0.79
13.	When I am older I would like to study overseas in a country where people speak English	60.6%	21.3%	18.1%	1.57	0.78
19.	I feel comfortable speaking English in my classes	90.4%	5.3%	4.3%	1.14	0.45
24.	I would like to have my teachers to speak English more in class	39.6%	21.9%	38.5%	1.99	0.89
25.	I like textbooks in English	76.0%	13.5%	10.4%	1.34	0.66

Table 4.37 Attitudes toward education in English on the part of students in secondary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
8.	I think that school should teach me to read and write in English	63.3%	23.5%	13.3%	2.18	1.12
13.	When I am older I would like to study overseas in a country where people speak English	58.8%	25.8%	15.5%	2.26	1.18
19.	I feel comfortable speaking English in my classes	86.5%	6.3%	7.3%	1.67	1.02
24.	I would like to have my teachers to speak English more in class	58.8%	25.8%	15.5%	2.29	1.18
25.	I like textbooks in English	80.4%	17.5%	2.1%	1.80	0.84

Attitudes Toward Education in English

In Tables 4.36 and 4.37 we see that the majority of the students in primary and secondary education think that schools in Statia should teach reading and writing skills in English and that they would like to study overseas in an English speaking country. A vast majority of the students also feel comfortable speaking English in the classroom and like textbooks in English. Overall the scores of students in primary and secondary education are rather similar and both groups of students express

Table 4.38 Attitudes toward education in English on the part of parents of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
9.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in English	77.9%	10.6%	11.5%	2.05	1.03
14.	I would encourage students to study abroad in an English speaking country	37.3%	22.7%	40.0%	3.02	1.17
22.	Students want teachers to speak more English in class	53.6%	23.2%	23.2%	2.57	1.04
23.	Students like textbooks in English	67.0%	27.5%	5.5%	2.25	0.76

Table 4.39 Attitudes toward education in English on the part of parents of students in secondary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
9.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in English	83.3%	8.3%	8.3%	1.81	0.91
14.	I would encourage students to study abroad in an English speaking country	48.9%	27.7%	23.4%	2.60	1.14
22.	Students want teachers to speak more English in class	64.4%	24.4%	11.1%	2.33	1.00
23.	Students like textbooks in English	73.9%	21.7%	4.3%	2.11	0.77

more positive attitudes toward English as compared to their attitudes toward Dutch as described above. There is only a difference in the extent to which students would like their teachers to speak more English in the classroom, as students in secondary education express higher levels of agreement with this statement than those in primary education.

The results in Tables 4.38 and 4.39 indicate that a vast majority of the parents of students in primary and secondary education agree that schools in Statia should teach students to read and write in English. They also think that students want teachers to speak more English in the classroom and that students like textbooks in English. While their levels of agreement are rather similar, parents of students in secondary education express higher levels of agreement than parents of students in primary education. Parents of students in secondary education more frequently state that they would encourage students to study overseas in an English speaking country than do parents of students in primary education.

Table 4.40 indicates that teachers think that the education system in Statia should teach students to read and write in English. Furthermore they express high levels of agreement with the statements that students want teachers to speak more English in the classroom and that the students like textbooks in English. The teachers' opinions are more neutral regarding the extent to which they would encourage students to study overseas in an English speaking country.

The results in Table 4.41 indicate that the general public agrees with the statement that schools in Statia should teach students to read and write in English.

Table 4.40 Attitudes toward education in English on the part of teachers (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
10.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in English	84.6%	7.7%	7.7%	1.89	0.97
15.	I would encourage students to study abroad in an English speaking country	27.5%	45.0%	27.5%	2.95	0.90
23.	Students want teachers to speak more English in class	66.7%	17.9%	15.4%	2.27	1.02
24.	Students like textbooks in English	75.0%	20.0%	5.0%	2.11	0.80

Table 4.41 Attitudes toward education in English on the part of members of the general public (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
9.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in English	84.4%	6.3%	9.4%	1.75	0.95
14.	I would encourage students to study abroad in an English speaking country	56.3%	25.0%	18.8%	2.47	1.08
22.	Students want teachers to speak more English in class	60.0%	30.0%	10.0%	2.27	1.14
23.	Students like textbooks in English	77.4%	19.4%	3.2%	1.97	0.80

Furthermore they think that students would like their teachers to speak more English in class and that students like textbooks in English. They are more inclined than parents and teachers to encourage students to study overseas in an English speaking country.

Attitudes Toward Bilingualism

Tables 4.42 and 4.43 show that both groups of students express positive attitudes toward bilingualism, as a majority would want their future children to speak English and Dutch and they would like their teachers to use both languages in class as well. Notice, however, that there are small differences between the two groups, as the students in secondary education express lower levels of agreement with the statement that they would like their children to speak both languages. Secondary students are more in favour of the use of both languages in the classroom than primary students, which may be related to their negative experiences with the use of Dutch as the exclusive language of instruction at the Gwendoline van Putten secondary school.

Table 4.44 shows that the attitudes toward bilingualism in the classroom among parents of students in primary and secondary education, teachers and the general public correlate with students' positive attitudes. Again, we see that the levels of agreement among the parents of students in secondary education and teachers are

Table 4.42 Attitudes toward bilingualism on the part of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a three-point scale)

		Yes	Neutral	No	*Mean*	*SD*
5.	If I have children. I would want them to speak both English and Dutch	81.4%	12.4%	6.2%	1.25	0.56
27.	I want my teacher to speak English and Dutch in my classes	75.3%	9.3%	15.5%	1.40	0.75

Table 4.43 Attitudes toward bilingualism on the part of students in secondary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
5.	If I have children. I would want them to speak both English and Dutch	71.6%	16.8%	11.6%	2.11	1.09
27.	I want my teacher to speak English and Dutch in my classes	80.2%	12.5%	7.3%	1.89	1.02

Table 4.44 Attitudes toward bilingualism on the part of parents, teachers and the general public (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Students want teachers to speak English and Dutch in class					
25.						
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
	Parents students primary education	84.3%	11.3%	4.3%	1.77	0.85
	Parents students secondary education	75.6%	15.6%	8.9%	2.07	0.96
	Teachers	72.5%	20.0%	7.5%	2.13	0.84
	General public	83.9%	12.9%	3.2%	1.84	0.78

slightly lower, which may be related to their more negative attitudes toward education in Dutch, evidence of which appears above in Tables 4.33 and 4.34.

Attitudes Toward Statian Language and Identity

In order to complete the investigation of language and identity among the population of Statia, the survey included statements concerning the local language, community and identity. As Tables 4.45 and 4.46 indicate, the majority of the students have strong feelings about their identity as Statians. They appreciate and share this identity with others in the community. These results are remarkable in view of the fact that a majority of the students were not born on the island. Apparently, birthplace is not a decisive factor in the formation of a strong island based identity and sense of community. The two groups of students also think that textbooks used in school have little connection with life in Statia. There is less consensus between the two groups of students with regard to the importance of Statian English, as students in secondary education express lower levels of agreement with the statement that the language is important for the people in Statia than do primary school students.

Table 4.45 Attitudes toward Statian language and identity on the part of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a three-point scale)

		Yes	Neutral	No	*Mean*	*SD*
1.	I think of myself as a Statian	56.3%	17.7%	26.0%	1.70	0.86
3.	I am happy to be Statian	69.5%	17.9%	12.6%	1.43	0.71
4.	I feel close to other people from Statia	75.0%	17.4%	7.6%	1.33	0.61
11.	I think Statian English is important for the people in Statia	65.6%	16.7%	17.7%	1.52	0.78
20.	The textbooks we use in school have little to do with our life in Statia	57.9%	28.4%	13.7%	1.56	0.73

Table 4.46 Attitudes toward Statian language and identity on the part of students in secondary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
1.	I think of myself as a Statian	58.2%	17.3%	24.5%	2.43	1.44
3.	I am happy to be Statian	60.4%	19.8%	19.8%	2.36	1.34
4.	I feel close to other people from Statia	63.4%	29.0%	7.5%	2.14	0.97
11.	I think Statian English is important for the people in Statia	48.5%	30.3%	21.2%	2.59	1.24
20.	The textbooks we use in school have little to do with our life in Statia	66.7%	16.7%	16.7%	2.18	1.33

Table 4.47 Attitudes toward Statian language and identity on the part of parents of students in primary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
1.	I consider myself to be Statian	83.3%	7.9%	8.8%	1.75	0.99
3.	I am happy to be Statian	82.7%	11.8%	5.5%	1.74	0.87
4.	I identify with other Statians	67.9%	27.4%	4.7%	2.04	0.93
6.	Statian schools prepare students for future life in Statia	48.6%	14.7%	36.7%	2.82	1.21
12.	We need to preserve Statian English	52.8%	25.5%	21.7%	2.55	1.12
20.	The textbooks used in school have little to do with life in Statia	59.1%	29.6%	11.3%	2.25	1.03

Tables 4.47 and 4.48 indicate that the two categories of parents also express strong feelings about their identity as Statians. They are happy with this identity and share it with others in the community, in spite of the fact that many parents were born elsewhere. They think that it is important to preserve Statian English and that the textbooks in school are not strongly connected to life in Statia, with the parents of students in secondary education expressing higher levels of agreement with these statements than parents of students in primary education. The statement that the school system prepares students for a future life in Statia was only included in the questionnaires for the adult groups of participants. Tables 4.47 and 4.48 show that

Table 4.48 Attitudes toward Statian language and identity on the part of parents of students in secondary education (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
1.	I consider myself to be Statian	89.4%	4.3%	6.4%	1.66	0.84
3.	I am happy to be Statian	89.1%	10.9%	0.0%	1.63	0.68
4.	I identify with other Statians	73.9%	21.7%	4.3%	1.96	0.87
6.	Statian schools prepare students for future life in Statia	40.5%	14.3%	45.2%	2.98	1.18
12.	We need to preserve Statian English	67.4%	13.0%	19.6%	2.37	1.16
20.	The textbooks used in school have little to do with life in Statia	85.1%	10.6%	4.3%	1.70	0.83

Table 4.49 Attitudes toward Statian language and identity on the part of teachers (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
1.	I consider myself to be Statian	38.5%	20.5%	41.0%	3.03	1.46
3.	I am happy to be Statian	50.0%	34.2%	15.8%	2.53	1.28
5.	I identify with other Statians	59.0%	23.1%	17.9%	2.39	1.08
7.	Statian schools prepare students for future life in Statia	48.7%	23.1%	28.2%	2.73	1.02
13.	We need to preserve Statian English	35.0%	37.5%	27.5%	2.87	1.07
21.	The textbooks used in school have little to do with life in Statia	79.5%	7.7%	12.8%	1.92	1.02

while parents' levels of agreement with this statement are quite diverse, parents of students in secondary education are less likely to agree with this statement than are parents of students in primary education.

Table 4.49 shows that teachers express lower levels of agreement than other groups with the statement that they consider themselves to be Statian. This is not surprising in view of the fact that at least 70% of them were born elsewhere. Nevertheless, 50% of the teachers express that they are happy to be Statian and 59% of them identify with other Statians. The teachers' opinions are more neutral concerning the statements that Statian schools prepare students for future life in Statia and that it is necessary to preserve Statian English. They express higher levels of agreement with the statement that textbooks in school have little connection with life on the island.

Table 4.50 shows that the general public express high levels of agreement with the statements regarding their Statian identity, in spite of the fact that a majority of them (58%) was born elsewhere. Their opinions are more neutral with respect to the necessity to preserve Statian English. They think that textbooks used in school have little connection with life in Statia, but a slight majority agrees with the statement that Statian schools prepare students for future life in Statia.

Table 4.50 Attitudes toward Statian language and identity on the part of members of the general public (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

	Question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
1.	I consider myself to be Statian	76.7%	6.7%	16.7%	1.93	1.36
3.	I am happy to be Statian	75.9%	10.3%	13.8%	1.90	1.18
4.	I identify with other Statians	65.5%	20.7%	13.8%	2.17	1.04
6.	Statian schools prepare students for future life in Statia	53.1%	15.6%	31.3%	2.50	1.37
12.	We need to preserve Statian English	44.8%	34.5%	20.7%	2.66	1.32
20.	The textbooks used in school have little to do with life in Statia	67.9%	25.0%	7.1%	2.00	1.19

Table 4.51 Students' opinions about their academic results (Mean and SD based on a three-point and a five-point scale in the case of students in primary and secondary education, respectively)

21.	I am unhappy with my results in school					
		Yes	Neutral	No	*Mean*	*SD*
	Students in primary education	35.1%	25.5%	39.4%	2.04	0.87
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
	Students in secondary education	32.3%	36.5%	31.3%	3.00	1.22

Table 4.52 Evaluations of the students' academic results (Mean and SD based on a five-point scale)

21.	I am unhappy with the results of Statian/my students					
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	*Mean*	*SD*
	Parents of primary education students	58.8%	24.6%	16.7%	2.41	1.01
	Parents of secondary education students	62.5%	31.3%	6.3%	2.25	0.91
	Teachers	47.4%	13.2%	39.5%	2.81	1.24
	General public	53.1%	18.8%	28.1%	2.47	1.34

Evaluations of the Students' Academic Results

The survey also included a statement designed to investigate the opinions of students, parents, teachers and other community members with respect to the academic results obtained by the students.

As shown in Table 4.51, the opinions of the students are similar and rather neutral.

Table 4.52 shows that other categories of respondents, in particular the parents, are more critical with respect to the results of the students in school. A majority agrees with the statement that they are unhappy with the results of the students. Only in the case of the teachers is the percentage lower than 50%, which may be explained by the fact that the teachers are more aware of the difficulties that the students encounter in the system. Consequently, the teachers have lower expectations and are happier with the results of the students.

4.2.2.4   Statistical Analysis of the Results

4.2.2.4.1   Introduction

The results from the questionnaires presented in the previous section indicated several differences in attitudes toward language and education between students in primary education and students in secondary education, and these differences were also to be found among their parents. In particular, the attitudes of students in secondary education and their parents toward the use of Dutch in the education system were more negative. This tendency was identified as deserving of further investigation, because the students in secondary education and their parents were those who had first-hand daily experience with an education system that aimed to use Dutch as the only language of instruction. Therefore, we undertook an analysis to determine whether these differences were statistically significant. Additionally, we postulated that if the language of instruction was an explanatory factor, we might expect a contrast between the results for students in secondary education who were attending or had attended the *Schakelklas* (an immersion/submersion program in Dutch that was introduced in 2011–2012, in order to prepare the students for a secondary education system that used Dutch exclusively as the language of instruction) on the one hand, and the students who started their secondary education before 2011–2012, that is, the ones who were in secondary years 2 or 3 at the time of the survey on the other. In the following sections, we present a statistical analysis of the results obtained from primary and secondary education students, a comparison between students who were attending or had attended the *Schakelklas*, and those who did not, as well as a comparison between the two groups of parents and the general public.

4.2.2.4.2   Comparison Between the Groups of Students: Methodology

A comparison was made between the group *Students in primary education* (N = 97), and the group *Students in secondary education* (N = 98). For the group of students in secondary education, the subgroups of: *Schakelklas* (N = 32), *First year* (N = 33), and S*econd & third year students* (N = 33) were also compared. The combination of second (N = 8) and third year students (N = 25) into one group for the analysis is not only justified to avoid numerical disparity, but also based on the fact that both groups had not attended the *Schakelklas*, as they had started their secondary education before the school year 2011–2012. All groups were compared on the following topics: 'Attitudes toward Dutch language', 'Attitudes toward school English', 'Attitudes toward bilingualism', 'Attitudes toward education in English', 'Attitudes toward education in Dutch' and 'The importance of Dutch in carrying out certain activities'. To facilitate the comparison between the groups, the scale of measurement had to be equal. Therefore, the original 5-point scale for students in secondary education was modified to conform to a 3-point scale to match the original 3-point scale used with students in primary education. This was done for all

topics, except for the topic measuring the importance of Dutch in carrying out certain activities, which is based on a 4-point scale for all groups.

The assessment for each topic is based on a set of questions. The specific set of questions utilized to assess each topic are listed in Table 4.53. The scores for question 12 were reversed in order to measure a positive attitude toward the Dutch language with a score of 1 and a negative attitude with a score of 5, in order to match the other questions related to this topic. For the purpose of reducing the various questions pertaining to each topic into one variable, the overall Mean was calculated for the set of questions. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the participant groups under consideration, as well as a Bonferroni post-hoc test. The internal consistency of the set of questions was calculated with Cronbach's alfa and listed in Table 4.53. A Cronbach's alfa (α) of .500 or higher was expected. If this expectation was not borne out, the topic was excluded from the statistical analysis, as was the case for 'Attitudes toward school English'.

Table 4.53 The set of questions per topic, together with Cronbach's α value for each set

Attitudes toward the Dutch language		$\alpha = .676$
10.	I like to hear people speak Dutch	
12.	I think it is a waste of time to learn Dutch (reversed)	
16.	I would like to know Dutch better	
Attitudes toward school English		$\alpha = .268$
6.	I like speaking standard/school English	
15.	I would like to know English better	
19.	I feel comfortable speaking English in my classes.	
Attitudes toward bilingualism		$\alpha = .510$
5.	If I have children, I would want them to speak both English and Dutch	
27.	I want my teacher to speak English and Dutch in my classes	
Attitudes toward education in English		$\alpha = .583$
8.	I think that school should teach me to read and write in English	
13.	When I am older I would like to study overseas in a country where people speak English	
24.	I would like to have my teachers to speak English more in class	
25.	I like textbooks in English	
Attitudes toward education in Dutch		$\alpha = .714$
9.	I think that school should teach me to read and write in Dutch	
14.	When I am older I would like to study overseas in a country where people speak Dutch	
17.	In classes where the teacher speaks Dutch, I feel free to express myself	
26.	I like textbooks in Dutch	
The importance of Dutch in carrying out certain activities		$\alpha = .528$
29.	In earning money & getting a job	
30.	In reading & writing	
37.	In passing tests	

4.2.2.4.3   Comparative Analysis Between Students in Primary and Secondary Education

First, the topic 'Attitudes toward the Dutch language' was analysed to compare the results for students in primary education with those for students in secondary education. A statistically significant difference was found between the students in primary education and the students in secondary education regarding their attitudes toward the Dutch language (F(1,193) = 9.254, p = 0.003). Students in primary education have a more positive attitude toward the Dutch language than the students in secondary education. The Means and standard deviations of each topic for the groups students in primary and secondary education are listed in Table 4.54. Second, the topic 'Attitudes toward bilingualism' was analysed. No statistically significant difference was found between the students in primary education and students in secondary education (p = 0.981). Both groups show a positive attitude toward bilingualism. Third, the topic 'Attitudes toward education in English' was analysed. No statistically significant difference was found between the students in primary education and students in secondary education concerning their attitudes toward education in English (p = 0.057). Both groups express rather positive attitudes on this topic. Fourth, the topic 'Attitudes toward education in Dutch' was analysed. A statistically significant difference was found between the students in primary education and students in secondary education regarding their attitudes toward education in Dutch (F(1,193) = 4.222, p = 0.041). The students in primary education are more positive toward education in Dutch than the students in secondary education. Finally, the topic 'Importance of Dutch in carrying out certain activities' was analysed. A statistically significant difference was found between the students in primary education and students in secondary education on how important they find the Dutch language in carrying out certain activities (F(1,193) = 25.844, p = 0.000). Students in secondary education find Dutch more important than students in primary education.

Table 4.54 Mean and standard deviation, on a three-point scale (lower Mean = more positive, higher Mean = less positive) for the students in primary and secondary education (∗the data for the topic 'importance of Dutch' is on a 4-point scale (lower Mean = more important, higher Mean = less important)

	Students in primary education (n = 97)		Students in secondary education (n = 98)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Attitudes toward the Dutch language	1.39	0.52	1.63	0.58
Attitudes toward bilingualism	1.32	0.56	1.33	0.51
Attitudes toward education in English	1.60	0.54	1.46	0.44
Attitudes toward education in Dutch	1.69	0.58	1.86	0.59
Importance of Dutch∗	1.30	0.45	1.05	0.14

4.2.2.4.4 Comparative Analysis Between Secondary School Students in Schakelklas, First Year, and Combined Second & Third Years

First, the topic 'Attitudes toward the Dutch language' was analysed to compare results for students attending the *Schakelklas*, those in the first year of secondary school who had attended the *Schakelklas,* and those in the second and third years of secondary school who had never attended the *Schakelklas*. Among students in secondary education a statistically significant difference was found between the *Schakelklas*, first year and combined group of second & third year students $(F(2,95) = 5.777$, $p = 0.004)$. A Bonferroni post-hoc test revealed that the combined group of second & third year students has a significantly more negative attitude toward the Dutch language than the group *Schakelklas* ($p = 0.014$) and the group of first year students ($p = 0.011$). The Means and standard deviations for each group on each topic are listed in Table 4.55. Second, the topic 'Attitudes toward bilingualism' was analysed. A statistically significant difference was found between the *Schakelklas*, first year and combined group of second & third year students $(F(2,95) = 3.632$, $p = 0.030)$. A Bonferroni post-hoc test revealed though, that no statistically significant *pairwise* differences can be found between these groups. The combination of Means of the three groups are statistically different, yet the differences cannot be interpreted pairwise. Third, the topic 'Attitudes toward education in English' was analysed. No statistically significant difference was found between the *Schakelklas*, first year and combined group of second & third year students regarding their attitudes toward education in English ($p = 0.637$). Overall these groups have a rather positive attitude toward education in English, as illustrated by the Mean scores in Table 4.55. Fourth, the topic 'Attitudes toward education in Dutch' was analysed. A statistically significant difference was found between the *Schakelklas*, first year and combined group of second & third year students regarding their attitudes toward education in Dutch $(F(2,95) = 10.698$, $p = 0.000)$. A Bonferroni post-hoc test revealed that the combined group of second & third year students have a significantly more negative attitude toward education in Dutch than

Table 4.55 Mean and standard deviation, on a three-point scale for students in secondary education: *Schakelklas*, first year and combined second & third year (higher Mean = less positive) (∗the data on the topic 'importance of Dutch' is on a 4-point scale, higher Mean = less important)

	Schakelklas (n = 32)		First year (n = 33)		Second and third year (n = 33)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Attitudes toward the Dutch language	1.50	0.48	1.49	0.56	1.90	0.61
Attitudes toward bilingualism	1.22	0.36	1.24	0.53	1.52	0.57
Attitudes toward education in English	1.45	0.46	1.52	0.47	1.41	0.40
Attitudes toward education in Dutch	1.68	0.51	1.68	0.56	2.21	0.54
Importance of Dutch∗	1.01	0.06	1.06	0.13	1.09	0.20

the *Schakelklas* students (p = 0.000) and the first year students ($p = 0.000$). Finally, the topic 'Importance of Dutch in carrying out certain activities' was analysed. No statistically significant difference was found between the *Schakelklas*, first year and combined group of second & third year students with respect to how important they find the Dutch language in carrying out certain activities ($p = 0.095$). Overall the groups find Dutch very important in carrying out certain activities, as can be seen in Table 4.55.

4.2.2.4.5 Comparison Between Parents and Members of the General Public: Methodology

A comparison was made between parents of students in primary education, parents of students in secondary education and members of the general public. Groups were compared on the topics 'Attitudes toward the Dutch language', 'Attitudes toward school English', 'Attitudes toward education in English', 'Attitudes toward education in Dutch' and 'Importance of Dutch'. For the comparison of these groups the original five-point scale was used, except for the topic measuring the importance of Dutch in carrying out certain activities, which is based on a four-point scale.

Each topic was assessed using a set of questions. The specific questions pertaining to each topic are listed in Table 4.56. The scores on question 13 were reversed in order to measure a positive attitude toward the Dutch language with a score of 1 and a negative attitude with a score of 5, in order to match the other questions related to this topic. For the purpose of reducing the various questions pertaining to a single topic into one variable, the overall Mean was calculated for the set of questions. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the participant groups under consideration. The internal consistency of the set of questions was calculated with Cronbach's alfa and is included in Table 4.56. A Cronbach's alfa (α) of .500 or higher was expected. If this expectation was not borne out, the topic was excluded from the statistical analysis, as was the case for 'Attitudes toward school English'.

4.2.2.4.6 Comparative Analysis Between Parents and Members of the General Public

First, the topic 'Attitudes toward the Dutch language' was analysed for the results obtained from the two groups of parents and members of the general public. The Means and standard deviation for each topic for each group are given in Table 4.57. No statistically significant difference was found between the groups of parents of students in primary education, parents of students in secondary education and members of the general public on their attitudes toward the Dutch language ($p = 0.161$). Overall there is a neutral attitude toward the Dutch language. Second, the topic 'Attitudes toward education in English' was analysed. A statistically significant difference was found between the groups of parents of students in primary education, parents of students in secondary education and members of the general public

Table 4.56 The set of questions for each topic, together with the Cronbach's α value for each set

Attitudes toward the Dutch language		α = .554
11.	I like hearing Dutch spoken	
13.	It is a waste of time to learn Dutch (reversed)	
17.	I would like to improve my skills in Dutch	
Attitudes toward school English		α = .216
7.	I like speaking standard/school English	
16.	I would like to improve my skills in English	
Attitudes toward education in English		α = .705
9.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in English	
14.	I would encourage students to study abroad in an English speaking country	
22.	Students want teachers to speak more English in class	
23.	Students like textbooks in English	
Attitudes toward education in Dutch		α = .683
10.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in Dutch	
15.	I would encourage students to study abroad in a Dutch speaking country	
18.	When teachers speak Dutch in class students feel free to express themselves	
24.	Students like textbooks in Dutch	
Importance of Dutch in carrying out certain activities		α = .751
27.	Earning money & getting a job	
28.	Reading & writing	
35.	Passing tests	

Table 4.57 Mean and standard deviation on a five-point scale per group (higher Mean = less positive/important)

	Parents primary education students (N = 116)		Parents secondary education students (N = 48)		Members of the general public (N = 32)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Attitudes toward Dutch language	2.03	0.63	2.25	0.54	2.05	0.89
Attitudes toward education in English	2.47	0.73	2.21	0.73	2.12	0.72
Attitudes toward education in Dutch	2.43	0.68	2.81	0.59	2.36	0.83
Importance of Dutch	1.50	0.64	1.75	0.72	1.42	0.67

regarding their attitudes toward school English ($F(2,193) = 4.116$, $p = 0.018$). A Bonferroni post-hoc test revealed that members of the general public have a significantly more positive attitude toward education in English than the parents of students in primary education ($p = 0.049$). Third, the topic 'Attitudes toward education in Dutch' was analysed. A statistically significant difference was found between the parents of students in primary education, parents of students in secondary education and members of the general public on their attitudes toward education in Dutch

(F(2,192) = 5.961, p = 0.003). A Bonferroni post-hoc test revealed that the parents of students in secondary education have a significantly more negative attitude toward education in Dutch than the parents of primary education students (p = 0.005) and members of the general public (p = 0.015). Finally, the topic 'Importance of Dutch' was analysed. A statistically significant difference was found between the parents of students in primary education, parents of students in secondary education and members of the general public on how important they find Dutch for certain activities (F(2,188) = 3.100, p = 0.047). A Bonferroni post-hoc test revealed though, that no statistically significant *pairwise* differences are to be found between these groups. The combination of Means of the three groups are statistically different, yet none of the differences can be interpreted pairwise.

4.2.2.5   Conclusions

This section presents a brief summary of the results of the questionnaires followed by overall conclusions.

4.2.2.5.1   Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

With respect to the demographic characteristics we observed that a majority in most of the categories of participants were born outside Statia. In the category of teachers this percentage rises to at least 70% (45% of the teachers who participated in this survey were born in Holland).

4.2.2.5.2   Language Use

Statian English is widely used by all groups except for the teachers, not only in informal situations such as with family and friends, but also with colleagues. In conversations with strangers, Statian English is frequently replaced by Standard/school English by adults. The use of Dutch is rather limited across all categories of participants, except for the teachers. We only find high percentages for the use of Dutch in the case of students communicating with their teachers, although teachers indicate that they use Standard/school English more frequently to communicate with students and colleagues in and outside of school.

4.2.2.5.3   The Importance of Dutch in Different Domains

The results indicate a strong consensus with respect to the importance of Dutch for the population of Statia. All categories agree that Dutch is only important for instrumental purposes, related to education and the job market, as indicated by the high percentages for the following activities: (i) passing tests, (ii) earning money &

getting a job, and (iii) reading & writing. The percentages affirming the importance of Dutch are slightly higher in the categories of students and slightly lower in the categories of parents of students in secondary education and teachers. Dutch is less or not important for integrative functions related to social activities within the community, such as making friends, being liked and talking on the phone.

4.2.2.5.4 Attitudes toward Language and Education

Most of the participants do not feel strong ties with the Netherlands, but in general they have a positive attitude toward Dutch in the sense that they like hearing the language, want to improve their skills in Dutch and strongly disagree with the statement that learning Dutch is a waste of time. Only students in secondary education and their parents have a less positive attitude toward Dutch. A vast majority thinks that the school system should help the students develop reading and writing skills in Dutch, but the results suggest that the students are not optimally prepared to achieve this goal. In general students do not like their Dutch textbooks and parents have trouble helping their children with homework in Dutch. Attitudes are particularly more negative among students in secondary education and their parents, as students feel less free to express themselves in Dutch and they are not very motivated to study overseas in a Dutch speaking country.

Attitudes toward Standard/school English are positive, as are attitudes toward education in English, especially among students in secondary education and their parents, who also favor future studies in an English rather than in a Dutch speaking country. In fact, most of the participants are advocates of an education system that leads to a high level of competence in both English and Dutch, which is not surprising in view of both the worldwide importance of English as well as the importance attributed to Dutch for education and the job market indicated by the results of this survey. The overall positive attitudes expressed toward bilingualism further corroborate this hypothesis.

