

the “real” Haitian Creole: ideology, metalinguistics, and orthographic choice

BAMBI B. SCHIEFFELIN—*New York University*

RACHELLE CHARLIER DOUCET—*New York University*

In this article, we examine the cultural categories and the conceptual logic that underlie the orthography debates about kreyòl that have taken place over the last 50 years.¹ In Haiti, as in many countries concerned with nation building, the development of an orthography for vernacular literacy has been neither a neutral activity nor simply about how to mechanically reduce a spoken language to written form. The processes of transforming a spoken language to written form have often been viewed as scientific, arbitrary, or unproblematic.² However, the creation of supposedly arbitrary sound/sign (signified/signifier) relationships that constitute an orthography always involves choices based on someone’s idea of what is important. This process of representing the sounds of language in written form is thus an activity deeply grounded in frameworks of value.

We suggest that arguments about orthography reflect competing concerns about representations of Haitianess at the national and international level, that is, how speakers wish to define themselves to each other, as well as to represent themselves as a nation. Because acceptance of an orthography is based more often on political and social considerations than on linguistic or pedagogical factors, orthographic debates are rich sites for investigating competing nationalist discourses. To draw on Anderson’s (1983) evocative notion, orthographic choice is really about “imagining” the past and the future of a community.

To understand the symbolic importance of the decisions taken in standardizing kreyòl orthography, we have focused on the interconnectedness of speech practices, language ideologies, and nationalist agendas. We draw on Silverstein’s notion of linguistic ideologies, which are “sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use” (1979:193). Language ideology is the mediated link between social structures and forms of talk, standing in dialectical relation with, and thus significantly influencing, social, discursive, and linguistic practices. Research on language ideology is a bridge between language structure and language politics, as well as between linguistic and social theory (Woolard 1992:235–236). Language ideologies are likely places to

This article analyzes competing representations of kreyòl and the symbolic importance of decisions taken in standardizing a kreyòl orthography. Kreyòl, which educated Haitians claim to share with the masses, is an enduring symbol of Haitian identity, yet the image of this language is deeply contested in several arenas. Linking language ideology, in particular metalinguistic terms that refer to varieties of spoken kreyòl, to orthographic choice, we view the debates as part of a nationalist discourse about Haitianess—what is authentic and legitimate—and examine the role of language in national identity formation. [Haitian Creole, language ideology, metalinguistics, orthography, national identity]

American Ethnologist 21(1):176–200. Copyright © 1994, American Anthropological Association.

find images of “self/other,” “us/them,” as, for example, in the recent debates about the English Only movement and American language policies (Silverstein 1987; Woolard 1989).

Language ideology often determines which linguistic features get selected for cultural attention and for social marking, that is, which ones are important and which ones are not. In countries where “nation-ness” (Anderson 1983:4) is being negotiated, every aspect of language—from its phonological features to lexical items to stylistic alternatives to multilingualism—can be contested, and often is. Similarly, in such situations, there is rarely a single ideology of language. Rather, one finds multiple, competing, and contradictory ideologies of language that are offered as the “logic” for which features may be contested.³ Such logics are often claimed to be strictly scientific, when, in fact, they are culturally constructed and represent particular political and social interests. Not surprisingly, these discourses, as part of nationalist discourses, often use oppositions as important rhetorical devices.

Gal’s exemplary analysis of Bartók’s funeral, for example, points out how sets of oppositions frame the continuing debate in Hungary about how the future of that nation should be shaped—in some native, eastern, Magyar way or in a European way. The two terms, “Europe” and “Hungary,” are enmeshed in a dual classification system which, in spite of changing valences depending on context of use, expresses profound contradictory and enduring oppositions, such as alienation: community, civilized: backward, to name but two (1991:443–444). In these “dichotomizing discourses” (Gal 1991:444), the opposition between authenticity and modernity often receives elaboration, as it is deeply tied to the question of what social stratum is to represent the nation. The nature of these symbolically loaded oppositions ensures that any commentary on them is sharply contested and assigned membership in one or another opposition camp.

The orthography debates about kreyòl share these and other structural and symbolic properties of dichotomizing discourses. Critical to the debates is the question of who counts and who does not, who is “us” and who is “them.” In terms of nation building, these oppositions often point to serious social divisions and ambivalences that have deep historical roots. The debates draw on language ideologies, which are also contradictory and dichotomizing, articulated by metalinguistic terms demarcating kreyòl speech varieties—varieties that mark social divisions that have affected national identity formation. The discourse of these debates also engages with critical historical events, as evidenced in arguments about whether or not to represent French, the colonial language, in the kreyòl orthography. The logic employed in Haiti’s orthography debates is not limited to local or national considerations. Because of the Haitian diaspora, arguments about orthography have repercussions for the representation of Haitian identities transnationally. It is significant that many Haitians who reside in the United States refuse to become American citizens and give up their Haitian passports. Furthermore, orthographic choice here is a statement about a nation’s potential connections to other communities; given Haiti’s historical connections to France, there are international implications, at least at the symbolic level.

Anderson makes the point that “communities are to be distinguished . . . by the style in which they are imagined” (1983:6). For Anderson, one of the most important manifestations of how communities are imagined is through their shared signs, that is, through literacy—its practices and its texts. In order to get to print capitalism, literature, and newspapers, however, there has to be a standardized orthography. There should also be a literate readership. For some nations, these two factors are not unproblematic, and the achievement of both involves complex political as well as social decisions.

Sounds and spoken languages are not at the center of the political issues in Anderson’s imagined communities. Sounds, however, *are* at the center of Haiti’s orthography debates. The single cultural practice that all Haitians share is speaking kreyòl, yet the *image* of this language, its representation in ideology, is itself deeply contested. To make our argument about why kreyòl

orthographies have been the subject of debates that have gone beyond linguistic and pedagogical issues, we start with an overview of Haiti's sociolinguistic situation and describe aspects of kreyòl dialects, in particular the contested front rounded vowels. This is followed by an analysis of metalinguistic terms referring to kreyòl speech varieties that encode critical social distinctions. We offer comparative material drawn from other French Creole-speaking nations to show similarities among pairs of metalinguistic terms and to suggest that the oppositions articulated are part of similar dichotomizing discourses. After a brief history of writing kreyòl, we present the main proposals for a systematic orthography. This is followed by considering contested orthographies as sites of contested identity as we examine the social, symbolic, and political values of the sounds and the look of the kreyòl orthographies.

the sociolinguistics of Haiti

For Haitians, the history and ideology that are associated with kreyòl and French have social and political implications that are played out in all social relationships. The appropriate use of those languages in educational, religious, and political contexts is widely discussed in public fora. Examining the complex and often paradoxical values associated with these debates is critical to understanding the ways in which Haitians evaluate each other and think about themselves. Kreyòl, like other creole languages, still pays the price of its origins. By-products of European colonization of the New World, the creole languages developed on plantations from the forced contacts between the European masters and their African slaves. According to most creolists, West African languages are the substrate and French the superstrate for kreyòl. What this means is that many elements of the grammatical structure of kreyòl were contributed by the dominated West African slaves, while the lexical base came largely from the dominating French colonizers (Koopman 1986; Singler 1993). Like many other creole languages, kreyòl continues to exist in a complex political and social relationship to a "standard" language, in this case French, which has been used in government since 1804 when Haiti won its independence, but was not legally recognized as the "official" language of the nation until 1918. Haiti was the first of the Caribbean countries to give its vernacular the status of an "official language."⁴ In 1964, kreyòl was mentioned for the first time in a Haitian constitution: the law now permitted the use of kreyòl in specific circumstances where the use of French could be detrimental to monolinguals, for example, in legal courts. In 1979, an educational reform sponsored by the government was approved, and kreyòl was officially introduced into the schools. In 1980, one orthography was made official. Kreyòl was recognized as a "national" language together with French in 1983; nonetheless, French would still play the role of the "official" language.⁵ Finally, in 1987, Haiti officially became a "bilingual" country with two official languages, French and kreyòl, in spite of the fact that only 7 percent of the population is bilingual. But as anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot has pointed out, "most linguists have stopped calling Haiti bilingual" (1990:115). These distinctions and shifts between what is the "official" language and what is the "national" language are linked significantly to definitions and redefinitions of Haitian identity through the respective status of French and kreyòl, as will be discussed below.

Formerly, sociolinguists described the relationship between Haitian French and kreyòl as diglossic: both were considered varieties of the same language, used by speakers in different social contexts for different functions.⁶ Haitian French was viewed as the high prestige form and kreyòl as the low prestige form. However, Haiti is better described as a nation predominantly composed of two linguistic communities, the minority kreyòl/French bilingual elite (7 percent and the monolingual kreyòl urban and rural masses, with varying degrees of linguistic interaction between the two depending on domains of contact (Valdman 1984). Currently, most

creolists no longer accept the view that Haitian French and kreyòl are varieties of the same language, but regard them as two distinct languages.

For most of its history, kreyòl has been a language of oral expression, while Haitian French has a literate tradition. Currently, there are approximately 6 million speakers of kreyòl, including those in the Haitian diaspora located largely in New York, Miami, Boston, and Montreal. While many are literate in English and/or French, less than 10 percent are literate in kreyòl.

kreyòl dialects and metalinguistics

The Haitian linguist Sylvain published the first serious study of kreyòl in 1936, *Le Créole Haïtien, Morphologie et Syntaxe*. Her view was that Haitian grammar derives largely from Ewe, a West African language. Later studies by Haitians as well as by foreign linguists focused on issues of origin, phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicography, and semantics.⁷ Despite their work, the public perception about kreyòl as a variety of French has not changed significantly.

One area in which there is little consensus concerns the phonology of kreyòl, specifically the status of four front rounded vowels: /ü/, /ö/, /œ/, /œ̃/. (Curiously, the nasal front rounded /œ̃/ is not given much consideration in the discussions.) The debates center on whether or not the four front rounded vowels should be included in the description of kreyòl, and consequently whether or not they should be represented in the writing system. These debates essentially focus on critical features that differentiate sociolinguistic variants of kreyòl.

Both geographical and social dialects exist in Haiti. The Haitian linguist Hyppolite (1949) was the first to analyze three regional dialects, a Northern variety, a Western variety, and a Southern variety. These are marked by minimal phonetic, lexical, and syntactic differences.⁸ In contrast to these regional differences, the social dialects are not only relevant to the description of kreyòl but are also central in the debates about various orthographies. *Kreyòl fransize* (Frenchified kreyòl), *gwo kreyòl* (vulgar kreyòl), *kreyòl swa* (smooth kreyòl), and *kreyòl rèk* (rough kreyòl) are used both popularly and scientifically to describe varieties of kreyòl.

While some linguists disagree about the importance of variation in kreyòl in terms of both geographical and social dialects (Valdman 1984:85), there seems to be agreement about the existence of a rural variety (*créole rural*) and an urban variety (*créole urbain*) of kreyòl (Lofficial 1979:41). The kreyòl spoken by the urban and rural masses, called *gwo kreyòl* (rough/popular/vulgar kreyòl) (Féère 1974:28; Hall 1953:12; Pressoir 1947:66), refers to a variety spoken by the *gros peuple* (masses) (Hall 1953:214), as opposed to the *kreyòl fransize* (Frenchified kreyòl) of the educated bilingual minority. The Haitian linguist Vernet (1989:20) notes the existence of the variety called *kreyòl fransize*, a term used to refer to the variety of kreyòl spoken by educated urban bilinguals.⁹ They contrast their *kreyòl fransize* with *gwo kreyòl* (rough, vulgar kreyòl), which they say is spoken by uneducated urban people and peasants. Both terms refer not only to the phonology, vocabulary, and intonational contours of the speech itself, but also to the nonverbal gestures used by speakers of each variety. Uneducated speakers, however, prefer the term *bon kreyòl* (good kreyòl) to refer to the variety that they themselves use, though they know the other terms. However, speakers often cannot spontaneously switch between these varieties. Depending on their own language socialization experiences and social networks, educated speakers can recognize *kreyòl rèk*, but are not always able to produce it. Uneducated speakers can recognize the other variety but not speak it spontaneously.

