

KOREK!

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO MAURITIAN CREOLE

Kan mo ti tipti, mo ti pe res pre kot enn ti garson ki ti ena enn lisien ki ti kapav sante! Lisien-la ti apel Jack, e biensir li pa ti kapav sante vreman. Me li ti kapav fer enn tapaz wadire li pe sante, e pou nou bann zanfan, sa li fize. Nou ti panse ki sa li inkrwayab! Enn zour, kan nou arrive avek Jack, nou finn mazine ki kikfwa nou kapav fer enn tapaz. Alor, nou ti fabrik enn lestrad avek bwat karton, enn tiket avek tou nou kamarad ek lafami. Mo ti panse ki enn arive, lisien Jack ti deside ki li pa ti sèvi pou nou ti seye, li pa ti fer enn son. Nou ti panse ki li pa ti sèvi pou nou ti sèvi pou fer? spektrak-la kouman? Nou ti panse ki li pa ti sèvi pou fer? mo kamarad finn panse ki li pa ti sèvi pou fer? insel spektak-la. 'Atann e... nou ti panse ki li pa ti sèvi pou fer? pe mazine.' Malgre tou mo ti panse ki li pa ti sèvi pou fer? nanye. Mo ti panse ki li pa ti sèvi pou fer? insel, kan mo'nn gagn enn lide. E... nou ti panse ki li pa ti sèvi pou fer? nem Jack. 'Enn top lide,' li'nn dit. E... nou ti panse ki li pa ti sèvi pou fer? e-la, sa kikenn-la bizin tomes? Mo ti panse ki li pa ti sèvi pou fer? mo'nn debark katpat lor lestrad-la e mo ti panse ki li pa ti sèvi pou fer? enn lisien ki kapav sante. Telman tou dimounn ti pe etra/mari riye, mo'nn panse ki zame zot pou arete. Spektak-la ti enn gran sikse. Toulezour depi sa zour-la, dimounn kriye mwa Jack, sa lot lisien ki kapav sante!

PAUL CHOY

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Preface

It first occurred to me to write this book after moving from the UK to Mauritius in search of a quieter lifestyle. It fascinated me that, despite English and French being the *official* languages of the island, an unofficial, undocumented and, outside Mauritius, largely unknown language appeared to be the island's de facto national language, spoken by over a million inhabitants on a daily basis.

Today, Mauritian Creole is as much a living, breathing part of the daily life of Mauritius as the people who inhabit this tiny Indian Ocean island.

Creole is a wonderful language, continually changing and evolving. But, to fully appreciate it, you must first understand a little about its rich history and the place it occupies in the life of modern Mauritius.

So, here goes. Three hundred years of history in three minutes. Apologies to the people of Mauritius for my brevity; the rich history of this beautiful island deserves far more attention. But hey, that's another book.

Although the first visitors to the island of Mauritius were Portuguese and Dutch, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the history of Mauritian Creole didn't begin until the arrival of French settlers at the start of the eighteenth century.

Before then, apart from the soon-to-be-extinct dodo, Mauritius was an entirely uninhabited island in the middle of the Indian Ocean. This is important to note because it explains why there is no prior indigenous language native to the island. There were no indigenous people to speak one.

Following their arrival on the island, the early settlers immediately set about creating a plantation economy based on slave labour. Within a few short decades, huge numbers of forced workers had been brought to Mauritius from their homes across Africa, Madagascar and even further afield. Soon slaves made up the majority of the population, vastly outnumbering their European owners.

As they had no common language, this newly established slave population quickly adopted French as their *lingua franca* (working language) in order to communicate with each other. However, with little formal education, and so few native French speakers to learn from, the slaves' spoken French rapidly evolved as they adapted the language they heard but didn't fully understand. Soon it became an entirely separate language; Mauritian Creole was born.

The speed with which this happened was extraordinary. Within as little as thirty years, Creole had established itself as a separate language, with its roots in French but with its own unique personality and characteristics developed and honed through daily use to allow displaced people of different origins to communicate with each other.

The controlling elite continued to speak French, and later English after sovereignty of the island passed to the British during the Napoleonic Wars, but Creole remained firmly entrenched among the working population of the island.

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Later, following the abolition of slavery in the 1830s, plantation owners were forced to bring another wave of migrants to the island to work the fields. Cheap labour from across the Indian subcontinent replaced the recently freed slaves.

Faced again with the lack of a common language and alienation from their European employers, these new arrivals also adopted Creole, enabling them to communicate with the recently formed working class of Mauritius.

Soon, even the French- and English-speaking elite started to speak Creole to communicate with the populace. And so Mauritian Creole became the nation's language.

To this day, French and English are officially the languages of business and government, but Creole remains the language spoken every day by the people, in the homes and on the streets of Mauritius. It serves no official purpose other than allowing people from diverse cultures to communicate and interact with each other – truly a language of and for the people.

I don't claim to speak Mauritian Creole particularly well. In fact, like you, I am still very much learning. But that is the fabulous thing about Creole: as a language that exists predominantly in its spoken form, it is very forgiving. Even as a beginner, making plenty of mistakes, you will still be understood and able to communicate.

This book was written as a result of my ongoing attempts to learn the language. It includes many of the lessons I have learned along the way, piecing together the language as best I could. Hopefully it will help you to learn, and enjoy, this rich, historic and evolving language.

Official Kreol Morisien – A Note

In the years immediately preceding the writing of this book, the government of Mauritius undertook a project to create a standard orthography (way of writing) for the Mauritian Creole language. Ultimately this led to the publication of the *Lortograf Kreol Morisien* in 2011 and *Gramer Kreol Morisien* in 2012, both of which were intended to provide the first step towards standardisation of the written language.

Prior to this, Creole existed almost exclusively in its spoken form, with very few books or dictionaries in existence. Without a formal standard to follow, these few language resources contained significant variations between them, particularly in spelling and punctuation.

Often the same word would be spelled in many different ways across different publications, as writers decided for themselves the correct word form to use.

Throughout this book I have endeavoured to comply with the new *official* standard, as well as to use spelling consistent with the second edition of the *Diksioner Morisien* (anyone serious about learning Creole should definitely obtain a copy of this excellent book). However, readers should also be aware that, as a result of complying with the official orthography of Mauritian Creole, differences might occur between the word forms used here and in other books written before the publication of this new standard.

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I bet you can't guess what the Mauritian Creole word for *snail* is?

In fairness, as this is a beginner's guide to the language, I'd say it's a pretty safe bet you don't know, so let me tell you. It's **kourpa**, the literal translation of which means *can't run*. So, in Mauritan Creole, a *snail* is a *can't run*!

How fabulous is that?

And it makes complete sense, when you stop and think about it. After all, have you ever seen a snail that *could* run?

Creole is jammed full of little gems like **kourpa**, all of which help to give the language its incredible personality, something I hope this book will help you discover for yourself.

But, before we get into any of that, let me get one thing out of the way straight away. This book is not going to teach you how to *speak* Mauritian Creole fluently. You don't learn to speak Mauritian Creole from a book. You learn by actually opening your mouth and speaking the language. So, instead, this book is going to teach you how to *learn* Creole.

So what's the difference?

Well, consider this. If I do my job right, the end of this book will mark the start of your journey to really learning the language. Throughout this book I am going to give you the basic tools to help you hold a conversation in Creole. This book won't teach you everything there is to know about the language, but you will be able to comfortably converse on almost any subject you like, which will allow you to continue your learning on your own. And this means diving in at the deep end.

You see, more than any language I have experienced (and I have learned a few), Creole is not a language for the shy. Forget locking yourself away in a room somewhere quiet, far from anyone who might hear you making a mistake, whilst you follow a mindless 'listen and repeat' distance-learning course.

With Mauritian Creole, you need to really get stuck in and immerse yourself in the language. And that means actually talking – to real human beings – who will invariably speak back to you. Yes, your foreign accent or mispronunciation of words may raise a smile or two, but that's all part of the fun of learning a new language.

This book is written from the point of view of a native English speaker learning Mauritian Creole and assumes no prior knowledge of any language other than English. If you already have some language-learning experience, then no doubt it will help your journey with Creole. But equally, if you are starting from absolute scratch, this book will take you step by step through everything you need to know.

Throughout the book I have tried to keep everything to the point and free of jargon. So, instead of

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spending time looking at why tenses such as the ‘past progressive’ or ‘conditional’ are constructed in a particular way, we will simply consider how to say *I was doing something* or *if I could do something*. After all, most of us don’t know what these tenses are in English let alone another language.

You will find that this is very much a book of two parts. The first part will introduce you to the structure of the language, and I have deliberately chosen to keep the number of new words to an absolute minimum.

All the vocabulary used in this first part is recapped elsewhere in the book, so don’t worry too much about learning all these new words as you make your way through part one. Instead, focus your energy on learning the basic structure of the language so it begins to feel natural to you.

Throughout this book, anything written in the Creole language will appear in ***bold italics***, whereas English translations will be in *italics*. There are also various language, grammar and pronunciation tips to help you gain a greater understanding.

Part two contains a comprehensive English–Kreol vocabulary list with more than enough words to help you become perfectly conversant in Mauritian Creole. Feel free to knock yourself out learning all of these later, once you have an understanding of the language.

Most important, however, is for you to remember to have fun with Creole. Because it is not burdened with the rigid structure of other languages, it’s a wonderfully expressive tongue with its own unique style and character. You’re going to love it!

So, are you ready to begin?

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**English–Kreol
Vocabulary List**

Part One: Language Guide

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Me, myself and I

Mo.

Congratulations! You have just learned your first Mauritian Creole word: **mo**, meaning *I*. See, that wasn't hard, was it?

Every sentence in Creole, and every other language for that matter, is made up using a combination of different types of words. Just like building blocks, each word builds upon another to create a sentence. The very first of these blocks we are going to learn about is 'personal pronouns' – words that describe a person, such as *you*, *he*, *she*, *it* and so on. Let's get stuck in straight away.

Singular personal pronouns

mo – *I*

mwa – *me*

to – *you* (informal)

ou – *you* (formal)

twa – *you* (objective)

li – *he / she / him / her / it*

Pronunciation Tip

These personal pronouns are pronounced more or less as you would expect. However, the **o** sound is more extended than in English, so **mo** becomes *mow*. **To** becomes *tow*. **Ou** is a little trickier, though, sounding like a longer *ooo*.

One of the first things you might have noticed about these pronouns is that there are both informal and formal versions of the word *you*. This idea might be unfamiliar to you if, like me, you are a native English speaker, as it stems from Creole's French roots.

Which version you use depends on the situation. Generally the informal **to** version would be used with friends, family and people younger than yourself. The more formal **ou** would be used to address people you don't know so well, such as someone you have only met once or twice, or acquaintances that you know, but not on a personal basis.

Getting your head around which version to use can be a little tricky at first, but perhaps a good way of understanding it is something I call the 'party rule'. It goes something like this.

Imagine you are holding a get-together of all your friends and family. Of the people you know, anyone you would invite to this informal gathering might be the people you would use the **to** form with.

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Everyone else would be **ou**. This simple rule isn't an exact illustration, but it will definitely serve to get you going.

You also might be wondering what the 'objective' version of *you* is for. You'd use this when describing someone as the object of a sentence rather than the subject; for example, *Shall I go with you?* (where *I* is the subject and *you* is the object). In English we use the same word, but in Creole it's different.

You will notice that the words for *he*, *she*, *him*, *her* and *it* are all the same: **li**. Having a single word for all of these certainly makes learning vocabulary easier – yay! But it also means that attention has to be paid to the context the words are used in to be clear about the intended meaning – boo!

So far we have looked only at the singular personal pronouns, those used to address one person at a time. But what about words to address groups of people, such as *we*, *us* and the plural *you*? These are known as 'plural personal pronouns'.