In general attitudes toward Statian language and identity are positive and the participants show a strong sense of community, in spite of the fact that many of them were born elsewhere. A majority in all categories agrees with the statement that the textbooks used in the education system are not really connected to the daily realities of Statia. With respect to the academic results of the students there is a discrepancy between the different categories of participants. In particular, parents are unhappy with the results of their children, whereas students themselves as well as their teachers are less critical.

4.2.2.5.5 Comparative Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis of the results was carried out to investigate whether certain differences in attitudes toward language and education were statistically significant across groups of participants. In particular the more negative attitudes among

students in secondary education and their parents with respect to Dutch and education in Dutch required a more detailed analysis, as well as potential differences between students in different years/grades of secondary education.

The comparative analysis between students in primary and secondary education confirmed that primary school students have more positive attitudes toward Dutch and education in Dutch than do secondary school students. Students in secondary education, however, find Dutch more important. Both groups share positive attitudes toward bilingualism and education in English.

The statistical comparison between the different groups of secondary school students revealed that the attitudes toward Dutch and education in Dutch were more negative among second and third year students who had never attended the *Schakelklas* (a one year immersion/submersion program in Dutch)*,* as compared to first year students who had attended the *Schakelklas* and students attending the *Schakelklas* at the time of the administration of the survey. This result supported our hypothesis that the *Schakelklas* would have a positive impact on students' attitudes toward Dutch and education in Dutch. This hypothesis requires additional (and especially longitudinal) research as the analysis was based on a comparison of relatively small groups of students (*Schakelklas*: N = 32, First year: N = 33, Second & Third year: N = 32) and different education levels may also play a role here. Attitudes toward English were positive across the three groups of students in secondary education and they all consider Dutch to be very important. No statistically significant differences were in evidence with respect to these topics.

The comparative analysis between parents and members of the general public showed that they share a neutral attitude toward Dutch. The parents of secondary school students have a significantly more negative attitude toward education in Dutch, whereas the parents of primary school students are less positive with regard to education in English.

Generally, we conclude that the results indicate that the population of Statia shares a strong sense of community. This community is multilingual, but Statian English is the most commonly used language. The use of Dutch is more limited to formal domains such as education and employment, but Dutch is considered to be very important by the majority of the population. Most of the participants are strong advocates of an education system that achieves a high competence in both English and Dutch and want to improve their skills in both languages. Attitudes toward bilingualism are positive and so are attitudes toward both Standard/school English and Dutch.

Students in secondary education and their parents share less positive attitudes toward Dutch and education in Dutch than other groups of participants. A statistical analysis confirms that attitudes are particularly more negative among students who did not attend the *Schakelklas* and hence had less preparation before they were immersed/submerged in a secondary education system whose goal was the exclusive use of a language of instruction which is a foreign language for the majority of the population.

4.2.3   Survey Questionnaires

Questions for pupils in primary schools

Your name will not be written on this paper and no one will know what your answers are.

Please use a cross (x) to show whether you agree or disagree with the following statements
Yes = thisi is true about me
No = this is not true about me
Neutral = this is neither true nor untrue about me

		Yes	No	Neutral
1.	I think of myself as a Statian			
2.	I feel strong ties with the Netherlands			
3.	I am happy to be Statian			
4.	I feel close to other people from Statia			
5.	If I have children, I would want them to speak both English and Dutch			
6.	I like speaking standard/school English			
7.	I think Dutch is a difficult language to learn			
8.	I think that school should teach me to read and write in English			
9.	I think that school should teach me to read and write in Dutch			
10.	I like to hear people speak Dutch			
11.	I think Statian English is important for the people in Statia			
12.	I think it is a waste of time to learn Dutch			
13.	When I am older I would like to study overseas in a country where people speak English			
14.	When I am older I would like to study overseas in a country where people speak Dutch			
15.	I would like to know English better			
16.	I would like to know Dutch better			
17.	In classes where the teacher speaks Dutch, I feel free to express myself			
18.	When my homework is in Dutch, my parents have trouble helping me			
19.	I feel comfortable speaking English in my classes.			
20.	The textbooks we use in school have little to do with our life in Statia			
21.	I am unhappy with my results in school			
22.	I feel uncomfortable speaking Dutch in my classes			
23.	When classes are not in English I sometimes get mad and act out			
24.	I would like to have my teachers to speak English more in class			
25.	I like textbooks in English			
26.	I like textbooks in Dutch			
27.	I want my teacher to speak English and Dutch in my classes			

Please, put a cross (X) in the box that fits your answer.

	How important do you think Dutch is for people in Statia for …	Important	Rather important	Less important	Not important
28.	making friends				
29.	earning money & getting a job				
30.	reading & writing				
31.	watching TV				
32.	using the internet				
33.	talking on the phone				
34.	being liked				
35.	living in Statia				
36.	raising children				
37.	passing tests				

Mark the language with a cross, you can mark more than one language.

	Which language(s) do you use every day when you talk to…	Statian English	Standard /school English	Dutch	Spanish	Another language: ....
38.	your mother					
39.	your father					
40.	your brothers and sisters					
41.	your friends					
42.	your teachers					
43.	your class mates					
44.	strangers					

Please, fill out the correct information or mark it by means of a circle.

45. Age: _____

46. Sex: boy   girl

47. I was born: in Statia   Outside Statia, in:_____

48. My mother was born: in Statia   Outside Statia, in:_____

49. My father was born: in Statia   Outside Statia, in:_____

50. Group/grade: 7   8

Thank you for your help!

Questionnaire for students of the Gwendoline van Putten School
This questionnaire is anonymous and all replies will be held securely and confidentially
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements marking your answer by means of a cross.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	I think of myself as a Statian					
2.	I feel strong ties with the Netherlands					
3.	I am happy to be Statian					
4.	I feel close to other people from Statia					
5.	If I have children, I would want them to speak both English and Dutch					
6.	I like speaking standard/school English					
7.	I think Dutch is a difficult language to learn					
8.	I think that school should teach me to read and write in English					
9.	I think that school should teach me to read and write in Dutch					
10.	I like to hear people speak Dutch					
11.	I think Statian English is important for the people in Statia					
12.	I think it is a waste of time to learn Dutch					
13.	When I am older I would like to study overseas in a country where people speak English					
14.	When I am older I would like to study overseas in a country where people speak Dutch					
15.	I would like to know English better					
16.	I would like to know Dutch better					
17.	In classes where the teacher speaks Dutch, I feel free to express myself					
18.	When my homework is in Dutch, my parents have trouble helping me					
19.	I feel comfortable speaking English in my classes.					
20.	The textbooks we use in school have little to do with our life in Statia					
21.	I am unhappy with my results in school					
22.	I feel uncomfortable speaking Dutch in my classes					
23.	When classes are not in English I sometimes get mad and act out					
24.	I would like to have my teachers speak English more in class					
25.	I like textbooks in English					
26.	I like textbooks in Dutch					
27.	I want my teacher to speak English and Dutch in my classes					

Please, put a cross (X) in the box that fits your answer.

	How important do you think Dutch is for people in Statia for ...	Important	Rather important	Less important	Not important
28.	making friends				
29.	earning money & getting a job				
30.	reading & writing				
31.	watching TV				
32.	using the internet				
33.	talking on the phone				
34.	being liked				
35.	living in Statia				
36.	raising children				
37.	passing tests				

Mark the language with a cross, you can mark more than one language.

	Which language(s) do you use every day when you talk to...	Statian English	Standard /school English	Dutch	Spanish	Another language: ....
38.	your mother					
39.	your father					
40.	your brothers and sisters					
41.	your friends					
42.	your teachers					
43.	your class mates					
44.	Strangers					

Please, fill out the correct information or mark it by means of a circle.

45. Age: _____

46. Sex: male   female

47. I was born: in Statia   Outside Statia, in:_____

48. My mother was born: in Statia   Outside Statia, in:_____

49. My father was born: in Statia   Outside Statia, in:_____

50. Stream: PrO   VMBO-b   VMBO-k   VMBO-t   HAVO

51. Year/grade: _____

Thank you for your help!

Questionnaire for teachers
This questionnaire is anonymous and all replies will be held securely and confidentially.
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements by marking your answer with a cross (x).

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	I consider myself to be Statian					
2.	I feel strong ties with the Netherlands					
3.	I am happy to be Statian					
4.	I value my Dutch citizenship					
5.	I identify with other Statians					
6.	I am critical about the Netherlands					
7.	Statian schools prepare students for a future life in Statia					
8.	I like speaking standard/school English					
9.	Dutch is a difficult language to learn					
10.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in English					
11.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in Dutch					
12.	I like hearing Dutch spoken					
13.	We need to preserve Statian English					
14.	It is a waste of time to learn Dutch					
15.	I would encourage my students to study abroad in an English speaking country					
16.	I would encourage my students to study abroad in a Dutch speaking country					
17.	I would like to improve my skills in English					
18.	I would like to improve my skills in Dutch					
19.	When I speak Dutch in class, the students feel free to express themselves					
20.	When homework is in Dutch, the parents have trouble helping the students					
21.	The textbooks we use in school have little to do with life in Statia					
22.	I am unhappy with the results of my students					
23.	Students want teachers to speak more English in class					
24.	Students like textbooks in English					
25.	Students like textbooks in Dutch					
26.	Students want teachers to speak English and Dutch in class					

How important do you think Dutch is for people in Statia to carry out certain activities? Please indicate your answer by marking the appropriate box with a cross (x).

		Important	Rather important	Less important	Not important
27.	making friends				
28.	earning money & getting a job				
29.	reading & writing				
30.	watching TV				
31.	using the internet				
32.	talking on the phone				
33.	being liked				
34.	living in Statia				
35.	raising children				
36.	passing tests				

Which language(s) do you use daily when you talk to … (Mark the language with a cross, you can mark several languages in one single situation)

		Statian English	Standard /school English	Dutch	Spanish	Another language: ……………
37.	your mother					
38.	your father					
39.	your brothers and sisters					
40.	your friends					
41.	your colleagues in school					
42.	your colleagues outside school					
43.	your students in the classroom					
44.	your students outside the classroom					
45.	strangers					

46. I was born: in Statia   Outside   Statia,   in:_____

If you have comments, please write them here:

Thank you for your cooperation!

Questionnaire for parents and the general public
This questionnaire is anonymous and all replies will be held securely and confidentially.
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements by marking your answer with a cross (x).

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	I consider myself to be Statian					
2.	I feel strong ties with the Netherlands					
3.	I am happy to be Statian					
4.	I identify with other Statians					
5.	I am critical about the Netherlands					
6.	Statian schools prepare students for a future life in Statia					
7.	I like speaking standard/school English					
8.	Dutch is a difficult language to learn					
9.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in English					
10.	I think Statian schools should teach students to read and write in Dutch					
11.	I like hearing Dutch spoken					
12.	We need to preserve Statian English					
13.	It is a waste of time to learn Dutch					
14.	I would encourage students to study abroad in an English speaking country					
15.	I would encourage students to study abroad in a Dutch speaking country					
16.	I would like to improve my skills in English					
17.	I would like to improve my skills in Dutch					
18.	When teachers speak Dutch in class, the students feel free to express themselves					
19.	When homework is in Dutch, the parents have trouble helping the students					
20.	The textbooks used in school have little to do with life in Statia					
21.	I am unhappy with the results of Statian students					
22.	Students want teachers to speak more English in class					
23.	Students like textbooks in English					
24.	Students like textbooks in Dutch					
25.	Students want teachers to speak English and Dutch in class					

How important do you think Dutch is for people in Statia to carry out certain activities? Please indicate your answer by marking the appropriate box with a cross (x).

		Important	Rather important	Less important	Not important
26.	making friends				
27.	earning money & getting a job				
28.	reading & writing				
29.	watching TV				
30.	using the internet				
31.	talking on the phone				
32.	being liked				
33.	living in Statia				
34.	raising children				
35.	passing tests				

Which language(s) do you use daily when you talk to … (Mark the language with a cross, you can mark several languages in one single situation)

		Statian English	Standard /school English	Dutch	Spanish	Another language: ....
36.	your mother					
37.	your father					
38.	your brothers and sisters					
39.	your friends					
40.	your colleagues at work					
41.	your colleagues outside outside of work					
42.	strangers					

43. Year of birth   _____

44. I was born: in Statia   Outside Statia, in:_____

45. Education: Primary Education   PrO   VMBO MAVO HAVO VWO   MBO
                          HBO   WO   ULO   MULO MMS   HBS

If you have comments, please write them here:

4.3   Narrative Proficiency Test: Background, Goals, Methodology, Findings and Conclusions

4.3.1   Background

In order to be able to measure the students' linguistic development, a narrative proficiency test was developed for the research project. The project needed an assessment of the development of language skills in Dutch and English in the transition

between the English medium of instruction in primary education and the Dutch language of instruction in secondary education. It is important to note that this transition differed both in length and character from school to school and even from teacher to teacher. The standard tests that were being used in Statian schools for the assessment of the development of language and mathematics, known as the *Cito toets*, were distrusted by a part of the island's population as they were considered to be unfit for the assessment of the students' skills. During all phases of the project, community members expressed their distrust of the applicability and effects of the testing systems used in the schools: "The test was not measuring math skills, but the language" (Faraclas et al. 2013, p. 115); "the methods and the system don't fit the *Cito toets*" (ibid, p. 116). Many experienced the test as a source of pressure: "We are getting too much pressure from GvP[1] and the *Cito toets* to speak more Dutch than English, but it is not working." (ibid. p. 107) If, in our attempts to assess students' performance, we had opted to utilize the results which had been obtained from the tests that are normally used in the schools to measure their progress, the general acceptability of the research outcomes would have decreased.

Language tests in themselves are a much contested tool, for a number of reasons, including the fact that they normally only assess a limited range of skills, as well as the fact that they tend to exclude many students, not because of low competence levels, but instead because these students do not conform to norms that have nothing to do with their language proficiency. From this perspective, Shohamy questions "test ethicality, test bias, the effect of tests on instruction, and the use of tests for power and control" (1998, p. 331). Because of these and other considerations, the research team felt that it was necessary to come up with a different instrument to evaluate students' levels of achievement in as many language skill areas as possible in an optimally positive and inclusive way.

At the time of the research project, in Statia the standardized language and mathematics tests designed and marketed by the Dutch *Cito* agency were being used to determine the placement of students in the highly stratified Dutch secondary education system, where students are separated into rigid and distinct tracks: 'The *Cito* test helps the school, the parents and the child to make the right decision about the type of secondary education that is best suited to a child.' (Van der Lubbe 2007) Although the score of the test is considered to be one factor among several that determine a given student's future in the system, in practice, the test has proven to be a powerful tool deployed in determining student placement in the Netherlands.

In spite of the fact that students in Statia had been officially allowed to take this test either in English or in Dutch, the failure rates in both languages were high. Since most complex academic concepts are taught to students in Dutch, the students who opted to take their tests in English found themselves without the English terminology that they needed to pass the test. Most of those who opted for Dutch, on the other hand, lacked both the language skills and much of the terminology that they needed to pass: "My nephew opted to take his *Cito toets* in mathematics in English, but couldn't cope with the test, because he had never been taught the key

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[1] GvP is the abbreviation used for the Gwendoline van Putten secondary school.

concepts in English." (Faraclas et al. 2013, p. 122) Under the existing regime of testing in the schools, language proficiency was being assessed on the basis of reading speed tests, but not on reading comprehension or active proficiency. This was also recognized in the focus group interviews: "The only *Cito toets* results for Dutch available are on reading speed. Unfortunately, this does not specifically test levels of comprehension in Dutch (...)" (ibid. p. 114).

An extra dimension of exclusion has been introduced in the Dutch tracking system by the rapidly growing testing and tutoring industry in the Netherlands, which increasingly markets programs designed specifically to improve the results on the *Cito toets* of students whose parents are affluent enough to afford such services. On Statia, the majority of the population does not have the financial means nor the expertise to support their children in that way. "Parents are very concerned about the *Cito toets* because they feel helpless to assist their children." (Faraclas et al. 2013, p. 123).

The *Cito* tests are created in the European Netherlands for children who live in the predominantly Dutch speaking European Netherlands, and whose linguistic skills are adapted to that environment. Beyond the translation of these tests into English, they have not been meaningfully adapted to the Caribbean context, which would necessitate a significant level of involvement of Caribbean educators in their formulation. Despite the fact that context should not play a role in the assessment of students' performance, the unfamiliarity of the Statian students with the Dutch context makes it harder for these children to perform on the *Cito toets*.

Another impact of the *Cito toets* has been the phenomenon of 'teaching to the test'. The use of *Cito* and other traditional standardized tests has proven to be problematic in relation to curriculum and content, as these tests are in many cases primarily focused on language and mathematics as core subjects at the expense of others. In class, subjects like history, geography and citizenship are increasingly neglected by teachers in order to free up time to train the students to pass the *Cito* tests. This practice is in stark contradiction to the stated purpose of the exams: instead of stimulating and measuring the students' progress in their academic development, the tests create an abstract educational goal that actually does not enhance, or even lowers, the future performance levels of these students. Time that would actually have been allotted to the broader formation of the students is spent on training for the tests: "[Dutch] language and mathematics are often the only subjects being taught, because of the *Cito toets,* which mainly tests in these areas and students are being taught to the test." (Faraclas et al. 2013, p. 107).

Particular pressure is exerted on both schools and teachers to shift the focus of classroom time to these two topics because they know that the quality of their work will be judged in no small part to the results that their students achieve on the *Cito toets*. The test results for *Cito* and similar tests allow for a ranking of schools on the basis of their performance on the tests, and teachers are assessed on the basis of their students' test performance, among other factors. The results for the *Cito* scores

in Statia are consistently low, so students, teachers and schools on the island are consistently given the message that they are underperforming and that they have to improve or make every effort to score better. This extends to the purchase of textbooks and other teaching aids: tests too often dictate the materials selected for use in the classroom.

In an attempt to address the problems with testing outlined above, we composed a bilingual narrative proficiency test which was designed to mobilize the visual, interpretive, narrative and oral competencies of the students. We adopted this integrative approach in order to shift the traditional focus on limited skill areas to students' capacity to apply the full range of written language skills in practice. A bilingual narrative proficiency test not only expands the range of assessed skills, but also is amenable to the comparison of the mastery of such skills by a particular student in more than one language. Moreover, a bilingual narrative proficiency test allows the students themselves to play an active role in creating the linguistic and cultural matrix within which assessment occurs.

The bilingual narrative proficiency tests were administered in class. Each session consisted of three different phases. In the first phase, the research team engaged with the students in such a way as to clarify the character and goals of the study, the problems that the research was designed to address, and the value of their input. In the second phase, the group discussed the value and strength of story-telling as a social practice. In the third phase, the test was administered, with the students being given sufficient time to complete two versions of their story, one in English, and one in Dutch. As the students were made *privy* to the goals and background of the research project and as the test tapped primarily into strengths of the community, the students developed – and expressed – the feeling that their input was taken seriously and that their participation would have an impact on their future in their own context.

In retrospect, at least three things could have been done better. In the research design phase, the students could have been invited to co-create the story board using their own image schemas. In this way they would have become co-designers of the test and the contextual relevance of the test would have been maximized. Students could also have become co-assessors of their own and their fellow students' stories. Additionally, due to time constraints, no evaluation was performed with the students of the instrument itself or the procedures followed to administer it. From a community based research perspective, all of these elements would have increased the level of community involvement and control over the process.

On the pages that follow in this section we present the sections of the original report that contain the description and analysis of the narrative proficiency test that we carried out over the course of our field research. What appears below are parts of the text found in the original report, with superfluous details deleted and clarifications added.

4.3.2   Narrative Proficiency Test: Results of the Narrative Proficiency Tests Administered by the Research Group During Their Visit to Statia in April 2013

4.3.2.1   Introduction

In order to assess and describe the effect of the current language curriculum on the Dutch and English language proficiency of Statian public school students, the research team decided to administer a narrative proficiency test during our visit to Statia in April 2013. This test enabled the team to make a comparative evaluation of language proficiency in Dutch and English of students in primary and secondary schools during the transition phase between the use of English as the language of instruction and Dutch as the language of instruction.

4.3.2.2   Methodology

The narrative proficiency test is a comprehensive and easily applicable tool, because it provides the means to assess several levels of language proficiency at once. The narrative proficiency test used in this setting is based on a storyboard: the pupils were given a sheet of paper that displayed 6 images that represented a chronological storyline. In this case we chose a very simple storyline, as this did not require much in the way of imagination on the part of the respondents, depending instead on their capacity to reproduce in words what they saw. Description in words of the images did not require complex sentence structures or uncommon vocabulary. One randomly selected half of each class that participated in the exercise was asked to write the story in English first, then in Dutch, while the other half of each class was asked to write the story in English first, then in Dutch.

The decision of the research team to use this test in the context of our work on Statia is based on the fact that it could provide us with data which would allow us to assess and map the levels of language proficiency in both English and Dutch throughout the transitional period, which corresponds roughly to between the ages of 10 and 15. This would enable us to describe the competencies of Statian pupils in writing and in expressing themselves using the consecutive languages of instruction of the Statian public education system *before, during and after* the transitional period from English to Dutch as language of instruction.

The test was administered to: (1) all pupils in all *groep* 7 and *groep* 8 classes (all Grade 5 and 6 classes) of all 4 primary schools; (2) all students in all of the three Dutch to English transitional *Schakelklas* sections (A, B and C) at the secondary school; and (3) first, second and third year students at the secondary school. In total, 177 tests were administered, 94 at the 4 primary schools, including 46 *groep* 7 students and 48 *groep* 8 students; and 83 at the Gwendoline van Putten secondary school, including 30 in the three *Schakelklas* sections, and 53 in the first, second and third years of secondary education. From this corpus of 177 texts, 52 samples have

been selected for discussion here, because they are representative of the diversity of language proficiency among all groups. The stories written by the students who took the test were assessed on the following levels:

– story: correctness of the storyline, link between the storyline and the images, degree of detail in the storyline
– sentence: sentence/phrase length, sentence complexity (simple sentences, coordination or subordination, use of tenses, use of modal auxiliaries, coherence of VP/NP, word order), signs of direct speech,
– vocabulary: adequacy of vocabulary used, diversity of vocabulary used (possible use of synonyms), use of pronouns
– spelling: correctness, punctuation

The transcription conventions used were the following: [brackets] indicate the explanation of an emoticon, question marks indicate the researcher's inability to decipher the text and lines through the text were present in the original text, indicating that the author had discarded the text.

4.3.2.3 Goal

Administering this test and analyzing the results that we obtained helped us to answer two questions: (1) What happens to the students' language proficiency in English during the transitional phase? and (2) To what extent does proficiency in Dutch after the transitional phase match proficiency in English? If these questions were answered, the effectiveness of the transitional model with regard to the development of language proficiency in the language of instruction could be assessed.

4.3.2.4 About the Test

The vocabulary needed to tell the story was simple in both English and in Dutch. The words most likely to be used by the students to describe what was being depicted in the images of the storyboard were predicted and the frequency of the usage of these words in each language was verified. For English, this frequency was based on the frequency lists found in wiktionary 2006.[2] Apart from the nouns and verbs, the articles, pronouns and copulas which were needed to complete the students' stories were all high frequency words in English. In order to assess the relative difficulty of the most likely Dutch words to be used by students in describing the images on the storyboard, we verified whether or not these vocabulary items were included on the list of the 1001 words which a 6 year old non-native speaker of Dutch student in the Netherlands was expected to know before entering primary school (Bacchini et al. 2005) . Telling the story did not require complex sentence structures. Complex sentence structures would only be expected to occur in cases where students

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[2] http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Wiktionary:Frequency_lists/PG/2006/04/1-10000

creatively embellished the storyline. Simple sentences with subject, verb and object were sufficient for the description of the events on the storyboard.

The tests were administered during regular meetings of students' classes in their normally assigned classrooms, after they had participated in the language attitude and use survey. By the time the proficiency test was presented to the students, they had become fairly accustomed to the presence of the research team and felt relatively at ease. After an introduction in English about story-telling, the students were informed that they would be writing their own stories. At first, most were quite enthusiastic about writing stories, but as soon as they were told that they would be writing not only in English but also in Dutch, the enthusiasm of the students dwindled. The students generally wrote better stories in English than in Dutch. The students who were asked to write in Dutch before writing in English generally took a much longer time to start the task than those asked to write in English first. Some students flatly refused to write the story in Dutch.

As a point of reference for assessment of the proficiency test, the team opted to use the core objectives for Dutch in Primary Education in the Netherlands (Ministerie van Onderwijs Cultuur en Wetenschap 2006) and applied these core objectives to the samples to check whether one or both of the stories written by each participant would match the level of language proficiency expected at the end of primary education in the Netherlands. The core objectives for Dutch in Primary Education in the Netherlands include the abilities to copy, to describe, to structure and to assess. Students who complete primary education in the Netherlands are supposed to know the rules for the spelling of words and proper punctuation. For students who have had English as their language of instruction in primary education to comply with these core objectives, one would expect an English rendering of the story of equivalent quality to the following fragment from a 10 year old girl in *groep* 7 at the SDA primary school (fragment ED15 – English):

> One day a woman was walking down the road with her purse. Then out of the blue a thief came and stole the woman's purse. He ran down the road away from the woman. But when he was running he ran past a policeman on duty. The police man saw him and started to chase the thief. Finally the policeman caught the robber he arrested him and made him give back the purse to the woman. She thanked the policeman and slapped the thief and everyone but the thief live happy ever after. The thief spent 15 years in prison.

Unfortunately, such high quality stories were very rare among those written by primary and even secondary school students. The stories written by primary school students in *groep* 7 and *groep* 8 were generally of poor quality and did not meet the standards set out in the core objectives for primary education. Even compared to many of the stories written by 15 and 16 year old secondary school students, this young girl's performance on the narrative test was exceptionally high. In general, teachers in both primary and secondary schools were acutely aware that there was a gap between the quality of performance of students when they complete their primary education and the quality of performance expected of them when they enter secondary school.

4.3.2.5   Findings

In general, the students were able to produce descriptions of the six drawings on the story board. Most stories however lack detail and stick to a simple description of the main story line in simple sentences. Some students from *groep* 7, *groep* 8 and *Schakelklas* created stories that showed broader narrative skills by giving the characters names (samples ED20 and DE7).

> ED20: 11 year old, mother tongue English
> English:
> One day there was a lady name Maria. Maria was walking from the store and
> a thief took her bag. The thief was running very fast and a police saw
> him running with the bag so the police start to run after the thief. After the
> thief got tired and started to run slower and slower and the police
> caught him and Maria got her bag again.
>
> Dutch:
> Eén dag daar was en mevrouw naam Maria. Maria loopt from de
> winkel en een dief took zijn tas. De dief rent hel sniel en een politce
> saw hijm running met de tas zo the politce rent after de dief. After de
> dief got tired en start to ren slow en slow en the politce caught
> hijm en Maria got zijn tas.
>
> DE7: 15 years old, mother tongue English
> Dutch:
> "Op drie, Januari een man naam John hebt een tas van een
> vrouw, Jane, gestolen. In het zelfde tijd John rent
> het politie was achter hem. Het politie hebt hem gevang
> en ze geeft het tas terug naar Jane"
>
> English:
> On January 3rd, a man name John stoled a bag from
> a lady name Jane. While John ran but the police was behind
> him. The police caught him and gave the bag back to Jane.

Some students from *groep* 7, *groep* 8 and *Schakelklas* created stories that showed broader narrative skills by using adjectives to describe character and mood (DE27) and by using linking words. Some even invented additional details like the date of the crime (see earlier, sample DE7): "On January 3rd", the motive for the crime (sample DE31) or the punishment that was eventually meted out to the thief (see earlier, sample ED15) for dramatic effect: "The thief spent 15 years in prison".

> DE31: 12 years old mother tongue English
> Dutch:
> "Hey" zegt de juffrouw, "geeft mij mijn handbag! Politie hulp!"
> "He He He" de theif zegt "ik had de jufs handbag gestollen nu ik heb
> meer geld." "stop Rechts daar" zegt de politceagent. De
> tweede mensen had rent alrond de heel city. "Ha!, IK
> heb je nu geeft mij de handbag" Daan de jufvrouw was zo veel
> blij dat ze heb de handbag. De Theif zegt hij was
> sorry vor wat hij had doen, daan de politceagent zegt
> dat zij moet heb een goedemiddag daan de jufvrouw
> en de politceagent were blij.

English:
"hey" Said the woman, "Give me my purse back! Police help!"
"He He He" said the thief "I stole the womens purse and now
I have the more money." "stop right there" said the police-officer
the two men chased eachother around the whole city.
"Ha! I have you now give me the purse." Then the woman was
so happy that she had the purse, the thief said he was
sorry for what he had done the police-agent wished her
a good afternoon then they were both happy.

This creativity in writing may have been inspired by the reading materials that were available in those classes and the fact that the teachers in those classes read out stories to the students. The texts written by the secondary school students after *Schakelklas* were generally shorter and lacked narrative creativity, illustrative of the fact that attention to reading and writing in the secondary school curriculum was less intense than in primary school and in *Schakelklas*.

Most texts that were produced were written in simple sentences and examples of subordination were rare (sample DE14).

DE14: 12 years old, mother tongues English and Papiamentu
Dutch:
De dame heeft een tas. Daar was en dief! Hij dief het dame
tas; De politie kom op het (scene), de politie ziet het dief.
De politie vangt de dief en hij brengt de tas tot de
dame en de dame was blij. Ik denk dat de dame zegt
Dank u! De dame was dansen in de straat en dat
(mean) zij was blij. (When) de dief (thief) haar tas
ze was bang nu (since) het politie heeft haar tas van
de dief zij was blij. Deze dame heeft spullen in
haar tas en geld. Deze dame (was) ~~bag~~ bang dat
de dief (thief) (~~it~~) het geld. ~~Waar~~ Wie is en dief?
Een dief is en persoon wie (thiefs) spullen.

English:
The ~~thie~~ lady have a bag. "There was a thief." ~~The~~ He thief
the lady bag. The police came on the scene, the police
see the thief and the police catch the thief and he
bring the lady bag. And the lady was happy, I think
that the lady said "Thank you". The lady was dancing
in the street and that means she was really happy. When
the thief, thief her bag she was scared and now since
the police has her bag from the thief she was
happy. The lady had stuff in her bag and money.
The lady was scared that the thief, thief her money. Who
is a thief? A thief is a person who thiefs stuff.