The French linguist Fattier-Thomas distinguishes between *kreyòl swa* (smooth kreyòl), the sociolect of the bilingual educated minority, and *kreyòl rèk* (rough kreyòl), the variety spoken by the monolingual masses (1984:39). Lofficial also uses the term *kreyòl rèk*, which he describes as "*le niveau ressenti comme le plus rude de la langue*" (1979:118) (the level felt to be the roughest of the language). While these metalinguistic terms are noted in the sociolinguistic

literature on kreyòl (Fattier-Thomas 1984; Valdman 1988, 1989a, 1989b, 1991) and are commonly known by Haitians in a variety of social classes, the words *rèk* (not ripe), *swa* (smooth), and *gwo* (large or rough, as in *gwo pèp* [the people (of the lower classes)]) are not listed in the various kreyòl dictionaries in their metalinguistic usage. It is informative for later discussions of the orthography to elaborate on the semantics of these expressions because they carry important cultural meanings.

Swa (smooth, French *soie* [silk]) as a single lexical item is primarily used as an adjectival modifier of *cheve* (hair) and refers to fine, straight hair. The opposite of *cheve swa* in this referential sense is *cheve grenn* (tightly curled, kinky; French *crépu*). Men are also said to be *swa* (smooth) if they are well-mannered, educated, emotionally even, and are pleasing to women (*nèg sa a swa* [that guy is smooth]), a positive description. *Swa* as an adverbial modifier refers to the smooth manner in which some action is carried out. For example, one says of a car that runs smoothly and is problem free, *machin sa a mache swa*. Yet another example, *pale swa* (speak smoothly and persuasively), describes speech that is flowing, regardless of the social or educational background of the speaker.

Kreyòl rèk, another speech variety, is not strictly opposed to *kreyòl swa*, though these two terms are reportedly contrasted (Fattier-Thomas 1984; Valdman 1989a, 1989b, 1991). Outside of its reference to speech, the primary meaning of the word *rèk* is agricultural and refers to fruit or vegetables that are not yet ripe but ready to pick.¹⁰ When referring to persons, *rèk* is often applied to children in the sense of precocious physical maturity, as *ti moun sa a rèk* (this child looks older than he/she really is). Additionally, *rèk* refers to strength, particularly in men.

Unlike *swa*, which can modify a range of actions, *rèk* is only used to describe a manner of speaking: *pale rèk* (speak roughly) is the opposite of *pale swa* (speak smoothly). *Pale rèk* also indexes a verbal style of directness, in opposition to the more indirect style of *pale swa*. Yet another way to refer to styles of indirection is the kreyòl expression *pale franse* (lit. “speaking French”). The cultural meaning of this expression is somewhat different from *pale swa*. *Pale franse* emphasizes speaking indirectly (in either French or kreyòl), with the implication of tricking someone through the use of beautiful sounds, obfuscated speech, or irrelevant arguments. The result may be confusion for the listener. Depending on the speakers and the context, what sounds good (*pale swa* or *pale franse*) can be viewed as potentially deceptive.¹¹

The differences between *kreyòl swa* (similar to the *fransize* variety) and *kreyòl rèk* (similar to *gwo kreyòl*) lie in the various degrees of similarities to French (phonetic as well as lexical traits, but also intonation and comportment) of the *fransize* or the *swa* varieties. The main characteristics of *kreyòl swa*, (all pertaining to surface structure) can be listed as follows and include phonetic, lexical, and discourse features (Fattier-Thomas 1984:41–42):

- use of front rounded vowels /ö/, /œ/, and /ü/ where *kreyòl rèk* would use the nonrounded vowels /e/, /ɛ/, and /i/;
- use of the postvocalic /r/ at the end of words;¹²
- use of lexemes closer to French;
- use of code-switching between kreyòl and French;
- use of “quasi-lexified” French idiomatic expressions (kreyòl: *predventen*; French: *près de vingt ans* [about 20 years ago]);
- vocabulary differences due to particular domains and stylistics.

Relevant to the orthography debate is the prevocalic Haitian /r/ and its possible realization as a more labialized /w/ in four main contexts: /ɔ/, /o/, /ɔ/, /u/. While Haitian linguists agree about this distribution at the phonetic level, there is much debate about the labialized form /w/ when we examine its representation in written form (Déjean 1980a:97; Vernet 1989:18).¹³

Since 1986, with the liberation of the press and the increased access of the masses to the media, there has been a shift in values associated with these speech varieties. Fattier-Thomas (1987), a French sociolinguist, remarks that some bilinguals, in particular politicians, try to modify their usual *kreyòl swa* to sound more like the popular variety *kreyòl rèk*, in an attempt

to identify with the masses. Monolinguals try to imitate the prestigious form *kreyòl swa*. For both categories of speakers, this is met with little success. *Kreyòl rèk* and *gwo kreyòl* are now given value in some progressive circles where claims of authenticity and rootedness in cultural identity are asserted. As this is happening, the term *bon kreyòl* is becoming an alternative to *kreyòl rèk* and *gwo kreyòl*, because the latter two have long-standing negative connotations for the bilinguals. *Bon kreyòl* is currently the term used in Haiti to refer to the *kreyòl* spoken by the masses.¹⁴

While these metalinguistic terms from Haiti are worth considering on their own, by expanding the frame of reference for a moment to other French lexicon-based creoles spoken in the Caribbean (Martinique and Guadeloupe) as well as in the Indian Ocean (Seychelles and Mauritius), we see that particular ideas about the superiority of the French language (Swiggers 1990) and about the creoles that are in relationship to it have originated in France.¹⁵ The languages of Haiti, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Seychelles, and Mauritius share a wide range of lexical and syntactic structures due to their historical commonalities. These islands were colonized by the French in the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries and during their early history had slavery-based plantation economies and a population consisting preponderantly of African slaves (Goodman 1964:14). Their creole languages developed under similar social and economic circumstances, where varieties of French were in contact with different African languages. This colonial experience provided not only the medium in which similar linguistic structures and vocabularies evolved, but also the socioeconomic foundation for the development of a set of attitudes and ideologies about the languages and their speakers. In all of these countries, Haiti included, a small group of French speakers occupied positions of authority over a large dominated population. French was the prestige language, and the creoles were assigned a range of lower social values.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that when speakers in Martinique, Guadeloupe, Seychelles, and Mauritius refer to the different varieties of creole language spoken within their speech communities, they use metalinguistic terms quite similar to those found in Haiti. These terms not only express a set of complex relationships to French but also assign hierarchical values to the varieties of creole themselves, as social strata are viewed as having their own named varieties of creole. For example, in the Seychelles two varieties are distinguished: *gros créole* and *créole de la bourgeoisie* (Bollée 1989:185–186). In Martinique the term *kreyòl rèk* has been appropriated by the intellectuals to refer to the variety of *kreyòl* that is the furthest and most differentiated variety from French. While they describe it as *déviante* (deviant) with regard to French, it is also assigned values of authenticity and purity (Prudent 1989:71). *Kreyòl rèk* is used in opposition to the term *langue tjololo*, which is the Frenchified variety of creole. The term *tjololo* (watery, diluted, without taste or substance) refers to liquids as well as language. Here it is the creole that is diluted with particular foreign elements: French words, sounds, and culture. The contrast *rèk-tjololo* is authenticity versus acculturation and alienation. Thus, France not only left its language in its colonies, but French colonists transmitted broadly shared social and linguistic ideologies that have had similar repercussions regarding attitudes toward varieties of the languages spoken there, including the creoles. The same language ideology has had an impact on choices concerning the development of orthographies of these creole languages.

Before addressing the specifics of the different *kreyòl* orthographies, we offer one further observation about attitudes held toward creole languages. Today, even in scientific spheres, a persistent stigma is attached to creole languages.¹⁶ Because their formative period was relatively recent, the 17th and 18th centuries, they are often seen as not yet fully formed complex languages. The descriptions of creole languages in some linguistic circles are similar to the attitudes of many creole speakers toward their languages. These languages are described as “reduced,” simple, and easy to learn; lacking in abstract terms, they are inadequate for scientific,

philosophical, and logical operations. For most of their histories, creole languages have not been considered adequate for government, schooling, or Western religious services.

The effects of pseudoscientific arguments or preconceived emotional ideas are evident in the negative attitudes lay persons generally hold toward creole languages and their speakers, and are revealed by the many pejorative terms used by both native and nonnative speakers alike. Folk terminologies describe the French lexicon creoles as “broken French,” “patois,” “dialects,” or “jargons,” and many assume that creole languages are “diminished,” “reduced,” “deformed,” “impoverished,” “vitiated,” “bastard” forms of the European standard languages that contributed to their birth.¹⁷ Many educated middle-class Haitians, members of the *petite-bourgeoisie*, as well as Haitian elites, view *kreyòl* as a simplified form of French at best. Many claim it is not a real language at all, but a mixture of languages without a grammar. The different varieties of *kreyòl* are viewed by Haitians of these social categories with a great deal of ambivalence. *Kreyòl rèk* and *gwo kreyòl* are often associated with pejorative connotations regarding the sounds (harsh, not harmonious, guttural, deformed), the grammatical features (debased, corrupted, elementary, lacking complexity), the social origin of the speakers (rural, lower class), and defects usually attributed to the speakers themselves (coarse, clumsy, stupid, illiterate, uneducated). On the positive side, the same varieties have been associated with national identity, authenticity, independence, sincerity, and trustworthiness. Much of this is connected to romantic notions about rural people—rough, coarse, but also authentic, real.

These ideas about *kreyòl* have not only had important repercussions on the ways in which monolingual *kreyòl* speakers have been viewed, but have also had important consequences for the codification and functions of written *kreyòl*. As we will see, the question of the nature and meaning of these language varieties in Haiti and who speaks them is at the core of the orthography debate that has been going on in Haiti for more than 50 years, and which, despite the claims of many linguists that the question is closed, still provokes reactions among linguists and educators both in Haiti and in New York today. The debate on the use of *kreyòl* itself, and particularly on the use of *kreyòl* in schools, is broader and is taken up by parents and teachers in addition to writers and media people. But the issues of orthography and use, we will argue, are connected through broader ideological issues.

writing *kreyòl*: a brief history

Historical evidence suggests that under French colonial rule (1695–1803), *kreyòl* was widely spoken among both masters and slaves as well as among the *affranchis* (freed slaves). Written *kreyòl*, however, was quite rare (Fourchard 1955, 1972; Hoffman 1989). The first accounts of written *kreyòl* date to the late 18th century, when *kreyòl* was used for both official and literary purposes.¹⁸ While a few official documents for political purposes were prepared in *kreyòl* during these early periods, they were read to the nonliterate population and did not circulate as written documents. The use of written documents in *kreyòl* for political or administrative purposes did not appear again until 200 years later, in the late 20th century. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the few writers who attempted to write in *kreyòl* applied French orthographic rules, which resulted in different *étymologisantes* (more or less etymological) spellings.¹⁹ We cannot talk of a spelling system for *kreyòl* before the 20th century.

Only a few written texts in *kreyòl* can be found dating from the early part of the 20th century. It is not surprising that they are mostly written versions of Haitian folktales that are part of a rich oral tradition. There is, for example, Georges Sylvain’s *Cric? Crac!* (1901) and translations or adaptations (from the French) of La Fontaine’s fables for children, such as Doret’s *Pour amuser nos tous petits: Fables de la Fontaine traduites en prose créole* (1924). Written *kreyòl* was thus limited to minor genres (poems, folktales, *saynètes* [playlets]) and aimed at entertaining specific audiences: children or a condescending elite. These writers, as those before them, continued

to use nonconventionalized orthographies based on French etymologies and the stylistic conventions and punctuation of written French. Furthermore, it is important to note that the use of kreyòl for these limited genres can be linked to ideas still held by many today: that kreyòl cannot be used for serious matters, such as education, science, or major literary genres, and is best for jokes and light entertainment.

