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HAITIAN CREOLE



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: *nation's State Department for current* :
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: *traveling abroad.* :
.....

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HAITIAN CREOLE

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In memory of Professor Pierre Vernet, founder and Dean of the College of Applied Linguistics in Haiti, Haitian Creole scholar, who died in his office at the college on January 12, 2010 during the catastrophic earthquake.

— Lionel Hugu

HAITIAN CREOLE

Introduction

Haitian Creole, *kreyòl ayisyen*, is one of the official languages of Haiti, along with French. It is a French-based creole heavily influenced by various West African languages and it is classified as part of the Romance group in the Indo-European language family. There are approximately 9.5 million Creole speakers in Haiti, with another 3.5 million dispersed in Canada, the United States (200,000 in New York), France, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, the Bahamas, and other Caribbean islands.

There are several main dialects of Haitian Creole, with regional variations. The standard dialect, and the one taught in this course, is that of the central district and the capital, Port-au-Prince. Other key dialects include the northern dialect, centered around Cap-Haitien; the southern dialect, centered in the Cayes area; and the plateau dialect. Dialect borders, however, have been obscured by the migration of people from the countryside to the capital.

The Republic of Haiti occupies the western third of the island of Hispaniola, which is located in the Caribbean between Cuba, Jamaica, and Puerto

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Introduction (continued)

Rico. Columbus first landed on the northern shore of Hispaniola in 1492 and claimed the island for Spain. In the early 17th century, French settlers began to infiltrate into northwest Hispaniola and made their first major settlement at *Cap-Français* (now Cap-Haitien) in 1670. Spain ceded what is now Haiti to France in 1697, and it became the very prosperous colony of *Saint-Domingue*. Saint-Domingue remained under French control until a slave revolt in 1804 resulted in emancipation and independence.

When the French imported slaves from West Africa to work on their plantations, they faced severe communication problems. The French colonists spoke various dialects of non-standard French. The West African slaves, who came from various tribes from what is now Benin, also spoke different languages. This lack of a common language resulted in a new, local variety of “pidgin” based on French as a way for the different groups to communicate in limited social contexts. Over the years, this pidgin became enriched with vocabulary and structures from various West African languages, as well as to a lesser extent Spanish and English. This enriched language became Haitian Creole, the native lan-

HAITIAN CREOLE

Introduction (continued)

guage of people born in Haiti. Unlike a “pidgin,” a “creole” is not a limited, simplified form of a particular language. A “creole” is a full-fledged language, able to serve all the intellectual, psychological, and social needs of its speakers. Even though Haitian Creole had become a full-fledged language, until the 20th century it remained only a *spoken* language that, unlike French, did not confer prestige.

Haitian Creole’s status was improved when it joined French as an official language of Haiti in 1961. However, even today fluency in French still remains a marker of social class. Presently, 95% of Haitians speak Haitian Creole as their first language. It is estimated that 5% of Haitians speak standard French fluently, 5% speak both French and Haitian Creole fluently, and 90-95% speak only Haitian Creole. In 1979 a decree was issued to allow Haitian Creole to be used in schools, and reform efforts are underway to teach Haitian Creole in the primary grades. French is still the primary language in education however, and it is used in both government and business. In recent years, intellectuals increasingly express pride in their language and their rich oral tradition, and there is an ever-growing number

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Introduction (continued)

of works written in Creole. Radio and television are broadcast in both French and Haitian Creole.

The Haitian Creole vocabulary is largely drawn from French (some estimates are as high as 90%). The grammar of Haitian Creole, however, has been strongly influenced by West African languages. For example, the definite article (*la, lan, a, an, nan*) comes after a noun; a plural marker (*yo*) is used after a noun; verbs are not conjugated; and tense is indicated by tense markers (*te, ap, pral*). In general, Haitian Creole grammar has been simplified and it is considered easier to learn than French or English grammar.

The first organized Haitian Creole writing system was developed in the 1940's. This writing system represented the sounds of the language in a way that was independent of French by using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), which provides a one sound – one symbol correspondence. The first newspaper written in Creole was published in 1943. In the 1950's, this writing system was modified to include spelling changes that were more closely related to French. In 1980, a hybrid

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Introduction (continued)

of both spelling systems was approved by the government. Today, however, most Haitian language materials in Haiti use the one sound – one symbol IPA system.

Reading Creole will be easier than you expect. There is only one accent, the *accent grave*, and the only sounds unfamiliar to English speakers are the nasal sounds similar to, though not always spelled the same as, those in French.