Plural personal pronouns

nou – *we, us*

zot – *you (plural)*

zot – *they, them*

bann-la – *they, them*

Again, you can see that the same word can be used for multiple meanings, such as **nou** for *we* and *us*. This is a regular occurrence in Creole. Unlike English, with its huge vocabulary of words, Creole is a much smaller language, with many words having multiple meanings. This means you need to infer the correct meaning in the context of the sentence as a whole.

Bann-la is often (but not always) used in situations where there could be confusion between **zot** meaning the plural *you* (a group of people) and **zot** meaning *them* (a different group of people). For example, in a sentence such as *can you [plural] wait with them?*

It's also worth mentioning that there is one more type of personal pronoun commonly used in Mauritian Creole, 'reflexive pronouns'. These are used to refer back to the subject; for example, in *myself*, *himself* and *themselves*.

Reflexive personal pronouns

momem – *myself*

numem – *ourselves*

tomem – *yourself (informal)*

oumem – *yourself (formal)*

zotmem – *themselves*

bann-la-mem – *themselves*

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You will note these pronouns are formed by adding the suffix **mem** (which means *same*) to the pronoun, so **to** (*you*) becomes **tomem** (*yourself*).

Collectively, these three types of personal pronoun are the first of our blocks for building a sentence, as they enable us to start identifying the subject of a sentence.

Language Tip

The suffix **-mem** is used a lot in Creole, and in ways that we wouldn't normally expect to see in English. For example, you might hear it being added to the word **la**, meaning *there*, to become **la-mem** or *there the same*. Although this doesn't really make sense in English, in Creole it is used as a means of bringing emphasis. So something isn't just there, it's *there*.

Don't be surprised to hear **-mem** reduced to **-em**. Spoken Creole is often heavily abbreviated, so **la-mem** will most often be heard as **la-em**.

The doing words

By far the most important of the sentence building blocks are verbs – words that describe some sort of action or occurrence. Verbs make things happen, and without them there would be nothing to talk about in Creole.

Before we get into how verbs are used within the Creole language, first let me share with you some great news: Creole verbs do not need to be conjugated!

Anyone who has ever learned a foreign language will remember the horror that is verb conjugation, where the form of the verb changes depending on when, what or to whom it is being applied. Memories of trying to learn many different versions of the same word come flooding back – *I have* but *she has*, *I go* but *he goes* and so on.

In Creole there is none of this. A verb is the verb for everyone and everything. And this makes life so much easier. Hooray!

Unlike in English, however, the verb does change depending on its relationship with other words. Where the verb can be used on its own, or appears at the end of a sentence, the 'full form' is used. But, where the verb is followed by another verb, or relates to an object, an abbreviated version of the verb is used, the 'short form'.

There are three types of Creole verbs. They are grouped together based on how their short forms are created. I am sure there is a fancy name for each of these groups, but I call them the 'normal', 'odd' and 'odder' verbs.

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To try and understand how to create these long and short forms, let's learn our very first verb.

ale – to go

This is the long form of a 'normal' verb. What makes it normal is that we can create its short form simply by chopping off the last letter, **e**, to create ***al***.

Long form / short form

ale / ***al***

In Creole, the vast majority of verbs follow this pattern, which means we can create their short forms in exactly the same way. So let's have a look at some other normal verbs in their long and short forms.

Long form / short form – meaning

koze / ***koz*** – to speak or to talk

manze / ***manz*** – to eat

gete / ***get*** – to look (at)

panse / ***pans*** – to think

trouve / ***trouv*** – to see or to find

Pronunciation Tip

In Creole, words and verbs that end with the letter **e** are pronounced with an -ay sound rather than the -ee sound that many English-speakers would more naturally use.

So ***ale*** would be pronounced *alay*, ***koze*** is pronounced *kozay*, ***manze*** is *manzay* and so on.

So far so good!

There are a few commonly used verbs, though, that do not use this standard format of just chopping off the last letter. I call these 'odd' verbs. Fortunately for us, there aren't many of them. Some of the more often used are:

Long form / short form – meaning

fini / ***finn*** – to finish

vini / ***vinn*** – to come

dimande / ***demann*** – to ask

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vande / **vann** – to sell

tande / **tann** – to hear

OK, so that's the normal and odd verbs dealt with. What about the 'odder' verbs? These are verbs that have the same long and short forms. As there is nothing in particular to help us recognise which verbs fall into this category, they all just have to be learned. Here are some of the more common odder verbs (a full list can be found in the English–Kreol vocabulary list at the end of this book):

Long form / short form – meaning

perdi / **perdi** – to lose

kapav / **kapav** – to be able

pran / **pran** – to take

Grammar Tip

Understanding when to use the long or the short form of a verb can be tricky at first. Remember, the long form of the verb is always used *unless* another verb, person or object follows it, in which case the short form is used. To understand this structure better, consider the following examples:

I will eat.

I will eat later.

I will eat pizza later.

In the first example, the long form of the verb **manze**, meaning *to eat*, would be used as it appears at the end of the sentence and therefore cannot be followed by a verb or relate to a person or object.

The second example would also use the long form of the verb, because another verb, person or object doesn't follow it.

In the third example, however, the short form **manz** would be used, because now an object, *pizza*, follows it.

Don't worry if this seems a little daunting at first. With practice, understanding when to use the long or short forms of verbs will begin to feel quite natural.

There is actually one other type of verb: 'supportive verbs' (technically called 'modal auxiliary verbs', but 'supportive' makes more sense to me). These are verbs that directly support another verb to give meaning. So, in the sentence *I want to go*, the word *want* is the supportive verb, working in conjunction with the verb *go*. As supportive verbs are often used in conjunction with other verbs, they only have one form. Some examples are:

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oule – *want*

anvi – *would like to, feel like*

bizin – *must*

Putting it together

I mentioned earlier that speaking Creole is simply a matter of putting together the building blocks of the language to form sentences. Now we have two blocks in place, we can do just that and form our very first sentence. Shall we have a go?

Mo koze – *I speak*

OK, I admit, it's a very simple sentence, but, when first learning Creole, simple is usually all you need. To create this sentence we took the personal pronoun **mo** and added it to the verb **koze**.

We can use exactly the same method to create some other sentences.

Mo ale – *I go*

Li manze – *He eats or She eats or It eats*

(depending on context)

To panse – *You think*

Zot tande – *You (plural) hear or They hear*

(depending on context)

You see how easy it is to begin speaking Creole? So far, though, we have only used the long form of the verb. How about creating a sentence using the short form?

Mo koz Kreol – *I speak Creole*

If you recall, a verb's short form is used when it is followed by another verb or directly relates to something, which in this case is *Creole*. So **koze** became **koz**.

At the moment we don't have any other words to add to our sentence, so let's introduce a couple more basic vocabulary words to get us going.

laplaz – *beach*

kiksoz – *something*

Now, with just a few more words we can build upon our sentences.

To tann kiksoz? – *You hear something?*

Li al laplaz – *He (or she or it) goes to the beach*

Mo trouv twa – *I see you*

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Can you see how easy it is to form simple sentences, just by building one language block onto another? And, by combining these blocks of language in all sorts of different ways, we can create more complex sentences.

Mo kapav trouv twa – *I can see you*

Li anvi al laplaz – *He (or she or it) would like to go to the beach*

To oule ale? – *You want to go?*

All we did here was add another language block, this time some supportive verbs, to build a more detailed sentence. Are you getting the hang of when to use the long and short forms of the verbs?

Pronunciation Tip

In everyday use, the verb **oule** is often abbreviated to **'le**. So don't be surprised if you hear **to oule** shortened to **to'le**, **mo oule** to **mo'le** and so on.

Interrogative words

So far we have learned about two of the essential building blocks used to create sentences in Creole: personal pronouns and verbs. But, before we move on to the other elements of the language, there is one more building block to look at: interrogative words used to ask questions.

As you might expect, there are as many words to ask a question as there are questions to be asked, but a few of the main interrogatives will cover all we are likely to need. Let's have a look at some of the important ones.

ki – *what, who, whom*

ki sann-la – *who* (when asking a direct question)

kifer – *why*

kan – *when*

kot – *where*

kouma – *how*

komie – *how much, how many*

Forming a sentence as a question is as simple as starting that sentence with one of these interrogatives.

To kapav trouv – *You can see*

Ki to kapav trouv? – *What can you see?*

To ale – *You go*

Kot to ale? – *You go where?*

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Li fini – *It finishes*

Kan li fini – *When does it finish?*

Besides the use of interrogatives, there are two other ways to form a question.

The first, and by far the easiest, is simply raising your voice at the end of the sentence. So the statement ***to ale*** (*you go*) becomes the question ***to ale?*** (*you go?*). Alternatively the word ***eski***, derived from the French *est-ce que*, can be placed before a statement to turn it into a question. So, once again, ***to ale*** becomes ***eski to ale?***

Numbers and counting

Learning to count is a fundamental component of speaking any foreign language, and it seems the perfect way to close this first chapter on Mauritian Creole.

As Creole is derived from French, the numbering system used is almost exactly what you might remember from any childhood French lessons you took. The only difference is the pronunciation, which has led to the Creole dialect having different spellings from French.

one – ***enn***

two – ***de***

three – ***trwa***

four – ***kat***

five – ***sink***

six – ***sis***

seven – ***set***

eight – ***wit***

nine – ***nef***

ten – ***dis***

eleven – ***onz***

twelve – ***douz***

thirteen – ***trez***

fourteen – ***katorz***

fifteen – ***kinz***

sixteen – ***sez***

seventeen – ***diset***

eighteen – ***dizwit***

nineteen – ***diznef***

twenty – ***vin***

twenty-one – ***vint-e-enn***

twenty-two – ***vennde***

twenty-three – ***venntrwa***

twenty-four – ***vennkat***

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twenty-five – **vennsink**
twenty-six – **vennsis**
twenty-seven – **vennset**
twenty-eight – **vintwit**
twenty-nine – **vintnef**
thirty – **trant**
forty – **karannt**
fifty – **sinkant**
sixty – **swasant**
seventy – **swasanntdis**
eighty – **katrovin**
ninety – **katrovin-dis**
one hundred – **san**
one thousand – **mil**
one million – **enn milyon**

Pronunciation Tip

There are a couple of numbers with slightly tricky pronunciation in Creole. English-speakers in particular need to watch out for numbers containing a five or an eight.

The **i** in **sink** is actually pronounced more like an English **a**, so the number *five* is pronounced **sank**. The same applies to the number *fifteen*, which is pronounced **kanz**, and *twenty-five*, which is pronounced **vann sank**.

The **i** in **wit** makes an ee sound. So the number *eight* sounds like **weet** and the number *eighteen* sounds like **deesweet**.

Also, don't forget that the **e** in **de** means that the number *two* is pronounced **day**.

As you can see, the numbering system is pretty straightforward. That's the good news. The bad news is that there are no shortcuts to learning how to count in Creole. Unfortunately it's just a matter of learning the numbers by heart.

Thirty-one, *forty-one* and *fifty-one* are formed the same way as *twenty-one*, simply by adding **-e-enn**. So **trant-e-enn**, **karant-e-enn**, **sinkant-e-enn** respectively.

There actually aren't words for *seventy* or *ninety* at all. Rather, **swasanntdis** and **katrovin-dis** are used respectively, and they have literal translations of 'sixty-ten' and 'eighty-ten' to signify that ten

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has been added. So, following this logic, *ninety-one* is 'eighty eleven' or ***katrovin-onz***, *seventy-two* is ***swasanndouz*** and so on.

Practice makes perfect, as they say, so now might be the perfect time to start counting sheep in Creole...