Following the American occupation of Haiti (1915–34), a different consciousness emerged. Dr. Jean Price-Mars, whose work laid a foundation for *négritude*, denounced in *Ainsi parla l’Oncle* (1928) the prevailing scornful attitude among Haitian elites toward Haitian culture and their indiscriminate adoption of the European lifestyle, which they judged superior. This was later echoed by members of the Indigenist Movement (late 1930–70s) who promoted a broader use of genuinely Haitian themes in literature and an acceptance of popular culture in Haitian society (Pompilus 1977). Despite the nationalist agenda, production of written kreyòl texts was still rare. Most Indigenist writers still used French, a French mingled with kreyòl locutions and phrases for local color that gave it a Haitian touch. None of them produced a body of work written entirely in kreyòl, since their target was precisely those members of Haitian society who, most of the time, used spoken and written French in their everyday life and rejected the use of kreyòl.²⁰

The few members of the Indigenist School or other writers *engagés* (militant) who used kreyòl employed an orthography *étymologisante* (etymologizing) for kreyòl, that is, an orthography very close to French.²¹ While there was strong support for indigenous cultural practices and their integration into artistic spheres, especially literary productions, an “indigenous” orthography was not contemplated at that time. Orthography was simply not viewed as a symbolic domain in which Haitian identity could be affirmed.

In the 1960s, new developments in kreyòl literature took place. The first literary “landmarks” were translation of French and Greek “literary monuments” into kreyòl, such as Corneille’s *Le Cid* by Numa (1975), and Sophocle’s *Antigone* by Morisseau-Leroy (1953b). These translations were different from the earlier translations of La Fontaine because the audience was an adult readership (not children), and unlike fables, which were considered a nonserious genre, these works showed that kreyòl was able to handle sophisticated masterpieces as a *langue de culture* (cultured language, a language that can carry culture or introduce culture). This phase was followed by the creation of new literary works in kreyòl. *Dézafi*, the first novel in kreyòl, was written by Frankétienne in 1975, and the appearance in 1977 of Trouillot’s *Ti difé boulé sou istoua Ayiti* (Controversies about Haitian History) demonstrated that written kreyòl not only could be used for literary genres, but for serious scientific essays.

developing an orthographic system for kreyòl

Since the mid-1920s, the proposals for a systematic orthography for written kreyòl have undergone different phases that can be summarized as follows:

- 1925–40 The pioneers (Doret, Beaulieu).
- 1940–51 The first technical orthographies (McConnell-Laubach vs. Pressoir).
- 1953–79 The contested reign of Pressoir-ONAAC (Office National d’Alphabétisation et d’Action Communautaire).
- 1980–present The reign of the official orthography (with isolated rebellions).

The development of these different orthographies will be elaborated below. Since the promulgation of the official orthography in January 1980, some of the debate has diminished, but arguments for and against the official orthography are still aired in a variety of arenas, including educational circles, the Haitian press, and elsewhere.²² There were, however, almost as many proposals as there were participants in the debates. As of 1980, Déjean (1980a:162)

identified a total of 11 proposed spelling systems. Nonetheless, despite apparent diversity, three main types of proposals can be identified:

1. Those that support a pro-phonemic approach;
2. Those that take a pro-etymological or anti-phonemic perspective;
3. Those in an intermediary camp that propose a phonemic orthography but with some concessions to French spelling.²³

The earliest systematic orthography for kreyòl was proposed in 1924 by Frédéric Doret, an engineer interested in teaching methods for monolingual kreyòl speakers, especially children (Doret 1924). Later, in 1939, Christian Beaulieu, a Haitian educator undertook the task (Beaulieu 1939). Their efforts remained essentially unnoticed.

In 1940, the development of an orthography for writing kreyòl became a serious issue. At that time, an Irish Protestant missionary, Ormonde McConnell, who had done work in adult literacy in rural southern and western areas of Haiti devised the first technical orthography. It used 33 symbols and was phonemic (Déjean 1980a:19–20):

oral vowels: a é è i o ò u
nasal vowels: â ê ô
semivowels: i/y w u (in the diphthong ui)
consonants: b d f g h j k l m n p r s t v z
digraphs: sh gn

In 1943, McConnell was joined by an American literacy expert, Frank Laubach, who was not familiar with kreyòl, and together they revised McConnell's original spelling system. The second version was called McConnell-Laubach or "*òtograf Laubach*," and was also a phonemic orthography. It used the same alphabet as McConnell's with the following differences: the letters *ou* instead of *u* to represent the sound /u/ as in kreyòl *dou* (French *doux*); and the letters *ch* instead of *sh* to represent the sound /ʃ/ as in kreyòl *chante* (French *chanter*). This spelling system was used in the literacy campaign sponsored by the government of Elie Lescot. The materials, almost all inspired from Protestant religious texts, were designed to bring salvation and light to the Haitian rural masses.

The Haitian scholar Pressoir (1947) strongly criticized the McConnell-Laubach orthography, mainly because of (1) the absence of the front rounded vowels /ü/, /ö/, /œ/, and /ø/; (2) the broad use of the "Anglo-Saxon" letters *w* and *y*; and (3) the use of the circumflex accent to mark the nasalized vowels (*â*, *ê*, and *ô*), thus using a French diacritic but with a different application (French uses the letter *n* to indicate nasalization). Some called this system *kreyòl bwa-nan-nen* (kreyòl with a wooden stick on the nose) because of the abundance of circumflexes. This refers both to the way the words look in their written form and to how they were to be pronounced when read.²⁴ Pressoir claimed (1947) that this new orthography was good for "savages" who spoke a *gros créole* (rough creole).

The literacy campaign, however, failed for political and cultural reasons. It was closely associated with the unpopular government of president Elie Lescot and coincided with an infamous "anti-superstition campaign" geared toward the suppression of the "barbarous" practices of vodou, which resulted in the destruction of many temples and sacred objects (Déjean 1963:23–44).

Although systematic, the McConnell-Laubach orthography was contested by many educated Haitians because of its association with Protestantism and its "American" look—a sensitive political issue, since Americans had occupied Haiti from 1915–34 (Pressoir 1947). Those Haitians did not want any reminders of this American presence, not even in the writing system. They were not happy about the novel representation of nasalized vowels through the use of the circumflex, which treated these nasal sounds differently from the ways in which they are represented in French. This made the representation of kreyòl appear strange and foreign, and

in particular, far from French. Arguments were made that this orthography would inhibit learning French, a goal in educational circles.

Pressoir, who was the leader of the opposition against McConnell-Laubach's system but was himself in favor of a pro-phonemic orthography, introduced a number of changes. He eliminated the circumflex to indicate nasalization and introduced the letter *n* in its place. In spite of the fact that the "Anglo-Saxon" letters *k*, *y*, and *w* looked "too American," he nonetheless retained the letter *k* instead of choosing the letter *c* (as in French) to represent the sound /k/, and also kept the letter *y* together with the letter *i* to represent the semiconsonant /j/ (Déjean 1980a:185), as in, for example, *ayè* (yesterday). Instead of the letter *w*, however, he used the digraph *ou* to represent both the vocalic sound /u/ and the semivocalic sound /w/, thus adopting the French orthographic convention for representing those sounds.

Pressoir's system used the following alphabet of 30 symbols (Déjean 1980a:183):

oral vowels: a é è i o ò u

digraph: ou

nasal vowels: an in on

semivowels: i/y ou u (in the diphthong ui)

consonants: b d f g j k l m n p r s t v z digraphs: ch gn

Pressoir also introduced the hyphen to distinguish between the nasalized vowels as in /pātã/ (kreyòl: *pantan* [surprised]) and (nonnasalized) vowels that are followed by the nasal consonant /n/, as for example in *pa-n* (French: *panne* [mechanical breakdown]).

The Pressoir orthography was adopted with some modifications. For example, some users introduced the apostrophe instead of the hyphen (Déjean 1980a:194). The Pressoir orthography has been used primarily by government agencies for more than 30 years in adult literacy programs and was considered quite satisfactory (Déjean 1980a:182; Férère 1977:59; Pompilus 1985:163). American missionaries, however, used a modified McConnell-Laubach orthography for Bible translation and instruction. In literary circles, independent writers wishing to write in kreyòl created their own orthographic systems, more or less close to French etymology and orthography, thus contesting the Pressoir system. There was no consensus about orthography.

These discussions regarding the appropriate orthography were based on the premise that literacy in kreyòl was exclusively targeted at the large nonliterate adult population. This changed in the 1970s as a result of social and political pressures to change the social order of the country, including the educational system. Before 1946, the educational system was elitist in both content and clientele, and French was the only medium of instruction. After the revolution of 1946, education became a real possibility for the lower classes, whose offspring progressively outnumbered those of the elite. The schools could not respond to the needs of this growing heterogeneous student body, and as a consequence, by the 1970s the educational system faced a crisis. While other factors such as economic and social dimensions were involved, the poor academic achievement of the majority of lower-class students was explained primarily by those students' ignorance of the language of instruction, that is, French. It was suggested by the Ministry of Education that kreyòl should become the new language of instruction. This radical proposal was met by passionate reactions among the public regarding, first, the use of kreyòl itself and, subsequently, the choice of an orthography for kreyòl. The debates mainly involved writers, educators, and linguists. During 1972–73, the media was the place of much animated discussion. Many proposals were made, too numerous to detail here.²⁵

Once kreyòl was officially introduced by law in the schools in September 1979, it was vital that the Haitian government unify kreyòl orthography. To do so, it established as the official orthography a system developed by Haitian linguists from the Institut Pédagogique National in collaboration with French linguists from the Université René Descartes. The official orthography has an alphabet of 32 symbols:

oral vowels: a e è i o ò ou

nasalized vowels: an en on ou

semivowels: w y u (in the diphthong ui)
consonants: b ch d f g h j k l m n ng p r s t v z

In 1980, the official orthography, called *òtograf IPN* (after the Institut Pédagogique National) or *òtograf ofisyèl*, or more simply *òtograf kreyòl*, was made official on a trial basis by a communiqué of the Ministry of Education on January 30, 1980. After four years of experimentation, the government was supposed to take a definitive decision. The four years have long since passed, but no official document has, as yet, either endorsed or discredited the official orthography. The system is still contested by some linguists and provokes passionate reactions among the public for reasons to be discussed in the following section.

In this orthography the sound /ɛ̃/ is represented by *en*. Only one accent mark was retained, the grave, as in *ò* to represent the sound /ɔ/ and *è* to represent the sound /ɛ/. The use of the hyphen and apostrophe are optional. (For example, in New York Haitian educational circles, one never sees hyphens or apostrophes and to suggest their use is met with a negative response). Another option concerns the representation of the prevocalic /w/ as either the letter *w* or *r* before /o/, /õ/, /ɔ/, or /u/ (for example, *gwo* or *gro*) and the use of the letter *y* to represent the sound /j/. For the back-rounded vowel /u/ the graphic representation is *ou*.

One of the major goals of the McConnell-Laubach orthography was that it be easy for the monolingual masses to learn and use and thus make it possible for them to quickly become literate in French, the goal at the time. For Pressoir, the major ideological concern was that the orthography not look American and function as a bridge to literacy in French. When the *òtograf kreyòl* was introduced in 1979, the linguistic ideology regarding *kreyòl* itself had changed significantly, and this factor affected the attitudes people held toward the orthography as a representational system. Unlike the earlier periods of adult literacy campaigns, where *kreyòl* was treated simply as a transitional tool or medium to be used for the achievement of other goals, by 1979 *kreyòl* was thought about not only in the context of literacy, but more generally as the *language of instruction* as well as an *object of instruction*. The image of *kreyòl*, both spoken and written, and consequently its role in social and political life had changed.

pro-phonemicists, pro-etymologists, intermediaries: what and whom are they representing?