There are twenty Haitian Creole Reading Lessons at the end of the units, starting with Unit Eleven. These lessons are also combined and provided at the end of the course. You may choose to do the Readings along with the units, or you may wait until you have completed the course and do them all together. Repeat the Reading Lessons as often as you wish. Instructions on how to proceed with the Readings are contained in the audio portion of the course.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Eleven

1. non
2. bon
3. pon
4. fon
5. ton
6. son
7. ven
8. sen
9. pen
10. fen
11. fent
12. pent
13. byen
14. lyen
15. diven
16. bon diven
17. avyon
18. won
19. penti
20. bon pen

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twelve

1. son
2. don
3. plon
4. plen
5. ten
6. men
7. renmen
8. gon
9. long
10. longè
11. byè
12. bon byè
13. Bonjou!
14. Bonjou Jak!
15. sonje
16. konbyen
17. monte
18. demonte
19. demen
20. mwen

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Thirteen

1. avèk
2. ase
3. Ayisyen
4. an
5. tan
6. bon tan
7. bon van
8. bonjan van
9. dan
10. danse
11. manje
12. achte
13. blanch
14. mechan
15. madanm
16. madmwazèl
17. san dan
18. sent
19. sant
20. Madanm nan danse.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Fourteen

1. Jaklin
2. machin
3. vin
4. kijan
5. vòn
6. pan
7. pàn
8. Machin nan an pàn.
9. bon lavant
10. Ou fè bon lavant.
11. machann
12. anndan
13. dlo
14. oubyen kola
15. dakò
16. ankò
17. Repete ankò.
18. Ou se Ameriken.
19. M rete Pòtoprens.
20. Ki kote lari a ye?

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Fifteen

1. vann
2. pann
3. medam
4. chante
5. mechan
6. defann
7. depans
8. Lafrans
9. tande
10. konprann
11. reponn
12. oumenm
13. gen
14. genyen
15. gan
16. gagann
17. elegan
18. Mwen pa konprann.
19. Bonswa.
20. Bonswa msye.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Sixteen

1. Kisa ou vle?
2. Ou konprann mwen.
3. Ou pa konprann medam yo.
4. Ou pale?
5. Non, msye.
6. Madanm, m ap pale avèk ou.
7. Ala traka!
8. Mwen di non.
9. Ou prale.
10. Sa depan.
11. Sa depan de ou.
12. Kijan ou ye?
13. Bonjou msye.
14. Ou konnen.
15. Ou genyen.
16. Ou gen diven?
17. Mwen pa gen okenn.
18. Eske ou konprann?
19. Ou konprann, pa vre?
20. Isit la nou pale kreyòl.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Seventeen

1. Sen Michèl
2. Ki kote Boulva a ye?
3. Eske se Boulva a isit la?
4. Kote Jak?
5. Jak pa isit la.
6. Li pi ba a.
7. Non, li pa pi ba a.
8. Ou se sen.
9. san pen
10. Mwen gade non an.
11. Mwen gade li.
12. Mwen kenbe plas la.
13. Mwen kenbe li.
14. Mwen vle li.
15. Ou vle li.
16. Eske ou vle li?
17. Mwen pa vle manje.
18. Mwen vle tikras.
19. pe / pou / pè
20. Eske ou boude?

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Eighteen

1. Tout ble.
2. Jwe jwèt la!
3. Ou bay legen.
4. Ou pale anglè?
5. Non, msye, m pa pale lang nan.
6. Mwen pa konnen.
7. Pen an bon.
8. kan / kann
9. Kote li?
10. Kilè ou di?
11. Ki kote ou ye?
12. kounyeya
13. Men li.
14. Eske ou la?
15. Mwen di ou.
16. Mwen vle li, msye.
17. Mwen pap ba ou li.
18. Kilè ou rive la a?
19. Yè maten.
20. Se pandan l ap mande.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Nineteen

1. M kontan fè konesans ou.
2. Avantaj bab ak moustach.
3. Pa pale m de koze sa a!
4. M konnen li bon.
5. Ou mèt antre nan chanm nan.
6. Pran sa ou renmen.
7. Fè tankou si ou te lakay.
8. Ou kwè mwen kwè ou?
9. Nan bwat la.
10. Mwen pa wè anyen.
11. Tann, mwen wè li nan kwen an.
12. Kisa sa a ye?
13. Kisa ou vle?
14. Ou vle yon bagay?
15. Mwen vle bwè kichòy!
16. Kilè? Kounyeya?
17. Wi. Mèsi anpil.
18. Repete, souple.
19. Pèlentèt.
20. Vyann nan gen san.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twenty

1. Mwenmenm, mwen pa vle!
2. Men yon bon kwen.
3. Li fè midi mwen ven.
4. Bonswa, madmwazèl.
5. Orevwa, msye. Babay!
6. Ou manke pwen.
7. Li bout.
8. Ou rive nan bout ou.
9. Lalin pa fwomaj.
10. Annavan, devan!
11. Timoun nan doubout.
12. Ki moun ki wè li?
13. Se oumenm madmwazèl?
14. Se pa mwen, se ti neve mwen an.
15. Ademen maten, madanm.
16. Ou konnen li dous anpil.
17. Non, paditou.
18. Ban m yon ti diven non!
19. Non, ou pa nan diven, men pen.
20. Non mèsì, mwen pito lèt.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twenty-One