Chapter one pop quiz

Q. Which form of the verb should be used in this sentence?

Mo _____ laplaz.

a: **ale**

b: **al**

Q. Adding which of the following words changes the sentence **zot demande**, meaning *they ask*, to *they must ask*?

a: **bizin**

b: **'le**

c: **manze**

Q. Which personal pronoun can be used to extend the previous sentence even further, to *they must ask them*?

a: **bann-la**

b: **to**

c: **zot**

Q. Following on from the sentence above, which form of the verb should be used in the sentence *they must ask them*?

a: **dimande**

b: **dimann**

Q. Which of the following is the correct written form of the number 476?

a: **kat san swasannsez**

b: **kat mil swasannsez**

c: **kat san swasannsis**

Q. Which form of the verb should be used in this sentence?

Chapter one pop quiz answers

Mo al laplaz.

a: ~~ale~~

b: **al** ✓

As the verb in this sentence, **ale**, meaning *to go*, directly refers to an object, **laplaz**, the short form, should be used.

Q. Adding which of the following words changes the sentence **zot demande**, meaning *they ask*, to *they must ask*?

a: **bizin** ✓

b: ~~le~~

c: ~~manze~~

The supportive verb **bizin** means *must*. So the full sentence would be **zot bizin demande**.

Q. Which personal pronoun can be used to extend the previous sentence even further, to *they must ask them*?

a: **bann-la** ✓

b: ~~to~~

c: ~~zot~~

This is actually a bit of a trick question. Both **zot** and **bann-la** could be used, as they are both plural personal pronouns for *they* or *them*. However, **bann-la** would most likely be used in a sentence like this to avoid confusion with the first **zot**, meaning *they*.

Q. Following on from the sentence above, which form of the verb should be used in the sentence *they must ask them*?

a: ~~dimande~~

b: **dimann** ✓

The sentence started out as **zot bizin dimande**, meaning *they must ask*. However, as a result of adding **bann-la**, the verb is now followed by a reference to people, so the short form of the verb should be used instead. The full sentence is therefore **zot bizin dimann bann-la**.

Chapter one pop quiz answers

Q. Which of the following is the correct written form of the number 476?

a: ***kat san swasannsez*** ✓

b: ~~***kat mil swasannsez***~~

c: ~~***kat san swasannsis***~~

The correct answer is ***kat san swasannsez***.

The word ***mil*** refers to thousands rather than hundreds, so the number used in answer b is 4076. Answer c looks very similar to the correct answer, but it actually means 466. Remember the literal translation of the number *seventy* in Creole is 'sixty ten', so *seventy-six* would be 'sixty-sixteen', which is why we need ***sez***, meaning *sixteen*, rather than ***sis***, meaning *six*.

Chapter Two: Filling Gaps

Chapter two: Filling gaps

A, an and the

In chapter one we looked at some of the major building blocks of the Creole language. Although understanding these important blocks will greatly help towards our goal of speaking conversational Creole, we are also going to need plenty of filler words to hold the blocks together.

This means learning about all the little words, such as *a*, *the* and *an*, that bring meaning to the sentences we speak. These kinds of words are often the ones we take for granted when speaking in English.

Most languages have a type of word called an 'article'. This is a little word that is attached to another to reference that word. So, we don't generally say *child*; instead we might say *the child*. Similarly, instead of *apple*, we might say *an apple*.

In English there are two types of article: *a* and *an* are known as 'indefinite articles' and *the* is the 'definite article' (don't worry, that's as detailed as we're going to get about English grammar!). In Creole, the indefinite article is **enn** and the definite article is **la**.

Before we can make use of these articles, though, we are going to need some words to reference. So, here are a few more words, along with the indefinite article, for you to add to your vocabulary list.

liv (enn liv) – book (a book)

tifi (enn tifi) – girl (a girl)

garson (enn garson) – boy (a boy)

banann (enn banann) – banana (a banana)

Unlike English, where there are two versions of the indefinite article (*a* and *an*), in Creole, **enn** is used for everything, which keeps things nice and simple for us mere students of the language.

Grammar Tip

As you learned above, **enn** actually means *one*, so *one apple* and *an apple* are the same thing in Creole.

The definite article, **la**, is also used for everything. However, its use differs in one major way from English (and French for that matter). In Creole, the definite article always comes after the word. So, a literal translation of *the book* would be *book the*.

Let's have a look at the words we learned above along with their definite articles.

liv-la – the book

tifi-la – the girl

Chapter two: Filling gaps

garson-la – the boy

banann-la – the banana

As you can see, the definite article takes up its peculiar position after the word it's supposed to be referencing. I told you Creole has its own unique character!

Just say no

In Creole, there are a number of special words called 'language markers' that are used to latch onto a word or phrase to effect some kind of change of meaning or state. By themselves these markers don't mean anything until they are used with another word.

Grammar Tip

Use of grammatical markers is really important in Creole. They are used for everything from distinguishing between singular and plural items to forming tenses. Understanding how to correctly place these markers will greatly improve your ability to communicate in the language.

Forming the negative in Creole is achieved in just this way, by placing the negative marker **pa** in front of the relevant verb. Let's have a go at putting this into action by looking at these simple sentences.

Mo koz Kreol – I speak Creole

Mo pa koz Kreol – I don't speak Creole

Mo tann li – I hear it

Mo pa tann li – I can't hear it

Mo kapav trouv twa – I can see you

Mo pa kapav trouv twa – I can't see you

As you can see, in each of these sentences, the negative marker **pa** has been placed before the verb to change its meaning to the negative.

You may notice, though, that the last sentence also includes the supportive verb **kapav**. This extends the sentence from *I see you* to *I can see you*. Where a supportive verb is used with another verb, the negative marker is placed before both of them to form the negative.

Ena and pena

Ena and **pena** are two of the most useful words you will learn in Creole, and yet neither have direct

Chapter two: Filling gaps

English counterparts.

Ena means *there is, there are* or *have*, and **pena** is the negative (**pena** is an abbreviated version of **pa ena**, so this word actually uses the negative marker we just looked at).

So, now we know how to use these new words, we can incorporate them into some simple sentences.

Ena enn tifi – *There is one girl*

Pena bannan – *There are no bananas*

Mo pena enn liv, mo ena trwa – *I don't have one book,
I have three*

Be aware, though, that there will be a temptation to see these words as Creole equivalents of the verb *to have*. However, their meanings are more wide ranging, the value of which will become more and more apparent as you use them in practice.

One is good but more is better

The Creole language uses plurals to indicate the existence of more than one of something. More often than not, a plural can simply be inferred from the context of the sentence, for example:

Mo ena boukou soz – *I have a lot of things*

This sentence introduces two new words that we haven't come across before: **boukou**, meaning *many* or *lots*, and **soz**, meaning *thing*. In normal use **soz** would refer to a single item, but in this sentence we can infer the plural because it is preceded by the word for *many*.

Where the plural can't be inferred, though, we can use another marker, this time the plural marker **bann**. This is placed before whichever word we want to make plural.

Mo ena bann soz – *I have things*

As you can see, this is very similar to the previous sentence. However, in the absence of the word **boukou** to infer that there is more than one *thing*, we need the plural marker **bann** instead. Care must be taken not to overuse **bann**, however, as often the plural will be assumed.

Well that's odd!

A very odd thing happened along the way as Creole evolved from its French roots. Many of the words that would go on to become common within Creole permanently fused with their original French definite article to create a new word.

So, in the case of **la table**, meaning *the table* in French, **la** and **tab** fused together to create the Creole word **latab**. And then, to make things even odder, the Creole definite article **la** was added onto

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the end of this new ‘fused’ word to make **latab-la**, meaning *the table* in Creole.

Some other words that experienced the same journey are:

latet – head

lisien – dog

lakte – key

lame – hand

lane – year

Throw-overs from the original language like these really show the evolution of Creole, and are one of the reasons I find it so fascinating to learn.

Everyday words

Learning a foreign language requires an investment of time to pick up the big concepts, the foundation stones that make up the language. But often just a few little everyday words are all you need to start building your first rudimentary sentences. The resulting sentences may not be pretty but they will be good enough for you to be understood.

So, before we get too bogged down with big concepts, here are ten everyday words that you will use all the time in Creole.

wi – yes

non – no

e – and

ek or **ar** – with

me – but

si – if

sa – that

isi – here

lor – on

dan – in, within

Learning Tip

When you first set out to learn a language, one of the biggest challenges is remembering enough vocabulary to be able to hold a conversation. But there is one really simple way to learn even the most obscure words. It's called ‘visualisation’ and involves creating a mental picture to illustrate the word.

Chapter two: Filling gaps

Take, for example, the Creole word **robine**, meaning *tap* (or *faucet* for our American friends). To help me remember this word, I created a mental image of a robin redbreast bird sitting on a tap and saying 'eh!'

Or how about the word for *hammer*, **marto**. I think this word sounds a bit like *tomato*, so I picture a tomato being squashed by a hammer (poor tomato – it doesn't help that I always give him a little face!).

Why not try this for yourself? The Creole word for *wet* is **mouye**, pronounced *moo-yay*. Can you create your own mental picture to help you remember this word? I bet you can't do it without a cow being in there somewhere!

Chapter two pop quiz

Q. Which is the correct translation of *The girl has some books*?

- a: **Bann tifi ena liv-la**
- b: **Tifi-la ena bann liv**
- c: **Tifi-la pena bann liv**

Q. What does **ki ete sa, lor laplaz-la?** mean?

- a: *Who's that, on the beach?*
- b: *Is it on the beach?*
- c: *What's that, on the beach?*

Q. What does **ou pa kapav** mean?

- a: *You can*
- b: *You cannot*

Q. What is the correct translation of *I cannot see the dogs* in Creole?

Q. How could the question *Why must we go?* be asked in Creole?

Chapter two pop quiz answers

Q. Which is the correct translation of *the girl has some books*?

a: ~~**Bann tifi ena liv-la**~~

b: **Tifi-la ena bann liv** ✓

c: ~~**Tifi-la pena bann liv**~~

If you recall, the definite article *the* in Creole is **la**. So *the girl* would be **tifi-la**. In order to indicate that she has some books (plural) rather than a book (singular), the plural marker **bann** may be used before the word for book, **liv**.

As we have already learned, **ena** means *there is, there are* or *have*. So, answer b, **Tifi-la ena bann liv**, is the correct Creole translation of *the girl has some books*.

In answer a, the placement of the plural marker **bann** before the word for *girl* makes it plural (*girls*), whereas the use of the definite article **la** with **liv** translates as *the book*. Therefore, the translation of answer a is actually *the girls (plural) have the book*.

Anyone who takes only a quick glance at answer c might be forgiven for believing it correct, but take a look again and the word **pena** instead of **ena** may pop out. **Pena** is of course the negative of **ena**, which consequently means the sentence actually translates to *the girl does not have some books*.

Incidentally, **tifi-la ena liv** would also be an acceptable translation of *the girl has some books*. As mentioned in this chapter, the plural marker **bann** should not be overused as often plural will be assumed from the context.

Q. What does **ki ete sa, lor laplaz-la?** mean?

a: ~~*Who's that, on the beach?*~~

b: ~~*Is it on the beach?*~~

c: *What's that, on the beach?* ✓

Although the interrogative **ki** can be used for either *what* or *who*, you will recall from chapter one that **ki sann-la** is used in questions about who has taken a particular action. As a result, we can infer that this question does not refer to a person, so the correct answer is *What's that, on the beach?*

Q. What does **ou pa kapav** mean?

a: ~~*You can*~~

b: *You cannot* ✓

The key word here is **pa**, the negative marker in the Creole language. Its existence in this short sentence signifies a change from can, **kapav**, to cannot, **pa kapav**.

Chapter two pop quiz answers

Q. What is the correct translation of *I cannot see the dogs* in Creole?

Mo pa kapav trouv bann lisien

To formulate this sentence we need to put into practice a number of the elements of the Creole language that should be familiar from the first two chapters. The use of the negative and plural markers **pa** and **bann** is important in this sentence in terms of ensuring that the correct meaning is communicated.