Many students had a difficult time writing down their thoughts in sentences and using punctuation. For the most part, thoughts were expressed in chains of Subject-Verb-Object strings combined with *and* or without any coordinating conjunctions at all (samples ED9 and DE28).

ED9: 12 years old, mother tongues Dutch and Papiamento
English:
There was a woman walking on the road and a man come

and take her bag and ran away with it the police officer saw
him running away with the bag he ran after him and after
a while of chasing the thief the police officer caught him
and the lady got her purse back.

Dutch:
Er was een mevrouw die op straat loopt en een man kwam
een pak haar tas en ren weg met het de politie agent zag de dief
weg rent met the tas de politie agent heeft de dief gevangend
en de vrouw heeft haar tas terug gekrijgen.

DE28: 13 years old, mother tongue unknown
Dutch:
Een jongen had een meisje handtasje gestolen
en hij heeft weg gerennen en de politie
had hem gezien en de politie heeft
acher de jongen gerennen en wanneer
de politie de man (catched) had de
vrouw haar handtasje terug gekrijg

English:
A boy stole a girl perse and ran away
with it and the police saw him and
ran behind him and when the police
~~caught~~ catched him the ~~lady~~ girl got het
perse back.

At times, it appeared that students were writing down their thoughts without pay-
ing much attention to the conventions of writing (samples DE16 and ED14).

DE16: 13 years old, mother tongue English
English:
An xorrow I dot not now Dot.
a womn gat rod and ran de
tes cros de rod and her de
poles and de poles run as *?tror?* de
tef and the ~~pd~~ poles cak de tef
and de tef hav de nan dag in his
han and the poles gav gak ~~de~~
~~da~~ de to de v.o ~~no~~ womon.
Dutch:[no text provided]

ED14: 11 years old, mother tongue English
English:
The boy steel the gril bat and the boy
run on the rod and the poles see the boy
and the boy run and run and the poles run aftur
the boy and the poles crej him and the gril
was happy.

Dutch:
De meisie he~~b~~ en tas de dief ren met de
meisie een de dief tik de tas en de dief
ren en de politie saa de dief en de politie ren at
de dief en de polite get dief en de tas en ~~th~~de
meisie was handen.

If students opted to use tenses other than the simple present, they often struggled with consistency and shifted between past and present tense reference (sample DE20).

DE20: 13 years old, mother tongues English and Spanish
Dutch:
Een vrouw was aan te lopen en een dief pakt
haar tas en rent weg. En police officer heeft hem
~~gen~~ gezien en rent achter hem until he catch and gave
~~her~~ the lady her bag back.

English:
A Lady was walking and a thief and stole her bag
while he was running a police officer saw him
and run after him until he catch the thief and
return the bag to the lady

On rare occasions, students inserted direct speech into their stories using hyphenation and correct punctuation (sample DE31), but in most cases these attempts to insert direct speech did not contribute to the clarity of the stories (samples DE10 and DE23).

DE31: 12 years old, mother tongue English
Dutch:
"Hey" zegt de juffrouw, "geeft mij mijn handbag! Politie hulp!"
"He He He" de theif zegt "ik had de jufs handbag gestollen nu ik heb
meer geld." "stop Rechts daar" zegt de politceagent. De
tweede mensen had rent alrond de heel city. "Ha!, IK
heb je nu geeft mij de handbag" Daan de jufvrouw was zo veel
blij dat ze heb de handbag. De Theif zegt hij was
sorry vor wat hij had doen, daan de politceagent zegt
dat zij moet heb een goedemiddag daan de jufvrouw
en de politceagent were blij.

English:
"hey" Said the woman, "Give me my purse back! Police help!"
"He He He" said the thief "I stole the womens purse and now
I have the more money." "stop right there" said the police-officer
the two men chased eachother around the whole city.
"Ha! I have you now give me the purse." Then the woman was
so happy that she had the purse, the thief said he was
sorry for what he had done the police-agent wished her
a good afternoon then they were both happy.

DE10: 10 years old, mother tongue English
Dutch:
Dief Dem
De bief stole de vrouw tas dan hij rent op de
straar and the the politie zegt jij bent jong
den de politier rent naar de dief en zchopt
him and then ze geef the vrouw zijn tas

English:
first the thief stole the woman's purse and then
he ran away the the police say you ar short
and then he rant away and then the police
cach him and he make hime give the lady her purse

DE23: 10 years old mother tongue Dutch
Dutch:
Er was een vrouw die liep op de weg, er kwam
een dief. hey! mijn tas! Hahaha! zei de dief, hij
rende weg. Toen zag een politie hem en zij: dief!
hij rende achter de dief aan, na een kwartier zij hij,
ik heb je te pakken! Hij hield de dief aan en gaf
de tas aan de vrouw.

English:
Once upon a time there was a thief, the thief liked
to steal things. He saw a woman and said:
Haha! I got your purse! He ran away over a
road. Then a cop saw him and said: thief!
he ran behind the thief and after 15 minutes
he said I got you! He hold the thief and gave
the purse to the girl

Many students did not have sufficient active Dutch vocabulary to write the sto-
ries. Many opted to insert English words in the Dutch text for slightly less frequent
concepts like *pakken* or *vangen,* which was often replaced by the English translation
catch (samples DE1: '...caught hem en geeft de tas terug naar de vrouw...', DE2:
'Dan heeft de politie hem "caught...".', DE11: '...en de dief get catch en ... 'and
DE12: '...dan de politie (caught) hij en ...')*;* or *(achter)volgen* which was replaced
by the English equivalent *chase* (sample DE1: 'Hij chase aan hem...'). Sometimes
students invented new words (samples ED8: 'de ~~vrouw~~vrouw heeft stoken en the
teaf went runing en de sop saw him runing en ran after him en he kost en...', ED14:
' en ~~th~~de meisie was handen') or even appeared to invent new languages (sample
ED4 and ED5).

ED 4: 11 years old, mother tongue English
English/Dutch?
The wimen the mean dief begr rodre
be most ren afen the dief road
the fine wonaf hikem goder
the poten ran aft the teft
the road the ponsct takes keg comes
somig the keg gmekemi
be is dief wom tit ran wins
be in plsae ran aft de diek
be gi wom kilen risk hei tast
be wom in hepsk a genek
be wom wos nepk t eig

ED5: 16 years old, mother tongue unknown
English/Dutch?

1.   The woman get tif
2.   He ron we the ?policboom?
3.   The police sea ongo
4.   The police romeng afta hen
5.   The police heg hen
6.   The woman happy"

On the other hand, no examples of Dutch words to fill in gaps in English vocabulary were found, apart from one occasion of the use of the article *de* to replace *the* (sample DE9).

DE9: 16 year old, mother tongue English
Dutch:
Dit verhaal gaat over een jonge wie hebt een meisje tas gestolen
en hij rent op straat en de politie hebt hem gezien en hij rent achter hem
om de jongen en de gevangen nis te zetten de politie heeft de jonge gevang
en hij geeft the vrouw zijn tas terug

English:
This story is going about a boy who stole a purse from a lady
and was running on de road to get away and the police spotted
him and ran after him he caught him and gave the purse back
to the lady

Sometimes students gave up on writing in Dutch, as in the following excerpt from DE20 by a 13 year old boy from a *Schakelklas* who claimed that he spoke English and Spanish at home. The Dutch version starts out in Dutch, but in the second line *police officer* slips in as a form of code-switching. In the third line, the Dutch word *totdat* is replaced by the English word *until,* and apparently the student gives up completely on Dutch thereafter.

Dutch:
Een vrouw was aan te lopen en een dief pakt
haar tas en rent weg. En police officer heeft hem
~~gen~~ gezien en rent achter hem until he catch and gave
~~her~~ the lady her bag back.

English:
A Lady was walking and a thief and stole her bag
while he was running a police officer saw him
and run after him until he catch the thief and
return the bag to the lady

In most cases the samples included many spelling mistakes, and no samples were found that had no spelling mistakes in both languages. Even very frequent words like *politie* (samples ED11: 'polietie', ED20: 'politce' and DE31: 'politceagent'), *vrouw* (sample DE11: 'mouw') or *juf* (sample ED7: 'jef') proved to be an obstacle for some of the participants. Sometimes spelling of certain words varied within one text as in the spelling of *lady* in sample DE6 ('ladie' and 'lady').

The writing proficiency in Dutch of the (professional university tracked) HAVO1 secondary school students showed improvement when compared to that of *groep* 7 and *groep* 8 in primary school, and their written language proficiency in Dutch was getting closer to their writing proficiency in English. This does not mean that the language skills of all participants were sufficient. A 13 year old boy in HAVO 1, who reported that he spoke English at home, wrote the following two short stories (sample ED16) in English and Dutch:

"a boy (tief) thiefs a lady handbag and runs away with it
and de police chases de man and after the police catches
de man and de lady was happy"

> "Een jongen boof een vrouw handtas en weg gerend met het
> en de politie heeft achter de man gerennen en de politie heeft
> de man gepakt en de vrouw was verliefd"

Both versions contain a number of features that can also be seen in the writing of *groep* 7 and *groep* 8 students in primary school: many spelling mistakes, no or limited use of punctuation, vocabulary issues and grammatical issues in word order and in verb forms, mixed use of articles, etc. In this example more issues could be found in the Dutch version than in the English version, and this was true for most of the HAVO1 students as in e.g. DE28, DE29 and DE30.

> DE28: 13 years old, mother tongue unknown
> Dutch:
> Een jongen had een meisje handtasje gestolen
> en hij heeft weg gerennen en de politie
> had hem gezien en de politie heeft
> acher de jongen gerennen en wanneer
> de politie de man (catched) had de
> vrouw haar handtasje terug gekrijg
>
> English:
> A boy stole a girl perse and ran away
> with it and the police saw him and
> ran behind him and when the police
> ~~caught~~ catched him the ~~lady~~ girl got het
> perse back.
>
> DE29: 13 years old, mother tongue English
> Dutch:
> Er was een meisje niet vrolijk en een man vrolijk
> en de man ging op weg. De politie ging na hem
> rennen en heeft hem gepakt en de vrouw was
> ~~Wee~~ vrolijk.
>
> English:
> There was a lady upset and a man happy and
> the police came after him and catched him and
> the girl was happy
>
> DE30: 13 year, mother tongue English
> English:
> The lady got rob and the thief ran away. The officer
> saw him, cased him and coath him, then return the
> lady's bag.
>
> Dutch:
> De vrouw was gestollen en de dief rende weg. De officer
> zag hem, was achter hem te rennen en had ze gevangen
> dn de vrouw tas terug gegeven

This group of HAVO-students had gone through an extra year of *Schakelklas* before they started with their HAVO education, but their language proficiency in both English and Dutch was still far below the levels expected upon completion of primary education.

The language skills of first year vocationally tracked students were worse: samples DE3, DE7 and ED8 below were some extreme examples.

DE3 – 14 years old, mother tongue English
Dutch:
man steelt tas rent weg politie
gezien en anchtenna gegaan opgepakt
tas terug geleverd

English:
thief took bag and ran away police
caught sight and started a chase
caught him and returned the bag

DE7 – 15 years old, mother tongue English
Dutch:
"Op drie, Januari een man naam John hebt een tas van een
vrouw, Jane, gestolen. In het zelfde tijd John rent
het politie was achter hem. Het politie hebt hem gevang
en ze geeft het tas terug naar Jane"

English:
On January 3rd, a man name John stoled a bag from
a lady name Jane. While John ran but the police was behind
him. The police caught him and gave the bag back to Jane.

ED8 – 14 years old, mother tongue unknown
English:
the woman bag got stolen en the teaf went runing en de cop
saw him runing ?? en ran after him en he kot him en
den give de women back her bag.

Dutch:
de ~~vrouw~~vrouw heeft stoken en the teaf went runing en de sop
saw him runing en ran after him en he kost en ??
den give de women back her tas

In all groups that took the test, there were students who showed serious deficiencies in writing skills, sometimes in both Dutch and English, at other times in one of the languages more than in the other. There was a high probability that these students would leave the school system without being able to perform simple language tasks in one of or both languages. Examples of these cases are samples ED13, ED14, DE13, DE16, DE26, DE29, DE30, ED4, ED5, DE11, ED7 and ED8 that can be found in Appendix 3.3 to the original report.

ED 13: 12 years old, mother tongue Spanish
English:
the man teaf the lady perst in then he stat to run in he was
runing on the street in the past behind de police in then the policed
see that the man was runing Beacause he teaf the lady perst so
the police run after him trying to ketch to teafer they was
but runing fast in then after the policeman ketch the teafer
in give back the perst to the wonderfull lady in the lady
was hapely ever after [*smiley*]

Dutch:
IK zee een man en een vrouw het man stref the vrouw tas
het man pass acter het policemab in then het police zee the

man rening met de wrouw tas en achter aan the politiman
ren achter het man en then the politi trek het tas van the
man den de politiman (give) het tas to de vrouw en the
vrouw was blij ze zegt thank ye bell for mijn tas!!!
[*smiley*]

ED8: 14 years old, mother tongue unknown
English:
the woman bag got stolen en the teaf went runing en de cop
saw him runing ?? en ran after him en he kot him en
den give de women back her bag.

Dutch:
de vrouwvrouw heeft stoken en the teaf went runing en de sop
saw him runing en ran after him en he kost en ??
den give de women back her tas

4.3.2.6 Conclusions

The goal of the narrative proficiency test was to find out (1) What happens to language proficiency in English during the transitional phase? and (2) To what extent does proficiency in Dutch after the transitional phase match proficiency in English? Our attempts to answer these questions also yielded information on the written language skills of the students in general.

It is clear that the language skills for Dutch and English in *groep* 7 and *groep* 8 of primary school did not meet the requirements set down in the core objectives for Dutch primary education. In any case, the students in *groep* 7 and *groep* 8 performed much better when they wrote in English than when they wrote in Dutch.

The written language proficiency in English of the students in and after *Schakelklas*, and in the third year of vocational education did not show any noticeable progress in comparison to those of the students from *groep* 7 and *groep* 8. The development of their written language proficiency in English seemingly came to a standstill from the moment students left primary school.

The written language skills for Dutch improved between *groep* 7 and the first year of secondary education, but in most cases proficiency in English was still better when the students were in *Schakelklas*. After having gone through the language proficiency program in *Schakelklas* and almost all of the first year of HAVO, their written proficiency for both Dutch and English was still below all of the core targets for mother tongue education in the Dutch primary education system. The same applied to the students in the third year of vocational education.

While administering the tests, the students at all levels demonstrated a collective negative attitude towards Dutch, and students who were expected to write their first story in Dutch postponed the task or started to act out instead of attending to it. This widespread negative attitude toward expressing oneself in Dutch was a source of major concern to all involved in the educational system in Statia. Besides making it extremely difficult to remedy students' grossly insufficient skills in Dutch, it was condemning the majority of students to failure in a system which was insisting on the use of Dutch as the language of instruction and assessment in all classes in secondary school, as well as in many classes at the primary level.

4.4   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations

When the research team was initially approached by the government to conduct this study on the language of instruction in Statia, focus group discussions, interviews and class observations were not part of the research design. This was no accident. Within the dominant discourses of Western academia, these modes of research have often been devalued or even trivialized as somehow 'unscientific' because they are supposedly 'subjective' and 'qualitative' rather than 'objective' and 'quantitative'. As such, focus group discussions, interviews and class observations have often been relegated to the sphere of 'ethnography' or the 'soft' sciences.

Such Platonic binary distinctions as *objective vs. subjective* and *quantitative vs. qualitative* are based on the essentialized and idealized notion of a single truth and a single valid way to know the world upon which the edifice of the hegemonic colonial episteme is founded. By branding the traditional methods by which we as human beings have always known and changed the world as somehow 'unscientific,' the propertied classes legitimize the transfer of our ancestral epistemological powers to a symbolic elite of 'scientific' and 'objective' experts, who have been selected and trained to establish and propagate versions of 'the truth' and 'objective'/'quantitative' methods for determining that truth which correspond to the image and interests of those same ruling classes.

In Statia and other hegemonic societies that have experienced colonialism, religious and scientific institutions such as churches and schools have spent centuries convincing the majority of the population that they cannot really know or change the world. It is this form of (mis-) education that is the target of community based research and critical pedagogy, both of which seek to acknowledge, rekindle and unleash the epistemic powers and critical agency of communities in identifying, describing, analyzing and solving their own problems. The research team realized that the process of critical dialogical praxis that community workers had already set in motion on the island around the issue of language in the classroom would neither be validated nor strengthened by an investigative project which was limited to amorphous site visits and a study of the literature, as envisioned in the original proposal from the government.

We realized that in order to expand the existing spaces for dialogue that had already been opened up by our Statian partners, guided unstructured interviews were an important first step, but the traditional interview format involving one-on-one discussions between an academic researcher and a member of the community would not be sufficient. To subvert the role of the academic researcher as 'expert' and to engage community members as critical thinkers and active problem solvers, it would be necessary to extend existing venues and create new ones where community members could freely interact with one another in critical yet focused discussion. We therefore opted to avoid the traditional interview format as much as possible in favor of focus group discussions, where as many members as possible of a particular community of practice related to the education system, such as teachers

at a particular school, students in a particular class, workers at the office of a particular educational support services provider, etc. could meaningfully interact in the identification, description, analysis and resolution of issues related to the language of instruction in the schools.

As demonstrated in the data presented in the main body of this chapter, these focus group discussions were extremely valuable for us, because it was through the focus groups that we were able to gain a deep understanding of the problems under study through the eyes and words of those who actually face these challenges in their day to day lives. We structured the focus groups as much as possible in such a way as to shift the notion of expertise away from us as academics and toward the real 'experts', if by 'expert' we mean those with the optimal knowledge- and experience-base to identify, describe and solve the problems at hand. The insights that we gained during the focus group sessions were, therefore, not somehow peripheral to our findings and conclusions. In many ways the outcomes of the report were driven by the logic that emerged from these encounters. As research activities, they were not any more 'subjective' or 'qualitative' than any of the others. These activities proved instead to be far more empirically based and accountable to the actual facts on the ground than much of what traditionally counts as 'scientific' research in academia.

It rapidly became clear to us that the processes that unfolded during the focus group sessions whereby all of the different participants engaged in the identification, description and analysis of their individual and collective challenges related to language and education could serve as an invaluable guide in designing the instruments to be utilized in the other components of this study, including the formulation of the questions on the survey, the structure and assessment criteria of the narrative proficiency tests, and the framework that we used for conducting classroom observations.

Instead of dominating the discussions by constantly asserting and performing the authority and expertise traditionally assigned to us as academics, we made a conscious decision to redirect our interventions in the focus group discussions toward two main objectives:

1. Challenging dominant discourses: In the process of acknowledging and valorizing the expertise of community members and their communities of practice, it was necessary for the research team to play a pro-active role in challenging and problematizing the exclusive and hierarchical dominant discourses on research and knowledge when they inevitably emerged in the course of the discussions.
2. Stimulating and inviting deeper and deeper levels of critical reflection, questioning, and analysis of problems, both through critical questioning as well as through the strategic integration of outside knowledges into the discussion.

While communities themselves usually need very little input from outsiders in the identification and description of the problems that they face, when it comes to the analysis of those problems, a more complex situation emerges, where the epistemic violence inflicted by the institutions of hegemony such as the churches, schools, and the media come to the fore. This means that the clarity with which

community members view their problems often becomes a confused and contradictory fog when the time comes to identify and describe the causes of those same problems. The people of Statia could see clearly that the educational system was not performing as well as it should, but when asked about the causes of the dysfunction in the system, the conversation had often degenerated into polemical bickering saturated with a 'blame the victim' discourse in which 'lazy students', 'indifferent parents' and 'unqualified teachers' became easy targets, replacing a deep analysis of problems with the half-baked explanations and jingoistic finger pointing that they had been exposed to through the social media and fundamentalist religious radio and television.

It is at this moment that we as academic researchers can play a crucial role in moving the process of problem analysis forward, first by asking questions designed to invite community members to continuously deepen their assessment of the root causes of their problems and secondly by pointing out that other communities in other places and other times have faced similar problems, and describe how some of those communities have taken control over the analysis and resolution of those problems. As outside researchers, we can provide counter examples from our lived experience to problematize how patriarchy, ethnocentrism and economic inequality are normalized by schools, churches and the media, especially in their idealized depictions of the 'outside world' and the 'real world'. As is evident from the data presented in the rest of this chapter, the potency of critical analysis unleashed by such interventions is palpable and equips community members with the tools that they need to break through dominant discourses and assume control over the analysis of their own problems in their own interests.

It is evident that there can be no meaningful resolution of problems without a profound analysis of the complex historical, political and social factors which caused them in the first place. What is not so evident at first glance, however, is how such an analysis can play a pivotal role in healing community divisions by prying community members loose from discourses formulated in someone else's interests and bringing them back to an awareness of their own common interests based in their own experience. In Statia, what started out as a polarized debate between two entrenched camps of proponents of 'Dutch only' vs. 'English only' education gradually became a united effort by the community to achieve their shared objectives, based on what they themselves knew about how language and education functioned (or were not functioning) on their island.

We now turn our attention to classroom observations. There is no better place to witness how language and education interact than in the classroom itself. For this reason, we insisted that classroom observations be included in this study. Any investigation related to education that makes a claim to accountability to the facts on the ground must at some point witness, describe and analyze what actually happens in class, because that is the place and time where all of the problems under study come to a head and the brutal force of their contradictory and painful impacts on students and teachers are exposed. There is no component of the present study whose results so powerfully re-affirm and attest to the validity of the findings of the others than the classroom observations component. Most of the tendencies that

emerged from the surveys, most of the challenges revealed by the narrative testing, and most of the problems identified, described and analyzed in the focus group meetings were all on graphic display in the classroom. The 'othering', the asymmetrical power relations, and the 'metropole' vs. 'colony' binary that have saturated Statian society over the past few centuries were all unconsciously performed almost as if they were a piece of tragic theatre endlessly played out with the classroom as the stage. For example, as the students passed through the doorway into their Dutch medium of instruction classes every day, they regularly and spontaneously distributed themselves spatially into two distinct groups: a small 'core' group which gathered around the teacher and participated in discussions because they felt comfortable with using Dutch and a much larger 'peripheral' group consisting of all of the other students who gravitated to the margins of the room and participated as little as possible.

4.4.1   Quotations from the Focus Group Sessions and Interviews and Classroom Observation Reports

In the original report upon which this work is based, we opted to organize the focus group and interview data included in this section according to each community of practice (each school, each, agency, etc.) where each encounter took place, with minimum commentary or analysis. This was done in order to underscore the importance of contextualizing the results, as well as to allow the governmental decision makers reading the document to appreciate and interact with the breadth, depth and richness of the data as much as possible without our interpretations intervening in the process. To better suit the purposes of the audience to which the present volume is directed, however, we have opted to re-organize the focus group and interview data by theme and to frame the data with a modest measure of analysis and commentary. The classroom observation reports constituted a separate and independent section of the original report that we submitted to policy makers. In the present volume, however, we have opted to distribute the classroom observation reports together with related quotations from the focus group and interview sessions under the theme where each seems best to fit, in terms of its relevance to the major topics that emerged from our dialogue with the community around the issue of language of instruction in the schools.

The quotations from the focus group sessions and the interview sessions as well as the reports from the classroom observations appear below under following thematic rubrics, each of which corresponds to an overarching concern raised by the community in relation to language policy in education in Statia. Because these data are holistic and dynamic and reflect real-life understandings and real-life behaviors of community members in relation to real-life situations, they are by their very nature resistant to neat categorization. We therefore fully recognize that assigning each to a particular theme runs the risk of giving the false impression to the reader that each should be considered only as relevant to the category under which it has

been included, rather than inviting the reader to appreciate how each represents a multiplex and all-sided view of what was happening in Statian society at the time when it was recorded. Nevertheless, we felt obliged to provide the reader with the following themes, which might serve as some minimal points of reference by which to navigate the incredibly vast scope and profound depth of what was being said and done on the island in relation to language and education in 2013

Theme 1: Systemic Failure of Formal Education in Statia
Theme 2: Dutch as Language of Instruction
Theme 3: Lack of Instruction in English
Theme 4: Dutch as a Foreign Language in Statia
Theme 5: Academic Competence in English and Dutch
Theme 6: Education and Identity
Theme 7: Statia's New Political Status and Education
Theme 8: Teachers
Theme 9: Policy
Theme 10: Tests and Standards
Theme 11: Pedagogy
Theme 12: Materials
Theme 13: Parents' Participation
Theme 14: Education and Society

Under each theme, we have tried as much as possible to give community members a chance to express themselves freely and anonymously concerning issues related to language and education. To ensure anonymity, quotations are identified by the membership of the speakers in the following stakeholder groups: (1) primary school teachers; (2) secondary school teachers; (3) principals, school boards and system-wide professionals; (4) parents; (5) educational and social work agencies; and (6) politicians.

In relation to the subset of focus group sessions and interviews which were held with workers and clients at educational and social work agencies, a special explanatory note is in order here. In the presentation of the data, we have randomly assigned a letter code to each of these agencies, which were providing key services to primary and secondary students in the school system on Statia in 2013. The agencies whose workers and clients participated in the focus group sessions and interviews include the following:

EduPartners In 2013, this agency had a Youth Opportunities Program with a vocational emphasis and links to the secondary school, involving a total of twenty-one 18–24 year-old, mainly female, students. The educational component used English as medium of instruction and included Dutch as a foreign language. Half of the participants were Statian, half were immigrants. The students of the EduPartners program were reported not to be proficient in Dutch, with the ones who did know some Dutch speaking only basic Dutch.

Mega D Youth Foundation The Mega D Youth Foundation was established to help students with homework and to involve them in a range of other projects. As of 2013, it was open on weekdays until 5:00 pm and its after school program included socializing, games, homework, extra lessons, study skills, music, rap, and editing music on laptops. The Mega D sponsored basketball team was training several times a week. Mega D involved youth in planning events such as talent shows and kept students busy during the summer. Certain subjects which were not available at the secondary school were being taught at Mega D, such as engineering, graphic designing, and writing lyrics. By encouraging students' creativity, Mega D aimed to help students to get to know themselves more, and to increase their self-confidence and self-esteem, with the center becoming a second home for some students. An average of 20 students overall were coming to Mega D from the secondary school with about 15 students dropping by every day. In 2011, Mega D was providing some activities for primary school students, but in 2013 primary schools had established their own after school homework programs at the schools themselves.

Educational Care Excellence Center (ECE) ECE was designed to make parents aware of what educational resources were available for their children, and that they had the right to ask for help with their children's special educational needs. In 2013, the staff at ECE reported that many students were coming to ECE because of low performance levels in school, but their problems were social-motivational at root, and they and their parents needed counseling and therapy on issues such as parenting skills. There was a pressing need for parents to gain enough confidence to ask for help. As of 2013, ECE had organized seminars and workshops on the quality of education, child safety and domestic violence, in coordination with other agencies.

Center for Youth and Family The Center for Youth and Family was conceptualized as a community center, providing counseling to families and children, and activities for children. In 2013, counseling was being done both on a voluntary basis and by court order. Besides housing a baby clinic, the center was helping to provide training in social skills at the secondary school, where the teachers were enthusiastic about collaborating with the center on the development of socially relevant content for their students and new approaches to classroom management.

Buzzy Bee Early Childhood Education Center As of 2013, the Buzzy Bee Center was providing child care from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm (with primary school classes normally being scheduled from 7:00 am to 1:00 pm). Because day care did not fall within the remit of the Department of Education, the staff at the center expressed dismay at missed opportunities for coordinating with the primary schools. The Education Center for Excellence had been doing its best to involve Early Childhood Education as much as possible with its work at other levels. For some time, Buzzy Bee had been trying to introduce basic Dutch, but it was finding it difficult to find and retain teachers of Dutch. Of 106 students in the school in 2013, there were no more than 10 Dutch first language students, 4–5 Spanish first language students, and a few Dutch second language students. They had 27 staff, with about

90% of the children on the island coming through the center. With no help from the government, some parents were finding it difficult to pay the fees (0–2 years old: $150/month full day; $80 per month half day; 3–4 years old $125 full day; $75 half day – all including food). The government was not supporting salaries for the center's staff. The majority of children were coming to the center from single parent families, with many children living with extended family members. English was the main language used at the center, but those teachers who had some knowledge of the languages of non-English speaking children were doing their best to use those languages as well.

Probation Office   This office was charged with providing follow-up services to youth and others who had been processed through the criminal justice system.

Senior Recreation Center   By 2013, this center had become a lively venue for daytime activities and interaction among the senior citizens of Statia. Besides being the grandparents and great grandparents of the students in the schools, clients of the center also represented a living memory bank of experience with education in Statia over the past century.

Another special note is in order regarding the parents' focus group meeting. The parents present at the meeting generally agreed that Dutch is a foreign language for the majority of students in Statia, and that the goal of primary and secondary education on the island should be adequate proficiency in both English and Dutch to allow students to go on to further education in either English or Dutch speaking countries overseas. They complained that students were being 'bombarded with Dutch' at the end of primary school and secondary school before they had adequate preparation to handle it. They agreed that the distinction between Statian English and Standard English in terms of form and appropriate context for use should be made from the earliest years of education, with Standard English being used in the schools. The role of pre-school education was also stressed in introducing children to Standard English as a second language and Dutch as a foreign language. Parents reported that they sometimes struggled in helping their children with their assignments when they were given in Dutch, and requested that things be done to bring the school and the students closer to the parents, instead of pushing them apart. They suggested that classes in Dutch be offered for parents.