Why is the issue of the *kreyòl* orthography so important to Haitians? The matter is not simply whether to write, for example, the *kreyòl* word for bread (/pɛ̃/) with *e* (*pen*) or *i* (*pin*) or *ain* (*pain*) like in French *pain*. The underlying issue is about representations of self (“Haitianness”) and representations of the nation.

Pro-phonemicists insist that *kreyòl* must be written in a coherent, systematic, and logical way. Even though some anti-French feeling can be noticed in some representatives of the group (for example, Déjean 1975a, 1975b, 1980a, 1980b, 1980c), the first criterion they consider is that a *kreyòl* orthography be easy to learn as well as completely independent from the French orthographic system. For them, the target groups are monolingual *kreyòl* speakers who do not read French, and theoretically they can learn any orthography. The most straightforward *kreyòl* system is the easiest for the not-yet-literate monolinguals because the only relevant facts are *kreyòl* facts. The orthography should represent the sounds of *their* *kreyòl*. The pro-phonemicists are comprised of those who adopted and used, even if with slight variations, Pressoir’s orthographic system and, since 1980, the *òtograf kreyòl*. Most who adopt this approach are people involved in adult literacy and/or children’s literacy programs in Haiti and in the United States. Representatives of this camp are the Haitian government (Office National d’Alphabétisation et d’Action Communautaire, Institut Pédagogique National, and the Ministry of Education); the Catholic and Protestant Churches; linguists including Vernet, Déjean, and Bayardel; and also independent writers and nonlinguists. The opinions of this group are not homogeneous,

and Déjean, for example, in order to put an end to “useless” discussions, accepted the official orthography, though with reservations (1980a, 1980b, 1980c).

Pro-etymologists, on the other hand, argue that kreyòl must stay as close as possible to the French orthographic system. The reasoning that underlies this position is that French and kreyòl will always coexist in Haiti and thus it is logical to facilitate the learning of French through kreyòl. This idea is usually expressed by the image of an “orthographic bridge” that will help avoid the confusion that might result for kreyòl monolinguals as well as the bilinguals from the use of two totally different systems for languages which, they think, are quite similar. Kreyòl orthography, the pro-etymologists assert, must also reflect kreyòl’s origin, which, for them, is predominantly the French language. Those who align themselves with the pro-etymologist position include mainly literary people and members of the intelligentsia (for example, Archer 1987; Labuchin 1973; Métellus 1990; Roumer 1973), primary and secondary school teachers, and many parents from both the middle classes and the lower classes who are concerned about the introduction of kreyòl into schools.

A third position, which advocates an intermediate solution, is represented by the Haitian linguists and educators Pompilus (1973) and Lofficial (1979). From their perspective, the orthography should be phonemic *but* whenever possible should use the same conventions as the French orthography to represent sounds similar in French and kreyòl. Their reasoning is that French and kreyòl coexist in Haiti, and one day the country will be totally bilingual. Their first argument is to include the front rounded vowels (usually associated with the speech of bilinguals) in the phonetic description of kreyòl and to provide a graphic representation for each of them. Pompilus gives two reasons for this: (1) many noneducated people also pronounce those vowels in their everyday speech and (2) eliminating the vowels will have as a consequence the rejection by many people of the orthography itself and of the use of kreyòl for instruction (Pompilus 1973:30).²⁶

It is difficult to reconcile Pompilus’s proposal for an intermediate orthography that should integrate the front rounded vowels with his declaration that it would be illusory to take the variety of kreyòl spoken by the urban educated as the standard (cited by Déjean 1980a:170). This contradiction reveals the tension of creating a bridge between the past (etymology) and the future (when Haiti will be totally bilingual) at a time when the present itself is so full of conflict. Lofficial argues that it is better to prevent potential problems, since it is likely that with the influence of schools and the media, the occurrence of the front rounded vowels will increase (1979:118). Thus, it is better to anticipate the difficulties that could arise from two totally different systems and integrate the front rounded vowels now. The Haitian linguist Férére advocates something quite similar with his proposal of an “ethno-orthography”; that is, an orthography culturally and socially acceptable—an orthography that must include the front rounded vowels, which are not just marginal sounds (Férére 1974:23,50).

orthography as representation: how the language sounds and looks

The question of the status of kreyòl and the orthographic debates are deeply tied to issues of representation at both the national and international levels. Orthographic debates when situated within the broader framework of language ideology—the cultural beliefs that underlie the language practices, choices, and attitudes of a people—can be seen as articulating historically grounded tensions between groups that do not hold equal shares in the social and political system. Often, these inequalities developed during colonial encounters and were maintained after the original colonists were no longer present.

The notion that the French language is superior to all others was transmitted to the French colonies and survived in the minds and practices of both the ex-colonizers and ex-colonized. Most of the discussions that have taken place in Haiti during the past 60 years (1930–90) about

language choice and orthographic representation can be traced to a prevailing ideology about the inherent superiority of the French language. This is connected to ideologies about the superiority and refinement of French culture based, curiously, on the achievements of the great French writers of two past centuries: the Century of Reason (17th century) and the Century of the Enlightenment (18th century). Ideas of the clarity, exactness, logic, rationality, natural order, and richness of the French language as contributing to the greatness of French civilization have been defended by many Haitian writers.²⁷

Schools in Haiti, which until recently remained exclusively in the hands of the French clergy, played an important role in keeping these ideas strong. After its independence, Haiti rejected globally anything that was reminiscent of France. While many French colonists were killed, nonetheless the new nation kept the French language among its *butin de guerre* (war booty) (Dorin 1973:9). Independent Haiti also copied French administrative and organizational structures in order to survive.²⁸ Since the beginning, the new ruling classes maintained two contradictory positions in their relationship to Europe, particularly to France: hatred and fear at one pole, admiration and emulation at the opposite pole.

The same ambivalence is reflected in Haitians' attitudes toward French and kreyòl, and it is in this light that the importance given to the issue of kreyòl orthography can be best understood. If we look carefully, we will see that the debate is not only about how to write kreyòl, that is, how to represent graphically the sounds of kreyòl. It is about the conception of kreyòl itself as a language and as an element of Haitian national identity, about how Haitians situate themselves through languages at the national and international levels, and about the notions of Haitianness, authenticity, nationalism, and legitimacy. The battle over the orthography cannot be understood if we do not situate it in its social context. The dual linguistic system is a manifestation of the dual cultural system existing in Haiti. Two specific issues are taken up, the question of the "sounds" and the question of the "look" of kreyòl from the perspective of the different camps, all of which have social, political, cultural, and symbolic implications.

the sounds of kreyòl

The first disagreement is about the sounds that the alphabet should represent, particularly about the existence or nonexistence in kreyòl of four front rounded vowels, /ü/ as in French *tu*; /ö/ as in French *peu*; /œ/ as in French *boeuf*; /ø/ as in French *un*. The existence or nonexistence of the front rounded vowels is viewed by many (including Déjean, Lofficial) as the "dividing line" between the educated minority and the masses, between rural and urban. But to this is linked more profound questions of representation and legitimacy. Which variety of the language should be standardized and codified? This "technical" question has its counterpart in the sociopolitical arena: which variety constitutes the "real," "authentic" kreyòl? This question leads to others, such as, who is the real Haitian and whose interests must be taken into account and served? Not surprising to anyone, these questions refer to the struggles for power that have gone on between Noirs and Mulâtres since colonial times and the struggles for upward social mobility by the masses.

Whether the front rounded vowels are the "apanage" (exclusive domain) of a minority of educated bilinguals as Déjean argues, or whether they are also used by monolinguals as Fère, Pompilus and Lofficial assert, it is the role of prestige marker ascribed to them by the population that interests us in the debate. Déjean himself documents many cases of hypercorrection in the speech of monolingual kreyòl speakers (1980a:124–125). Fattier-Thomas also notes the use of hypercorrections (related to the front rounded vowels) in commercial advertisements to establish a kind of complicity with the public (1984:41). This is to say that for both bilinguals and monolinguals the front rounded vowels have a highly marked and symbolic value. For the educated and noneducated urban dwellers, the front rounded vowels are associated with the

front unrounded vowels, which are considered their antithesis and function as prestige markers (the front rounded ones being the prestigious forms). For example, consider the following pairs:

		kreyòl	French	English
opposition	front rounded	front unrounded	front rounded	
/ü/-/i/	duri	diri	du riz	rice
	suk	sik	sucre	sugar
/ö/-/e/	bleu	ble	bleu	blue
	meuzu	mezi	mesure	measure
/œ/-/ɛ/	pèu	pè	peur	fear
	bèu	bè	beurre	butter
/œ/-/ɛ̃/	lundi	lendi	lundi	Monday
	pafun	pafen	parfum	perfume

These pairs are not minimal pairs. They are variants that are found in social dialects, and they function as social markers. The use of the front rounded series is associated with educated classes, good manners, and harmonious sounds; whereas the second series is associated with popular usage, rough manners, strident, and even vulgar sounds. Metalinguistic terms are used to qualify the second series, the unrounded vowels, and to reflect the low esteem associated with these sounds.²⁹ To pronounce an unrounded vowel when a rounded vowel is expected is to make a mistake, and when one makes this error, Haitians will say that one has a *bouch su* or *bouch si* (sour/acidic mouth) or, more elegantly said, *bouch surette* (puckered mouth).³⁰ This is related to the idea that these unrounded vowels have intrinsically disagreeable sounds, and these are labeled *su* or *si* (sour/acidic). Other meanings of *si* or *su* in kreyòl refer to the taste of lemons and other acidic or unripe fruits, and milk or other kinds of food that can turn sour. When they go bad, one says, “*lèt la si*” (“the milk is sour”) or “*manje a si*” (“the food is sour”). When food smells rotten, one says, “*manje a santi si*” (“this food smells sour”). When someone has indigestion (acidic or upset stomach), one says, “*manje a rete si sou lestomak mwèn*” (“I did not digest that food”). People can also have a disagreeable sour smell, expressed as *nèg sa a santi si* (that man smells sweaty). These examples show the connection of the words *su/si* with the idea of something that has turned disagreeable, sour, rotten.

The negative attitudes toward the unrounded vowels also explain the hypercorrections often made by noneducated speakers when they try to affect a certain degree of education and good manners by avoiding the marked sounds even in cases where there are no alternates. The expressions *bouch su* and *bouch si* as well as *bèk su/si* and *djòl su/si*, of which *bèk si* and *djòl si* are the *rèk* variety and have the pejorative sense of “disgusting trap,” are used to describe what speakers do and how they sound when they hypercorrect these vowels in their speech. Those ideas are internalized, it must be stressed, by members at both ends of the social ladder who react with equal vigor against the official decision to eliminate the front rounded vowels and to generalize the use of the *su/si* sounds. They do not want their children to acquire “bad habits” (i.e., *bouch su*), but rather to speak elegantly and as closely to French as possible (Jean-Charles 1987; Zéphir 1990). As Lofficial argues “un parti-pris pour les formes marquées peut heurter le sentiment populaire” (1979:118). (A deliberate choice for the marked forms may hurt popular feelings.) From this it is reasonable to suggest that an important assumption underlying the rounded-unrounded vowel question is that kreyòl is a deformation of French and that French is the model to imitate.