Q. How could the question *Why must we go?* be asked in Creole?

Kifer nou bizin ale?

This simple question uses the interrogative **kifer**, meaning *why*, to turn the statement *we must go* into a question.

It's interesting to note that, by simply changing the interrogative, we can create a number of other questions from the same statement, such as:

Kan nou bizin ale? – *When must we go?*

Kot nou bizin ale? – *Where must we go?*

Chapter Three: Progressing

Chapter Three: Progressing

Getting in tense

Life would be very confusing without the concept of time. It is what enables us to coordinate events and actions in our lives. In language, grammatical tenses are used to give these events a time context, locating them in the now, the past or the future.

It may not have been immediately obvious, but we have actually already experienced our first tense, called the 'simple present'. This tense was used throughout the first two chapters to form sentences describing events in the present, such as **mo koze**, *I talk*.

But, to engage in an active Creole conversation, we need to be able to break free from the confines of the simple here and now. So, let's extend our range by looking at three more tenses:

- The 'progressive present' tense, used for ongoing events in the present: *I am doing*.
- The 'simple future' tense, used for actions or events yet to occur: *I am going to do*.
- The 'simple past' tense, used for events that have already occurred: *I did*.

Although each of these new tenses places events at different times, they are all formed in exactly the same way, by using the language markers **pe**, **pou** or **ti**, respectively. Which tense is being employed is signalled by which marker is used. Here are a few simple sentences we can now build using these new markers.

Mo koze – *I speak*

Mo pe koze – *I am speaking*

Mo pou koze – *I am going to speak*

Mo ti koze – *I spoke*

Mo ale – *I go*

Mo pe ale – *I am going*

Mo pou ale – *I am going to go*

Mo ti ale – *I went*

Pronunciation Tip

Remember, in Creole, words that end in **-e** are pronounced **-ay**. So, the progressive marker, **pe**, is pronounced **pay**.

Forming each of these tenses is not difficult; it is simply a matter of placing the appropriate marker in front of the verb.

Just to make things more confusing, the words **pou** and **ti** also have other meanings in the Creole language. So, whereas **pou** can be used as a marker to indicate something that will happen in the

Chapter Three: Progressing

future, it can also mean *for*. And, whereas **ti** is used as a marker for something in the past, it is also the word for *small*.

Don't be surprised if you start tying yourself up in knots around about now, trying to work out the various meanings of words or how to form tenses. Speaking a new language often leaves your tongue needing to play catch-up with your brain whilst trying to work out what to say. This is totally normal and just takes practice – I did warn you Creole is a language for speaking!

Mixing it up

So far we have looked at how our various language markers can be used to change the context of verbs or words. However, sometimes markers can be put together to create 'combination markers'. By combining markers, we can achieve greater meaning than by using them alone. So, by placing **ti**, the simple past marker, with **pe**, the progressive marker, we create a new combination marker, **ti pe**. This marker signifies an ongoing event but in the past.

Mo ti koze – *I spoke*

Mo pe koze – *I am speaking*

Mo ti pe koze – *I was speaking*

The **ti** marker places this action in the past, but the addition of the **pe** marker tells us it was also ongoing. Using the two markers together allows us to make use of the properties of both.

Let's have a look at another combination marker, this time

ti pou, which indicates something conditional (*I would*,

but ...) or something that was going to happen but didn't (*I was going to, but ...*).

Mo ti koze – *I spoke*

Mo pou koze – *I am going to speak*

Mo ti pou koze – *I would speak (but ...)*

Mo ti pou koze – *I was going to speak (but ...)*

To give this combination marker a context, let's have a look at using it in some full sentences.

Mo ti pou manze, me mo bizin ale –

I would eat, but I have to go

Mo ti pou ale, me mo pa kapav –

I was going to go, but I can't

As you can see, this is a more complex sentence, but it doesn't include anything we haven't already learned.

Chapter Three: Progressing

Learning Tip

Don't worry about trying to grasp this all at once. Learning how to use all these language markers will take time. Rather, think of this whole section as a point of reference. Review it often to help you develop your understanding over time.

To be or not to be

If there is a single aspect of the Creole language guaranteed to get English-speakers scratching their heads in bewilderment, it's surely this:

There is no verb *to be*!

The likes of *I am*, *you are* and so on just don't exist. Instead, a number of little structures serve for each situation where the verb *to be* would be used in English.

One such situation uses the word **ete**. This word is derived from the French verb *être*, meaning *to be*, so in a sense it means *to be*. But not quite, and not always. Unlike *être*, its use is limited to asking or describing where someone (or something) is, was or will be.

Kot ou ete? – *Where are you?*

Kot ou ti ete? – *Where were you?*

Kot ou pou ete? – *Where will you be?*

OK, so far none of this causes too much of a headache. But let's have a look at the replies to these questions, and their literal translations.

Mo isi – *I here* (in the present)

Mo ti isi – *I here* (in the past)

Mo pou isi – *I here* (in the future)

As you can see, any sign of the verb *to be* has simply disappeared – no *am*, *was* or *will be*. Confusing, isn't it!

Forming the negatives of these sentences is as simple as adding the negative marker, **pa**. So, whereas **ou pou isi** means *you will be here*, **ou pa pou isi** means *you won't be here*.

Hopefully, by now, you will have started to realise that learning to speak Creole is not a matter of just learning a bunch of Creole words and using them as you would in English. Creole has its own personality, which means it behaves differently from English in many ways. Don't worry, though – you will find, with practice, this personality will quickly start to feel natural.

Another word that can be substituted for some of the functions of the verb *to be* is **se**, meaning *it is*.

Chapter Three: Progressing

Se enn liv – *It's a book*

Se pou mwa – *It's for me (it's mine)*

Se mo garson ki ti fer li – *It was my son who did it*

Collectively, these substitutes do not constitute the verb *to be*; they simply replace some of the functions of the verb.

Pronunciation Tip

Remember, although the word **se** ends in **-e**, it is not pronounced *say*, as you might expect, but rather *seh*. The reason is that only verbs ending in **-e** are pronounced *-ay*, and **se** is not a verb.

More everyday words

Now that we have learned how to provide a reference in time for events and situations, let's add some time-based everyday words, which will help us in building these types of sentences.

zordi – *today*

yer – *yesterday*

demin – *tomorrow*

gramatin – *early morning*

matin – *morning*

lapremidi – *afternoon*

aswar – *evening*

lanwit – *night*

bonzour – *hello*

orevwar – *goodbye*

Chapter three pop quiz

Q. Select the answer that places the language markers in the correct order for the following sentences:

Yer, mo _____ koze. Zordi, mo _____ koze. Demin, mo _____ koze.

a: **pou, ti, pe**

b: **pou, pe, ti**

c: **ti, pe, pou**

Q. Select the correct translation of the following sentence:

Kot to ti pe ale?

a: *Where were you going?*

b: *Where are you going?*

c: *When are you going?*

Q. What is the correct translation of the sentence *I will be here tomorrow?*

Q. How can the sentence **Kan to pou vinn isi?**, meaning *When will you come here?*, be changed to mean *When did you come here?*

Q. What does **Mo ti bizin koz ar li** mean?

a: *I needed to talk with him.*

b: *I am going to talk with him.*

c: *I would have spoken with him.*

Chapter three pop quiz answers

Q. Select the answer that places the language markers in the correct order for the following sentences:

Yer, mo _____ koze. Zordi, mo _____ koze. Demin, mo _____ koze.

a: ~~pou, ti, pe~~

b: ~~pou, pe, ti~~

c: **ti, pe, pou** ✓

The clues to answering this question are the words **yer**, **zordi** and **demin**, meaning *yesterday*, *today* and *tomorrow* respectively. Knowing this allows us to establish the correct order of markers as **ti, pe** and **pou**, which are the past, progressive present and future markers. Answer c is therefore correct.

Q. Select the correct translation of the following sentence:

Kot to ti pe ale?

a: *Where were you going?* ✓

b: ~~Where are you going?~~

c: ~~When are you going?~~

This sentence uses the **ti pe** combination marker, which signifies an ongoing action in the past. As answer a is the only answer in the past, it must be correct.

Incidentally, **Kot to pou ale?** and **Kan to pou ale?** are the translations of answers b and c respectively. Both are set in the future, so the simple future marker **pou** is used. However, whereas answer b asks *where* (**kot**), answer c asks *when* (**kan**).

Q. What is the correct translation of the sentence *I will be here tomorrow?*

Mo pou la demin

This sentence is not as difficult to translate as it might have first appeared. Remember, in this context there is no verb *to be*; it is simply inferred. So we simply need to state *I here tomorrow* and place that event in the future with the future marker, **pou**.

The sentence **Mo pou isi demin** would also be correct; however, in practice **Mo pou la demin** would more generally be used.

Q. How can the sentence **Kan to pou vinn isi?**, meaning *When will you come here?*, be changed to mean *When did you come here?*

This is done simply by swapping the future marker, **pou**, which places the event in the future, with

Chapter three pop quiz answers

the past marker, **ti**, which places the event in the past. The rest of the sentence remains exactly the same, so the correct answer is **Kan to ti vinn isi?**

Q. What does **Mo ti bizin koz ar li** mean?

a: *I needed to talk with him.* ✓

b: ~~*I am going to talk with him.*~~

c: ~~*I would have spoken with him.*~~

Again, the key to this answer is when the event occurred. In this question, the past marker **ti** really stands out. It tells us that answer b cannot be correct as it is in the future.

You might have been tempted to answer c, but that answer would have needed the **ti pou** marker, which signifies something that would have been done but wasn't.

In this case, using the **ti** marker turns the verb **bizin**, meaning *to need*, into the past tense, *needed*, which leaves us with the correct answer, a.

Chapter Four: Dialogue 1

Chapter Four: Dialogue 1

John and Sarah

So far we have only taken an artificial look at Creole, learning about small pieces of grammar and vocabulary in isolation from the rest of the language. But Creole doesn't work like this. It exists to be spoken, which is when it really comes alive.

To truly gain an insight into the language, we need to see it in context. So let's have a look at some real-life dialogue, as spoken by Sarah and John, two friends who have just bumped into each other. Don't worry about how much you understand – we're going to break it all down in a minute.

Sarah: *Hi John. How's it going?*

John: *Good, thanks. And you?*

Sarah: *Pretty good. Hey, I have a surprise for you.*

John: *What's that?*

Sarah: *Mo pe aprann koz Kreol Morisien.*

John: *Huh? To koz Kreol aster?*

Sarah: *Wi, enn tigit. Mo pe aprann depi twa mwa.*

John: *Mari bon sa! Kouma to trouv li, fasil ouswa difcil?*

Sarah: *Touledede! Gramer-la plis fasil ki Angle, me mo gagn difikilte pou rapel tou bann mo.*

Sak fwa mo aprann enn nouvo mo, mo bliye enn lot.

John: *Me to koz li bien!*

Sarah: *Pankor! Mo bizin pratike. Mo sir mo pe fer boukou fot kan mo koze!*

John: *Pa trakase. Bizin fer bann fot pou aprann. Avek pratike, biento to pou kapav koz kouma enn Morisien!*

Sarah: *Mo espere! Mo mari kontan ki mo kapav koz ar mo bann kamarad an Kreol.*

John: *Hey, ki to pe fer aster? Mo pou pran enn kafe ar Andrew. To anvinn vinn zwenn li ek mwa? Li pou gagn enn mari sirpriz ki to kapav koz nou langaz!*

Sarah: *Mo ti pou al kot mwa, me kitfwa mo kapav vinn enn kou.*

John: *Top. To ena to loto anplace? Ouswa to anvinn vinn ek mwa?*

Sarah: *Non, li bon. Mo ena mo loto laba. Kot to pou zwenn li?*

John: *To konn bar-la anfas ar laplaz?*

Sarah: *Wi, mo konn li. OK, mo pou la dan enn demi-er.*

John: *Great, see you there.*

Although at first sight this dialogue might look intimidating, apart from a few new words of vocabulary, it doesn't contain anything that we haven't covered in the first three chapters. You already have all the tools you need to hold a similar conversation!