1. Mwen vle manje!
2. Kisa ou pral achte?
3. Mwen vle achte yon tanbou.
4. Pòtoprens ak Sendomeng.
5. Oumenm ak mwenmenm ansanm.
6. Kilès ki Jak la pami yo?
7. Mwen abitye wè li souvan.
8. Men li pa vle reponn mwen.
9. Kisa li ka bay?
10. Li sezi, li vin tou blanch.
11. Jak se yon moun endepandan.
12. Mwen pa genyen ankò.
13. Eske Jeremi se yon kote ki lwen?
14. Koute souple! M ap repete li ankò.
15. Kisa? Ou te wè tout bagay?
16. Non, mwen tande tout bagay.
17. Li se zanmi Chal tou?
18. Ki kote? Nan restoran an?
19. Li nan garaj la.
20. Ala fè cho!

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twenty-Two

1. Klod tou kapab pati si li vle.
2. Li pare pèlen li.
3. Gade do kay la.
4. Mwen wè yo ak de grenn je m.
5. Kilè li ye?
6. Kounyeya? Inè.
7. Mèsi madanm epi mèsi msye tou.
8. Kouman ou ye?
9. Mèsi, mwen pa ka ale aswè a.
10. Genlè ou pap tande madanm.
11. Di msye sa a tanpri.
12. Li katrè nan apremidi.
13. Mwen te manje a twazè.
14. Vini demen, dakò?
15. Konbyen m dwe ou?
16. Douz goud.
17. Onz dola? Sa a twòp.
18. Pa gen anyen ankò.
19. Jodi a.
20. Demen ladann tou.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twenty-Three

1. A sizè, souple.
2. Limenm ak mwenmenm.
3. Lwi / li
4. Depi senkè sonnen.
5. Ki rans sa a, ala traka!
6. Men di dola mwen dwe ou la.
7. Konbyen kòb ou genyen?
8. Mwenmenm? Mwen gen katòz goud.
9. Mwen bezwen dola pito.
10. Kèk goud oubyen kèk dola?
11. Msye sa a ap repete sa li di ankò.
12. Jodi a, se a uitè.
13. Genlè ou pap tande mwen.
14. Sa se yon dezagreman.
15. Apresa, li ap la aswè a.
16. Anvan setè. Dakò?
17. Douz dola, enben m ap achte li.
18. Pa vre?
19. Mwen dwe ou trèz dola, pa vre?
20. Enben men yo. Orevwa.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twenty-Four

1. Koute elèv la souple.
2. Wi, n ap koute li.
3. Nou tande li byen.
4. Li pale pwofèse a mal anpil.
5. Apresa, li fèmen bouch li.
6. Anvan uitè, souple.
7. Non, non papa! Mwen pa kapab.
8. Ki kòkòday yo genyen?
9. Mwenmenm? M pa di anyen.
10. Ala yon bèl lide papa!
11. Se limenm menm.
12. Sa a se pa yon bèt.
13. Mwen kwè li se yon bosal.
14. Sa a pa ka fèt devan je moun.
15. Tann piba a, agoch.
16. Se menm bagay, pa vre?
17. Non, sa a diferan.
18. Nan ka sa a, sa genlè pa deranje ou.
19. Mwen pa gen dola sou mwen kounyeya.
20. Enben, ou mèt ban m kenz dola.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twenty-Five

1. Konbyen sa a?
2. Kisa li ka fè nan ka sa a?
3. Kisa li ta ka achte?
4. Yon moso pen? Mwen ta byen renmen youn.
5. Ala bèl bagay, li bèl toutbon.
6. Men sa a pa ase.
7. Non mèsi, m pa vle dlo, msye.
8. Jak fè tout bagay pou enteresan.
9. Sa a pa vrèman bèl.
10. Non, men nou ka di li joli.
11. Ale lekòl.
12. Nou pap soti jodi a.
13. N ap vann tout sa nou genyen.
14. Sa li ap aprann nan pa byen.
15. Dakò. Men sa ou ap di a pa kòrek nonplis.
16. Robè pa konprann tout bagay nèt.
17. Wololoy, telefòn nan ap sonnen ankò!
18. Ki moun ki lòtbò la a?
19. Nouvo? Non monchè, se yon bagay ki ansyen.
20. Machè, se pa de moun ki reponn prezan jodi a!