Many of the parents attending the meeting were very worried about the number of consultants who come to Statia and make recommendations without consulting the population of the island. They were also skeptical about how the recommendations made by the Research Team would be implemented, because in the past, educational reforms had not been implemented very effectively, particularly in the area of coaching teachers and institutions. People were very concerned that the report would be completely ignored by the government and that the voices of the people of Statia would not be listened to. One member of a primary school board who was in attendance was extremely worried about how any transition would be made if a new

policy were implemented. Concern was also raised about the number of parents in attendance at the meeting, but the Research Team made the people at the meeting aware that a high percentage of parents had actually filled out the questionnaire before the meeting.

In the sections that follow, quotations from members of all of the stakeholder groups are included together with the classroom observation reports. Double quoted passages are taken verbatim from the speaker. Single quoted passages have been summarized to protect the identity of the speaker. Passages in square brackets are not quotations, but instead provide information to help contextualize adjacent quotes.

4.4.1.1 Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 1: Systemic Failure of Formal Education in Statia

There was near unanimous agreement among those who participated in the focus group sessions and the interviews that the current educational system was not working and was failing to adequately serve the needs of the island. Many of the stakeholders commented on the failure of the schools to meet the academic performance goals set by the system and expected by the community. There was a general sense of unease, resulting from the pressure being exerted on the schools in Statia to conform to standards set for European Netherlander students in the European Netherlands. Because the consistently implicit, and sometimes explicit, goal of education on Statia has been the preparation of students to achieve the illusive dream of receiving a scholarship to attend university in the European Netherlands, the very low number of Statian students who actually qualify to enter Dutch universities, and the very high proportion of the lucky few who gain entry who fail and return home empty-handed, have compounded feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration. The comments below illustrate how this mis-match between the Dutch educational system and the realities on the island has had a profoundly negative impact on levels of educational achievement and social adjustment in Statia, many of whose citizens associate formal education with failure:

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: '65% of the people in Statia have reading levels that permit them to read newspaper headlines, but little else."

Primary school board member, group session: "Children are on average 3 years behind in Maths and Dutch. More instruments and more expertise are needed to bridge the gap. The effects of the system are particularly felt at the secondary level. Much of the damage has already been done at the primary level. It is not easy to meet the challenge, but it is not impossible."

Primary teacher, school 'D' group session: "Students have a negative attitude toward teachers and consider teachers to be boring. Only 3 of the 19 students in my group will probably succeed, and these are all from non-typical [i.e., Dutch-speaking] families."

Secondary teacher, group session: 'Vocabulary levels among the students are low in both English and Dutch. The level of language proficiency in 4th year VMBO is equivalent to Grade 4 in primary school. This means the students are 6 years behind the levels in the European Netherlands. The students are reportedly 3 years behind when they leave primary school, so that they have only progressed one year during their entire secondary school career.'

Principal, interview: 'The HAVO [advanced] class only has about ten in it, but probably not all of these would have qualified for HAVO in the [European] Netherlands. A lot of incorrect assignment is being done based on testing which is made too easy for the students. Many of the students who are in VMBO-T should actually be at less [advanced] theoretically oriented levels of VMBO …. No failing grades were given to the students who were actually failing. All of these issues need to be addressed.'

Worker or client at agency 'B', group session: "There is a problem with the *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system]. Parents on Statia don't have the resources that [European] Dutch parents have to train their children to take the *Cito toets*. The test comes from the [European] Netherlands and is not adapted to Statia. Students are being pressured by the *Cito toets*. They are not prepared for the *Cito toets* and they fear it. It's difficult for parents to help their children with all of the changes in the curriculum. The *toets* was introduced without a curriculum. The students can't succeed in such a system. It's almost as if the system was designed for the children to fail. We the parents are not allowed to know what is on the *toets*. So we can't help our students."

Primary teacher, school 'D' group session: 'Students can read the words in Dutch but they can't understand what they are reading.'

Parent, interview: 'My child has a very challenging teacher at the secondary school, who requires that all reports be written in Dutch. To meet these requirements, my child has to write all reports in English and then use Google Translate to translate them into Dutch. She/he receives high marks on the reports that she/he translates this way, whereas she/he gets lower marks on reports that she/he tries to write in Dutch from the very start.'

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "The GvP [secondary school] is supposed to give the students a choice of [Dutch secondary school track] profiles, but there are not enough subjects offered to students to really give them a choice. They are limiting our children more and more. A lot of people from overseas do not believe that Statia should have HAVO [a university-oriented track in secondary school]."

Principal, interview: 'Of the … students who go on to Holland for studies each year, [most] fail and have to come back and their families have to reimburse their scholarships.'

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: 'Many who go to Holland have to come back, because they are not ready. Students need a full orientation.'

Worker or client at agency 'C', interview: "There are still many students going to Holland to study. Many think that they will be able to get by with English in the [European] Netherlands. I tell the students that they need to speak Dutch in Holland. They are still very fearful of speaking Dutch. I tell students that it is a great advantage to speak more than one language, not a burden."

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "Children are not being given the educational opportunities that they deserve. They have the intelligence and capacity to excel, but the system is failing them."

Systemic Failure: Primary School Class Observation 13 (Mathematics Lesson in Dutch)

The Curaçaoan teacher was teaching a Geometry lesson in Dutch with material that had not yet been introduced in English. The teacher used facial expressions that invited the children to learn. She/he gave positive feedback to the students and tried to break down the tasks into steps. The teacher had to go into English fairly frequently and many students answered in English. When the teacher explained things in Dutch, some students just shrugged their shoulders. Students could sound out some Dutch from their mathematics books, but had a hard time understanding it.

The students needed a lot of correction in the way that they expressed themselves in Dutch, even though they might actually have had the figures right. So they didn't get the positive feedback that they deserved, because the teacher had to correct their Dutch. As the class went on, a core-periphery dynamic (Dutch home language students participating, everyone else disengaged) developed, with only half of the students actively participating and the others looking at their desks or elsewhere, discouraged. Some students could not participate at all. The non-Statian students seemed to be doing better than the Statians. At the end of the class, the teacher and students sang a hymn in Dutch and prayed in English.

Systemic Failure: Primary School Class Observation 5 (Dutch Reading Lesson in Dutch)

The teacher spoke in English, asking the students to read silently in Dutch. The students were uneasy and not really engaged. None of them seemed to be reading the material. There was so little learning going on in this class that there was nothing much more to include in the observation report.

4.4.1.2   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 2: Dutch as Language of Instruction

Another point of general consensus was that the use of Dutch as language of instruction in the schools was a significant factor contributing to the very high levels of dysfunction in the system. A sense of crisis was palpable in most of the statements made by members of every stakeholder group in this regard. Many felt that while the small minority of students whose home language is Dutch were being catered to,

the great majority were being left behind. Parents whose home language is not Dutch were finding themselves powerless to help their children or, if they could afford it, found themselves obliged to pay for private tutoring services to help their children succeed:

Parent, group session: "Once my son began his education in Dutch and he stopped doing FBE [student-centered Foundation Based Education], he lost confidence and he began to resent Dutch. You could see it in his body language. I can help my child, I can give him the assistance that he needs. But what about the majority of Statian students? Students who once enjoyed learning, now have negative attitudes. When you are judged based on how well you use Dutch, when children begin to fail, when children see that the teacher does not approve of their level of performance, it is not right. Is the school doing its job? I'm having to consider working less hours in order to do the work that GvP [the secondary school] is not doing, but should be doing, with my son. If I can't give my son all that he needs, imagine a parent who doesn't have all of the advantages that I have."

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: "I am worried about what will happen to the children when they get to secondary school with Dutch as the language of instruction."

Systemwide professional, group session: "Students feel very afraid about going to GvP [secondary] school. They are afraid of Dutch [as language of instruction]."

Parent, group session: "My son is terrified of going to the secondary school. He is shutting down. He is begging to get out of Statia. His biggest fear is going to secondary school and not being able to express himself in Dutch."

Secondary teacher, group session: "I see so much creativity in Statian children when they arrive at school, but as the years go on, the lights begin to dim. By the time the students get to secondary school, for all but a few, the lights have gone out. In my opinion, most of my colleagues must share my optimism, otherwise, they wouldn't be teaching. One big advantage to living on Statia is that any change we make in school can have a major impact on the entire society. But teachers have not been encouraged or rewarded for trying to go the extra mile. On the contrary, they are often punished and they stop."

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: 'The secondary school insisted that we do our modules [on sexuality with their students] in Dutch. They said this is a Dutch school, a Dutch island, etc. I told them that the children do not have enough Dutch to express themselves freely. The children need to feel comfortable expressing themselves [when talking about sexuality]. We had a confrontation with the secondary school that day. We can stimulate Dutch, but we need to give the students the space to express themselves in English. It's hard for the students to express their feelings in Dutch. During the sessions, we used English, but we picked out those children who speak Dutch to translate for them into Dutch. But those children don't want to use Dutch. They want to identify with the other English speaking children. Children don't like to speak Dutch. Whenever we do counseling, we speak English only. When a [European]

Netherlander counselor tries to understand Statian, it is very difficult. The [European] Dutch counselor needs a translation. The children master neither Dutch nor English.'

Primary teacher, school 'C' group session: "Students need a good foundation in their own language. The issue of English has to be dealt with. The transition from Statian English [English lexifier Creole] to Standard English has to be made. We are getting too much pressure from GvP [secondary school] and the *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system] to speak more Dutch than English, but it is not working. Parents need to assist their children, but Dutch is preventing them from doing so. Students have to come back to serve Statia."

Primary teachers, school 'B' group session: [Statian Teacher:] "In school, Dutch was forced on us. I was OK with it, but many of my classmates fell behind." [European Netherlander Teacher:] "I agree. My students are really frustrated with Dutch. I'm trying to make the connections between English and Dutch. It is really important to make sure that students have a positive attitude toward Dutch."

Systemwide professional, group session: 'Teachers feel that they are doing damage repair and that tests don't reveal students' true abilities, knowledge, or teachers' true achievements. Teachers must cater to individual needs of students in terms of language. Students are from very different linguistic backgrounds and are performing at very different levels.'

Systemwide professional, group session: "The methods and system don't fit the *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system]. There are 2 systems of teaching in Statia, you have to implement the Dutch one, and the parents expect you to do the English one. The two systems clash. Some pre-group 5 classes are being taught mostly in Dutch, but this is just damage control. Children and teachers are overwhelmed by all of the things that are expected of them."

Secondary teachers, group session: [When asked privately, the great majority of the secondary school teachers, even those from the European Netherlands, thought that English should be the language of instruction at both the primary and secondary levels:] "It is so strange for the children." "The students are being taught in Chinese. Everything is being taught to tests that have nothing to do with the students' reality." "We know one thing for sure, that the system that we have now is not good for the students."

Parent, interview: 'My daughter loved Dutch in the primary school, but … the moment that Dutch was imposed in school as a language of instruction, my daughter's grades in Dutch dropped and she began to refuse to speak Dutch with me. When she got to secondary school where the language of instruction is in Dutch, she began writing her answers in English. Now she avoids Dutch. The secondary school has nothing on paper concerning language policy.'

Parent, interview: "My child did extremely well in primary school, but when he got to secondary school, he was put in a *Schakelklas* [English to Dutch transition class], and he started feeling like a failure and totally lost interest in Dutch. He

now has no interest in studying for the *Schakelklas*, because no matter how hard he tries to study, he always gets a failing mark. For example: he tried hard to learn his 20 vocabulary words per week (often without having the meaning of the words clearly explained). He learned [the verb] *betalen*, then when he got the *toets* [standardized test] on Friday, he knew which sentence to put the word in but he was also expected to conjugate the verb, which he did not know how to do, so he failed the test."

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "Teachers need to start from where the students are, not from the teacher's comfort zone. Policy is one thing and practice is another. Much else is needed, such as backup and follow up. The secondary school has tried to integrate all kinds of new structures, but the results have not changed. What is missing? No one is asking the children what they need. An example of the problem: Spanish is being taught from a Dutch textbook!"

Parent, group session: "The only solution that is left [for parents] is to pay for private tutoring in Dutch. My child had a whole year of a Guyanese teacher teaching him in Math [using English as the medium of instruction]. That whole year I had to pay a private tutor in Math [to teach the Dutch approach to the subject, so that he could pass the standardized test that comes from the European Netherlands]. There are even differences between the English handwriting and the Dutch handwriting. There is no consistency. There are no specific methods and learning lines in place. There are not enough assistant teachers to help, only 3 per school. Once you put a system in place, you have to take the financial constraints into consideration."

Worker or client at agency 'F', group session: "Dutch has been introduced [as a foreign language] too late. It needs to be introduced earlier at the pre-school level. There was a teacher who was teaching Dutch at the preschool but the teacher left. There are financial limitations and difficulties finding someone willing to teach Dutch at the pre-school. The teacher will only be part-time. Most people want a full-time job. They will have to be either part-time or combine it with something else. It would be optimal if a Dutch teacher could be found who could share their time between the pre-school and the primary school.'

Worker or client at agency 'F', group session: "Dutch needs to be taught in a fun way. The Dutch teacher has to teach through play. It is not easy to find a person who can do that." "The Dutch materials available at the pre-school are first language materials."

A small minority of the participants in the focus group and interview sessions, however, defended the use of Dutch as the language of instruction:

Parent, group session: "Because my son has a good foundation in English, he has no problem learning Dutch, even though we don't speak Dutch at home."

Primary school board members, group session: 'Language in education is one of the main issues in Statia: Where did all the confusion start? In my opinion, the confusion started when the FBE [student centered Foundation Based Education] started. We have definitely seen a trend after the introduction of the FBE and the Minister in Curaçao decided that English should be the language of instruction

in Statia. To me, you need to look further back into the history of language in education in Statia. Before, we had a high success rate. After the introduction of FBE, the success rates went down. This was because the students entering GvP [secondary school] were not prepared well enough in Dutch.' 'Before, we had people going to Holland, now we hardly have anyone going on to Holland. Look at the elites from the former Netherlands Antilles: They studied in Holland and became great scholars.'

Parent, group session: "My son is in Group 5, but he seems to have materials that are used at Group 3 level in the [European] Netherlands. My son is getting his lessons in English from a non-Dutch speaking teacher, with Dutch as a subject. He has another teacher for Dutch and another teacher for Math. The American way of doing Math is different from the Dutch way. When the child goes home, the parents will teach the child in the way that they learned it. My point of view is a minority point of view. Most parents want English, because it's easier for them since they don't master Dutch."

Dutch as Language of Instruction: Secondary School Class Observation 16 (Schakelklas [English to Dutch Transition Class] in Dutch)

The European descended teacher spoke very slowly, and articulated very well in Dutch. The teacher was extremely well organized. The teacher had no problem touching students. The class was slow moving, because the teacher spent a lot of time on classroom administration. In working with vocabulary, the teacher used a poster methodology. The teacher attempted to implement a contextualized methodology, using examples from Statia. The sentences were quite complex. The teacher asked the students for examples, and usually only wrote her/his own rather complicated examples on the board, without checking whether the students understood.

The teacher would not allow students to speak in English. When some students tried to use translanguaging to make the connection between a vocabulary word such as *het resultaat* in Dutch and its cognate word 'result' in English, the teacher rejected the use of English. The 5 vocabulary words which were dealt with in the class were: *het resultaat, het ideaal, de aanleiding, bedreigen, aanvaarden*. There was one European descended girl in the class who didn't say a word. The teacher only used English to give the directions for the homework assignment.

There was a dramatic core-periphery effect in the class (Dutch home language students participating, everyone else disengaged). A few girls dominated the class, especially one who had just been to the Netherlands. None of the boys participated in any meaningful way. The teacher did not attempt to check to see if they had understood anything.

4.4.1.3   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 3: Lack of Instruction in English

Participants from all of the groups represented in the focus group and interview sessions saw the lack of instruction in English as a major source of failure, both at the level of individual students, as well as at the level of the entire educational system.

There was a general sense that the various experimental frameworks for the transition from the use of English to the use of Dutch as language of instruction which had been attempted over the previous years had all proved to be inadequate. Particular alarm was expressed at the low levels of academic competence in *both* Dutch and English among most of those who had attended schools on the island. Some expressed concern that there was no place for Statian (Statian English lexifier Creole) in the schools:

Primary teacher, all school group session: "In my more than 40 years of experience as a teacher in Statia, I have found that both primary and secondary students perform much better when English is the language of instruction."

Principal, group session: "We should introduce one language at a time. English is the one that we teach first. Children forget how to tell time in English when they start learning Dutch. Some of the students say things like: '*Teacher, I forgot how to write 'did' in English.' 'Teacher, you are turning us into Dutch freaks!*' There is an influx of Spanish speaking students to the Public School, who are faced with having to learn English and Dutch, especially when they enter the system at higher elementary levels."

Systemwide professional, group session: "Teachers wonder what happens to the students who begin *spelend onderwijs* [playful learning of informal foreign language skills] in Dutch in the lower grades with such enthusiasm, but end up hating Dutch by the time they reach secondary school. Students have very negative attitudes toward Dutch, including those who speak Dutch at home, perhaps because of peer pressure to speak English. Many students just give up when faced with lessons in Dutch. Some refuse to speak Dutch."

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "We have to pay attention as well to English. The transition from Statian [Statian English lexifier Creole] to Standard English needs attention. I got a terrible foundation in English, because we were taught in Dutch. But I never really learned Dutch here in Statia, I learned it later in the ABC Islands."

Secondary teacher, group session: "Many times when I speak English, I need to use academic terms in Dutch. So I never got the chance to learn these terms in my own language before I had to learn them in Dutch."

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: "Sometimes there is tension between GvP [secondary school] and us over which language we should use in the classroom there. We prefer English, but GvP insists on Dutch. I think that if you want to achieve something with these students, they need to be able to express themselves in their own language. I tend to agree with the local teachers in this area. It is unreasonable to expect the children to interact in Dutch at GvP. The students do not master Standard English either. The Surinamese and the local teachers often use English, but some of the Dutch teachers are insistent on using Dutch at all times."

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: "Right now many Statian students don't even master English. They need to get a good foundation in English before

they go on to Dutch. Right now, the system is not working for the majority of the students. The system has to change in a structural way: hardware, not software. There is too much pressure on students to learn Dutch. If students' Dutch is not good enough, they just give up."

Principal, group session: "Statia people speak a 'dialect' [Statian English lexifier Creole], which is based on English. This is our mother tongue. The first challenge is moving from dialect to standard. Children need to know the difference between dialect and English. Even when we get together we use dialect. When we get into formal situations we use standard English. There is no clear-cut decision as to how to deal with dialect. English schooling does not deal with this necessarily. We need to be proud of where we came from. We can start with Dutch at an early age with *spelend onderwijs* [playful learning of informal foreign language skills]. The kids get a more positive attitude toward Dutch when we use the playful method."

Principal, group session: "The children are being faced with two very difficult transitions, one from Statian English [Statian English lexifier Creole] to School English, and one from English to Dutch, and neither of these transitions is being handled well. One necessary step to solving this problem is to make English the language of instruction and to teach Dutch as a required foreign language from the very beginning of primary school."

Parent, group session: 'I speak English with my children. It's good to get *spelend onderwijs* [playful learning of informal foreign language skills] in Dutch. It's easy for me to talk with my children in English. My 'love language' with my children is English. Children need more training in 'proper' English. Guyanese teachers are very strong in 'proper' English. The problem with Guyanese teachers is that they don't know Dutch. They aren't familiar with the Dutch approach to Math. The materials from the US use periods and commas in the opposite way from Dutch when denoting quantities in money. This results in even more confusion.'

Principal, group session: "Dialect [Statian English lexifier Creole] is the basis of my being! Orality is very important in Statia. Storytelling is important for us. Our old folks used to tell us great stories. Many children today don't like reading. Parents need to be supported to help the schools. The community needs to get involved. In our youth, we respected our parents, we didn't answer back. Society has changed because the community is breaking down. When I went to the US, I couldn't cope with the English tests, because my academic skills were in Dutch. We [should] start with English."

Primary teacher, all school group session: 'There is a special need in Statia because the local language is not school English. Some teachers don't use standard English in school. What do we expect from the children? We as teachers need to look at our own competence in language (English and Dutch) before we look at the children's competence.'

Lack of Instruction in English: Secondary School Class Observation 14 (Schakelklas [English to Dutch Transition Class] in Dutch)
The teacher had excellent presence and technique and conducted the entire class in Dutch. She/he was not afraid to touch the students and didn't scold the students in a harsh way. The students did not appear to be very happy or to think that the lesson was very important, but they were responding. Some were acting out, but the teacher was handling it well. The teacher was using a playful approach, insisting on eliciting the different verb forms from the students. Some students, especially those from Dutch dominant backgrounds, knew the forms. The students copied what was on the board in their books. The students interacted with one another in English.

The core-periphery effect was evident to some extent: The two students who expressed positive attitudes toward Dutch sat closest to the teacher and raised their hands the most. The teacher moved around the class in an attempt to bring the periphery in. Most students did not raise their hands, but did try to respond and to write in their books. The teacher encouraged a Spanish speaking student who just arrived in Statia. The student spoke very softly, but often got the answers right. The other student of Dominican Republic descent seemed to have learned English and seemed to have relatively little interest in the lesson, although she/he knew many of the answers. The Creole speaking student from Dominica seemed fairly lost, but still occasionally tried to answer. One Dutch dominant student was bored and acted out a lot in class. The students spelt out the words orally using English letter names.

Brief Interview with Students in this class: Most students felt negatively toward Dutch and wanted less Dutch and more English in school, two felt all right with both Dutch and English. Some thought that Dutch was hard. "I speak English, why are my lessons in Dutch?" No one thought that English should not be used as language of instruction.

4.4.1.4   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 4: Dutch as a Foreign Language in Statia

Participants in the focus group and interview sessions were of the nearly unanimous opinion that Dutch is a foreign language for the vast majority of Students in Statia. Even those who claimed that Dutch may have been a second language years ago for a significant part of the island's population agreed that today most young people in Statia rarely have any exposure whatsoever to Dutch outside of the classroom. Many participants were acutely and painfully aware of the disastrous results to be expected from using a first language approach for teaching a foreign language, as well as from using a foreign language as a language of instruction:

Systemwide professional, group session: "For most children, Dutch is not even a second language. It's a foreign language, and it should be taught as a foreign language."

Worker or client at agency 'F', group session: "Dutch is like icing today in Statia, you really don't need it. You eat your cake, and if you have icing, so much the better. The only time you need it is at school."

Systemwide professionals, group session: 'We are trying to teach Dutch as a first language, which does not correspond to the situation in Statia. We need to teach Dutch as a foreign language.' 'The teaching of Dutch in primary education is disorganized and in turmoil from all of the pressure being put on them by different stakeholders.' 'There is no one method, for each purpose, we use different books. There is no clear learning line for Dutch. When we teach subjects other than Dutch, these should not be taught in Dutch, but instead in English.'

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: "Dutch is a foreign language and the goal in Statia should be to get students academically competent in both English and Dutch. If a student does not want to go on to study in a Dutch speaking country, they should be able to get their subjects in English, with English as language of instruction and Dutch as a subject."

Primary school board member, group session: 'For older generations, Dutch may have been a second language, but not for the present generation.'

Primary teacher, all school group session: "Dutch is a not a first language, but we're teaching it as a first language. This is not fair to the students. We use a European Dutch method [textbook series] which is culturally inappropriate." 'We need a contextualized non-first language Dutch method. The present system is not serving the majority of the students.' "Teaching these children the language (Dutch) is one thing, teaching them *in* the language is another!" "Dutch cuts them off. The children must have space to blossom!"

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: "A basic question needs to be answered: Is Dutch a second language or a foreign language in Statia? Is it a language that Statians are exposed to at an early age or a language that they need to be taught later on as a foreign language?" 'Most Statian children are not exposed to Dutch until they come to school.' "Some parents in Statia can speak Dutch very well, but they never speak Dutch with their children."

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: 'If we look at how people learn a language, they first have to be exposed to that language. In Statia, students are not exposed to Dutch. There is little Dutch in the children's environment. Their first language is English. Once they learn English well, they can go on to Dutch.'

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: 'In Suriname, I was not interested in any language but Dutch. When I came to Statia, I learned English from the environment. Language courses are useless without using the language in the environment. It is extremely difficult to teach Statian students in Dutch. They need to have English as the language of instruction.'

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: 'Dutch is a foreign language on Statia. There is no consistent informal input in Dutch for the average Statian child. The children should get a foundation in Statian [English lexifier Creole] and Standard English before they are expected to perform in Dutch. At GvP [secondary school] students are forced to learn Dutch. Some children like learning Dutch.'

Secondary teacher, group session: "Dutch is a foreign language in Statia. English should be the language of instruction at both the primary and secondary levels."

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: [A Guyanese teacher would have liked to have learned Dutch in Statia, but she did not hear any Dutch spoken on the island:] 'I was told that Dutch is the mother tongue of Statia, but this is not true. When students know their mother tongue well, they can make the transition to another language better. English should be the language of instruction, with Dutch as a strong foreign language.'

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "A language can only be truly mastered as a first or second language when it is used at home, on the media and in the general environment. This is not true for Dutch on Statia."

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "Who is the biggest employer on the island? The children need to master the language that they need for employment. The main language of work on the island is English. So English should be the language of instruction. How many countries speak Dutch? The young people need to speak English for tourism. It is very important for students to master English first. *Spelend onderwijs* [playful learning of informal foreign language skills] is key to teaching Dutch."

Primary teachers, school 'C' group session: "Whatever language of instruction we use, the students need to understand what we are saying. Therefore, English is the logical language of instruction." "Whatever method we use to teach Dutch it should be a foreign language method. It must be adapted to the Statian context."

Primary teacher, school 'C' group session: "I am using first language method [textbook series] that is used in Holland. This is very difficult, because sometimes I have to introduce a topic that the students haven't even had in English yet. I want to go from the known to the unknown. I would like to use a foreign language method instead of a first language method. When I give a lesson, I have to translate everything into English. I am supposed to teach mathematics in Dutch, but I end up teaching it in English. The mathematics *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system] is given in English."

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: "The spoken language for youth in Statia is 'street English' they speak very little Dutch. Statian English [English lexifier Creole] has no place in school and students need to be trained in School English. Students address each other in Statian English."

Secondary teacher, group session: "Dutch is a foreign language in Statia, and Standard American English would be the optimal language of instruction throughout with Dutch as foreign language, with the goal of proficiency in Dutch to 2 years at secondary level in Holland. The highest level students (5 to 8 per year) should do their secondary school in the European Netherlands, or a special program should be created for them in Statia."

Workers and/or clients at agency 'B', group session: 'Students should be given a foundation in their own language before they are expected to perform in a foreign language.' "Students are getting a negative attitude toward Dutch." 'Teachers from Holland are expecting the students to perform in Dutch as a first or second language, not as a foreign language. Most of these teachers aren't trained to teach

Dutch as a foreign language. When the students don't perform, the teachers tell them 'You should know that.' "The students feel like failures, because they are foreign language learners of Dutch, not first or second language learners."

Secondary teachers, group session: 'The students should not be taught in Dutch, which is a foreign language for them. They should be taught in the language that they are more familiar with: English.' "When we teach in Dutch at GvP [secondary school], we are teaching to the walls." "If you start off with Dutch a wall goes up right away. You have to start off in English and then throw in Dutch along the way. Students have not mastered Dutch enough to keep up. Even though I have a good background in Dutch myself, I don't think that Dutch should be the language of instruction. The language should promote learning, not impede it. Dutch has become a major stumbling block to learning."

Primary teacher, all school group session: "It is frustrating and unfair to students to have them learn new material in a language that they do not know. If you are in a foreign country you learn the language quickly, but children in Statia are not exposed to Dutch daily. Statian children are not exposed to Dutch. Spanish children in Statia are exposed to English daily and they learn it. Would more television in Dutch help? Requiring children to learn in Dutch at the secondary level is a major problem. Dutch only medium higher education is an old-fashioned idea. Not all children are able to learn a second language. A lot of people work outside of government and need no Dutch." "First we would like to decide where we would like to be. Then we will know how to get there."

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "The children are being forced to have Dutch as a language of instruction. Students are beginning to fall behind, lose interest, and adopt a negative attitude toward Dutch. It is ridiculous to use a foreign language as a language of instruction. Dutch should be taught as a foreign language."

Secondary teacher, group session: 'The current Dutch only policy at GvP [secondary school] is not working. Only the students from Dutch speaking families get much Dutch before they come to school. But even many of those children usually answer their parents in English. When the children leave school, they don't hear Dutch again until the next day at school.'

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: 'Parents who know Dutch don't speak Dutch to their children. Older people speak Dutch better, because Dutch was a more important language before. A few families speak Dutch at home. These are normally more highly educated parents or [European] Netherlands mixed marriages, etc. Television and everything else is in English. There is no Dutch in the Statian environment, even less than before. There is a need for Dutch children's programs on TV and radio, but it is doubtful that the young people will be willing to tune in to such programs. The young people need more exposure to Dutch. Maybe there should be exchange programs with students from the [European] Netherlands and more entertainment programs from the [European] Netherlands. Previously, the HAVO 5 class would take a trip to the [European] Netherlands. That was good. Summer camps in Holland would be good. Students need more orientation to prepare them for going abroad.'

Systemwide professionals, group session: 'The most important thing is to teach Dutch as fun. Students don't see any sense in learning Dutch. Parents say that they can't help their children with school because they don't know Dutch. Many parents who know Dutch refuse to speak Dutch to their children. Statia is an English community, not a Dutch community. Even [European] Dutch teachers see the need for English first.' "The Dutch and English ways of teaching collide!"

Parent, group session: 'My daughter is in Group 4 with a [European] Dutch teacher. She gets Dutch in school and now she's teaching her father. Children pick up languages so quickly and they love it. The students are also singing songs in Papiamentu. The children even pick up Papiamentu 'attitude'. But eventually, the excitement disappears. As they go on, the excitement and enthusiasm wane. Why? One reason is that there is no Dutch in the environment to reinforce the Dutch learned in school.'