Chapter Four: Dialogue 1

Learning Tip

Don't get too bogged down with trying to understand every word of dialogue. Instead, just try to get a feel for what is being said. This is a skill you will need to call upon as you begin to develop an ability to converse in Creole. Often, although you won't pick up on every word that is being spoken, you will gain the gist through all sorts of other clues, such as non-verbal gestures or tone of voice.

To find out how, let's break this conversation down and see how it was formed by looking at each line of the original conversation along with literal English versions.

The literal translations have been used to demonstrate that, although the sentiment of a sentence can be carried from one language to another, it isn't possible to simply transpose Creole words for English, or vice versa. It doesn't *feel* quite right. There is nothing that stops the translation making sense, but it's not quite right at the same time.

Often, when a person starts learning a new language, they simply compose a sentence in their head in English and then replace the words of that sentence with the foreign-language equivalents. But, as you will discover, each language has its own personality, and you should try to engage with this personality from the start.

Sarah: *Hi John. How's it going?*

John: *Good, thanks. And you?*

Sarah: *Pretty good. Hey, I have a surprise for you.*

John: *What's that?*

The most obvious thing about the very start of this conversation is that it's in English! That's because, although Creole is a fully fledged language in its own right, it has always existed alongside other languages and it is very common for speakers to switch between languages at whim, sometimes even mid-sentence! So, a bilingual conversation like this is not at all unusual.

Sarah: *Mo pe aprann koz Kreol Morisien.*

I am learning Mauritian Creole.

Sarah has just surprised her friend John with her first sentence of Creole (just as you will soon be able to do with your Creole-speaking friends). If you recall, the **pe** marker is used to signify something that is ongoing; that something is the verb **aprann**, meaning *to learn*. So **pe aprann** means *learning*.

John: *Huh? To koz Kreol aster?*

Huh? You speak Creole now?

The new word that stands out here is **aster**, meaning *now*. This is the first time we have come across this handy little word.

Chapter Four: Dialogue 1

Sarah: Wi, enn tigit. Mo pe aprann depi twa mwa.

Yes, a little bit. I have been learning for three months.

Tigit is another brand new word, meaning *a small quantity* or *a little bit*. It derives from another handy word, **piti**, often abbreviated to **ti**, meaning *small*.

John: Mari bon sa! Kouma to trouv li, fasil ouswa difcil?

That's really great! How are you finding it, easy or difficult?

The first word of this sentence, **mari**, is used a lot in Creole. Its literal meaning is *very*, or *superior*, but those words don't really do it justice. Its real job is to 'big up' the word it precedes, in this case **bon**, meaning *good*. So, whilst a literal translation might be *very good*, perhaps *VERY good* would better convey the sentiment of **mari bon**.

This sentence also uses the short form of the verb **trouve**, but for its other meaning: *to find*. It is very common in Creole for words to have multiple meanings.

We also have three other simple additions in this sentence, in **fasil ouswa difcil**, meaning *easy or difficult*. You will find that the word **ouswa** (meaning *or*) is often abbreviated to **swa**.

Sarah: Toulede! Gramer-la plis fasil ki Angle, me mo gagn difikilte pou rapel tou bann mo. Sak fwa mo aprann enn nouvo mo, mo bliye enn lot.

Both! The grammar is easier than English, but I have difficulty remembering all the words. Every time I learn a new word, I forget another.

There is all sorts going on in this sentence, with a lot of new vocabulary!

The first of these new words is **toulede**, meaning *both*. This is another throwback to the French, this time to *tous les deux* (literally *all the two*). So Sarah is explaining that she is finding some elements of learning Creole easy and others more difficult. This is likely a sentiment you will be able to relate to by now!

Apart from the useful word **plis**, meaning *more* or *more than*, the other word of interest in this sentence is **ki**. We have already experienced **ki** as an interrogative, used to ask questions such as *what*, *who* and *whom*. But, as you can see, it is also used as a comparative: to compare one thing to another. This makes it a very useful little word.

The word **mo** perfectly demonstrates that, as many words have multiple meanings, there is a need to view each sentence as a whole rather than as a collection of individual words.

Usually you would be forgiven for interpreting **mo** as *I*. However, you will note that in this context it is preceded by the word **tou**, meaning *all*, and the plural marker **bann**, signifying more than one. So,

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unless you believe there exists more than one of you, the context of the sentence tells us this word must mean something else, and in this case it means *word*. Sarah uses the word **nouvo** to identify these as *new* words.

There are three new verbs in this sentence. **Rapel**, which has the same long and short forms, means *to remember*. And **bliye**, which also has only one form, is the verb *to forget*. But the real gem in this sentence is the verb **gagne**, in its short form **gagn**. This is such an important word in Creole that it is covered separately within this chapter.

John: Me to koz li bien!

But you speak it well!

This sentence introduces another everyday word, one you will use every day you speak Creole: **bien**, meaning *good*.

Sarah: Pankor! Mo bizin pratike. Mo sir mo pe fer boukou fot kan mo koze!

Not yet. I need to practise. I am sure I am making lots of mistakes when I talk!

A few useful new words are introduced here: **pankor**, *not yet*; the verb **pratike**, meaning *to practise*; **sir**, *sure*; and **fot**, *mistake* or *fault*.

John: Pa trakase. Bizin fer bann fot pou aprann. Avek pratike, biento to pou kapav koz kouma enn Morisien!

Don't worry. (You) have to make mistakes to learn. With practice, soon you will be able to speak like a Mauritian!

Here we can see the use of the negative marker, **pa**, in action. It is used to form the negative of another new verb, **trakase**, meaning *to worry*. So, **pa trakase** becomes *don't worry*.

The next sentence is interesting for a couple of reasons. Firstly, the sentence begins **bizin fer bann fot**, which has a literal meaning of *have to make mistakes*. Did you notice the lack of an objective pronoun (*you*)? In Creole, it isn't absolutely necessary to indicate who or what needs to make mistakes; the context simply suggests it.

There is something a little odd going on with the two instances of the word **pou**, which precede the verbs **aprann** and **kapav**. Although the second **pou** is the future marker we are familiar with, the first is the word **pou** meaning *for* or *to*, a completely different word, which in this case is being used in conjunction with the verb **appran**, to mean *learn*.

Last, but not least, there is one more new new word in this sentence, **biento**, meaning *soon*.

Sarah: Mo espere! Mo mari kontan ki mo kapav koz ar mo bann kamarad an Kreol.

I hope (so)! I am very happy that I can speak with my friends in Creole.

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Again, the word **mari** is used to ‘big up’ the word it precedes, in this case **kontan**, *happy*. This shows Sarah isn’t just happy she can now talk with her friends in Creole, she is *really* happy. Note the plural marker **bann** to indicate more than one friend.

The verb **espere**, which starts the sentence, means *to hope*.

John: Hey, ki to pe fer aster? Mo pou pran enn kafe ar Andrew. To anv vinn zwenn li ek mwa? Li pou gagn enn mari sirpriz ki to kapav koz nou langaz!

Hey, what are you doing now? I am going to meet Andrew. You want to come meet him with me? He’s going to be really surprised that you can speak our language!

The progressive marker, **pe**, is used for the first time in this conversation, when John asks Sarah what she is *doing* now. He tells her he is off **zwenn**, meaning *to meet*, his friend Andrew and grab a coffee. Except that he doesn’t say *grab* (although this is a good example of the English equivalent of what he actually says). Instead he uses the verb **pran**, *to take*. In Creole, when ordering a drink (or food for that matter), you don’t *have* a drink, you *take* it.

The sentence ends with the word **langaz**, meaning *language*.

Grammar Tip

The verbs **zwenn** and **pran** both have a single version; they do not have full (long) and medial (short) forms. They are the same whether at the end of a sentence or in the middle.

Sarah: Mo ti pou al kot mwa, me kitfwa mo kapav vinn enn kou.

I was going to go to my place, but maybe I could come for a while.

Did you spot the combination marker **ti pou**? Sarah uses this to tell John that she was just going to go home, but its use indicates a change of plan. She then uses the word **kitfwa**, meaning *maybe* or *perhaps*, to tell John that she will come for a while, **enn kou**.

Sarah tells John that she had been planning to go home. In Creole, home is actually expressed as the ‘place of’ someone. So, *my home* is **kot mwa** whereas *your home* is **kot twa** (or **kot ou** depending how well we know each other).

Language Tip

The small phrase **enn kou** is used often in Creole to signify that something will happen for a short while. In practice, a sentence fragment like **vinn enn kou** could also be translated as *come here a minute*.

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John: Top. To ena to loto anplace? Ouswa to anvi vinn ek mwa?

Great. You have your car here? Or you want to come with me?

Top is a fabulous word. It means *best*, but in this context *great* would be a better translation.

In the next sentence, you will notice the use of **to** twice, in **to ena to loto**. There is an obvious new word **loto**, which is a *car*, but there is actually another new word as well. The second **to** means *your*. This is known as a ‘possessive determiner’, and we will look at these in more detail shortly.

An place is a commonly used short phrase. Its literal meaning is *in place* but in practice it means a sort of informal *here*. By asking whether Sarah has her car **an place**, John is asking whether it is *hereabouts*.

Did you also notice the use of **swa**, the abbreviated version of **ouswa**, meaning *or*?

Sarah: Non, li bon. Mo ena mo loto laba. Kot to pou zwenn li?

No, it's OK. My car is over there. Where are you going to meet him?

A literal meaning of **li bon** would be *it's good*. This is a good example of the use of **li** to mean *it*. However, in this case the *it* Sarah is referring to isn't her car. A better approximation of the meaning of **li bon** in this context would be *it's OK*.

Another useful new word is **laba**, meaning *over there*, an expansion of the Creole word **la** meaning *there*.

John: To konn bar-la anfas ar laplaz?

You know the bar facing the beach?

Although this short conversation is coming to a close, we still have time for new words such as **anfas**, used when describing a position *opposite* or *facing* something or somewhere.

Sarah: Wi, mo konn li. OK, mo pou la dan enn demi-er.

Yes, I know it. OK, I'll be there in half an hour.

As we saw in chapter three, Creole takes a different approach to the verb *to be*. So, Sarah only needed to take the word **la**, meaning *there*, and precede it with the future marker, **pou**, to indicate where she *will be* later.

John: Great, see you there.

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Being possessive

In language, possession is demonstrated using things called ‘possessive determiners’. This is just a fancy grammatical name for words such as *my*, *yours* and *hers*, which indicate possession of something else. So, *my* book indicates I am in possession of a book. *Your* car shows you have possession of a car. In Creole these possessive determiners are:

mo – *my*
to – *your* (informal)
ou – *your* (formal)
so – *his, hers, its*
zot – *their, your* (singular), *your* (plural)

As you can see, with the exception of **so**, the determiners are exactly the same as the personal pronouns. This is because, in Creole, there is no difference between *your book* and *you book*. They are both **to liv**.

mo loto – *my car*
to loto – *your car*
so loto – *his car*
zot loto – *their car*

This is pretty straightforward so far, but what about expressing possession by a third party – for example, *John’s car*? For this we need to get a little creative. We express it as *John, his car*.

John so loto – *John’s car*
Sarah so liv – *Sarah’s book*
garson-la so liv – *the boy’s book*

Everyone’s gain

The verb **gagne** is very important in Creole. Its literal meaning is *to gain*; however, it also has the direct meanings of *to obtain*, *to win* and *to earn*. But it also has a number of indirect meanings, replacing verbs such as *to be* or *to have* in certain circumstances.