Both the linguists who designed the official orthography and the government that implemented it consider the front rounded vowels as “marginal sounds.” No graphic representation of them is included in the alphabet because, says Vernet for example, “Il ne faut pas apprendre à l’enfant des sons qu’il ne prononce pas quotidiennement dans sa langue maternelle”

(1980:43–44). (One need not teach a child sounds that he does not pronounce in his or her mother tongue everyday.) Déjean has expressed a similar idea: “Choisir un système graphique qui intègre les voyelles antérieures arrondies, c’est augmenter sa difficulté d’apprentissage pour l’immense majorité des Haïtiens” (1980a:172–173). (To choose a graphic system that includes the front rounded vowels is to increase the difficulty of its learning for the majority of Haitians.) This suggests another important assumption, that the front rounded vowels sounds are difficult for monolinguals to learn to use (Déjean 1980a:171–173). Thus, those sound should not figure into the alphabet, in order not to embarrass and marginalize the majority of speakers. By advocating the use of the front unrounded vowels, Déjean expresses his sociopolitical militancy: anyone who proposes to include the four front rounded vowels is “*réactionnaire et élitiste*” (reactionary and elitist) and aims at promulgating a class and cultural imperialism (1980a:175).³¹

To a lesser extent, the same prestige issue holds for the use of certain nasalized forms. For many words, there is a choice between a less nasalized form and a more nasalized form. In the more nasalized form, a vowel preceding a nasal consonant is itself highly nasalized. In the example, *agronòm agronnonm* (agronomist), *agronom* has nasal consonants, but the vowels are not highly nasalized, whereas *agronnonm* has both nasal consonants and nasalized vowels. “Excessive nasalization” is considered a characteristic of rural speech and is felt to be vulgar (*rèk*) (Lofficial 1979:118). Thus, we have the equation: nasalization = rural = vulgar. The team who developed the *Ti diksyonnè kreyòl-franse* (under the direction of A. Bentolilla) chose the nasalized forms as “characteristic” of kreyòl, as indicated by the spelling of the word *diksyonnè* (dictionary). The double *n* marks the pronunciation as extended nasalization, which has rural connotations. Thus, another equation can be stated: rural = authentic = Haitianess. The *Ti diksyonnè* has been quite controversial in Haiti and New York.³²

A set of implicit oppositions and contradictions emerges from the debates about the sociolects and standardization of kreyòl. Characteristics of the educated are that they are from the higher social classes, use *kreyòl swa*, and are urban, elegant, agreeable, and civilized, all desirable traits for both bilinguals and monolinguals. Characteristics of the uneducated are that they are from the lower classes, are rural (*habitan*), use *kreyòl rék*, and have bouch *su/si*, all of which are undesirable for both bilinguals and urban monolinguals but desirable for many nationalists and progressives (linguists, thinkers, and politicians).

The sound system leads directly into the core of the debate about social classes, legitimacy, and authenticity. If we push the idea of authenticity to its limits, the following questions emerge: What sounds are those of the real, authentic kreyòl? What is the real, authentic kreyòl? Thus, who is the real, authentic Haitian, the dominated “Africanized” masses or the dominant “Frenchified” elites? Is there a “pure” kreyòl? We see that the ideological basis of such questions can lead to a vicious circle.

The question of the sounds of kreyòl, when examined particularly in the context of the question of the front rounded vowels, led us to issues of legitimacy, social prestige, and social mobility, and also to issues of representation in the local arena. The question of the *look* of kreyòl can be placed at a different ideological level, involving mainly the relationship of Haiti with other countries and is centered around the issues of nationality, independence, and autonomy.

the look of kreyòl

The pro-etymologists center their arguments around the issue of the roots of kreyòl. According to them, kreyòl, derived from French, must reflect its origin, and should be easily classified by its appearance into a world language family, that of the romance languages (Archer 1987). An etymologic orthography will be helpful for learning French later, since French will always be spoken in Haiti. Haiti must not forget its membership in the *francophonie* (French-speaking

community). To adopt an “Anglo-Saxon look,” represented by the “non-Latin” letters *w*, *k*, and *y*, is to deny that membership (Archer 1987). According to the most fervent pro-etymologists, the use of the three above-mentioned letters gives kreyòl a weird look and, even worse, will prevent the easy learning of French for both bilinguals and monolinguals. The most zealous pro-etymologists, who also present themselves as zealous nationalists, think that the Anglo-Saxon orthography has been imposed upon the Haitian people by imperialist powers. This idea, expressed in 1947, pointed to McConnell and Laubach as agents of the United States, the first imperialist power. This was later echoed by Archer (1987). According to her, the purpose of the United States was clear: to eliminate French in order to introduce English, a task that would be accomplished through the anglicization of kreyòl. The United States also wanted to substitute Protestant religion for the Catholic faith and Vodou religions. The U.S. interest in literacy is only based on its desire to sell Protestant Bibles and convert Haitians to Protestantism.

Still according to Archer, the aim of the French—the second imperialist power—in this endeavor is not very clear, but it is still worthwhile to raise the question: why the sudden interest of the Western powers in the vernaculars, in the Caribbean as well as in other parts of the world? Why this insistence on using the vernaculars in education? Archer calls for vigilance and the retention of French and an etymological kreyòl system (1987:4, 11). Not everyone who is pro-etymological expresses such extreme ideas as Archer, but there is certainly a defensive reaction against or a discomfort with foreign intervention in matters that Haitians consider strictly domestic (Métellus 1990). The same rejection or mistrust is also found in the other two camps (Déjean [1980a] and Lofficial [1979]).

Among the most contested letters is *k*, which not only represents the danger of U.S. imperialism, but also has even been claimed to represent the threat of communism.³³ Déjean (1980a) reports that the literacy activists have been accused of being disguised communist agents by a government official under F. Duvalier’s regime. Here is revealed a fear of a sudden “wake up” of the masses. Déjean also reports that a militant communist accused the same orthography of being “bourgeois, réactionnaire et macoute” (1980a:55).

The underlying assumption of the pro-etymologists is that the orthographic system of the language must be linked to a literate culture, to a literary tradition. Kreyòl orthography must follow in established tradition. The most extreme assumption is that kreyòl needs French to rely on and that French must be given credit for its contribution. On the contrary, answers the opposite pro-phonemic group, no nationality, religion, culture, or political allegiance can be ascribed to single letters like *w*, *k*, and *y*. An orthography is just an arbitrary and conventional system, and from a linguistic point of view, a writing system should be neutral (Déjean 1980a). Thus, the pro-phonemic group advocates an orthography totally new and independent for kreyòl. From their perspective, the choice of a phonemic system is scientifically justified; it is the more rational and simpler way of writing kreyòl, which should avoid the errors and aberrations of the French orthography. It is just a conventional system, and the use of *w*, *k*, and *y* has nothing to do with being Anglo-Saxon or Protestant, Russian or communist. The underlying assumption is that kreyòl is a language that can stand by itself and does not need to rely on someone else’s tradition. Consequently, the pro-phonemic group argues that the teaching of kreyòl must be independent from the teaching of French. For the militants of that group who are the most involved in literacy (for example, Déjean and Vernet), the target is the monolingual masses, not the educated elites.

It is interesting to note that the two most extreme camps, the pro-phonemic and the pro-etymologists, advocate the authority and neutrality of “science” for their arguments. But we have seen that there are no neutral positions, only ideological stances. One more example of the deeply ideological character of the debate is the silence regarding the simplification of many final consonant clusters involving stops and liquids (both *r* and *l*) and the clusters *sm* and *st*, as in:

/bl/	as in /posib/	French: /posibl/	possible
/pl/	as in /poep/	French: /poep/	people
/br/	as in /lib/	French: /libr/	free
/pr/	as in /prɔp/	French: /prɔpr/	clean
/sm/	as in /komunis/	French: /komunism/	communism
/st/	as in /komunis/	French: /komunist/	communist

These final consonant cluster simplifications are not discussed—maybe because they are a general pronunciation feature common to all Haitians, educated and noneducated, present whenever they speak kreyòl or French. Where there is no difference, there is no possibility of marking prestige and social distance through these consonant clusters.³⁴ Another question unrelated to pronunciation but relevant to writing concerns the use of punctuation, particularly the use of hyphens and apostrophes. Their use is advocated by the pro-etymologists to show contractions (apostrophe) or grammatical relationships (hyphen). Even though the *òtograf kreyòl* allows the use of both signs, many pro-phonemists reject their use.³⁵

conclusions

These arguments reveal the complexity and ambivalence of cultural definitions of Haitian-ness. As Haiti is still in the process of integrating its dual African/European heritage, there are numerous arenas where cultural duality is continually negotiated. Religion (vodou and western religion) is one important locus of this negotiation process, and language (French and kreyòl) is another. The debates about language also illustrate the extent to which an issue—in this case orthography—can be politicized when intolerance is the dominant note.

With few exceptions, throughout the 19th century, the elites have defined themselves as “colored French” and have spoken of Haiti as the “*filie ainée de la France*” (the oldest daughter of France) or as *France Noire* (Black France). Although acknowledging their African roots, the elites also claimed their affiliation with Latin culture. The Indigenist School and Haitian Ethnology School affirmed that Haitian culture was Afro-Latin but with a predominance of African elements. African elements are associated with blackness, vodou, and the masses. Kreyòl, the only element that the educated claim to share with the masses, is the enduring symbol of Haitian identity. But we have seen an ambivalence in the values attached to kreyòl: the *rèk* variety is used for nationalist discourse on authenticity and pride, but at the same time is associated with negative connotations about these same masses. This ambivalence is reflected in the orthography quarrels themselves as well as in the wish on the part of the pro-etymological camp for a kreyòl orthographic “bridge” between the past (French) and the future (when French and kreyòl will co-exist peacefully) but with no solid foundations in an ever-changing present.

It is noteworthy that Haiti is not the only country where language issues and orthography issues in particular provoke emotional reactions. Examples abound of orthographic quarrels in industrialized societies as well as in the so-called third and fourth worlds.³⁶ The recent arguments regarding the implementation of the reform of the French orthography are a good example of how a country can stick to its orthographic icons as symbols of its identity.³⁷ When a language is codified and an orthography is officially adopted, this is usually interpreted to mean that there is one correct way to spell and write the language, and that all others are simply wrong. To design and implement an orthography is neither a simple nor a neutral endeavor. It establishes norms of pronunciation as well as norms for writing. Because of its prescriptive character, an orthography can be perceived in different ways. The main reason for reaction is that the elaboration of an orthography implies the choice and standardization of one dialect over the others. And when a variety through its officialization is given the status of a standard,

the users of the other varieties sometimes react with surprising virulence because they feel that their language variety and its speakers are denied representation.

The latest *òtograf kreyòl* is implicitly positioning the kreyòl spoken by the masses as the standard. This has created resistance both to the adoption of the orthography and to the use of kreyòl as a medium of instruction in school. The double resistance comes from both the masses and the educated elite minority. The masses see the officialization of written and spoken kreyòl in school as limiting their access to French and consequently social and economic mobility. The elites, who already know kreyòl, do not see the point of teaching it, in any form, in school. They also hold the view that *kreyòl rèk* and *gwo kreyòl* are directed toward the lowest common denominator, bringing them down instead of elevating the masses.

As we have seen, the debate around the orthography takes on issues of legitimacy and authenticity. Who is meant to be represented by this *òtograf kreyòl*, whose speech, values, cultural identity? Which version of kreyòl can be said to be genuinely Haitian? Is it the *kreyòl swa* or *kreyòl fransize* of the educated minority, or the *kreyòl rèk*, the *gwo kreyòl*, or the *bon kreyòl*, the “real kreyòl” of the masses? What is the real kreyòl? These rhetorical questions have an implicit corollary: “Who is the real Haitian?”