Dutch as a Foreign Language: Primary School Class Observation 11 (Science Lesson in Dutch and English)
The Curaçaoan teacher used a mixture of Dutch and English, with fluent code switching. Students were eager to participate. Some answered in English and others answered in Dutch. The teacher asked the students to read a book during the lesson, but instead they started filling out the workbook game pages that she/he had given them for homework. She/he said that they love to do the fun things, but that most were not ready to do the academic things in Dutch.

4.4.1.5   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 5: Academic Competence in English and Dutch

Despite their negative experiences with Dutch being used as a language of instruction and with Dutch being taught as a first rather than as a foreign language, a significant majority of those who participated in the focus group and interview sessions felt that Statian schools should teach high levels of academic competence in both English and Dutch. In the past, the debate concerning language of instruction in the schools had taken place within a zero-sum framework, where the options were limited to academic competence in Dutch versus academic competence in English. Through the dialogue process initiated by our networks of partners on the island as well as through our own interactions with the island community, this polemic had shifted to consensus around a system that promotes academic competence in both languages:

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "We are hopeful that the language issue will be resolved: This is the last chance that we have to really get it right. For the first time, we are hearing that the decision doesn't have to be either English or Dutch. The debate has been so bitter and polarized. Now we realize that we can make our children competent in both English and Dutch. We have

lived this. We know what's going on. Most of the consultants who come assume that we don't know anything. I've seen so many consultants and so many reports. The last 3 or 4 years has been even more consultant-intensive. But we don't know who is coordinating the process, the research, the implementation."

Parent, group session: "Parents need to assist. They need to speak more Dutch at home and go to the library. The language of instruction should be English at the beginning with Dutch as a second language from Kindergarten. Everyone wants the children to excel in both languages and in school in general. Youth wants everything fast. Many don't want to do longer term studies. Statia has produced doctors, lawyers, nurses, all careers that involve long term study. Our children give up. They don't have the push, they don't stand up and fight. Before we used to leave the island at 12 years old [to attend secondary school on other islands], we had to fight and struggle. The language barrier makes students give up. Statia is not producing enough professionals."

Primary teacher, all school group session: 'In secondary school teachers are grading children on Dutch rather than the subject matter. Children need to be encouraged, not shut down. Children need to be taught in the language in which they are the most comfortable. But they should have the opportunity to learn Dutch once they get the basics in English.'

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "If you master your own language first, it is much easier to master another language."

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "We want children to love Dutch. We need to play in Dutch, but this means that Dutch cannot be used as the language of instruction. Our main goal is to take advantage of multiple intelligences. We have to approach learning from as many different directions as possible. We need to use the outside. We have all of the space outside. We should use it. The students need a change of environment."

Worker or client at agency 'G', group session: [A person from the Dominican Republic, who pointed out that the Spanish speaking community needs Dutch courses to obtain the Dutch nationality, to help their children with their homework and to become integrated members of the society:] "Because Statia is part of the Netherlands, you need to know Dutch."

Politician, interview: 'In government employment, no knowledge of Dutch would be a handicap, but for 90% of government positions, there are equal opportunities for those who only master English. On the other hand, Dutch is the only language used for all official government documents, unless the information is strictly local.'

Politician, interview: 'Children today master neither Dutch nor English, especially in writing. Some feel that lessons should be in English, then everything should be translated into Dutch. Learning should be contextualized. English should be the language of instruction and Dutch as the second language. Right now, Dutch lessons are translated back to English. That is backwards, we should be going from English to Dutch. Dutch should be obligatory. Because we speak English, we have to start with English. We need to master our own language.'

Principal, group session: "Dutch is important for those who want to go on to study in Holland (at many different levels) Dutch is important for career purposes also. Most higher level government posts require high levels of Dutch."

Secondary teacher, group session: 'Students should have the right to opt for the language of education that they want. I believe that children should have a choice: opting for Dutch education or English education. English education is much more expensive than education in the European Netherlands. This system will require additional materials and teachers.'

Academic Competence in English and Dutch: Secondary School Class Observation 17 (Social Studies Lesson in Dutch)

The European Netherlander teacher used mainly Dutch, but did use English when important information was being communicated. The students used more English than Dutch. The students were practicing for a test. The students seemed to know the material. The teacher had a good, positive and playful approach, was not afraid to touch the students, was moving around the room to check to see that all the students were doing their work, and was attending to students with trouble understanding.

Academic Competence in English and Dutch: Secondary School Class Observation 18 (Science Lesson in Dutch, Highest Tracked Group of Secondary School Students)

The teacher used Dutch to teach, but used some English as well. The students were responding. They were also acting out a bit, but the teacher handled it well. Among themselves, they spoke in English. The students responded to questions in English. The teacher spoke mainly Dutch, the students spoke mainly English. When the teacher gave instructions in Dutch, the students sometimes asked one another what the teacher meant. One student went immediately to work on his homework, while the others spent a lot of time getting started. Eventually, all of the students settled down and began to do the assignment.

The teacher began to do the assignment with the students. The students were able to read the problems from the workbook out loud to the teacher. The students were engaged in the lesson and all worked together to solve the problem. The teacher took the students step-by-step through the problems. Not all of the students replied in Dutch. They had the correct answers, but they didn't say them in Dutch. After the workbook lesson was finished, the students went on break.

Brief Interview with Students in this class: 85% of the students clearly expressed a preference for English as a language of instruction over Dutch, but still valued Dutch as an important language to learn. They would prefer a system where they could choose which language they want to take their subjects in, according to where they would eventually like to go to do their further studies. Some were negative toward Dutch, one or two were positive, the rest were indifferent. Most had a favorable attitude toward English, but some were indifferent to both languages.

4.4.1.6   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 6: Education and Identity

Many participants in the interview and group sessions expressed very strong feelings about what they perceived as a lack of self-esteem and assertiveness among Statians, which a number of them attributed at least in part to the education system on the island. Statian language, culture and history were reported to be largely absent from the classroom, and those few teachers who tried to include elements of these and other constituents of Statian identities in their teaching found themselves obliged to create their own curricula and materials to do so. This lack of affirmation in the schools of what it means to be a Statian was seen to be contributing to social problems on the island, particularly among young people:

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "Not letting the children have their home language as their language of instruction is considered by people from the United Nations as a form of child abuse."

Worker or client at agency 'G', group session: "The dumbest Dutchman here on Statia thinks that he is smarter than the smartest Statian. The stupider they are the smarter they feel. I can count on one hand people from the [European] Netherlands who I can speak with as an equal. Statians have a hard time expressing how they feel about this."

Primary school board member, group session: "The students' identity is being lost. They need to learn about their own language and culture. How can you be proud of yourself when you don't know who you are? In Suriname, all of the history books were changed to be relevant to Suriname. In Statia, we are always learning about someone else's language, culture, history. People don't know who they are. If our youth cannot find themselves or see themselves in their schooling, they will turn to drugs and other escapes from their pain."

Primary school board member, group session: "Statians have a submissive attitude toward foreigners and foreign things. Are the teachers expecting the students to accommodate to them, or are they accommodating the students?"

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "A major reason for underperformance in students is the language. A major problem on Statia is that children lack self-esteem. Their language and culture are demeaned. They feel bad about themselves. [On the nearby island of] Saba students are achieving higher levels in school because they use English in the classroom."

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "The *Schakelklas* [English to Dutch transition class] had a discriminatory concept behind it. The sentences that the students practice sometimes put the [European] Netherlands in a positive light and Statia in a negative light. When they finally introduced English at GvP [secondary school], they said that Statian English was bad. So the students continued to have their identity under attack. Many Dutch teachers are being very disrespectful."

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: 'There is a big brain drain out of Statia. People with higher education stay off island. Therefore, we need to import professionals. But when they come here, they often have a negative attitude toward Statia. In [the neighboring island of] Saba, the teachers are from English speaking countries in the Caribbean and elsewhere.'

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: "Statians are confused, there is still even debate about what is the first language in Statia, whether Dutch is a second language or a foreign language, etc. Fear is also a factor here. European Netherlanders are fearful of English threatening their identity. Statians are afraid of Dutch threatening their identity. Some parents believe that if their children are not 'doing Dutch;' in school, something must be wrong."

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "Today I was teaching about the Caribbean. The children don't even know what the Caribbean is. They were never taught their own geography, their own history. We learn all about Europe, not about ourselves. Students need to learn about their own. We need learning lines that start with where the students are, with what they know, not with Europe. We are trying to develop learning lines that start with Statia." "We are being made to feel that our language must be put aside in favor of another language."

Primary teacher, school 'C' group session: "I try to teach Statian history, but there are no textbooks. I have to make up my own materials from books that I find in the library, etc. There is no set program for any areas except [Dutch] language and mathematics."

Primary school board member, group session: "The use of Dutch is excluding the children from Dutch society, rather than including them. The Curaçaoans had to fight for the recognition of Papiamentu. It is now Statia's turn. If you are strong in your own language, you will have the best chances to master Dutch."

Systemwide professional, group session: "The tests and the materials are not geared toward Statian students and their reality."

Parent, interview: "My child had an oral presentation to make in Dutch at the secondary school. She/he asked her/his teacher if she/he could talk about African history, including the slave trade, Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, and end the presentation with Obama. She/he practiced many times, and she/he had the presentation down fluently. After presenting the report, she/he came home and told me that: 'A Dutch student talked about his bicycle, and he left many things out of his report, but he got an 8, and I got a 7. The teacher said that my report should not be about African history.' But this theme is one that is actually taught to the students in Group 8 in some schools as Black History."

Primary teacher, school 'D' group session: "Teachers wonder if school should be preparing students for life in Statia or for further studies in the Netherlands. Teachers feel a lot of pressure."

Principal, interview: "The students need to know their history. Outreach to parents and grandparents is very important, parents need to be on board. It is important to make students realize that you are there for them. Many children need

confidential attention. Children need to know that you love them. When they leave you, you need to maintain contact with them."

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: "The way that language is being handled in the schools today is unsatisfactory and creates a lot of resistance. Maybe only 5% of the children will be able to do anything in Dutch in their lives. More children should go to neighboring islands for further education. There is a general resistance to the Dutch and Dutch language, because people feel that it is being imposed on them. People here have a history of people telling them what to do. People speak of 'Statian identity' but in fact the island has an incredibly diverse and mobile population. For many on the island, the church perhaps provides a sense of identity."

Primary school board member, group session: "Children have to get academic English. English must be the main language of instruction. But Dutch should be the second language of instruction, not replacing English, but alongside English. We need to meet the children with what is close to their heart. Language is emotion." "English needs to be strengthened. Academic English has to be taught more and more systematically. The English exam is in Dutch! Why are Spanish speaking children able to cope with English and Dutch? It's because they have a firm foundation in their own language. We are hurting the children."

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: 'Children coming from primary school feel lost at the secondary level …'.

Secondary teacher, interview: 'Lack of motivation and success is a main factor. The whole system must focus on attitude and motivation in education. Most students have average or above average intelligence. Focus needs to be on ambition and on why the students are here in school. Motivation is key …. Students should be allowed to do extra educational activities in place of class work.'

Education and Identity: Primary School Class Observation 7 (History Lesson in English)

The students were reading at a high level. The Surinamese teacher was using partly creolized English to correct and re-affirm students' reading aloud. The reading was about Statia, and contextualized. The teacher brought up the role of slavery in constructing the Dutch Reformed church building in Statia. She/he tried to get the students to picture how hard it was to build the church. All of the steps in the building process were imagined by the students.

The students were very lively, but the teacher was trying her/his best to make them speak one at a time in a very respectful, firm, but patient way. The teacher always repeated and reviewed what the students said. The students wrote down a story on a piece of paper about what they would tell a visitor about the Dutch Reformed Church on Statia. Some students wrote long stories. The teacher asked an individual student to pretend to show a member of the research team around Statia. The student did a great job, without even consulting her/his story. Other students performed the task successfully as well.

The students took recess, then after recess, they came back to class and continued to write their stories. The students finished their stories, with the teacher going around the room to give them individual help when needed. Finally, the teacher took the students to the school library to read books for the few minutes left in the class session.

4.4.1.7   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 7: Statia's New Political Status and Education

A new chapter in Statia's long colonial history began with the general referendum on political status held on the five constituent islands of the Netherlands Antilles on 10 October 2010 (this referendum is therefore popularly known as '10/10/10'). In that referendum, Curaçao and Sint Maarten voted in favor of a more distant and autonomous relationship with the European Netherlands, similar to that which had been granted to Aruba, the former sixth member of the Netherlands Antilles, some decades previously. Bonaire and Saba voted for a closer relationship with the European Netherlands as municipalities of the country itself. Statia was the only one of the five islands that voted in favor of preserving its place in the Netherlands Antilles, but, because the results of the referendum on the other islands logically entailed the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles, it was decided by governmental officials and politicians that Statia would become a municipality of the Netherlands alongside Bonaire and Statia, thus nullifying the result of the referendum on Statia. Many participants in the interviews and focus group sessions linked this political crisis to the educational crisis on the island. They reported a growing sense of resentment toward the increasing influence of the Dutch government over life in Statia and the increasing presence of people from the European Netherlands in positions of authority, including headmasters and teachers. They asserted in some cases that this resentment was becoming generalized in the form of a resentment toward all things Dutch, including Dutch people and their language. Among the flashpoints identified for this resentment were the schools, the secondary school in particular:

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: "With 10/10/10 [10 October 2010, the date of the referendum after which Statia became a municipality of the Netherlands] there has been more Dutch influence at different levels, and people are reacting more negatively toward the [European] Netherlands and Dutch as a language. Once when I went to address a class at GvP [secondary school], I was forced to speak Dutch. This made me nervous. I had to make sure that I didn't make a mistake. Statians often feel nervous speaking Dutch, even if they speak Dutch well. People feel that the European Netherlands is coming to take over Statia."

Principal, group session: "The sentiment now is anti-Netherlands and more and more anti-Dutch language, which should not be the same. In 2015, the status of the island is to be reviewed, with some people talking about independence."

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: "Many Statians told me that they would not attend a 10/10/10 [the date of the referendum after which Statia became a municipality of the Netherlands] event because it was nothing to celebrate. These political tensions affect the schools. New rules and policies that have come into effect since 10/10/10 have made peoples' attitudes more negative. When a Statian goes to St. Martin, they are waived right through immigration, but when Statians come home, they are made to wait in line to check their passports. The new duties on things that we buy for personal use are not fair. For people on the island, there is no way to get these things except for off island."

Secondary teachers, group session: 'There is a very strong negative attitude toward Dutch people and language.' "A big reason for the resistance to Dutch is the feeling among Statians that the Dutch are taking over. Many students transfer the resentment of their parents to the school. This fear and resentment has really increased since 10/10/10 [the date of the referendum after which Statia became a municipality of the Netherlands]. On the talk shows all the calls are about the Dutch imposing their systems on Statia. When students hear these things at home, they bring those attitudes to school. Many students who actually have Dutch at home, do not speak Dutch when they play. They also have a negative attitude toward Dutch."

Worker or client at agency 'C', interview: "Since 10/10/10 [the date of the referendum after which Statia became a municipality of the Netherlands] there are increasingly negative attitudes towards Dutch."

Secondary teacher, group session: 'Now more than ever, GvP [secondary school] is being considered a 'Dutch island' and the terrace behind the kitchen is often considered a 'Dutch space' where non-European Netherlanders do not feel comfortable. The European Netherlanders have closed ranks.'

Worker or client at agency 'C', interview: "Right now, there is a major problem in the schools. The Dutch teachers are separating themselves from the Caribbean teachers. The Dutch teachers are afraid of the students. The teachers see students fighting and touching one another in an inappropriate way, but they don't correct them. The teachers are not keeping track of which students are coming to school and which students are not coming to school. The major problem at the moment is respect."

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: 'In the ABC islands, Dutch is more important than in Statia, because here English caters to peoples' needs. Maybe students can be split up into those who want to school abroad in English and those who want to school abroad in Dutch. Of course, in the [European] Netherlands, many university courses and textbooks are in English. People are reacting against the perceived imposition of Dutch since 10/10/10 [the date of the referendum after which Statia became a municipality of the Netherlands]. Most students give up or resist learning Dutch. There is a need to have English as a basis before going to Dutch. It would be better to introduce Dutch as a foreign language subject, but as a special foreign language subject that starts at *kleuterschool* [early childhood education] as *spelend onderwijs* [playful learning of informal foreign language skills].'

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: 'Local people are upset that the [European] Netherlanders have established separate spaces on the island, for example Mazinga on the Bay and the terrace at GvP [secondary school] school. Non-European Netherlanders feel very reluctant to come into these spaces.'

Systemwide professional, group session: "Students whose parents speak Dutch at home don't speak Dutch in school and don't reply to their parents in Dutch. Many students in Statia hate Dutch because they feel that it's been forced on them. They have a negative attitude toward Dutch. They are expected to perform at too high a level in Dutch and they fail. The children are suffering for all of this."

Secondary teacher, group session: "The focus up to now has been on what the Inspectorate wants and not on what is best for the students. Statia should demand that things should be done differently here than in the [European] Netherlands. I know people who went to this school years ago, and before they felt it was their school. Now, people seem not to feel part of the school in any way. If there is a school function, no local parents attend, only [European] Netherlander parents attend. The school is not well integrated into the local community. Some parents consider the school to be a 'Dutch island' on Statia. Many parents therefore don't want to hear anything about the school."

Primary school board member, group session: "Some teachers see teaching as just a source for pay. They just say that the program must be in Dutch and that's it. Teachers need to go the extra mile to meet the children where they actually are, instead of where they want them to be. Frustration is building up and children develop a very negative attitude towards the Dutch language. We miss Caribbean teachers."

Secondary teacher, group session: "Students perceive Dutch negatively because of the way the 10/10/10 [the date of the referendum after which Statia became a municipality of the Netherlands] transition has been handled. The transition to English as the language of instruction at the primary level in the 1990s was not handled well."

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: 'Expatriates and expatriate teachers tend to adopt a negative attitude toward Statia and by extension to their students. The highest quality teachers from overseas do not come to Statia. Many come to Statia to escape their problems in the [European Netherlands]. There is no orientation for [European] Netherlander teachers before or after they come. There is a danger that there will soon be educational apartheid on Statia. Two [European] Dutch teachers were trying to start their own school for their children.' "Statian people are open people, but has this openness been taken advantage of?"

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "Expatriates started to put their children in Statia Terminal School [the English medium private school at the oil terminal, which employs many expatriate workers]. The ministry stopped this: now the school is only for Terminal workers. Teachers are being forbidden to use English in secondary school class. Before, children learned to move between languages and cultures. They had a stronger foundation. Too many times, Statians have just let things happen to them. They haven't taken control over their destiny. Things are changing rapidly. Students' needs are different. We haven't changed to meet these needs."

Secondary teacher, group session: 'Before we had more links to other Dutch speaking islands, but now we are alone in the former Dutch Windward Islands [Sint Maarten, Saba and Statia] in using Dutch. I feel that there is a negative 'vibe' going around about Dutch. We should not make a decision based on that feeling. I really see the negative attitude in the way the students speak about Dutch. The students relate better to African descended teachers and respect them more than they do the European descended teachers.'

Secondary teacher, group session: 'The negative attitudes toward Dutch increase as the students go on in secondary school.' "There is a big difference between the enthusiasm for Dutch before and now. The enthusiasm has gone way down. Dutch is not understood. When we were growing up, we heard more Dutch in our environment. There is a major problem, because our results are going down. The media are mostly in English now, there is less Dutch input."

Primary teachers, all school group session: "Society has changed. Children are much more vocal than before. They don't just accept things as adults say them. Many children say that they don't like Dutch, [they say:] 'It's not my language.' Children have a negative attitude and a block toward Dutch. Some children refuse to respond to teachers in Dutch, even though their answers are correct. Teachers lack guidelines as to how to deal with students who know the material but not the language. Too many persons think that you can only get a higher education through Dutch."

Parent, group session: "Many people have criticized me for speaking Dutch with my children here in Statia, but I want them to be able to cope with Dutch in Holland. My older son is an *echte Nederlander* [real Dutchman] and he wants to go back to the [European] Netherlands. But when he is in school, he speaks Dutch very softly, because he doesn't want to stand out. He is not proud of it. I tell him to be proud of speaking Dutch. In Holland, he was afraid to speak English because of peer pressure. My younger son is speaking more English now. A minority of Statian parents are also trying to stimulate Dutch in their homes with their children. Many students get good grades in Dutch in primary, but do badly in Dutch at secondary level, so they begin to lose interest in Dutch."

Statia's New Political Status and Education: Primary School Class Observation 9 (Dutch Lesson in Dutch)

Some students were answering, but many were acting out. The European Netherlander teacher had to discipline the students, and she/he did so in English. There was so little learning going on in this class that there was nothing much more to include in the observation report.

Statia's New Political Status and Education: Primary School Class Observation 3 (English Lesson in English)

The students participated actively in the English lesson. They were getting lots of positive feedback from the Guyanese teacher. The teacher was asking lots of questions and all of the students were answering. The teacher was interpreting and what the students wanted to say, rephrasing it when necessary. The teacher used lots of smiles.

The teacher began to list all of the points being made by the students about what successful communication is. There was not even enough space on the blackboard for all of the excellent points being made by the students. There was no core-periphery effect (Dutch home language students participating, everyone else disengaged) in this classroom. The students were performing on a very high level. All of the students were eager and raising their hands. There were no students acting out. The teacher gave the students lots of feedback. The teacher was strict, but the students didn't resent it.

4.4.1.8   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 8: Teachers

As the key intermediaries between the educational system and the students it is supposed to serve, teachers were often mentioned in the interview and focus group sessions. A general sense of alarm was evident concerning the high numbers of European Netherlander teachers on the island, most of whom had been recruited on short term contracts with little or no orientation, and their resulting high levels of culture shock, burnout and turnover. Comments were made about how biases against the hiring of teachers and trainers from the Caribbean region were built in to the Dutch educational bureaucracy, whose power over education policy and practice on the island had been increasing over the previous years, especially since the referendum of 10 October 2010:

Primary teacher, school 'D' group session: 'If the language of instruction becomes English, what will we do with all of the European Netherlands teachers?'

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: "We need to acknowledge the value of Statian English in the schools and in Statian society in general. I have been trying to do this for many years, but it has been an uphill battle." 'Before 2000, teachers from English speaking countries were usually not allowed to come teach in Statia. The first such teachers came from St. Kitts and Guyana. They faced some discrimination. Presently, it seems like these English dominant teachers are being made to feel that they are less qualified than the Dutch dominant European Netherlander teachers who are coming into Statia in greater numbers now.'

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: "There is no formal orientation or training for European Netherlander teachers before we come to the island. When the School Boards do interviews in Holland or by teleconference or Skype, they give only a few bits of information about Statia to the interviewees."

Worker or client at agency 'G', group session: 'Right now the teachers come here from the [European] Netherlands with no idea of how life is in Statia. A lot of [European] Netherlanders come here and see Statia as a 'backward place in Africa.' [European] Netherlanders are shocked to see people driving in cars. They think that they are coming to 'help these poor natives.' They have the best intentions, but the wrong ideas. They come like the missionaries before. Some

[European] Netherlanders who were here before, come back and still think that things are as they were before. Maybe a six year contract would be better than a three year contract for expatriate teachers.'

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: 'Teachers from the [European] Netherlands experience much difficulty upon arrival in Statia. They need more solid preparation, at least to make them aware of cultural differences and the special variety of English spoken on the island.'

Primary teachers, school 'D' group session: 'There is absolutely no orientation for European Netherlands teachers coming to Statia." [One of those teachers said that she/he came to Statia to be challenged and in fact, after 7 months, she/he had complied with all of her/his professional responsibilities (paperwork, testing, etc.) and she/he was bored.] 'There seems to be a consistent pattern of placing European Netherlands teachers in the schools, because Statians don't have the necessary qualifications.' "Dutch teachers tend to just find their own independent solutions when they find themselves in a difficult situation, so everyone ends up doing their own thing."

Secondary teacher, group session: "Orientation for new teachers coming from the [European] Netherlands is definitely insufficient. The school is putting into place some things to deal with this. New teachers are assigned a 'buddy', will be given a tour around the island, etc."

Systemwide professional, group session: 'European Netherlander teachers are ill prepared and many regret coming here. They receive no orientation. Some students say that the teachers who come to Statia from the European Netherlands are garbage. Some of these teachers have a negative attitude toward Statian students and toward the island in general. These teachers call the students 'lazy' and 'stupid."

Principal, group session: 'There is a problem with turnover for [European] Netherlands teachers, who usually come to Statia for 3 year contracts. As soon as the teachers are oriented, it's time to go. There needs to be an orientation program for these teachers. They should know more English and should be more aware of Statian culture. They have expressed a desire to know more. There is a need to promote Statian teachers. There is a need for incentives for them. Salaries are lower in Statia than in the [European] Netherlands.'

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: 'There needs to be a proper orientation for teachers coming from the [European] Netherlands. We used a buddy system. You could see their faces lose their enthusiasm their first year in September and October. Teachers from Holland need to have less pressure during their first years. But they have to admit that they need help first. Many teachers who come to Statia from Holland are running away from problems there.'

Worker or client at agency 'B', group session: "Teachers from Holland get no orientation before they come to Statia. The school boards should address this problem. Often, teachers from Holland don't know how to relate to Caribbean students. Before, school was fun. Even the Dutch teachers mixed with us. When you went to school, you could expect a touch and a kiss and a hug. People shared

the food that they cooked, everything. Since 10/10/10 [the date of the referendum after which Statia became a municipality of the Netherlands], the teachers from Holland do not mix with Statians. They stick to their own group. As a parent, I am really concerned about having my child attend GvP [secondary school]. The teachers from Holland separate themselves, use their own beach, etc."

Primary school board member, group session: "We also have to look at the teachers. For years we had no *Inspektie* [Inspection], now we do. During those years, maybe the quality of the teachers went down. We are trying to get school coaches and other forms of support for our teachers. We have told our teachers, especially those that come from Holland, that they need to speak Dutch. But almost all of the teachers are speaking English. We have a problem with teachers from the English speaking countries. They don't know our Dutch system. They don't know any Dutch."

Primary teacher, all school group session: 'Various teachers from different places come to Statia. Teachers need to be vetted for proficiency in English. Many applicants from abroad may not be aware of the language situation in Statia.'

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "Caribbean teachers are better integrated into the local community. They go to church, etc. Some Dutch teachers have lived on Statia for a long time and they have been integrated into the community and they treat parents better [than do other European Netherlander teachers]."

Primary school board member, group session: 'Teachers are lacking opportunities for in-service and other training. Teachers are stuck in old ways of thinking. Teachers don't have coaching, backup, training, etc. Training that is available is sometimes not appropriate for Statia. There is a lot of local expertise in the Caribbean, but Statia has no links with other islands here, mainly because Statia can only bring in Dutch certified trainers. Non-European Dutch trainers can be used, but many may not be aware of this. Regional trainers who speak English will be able to connect better to Statian students. The advertisements for teachers in Statia are in Dutch and probably many English speaking teachers do not apply.'

Primary teacher, school 'D' group session: 'There is no consistent plan for teaching Dutch. Each teacher seems to be doing their own thing. Teacher turnover is very high with no archive or institutional memory. The Dutch method is inappropriate and not contextualized. Teachers have to make their own materials. Students are at different levels, classes are divided.'

Worker or client at agency 'G', group session: 'Many teachers are frustrated with the students' and parents' attitudes. Teachers are being disrespected, and therefore they lose motivation. Some people like teaching, they're not just doing it for the salary. They're doing it from the heart. When they don't get encouragement, they feel abused.'

Teachers: Primary School Class Observation 8 (English Lesson in English)

This was a relatively large class. The chairs needed to be lined up strictly into rows for a test. During the review in English, students answered questions with

enthusiasm, and were eager to raise hands. The students were not afraid to make mistakes. There was no core-periphery effect (Dutch home language students participating, everyone else disengaged).

Students had a fair knowledge of the material. Students read out the directions. Their reading levels and comprehension were good. The Guyanese teacher gave individual help to students, and they responded well to her/him. She/he had the right facial expressions and body language to make the students feel comfortable. She/he was not afraid to touch them and they were not afraid to touch her/him. There were no signs of students not having their affective needs satisfied.

Most students were working hard on their tests. Some had a hard time settling down, but eventually everyone attended to the test. In general, the students were able to answer many questions on the test, even the ones who initially found it hard to sit still. The teacher gave books to the students who finished before the others to read silently. Some who finished quickly were also given other class work to do silently. Most students were able to sit quietly and read. After the test, the teacher asked the students about the reading assignment.

4.4.1.9   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 9: Policy

Regarding educational policy, high levels of wariness and weariness were expressed by members of all of the different stakeholder groups who participated in the interview and focus group sessions. Virtually none of the participants was of the opinion that policy decisions had been made in a coherent way that reflected the needs of the island and its young people. Most of those with appreciable years of experience in the educational system in Statia complained of having lived through a constant barrage of major policy shifts, all of which seemed to have been driven by the prevailing political winds in the European Netherlands, and none of which had been implemented in a systematic and consistent way.

As a result, principals and teaches reported finding themselves in multiple situations where they were either obliged to improvise to make up for the lack of clear policy guidelines, or they were obliged to allow instruments imposed by the European Netherlands, such as the standardized *Cito* tests, to determine the *de facto* educational policy and practice in the schools. Many participants compared what they considered to be the dire situation on Statia with what they considered to be the more stable and effective policy environment on the neighboring island of Saba, which had opted for English as the language of instruction and Dutch as a strong foreign language in its schools.

Many stakeholders were under the erroneous impression that there was only a language policy for secondary and not for primary, whereas the opposite was true. There was also the false impression that the primary schools opted for English in Cycle One then for a transition from English to Dutch in Cycle Two, and that the policy was Dutch as language of instruction in secondary school. In fact, there was

no written language policy for secondary school at the time, while the official policy for primary education stated that both cycles in primary were supposed to use English as language of instruction:

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: "We face the challenge of trying to implement a project that is part of the Dutch government, but because of our experience, we have to constantly find ways around the system, to make it work here. We should be able to get the support that I need to work in a different way in this very different situation."