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twenty-Six

1. Li kwè yo bèl.
2. Li fè twò cho jodi a!
3. Achte yon plato nèf pou mwen.
4. Pito sa pase malgre sa.
5. Tout moun ta renmen vini.
6. Li pa vle kwè sa li wè a.
7. Eseye li ankò.
8. Kijan li miwo miba konsa a?
9. Bagay sa a san sans.
10. Relijyon vodou se yon eritaj zansèt yo.
11. Eske li bon oubyen li move?
12. Se sa mwen t ap mande a.
13. Ou konnen twòp wi oumenm.
14. Fè yon ti chita souple.
15. Jamè! Men paditou, paditou menm!
16. Nan ka sa a sèl sa mwen ka di se orevwa.
17. Ou pa ta vle kwè, yo nonmen li depite.
18. Yo voye li nan peyi pèdi.
19. Nou dwe manje anpil legim.
20. Ou gen yon bèl rad wi.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twenty-Seven

1. Ki jounal ou li dabitid?
2. Anjeneral, mwen pa li jounal.
3. Mwen pito tande nouvèl nan radyo, mwenmenm.
4. Mwen renmen mache nan mòn anpil.
5. Li renmen gade gwo pyebwa yo nètalkole.
6. Ou ka gade gwo pyebwa nan mòn yo.
7. Li ap tann pwochen okazyon k ap pati a.
8. Msye sa a sanble yon moun debyen.
9. Anyen pa janm ase pou ou.
10. Toutokotrè, mwen gen menm twòp.
11. Bay timoun yo bwè lèt tanpri.
12. Alè sa a, magazen yo fèmen deja.
13. Li kondui ak tout boulin.
14. Konbyen kòb mwen dwe ou?
15. Ou dwe m senkant goud.
16. Men kòb m dwe ou la.
17. Ou pa premye moun ki di m sa.
18. Se pa premye moun di m sa.
19. Nou te kòmanse nan mwa janvyè pase a.
20. Epi nou vanse fini kounyeya.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twenty-Eight

1. Msye sa a se yon bowòm.
2. Men nou ka di madanm nan byen kontan.
3. M pa vle kwè sa yo di a.
4. Sou ki bò lari a pou n gade?
5. Ou di ou pral vwayaje Kiba an septanm.
6. Anba wozo, sa m wè m pa ka pale.
7. Ki nimewo ou vle?
8. Ala bèl wòz sa yo bèl.
9. Ki koulè machin tantin ou an?
10. Se yon gwo machin jòn.
11. Kite m gade foto sa yo.
12. Eske ou ap rekòmande otèl sa a?
13. Li fè cho jodi a; se yon okazyon pou ale nan lanmè.
14. M pa kwè li gen anyen serye pou li di.
15. Debwouye ou poukont ou.
16. Rakonte nou tout sa ki te pase anwo a.
17. Se pa blag pou yon moun rive kote sa a.
18. Sezon lapli a pa lwen, nou prepare semans yo.
19. Ki kote ou soti la a?
20. Mari al fè yon ti pwomnad.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Twenty-Nine

1. Se lavil oswa andeyò ou rete?
2. Janjak ap viv poukont li.
3. Konbyen timoun ou genyen?
4. Nou gen twa gran fi.
5. Ki leson pwofesè a bay pou demen?
6. Jak vanse pi vit anvan labrin tonbe.
7. Li di li pa rete anpil lòt bagay pou li achte.
8. Kisa sa a ye?
9. Lekòl tètanba nan peyi tètanba.
10. Ann pale koze ki enpòtan.
11. Ou kwè m kwè ou!
12. M ap gade pitit pitit mwen an k ap jwe.
13. M konnen tout fanmi an.
14. Pa gen kote ki pi trankil pase Laplenn.
15. Soti Petyonvil rive Lazil apye.
16. Kisa ou ap chèche deyò a alè endiy sa a.
17. M pa kwè gen bon latrin kote sa a.
18. Li lejè kou pay.
19. Enben, kisa ki pral pase apre?
20. Tanpri, ban m yon kola ak yon chalimo.

HAITIAN CREOLE

Unit Thirty

1. Yon Ameriken rive an Ayiti.
2. Li prale nan otèl la.
3. Epi li ap pale ak chofègid la.
4. Chofègid la mande, “Ou renmen wè anpil moun?”
5. “Wi, mwen renmen wè anpil moun.”
6. “Ou renmen manje?”
7. “O wi, mwen renmen bon manje.”
8. “Eske ou renmen laplaj¹?”
9. “Wi, mwen renmen laplaj.”
10. “Ou renmen kanaval²?”
11. “M pa konnen.
12. Men m ta renmen wè kanaval.”
13. “Oke, si ou renmen wè anpil moun ak bon manje,
14. Mpanse³ ou ap renmen kanaval tou.
15. E si ou renmen moun,
16. Si ou renmen bon manje,
17. Si ou renmen laplaj ak kanaval,
18. Konsa ou ap renmen Ayiti!”

¹ laplaj: the beach

² kanaval: Carnival, Mardi Gras

³ pansè: think