This article is a reflection on metalinguistic terms used by kreyòl speakers and about their relationships to the debate on the elaboration of an orthography for writing kreyòl. We have seen how the metalinguistic terms and the orthography debate are deeply rooted in symbolic systems of representation and in the different and ambivalent meanings ascribed to Haitianess, whether referring to the national level (issues of identity, authenticity, and legitimacy) or to the international level (issues of the sovereignty and self determination). We hope that this exploration of the terms *rèk*, *swa*, *gwo kreyòl*, *kreyòl fransize*, *bouch su/si* will be extended by further research that will evaluate the extent and frequency of their use and their relative weight in the sociocultural, economic, and political scenes in Haiti.

Any linguistic policy that would be exclusively based on “purely linguistic facts” takes the risk of going the wrong way, because language is not only an instrument of communication but also carries symbolic values that condition social, political, and economic spheres. The main question to raise, in the Haitian case, is how to give the currently stigmatized variety of kreyòl spoken by the majority of the population, as well as that majority itself, the effective means to reverse the present situation. Such means are not limited to the linguistic sphere, but necessarily overlap with and will have consequences for economic, social, and political domains as well.

notes

Acknowledgments. We would like to thank the many Haitians in New York and Port-au-Prince who participated in our research project and freely shared their views about kreyòl with us; the Spencer Foundation and New York University (Research Challenge Fund) for supporting this research; and Michel DeGraff, Sue Gal, Paul Garrett, Fred Myers, Gillian Sankoff, John Singler, Lucien Smarth, and Kit Woolard, all of whom generously provided helpful suggestions and encouragement when they were most needed.

1. We refer to the language in the title of the article in the form that is most familiar to an English-speaking audience, Haitian Creole. However, in the body of the text, we refer to the language as kreyòl, the way it is referred to by Haitians, and we have chosen to write it and our own transcriptions using the *òtograf ofisyèl* (official orthography). According to Haitian Convention, we use lower-case letters in writing *kreyòl*, the name of the language. We have, of course, maintained the original orthographies used in published sources.

This collaborative project grew out of an investigation of kreyòl language use in New York City, which was then extended to Port-au-Prince. Participants were from diverse social and educational backgrounds, and varied in terms of linguistic repertoires, migration history, and age. During the course of transcribing audiotaped family interaction data with native speakers, the issue of orthographic conventions arose frequently. We realized that the very transcription conventions we chose indicated an ideological stance. This, in conjunction with native speakers’ metalinguistic commentaries about other participants’ speech, led us to investigate the relationships between varieties of speaking and orthography. Our research methods include the use of historical, literary, sociolinguistic, and ethnographic data.

2. According to Saussure, “the signs used in writing are arbitrary; there is no connection, for example, between the letter *t* and the sounds that it designates. . . . Since the graphic sign is arbitrary, its form matters

little or rather matters only within the limitations imposed by the system" (1966[1916]:119–120). In the orthography debates about kreyòl, the forms/signs themselves have symbolic value, and therefore, matter.

3. Research investigations of language ideology have pointed out the prevalence of competing ideologies in different types of communities. See, for example, the papers in Kroskrity, Schieffelin, and Woolard 1992.

4. Both Duvalier the father and Duvalier the son adopted a "vanguard" position in comparison with the majority of their constituents' attitudes toward kreyòl and French in Haiti.

5. Ironically, as both Duvaliers based their power on a nationalistic ideology, kreyòl benefited from their policies from a linguistic point of view. Official standardization, however, cannot by itself change the social and cultural assumptions about the kreyòl language prevalent in Haitian society. For a sociopolitical perspective on the status and functions of several Creole languages in the Caribbean see Devonish 1986.

6. The use of the term "diglossia" has been the subject of often emotional debates. First used in 1928 by the French Hellenist Jean Psichari (cited in Fattier-Thomas 1987:100), Ferguson (1959) refined the concept as two varieties of a language that are functionally distributed and applied it to several cases, including Haiti. Ferguson's statements about the relationship between French and kreyòl, though eventually shown to be inaccurate, dominated the way in which many linguists viewed the relationship between the two languages both structurally and functionally. For various perspectives on this issue see Déjean 1980a, 1983, 1987; Fèrère 1977; Fishman 1967, Fleischman 1984; Prudent 1980, 1981; Racine 1970; Tabouret-Keller 1982; Valdman 1968, 1976, 1978, 1987; and Winford 1985. Even now, however, one still finds textbooks that refer to Haiti as an example of "classical diglossia" (Fasold 1984:53).

7. See, for example, d'Ans 1968; Bentolila et al. 1976; Carden and Stewart 1988; Déjean 1980a, 1983; Hazaël-Massieux 1991; Holm 1989; Koopman 1986; Lefebvre et al. 1982; Lefebvre 1986, 1990; Spears 1990; Valdman et al. 1983.

8. The main syntactic differences between the Southern variety and the other two is the form of the nonpunctual aspect marker *pe* instead of *ap* or *ape*. The distinctive morphosyntactic feature of the Northern dialect is the use of the particles *a* and *an* to mark possession, while the other dialects rely on word order alone. At the phonetic level, the Northern dialect displays the use of postvocalic /t/, whereas the other two varieties do not.

9. The term *kreyòl fransize* is increasingly used by the bilinguals themselves to qualify their speech. It was confined to the linguistic literature according to Pompilus (1990), Lofficial (1992), and others.

10. Used in this way, it is part of a continuum of ripeness, beginning with *vèt* (unripe, green) and ending with *mi* (ripe/ready). These terms, however, are not applied to speech.

11. For a related point see Efron (1954).

12. The exception is in the Northern dialect, which has this postvocalic feature throughout (Hyppolite 1949; Orjala 1970).

13. The debate about written forms *wo*, *wō*, *wò*, and *wou* is not about whether they are *rèk* or *swa* but about the pedagogical usefulness of *w* versus *r*. The official orthography gives a choice between *w* and *r*.

14. We have reason to believe that for many Haitians living in New York and Boston, where knowledge of French is not necessary to function in society, *kreyòl swa* and *kreyòl fransize* remain the prestige varieties associated with the educated upper social classes.

15. Bourdieu's ideas (1975, 1977, 1979, 1982) concerning prestige language and symbolic capital illuminate this argument. Bourdieu (1975) argues that through the *langue légitime* (legitimate language)—the language elaborated by the writers and grammarians—the dominant classes establish a distance between themselves and the rest of the speakers. Thus, language functions not only to communicate but at the same time to set boundaries between the elite and the masses, boundaries that are well accepted by all classes, consciously and unconsciously. One of the main characteristics of the legitimate language, "correctness," is a privilege of the dominant classes.

16. Diamond's (1991) article in *Natural History* titled "Reinventions of Human Language: Children Forced to Reevolve Grammar Thereby Reveal Our Brain's Blueprint for Language" includes the following:

Between human languages and the vocalizations of any animal lies a seemingly unbridgeable gulf. . . . One approach to bridging this gulf is to ask whether some people, deprived of the opportunity to hear any of our fully evolved modern languages, ever spontaneously invented a primitive language. . . . Children . . . (placed in a situation comparable to that of the wolf-boy) . . . hearing adults around them speaking a grossly simplified and variable form of language somewhat similar to what children themselves usually speak around the age of two . . . proceeded unconsciously to evolve their own language, far advanced over vervet communication but simpler than *normal* languages. These new languages were the ones commonly known as creoles. [p. 23, emphasis added]

17. Auguste Brun, a French scholar writing in the early part of the 20th century claimed that "une langue est un dialecte qui a réussi. Un patois est un langue qui s'est dégradée" (quoted in Pressoir 1958:27). (A language is a dialect that has been successful. A patois is a language that has deteriorated.) Such a view is still held by some educated Haitians today.

18. The first official written documents in kreyòl are the proclamations of the Commissaires Sonthonax and Polverel to the slaves (May 26, 1793); the proclamations of the Commissaire Sonthonax to the slaves abolishing slavery (August 29, 1793); and the proclamation of the First Consul Napoleon Bonaparte to the slaves of Haiti, dated 17 Brumaire, Year Tenth, urging them to warmly receive the French expedition of General Leclerc in 1802 (Fouchard 1972, cited by Jean-Baptiste 1984:17–18.)

19. The first example of literary efforts in kreyòl is a poem called “Lisette quitté la plaine” by Duvivier de la Mahautière (1757) cited in Sylvain 1936:8. Two texts have been located from the early part of the 19th century: “Idylles et Chansons ou Essais de Poésie Créole” (1811) cited in Charles 1984:155 and a play by Haitian author Juste Chanlatte, *L’Entrée du roi dans sa capitale en janvier 1818* reproduced in *Le Nouvelliste* 19 août 1979.

20. The most famous works from that period are written in French mixed with Haitian “creolisms.” An example is *Gouverneurs de la Rosée* (Masters of the Dew) by Jacques Roumain, published in 1944 and translated into 14 languages. It is considered a masterpiece of Haitian literature. A second is *Compère Général Soleil*, (Comrade General Sun) by Jacques Stephen Alexis (1955). Both are peasant fiction novels in which one cannot find a single dialogue totally in kreyòl.

21. See for example Rigaud’s *Tassos* (1933), Morisseau-Leroy’s *Diacoute* (1953a), or Pressoir’s *Sèt-Poe-M Ki So-T Nan Mo-N* (1954b).

22. For example, Archer 1987, Maysonave 1991, Métellus 1990, and Michel 1990, to cite but a few.

23. Debates regarding orthography in Mauritius (Robillard 1989) and Martinique (Prudent 1989) show similar divisions between those advocating a phonemic basis and those arguing for an etymological one.

24. The term *bwa-nan-nen* refers to the practice of putting a small wooden pincer, like a clothes pin, on the face or ear of someone who loses at each round of dominoes or cards, and is still done in urban as well as rural areas. Pompilus (1973:25) suggested that this appellation, *bwa-nan-nen* (wooden stick on the nose), was invented by the literacy instructors to help their students remember that the circumflex represented nasalization. One characteristic generally admitted of rural kreyòl is extended nasalization (Lofficial 1979:118).

25. For example,

Manigat (1970, 1972) suggested that the digraph *sh* instead of *ch* represent the sound /s/.

Pompilus (1973) proposed that the letters *c* and *qu* instead of *k* represent the sound /k/; the digraph *ou* instead of the letter *w* represent the semiconsonant /w/; the digraph *oi*, closer to French, represent the diphthong /wa/; the letter *i* instead of *y* represent the sound /j/; the four front rounded vowels already mentioned.

Lofficial (1979:120–122) proposed using the ONAAC orthography (the government’s adaptation of Pressoir’s orthography), but adding “Pressoir’s front rounded vowels” (which, in fact, were not part of Pressoir’s orthography) and McConnell-Laubach’s representation of nasals (i.e., the circumflex).

Other proposals, including those made by Hall (1951a, 1951b, 1953), Churchill (1957), Berry, (1964, 1975), and Valdman (1974) received little attention in Haiti.

26. Pompilus now accepts the official orthography but with reservations regarding the “overuse” of the letters *y* and *w* (1990).

27. For example, Dantès Bellegarde, a prominent thinker of the first half of the 20th century wrote in 1949,

La langue française . . . est sans conteste l’idiome dont la connaissance importe le plus au gens cultivés de tous les pays. Par la richesse de son vocabulaire (philosophie, science, médecine, droit, théologie, critique), par ses qualités supérieures de clarté, de précision, et de souplesse, elle mérite bien le nom de langue de civilisation, (quoted in Garrett 1990:58). (The French language is indisputably the idiom that is the most important for learned people of all countries to know. By the richness of its vocabulary [philosophy, science, medicine, law, theology, criticism], by its superior qualities of clarity, precision, and flexibility, it well deserves the name of language of civilization.)

For more details concerning similar views about the French language, see Grillo 1989 and Swiggers 1990.

28. Hoffman (1984) explains that the Haitians were aware of the paradox inherent in their conscious imitation of those who had caused them so much suffering, the French. “[They] attempted to resolve it by asserting that they had been oppressed in colonial times not by the French, but by the *colons*, a disreputable minority of adventurers recruited from the dregs of French society” (59). These were not the same French of the metropole, who epitomized culture and civilization. We thank Paul Garrett for pointing this out.

