Why Preserve Patois?

1) Patois is a Window on our Past and Explains our Present
   • Trinidad and Tobago has 12 heritage languages.
   • Patois is one of the oldest surviving languages of the country (c. 1783 to now).
   • Intangible Cultural Heritage must be preserved.

2) Patois Opens Doors
   • to elders at home and abroad
   • to over 12 million Patois-speakers in the region
   • to wherever Patois is spoken in countries of different official languages (Brazil, French Guiana, Venezuela, Haiti, the Windward Islands, the USA and beyond)

3) Patois Opens the Mind
   • expand neurolinguistic capabilities (bilingualism and biliteracy)
   • develop linguistic and literary creativity
   • reduce linguistic profiling and linguistic discrimination
   • increase sociolinguistic awareness
   • educate

4) Patois Opens Worlds
   • ethnobotany in Trinidad
   • national history
   • culture (cocoa, bèlè, proverbs)
   • music (bongo, calypso, kwèch/crèche, folk songs, zouk, kompa, cadence)
   • literature (historical diaries and travelogues, folktales, stories, novels, plays and poetry)
   • words, words, words - words of Patois origin continue to be in use throughout the French influenced English-official Caribbean

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