Systemwide professional, interview: '[The neighboring island of] Saba uses English as the language of instruction and teaches Dutch as a foreign language. From observations in the primary schools on both islands, when students who speak Dutch as their first language are excluded [from the sample], the results for speaking and understanding Dutch are much higher in Saba than in Statia. While there are negative attitudes toward Dutch on both islands, the attitudes are in general less negative on Saba than on Statia. The only *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system] results for Dutch available are on reading speed. Unfortunately, this does not specifically test levels of comprehension in Dutch, which are generally higher in Saba than in Statia.'

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: 'The Dutch are considered to be the third best speakers of English as a foreign language in the world. This is because they come to English from a position of strength in Dutch.' "All we are asking here is that our children get the same chance. Then the Dutch teachers wouldn't be tearing their hair out when they try to teach our students Dutch."

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "If Holland were taken over by France tomorrow, would the Dutch accept French as their language of instruction?"

Primary school board member, interview: 'At GvP [secondary school] school, many Dutch teachers are concerned about their jobs if English becomes the language of instruction. But whatever we do, the focus should be on the students. Even the highest-level students in GvP want English to be the language of instruction. We need to listen to the children. They are capable of participating in making the decision.'

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: 'Children are suffering from a confusion between English and Dutch. English should be the language of instruction, with Dutch as a strong other language, just as the policy states. When I teach in Dutch, I make sure to translate everything into English, so that the students understand. They feel very frustrated trying to express themselves in Dutch. Now the system has changed again, and mathematics is being done in Dutch in Cycle 2 of primary school and Dutch being taught as a second language rather than as a foreign language, and this has really confused and frustrated the students.' "You cannot throw away English and you cannot put the English dominant teachers out of the schools."

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: "There has been much controversy on the island regarding the language of instruction. I was involved in the 2007 efforts to put into place a language policy for Statia. Some want English as

medium of instruction, some want Dutch." "People in decision making positions need to understand that there is no language better than another language." "The transition is not being made from Statian [Statian English lexifier Creole] to Standard English in the schools, because the focus has always been on Dutch and the transition to Dutch." 'There has always been a strong bias toward Dutch. The differences between Statian English [Statian English lexifier Creole] and Standard English need to be studied by the students, both in terms of form as well as in terms of the contexts where each is used. Students need to understand and master their own language, learn to read and write it, and get an academic mastery of it before they go on to Dutch.'

Principal, group session: "In practice there are no consistent policies about language in the primary schools, and where these might exist, they are not being consistently implemented. There is no consistent practice, no system, no coaching, no training, no materials. Principals are not taking responsibility for this. Major problems are caused by situations at home. These are hard for the schools to deal with."

Principal, group session: [In one primary school:] 'In group 1 – 4 English is the language of instruction, in 5–8 both languages are used side by side, with concepts translated from English to Dutch. In groups 1–3 Dutch is introduced through *spelend onderwijs* [playful learning of informal foreign language skills]. In group 4, the systematic transition to Dutch begins. *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system] are given in English in Groups 1–7, Dutch in Group 8. [The Principal is spending a lot of time in classrooms to give teachers the training and guidance to implement the new system based on the *Cito toets*.] The *Cito toets* is generally not Caribbean oriented.' [In another primary school:] 'Group 5 is still in English, the transition to Dutch happens in Group 6. At first, groups 7 and 8 took the *Cito toets* in Dutch, and the other groups took the tests in English, but now all groups 3–8 take the *Cito toets* in English.' [In the other primary schools:] 'Dutch background students take the *Cito toets* in Dutch, English background students take the *Cito toets* in English. Students tend to do better on the *Cito toets* in English. The teachers are given vocabulary tests etc. to teach to the *Cito toets*. To do this, the teachers go from English vocabulary to Dutch vocabulary.'

Primary teacher, all school group session: "We need a clear cut decision. We need a clear guideline about language in the schools. A main concern has always been language policy. The language policy for the elementary schools was to make English the language of instruction with Dutch as a strong second language. Teach English first, then teach the students as much Dutch as possible. This is a long-term discussion that has been ongoing in Statia for decades. The implementation has not been what we expected. [The neighboring island of] Saba has decided to have English only as their language of instruction. Statia needs the same strong decision making and implementation. There should be options made available for students to opt for one language of instruction or another. There needs to be a clear decision by the government. We do not have to look to the [European] Netherlands for a decision!"

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: "We have been swamped with training courses. When we came, we were told that Statia was doing [student centered] Foundation Based Education [FBE]. We had many, many training sessions in FBE, focused on English. In 2009, we were warned that we were no longer going to be using FBE and that the emphasis would probably move more toward Dutch. The English teachers were given some training in Dutch."

Primary teacher, school 'D' group session: "It doesn't matter which language you use, but a clear decision must be made. No mixed systems, mixed messages: either Dutch as the school language and English as a subject or English as the main language and Dutch as a foreign language."

Secondary teacher, interview: "You can't solve the problem without a comprehensive master plan. If you start with small things, it won't work. You must have an overall plan for the system. You have to make zero-point departure. The transition from one language of instruction at primary to another language of instruction at secondary has proven to be a disaster and is totally unworkable. Whatever language you opt for in secondary, must also be the language of instruction at the primary level. If we still want Dutch as a language of instruction at the secondary level, Dutch should also be the language of instruction in primary as well. If we want English as the language of instruction, we would have to switch the roles of the two languages at the secondary level, with Dutch as a foreign language. It would be a positive development to get the Dutch to accept English as the language of instruction and Dutch as the foreign language, because this would show an acknowledgement and appreciation of the diversity within the Kingdom."

Secondary teacher, interview: 'I was part of a language policy team during the 1990s and 2000s. Politics and money play a big role in the lack of implementation of a realistic policy. There are some dos and don'ts coming from Holland. Teachers are not paid here as much as in the [European] Netherlands. Surinamese teachers don't speak English and their Dutch isn't good enough. Guyanese teachers don't speak Dutch.'

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: 'The GvP [secondary school] Vice Principal's strength is the students, but she is not being allowed to do this any more, because she has so many administrative tasks. The GvP Vice Principal is having a very hard time. She is bypassed in decision making. Every year, more and more Dutch teachers are being brought in and the local teachers feel more and more to be a minority. Local teachers seem to get a [European] Netherlander teacher assigned to monitor them.'

Workers and/or clients at agency 'D', group session: 'There are two options, either get rid of Dutch or start Dutch from the beginning. There is a need to start Dutch from *kleuterschool* [early childhood education]. English as the main language is probably the best option. Dutch should be taught as a foreign language. Just like in the [European] Netherlands, Statian children need to get a good foundation in their mother tongue (English) first.' 'I went to an English only school, with Dutch as a foreign language subject. This worked for me but I don't have enough Dutch to perform in certain jobs. Many of my fellow students from the same English only school actually went on to succeed in Dutch. Some had to repeat

grades, but they finally mastered Dutch. Maybe there should be advanced courses
at the end of secondary education for those who want to go to the [European]
Netherlands, say 2 years of intensive Dutch and cultural orientation.'

Principals, group session: 'There are not too many students who should be in sec-
ondary school who are still in primary. Secondary school aged children are not
usually made to remain in primary, unless psychological tests indicate that they
have specific problems. Some older children who arrive in Statia from Spanish
speaking backgrounds go to Grade 6 with special coaching when they first arrive
in Statia, so they can get used to English and Dutch before they go to secondary
school. Sometimes it is not wise to make children repeat grades in groups 5–8.
Only children in lower groups repeat.' 'We try to address problems early.'
'Internal guidance officers have helped here. Children from Spanish speaking
backgrounds often excel, they are very eager to learn. Principals attribute this to
higher motivation among immigrants.' 'They are more motivated, and less used
to getting everything that they want.'

Parent, group session: "I speak Dutch with my children. I don't agree that for the
first four years English is given as the language of instruction. Before, teachers
used to speak only Dutch, and we were not allowed to speak English. So now
students don't get enough Dutch at the primary level. My children won't answer
me in Dutch any more. They are not as fluent as before. They conjugate the verbs
wrong. English is not taught properly. Spanish children come here with a strong
base in their language, a strong foundation and they succeed. Children need more
training in proper English."

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "People in Statia need to become
more aware of the need for people with special challenges to find a place in
society. In the SDA [primary] school, the students in the first cycle get Dutch
only as a foreign language subject given by a special Dutch teacher. The SDA
school has Guyanese teachers, who are giving the children a firm foundation in
English. In [the neighboring island of] Saba, the students get their lessons in
English as language of instruction. You can see it in their high levels of
performance and confidence."

Worker or client at agency 'B', group session: "The school management is not pro-
viding leadership. They don't sell the vision of the school to all of the stakehold-
ers. If everyone is not on board, the vision can't be implemented. There is no
chance for parents to get a meeting with the teacher. The teachers' programs are
too tight. As soon as the teacher thinks that she has a free moment, the manage-
ment comes along with a last-minute meeting or workshop or something else.
Space has to be left for parents who want to visit the school. I am a Statian. When
I look at the Boards of many organizations on the island, they don't have the
experience or the training to take on their responsibilities and provide leadership
and management."

Secondary teachers, group session: [There was considerable confusion among the
teachers concerning the policy and practice related to the transition from English
to Dutch as the language of instruction, and about the agreements made about
Dutch as language of instruction at GvP school. Teachers do not know when they

are allowed to speak English and when they are not allowed to do so. When all of the teachers were questioned about it, they say that they use English about 50% of the time.]

Systemwide professionals, group session: "Research is definitely needed, because the language problem is huge in Statia. The past language policy was not based on research. Language is holding up everything else in education." "A research based report was submitted two years ago asking for a switch to English as the language of instruction in Statia. No action was taken by those responsible to follow up on this document."

Politician, interview: 'Government needs to have more input into how scholarships are allocated, to make sure that Statians study to meet the island's needs and come back to Statia ready to contribute to the island. Some students without Dutch nationality succeed in finishing school at 16 and can't get a scholarship until [they are] 18.'

Worker or client at agency 'B', group session: 'Creole is the spoken language in Statia. School English is not mastered by students. English is best as the language of instruction. Proficiency in English is the basis for proficiency in Dutch. We need to know how the transition is being made in [the neighboring island of] Saba. We need to know how to manage the transition from English to Dutch in Statia. Perhaps we should have English as the medium of instruction with intensive Dutch classes.'

Secondary teacher, group session: 'All of the students will want to leave the island, and most will want to go to Holland, because it is less expensive for them. If you want to change this, you can't do so in the school only, but it has to be a society wide change, a campaign. The highest officials in government make major mistakes in English, let alone Dutch. I have no objection to English becoming the language of instruction, but a transition will also need to be made from Statian English [Statian English lexifier Creole] to Standard English. If a shift to English as language of instruction at secondary level happens, we will have very similar problems to those now encountered with Dutch.'

Worker or client at agency 'B', group session: 'Primary schools need to come together as one to develop learning lines and methods for teaching the subjects. There should be a separate department that links up all of the school boards, to coordinate their programs. Too many times personal interests get in the way of the best interests of the children. All of the schools should be aware of what one another is doing. They need a central coordinating body that can get out to the schools to make sure that everyone is doing what they need to do. There needs to be a clear policy and people need to know what the policy is and be committed to implementing it. There needs to be a system of rewards (and penalties?) involved for implementing a policy.'

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: "It is not difficult to work with children here. They are less 'hardened' than Dutch children. Children have a lack of stimulation. Children are not *talked with*, but *talked to* at the primary level.

Children are automatically promoted from one grade to another at the primary level, even if they cannot read or write. GvP [secondary school] inherits these and other problems from the primary schools."

Policy: Primary School Class Observation 12 (English Grammar Lesson in English)

The Statian teacher used English to teach the class. The students were all engaged and busy making charts on the basis of their English language workbooks to show the difference between 'action verbs' and 'linking verbs' in English. The teacher went around the room to check to see how the children were doing. They felt free to ask her/him questions and to respond to her/his interventions. The teacher had the language, the facial expressions, and the actions to connect with the students. When she/he corrected or scolded the students, she/he used expressions that were culturally appropriate and didn't make the students uneasy or overly uncomfortable. The teacher made jokes with the students to make them happy to learn. She/he also used Statian English at times to make the students understand and feel comfortable.

The students were eager to carry out the task and to help one another when they could. The teacher gave the students positive feedback. All of the students raised their hands and were not afraid to make mistakes. They felt free to write on the board. The teacher broke the task down into the necessary steps. The teacher showed the students how to use the dictionary to make sure if a word is a verb or not. The students were reading with natural intonation and they knew the meaning of what they were reading. The students easily learned the tests that they can do to find out if a verb is an action verb (something that you can do) or a linking verb. Students could distinguish between past and present forms of verbs.

Students were told that they needed to distinguish between Statian English lexifier Creole and School English. They paid special attention to the use of the third person present use of /−s/ and the use of present and past forms. The teacher explained the distinction between 'the way we sometimes speak' and 'the way we speak and write at school'. The teacher allowed herself/himself to be corrected by the students. The teacher let the students bring experiences from outside the class, television shows, etc.

4.4.1.10   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 10: Tests and Standards

Participants in the interview and focus group sessions expressed extreme unease with what they unanimously considered to be the unreasonable expectations from politicians and educational authorities that Statian students should meet the same performance standards as those of the European Netherlands, and with what they unanimously considered to be the unreasonable tools by which compliance with those standards is measured, especially the standardized *Cito* tests. They made it

clear that these standardized tests had reoriented the work of principals, support staff and teachers toward an almost exclusive focus on students' performance in Dutch and mathematics. This trend was reported by them to have been consolidated by a battery of new initiatives coming from the European Netherlands to upgrade materials, methods and teaching for Dutch and mathematics only. For many of the participants, the resulting pressure was proving to be almost unbearable.

Principals, group session: 'According to official policy, by 2016 student performance in the European Netherlands and the Caribbean Netherlands need to be on par.' 'Judgments of performance must be in the hands of individual schools.' 'It will be impossible to reach par by 2016, although we can try to approximate levels in the European Netherlands.' Another policy states that by 2015, Caribbean Netherlands students should have reached 'acceptable levels.'

Principal, group session: 'Statian students will be expected to be assessed against the same average score (corresponding to 5.5 in the *Centraal Schriftelijk Eindexamen*) as [European] Netherlands students as of 2016. Right now some of these exams come from Curaçao, but by 2016, Statian students will have to take the same end exams as students in the [European] Netherlands.'

Parent, interview: "Dutch means failure in education." 'Parents are very concerned about the *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system] because they feel helpless to assist their children.'

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "Too much pressure comes from the fact that students are expected to take their *toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system] in Dutch. This sets up the students for failure and the students shut down. Students at GvP [secondary school] feel that they are being pressured and they get a negative attitude toward Dutch."

Primary teacher, school 'D' group session: "[Dutch] language and mathematics are often the only subjects being taught, because of the *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system], which mainly tests in these areas and students are being taught to the test." 'Very little attention is being paid to social and natural sciences. Less than satisfactory marks are hardly ever given.'

Primary teacher, all school group session: 'The *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system] in English should be available for English speaking students, Dutch for Dutch speaking students. But some English students prefer to do the Maths *toets* in Dutch because they only know academic terms in Dutch. St. Maarten parents can opt for either Dutch or English schools. In Statia, many students don't get academic language in either English or Dutch.'

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: "English is not considered important, especially now because Dutch language skills and mathematics skills in Dutch are being stressed for the *toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system] in [Dutch] language and [Dutch] mathematics." [Everyone agreed that this emphasis exists because of the *toets*.] 'The students can both understand and express themselves in English. In Dutch they can

understand some, but it is very hard for them to express themselves. The students are allowed to do the mathematics *toets* in English, but the *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system] in English is still structured on Dutch mathematical models, which often differ from those used in English speaking countries.'

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: "There is too much pressure on students to learn Dutch. If they can't cope with Dutch, they fail. We have a student from the Terminal School here who is 8 years old, he gets all of his subjects in English. He is already studying things that GvP [secondary school] students are learning and he gets more homework than GvP students. He has English as language of instruction and Dutch as a subject. At the SDA [primary] school, the students get a lot of English, and they do better than at other schools."

Systemwide professional, group session: 'A SPLIKA company has been asked to make new Dutch learning lines for primary and secondary schools next year. There is no direct link between this research project and SPLIKA. In Holland new learning lines are being promoted. This research may not be finished on time to influence the SPLIKA project, which aims to have all methods and materials in place by 2016.'

Primary school board member, interview: 'Since 10/10/10 [the date of the referendum after which Statia became a municipality of the Netherlands], more funding is available from the Dutch government than before. School Boards are being counseled by a coach who stresses that School Boards need to concentrate on budgeting and policy. New training is now being made available in classroom management. It has really made a difference. Twice a week extra Dutch and Maths tutoring is now available.'

Parent, group session: "Another problem is the report cards of the children. You get a bunch of papers, but there is no overview, with averages. Now it's hard to get a general picture of how your child is doing."

Tests and Standards: Primary School Class Observation 10 (Dutch Lesson in Dutch and English)

The Statian teacher tried to use mainly Dutch in this class, but she/he translated what she/he was saying when necessary. Some students could give one-word answers to some simple questions in Dutch and some could fill out the spaces that they needed to fill out in their workbooks. Most students used English for longer strings of language. The teacher went around to check to see if the students were following what she/he said in their workbooks. The students felt free to ask and answer questions.

Discipline was done in English. There was a slight core-periphery effect (Dutch home language students participating, everyone else disengaged) in this class (4 in, 5 out). The peripheral students waited for the core students to respond to the teacher with the correct answers and they wrote these answers down in their workbooks. The students were generally eager to participate and show what they knew.

Long answers to questions in Dutch or English about the reading in Dutch for the day on '*massaproductie*' [mass production] were given by students in English. Here

a concept that had not yet been introduced in English was being introduced first in Dutch. The teacher had to go through a long explanation in English and give a number of examples in English, to make sure that the students understood. Once the teacher gave long sentences in English, the core-periphery effect vanished and students all participated.

The teacher never actually used the term 'mass production' in English. Once the teacher began to use and read longer passages in Dutch, the core-periphery effect emerged again and the 'talking to the walls' phenomenon started. Once the teacher started speaking English and asking questions in English, the students started engaging again. Then the teacher started with longer stretches of Dutch and the students began to disengage.

After the lesson, the teacher had a chance to explain to a research team member that there is pressure on the teachers in Groups 7 and 8 to give more and more Dutch to the students, because of the Dutch language *toets* [standardized test] and because the students will need to cope with Dutch as the language of instruction in secondary school. The teacher also explained that the mathematics *toets* are no longer given in Dutch, but instead they are now given in English.

Tests and Standards: Primary School Class Observation 1 (Dutch Lesson in Dutch)

The European Netherlander teacher tried to teach the class in Dutch as much as possible, but was obliged to use English often. A core-periphery effect was evident: A small core group of students actively participated in Dutch and sat together close to the teacher. The others were sitting farther away from the teacher, not participating, and needing special instructions in English. Some were silent and acting shy and others were acting out. Students resented the strict approach of the teacher. Some students were asking for attention and they were not getting it.

The main part of the lesson was a dictation, with the students writing out vocabulary words that they had studied in Dutch. Most students could not interact in Dutch, but a few could do so very well. Students spoke Statian English lexifier Creole with each other and tried to explain things in that language to each other, but the teacher would not let them do so, 'because it was a test'. Most students seemed to know the basics of Dutch spelling.

4.4.1.11 Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 11: Pedagogy

The overwhelming majority of the participants in the focus group and interview sessions characterized the situation in the schools on the island in relation to pedagogical theory, approach and practice as one of ad hoc improvisation. This was especially evident in comments made about language policy, with particular criticism reserved for how transitions at different levels from English to Dutch as language of instruction were being handled. As in numerous other instances, they compared the pedagogical chaos on Statia with what they considered to be the more

stable and effective pedagogical environment on the neighboring island of Saba, which had adopted English as the language of instruction and Dutch as a strong foreign language.

Systemwide professional, interview: 'In [the neighboring island of] Saba, children are already doing better in Dutch than in Statia, with English as the main language of instruction and with Dutch *spelend onderwijs* [playful learning of informal foreign language skills] from Group 1 as a foreign language. In primary school there is one hour of Dutch each day with a specialized teacher. The emphasis is on Dutch vocabulary and forming sentences. In secondary school, more formal Dutch is introduced. In secondary school, students take CXC [Anglophone Caribbean Examinations Council secondary] exams but they take a Dutch exam for their Dutch subject. In Saba, there is no Dutch at all in the environment. In general, Saba also suffers from lack of learning lines. Saba children are reading better and have higher vocabulary levels than in Statia. Children have fewer negative attitudes toward Dutch than in Statia, but still are not highly motivated to learn it. Saba is more oriented toward the US, and increasing numbers of Statian children are going to [European] Netherlands, where they have family who can house and protect them.'

Primary school board member, group session: "Some adults want Dutch only. When I first became part of the School Board, I thought that the school should be completely in Dutch. But now, I have changed my mind. I realized that this approach to Dutch is making people dislike Dutch. This is particularly serious in the secondary school. Now I think that we should build on what the students already know to build second language competence."

Systemwide professional, group session: "When we use English almost everyone understands. With Dutch, less than half of the students understand. Children can pick up something in a new language better if they already know it in their own language. They have to get the concepts first in English."

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: 'The basic theory of education is going from the known to the unknown. Statian children are surrounded by English in all environments, then they go to school and they are expected to perform in Dutch. This is violating this basic theory.' "Students are forced to wear a cap that is not comfortable on their heads in school. Many give up on school because of Dutch."

Worker or client at agency 'F', group session: "We should always go from the known to the unknown. Repetition is important for students. Children need to learn to use language naturally and fluently. Everything should be done through play, so education is a positive experience, going from success to success. Even in the higher grades and with adults, education should be fun."

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: 'Those in the government need to know that we need to go from the known to the unknown. It is very hard for students to succeed in secondary school because of the language barrier. Those Spanish speaking students who have a strong foundation in their own language often do very well in Dutch.'

Systemwide professional, interview: "At the SDA school, which is the only primary school in Statia that is actually implementing the official policy to make English the main language of instruction in all of the primary grades, the results in Dutch are superior to those of the other primary schools, where Dutch is often used as language of instruction."

Primary teachers, school 'C' group session: [Teacher 1:] 'In first grade, everything is in English, I only teach Dutch in Dutch classes. I start out the Dutch classes bilingually, but by the end of the year, I teach in Dutch only.' [Teacher 2:] 'In Group 6 I teach mostly in Dutch. The students go to English class with someone else.' [Teacher 3:] 'I teach everything in English.'

Systemwide professional, group session: "Policy changes are fine, but what teachers need are more concrete guidelines as to what levels are expected in students and how to achieve those levels in the classroom."

Principals, group session: 'The inspectors are open minded and they maintain good channels of communication. The inspectors are based in the [European] Netherlands and they speak both English and Dutch. In general, the inspectors don't give much advice on language of instruction. They concentrate more on the teacher-student relationship and school management.'

Principal, group session: "We have little advice from outside about how to approach language and education. There seem to be no experts around. Principals go to other principals to get advice and help. We have no back up, but we do have each other."

Primary teachers, all school group session: "There is no support for teachers in terms of transition. Each teacher is on his/her own. Peer groups are useful, but there is no clear guidance and there are no tools. Readers for older learners at lower reading levels in Dutch are not interesting to them, they are too juvenile." "We do not know how to teach this curriculum." 'Language coaching is necessary. A language coach is needed for Statia.' [Someone pointed out that the appointment of a language coach at the secondary school has resulted in noticeable improvement, even after one single month.] "There is a need for Dutch second language materials appropriate to Statia." "I don't know how to teach Dutch anymore. I feel like I'm on my own. There are no answers, only questions." "Every teacher is on his own little island." "I need more and different tools to teach Dutch."

Systemwide professional, group session: "The secondary school is putting too much pressure on the primary schools to start Dutch earlier. People often talk about the 'good old days' with the nuns who insisted on Dutch. It is unreasonable for the secondary schools in Statia to expect competence in Dutch from Statian students. Many of [the neighboring island of] Saba's teachers come from other Anglophone Caribbean islands. Statian teachers often do not speak proper English with students. One recommendation would be to keep both languages. English should be the language of instruction until students are sufficiently competent in it to take on academic Dutch. Maybe English should be also the language of instruction in secondary school. The Dutch exams are not a very reasonable option. If people would accept CXC [the Anglophone Caribbean Examinations Council framework] this would be an option. For those who want to study further in Dutch, a special program will be necessary."

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "I am not happy with all of the pressure on me to use more Dutch in my classes. I am afraid that the students are beginning to feel that Dutch is being imposed on them and that they are beginning to adopt a negative attitude toward Dutch. I feel that Dutch should be taught in a way that connects with where the students are at in a positive way." "I learned Spanish from the *telenovelas*, and I learned it well, because I enjoyed the *telenovelas* and I could understand what was being said from the visuals."

Systemwide professional, interview: "A lot of what the teachers are doing is damage control rather than a long-term strategy. Students should get English first. It should be the only language of instruction until group 5 or 6. Dutch should be introduced as *spelend onderwijs* [playful learning of informal foreign language skills]. Students should be allowed to change teachers, by level, by language. In Bonaire they do this: If 8:00 to 9:00 is the math hour, the students who are at level 3 in all the different groups go to one teacher, level 4s to another teacher, Papiamentu students to Papiamentu teachers, Dutch students to Dutch teachers. This avoids the presence of radically different levels and different language backgrounds in the same class."

Systemwide professional, group session: "Dutch speaking teachers should speak only Dutch, English speaking teachers should speak only English. It becomes confusing when one teacher tries to teach more than one language. The pupils identify the person with the language. Children should be challenged and not pushed."

Secondary teacher, group session: "Children who get a chance to learn first in their own language do better. Building a strong foundation in the students' own language is important. It is hard to motivate students to read. Whatever language we choose as the language of instruction, we need to motivate the students. Why has the curriculum changed? Before, we had to read lots of books, now the students read so few. Reading should be fun, we have to be realistic. I don't like to read. When the teacher forced me to read, I started to enjoy reading. I saw the benefit because I was forced to."

Secondary teacher, group session: 'The children don't have enough Dutch input to master Dutch. Primary schools are not preparing students sufficiently in Dutch. For example, a Group 6 teacher who is actually Dutch has decided to abandon using Dutch because the children don't understand.'

Systemwide professional, interview: "In Group 7, teachers have a very difficult time because teaching is in Dutch only. Translation from English to Dutch is time consuming. Children are not used to problems but they are very good at equations."

Systemwide professional, group session: 'There is no special education program in Statia, so special education children are forced to face Dutch in Group 5. For those children one language is enough. Two lines are therefore needed: one for those who need/want English and another for those who need/want both English and Dutch.'

Primary teacher, school 'B' group session: "In my [*spelend onderwijs*, playful learning of informal foreign language skills] classes, the students love learning

Dutch in this way. But now I feel pressure to make the students learn academic material in Dutch before they learn it in English, and many students are not yet ready to do this. When I ask the children to read an academic book in Dutch, they don't do it, but when I ask them to fill out a workbook page that involves a game in Dutch, they are happy to do it."

Primary teacher, school 'A' group session: 'Language at the early childhood level must be fun. There was a teacher at our school who was very successful because she used *spelend onderwijs* [playful learning of informal foreign language skills]. Immersion at this level is very important for students when they are learning Dutch as a foreign language.' "Students need exposure to a foreign language in order to learn it well."

Primary teachers, school 'A' group session: 'If English were made the language of instruction and Dutch were being taught as a foreign language, then Dutch could be taught with immersion. Immersion is not a viable strategy for Dutch as a language of instruction in school.' "When we teach Dutch, we need to make it playful with immersion."

Workers and/or clients at agency 'B', group session: 'It is important to start with Dutch as foreign language very early. *Schakelklas* [English to Dutch secondary transition class] would not be needed if the *spelend onderwijs* [playful learning of informal foreign language skills] is done properly. Submersion is not working. Students don't like it. Cycle 2 of primary school should work more closely with the secondary school. Dutch is being taught as if it were a first language, it should be taught as a second language.' [A stakeholder who just recently returned to Statia after many years in the [European] Netherlands thinks Dutch is the best medium of instruction for secondary school, another stakeholder thinks English would be best.] "If you don't speak the Dutch, you gonna be in trouble!" "How can you master another language if you don't know your own?"

Systemwide professional, group session: 'There are too many transitions: Statian to English, English to Dutch. Many children have an enormous language backlog in school. They still speak 'slang'. A lot of repair work is being done in the lower grades. When students get to secondary, they are not ready. Teachers have to go back to English to be sure that the children are understanding. Many teachers in groups 5–8 do not have good enough Dutch and some teachers in groups 1–3 from the [European] Netherlands have insufficient English. Children have insufficient levels in both languages. By the end of Group 4, students' levels in English are not high enough to make the transition to Dutch.'

Systemwide professional, interview: 'The transitions from Statian [English lexifier Creole] to school English, and from *spelend Nederlands* and school English to school Dutch are key to making the current system work, but teachers feel that they don't have the support they need to manage these transitions.'

Principal, group session: 'The problem is how the transition happens from English to Dutch in secondary school. The book for the traffic exam given in Group 7 used to be in English, while the traffic test is in Dutch. When the traffic test was changed to English, the percentage passing increased. A secondary student wanted help in economics. The principal read the Dutch book and explained it

to the student in English and the student immediately understood. When students are given the chance to get the material in English first, they can grasp it. The best way to get the students to Dutch is via English, and the best way to learn Dutch culture is via our own culture. Some feel that the *Schakelklas* [English to Dutch transition class] at the secondary school should use more English for transition.'

Principal, interview: 'The *Schakelklas* [English to Dutch transition class] was created to help compensate for the deficiencies that result from problems in the implementation of language policy in the primary schools. This is the main cause of the current problems with language in education. Students in VMBO [track] take an average of 6 years when normally they should take 4. In the end, the *Schakelklas* might save students some time in finishing their studies.' 'In the first year, there was a lot of opposition to the *Schakelklas*. The next year, there were a lot fewer questions. By next August, there will be a permanent language coach in Statia, teaching teachers how to teach in Dutch.'