Pronunciation Tip

Gagne makes use of a nasal sound that, although rare in English words, is very common in French words and those derived from them. An approximation of the correct pronunciation would be *gangyay*.

For English-speakers, the easiest usage to understand of the verb **gagne** is its direct translation.

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Mo esper mo pou gagne – I hope I will win
Mo ti gagn Rs 500 – I earned 500 rupees

In these examples, the verb **gagne** is used in a similar way to *gain* in English. Where things become a little trickier, however, is when we look at its indirect meanings.

To illustrate this point, let's have a look at how English and Creole differ in their construction of the sentence *I am hungry*. Whereas in English we *are* hungry, using the verb *to be*, in Creole we *gain* hunger using the verb **gagne**.

Mo gagn fin – I am hungry
Li gagn swaf – She is thirsty
To gagn so? – You are hot?

As you can see, in Creole, instead of *being* something, we *gain* it. This principle applies equally for hunger, thirst, hot, cold and the like.

As with other verbs, we can also use the various language markers to change the properties of the verb. For example, we can use the progressive marker **pe** to mark the progressive action of *getting* hot. Let's have a look at this in action:

Zot pe gagn so – They are getting hot
Li pou gagn fre – It will get cold
Mo ti gagn swaf – I was thirsty

Gagne is also used when asking to *gain* something that in English we might ask to *have*. So, at the supermarket checkout you might ask whether you could *gain* a bag rather than whether you could *have* one.

Mo kapav gagn en sak? – Can I have a bag?

Language Tip

Gagne is usually used when you initiate asking for something, but the verb **pran**, meaning *to take*, is used instead when responding to someone who asks what you would like. For example, if a waiter asks for your order, you might say ***mo pran enn tas dite***: *I'll take a cup of tea*.

Chapter four pop quiz

Q. Which is the correct translation of ***Mo pa ti kapav trouv John so loto?***

- a: *I cannot see John's car.*
- b: *John couldn't see my car.*
- c: *I couldn't see John's car.*

Q. How could the sentence *I ate more than my friend* be expressed in Creole?

- a: ***Mo ti manz mo kamarad.***
- b: ***Mo ti manz plis ki mo kamarad.***
- c: ***Mo ti manz plis ki to kamarad.***

Q. How could you translate the sentence *I haven't talked to them yet?*

Q. There is a problem with the following sentence. What is it?

Ki ou pou fer yer?

Q. Which word can be added to bring *hope* to the following sentence?

Mo _____ ki li kapav vinn ek mwa demin.

- a: ***esper***
- b: ***espere***
- c: ***pans***

Chapter four pop quiz answers

Q. Which is the correct translation of ***Mo pa ti kapav trouv John so loto?***

a: ~~*I cannot see John's car.*~~

b: ~~*John couldn't see my car.*~~

c: *I couldn't see John's car.* ✓

The simple past marker, ***ti***, which places this Creole sentence in the past, tells us straight away that answer a cannot be correct. The possessive determiner ***so***, in this case meaning *his*, means that answer b must also be incorrect. The only answer that matches the question is therefore c.

Q. How could the sentence *I ate more than my friend* be expressed in Creole?

a: ~~***Mo ti manz mo kamarad.***~~

b: ***Mo ti manz plis ki mo kamarad.*** ✓

c: ~~***Mo ti manz plis ki to kamarad.***~~

The secret here is identifying the correct possessive determiner and the comparative element, ***than***. We can immediately discount answer a, as it does not include a comparative at all and so translates to *I ate my friend!*

As answer c uses the determiner ***to***, meaning *your*, we know that this cannot be correct either, as the sentence is about *my friend*, not *your friend*. So this leaves answer b as the correct translation.

Q. How could you translate the sentence *I haven't talked to them yet?*

Mo pankor koz ar zot.

In Creole, there are many ways to say just about everything. The key to developing a conversational knowledge of Creole is to simply ensure that the key words of a sentence are included. So, if you included the words *talk*, *yet* and *them* in your sentence, you would almost certainly have been understood.

Q. There is a problem with the following sentence. What is it?

Ki ou pou fer yer?

There are two elements of this sentence that don't marry up: the future marker ***pou*** and the word ***yer***, meaning *yesterday*. Using both these words would give a literal translation of *What are you going to do yesterday?*

For this sentence to make sense, either the past maker, ***ti***, needs to replace the future marker or the word *yesterday* needs to be replaced with something in the future, such as ***demin***, meaning *tomorrow*.

Chapter four pop quiz answers

Q. Which word can be added to bring *hope* to the following sentence?

Mo _____ **ki li kapav vinn ek mwa demin.**

a: ~~**esper**~~

b: **espere** ✓

c: ~~**pans**~~

Although both verbs would make sense in this sentence, the clue in the question points towards the verb **espere**, meaning *to hope*, rather than **pans**, meaning *to think*, to create the sentence *I hope that he/she/it can come with me tomorrow.*

Deciding which of the long and short forms of the verb **espere** should be used here can be confusing at first, but if you look closely you will see that the verb is followed by the determinator **ki**, meaning *that*, rather than another verb, an object or a person. As a result, the long form **espere** would be the right choice here.

Chapter Five: It's All Getting a Bit Tense

Chapter Five: It's All Getting a Bit Tense

Way back when

Way back in chapter three (feels like ages ago, doesn't it) we introduced the simple past and future tenses, using the **ti** and **pou** markers respectively. Although those tenses are more than enough to get you going, there will be times when you'll want a greater ability to express yourself in the past or future. This chapter introduces a few more tenses to provide you with that additional range.

Our first new tense is called the 'present perfect'. It is used to form sentences in the form *I have done something*.

As you will have come to expect by now, this tense is formed with another past marker, **finn**. So, whereas **mo ti koze** means *I spoke*, **mo finn koze** means *I have spoken*. Simple.

What is a little less simple, though, is picking up on this marker in everyday usage, as it is often abbreviated to **inn**, or even **'nn**. So, **mo finn koze** is the same as **mo inn koze**, which is the same as **mo'nn koze**.

Unfortunately this sound is also usually spoken quite quickly, so it has to be listened for. Don't worry though: now you know what to listen for, you will soon start to pick up on it!

It may be easier to grasp by comparing this new tense with the simple past tense we looked at before. Consider the following two sentences.

Li ti trov nou – He saw us (simple past tense)

Li'nn trov nou – He has seen us (present perfect tense)

Although both of these sentences are placed in the past, you can see there is a subtle difference in their use. In reality, though, you are unlikely to be misunderstood if you mistakenly use the wrong past tense.

Just now

Before we move away from the past, there is one more past tense to take a quick look at. It sits right at the point where the present becomes the past and is called the 'immediate past'.

Formed using the immediate past marker, **fek**, this tense is used to express something that has *just* happened, within the past few moments. So, whereas **mo ti manze** means *I ate* (in the past) and **mo finn manze** is *I have eaten* (in the past), **mo fek manze** means *I just ate* (a few moments ago).

Collectively, we now have three separate ways of expressing the past, from the immediate past to way back when, more than enough to maintain a conversation in Creole.

Chapter Five: It's All Getting a Bit Tense

Showing willing

In Creole, as in English, there is a second future tense that is used to express events of the future. However, it provides a slightly different context from the 'simple future', which we have already looked at.

Its purpose is to describe or confirm plans or intentions for the future for which we would most likely use the word *will* in English. I call this the 'willing future' tense, and it uses the marker **ava**.

Mo ava koz ar li demin – *I will talk with him tomorrow*

Understanding when to use the simple future and when to use the willing future is perhaps easier when they are put in context. So, let's compare these two sentences:

Mo pou al laplaz demin – *I am going to the beach tomorrow*

Mo ava al laplaz demin – *I will go to the beach tomorrow*

In the first sentence the speaker uses the simple future tense, indicated by the marker **pou**, to state it is a matter of fact they are going to the beach tomorrow. It is clear-cut; *I am going*. In contrast, the second statement indicates that it is the speaker's *intention* to go to the beach.

Whilst generally both sentences convey the same message, the use of **ava**, to indicate the speaker's *intention* to do something in the future, carries a very subtle inference that this event is a little less definite. To gain a better insight into this difference, let's compare two more sentences:

Mo pou arriv sink-er – *I am going to arrive at five o'clock*

Mo ava arriv sink-er – *I will arrive at five o'clock*

Again, both sentences are set in the future. However, whereas the first once again conveys a message of certainty, the second indicates the speaker's plan or intention. Swap *will arrive at five o'clock* with *should arrive at five o'clock* and you get a sense of the subtle difference.

The use of **ava** is definitely less common in Creole than **pou**. And, unfortunately, when it is used it is often abbreviated to **'va** or **'a**. So, care needs to be taken to listen out for this 'willing' future tense!

More combinations

With these additional language markers at our disposal, we now also have more possible combination markers to extend our range even further. Let's take a look at a couple of these.

First, how about combining the two past markers **ti** and **finn** to create a new **ti finn** marker to express an action or event that *has already* happened? I call this the 'storytelling marker' as it describes something that happened at an undetermined time in the past.

Chapter Five: It's All Getting a Bit Tense

Mo ti koze – I spoke

Mo finn koze – I have spoken

Mo ti finn koze – I had already spoken

Don't forget, **finn** will often be abbreviated to **inn** or **'nn**, so don't be surprised to hear **mo ti finn** shorted to **mo ti'nn**. Let's see this in action.

Mo ti'nn koze kan li ti arive – I had already spoken when he/she/it arrived

We're not done yet, though. How about turning a combination marker into a 'super-combination'? (Ok., I made that up, but I think it expresses the flexibility of these markers.)

Let's look what happens when you take the **ti finn** (or **ti'nn**) marker we created above and combine it with the immediate past marker **fek**.

Mo ti'nn koze – I had already spoken

Mo fek koze – I have just spoken

Mo ti'nn fek koze – I had just spoken

This time we have created a marker to express something that had just happened in the context of our story, rather than something that has just happened in real life.

Mo ti'nn fek koze kan li ti arive – I had just spoken when he arrived

As you can see, the Creole language has an extraordinary ability to simply combine existing words to create additional meaning. This is the true power of the language. With practice you will soon find that these combination markers will flow naturally in your conversation.

Grammar Tip

Don't forget, the super-combination marker **ti'nn fek** is used for describing something in storytelling mode, meaning it describes something that happened at an undetermined time in the past.

For something that happened at a time in the past that can be specified, such as last week, the more simple **ti fek** would generally be used instead.

A simple rule of thumb is to use **ti fek** if the speaker is able to more or less recall the date or time of the action. Otherwise **ti'nn fek** would be appropriate.

Don't get too bogged down in this, though. Either would be understood in either situation.

Chapter five pop quiz

Q. What is the correct translation of the sentence **Mo ti dir ki li'nn trouv nou?**

- a: *I said he saw us*
- b: *I said that he had seen us*
- c: *I said that he was going to see us*

Q. Rearrange the following words to form the sentence *I thought he would have sold it.*

ti li ki ti li vann pou mo panse

Q. Which word would you add to the sentence **Li fek zwenn li** to change its meaning from *He just met her* to *He had just met her?*

- a: **ti'nn**
- b: **pou**
- c: **ti**

Q. How many verbs are contained in the sentence **to'le al ek zot?**

- a: one
- b: two
- c: three

Q. How could the sentence *They will come tomorrow, if they can* be expressed in Creole?

Chapter five pop quiz answers

Q. What is the correct translation of the sentence **Mo ti dir ki li'nn trouv nou?**

a: ~~I said he saw us~~

b: I said that he had seen us ✓

c: ~~I said that he was going to see us~~

Ok, this is a little tricky unless you remember the difference between the simple past and the present perfect tenses. Although both place an event or action in the past, which one you use makes the difference between saying *I saw* and *I had seen*.