29. An extremist and nonscientific view associates the unrounded vowels with the African slaves, who were thought to have a congenital incapacity to pronounce sounds properly and consequently had a loose and free pronunciation. Archer has stated, for example, “Les Noirs remplacent toujours *u* par *i*, *eu* par *é*, *un* par *in*, ils rejettent le *r* final; ils ont un parler lâche et libre” (1987:129). (Black people always replace *u* with *i*, *eu* with *é*, *un* with *in*, they drop the final *r*; they have a way of speaking loosely and freely.) Interestingly enough, the dropping of the *r* is seen by the French philologist Albert Dauzat as characteristic of the French regional dialects of Normandy and Picardy (Dauzat, cited by Churchill 1957:5).

30. One possible explanation of the origin of this term locates its metaphorical origins in the sounds produced when speaking while sucking a hard candy called a *surette*. Indeed, if one were to speak with a *surette* in the front of the mouth, all vowels would be rounded (DeGraff 1992).

31. DeJean states: “L’adoption de graphèmes pour représenter les quatre voyelles antérieures arrondies est une manoeuvre illusoire et trompeuse” (1980a:173). (The adoption of graphemes to represent the four front rounded vowels is but an illusory and tricky maneuver.)

32. According to Lofficial

Le Dictionnaire Élémentaire Créole-Français privilégie, probablement par souci d’authenticité, des formes qui sont ressenties comme rudes par les Haïtiens. Ainsi chaque fois qu’il y a un choix entre une forme

très nasalisée et une autre (*agronnom* et *agronom*, par exemple), c'est la première qui est présentée comme forme de base, l'autre n'étant présentée qu' à titre de variante. [1979:118] (*The Basic Kreyòl-French Dictionary*, probably concerned with authenticity, prefers forms that are considered rough by Haitians. Each time there is a choice between a form very nasalized [*agronnom* and *agronom* for example], the first is presented as a basic form, the other one just as a variant.)

The dictionary being referred to by Lofficial prints the forms as "*agronnòm* var. *agrònòm*" (French *agronome* [agronomist]) (Bentolila 1976:21).

33. It is interesting to note that another value is ascribed to the letter *k* in the development of Papiamentu, the creole language spoken in Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao, where it is used to mark "African ancestry" (Winer 1990:266, fn. 1). In the United States, it is used by black power movements and other groups as a marker of social protest against undemocratic practices, as in "Amerika." Similar symbolic analyses have been carried out concerning the letter *ç* in Catalan and the letter *k* in the creole of Réunion (Neu-Altenheimer et al. 1987).

34. Labov's (1966, 1972) research on hypercorrection and variable norms among socially stratified speakers in New York City is the model for this social variation. While kreyòl does not show variation in the final consonant clusters, there is social variation in initial consonant clusters /sp/ and /st/. The *rèk* variety adds /e/ before the cluster, for example, /espə/ (*rèk*): /spə/ (*swa*) "sport," /estad/ (*rèk*): /stad/ (*swa*) "stadium." This variation has not been discussed in the literature.

35. Our purpose is not to discuss whether the different positions are right or wrong, but to see their ideological implications and connections. Déjean, for example, argued that there were too many inconsistencies and difficulties in their use (1980a, 1980b, 1980c), but it may be also that they are viewed as looking "too French."

36. For a discussion of other contested orthographies see, for example, Bernabé et al. 1983; Coulmas 1990; Fodor and Hagège (1982–90); GEREC 1982; Graves 1991; Hellinger 1986; Hornberger 1994; Jaffe 1990; Ludwig 1989; and Winer 1990.

37. As a postscript, we would like to add the following: As reported by Coles (1990), a French commission made recommendations approved by the Académie Française to partially suppress the circumflex (eliminating its use with the letters *i* and *u*, but not *o*, *e*, and *a*) and also "to remove the hyphen whenever possible." But after much debate, which sometimes took a very aggressive tone, the French Academy decided (by a vote of 23 to 6) that, "pour rien au monde!" the French would not give up their beloved circumflex and hyphens.

However, accents are also being added especially to foreign words to make them appear more French. At the same time, the spellings of the English words are adapted to French pronunciations and orthography. Since French orthography has always been a major subject of debate, the claim is that these simplifications are meant to improve general spelling skills. It should be noted, however, that the Education Minister hopes that these simplifications of spelling will also stop the French language from being overrun by "anglais." Signs of *la résistance* to these changes are already emerging (Greenhouse 1991; see also *The Economist* 1991:43).

references cited

- Alexis, Jacques Stephen
1955 *Compère Général Soleil*. (Comrade General Sun.) Paris: Gallimard.
- Anderson, Benedict
1983 *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.
- Archer, Marie Thérèse
1987 *La Créologie Haïtienne: Latinité du Créole d'Haïti*. Port-au-Prince: Le Natal.
- Beaulieu, Christian
1939 *Pour Ecrire le Créole*. *Les Griots*. 4:589–598.
- Bellegarde, Dantès
1949 *La Langue Française et le Créole Haïtien*. *Conjonction*, 19.
- Bentolila, Alain, Pierre Nougayrol, Pierre Vernet, Charles Alexandre, and Henry Tourneux
1976 *Ti Diksyonnè Kreyòl-Franse: Dictionnaire Élémentaire Créole Haïtien-Français*. Paris: Editions Caraïbes/Hatier.
- Bernabé, Jean, Lawrence D. Carrington, Pat Charles, Félix Henderson, K. Hippolyte, and Pearllette Louisy
1983 *The Development of Antillean Creole. A Report of the Second Creole Orthography Workshop held in St. Lucia, September 16–19, 1982*. Castries.
- Berry, Paul
1964 *Research and Development in Applied Psychology and Linguistics for Mass Education in Haitian Creole*. Croton on Hudson, NY: Hudson Institute.
1975 *Literacy and the Question of Creole*. In *The Haitian Potential: Research and Resources of Haiti*. Vera Rubin and Richard P. Schaedel, eds. Pp. 83–113. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Bollée, Annegret
1989 *Le Développement du Créole Ecrit aux Seychelles*. In *Les Créoles Français entre l'Oral et l'Ecrit*. Ralph Ludwig, ed. Pp. 183–200. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Bourdieu, Pierre
1975 *Le Fétichisme de la Langue*. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 4:2–32.

- 1977 The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges. *Social Sciences Information* 16:645–668.
- 1979 *La Distinction: Critique Sociale du Jugement* Paris: Les Editions de Minuit.
- 1982 *Ce que Parler Veut Dire*. Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard.
- Carden, Guy, and William Stewart
1988 Binding Theory, Bioprogram and Creolization: Evidence from Haitian Creole. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 5(3):1–67.
- Charles, Christophe
1984 Les Pionniers de la Littérature Haïtienne d'Expression Créole. *Conjonction* 161–162:151–158.
- Churchill, Margaret Anne
1957 *Haitian Creole: Linguistic Analysis and Proposed Orthography*. M.S. thesis, Georgetown University.
- Coles, Peter
1990 The French Used to Have a Word for It. *Nature* 347:323.
- Coulmas, Florian
1990 Language Adaptation in Meiji Japan. In *Language Policy and Political Development*. Brian Weinstein ed. Pp. 69–86. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- d'Ans, André Marcel
1968 *Le Créole Français d'Haïti*. The Hague: Mouton.
- DeGraff, Michel
1992 E-mail message to Bambi B. Schieffelen, March 20.
- Devonish, Hubert
1986 *Language and Liberation: Creole Language Politics in the Caribbean*, London: Karia Press.
- Déjean, Paul
1963 *Problèmes d'Alphabétisation en Haïti. Mémoire pour l'Obtention de la Licence en Sciences Sociales, Dactylographié*, Institut d'Etudes Sociales, Institut Catholique de Paris.
- Déjean, Yves
1975a *Dilemme en Haïti: Français en Péril Français?* New York: Les Editions Connaissance d'Haïti.
1975b *Fransè se Danje*. *Sèl* 23–24:32–39.
1980a *Comment Ecrire le Créole d'Haïti*. Québec: Collectif Paroles.
1980b *Ann Kase Koube Otograf la*. *Sèl* 8 (48–49):4–5.
1980c *Iv Dejan ap Reponn Keksyon Sèl sou Nouvo Otograf Kreyòl la*. *Sèl* 8(48–49):25–35.
1983 *Diglossia Revisited: French and Creole in Haiti*. *Word* 34:189–213.
1987 *Diglossia in Haiti*. In *Geolinguistic Perspectives*. K. Rogers, ed. Lanham, MD: University of American Press.
- Diamond, Jared
1991 *Reinventions of Human Language*. *Natural History*, May:22–28.
- Doret, Frédéric
1924 *Pour amuser nos tous petits: Fables de La Fontaine traduites en prose créole*. Paris: Imprimerie des Orphelins-apprentis.
- Dorin, Bernard
1973 *La Fausse Querelle du Créole et du Français*. *Conjonction* 20:9–12.
- The Economist
1991 "Comme vous étiez." *January* 26:43.
- Efron, Edith
1954 *French and Creole Patois in Haiti*. *Caribbean Quarterly* 3:199–214.
- Fasold, Ralph
1984 *The Sociolinguistics of Society*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Fattier-Thomas, Dominique
1984 *De la Variété Rèk à la Variété Swa: Pratiques Vivantes de la Langue en Haïti*. *Conjonction* 161–162:39–51.
1987 *Portraits de Bilingues Francophones Haïtiens*. *Conjonction* 176:97–125.
- Fèrère, Gérard A.
1974 *Haitian Creole Sound-System, Form-classes, Texts*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.
1977 *Diglossia in Haiti: A Comparison with Paraguayan Bilingualism*. *Caribbean Quarterly* 23(1):50–60.
- Ferguson, Charles A.
1959 *Diglossia*. *Word* 15:325–40.
- Fishman, Joshua A.
1967 *Bilingualism with and without Diglossia; Diglossia with and without Bilingualism*. *Journal of Social Issues* 23(2):29–38.
- Fleischmann, Ulrich
1984 *Language, Literacy and Underdevelopment*. In *Haiti Today and Tomorrow: An Interdisciplinary Study*. Charles Foster and Albert Valdman, eds. Pp. 101–117. New York: University Press of America.
- Fodor, Istvan, and Claude Hagège, eds.
1982–90 *Language Reform: History and Future*. 5 vols. Hamburg: Buske Verlag.
- Fouchard, Jean
1955 *Le Théâtre à Saint-Domingue*. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie de l'Etat.
1972 *Les Marrons de la Liberté*, Paris: L'École.