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: 'Teachers at the primary level speak English, many cannot speak enough Dutch (even those from Suriname). Secondary students can't cope with Dutch. Transition class has improved students' Dutch. But the *Schakelklas* [English to Dutch transition class] produces negative attitudes, because it is not compulsory for all students. Selection for the *Schakelklas* is sometimes experienced as a personal failure and it extends secondary education for an extra year.'

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: "There is a big group that comes to us from *Schakelklas* [English to Dutch transition class]. Many of them request extra Dutch lessons. The SDA [primary] school starts Dutch later than the other schools, but their students are more advanced in Dutch than the students from the other schools. Many of the students who come to us come because they can't cope with Dutch. Many try to use translation programs on the internet."

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: 'The secondary school *Schakelklas* [English to Dutch transition class] students are not allowed to speak English. This has brought about a lot of resistance. The students really don't like the *Schakelklas*. They see it as being put back one year. A secondary school teacher told me that because the students have to do everything in Dutch, it makes it seem that they are less intelligent than they actually are. The students have to do their exams in Dutch. It is difficult to assess students' levels and to track them because of the language issue.'

Secondary teachers, group session: "The mentors speak English, as do most teachers. Only the *Schakelklas* [English to Dutch transition class] is in Dutch only. Even in lower levels of the *Schakelklas*, some English is used. A lot of resentment has built up over the *Schakelklas*. Students feel so relieved when they complete the *Schakelklas*. Why are the students so against Dutch?" "A *Taalcoach* [language coach] comes once a month for a week from St. Maarten. She just started her job. She has visited some of our classes." 'The *Schakelklas* has some effect, but as soon as the students leave, they go back to English.'

Systemwide professional, group session: "Children in Statia are very energetic. They are frustrated. They need more group work, more interactive learning. There is a lot of violence among students. There is not enough break time for children to play and get their pent-up energy out."

Pedagogy: Primary School Class Observation 6 (Mathamatics Lesson in English)

The teacher had students playing catch doing multiplication tables. All of the students were required to be involved because the teacher called on all of them in English while throwing the ball to them. The teacher gave the students the chance to think things out. The teacher broke down the thinking process into steps. Most of the children were giving correct answers, even with difficult figures. All of the children were trying. None of them was silent or refusing to answer. Division was seen by students as more difficult. They were still not afraid, and they answered with accuracy. The teacher allowed students to correct themselves. Many children were very confident, even raising their hands when they were not sure of the answer. They felt no fear or shame of getting things wrong.

Pedagogy: Primary School Class Observation 4 (Science Lesson in English)

The students actively participated in this lesson. The Surinamese teacher was using English very effectively. There was no core-periphery effect (Dutch home language students participating, everyone else disengaged) in the classroom. The children were performing at a very high level. The students were very eager to raise their hands and participate. The students felt very free to express themselves.

The teacher was less strict than others, and the children really responded. The teacher allowed the students to interrupt her/him and she/he rephrased the students' answers. She/he got the students engaged with their materials, by using real examples from Statia. The teacher sometimes used Statian English and the students felt extremely free. The teacher used what the children said to make connections to the next points in the lesson. The teacher made abstract concepts clear and relevant to the students. Students told stories from their own experience. The teacher asked comprehension questions about the reading, using cloze sentences.

Pedagogy: Secondary School Class Observation 20 (Social Studies Lesson in Dutch)

The European Netherlander teacher had limited proficiency in English, but connected very well with the students. The students helped the teacher with English and she/he helped them with Dutch, so that the languages were used in a complementary way in the class, in distinction to other classes. The students were very enthusiastic and were quite well acquainted with key concepts and terminology in English and Dutch. The teacher entrusted all of the audio-visual equipment to the students who meticulously set things up to view a movie. In this class there was an appreciation for translanguaging and a bond of mutual trust and mutual language learning between teacher and students that helped somewhat to overcome the obstacles posed by insisting on Dutch as the language of instruction.

4.4.1.12   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 12: Materials

Very low levels of satisfaction were expressed by the participants in the focus group and interview sessions with the quantity and quality of the materials available for teaching in Statian schools. It was consistently reported that there was a lack of materials, and those materials that were available were almost all designed for students in the European Netherlands. Comments were made about the linguistic and cultural alienation experienced by Statian students in classrooms where these materials were being used. For example, it was pointed out that Statian students, most of whom have much more mastery of English than they do of Dutch, are not only expected to learn Spanish as a foreign language through textbooks designed for native speakers of Dutch, but they also find themselves in the absurd position of using texts designed for native speakers of Dutch in their English classes.

Primary school board member, group session: "One Spanish teacher has decided to replace the Dutch-Spanish text with an English-Spanish text. The teacher who is still using the Dutch-Spanish text has much lower results than the teacher using the English-Spanish text. It is important that the children understand the materials. For example: The students from the medical University came in and explained a Dutch text on anatomy in English, and all the students scored more than 7 on the *toets* [standardized test]."

Systemwide professional, group session: 'There is no continuity or consistency, no consistent guidance. Each teacher is improvising. Everybody is doing their own thing. There are no guidelines, no development line. The most important thing right now is facing this challenge all the way to groups 3–4 instead of just groups 1–2. The Dutch texts that we are using are not second language texts. There is no guidance for teachers for the transition process.'

Primary teacher, all school group session: "We face big challenges in Maths with problems which are also culturally inappropriate. Teachers try to make the materials culturally appropriate, but this is not always possible. With each level it gets harder. Assignments have to be translated word for word."

Systemwide professional, interview: "In vocational education, the language of the materials is Dutch. Many of these students have been out of school for some time. Motivation plays a major role. Is it realistic to expect that our children learn to perform in Dutch at the same level as European Dutch students?"

Primary teacher, school 'C' group session: 'For vocabulary, I draw the words first, so they can get the concepts that they already know in English and translate them into Dutch. A new method [textbook series] will be available for Dutch by the next school year. There will be a conference in Aruba on this next month.' 'There have been a lot of workshops and training opportunities for teachers since 10/10/10 [the date of the referendum after which Statia became a municipality of the Netherlands].'

Secondary teacher, group session: "Teachers who are not from Dutch backgrounds have a hard time relearning all of the terminology in Dutch."

Secondary teachers, group session: "Materials at present are based on European Netherlands. There is no relevance to Statia. Dutch materials need to be made more relevant. Students can't see themselves in the materials. Adolescents are trying to find themselves, but they can't find themselves in the materials. Even the English exam is in Dutch." "There is a lack of materials adapted to the Statian context. The materials are also outdated."

Systemwide professional, group session: 'There is no method [textbook series] in place for English, yet the Language Group has not been asked to do anything for English. Next year some schools will start using the 'Journeys' program for teaching English, but this method is not adapted to the Caribbean, and has a strong religious bias. Perhaps SPLIKA might develop a method to teach English that is compatible with SPLIKA. SPLIKA is also apparently working on a bridging [English to Dutch] method for Statia and perhaps the rest of the former Netherlands Antilles.'

Primary teacher, school 'C' group session: "Very little was provided in the way of orientation before my coming to Statia. I was surprised by the lack of materials for Dutch and other subjects."

Materials: Secondary School Class Observation 19 (Mathematics Lesson in Dutch)

There were hardly any stimulating visual materials in the classroom. The European Netherlander teacher had a very heavy Dutch accent. The teacher was teaching mainly in English, but using Dutch mathematics terminology from a Dutch book. The students answered only in English, except for the specific mathematics terms. The students had the impression that the class was in Dutch. The students were not encouraged to write. The class was essentially a foreign language class. Not much was accomplished in the class, except reviewing 5 terms in Dutch that the students had been taught previously.

Materials: Primary School Class Observation 2 (Social Studies Lesson in English)

The European Netherlander teacher and the Afro-Caribbean assistant teacher gave the class almost entirely in English. There were separate materials in English and Dutch. The Social Studies test that the students took during this session was in English for the majority English dominant students and Dutch for the few Dutch dominant students.

Formerly, there were no contextualized materials for the Social and Natural Sciences, but the teacher had created Statian-contextualized materials in both languages for these subjects (only a few used the Dutch materials). The Dutch dominant students were all from the European Netherlands. One of the few Dutch dominant children got some materials in Dutch others in English, since she/he had been in Statia for 5 years and she/he felt more comfortable in English than in Dutch. One of the students used Spanish and English.

The students almost invariably asked and answered questions in English and the teacher almost invariably asked and answered questions in English. Students were very engaged and working with materials/tests. Students were not shy at all and all

were talking. They used Statian English lexifier Creole with each other. Even those students who were acting out and not attending to the story writing session in Dutch were engaged and working quickly on their tests. Students were asking questions, and the teacher was trying to answer in English.

The few European Netherlander students and one of the Latin American students finished their tests first. As they finished, the students went on to do an art/biology lesson which involved drawing pictures. The non-European students sometimes had a difficult time interacting with the teacher. They were often looking for praise and attention but not getting it. Sometimes they resented the teacher being short with them. Some Latin American-identified students seemed to be doing extremely well, but a few were among the slowest in the class.

The teacher used a Statian accent when speaking English. He/she also spoke Spanish and interacted in Spanish with Latin American students. Students also interacted with the teacher in Statian English lexifier Creole.

4.4.1.13 Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 13: Parents' Participation

Participants in the focus group and interview sessions generally expressed disappointment and alarm concerning what they identified as the low levels of participation on the part of Statian parents in their children's formal education. Among a range of factors that they singled out as underlying these low participation rates, the use of Dutch as the language of instruction was by far the most commonly mentioned. They were especially concerned by the use of Dutch at the secondary level, which was making it difficult for the non-Dutch speaking majority of parents on the island to have any meaningful interaction with their children in relation to what their children were learning at school:

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "At the pre-school level, the parents' meetings are full of parents. At primary, there are fewer, at secondary, almost none. Parents need to be allowed to sit in on classes."

Systemwide professional, group session: "For many parents, there is little involvement. Many parents don't come to meetings. Some report cards remain uncollected by parents. Parents don't come to appointments. Because there is a school bus, many parents don't drop their children off at school. There is a lack of parental contact with the schools and a lack of parental involvement in their children's education. Newsletters have been published, but the problem is still not solved. Parents say: 'Don't speak Dutch, speak English.'"

Parent, interview: "My nephew opted to take his *Cito toets* [the standardized test regularly administered in the Dutch education system] in mathematics in English, but couldn't cope with the test, because he had never been taught the key concepts in English. There needs to be consistency in the system. I think that Dutch is important, but it needs to be a strong foreign language. My children are learning some Dutch. As a parent, when children are given home work in Dutch, there is

a problem because the parents are used to speaking English, even those who have lived in Holland. This cuts children off from their parents, even from Dutch speaking parents."

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: "One element that needs to change to solve these problems, is to change the language in school so that it corresponds to the language that the children bring from their homes. But this is only a small part of the solution. Parental responsibility needs to be cultivated and this has to be done among the youth."

Worker or client at agency 'G', group session: "Children's parents can't help their children with school, because they don't speak Dutch. Children get a complex about speaking Statian, the language that they are most comfortable with."

Systemwide professional, group session: 'Many students have negative attitudes toward Dutch. Even children from Dutch speaking homes don't want to speak Dutch. Parents need to be involved in instruction in both English and Dutch in the home. Once policy is in place and the research has been done, a campaign needs to be organized to involve parents in education.'

Worker or client at agency 'F', group session: "Dutch should play a bigger role at home, but the parents don't speak it. There are no regular Dutch classes for parents. Many cannot afford them."

Worker or client at agency 'G', group session: "What are the opportunities for adult education in English and Dutch to help the parents to help their children in their studies? To tackle this problem there has to be a lifelong learning approach, from early childhood all the way to adult education. There was an attempt to get [European] Dutch teachers from the schools to give Dutch lessons to adults, and people enjoyed it, but the teachers couldn't keep it up. This was done with the approval of the Education Department. A group of civil servants organized themselves to perfect their Dutch, but the funding ran out."

Secondary teacher, group session: "The HAVO [secondary track] group do a little better than the VMBO [secondary track] students, but they often don't know the meaning of even simple Dutch words. I have fears about how they will fare on the Dutch exams. I encourage reading a lot. Some parents see the importance of Dutch. The parents know that education should be in English, but they tend to see Holland as the only alternative for further study. Parents need to motivate their children to be serious about their studies. Students are happy with a mark of 5 or a 6, but this is not good enough. This cannot change with this generation. It will have to wait for the next generation. Some parents don't even know what level their children have been placed at. In HAVO [secondary track] it is easy because it's just one level, but VMBO [a secondary track which has multiple subtracks] is harder."

Secondary teacher, group session: "Teachers need to be persistent in involving parents in their children's education. Many after school programs are starting. Whatever solution we choose, we need to do it together. We need strong leadership, not everybody just doing their own thing."

Primary teacher, school 'D' group session: "Students have a lack of coaching from parents and often from teachers." "Students need a personal relationship with teachers and this will be disrupted when the students reach secondary school, where they will move from one teacher and one classroom to another."

Worker or client at agency 'C', interview: "Most parents are just existing, living from day to day. Last year, we had 14 girls pregnant under the age of 18 with most of the fathers over the age of 30. In [the neighboring island of] Saba, the rate is not so high. The home environment is not giving the right messages to the young people. Before, parents went to school in order to discipline their children in front of the teacher. Now, parents come to school to discipline the teacher in front of their children."

4.4.1.14   Focus Group Sessions, Interviews and Classroom Observations, Theme 14: Education and Society

Few participants in the focus group and interview sessions were under the illusion that the language of instruction was the only cause of what was widely perceived to be a crisis in the schools on Statia. The various globalizing forces that are undermining families and communities worldwide such as accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few at the expense of the many, unemployment, poverty, attacks on the social safety-net, consumerism and the ever increasing barrage of patriarchal, ethnocentric and economically exploitative messages from the social and other media, were also identified as taking their toll on the people of the island in general, and on school aged youth in particular. Illusory promises of a university education in the European Netherlands or of fame and wealth without advanced formal education as a sports or movie star were identified as aggravating factors in this toxic mix, along with increased tensions resulting from Statia's new status as a municipality of the European Netherlands:

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: "Many people criticize Statians. They call the people of Statia 'lazy'. But traditionally Statians have been very self-reliant. A lot of Statians have many jobs. Many people have their paid jobs, but also they have many other community responsibilities, many of which are actually more important to keeping the community together than their paid jobs. I really admire how readily people have taken on many of these functions. Many people actually come to work to rest, because they are doing so much unpaid community work outside of work."

Worker or client at agency 'C', interview: "In [the neighboring island of] Saba, people are very proud and fight for their youth. You can't go to Saba and tell the people that they are doing something wrong."

Worker or client at agency 'A', group session: "Students don't only want to know what is in the book, they want to know what's behind the book, how do we apply what's in the book. In our days, we learned about what was happening in the

[European] Netherlands, without asking about its relevance to Statia. Now young people are asking about what that has to do with them here. A project centered approach has been shown to have a positive impact. Some teachers needed coaching about the project approach."

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: 'There is a real danger of severe loss of social cohesion on Statia in the near future. Fewer young people are going to church. The people who hold society together are now in their 50s and 60s. Those in their 30s and 40s are working in offices such as this. But I don't know if the youth today will be prepared to take on these tasks. Children do not want to work with their hands, they want office jobs. Children want to work for money, not for self- or community- development.'

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: "It is hard for the students to express themselves in Dutch. The children don't know who they are, they have emotional and verbal deficiencies, low self-esteem. When they excel in school, it is often not reinforced. Peers might even criticize it."

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: "GvP [secondary school] is not the same as it used to be. There is a lot more tension. There is a lot more hating between the students, between the teachers. We used to have outings, basketball, we would go to the beach. There was a lot of music in school. But now, school has become a 'stress point' for a lot of students. Before school was fun, we wanted to go to school. Before, parents were more strict, so the only time we had to meet others was in school. Parents have no time for their children now and children sometimes don't listen to their parents. They come to me and say, 'Take care of my child, I can't'."

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: "There is no orientation for people coming from the [European] Netherlands. I had no orientation. Statians who I employ feel a lot of pressure, because everyone knows their history and they feel a lot of pressure to fit in. You have to be strong and secure in your own identity. Everyone has enormous social struggles here, both [European] Netherlanders and Statians. Some say that Statia is the most stressed out island in the Caribbean. Everyone is unhappy."

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: "Society has become more difficult for children now. We have tried to organize identity-affirming events for Black History Month, etc, but very few students attend, because they are distracted by the media, the internet, etc. Maybe 70% of families have challenges that impact the children. Perhaps 90% of children have some challenge or another. We have many children who are depressed, suicidal, lacking in terms of identity, etc."

Worker or client at agency 'E', group session: "Before 10/10/10 [the date of the referendum after which Statia became a municipality of the Netherlands], there were few rules and regulations. Now there are so many rules and regulations, that people don't know what to do with them. For example, there is a lot of poverty on Statia, but only 14 people are on welfare, even though some don't have enough to eat. Because people are poorly equipped to deal with all of the new post 10/10/10 rules and bureaucracy and because they are ashamed to admit it, they don't apply."

Worker or client at agency 'G', group session: 'When we were going to school, we were much more disciplined in studying. Now children don't have a high regard for teachers. Before teachers had better connections to our families. Now if children complain, their parents might come and cuss out the teacher. It was much more difficult to get a scholarship before, now it's too easy, so students are no longer trying. Maybe Dutch isn't the best as a language of instruction, because students need to understand their lessons. But Dutch must be a strong second language subject. Students can learn to be fluent in Dutch in the [European] Netherlands if they go there. I had a hard time learning in Dutch. It had negative effects on my motivation and attitude.'

Worker or client at agency 'G', group session: "Now young people are less motivated, especially Statia-born children. Spanish speaking immigrants do better because they are more motivated. Men in Statia are motivated to speak Spanish, because they like Spanish speaking women. Many children are motivated today, but many others just don't want to learn. You have to have it in your head that you want to do it, you have to be motivated. It has to start with the parents. You can't wait until the children get big. You have to start young. Parents do not attend meetings. The ones that come are the ones who don't need it. Maybe more social services are needed to address the situation in the home. People who have problems don't want to go to public places to discuss their problems. Social services need to go to the homes of the people who need their services. Many people won't allow social workers into their homes. They see this as getting into their business."

Worker or client at agency 'G', group session: 'The young ones who don't want to learn, are the ones who drop out and have children, so that the negative dynamics are perpetuated over the generations. The children who do succeed leave Statia and they don't come back. Government is not making it attractive. Many are told when they come back that they are overqualified. So those who don't want to learn stay on the island and pass their lack of motivation to their children who also stay on the island. The ones who are motivated leave the island and don't come back.'

Worker or client at agency 'D', group session: "Because of the way that the system is set up, a lot of students see further studies in the [European] Netherlands as the only alternative. Fewer and fewer students are considering the ABC Islands [Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao] for further studies. Students are more and more motivated to study in the US or the US Virgin Islands. But in the schools, the [European] Netherlands is being promoted for further studies."

Systemwide professional, interview: 'The idea of preparing students for studies in Holland is no longer as relevant for the great majority of the students as it might have been in the past.'

Secondary Teacher group session: 'The argument that you have to have Dutch as language of instruction or as a second language to give students a chance to study in Holland is misleading. Even our students who go to Holland to study are opting for English language universities once they get to Holland. The students

need intensive preparation if they want to go to Holland or if they want to go to the US or another English-speaking country. Right now, students are required to have 7 hours per week in Dutch and 2, 3, or 4 hours of English. The first two years of secondary school can be general studies and the last two years can be intensive preparation for further studies.'

Principal, group session: "There is a very 'floating population' in Statia. People come and go all the time. Right now it is estimated that 20% of the people on the island use Spanish at home."

Education and Society: Secondary School Class Observation 15 (Mathematics Class in Dutch)

The teacher was really involved with the students and with the personal relations among the students. The teacher interacted strongly with the students to elicit the appropriate Dutch vocabulary to solve a mathematical problem. Interaction was over 90% in Dutch on the part of the teacher and 50% on the part of students. When students had something to say that didn't have much to do with the problem itself, they switched to English. The teacher did an excellent job of getting the students to switch back to Dutch. Dutch vocabulary seemed to be an enormous problem for these students, especially due to the context specific nature of the words used. At one point the teacher said 'And yes, because people work 40 hours a week…' The students immediately interrupted the teacher saying '60 hours, 48 hours, etc.' This showed how the teacher's frames of reference did not match those of the students in key areas that had to do with solving of mathematical problems.

4.4.2   Conclusions

The results from the focus group sessions, the interview sessions, and the classroom observations generally confirmed the following points of consensus upon which we formulated both the general conclusions discussed in detail in Chap. 6 below, as well as the recommendations to policy makers outlined in Chap. 5 below:

1. The system in place was not working and that the results were far below expectations.
2. The goal of education on the island should be full academic competence in English alongside full academic competence in Dutch.
3. For the great majority of the students of Statia, Dutch is a foreign language.
4. Students' attitudes toward Dutch in particular, and learning in general, tended to deteriorate as the students progressed from primary school where Dutch was being used alongside English, to secondary school where all lessons were supposed to be taught only in Dutch.

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Chapter 5
The Recommendations: Reactions and Implementation

5.1 Consensus

After the field work components of the research project had been completed in April 2013, the research team set out to compose the final report for the Island Council in Statia and the Ministry in the Netherlands. The combination of all insights gained from the focus group sessions led to a number of ground breaking observations that made the formulation of recommendations an easy exercise. What emerged from these research activities suggested that there were a considerable number of points of general consensus on the current situation in Statia, on community defined goals for the formal education system, and even on possible approaches to achieve these goals. Four main points of consensus were identified in collaboration with the community:

1. All agreed that the system in place was not working and that the results were far below their expectations.
2. All agreed that the goal of education on the island should be full academic competence in English alongside full academic competence in Dutch.
3. All agreed that, for the great majority of the students of Statia, Dutch is a foreign language.
4. All had observed that the students' attitudes toward Dutch in particular, and learning in general, tended to deteriorate as the students progressed from primary school where Dutch was being used alongside English, to secondary school where all lessons were supposed to be taught only in Dutch.

These points of consensus were resoundingly confirmed by the results of the language attitudes and use survey, the narrative proficiency tests, and the classroom observations, enhancing the validity of the study results and ensuring that as many members of the community as possible could eventually take ownership over the process of addressing the question of language of instruction in the schools.

In terms of language policy in Statia, the general results from all of the modules of the research project including the attitudes and use survey, the narrative proficiency test, the classroom observations, the focus group sessions and the literature research provided us with the solid and cross-verified empirical evidence necessary to draw the following conclusions:

1. All participants shared a common goal: maximal proficiency in both English and Dutch for all Statian students. There was a common misperception, however, that teaching a foreign language such as Dutch in Statia as a first or second language, or using Dutch as a medium of instruction or for initial literacy would automatically yield better results than teaching Dutch as a foreign language.

2. Because English is a first or second language of the majority of students and is a language widely used in daily life in Statia, maximal academic proficiency in English has been shown to be best achieved when it has been used as the language of instruction in the schools of Statia, and not simply taught as a language subject.

3. Because Dutch is a foreign language for the majority of students and is a language rarely used in daily life in Statia outside of school, maximal informal and academic proficiency in Dutch have been best achieved when Dutch has been taught as a foreign language in the schools of Statia and when Dutch has not been used as the language of instruction (see the results from the primary schools in the sections below).

4. Transitions in Primary Education from one language of instruction (English) to another (Dutch) have proven to be difficult and counterproductive in the schools of Statia.

5. The use of Dutch rather than English as language of instruction in Statian schools has had a negative impact on students' academic performance in all subjects (including Dutch) and has effectively excluded the majority of them from access to quality education, as observed by teachers, parents, schoolboards and other stakeholders interviewed in this study.

6. The use of Dutch as language of instruction and of Euro-centric approaches, methods and materials has alienated Statian students from their own language, culture, and community, with increasingly corrosive effects on their self-esteem at the individual level as well as on the Statian society as a whole, with Statian students adopting an increasingly hostile attitude toward Dutch language and all things Dutch, as pointed out time and time again during our interviews with students, parents, teachers in both primary and secondary education and other stakeholders.

7. Although the *Schakelklas* may have had some positive effects in terms of the student's attitudes towards Dutch, teachers observed that many students would be doing better if they were being taught in English.

8. Basic pedagogical principles, such as: (1) using what students already know to introduce what they do not yet know; (2) establishing a solid foundation in Academic Competence in English based on their informal competence in that language; (3) building on this first language Academic Competence in English as

well as on a carefully cultivated Informal Competence in Dutch to eventually establish an Academic Competence in Dutch; and (4) the introduction of key concepts in mathematics, the social and natural sciences and other subjects in a language known to the students before introducing these concepts to them in a language that they do not know, have often been violated in the schools of Statia, with predictably frustrating results for the meaningful participation of students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders in the educational process.

5.2 The Two Options

The research process led to the formulation of two possible options for the solution of the identified problems that were presented to the government in 2013. The first option aimed at the total abolition of Dutch as a language of instruction in the Statian educational system, the second aimed at the abolition of Dutch as a mandatory language of instruction while keeping open a possible Dutch language of instruction track alongside the English language of instruction track in the last 2 years of secondary education. Both options focused on accommodating the widely expressed desire for full academic competence in both Dutch and English at the end of secondary education. The two options were accompanied by a set of prerequisites that had been formulated on the basis of the outcomes of the different research components, and these will be presented after the two options:

Option 1
- Standard/school English as the only language of instruction and as the language of initial literacy in the pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools, with attention paid to the transition from Statian English to Standard/school English during the first years. Dutch should be taught consistently and systematically as a foreign language at all of these levels.
- Foreign language instruction in Dutch should follow a strategy of *spelend onderwijs*[1] at the pre-primary level and during the first years of primary school, to ensure that all students gain a sufficient Informal Competence in Dutch to allow them to begin to acquire an Academic Competence in Dutch.
- Literacy in English should begin to be taught in the first years of primary school, while literacy in Dutch should not be introduced until a solid foundation has been established in reading and writing English (probably in *groep* 5[2] of primary school).
- Thereafter, academic competence in Dutch can be further consolidated on the basis of students' academic competence in English. This means that, in general, academic concepts should be taught in English first before they are introduced in Dutch.

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[1] 'Playful education': gaining informal competence Dutch as a foreign language, in a playful way.
[2] Primary grade three

Option 2

- Standard/school English as the only language of instruction and as the language of initial literacy in the pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools, with attention paid to the transition from Statian English to Standard/school English during the first years. Dutch should be taught consistently and systematically as a foreign language at all of these levels.
- Foreign language instruction in Dutch should follow a strategy of *spelend onderwijs* at the pre-primary level and during the first years of primary school, to ensure that all students gain a sufficient Informal Competence in Dutch to allow them to begin to acquire an Academic Competence in Dutch.
- Literacy in English should begin to be taught in the first years of primary school, while literacy in Dutch should not be introduced until a solid foundation has been established in reading and writing English (probably in *groep* 5 of primary school).
- Thereafter, academic competence in Dutch can be further consolidated on the basis of students' academic competence in English. This means that, in general, academic concepts should be taught in English first before they are introduced in Dutch.
- At the end of the second year of secondary school students can opt:

  (1) to continue on an academic, professional, or practical track with English as the language of instruction and Dutch as a foreign language; or
  (2) to shift to a HAVO or VMBO track with Dutch as the language of instruction if they plan on further studies in the European Netherlands or the ABC islands (in which case, they will receive some additional hours of instruction in Papiamentu/o as a foreign language).

5.3   Recommendations for Implementation

Keeping in mind that former attempts for educational reform in Statia had failed time and again, the research team decided to formulate 21 conditions for the successful implementation of the transition from Dutch as language of instruction to English as language of instruction as a support to the teams that would be tasked with implementing these changes:

The successful implementation of either of these options would depend on the following:

1. Teachers should have systematic and dependable support in terms of training, coaching, supervision, and networking with other teachers.
2. Teacher placement should be very carefully done, to ensure that no monolingual Dutch teachers are placed anywhere except in Dutch foreign language classes, or (if Option 2 were to be selected) in the HAVO and/or VMBO classes of the final 2 years of secondary school.

3. More attempts should be made to recruit teachers from Statia and the rest of the Caribbean region.

4. Teachers recruited from the European Netherlands and elsewhere outside of Statia should be able use English as a language of instruction. They should first undergo a comprehensive orientation program before they arrive in Statia, and then be assigned a 'buddy' to help them to successfully adapt once they arrive on the island. Teachers should be encouraged to integrate into Statian society, rather than separating themselves from it. Teachers who integrate well should be offered contracts of longer duration than the standard 3 year contract.

5. Relatively uniform but generally flexible learning lines which reflect best practices should be established with maximal input from the teachers themselves.

6. Culturally appropriate English first language materials should be acquired and/or developed for the teaching of all subjects at all levels (but especially at the pre-primary and lower primary levels), except for Dutch as a foreign language and the subjects of the HAVO and VMBO tracks in the last 2 years of secondary education (if Option 2 were to be selected).

7. Linkages between the pre-primary and primary schools should be strengthened, with the goal of ensuring that *spelend onderwijs* begins in Dutch as early as possible. Caribbean-adapted Dutch foreign language materials and culturally sensitive Dutch foreign language teachers should play a crucial role at the pre-primary level in laying the foundation for informal and academic competency in Dutch at the higher levels.

8. A system should be put into place to identify, acknowledge, reward, publicize, and disseminate best practice by teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders.

9. Secondary school students should have easy access to counselors and regularly scheduled individual and group appointments with them, to make sure that they are fully aware of their options in terms of tracking within secondary education and further study after graduation.

10. More opportunities should be made available for further study in the Caribbean region (e.g. by creating agreements and exchange programs with Caribbean tertiary institutions), where students can stay and feel closer to home. Counseling should play a key role here during the first years of secondary education. More opportunities should be made available to graduates to return and make a living in Statia.