Only answer b makes use of both tenses, with **ti** being used to place the verb **dir** in the simple past tense, *said*, and **finn** (disguised in its abbreviated form, **'nn**) to place the verb **trouv** in the present perfect tense, *had seen*.

Q. Rearrange the following words to form the sentence *I thought he would have sold it*.

Mo ti panse ki li ti pou vann li ✓

The key to this question is placing the verbs and the personal pronoun in their correct order. Once you have done that, the rest just falls into place.

Q. Which word would you add to the sentence **Li fek zwenn li** to change its meaning from *He just met her* to *He had just met her*?

a: **ti'nn** ✓

b: ~~pou~~

c: **ti** ✓

The correct answer could best be summarised as 'it depends'. We know that the action happened in the past, which means answer b (which uses the simple future marker) cannot be correct. But which of the other two markers should be used depends on whether the speaker is able to determine when the event they are describing occurred.

If the speaker can recall the approximate date of the event, the combination marker **ti fek** would most likely be used. Otherwise, the storytelling marker **ti finn fek** (abbreviated to **ti'nn fek**) would be used. In practice, though, both would be acceptable.

Q. How many verbs are contained in the sentence **to'le al ek zot?**

a: one

b: two ✓

c: ~~three~~

Chapter five pop quiz answers

There are two verbs in this sentence, which translates as *You want to go with them?* The first is **oule** (meaning *to want*), in its abbreviated form **'le**, and the second is the short form **al** of the verb **ale**, meaning *to go*.

Q. How could the sentence *They will come tomorrow, if they can* be expressed in Creole?

Zot ava vini demain, si zot kapav

This is a fairly straightforward translation. However, as the sentence expresses the people's *intention* to come, if they can, the 'willing future' marker **ava** is used instead of the more usual simple future marker, **pou**.

Chapter Six: Quirky Creole

Chapter Six: Quirky Creole

Double talk

Over the years, Creole has developed all sorts of wonderful characteristics that give it a great deal of personality. These are all the little things that make it stand out as a language in its own right. In this chapter we are going to take a look at some of these characteristics, in which Creole takes a different approach from English. A great example of this is the habit of ‘double talk’: repeating a word to bring emphasis to that word.

Compared to languages such as English, Creole possesses a relatively limited vocabulary. But what Creole lacks in volume it makes up for in creativity. Missing a word to bring an enhanced meaning to what you are saying? No problem, just say it twice!

Creole-speakers double-talk all sorts of words to bring additional meaning to those words. In the case of verbs, double talk generally makes the verb less meaningful, more informal. So, whereas the verb **koze** means *to talk*, **koz-koze** has the more informal meaning *to chat*.

Mo ti koz ar li yer – *I talked with him yesterday*
Mo ti koz-koze ar li yer – *I chatted with him yesterday*
Mo pou mars taler – *I am going to walk later*
Mo pou mars-marse taler – *I am going for a stroll later*

Whilst double talk usually gives a verb less purpose, sometimes it can change the meaning completely, such as in the case of **bat-bate**, which in double talk means *to do little jobs here and there* but originates from the verb **bate** meaning *to beat*. Unfortunately there is no particular reason for this; examples like this are just thrown in there to confuse us students of Creole!

Other more general words will often be double-talked as well, to emphasise a point. So, whereas **vit** means *fast*, **vit-vit** sort of means *double fast*, or *really fast*. Of course, we could just use **mari vit**, meaning *very fast*, but somehow that doesn’t feel as expressive as **vit-vit**.

Mo bizin fer li vit – *I must do it fast*
Mo bizin fer li vit-vit – *I must do it fast, fast (really fast)*

Of course, as Creole is a language of expressiveness, where one or even two is not enough, you can just keep going.

Sime-la li long – *The road is long*
Sime-la li bien long – *The road is very long*
Sime-la li bien-bien long – *The road is very, very long*
Sime-la li bien-bien-bien long – *The road is very, very, very long (extremely long)*

Within reason, double talk is usually only limited to how long you can speak without needing to take a breath. A word can be repeated as much as it takes to get the point across!

Chapter Six: Quirky Creole

Time for more

Creole deals with dates and times slightly differently from English. For starters, rather than asking for the time, in Creole we ask for the hour, **ler**:

Ki ler la? – *What is the hour (time)?*

In Creole, time is described as the hour and then the number of minutes plus or minus the hour. So, 10.00am is described as *ten hour* and 10.20am is *ten hour twenty*. However, 10.40am uses the word **mwin**, meaning *minus*, to create *eleven hour minus twenty*. Let's have a look at these times in Creole.

dis-er – *ten hour (10.00am)*

dis-er-vin – *ten hour twenty (10.20am)*

onz-er-mwin-vin – *eleven hour minus twenty (10.40am)*

You will notice that **ler**, *hour*, is shortened to **er** when used in this context.

Pronunciation Tip

There is a habit, when pronouncing words ending with the letter s, to use a z sound instead when that word is directly linked with another. So *dis-er* would more often be pronounced *di-z-er* rather than *di-s-er*.

There are a couple of options when quarter and half hours are involved. The time 10.30am may be described either as *ten hour thirty* or as *ten hour and a half*. The same applies to quarters, so 10.45am could be *eleven hour minus fifteen* or *eleven hour minus a quarter*.

dis-er-e-kar – *ten hour and a quarter (10.15am)*

dis-er-edmi – *ten hour and a half (10.30am)*

onz-er-mwin-kar – *eleven hour minus a quarter (10.45am)*

In time, am and pm are expressed using **dimatin** for the morning and **dan lapremidi** for the afternoon. *Midday* and *midnight* are **midi** and **minwi** respectively.

trwa-z-er-dis lapremidi – *three hour ten in the afternoon (3.10pm)*

nef-er dimatin – *nine hour in the morning (9am)*

Chapter Six: Quirky Creole

Grammar Tip

In Creole, *half* is **demi**. However, an abbreviated form, **edmi**, is used in reference to the time. This is a throw-back to its French origin: **et demi**, meaning *and half*.

Dates are described in much the same way as English, with numbers to represent the days of the month and the year.

Lindi – Monday
Mardi – Tuesday
Merkredi – Wednesday
Zedi – Thursday
Vandredi – Friday
Samdi – Saturday
Dimans – Sunday
wikenn – weekend

Zanvie – January
Fevriye – February
Mars – March
Avril – April
Me – May
Zwin – June
Zilie – July
Out – August
Septam – September
Oktob – October
Novam – November
Desam – December

So, Monday 28th November 2005 would be expressed as **Lindi Vintwit Novam De Mil Sink**.

First, second, third and so on (correctly known as ‘ordinal numbers’) are formed simply by adding **-iem** to the end of a number:

premie – first
deziem – second
trwaziem – third
katiem – fourth
sinkiem – fifth
sisiem – sixth
setiem – seventh

Chapter Six: Quirky Creole

witiem – eighth

nefiem – ninth

disiem – tenth

You will notice that **premie** (*first*) is an exception to this rule. Having dealt with *first*, this is probably a good time to mention the word for *last*, which is **dernie**.

Grammar Tip

The Creole words for *second* and *third* have an additional z. This is an often-used tool in Creole to make certain words easier to say. Without this z, the word *second* would be pronounced phonetically as *day-ee-em*, which doesn't roll off the tongue as easily as the version with the z in place.

Age

The concept of age is also expressed differently in English and Creole. Whereas in English we *are* our age (*I am eight years old*), Creole follows its French roots, in which we *have* our age (*I have eight years*). When we ask someone for their age we use the word **larz**.

Ki larz to ena? – How old are you?

If you recall all the way back to chapter two, the Creole word **ena** is used in the context of having something, so we can use it here to describe *having* our age.

Mo ena wit-an – I have eight years

Since how long?

Depi is another of those handy little words that you will find yourself using all the time, as you develop your conversational Creole. It can mean *since*, *for* or *from*, depending on the context.

In English, we use a fancy tense called the 'present perfect continuous' to express something that we have been doing for some time and are still doing now.

I have been doing something for two years

I have been doing something since I was twelve years old

However, Creole places those sentences in the 'progressive present' tense, using the progressive marker **pe** combined with **depi** to form the sentence. Literal translations might look like:

Chapter Six: Quirky Creole

Mo pe fer kiksoz depi de lane – I am doing something for two years

Mo pe fer kiksoz depi mo ena douz lane – I am doing something since I was twelve years old

Going places

One thing the Creole language is not short of is the ability to describe how to get from A to B, or to describe where something is in reference to something else. There is a comprehensive vocabulary to choose from. We have already met some of these words, such as **isi**, meaning *here*. But let's take a look at some more of the most commonly used words for describing where something is.

devan – in front (of)

avan – before

deryer – behind

laba – over there

drwat – right

gos – left

adrwat – (to the) right

agos – (to the) left

lao – above

enba – below

anfas ... ar/ek – opposite ... with

ant ... ar/ek – between ... with

akote – next to

deor – outside

andan – inside (when referring to a person)

ledan – inside (when referring to an object)

Although learning a list of vocabulary like this is difficult in itself, we are fortunate that, in general, describing where something is uses a very similar structure to English.

Get sa lisien, deryer loto-la – Look at that dog, behind the car

Tifi-la ti mars devan sa garson-la – The girl walked in front of the boy

Ena kiksoz lor latab-la – There is something on the table

These particular sentences are constructed in a very similar way to how they would be in English. However, in Creole, some things relating to describing where something is are dealt with quite differently.

For example, whilst Creole has equivalents for the words *left* and *right*, it also has separate words meaning *to turn left* and *to turn right* (**agos** and **adrwat**, respectively). So, whereas **lor to gos** means *on your left*, **tourn adrwat** uses a separate word to give the meaning *turn left*.

Chapter Six: Quirky Creole

The differences don't stop there. Consider this sentence:

Lisien-la ant tifi-la ek so kamarad – *The dog is between the girl and her friend*

As you can see, this sentence uses the word **ant**, meaning **between**, to describe the position of the dog. But, whereas in English a person or object is described as being between one thing *and* another, Creole uses the words **ar** or **ek**, both meaning *with*.

This same principle applies to the word **anfas**, meaning *opposite*. Again, this type of sentence is constructed with **ar** or **ek**.

Zwenn mwa laba, anfas ar laplaz-la – *Meet me over there, opposite the beach*

Where are you from?

One last way that Creole differs slightly from English can be found in the word used to describe where someone comes from. In Creole, the verb **sorti**, meaning *to leave*, is used to describe someone's place of origin.

Mo Angle, mo sort Langleter – *I am English, I come from England*

Li Morisien, li sort Moris – *He is Mauritian, he comes from Mauritius*

Chapter six pop quiz

Q. What time does **midi mwin vennsink** refer to?

- a: 2.25am
- b: 12.25pm
- c: 11.35am

Q. What does the sentence **Ti ena enn ti garson** mean?

- a: *This is a small boy*
- b: *There was a small boy*
- c: *There was a boy*

Q. How would the sentence above need to be amended to include the boy's age as being eight years old?

Q. How could the sentence *I am going to go outside* be translated into Creole?

Q. Can you translate, and then answer, the following question? Clue: **trwa-?-iem**.

Ena enn fot dan mo-la 'trwaiem'. Ki sa fot-la?

Chapter six pop quiz answers

Q. What time does *midi mwin vennsink* refer to?

a: ~~2.25am~~

b: ~~12.25pm~~

c: 11.35am ✓

The literal translation of the time in the question is *midday minus twenty-five*, making *11.35am* the correct answer.

Q. What does the sentence *Ti ena enn ti garson* mean?

a: ~~This is a small boy~~

b: There was a small boy ✓

c: ~~There was a boy~~

The marker *ti* tells us that this sentence is placed in the past, which immediately shows that answer a cannot be correct. But there is a second word *ti*, this time meaning *small*, in the sentence. Answer b is the only sentence that matches these two criteria, making it the correct answer.