- Frankétienne
1975 *Dézaïfi*. Port-au-Prince: Edition Fardin.
- Gal, Susan
1991 *Bartók's Funeral: Representations of Europe in Hungarian Political Rhetoric*. *American Ethnologist* 18:440–458.
- Garrett, Paul Brian
1990 *Spoken Identity: The Social implications of Language for Haitians*. Senior Essay, Dept of Sociology, Yale University.
- GEREC (Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherches en Espace Créolophone)
1982 *Charte Culturelle Créole: Se Pwan Douvan avan Douvan Pwan Non!* Fort-de-France: Centre Universitaire Antilles-Guyane.
- Goodman, Morris F.
1964 *A Comparative Study of Creole French Dialects*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Graves, William
1991 *Orthographies and Identities: The Politics of Writing in an American Indian Community*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Ethnological Society, Charleston, South Carolina.
- Greenhouse, Steven
1991 *A Question of Spelling Turns the French Testy*. *The New York Times*, January 2:2.
- Grillo, Ralph D.
1989 *Dominant Languages: Language and Hierarchy in Britain and France*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hall, Robert A., Jr.
1951a *A la Recherche d'une Orthographe Créole*. In *Vers une Orthographe Créole*. Léo Faublas, ed. Pp. 24–27. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie de l'Etat.
1951b *Le Créole et l'Orthographe Française*. In *Vers une Orthographe Créole*. Léo Faublas, ed. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie de l'Etat.
1953 *Haitian Creole: Grammar, Texts, Vocabulary*. *The American Anthropological Association Memoir*, 74. Washington, DC: American Anthropological Association.
- Hazaël-Massieux, Marie-Christine
1991 *Bibliographie des Etudes Creoles: Langues, Cultures, Sociétés* Paris: Didier-Erudition.
- Hellinger, Marlis
1986 *On Writing English-Related Creoles in the Caribbean*. In *Focus on the Caribbean*. Manfred Görlach and John Holm, eds. Pp. 53–70. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Holm, John
1989 *Pidgins and Creoles*. Vols 1 and 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hoffman, Léon-François
1984 *Francophilia and Cultural Nationalism*. In *Haiti Today and Tomorrow: An Interdisciplinary Study*. Charles Foster and Albert Valdman, eds. Pp. 101–117. New York: University Press of America.
1989 *Haïti: Couleurs, Croyances, Créole*. Montréal: Editions du CIDIHCA (Le Centre international de documentation et d'information haïtienne, caribéenne et afro-canadienne).
- Hornberger, Nancy H.
1994 *Five Vowels or Three? Linguistics and Politics in Quechua Language Planning in Peru*. In *Language Policy and Language Education: Critical Approaches*. James W. Tollefson, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming.
- Hyppolite, Michelson P.
1949 *Les Origines des Variations du Créole Haïtien*. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie de l'Etat.
- Jaffe, Alexandra
1990 *Language, Identity and Resistance on Corsica*. Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington.
- Jean-Charles, Hervé Louis
1987 *Attitudes of Teachers and Parents toward French and Creole in Haiti*. Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University.
- Jean-Baptiste, Pauris
1984 *Kreyòl nan Literati Politik ak Literati Ofisyèl*. *Conjonction* 161–162:15–22.
- Koopman, Hilda
1986 *The Genesis of Haitian: Implications of a Comparison of Some Features of the Syntax of Haitian, French, and West African languages*. In *Substrata versus Universals in Creole Genesis*. Pieter Muysken and Norval Smith, eds. Pp. 231–258. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Kroskrity, Paul, Bambi B. Schieffelin, and Kathryn Woolard, eds.
1992 *Special Issue on Language Ideologies*. *Pragmatics* 2(3).
- Labov, William
1966 *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
1972 *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Labuchin, Rassoul
1973 *Graphie du Créole, Point de Vue*. *Conjonction* 120:40–44.

- Lefebvre, Claire
 1986 Relexification in Creole Genesis Revisited. *In* Substrata versus Universals in Creole Genesis. Pieter Muysken and Norval Smith, eds. Pp. 279–300. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
 1990 La Genèse du Créole Haïtien. *Interface* 2(5):27–33.
- Lefebvre, Claire, Hélène Magloire-Holly, and Nanie Piou, eds.
 1982 *Syntaxe de l’hatien*. Ann Arbor, MI: Karoma.
- Lofficial, Frantz
 1979 *Créole, Français: une Fausse Querelle*. Montréal: Collectif Paroles.
 1992 Conversation with Rachelle Doucet, January 15.
- Ludwig, Ralph, ed.
 1989 *Les Créoles Français entre l’Oral et l’Écrit*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Manigat, Max
 1970 Alphabet “Jé Kléré”, une nouvelle méthode de transcription du créole haïtien. Brussels: Mimeo-graph.
 1972 Kèk lidé sou òtograf kreyòl la. *Sèl*, December:30–32.
- Maysonave, Georges Edouard
 1991 Lettre au Dr. Georges Michel. *Le Nouvelliste*, Mar. 12:5
- Métellus, Jean
 1990 Simplification de la Langue. Réforme de l’Orthographe. *Enjeux Linguistiques. Poétique et Technologie*. *Le Nouvelliste*, July 6–8:1,8,10.
- Michel, G.
 1990 Lettre à Lucien Montas à propos de la Réforme éducative. Port-au-Prince: Editions Fardin.
- Morisseau-Leroy, Félix
 1953a *Diacoute*. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie Deschamps.
 1953b *Antigone en Créole*. Port-au-Prince: Le Centre de Production de Matériel Educatif.
- Neu-Altenheimer, Irmela, J. Carpanin Marimoutou, and Daniel Baggioni.
 1987 Névrose Diglossique et Choix Graphiques: <<ç>> in Catalan et <<k>> en créole de la Réunion. *Lengas* 22:33–57.
- Numa, N.
 1975 *Jénéral Rodrig*. Adaptation *Le Cid*. Port-au-Prince.
- Orjala, Paul
 1970 *A Dialect Survey of Haitian Creole*. Ph.D. dissertation, the Hartford Seminary Foundation.
- Pompilus, Pradel
 1973 De l’orthographe du Créole. *Conjonction* 120:15–34.
 1977 *Histoire de la Littérature Haïtienne Illustrée par les Textes*, 3. Port-au-Prince: Editions Caraïbes.
 1985 *Le Problème Linguistique Haïtien*. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie Deschamps.
 1990 Conversation with Rachelle Doucet, August 28.
- Pressoir, Charles F.
 1947 *Débats sur le Créole et le Folklore*. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie de l’Etat.
 1954a *Méthode de Français Oral: Passage du Créole au Français*. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie de l’Etat.
 1954b *Sèt-Poe-m Ki So-T Nan Mo-N*. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie de l’Etat.
 1958 *L’avenir du Créole dans notre petit pays*. *In* *Bulletin du Bureau d’Ethnologie* III, 16:26–31. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie de l’Etat.
- Prudent, Lambert-Félix
 1980 *Des Baragouins à la Langue Antillaise*. Paris: Editions Caraïbéennes.
 1981 Diglossie et interlecte. *Langages* 61:13–38.
 1989 *Ecrire le Créole à la Martinique: Norme et Conflit Sociolinguistique*. *In* *Les Créoles Français entre l’Oral et l’Écrit*. Ralph Ludwig, ed. Pp. 65–80. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Racine, Marie-Marcelle Buteau
 1970 *French and Creole Lexico-Semantic Conflict: A Contribution to the Study of Languages in Contact in the Haitian Diglossic Situation*. Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University.
- Rigaud
 1933 *Tassos*. Haiti.
- Robillard, Didier de
 1989 *Le Processus d’Accession à l’Écriture: Etude de la Dimension Sociolinguistique à travers le cas du Créole Mauricien*. *In* *Les Créoles Français entre l’Oral et l’Écrit*. Ralph Ludwig, ed. Pp. 81–107. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Roumain, Jacques
 1944 *Gouverneurs de la Roseé*. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie de l’Etat.
- Roumer, Emile
 1973 *Graphie du Créole, Point de vue*. *Conjonction* 120:39–40.
- Saussure, Ferdinand de
 1966[1916] *Course in General Linguistics*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Singler, John
 1993 *African Influence upon Afro-American Language varieties: A Consideration of Sociohistorical Factors*. *In* *Africanisms in Afro-American Language Varieties*. Salikoko Mufwene, ed. Pp. 235–253. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

- Silverstein, Michael
 1979 Language Structure and Linguistic Ideology. *In* *The Elements: A Parasession on Linguistic Units and Levels*. Paul Clyne, William Hanks, and Carol Hofbauer, eds. Pp. 193–247. Chicago: Chicago Linguistic Society.
 1987 "Monoglot "Standard" in America. Working Papers and Proceedings of the Center for Psychosocial Studies, 13. Chicago: Center for Psycho-Social Studies.
- Spears, Arthur
 1990 Tense, Mood and Aspect in the Haitian Creole Preverbal Marker System. *In* *Pidgin/Creole Tense, Modality, Aspect Systems*. John V. Singler, ed. Pp. 119–142. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Swiggers, Pierre
 1990 Ideology of the Clarity of French. *In* *Ideologies of Language*. John E. Joseph and Talbot J. Taylor, eds. Pp. 112–130. New York: Routledge.
- Sylvain, Georges
 1901 *Cric? Crac! Fables de la Fontaine Racontées par un Montagnard Haïtien et Transmises en Vers Créoles*. Paris: Ateliers haïtiens.
- Sylvain, Suzanne
 1936 *Le Créole Haïtien, Morphologie et Syntaxe*. Port-au-Prince/Wetteren.
- Tabouret-Keller, Andrée
 1982 *Entre Bilinguisme et Diglossie*. *La Linguistique* 18:17–44.
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph
 1979 *Ti difé boulé sou istoua Ayiti*. New York: Koléksion Lakansiel.
 1990 *Haiti: State against Nation. The Origins and Legacy of Duvalierism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Valdman, Albert
 1968 Language Standardization in a Diglossia Situation. *In* *Language Problems in Developing Nations*. Joshua A. Fishman, Charles A. Ferguson, and Jyotirindra Das Gupta, eds. Pp. 313–26. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
 1974 L'élaboration d'une Orthographe. *Revue de la Faculté d'Ethnologie* 24:5–14.
 1976 Vers la Standardisation du Créole en Haïti. *In* *Identité Culturelle et Francophonie dans les Amériques*. Emile Snyder and Albert Valdman, eds. Pp. 166–201. Québec: Les Presses de l'Université.
 1978 *Le Créole*. Paris: Klincksieck.
 1984 The Linguistic Situation of Haiti. *In* *Haiti: Today and Tomorrow*. Charles Foster and Albert Valdman, eds. Pp. 77–100. New York: University Press of America.
 1987 Le Cycle Vital Créole et la Standardisation du Créole Haïtien. *Etudes Créoles* 10 (2):107–125.
 1988 Diglossia and Language Conflict in Haiti. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 71:67–80.
 1989a Aspects Sociolinguistiques de l'Elaboration d'une Norme Ecrite pour le Créole Haïtien. *In* *Les Créoles Français entre l'Oral et l'Ecrit*. Ralph Ludwig, ed. Pp. 43–63. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
 1989b Vers la Déminorisation des Créoles. *In* *Actes du Symposium organisé par l'Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée et la Commission Interuniversitaire Suisse de Linguistique Appliquée*, Neuchâtel, Sept. 16–18, 1987. Pp. 187–206. Geneva: Librairie Droz SA.
 1991 Decreolization or Dialect Contact in Haiti. *In* *Development and Structures of Creole Languages*. Frank Byrne and Tom Huebner eds. Pp. 75–88. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Valdman, Albert, Robert Chaudenson, and Marie-Christine Hazaël-Massieux, eds.
 1983 *Bibliographie des Etudes Créoles, Langues et Littératures*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Creole Institute.
- Vernet, Pierre
 1980 *Techniques d'écriture du Créole Haïtien*. Port-au-Prince: Le Natal.
 1989 Alphabétisation en Haïti. Aspects Linguistiques. *In* *Hommages au Dr. Pradel Pompilus*. Centre de Linguistique Appliquée, ed. Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie Deschamps.
- Winer, Lise
 1990 Orthographic Standardization for Trinidad and Tobago: Linguistic and Sociopolitical Consideration in an English Creole Community. *Language Problems and Language Planning*. 14:237–268.
- Winford, Donald
 1985 The Concept of Diglossia in Caribbean Creole Situations. *Language in Society* 14:345–356.
- Woolard, Kathryn
 1989 Sentences in the Language Prison. *American Ethnologist* 16:268–278.
 1992 Language Ideology: Issues and Approaches. *Pragmatics* 2(3):235–250.
- Zéphir, Flore
 1990 Language Choice, Language Use and Language Attitude of the Haitian Bilingual Community. Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University.

submitted June 15, 1992

revised version submitted November 10, 1992

accepted December 11, 1992