11. Students intending to pursue further studies should be made aware of options for study as geographically and culturally close to Statia as possible. Any student with plans to study off island should undergo a thorough orientation process. Whenever possible intake and other tertiary entrance examinations should be taken and passed by students while they are still on Statia.

12. Stronger linkages should be forged with support agencies such as EduPartners, the Mega D Foundation, the Education Care Expertise Center, and the Youth and Family Office to provide counseling, study skills, and other services to complement those provided in the schools.

13. Parents should be reintegrated into their children's learning process and more time should be made available for parent-teacher meetings. Report cards should be made more user friendly to give a clearer overall picture of students' performance, parents should be allowed to sit in on classes and participate whenever possible. Dutch classes should be organized for adults/parents.

14. More attractive opportunities should be made available to students to use Dutch outside of school and to cultivate an appreciation for the language. Perhaps the program of summer camps in the European Netherlands could be revived. The secondary school should make further attempts to reconnect with the surrounding community.

15. Special attention should be paid to the particular needs of the high percentage of students who were not born in Statia and/or are not Dutch citizens. These needs may be twofold: scholarships for secondary education students (between the ages of 16–18) who are not Dutch citizens and special attention for students from Spanish speaking and other backgrounds who may not wish to pursue their studies in the European Netherlands.

16. All standardized national testing should be in English, except for: (1) tests for competence in Dutch as a foreign language (here '*Profiel Taalvaardigheid Hoger Onderwijs'* of *'Certificaat Nederlands als Vreemde Taal'* can be utilized as a guide); (2) tests in the HAVO and VMBO tracks (if Option 2 were to be selected); (3) any students who may opt to be tested in Dutch. Some experimentation could be done whereby the Dutch exams could be translated *both* linguistically (into English) *and* culturally to suit the Statian context.

17. The appropriate legal framework should be identified for the use of English as language of instruction.

18. Where there are questions and stumbling blocks in the implementation of a system with English as the language of instruction and Dutch as a foreign language, reference should be made to the school system on Saba which generally follows the British (CXC) system and to the Statia Terminal School which generally follows the US (College Board) system, to determine the optimal solution for the schools on Statia.

19. Statian English: At all levels, teachers should normally use Standard English rather than Statian English in their classes, and expect students to do the same. Whenever Statian English is used by students in class, teachers should immediately take advantage of the moment to demonstrate to students how the same thing is said in Standard English, gently and non-judgmentally reminding the students of the contexts where Standard English is the preferred form, such as at school.

20. Dutch should be taught as a Foreign Language, as the vast majority of the students are non-speakers of Dutch with very limited access to Dutch outside the school system. Crucially, Dutch should not be taught as first or second language. Foreign language education to foreign language speakers has been demonstrated to be more effective than first or even second language instruction to foreign language speakers (i.e. non-speakers) of Dutch or any other language. Models of Bilingual Education (Dutch-English) in Holland cannot be adapted

to Statia, because of the different status of the two languages in the two parts of the Kingdom. English is increasingly becoming a second language in the European Netherlands. Students in Holland have massive access to English through the media, fostering high comprehension levels on a daily basis from early on, which facilitates the use of English as a language of instruction in the European Netherlands within a model of bilingual education. The same is not true for Dutch in Statia, where English is the dominant language and Dutch does not play a significant role in most peoples' daily lives, apart from school and governance.

21. Number of hours per week for Dutch as a foreign language: An example of how Dutch could be integrated into the curriculum as a foreign language could include the following: at least 3 h of *spelend onderwijs* in Dutch per week in all years of pre-primary education, at least 4 h per week of Dutch as a foreign language in all of the primary school years, and at least 4 h per week of Dutch as a foreign language during the first 2 years of secondary school. During the final 2 years of secondary school, the number of hours of Dutch as a foreign language would vary based on the orientation of the track.

5.4   Presenting the Options and Recommendations to the Governments of the Netherlands and Statia and to the Population of Statia

The report was presented in written form in September 2013 to the governments that had requested it. The full text of the report as it was finally approved and presented to the Chamber of Representatives of the Netherlands and to the Island Council of Statia can be found online under the title 'Language of Instruction in Sint Eustatius: Report of the 2013 research group on language of instruction in Sint Eustatius.' (Faraclas et al. 2013).

The research team insisted on the presentation of the recommendations to the community of Statia. All authorities agreed on this proposal and the team was given the opportunity present and discuss the research findings during two very well attended town hall meetings in the E. Mike van Putten Youth Center (also referred to as the 'Lion's Den') in Statia on January 27 and 28, 2014. During these community meetings, the strong sense of consensus among the people of the island was reconfirmed, and it became even clearer that a large majority of those present adopted and valued the observations and recommendations that had emerged from the research project. On January 28, the project findings and proposals were also presented in a series of radio-interviews with the project team members that were broadcast several times over the period of January to February 2014. The RCN office, on the basis of the report and in close consultation with the research team, drew up a press release that was distributed in the Caribbean media.

5.5   Feasibility Study

After the research team presented the results and suggested options concerning the language of instruction, the authorities decided to mandate an evaluation of the recommendations of the research project by means of a feasibility study. The focus of the feasibility study was: "to answer the question of what language of instruction and examination system would be most feasible on St. Eustatius. The study was premised on the students on St. Eustatius, their capabilities and their future prospects." (Drenthe et al. 2014, p. 5). The results of the feasibility study supported the adoption of Option 1 of the two options recommended in our original report, which was to adopt English as the language of instruction in primary, secondary and vocational education in order to prepare Statian students for the CXC exams, while teaching Dutch as a strong foreign language.

With respect to the new language policy which would be required by the adoption of Option 1, those who were responsible for carrying out the feasibility study highlighted the importance of making proficiency courses available to the teachers in Statian schools, designed to assist them in developing their full academic competencies in Standard English. Another area that they identified as in need of urgent attention was the development of specific methods and materials to teach Dutch as a foreign language in the Caribbean context. They noted that although the implementation of the new model would require additional economic investment, this investment could be minimized by efficient collaboration among the five different schools on the island and the Buzzy Bee Day Care Centre. They added that the development of a method and textbooks to teach Dutch as a foreign language in the Caribbean context would not only be relevant for the education system in Statia, but also for schools on the other islands of the Dutch Caribbean, hopefully leading to further savings in the longer term.

The confirmation of the findings of the original research project by the feasibility study that followed was the last element required to convince governmental bodies to accept the recommendations regarding the language of instruction made in the original report.

5.6   Acceptance of the Proposed Changes in Option 1

In June of 2014, the educational authorities approved the implementation of Option 1, which recommended the use of English as the language of instruction and Dutch being taught as a strong foreign language. The preparation for the recommended transition from Dutch to English as the language of instruction in all schools at all levels started in 2014, with the actual implementation being initiated in school year 2015–2016. This process was envisioned as a gradual transition, meaning that the system would be changed step-by-step, phasing out the Dutch secondary school tracking and examination system and the use of Dutch as a language of instruction.

5.7   Implementation

A consequence of the implementation of English as the language of instruction in secondary education was that the transitional phase from English to Dutch in the last 2 years of primary education became redundant, and that the English to Dutch transitional *Schakelklas* at the Gwendoline van Putten secondary school became redundant as well. The annual School Guide of the Gwendoline van Putten school for 2017–2018 clearly indicated that the transition from Dutch to English as language of instruction was in full swing at the school. The guide stated that as of spring 2018, the school would be in the third year of the transition to English, so that the only students at the school who would still be studying under the former Dutch system would be those in their final 2 years of secondary education. In 2020 the last cohort of students who began their secondary education under the Dutch system should have graduated, after which time Dutch would only be offered as a foreign language, with some additional Dutch instruction being given to those students who plan to study in the European Netherlands. Students in the final Dutch cohort who are not successful in the 2020 exam year would have one last opportunity to repeat their exams, so that the Dutch system would have been completely replaced by school year 2021–2022.

   The decision has also been taken to change the assessment system in the schools. Instead of the Dutch tests and examinations that were used in the past, the Caribbean regional assessment system of the Barbados and Jamaica based CXC (Caribbean Examinations Council) has been adopted. This assessment system "offers a wide range of subjects in academic, technical and vocational areas for candidates of varying ages, abilities and interests from the English-speaking Caribbean and the Netherlands Antilles and Suriname" (Caribbean Examinations Council 2018). Apart from the fact that it is regionally embedded and that it is fit for the context of the students in Statia, the added advantage of using the CXC assessment framework is that it is backed up by an extensive professional and material support network, which can facilitate the development of syllabuses and other teaching materials maximally adapted to the different regional settings of the Caribbean.

   Students who initiated their secondary education from August 2015 onward have been prepared for the exams issued by the Caribbean Examinations Council that cater to both academically and vocationally oriented students. In this new system, students prepare for the Caribbean Certificate Secondary Level Competency (CCSLC) in 3 years. Subsequently, students can proceed to a higher form of secondary education, directed to the attainment of either a Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) or a Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ).

5.8   Evaluations of the Transition from Dutch to English

In its 2016 reports concerning all four primary schools in Statia (Inspectie van het Onderwijs 2016c, d, e, f), the Dutch Inspectorate of Education pointed out substantial improvements in comparison to the results recorded in the previous reports of

2012. Although it was too early to evaluate the final results of the students due to the recent character of the implementation of the transition, the changes in the atmosphere at the schools were already very noticeable. It was observed that teachers were motivated and felt responsible to work as a team with the newly created materials in English. Levels of respect were high among students and teachers such that the schools had improved their capacity to function as safe, pleasant and cheerful learning environments. Class observations pointed out that classes were well structured and encouraged students' active participation. Parents had also noticed these and other improvements and felt more connected to the schools. Despite the fact that the Dutch inspectorate did not wish to evaluate the attainment of core competencies in the Statian schools on the basis of the fact that the Dutch tests were deemed not to be fit for this purpose, all other aspects of the schools were evaluated in a positive way, which was not the case in the 2012 reports (Inspectie van het Onderwijs 2012a, b, c, d, e).

The 2016 reports of the inspectorate of education for the Gwendoline van Putten secondary school (Inspectie van het Onderwijs 2016a, b) confirm that the process of transition from Dutch to English as the language of instruction was taking place in the school and that the general trend at the school was a positive one. This has helped to create a favorable climate for the full implementation of the transition. Despite the fact that the inspectorate report concluded that the school had not yet reached so-called 'baseline quality' (Inspectie van het Onderwijs 2016a, p. 11) many areas of tangible progress were noted. The school had succeeded in transforming itself into a quiet and safe environment, a point which was positively affirmed by teachers, students and parents. Although the transition from Dutch to English as the language of instruction had demanded much effort and additional work on the part of the teachers and administrative staff at the school, they expressed optimistic attitudes toward the changes. They generally felt connected and committed to the school as a team, functioning with a high level of cooperation in a positive atmosphere. The results of the students at the school revealed systematic improvements, which appear to confirm these observations. The GvP School Guide for 2017–2018 indicates that the percentage of passing grades had increased substantially in 2016 and 2017, reaching from 81% to 100% per class.

The main point of concern for the schools which was underscored in the reports was the lack of appropriate materials to teach Dutch as a foreign language and to assess the students' proficiency in Dutch. It is not yet clear what the outcomes of the new system will be in terms of students' proficiency in Dutch, but this observed lack of materials could potentially represent a threat to the smooth transition to English as the language of instruction.

The 2018 reports of the inspectorate of education for the Gwendoline van Putten secondary school (Inspectie van het Onderwijs 2018a, b) signal additional positive developments regarding educational quality at the school. The percentages of students passing their final exams increased substantially in 2016 and 2017, reaching 100% in certain tracks. In the areas of learning materials, student counseling, school environment, quality control and time management in the classroom the school has reached so-called 'baseline quality' (Inspectie van het Onderwijs 2018a, p. 5–10)

and specific programs have been created in order to meet the needs of individual students. The reports note that the introduction of CCSLC encounters wide support among the staff and has led to more interaction in the classroom and to the systematic development of language skills in English. Although the full implementation of CCSLC among the school team members will require more time and effort, the reports express optimism and confidence regarding the final results of the transition process.

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Chapter 6
Conclusions

Check for updates

> *We make the road by walking.*
> Horton and Freire (1990)

In Chap. 2, we cited researchers who have challenged the traditional academic-centered paradigm within which most of what is considered to be 'serious' research takes place in Western society. These sources observe that such 'top-down' research is not often well received by the communities that it investigates due to the fact that the objectified populations of researched societies are often not informed about the purpose, results and potential consequences of the research, nor are they involved in any significant way in research design, implementation, analysis and interpretation. These negative attitudes toward research in general are magnified in the case of research done by institutions and individuals identified with the former colonizer in postcolonial societies. Questioning the ethical responsibilities of the researcher in the research process, Smith (1999) observes: "from the vantage point of the colonized … the term 'research' is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. The word itself, 'research', is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary."

With such issues in mind, Tollefson (2006: 44–45) concludes that 'a critical examination of research methodology raises several fundamental questions'. Based upon Blommaert (1996); Pederson (2002) and Ryon (2002), he asks 'how [do] different discourse communities, including language-policy researchers, establish and maintain their preferred forms of knowledge?'. Making reference to Gegeo (1998), Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo (1999) and Williams and Morris (2000), he also asks 'what "counts" as legitimate research questions, acceptable research methodologies, and persuasive forms of evidence?'. Finally, following Canagarajah (2002), he asks 'how are preferred forms of knowledge created and sustained among groups affected by language policies?' and based on Ryon (2002) he interrogates the 'role […] others [should] play in the research process, especially in evaluating research.' After formulating these fundamental questions, he concludes, with reference to

Williams and Morris ([2000]) that 'people who experience the consequences of language policy should have a major role in making policy decisions'.

In order to address Tollefson's questions and concerns, we find that our experience in Statia has made it more evident to us than ever before that community based research is a framework or approach, rather than a methodology. This means that any given community based research project can, and in most cases should, look very different from any other, in terms of its scope, methodology, description/analysis of results, and the problem solving strategies which emerge from it.

In response to Tollefson's first question as to 'how different discourse communities, including language-policy researchers, establish and maintain their preferred forms of knowledge', we, as academic researchers, and the people of Statia, as a community of researchers, engaged in a process of dynamic and constant negotiation over what we established and maintained as our 'preferred forms of knowledge.' One of the most important aspects of community based research is accountability to the facts on the ground, that is, to the multi-layered contexts that shape, and in turn are shaped by, the particular community which serves as the locus of any given study. Another key facet of a community based approach is commitment to the community in their efforts to resolve their problems. One of the most agonizing challenges confronted by academics involved in community based research is the almost predictable head-on collision between what we as 'professional' researchers have been trained to expect in an idealized Platonic world of unitary truth, universal inviolable principles, neat mathematical logic, and a single 'objective' and infallible 'scientific' method on the one hand, and on the other the multiplex, contradictory, unpredictable and 'messy' process dictated by the facts on the ground as well as by our commitment to fulfilling our promise to make our research *work with* and *work for* the community involved.

In order to maintain accountability to the facts on the ground and fulfill our commitment to the community, those of us who are academics as well as community based researchers are constantly obliged to reshuffle our traditional priorities in favor of open-mindedness, adaptability, compromise and critical analysis in our thinking and practice. This applies not only to our understanding and critique of traditional academic-centered research, but also to our understanding and practice of community based research itself. Thus, a stance of critical pragmatism is required of us, whereby we are constantly expected to co-create and re-create the research project in dialectical and dialogic interaction with our co-researchers in the community as well as with the ever-changing context within which the community situates itself. Critical pragmatism militates against the projection of any idealized models or expectations on the communities in which we work, thus avoiding the elevation of community based research to the status of just another dogmatically defined ritual in the academic arsenal of 'expert' techniques.

In relation to Tollefson's second question as to 'what "counts" as legitimate research questions, acceptable research methodologies, and persuasive forms of evidence' the people of Statia challenged us as academic researchers to transform the nature of our commitment to a community based approach, especially with reference to how that approach might interface with the specific language policy and

planning conditions prevailing on the island. This involved moving away from an idealized set of principles, questions, methodologies and notions of 'evidence' to a pragmatic and sometimes contradiction-riddled commitment to doing all in our power to put the community in control of the research process.

When we were originally approached by the Ministry to carry out the project in Statia, we immediately contacted the networks of community workers with whom we had already engaged around the issue of the language of instruction in the schools. We were advised by our partners on the island to accept the offer, but to adopt an attitude of critical pragmatism in our response to the government. We could have easily rejected the project proposal without any further consideration since it was conceptualized and designed according to the traditional academic-centered approach to research. Instead, we attempted to consider the proposal in light of our ongoing commitment to the community and accountability to the facts on the ground. In terms of our commitment, we were acutely aware of the effects of the use of foreign languages as languages of instruction and initial literacy in Statia and the rest of the Caribbean, and we and our partners in Statia saw this as an opportunity to support the island community in making a change which could benefit their children in very concrete ways. In terms of accountability, we also had to recognize that the Ministry and the rest of the governmental educational system was an integral part of the context within which formal education takes place in Statia. Although we were aware that the educational authorities had historically played a major role in the causes of the problem at hand, we were also aware that these same authorities could play an important future role in changing policy and practice as part of a potential solution to that and other problems.

Thus, we decided that instead of behaving like traditional academics and washing our hands of a proposal that did not meet our idealized 'expert' standards for community based research, we would get our hands 'dirty' and make a counter-proposal designed to reimagine and restructure the government's proposal, in such a way that it might give us some space to continue to construct a community based framework and retain a community based approach in our work on Statia. It should be noted that, while we were clear in our counter-proposal that we wanted to adopt a more community based approach, we did not completely revamp the proposal. To completely redesign the proposal would not only involve positioning ourselves as 'experts', but it would also replicate the 'top-down' practice previously adopted in the formulation of the original proposal, whereby the community itself was absent in a crucial area of research design. Instead, in the spirit of critical pragmatism and compromise, we added some components that would allow us to open up spaces and provide platforms for meaningful community input at as many levels as possible, a strategy which proved acceptable to the government.

Of course, in an ideal situation, the proposal itself should have emerged from the community instead of the government, and should have been designed by the community itself, instead of by the academics advising the Ministry or by us as an academic research team. But community based research is not designed for neat and predictable ideal situations. Community based research is instead about the messy and unpredictable real-life processes whereby communities describe, analyze and

solve their problems in contexts that are more often than not saturated with asymmetrical power relations. Given the nature of these asymmetries of power in the small island territories and states of the Caribbean, we found ourselves embarking on our government sponsored work in Statia with a proposal in hand that had been designed with little or no community input. Based on our previous visits to Statia, as well as on our previous experiences in community based research, however, the members of the research team felt that it was not too late to incorporate significant input from the community in shaping and steering the research agenda.

This pressing need for community input in the design of the project defined our third field visit to Statia, which was the first visit where we were positioned as government sponsored researchers. We explicitly avoided creating any of the instruments to be used for the research before this visit and we purposefully avoided gathering data in any systematic way during the visit itself. This visit to Statia was instead completely dedicated to expanding the spaces and platforms that we and our partners had already established for dialogue about the language of instruction in the schools with as many members of the community as possible in all of their roles in relation to formal education: as students, parents, grandparents, care givers, teachers, school administrative staff-persons, childcare professionals, educational support professionals, governmental education officers, social workers, youth workers, community activists, etc. Our interactions with community members took on various forms, including one-on-one interviews, focus group meetings, town hall meetings, and call-in shows over the mass media. The thematic thread that bound all of this dialogue process together was a focus on what each community member individually and each community group collectively thought were the important questions and problems that needed to be investigated and addressed in relation to the language of instruction in the schools and how best to go about involving the community in the investigative process.

We left Statia after that visit with a qualitatively better understanding than when we arrived of how the community itself identified, described and analyzed the challenges and problems that they faced in relation to the language of instruction in the schools. We also left with a clear sense of how the community saw our role in supporting them in their efforts to come to grips with these challenges and problems. These insights provided us with an overall framework within which the various components of the research project could function in a coherent and complementary way and guided us in the process of designing the instruments that we administered during our fourth visit. We would have preferred to have community members play a more active role in designing the instruments and eventually administering them, but this was not possible given our limitations in terms of time and resources. In any case, by the end of our third visit, a significant portion of the island population had for the first time in their lives participated directly in a dialogical process with a team of academics designed to acknowledge, valorize and mobilize their understanding of a research problem faced by their community.

With reference to Tollefson's final question as to 'how preferred forms of knowledge [are] created and sustained among groups affected by language policies' particularly in relation to the 'role [...] others [should] play in the research process,

especially in evaluating research,' we find it useful to describe our struggle over how to maximize our contribution to the research process while minimizing our encroachment on community control over it. By the time we arrived in Statia for our fourth visit, awareness throughout the community of what the research team was doing and how it differed from what academic researchers had done on the island in the past had reached the critical mass required to ensure high levels of community involvement and maximal quantity and quality of results. We immediately resumed the dialogue process initiated during our previous visits, but with a new focus, not only on gathering data, but also on deepening the level of critical analysis of the problem at hand on the part of all of the community members as co-researchers. What we learned at this juncture was that our efforts to abandon the traditional 'expert' stance adopted by academic researchers had nothing to do with disengaging from the research process. On the contrary, a commitment to ensuring maximal community control over the process required a much deeper level of engagement, understanding and commitment on our part, especially at the level of critical analysis.

People wanted their voices to be heard and had confidence that the research activities had been organized and designed in such a way as to record and transmit their understandings, descriptions and analyses of the research problem, as well as their past and proposed initiatives to solve it. As the level of problem analysis deepened, it rapidly became apparent that points of underlying community-wide consensus were emerging that helped to transform the polarized polemics of the past around the issue of language of instruction in the schools into a process of healing divisions in the community and mobilizing the population as a whole to work together to bring about changes in the formal educational system that correspond to their common interests and goals.

The robust, complementary and mutually validating results from the surveys, narrative proficiency tests, focus group meetings and classroom observations carried out during the fourth visit can be attributed in no small way to the spaces opened up over the previous year by community workers and ourselves for meaningful and consequential input from the community via the critical dialogue process. While each set of results obtained from each of the research components proved to be convincing in itself, the descriptive, explanatory and analytical power unleashed through the triangulation of the data gathered in all of the components together proved to be decisive in re-affirming and validating the community's understanding of the problem and in convincing the policy makers in government to change the language of instruction in the schools.

By the time we left Statia at the end of the fourth visit, there was a growing sense among the various community members that they could and should assume more control over policy and practice in the formal education system. This new found sense of power was further consolidated when we returned on our fifth, sixth and seventh visits to the island to report back to the community on the final results and to support our networks on the island in their ongoing work. Thus, the community was in an optimal position to assume as much ownership as possible over the eventual changes in the classroom that resulted from the research process. From the

latest reports on the implementation of the new policy on the language of instruction in Statia, it appears that this ownership is helping to make the transition from Dutch to English a success.

Our work in Statia has compelled us to pose some additional questions to those quoted from Tollefson at the beginning of this chapter. We feel that the following three questions are relevant to community based research in general and language policy and planning in particular: (1) What is the relationship between research and social change? (2) Can research be considered separately from the communities impacted by that research and their agendas for social change? and (3) To what extent can the process of transforming researched communities into communities of co-researchers achieve levels of acknowledgement and valorization of the research process and levels of community ownership and mobilization necessary for bringing about social change in the image and the interests of all of the stakeholders? To frame these questions, we make reference once again to Pérez-Milans and Tollefson (2018), who emphasize that:

> Despite important work revealing the problematic consequences of the agency-structure distinction, the tension between different approaches in LPP is not likely to disappear any time soon. The challenge for future research is therefore to sort through and make explicit the underlying ontological, epistemological, and personal/social underpinnings for researchers' claims. This effort may involve engagement with approaches that no longer privilege discourse in the study of social change, but instead focus more explicitly on the material realities of people understood not merely as disembodied life forms embedded in discursive systems, but rather as concrete human beings with substantial and inescapable material needs.' (Pérez-Milans & Tollefson 2018, p. 731)

We feel that much of what the people of Statia were able to achieve through the activities described in this volume can be attributed to an approach that strove at all points to minimize the reification of the population and to maximize meaningful input from all groups in society. In order to best meet these goals, the research process became wherever possible an extension of previous and ongoing efforts of community members to identify, analyze and solve problems related to language and education. This process unfolded in traditional community venues for dialogue and consensus building, such as church and town hall meetings where all voices are heard, rather than relying on an exclusive set of key informants, somehow deemed to be representative of the entire island. As a result, the research project became an integrated thread in the fabric of Statian society.

Concerning our first question, 'What is the relationship between research and social change?' the evidence presented in this volume supports the critique that we advanced in Chap. 2 of the artificial distinctions made in colonial and colonized societies between education, research and social action. In that critique, we endorsed the insights of indigenous peoples worldwide who contend that in most human societies throughout most of human history, the agency of every individual was recognized and valorized as educator, researcher and problem solver, and each member of any given community was expected to integrate teaching, learning, the description and analysis of problems and the resolution of problems into a seamless whole, without blind and alienating reliance on a class of 'experts' specialized in any one

of these artificially delineated areas. Such societies could be called communities of co-learners, co-researchers and co-agents for social change, and one way of describing community based research is an approach to investigation that aims to constantly re-create such communities.

The indigenous critique of colonizing research demonstrates how, at the societal level, the official compartmentalization and professionalization of education, research and social action has provided ruling classes in both Western societies and the societies colonized by them with powerful tools to ensure that social change happens in the interests of those dominant classes, rather than in the interests of the community as a whole. This indigenous critique goes further and deeper, however, to open our eyes to how, at the individual level, people everywhere, even in the most colonial and colonized societies, still constantly find themselves obliged to assume creative, holistic and synthetic forms of agency that violate the officially delineated boundaries between learning, investigating and problem solving, in order to survive and create life within death-seeking systems of hegemonic domination (Esteva 2001).

For example, one needs only to examine the countless ingenious and subversive strategies that women everywhere formulate and implement on a daily basis to ensure their own survival as well as that of their families to realize that education, research and social action are still routinely mobilized by them, not as separate areas of specialization, but instead as part of holistic agendas for survival. Unfortunately, such amazing feats of agency are trivialized and rendered all but invisible by the colonial ruling classes and an academic establishment (including 'researchers') which has been created to serve those ruling classes' interests. This process of erasure has been so pervasive and so internalized, that even those who perform these paradigm defying acts on a daily basis normally do so with little acknowledgement or valorization of the incredible feats of agency that they represent. One of the most important tasks of community based research is to support community members in a process of becoming more aware and appreciative of the agency that they still exert in solving their everyday problems, so that they can begin to use this as a foundation for reclaiming greater agency at the societal level.

In relation to our second question, 'Can research be considered separately from the communities impacted by that research and their agendas for social change?' our findings from Statia clearly demonstrate that the more research activities are directly related to the communities that they impact and the more research activities are integrated with those communities' agendas for social change, the greater the chances that such research will be welcomed, owned and taken on board by those communities in the resolution of the problems that such research activities are ostensibly designed to address. Smith (1999) effectively argues that it is not just pointless to consider research in isolation of the impacted communities, it is also counterproductive, alienating and colonizing. Moreover, the evidence presented in this volume suggests that even such traditionally Western academic criteria as validity, replicability and accountability to the empirical facts are better satisfied by an approach that works with and for communities and their social agendas, rather than in some artificial and 'objective' isolation from them. Not only did the results

obtained using all of the different instruments that we designed based on our engagement with the community and their agendas validate one another, they also laid the foundation for opening up and expanding spaces for consensus building and collective social action. The considerable extent to which such spaces and such collective action were firmly grounded in the 'facts on the ground' that is, in the real lives of the people of Statia, is evidenced in the eventual success of the initiative undertaken by them to change the language of instruction in their schools. In other words, real accountability to the empirical facts yields real results.

Regarding our third question 'To what extent can the process of transforming researched communities into communities of co-researchers achieve sufficient acknowledgement and valorization of the research process to achieve the levels of community ownership and mobilization required to bring about social change in the image and the interests of all of the stakeholders?' we consider the evidence from Statia for a positive correlation between these variables to be convincing. The greater the extent to which a given community can become engaged as a community of co-researchers, the greater the chances both for their acknowledgement and valorization of the research process, as well as for their ownership of and mobilization in the social changes resulting from the research process. As the community became increasingly involved in research design, execution, and interpretation as well as with the dissemination of research results, they became increasingly aware and proud of what they were doing to identify and analyze problems related to language and education on the island. This self-awareness and self-esteem increased their confidence and determination in proposing and implementing the changes that they proposed to those problems. More than anything else, this confidence and determination proved to be decisive in convincing those officially responsible for language policy and planning to approve the proposal to change the language of instruction from Dutch to English, and more than anything else, this confidence and determination have proved to be decisive in ensuring that the new policy is being effectively and successfully implemented.

The classroom is a flashpoint for an array of social problems, and a virtual battleground on which the competing agendas of different social forces often clash. Thus, the factors that have made formal education an experience of failure rather than success, and exclusion rather than inclusion, for the majority of students in Statia, the Caribbean and other small island territories and states are many, and the resolution of some of these problems will involve community wide mobilization over many years. The results of the research carried out in Statia were instrumental in bringing about one of the few changes in governmental policy and practice which could actually have an immediate impact on alleviating the situation in the classroom: a change in the language of instruction. But it is important to note here that some less obvious results of this research hold the promise of contributing to the eventual resolution of some of the more intractable problems that manifest themselves in the classroom as well. It is our hope that the process of community engagement that was set in motion during the course of this research will serve as an inspiration to the people of Statia, by demonstrating clearly to them that they can successfully bring about positive social change in their own interests. We also hope

that the mobilization of the community around the issue of the language of instruction in the schools can help to lay the groundwork for continued community organizing over the longer term aimed at grappling with some of the more systemic problems that have had a negative impact on the schools and the rest of Statian society.

In light of the investigative activities and results that it documents and analyzes, it is our opinion that this book provides significant evidence in support of community based research as a robust alternative to traditional academic approaches to research in the field of language policy and planning and other areas that have an impact on issues of social justice in postcolonial societies.

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