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# Sociolinguistics: The Study of Language in Society

Key Stage 4

English Language

Resource 5

2019



# Resource Five Overview



Topic	From One Small Island to Another
GCSE Modules	Critical reading. Comprehension.
Objectives	By the end of this resource you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Be able to show an awareness of code-switching</li><li>✓ Have reflected on your use of different varieties of language</li></ul>
Instructions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read the data source</li><li>2. Complete the activities</li><li>3. Explore the further reading</li></ol>
Context	<p>Andrea Levy was born in London in 1956 to a family of Jamaican immigrants. She began writing when she was in her mid-thirties. She wrote about the black British experience in Britain from different perspectives. This resources looks at extracts of her 4<sup>th</sup> book, <i>Small Island</i>, written in 2004.</p> <p>Based on the experiences of those of her father's generation who returned to Britain after being in the RAF during WWII.</p> <p>Explores the issues that arose in England when Jamaicans came to live amongst the English.</p>



# Resource Five

## Data Source



### Small Island

#### Extract



'How you get on?' I asked. She dodged round me to walk on. 'They tell you you have a job?' She feigned a deaf ear. And, man, she is walking faster than any Jamaican ever walk except when they run. I have to call after her, 'Hortense,' for I was out of puff. 'What they say to you?' Still this woman has no word for me. Cha. I am following on behind her like a lame dog. 'Wait, nah,' I called. She quicken her pace. So, as Auntie Corinne taught me when chasing a chicken round the yard, I make a jump to grab this woman. Two hands I use to seize her then swing her round to face me. 'Wait,' I said. Stiff as a rod of iron, her neck twisted misshapen to turn her eye from me. 'So what they say?' I asked. Suddenly she look on me, her nose go up in the air and, man, I am ready to duck. Aah, I knew that look.

'Why you ask me all these question? What business is it of yours?

'What little wind was left in me she cause to expel. Come, this was a good question. Why was I asking anything of this wretched shrew? I was ready to walk away. Plenty boys would by now be chasing the next pair of pretty legs that passed their eye, not wasting their time listening on a lashing tongue. So why I bother to say, 'You are my wife,' only for her to look on me like this was one pained regret?

'Leave me alone. I can look after myself. I was doing it for many years before you came along . . .'

So what was it? A quickening breath? A too-defiant shrugging shoulder? The gentle pout of her lip? Who can say? But something beg me stay. 'Hortense, no more cuss me. Tell me what 'appen.'

# Resource Five

## Data Source



She purse her lip tight. Cha, I could do nothing but shake her. Not hard, for I am not a brute. But I rattle on her bone. It was the teardrop that splash on my lip, warm with salt, that cause me stop. She was crying. Steady as a rain pipe, the crystal water ran from her eye. She start contorting again to hide her face from me. A woman passing by begin staring on us. But it was not concern for Hortense's welfare, she was just ready to walk a wide circle around we two.

'What happen?' I asked her. 'Nothing,' she said. So I tell her, 'Nothing is a smile, Hortense. You no cry over nothing.' And the woman scream, 'Nothing,' at me again.

Man, let her burn. Come, this was probably the first time the woman's cheek ever felt a tear. She was insufferable! I walked away. Two paces. Then a hesitant third before I turned to look back on her. She was snivelling and trying with all her will not to wipe her nose on her good white glove. I thought to smile when I hear it: Hortense reeling wounded after a sharp slap from the Mother Country's hand. Man, I was ready to tell her, 'Pride comes before a fall.' To leap around her rubbing me hands while singing, 'Now you see . . . I tell you so . . . you listening now.'

But her breath rose in desperate gasps as she mumbling repeated over, 'They say I can't teach.'

Come, no pitiful cry from a child awoken rude from a dream could have melted a hard heart any surer.

I guided her to a seat in a little square, she followed me obedient. So did a little scruffy boy whose wide eye perused us all the way. Softly delivered in my ear, Hortense informed me that she was required to train all over again to teach English children.

# Resource Five Activities



## Activities



1. Re-read the extract and highlight and annotate the following:
  - English words with unusual spelling
  - Different varieties of language (e.g. Standard English, dialect, slang, colloquial language)
2. Identify 2 different varieties of language used in the extract: What differentiates them?  
In answering that question, for example, look out for English words with an unusual spelling, and bear in mind other aspects than grammar or syntax.
3. How does the author use the 2 varieties, and to what end does she switch between them in this extract?
4. Why do you think Hortense replies the way she does? Consider in particular the variety of language that she uses.
5. There are example of code-switching in the extract. How are these used and why?
6. Do you ever code-switch? When and why? In your answer consider if these reasons and timings are different or similar to those in the extract, and how you can relate your own experience to that in the text.

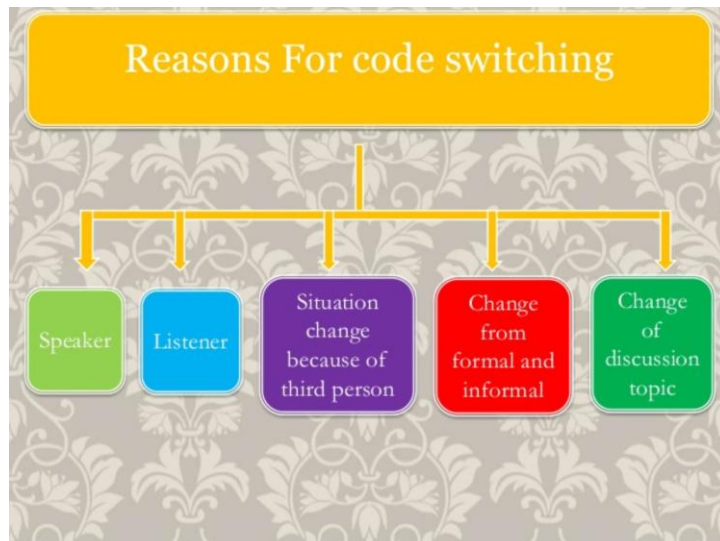
# Resource Five Further Reading



## Explore



1. Read the text on the 2 images below.
  - a) Why do you think Miguel code-switches? You can draw ideas from the 2nd image.
  - b) Have you ever seen or used code-switching on social media? If so, why do you think you/others code-switch in that context?





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