Q. How would the sentence above need to be amended to include the boy's age as being eight years old?

... *ki ti ena wit-an*

As we learned in this chapter, in Creole we *have* our age rather than *being* our age. So we need to use the word *ena* to describe having *wit-an*, *eight years*. But, we must also remember to use the past marker *ti* to place this in the past, to match the tense used in the rest of the sentence.

So the full sentence would read, *Ti ena enn ti garson ki ti ena wit-an*: *There was a small boy who was eight years old*.

Q. How could the sentence *I am going to go outside* be translated into Creole?

Mo pou al deor

This sentence could almost as clearly have been stated as *mo al deor*, but that would translate as *I go outside*. To express that the speaker is *going to go*, the future marker *pou* needs to be placed before the verb *ale*.

Q. Can you translate, and then answer, the following question? Clue: *trwa-?-iem*.

Ena enn fot dan mo-la 'trwaiem'. Ki sa fot-la?

Chapter six pop quiz answers

Although this may seem tricky at first, it is actually just a case of performing a simple translation. The Creole sentence can be translated to read, *There is a mistake with the word **twraiem**. What is that mistake?*

The only tricky word here is **fot**, meaning *fault* or *mistake*, as we learned in chapter four.

Once we have translated the question, we can see that the clue suggests that the word **twraziem** is misspelled, as it is missing the **z** to become **twaziem**.

Chapter Seven: Dialogue 2

Chapter Seven: Dialogue 2

John, Sarah and Andrew

Now we have even more structure and vocabulary of the Creole language to draw upon, let's have a look at another everyday conversation by catching up with John, Andrew and Sarah at Cafe One. Again, don't worry about words you don't understand – we'll break it all down shortly.

John: *Bonzour Andrew. Ki manier?*

Andrew: *Mwa, mo korek. Twa?*

John: *Korek. Fer lontan to isi?*

Andrew: *Non, mo fek arive, depi sink minit.*

John: *Good. Mo ti pans mo an-retar.*

Andrew: *Non, tou korek, asiz twa. Ki to pou bwar?*

John: *Mwa, mo pou pran enn kafe, silteple.*

Andrew: *OK, atann enn kou. Mo pou komann bann kafe-la.*

John: *Pran enn pou Sarah ousi. Li pou vinn zwenn nou biento.*

Andrew: *Abon! Mo pa rapel dernie fwa ki mo ti trouv li.*

John: *Wi, mo kone. Mo ti zwenn li fek-la. Mo ti dir li bizin vini pou pran kafe ar nou.*

Andrew: *Mari top. OK, mo pou pran trwa alor. [leaving]*

Sarah: *Alo John.*

John: *Hey Sarah. Glad you could make it. Mo finn komann enn kafe pou twa. Korek sa?*

Sarah: *Wi, mari bon sa. Kot Andrew ete?*

John: *Li'nn al pran bann kafe-la. Get li laba, li pe vini aster-la.*

Andrew: *Hi Sarah. How are you?*

Sarah: *I'm good thank you, me si to anvi nou kapav koz Kreol. Mo kapav konpran si to koz dousman.*

Andrew: *Eh? John, to pa ti dir mwa ki li kapav koz Kreol! Kan to ti aprann sa?*

Sarah: *Mo pe aprann depi twa mwa.*

John: *Ki to pans, Andrew? Li koz bien, non? Apre zis enn-de mwa!*

Andrew: *Serye sa! Li koz mari bien.*

Sarah: *Mersi! Mo pe seye!*

Although this is still a relatively short dialogue, it includes a lot of new vocabulary and recaps many of the concepts we have looked at over the past few chapters. As before, let's break the dialogue down and see how the language has been structured.

John: *Bonzour Andrew. Ki manier?*

Hello Andrew. How's it going?

The Creole language includes a number of greetings, but **ki manier** is one of the most common. Its literal meaning is *how's the behaviour*, but in context it just means *how's it going?*

Andrew: *Mwa, mo korek. Twa?*

I'm good. And you?

Chapter Seven: Dialogue 2

Korek is another of those catch-all words you will use every single day in Creole. It means *good*. And it means *OK*. And it means *healthy*. And it means *fine*. And it means ...

In practice, **korek** can be used as a positive affirmation of just about anything, and people will often use it as a standalone greeting. In this context, though, Andrew uses it as a reply to mean *I'm OK* or *I'm good*.

John: Korek. Fer lontan to isi?

I'm good. Have you been here long?

There's that word **korek** again, used as a response to a greeting.

John also asks Andrew whether he has been waiting long, but let's have a closer look at this sentence. The literal meaning of **fer lontan to isi** is *do long time you here*. It uses a new word, **lontan**, meaning *long time*, and once again it demonstrates how English and Creole can differ in the way they each construct their sentences.

Andrew: Non, mo fek arive, depi sink minit.

No, I just arrived, five minutes ago.

The immediate past marker, **fek**, is used to indicate an action that has just occurred, in this case Andrew arriving at Cafe One. You might also have noticed the use of **depi**. This gives a literal translation of *since five minutes*, but in context it means *five minutes ago*.

John: Good. Mo ti pans mo an-retar.

That's good. I thought I (was) late.

This is another example of the lack of the verb *to be* in Creole. You will notice that John thought he was **an-retar**, meaning *late*, but there is no word for *was* (which is why it is shown in brackets in the translation).

Andrew: Non, tou korek, asiz twa. Ki to pou bwar?

No, everything's good, sit down. What are you going to drink?

Korek, again! Can you see how useful this word is? This time it is used with **tou** to signify that all, or everything, is good.

Andrew uses the short form of the verb **asize**, meaning *to sit*, to invite his friend to sit. But you may have noticed the use of **twa**, the objective form of *you*. This forms a phrase with the literal meaning *sit you*, which is roughly equivalent to the English *sit down* or *take a seat*.

Chapter Seven: Dialogue 2

Just like the word *drink* in English, the word **bwar** is used both as a noun (to mean *a drink*, as in a beverage) and as a verb (*to drink*). So it's entirely possible to **bwar enn bwar**, or *drink a drink*. In this case, though, Andrew uses the future marker, **pou**, to ask John what he *will* drink.

John: Mwa, mo pou pran enn kafe, silteple.

Me, I'll take a coffee, please.

We are already familiar with the concept of *taking* a drink, from the previous dialogue, but this sentence also introduces the word for please, **silteple**. This is the informal version of the word *please*, used because John and Andrew know each other. If they were talking in a more formal manner, they would use the formal version, **silvouple**.

Andrew: OK, atann enn kou. Mo pou komann bann kafe-la.

OK, wait a moment. I'll go and order the coffees.

In Creole, **atann**, the verb *to wait*, has only one form, so it is the same regardless of where it appears in a sentence. Andrew uses this verb with **enn kou** – which we learned earlier means *a little* or, in this context, *a moment* – to tell John to hang on whilst he orders the drinks. The short form **komann**, from another new verb, **komande**, meaning *to place an order*, is used to achieve this.

John: Pran enn pou Sarah ousi. Li pou vinn zwenn nou biento.

Take one for Sarah as well. She is coming to meet us soon.

Although the word **ousi** means *also*, it can also be used for all sorts of similar meanings. In this case it is used to signify *as well*.

John uses the word **biento**, meaning *soon*, to give Andrew an idea of when Sarah will arrive.

Andrew: Abon! Mo pa rapel dernie fwa ki mo ti trouv li.

Oh really! I don't remember the last time I saw her.

Abon is one of those words that doesn't really have an English equivalent. It is a kind of exclamation, and can be used any time you might say something like *really?*

John: Wi, mo kone. Mo ti zwenn li fek-la. Mo ti dir li bizin vini pou pran kafe ar nou.

Yes, I know. I met her just now. I told her she had to come for coffee with us.

Fek-la is a fabulous little construction. Its literal meaning is *the just*, but it is used to mean *just now*.

Andrew: Mari top. OK, mo pou pran trwa alor. [leaving]

That's great. OK, I will take three then.

Chapter Seven: Dialogue 2

As you can see from the translation, Andrew tells John that he is going to *take* three coffees, whereas we would be more familiar, in English, with him going to *get* three coffees.

Hopefully, by now, you will be starting to get a feel for this difference between the two languages in terms of *taking* something rather than *getting* or *having* it.

Sarah: Alo John.

Hello John.

Alo, derived from *hello*, is used in a similar way to its English counterpart. Greetings such as **bonzour** are used more often, however.

John: Hey Sarah. Glad you could make it. Mo finn komann enn kafe pou twa. Korek sa?

Hey Sarah. Glad you could make it. I have ordered you a coffee. Is that OK?

As before, John demonstrates how Creole sits happily alongside other languages. He then tells Sarah that he has ordered her a coffee, using the past marker, **finn**, to make the verb **komande** a past action.

Sarah: Wi, mari bon sa. Kot Andrew ete?

Yes, that's great. Where's Andrew?

Have a look at the placement of the word **sa**, meaning *that*. As you can see, it appears after the thing describing it. A direct translation of this sentence would read *great that*. This is quite normal in Creole.

Sometimes a word like **sa** will appear at the start of a sentence; other times it will appear at the very end. Something you are going to notice over time is that you will just start to know where to place words like these, without really knowing how you know. This is all part of the process of allowing Creole to become natural to you.

John: Li'nn al pran bann kafe-la. Get li laba, li pe vini aster-la.

He has gone for the drinks. Look he's over there, he's coming now.

We first came across the verb **gete**, meaning *to look (at)*, right back in chapter one. John uses the short form **get** to tell Sarah where Andrew is.

Andrew: Hi Sarah. How are you?

Sarah: I'm good thank you, me si to anvi nou kapav koz Kreol. Mo kapav konpran si to koz dousman.

I'm good thank you, but if you want we can talk Creole. I can understand if you talk slowly.

This new word, **dousman**, is really handy for anyone learning Creole, especially when it is used

Chapter Seven: Dialogue 2

in conjunction with the verb **koze**, *to speak*. In Mauritius, people will often speak very fast and will sometimes only partially pronounce words. So, whilst you are learning, it will be very handy for you to be able to ask people to **koz dousman**, *speak slowly*.

Andrew: Eh? John, to pa ti dir mwa ki li kapav koz Kreol! Kan to ti aprann sa?

Eh? John, you didn't tell me that she could speak Creole! When did you learn that?

Sarah: Mo pe aprann depi twa mwa.

I have been learning for three months.

John: Ki to pans, Andrew? Li koz bien, non? Apre zis enn-de mwa!

What do you think, Andrew? She speaks well, doesn't she? After just a few months!

Two handy little words are introduced here: **zis**, meaning *just*, and **enn-de**, meaning *a few*. All of these little words are really going to help you to develop a conversational ability in Creole.

Andrew: Serye sa! Li koz mari bien.

That's serious! She speaks great.

Serye is another one of those odd words with multiple applications in Creole but with a literal meaning that doesn't really work in English. The direct translation is *seriously*, but an equivalent in English might be better found in words like *great*, *cool*, *really good* or even *interesting*.

Sarah: Mersi! Mo pe seye!

Thanks! I am trying!

This dialogue ends with a couple more useful words for our growing list of vocabulary: the verb **seye**, meaning *to try*, and **mersi**, meaning *thank you*.

Chapter seven pop quiz

Congratulations – you have made it to your final pop quiz!

The great news is that by now you will be in possession of enough vocabulary and know enough about the structure of Creole to really begin enjoying conversing in the language. But, before you are let loose, there is one last challenge to face. Can you provide translations between Creole and English, as required, for the following sentences?

1. *Where are you going?*
2. *I see the dogs.*
3. *Where were you yesterday?*
4. *I will come with you tomorrow, if you like.*
5. *I have been here since 11.30am.*
6. ***Ti ena enn garson ki ti pe aprann koz Kreol.***
7. ***Li pou gagn fre demin.***
8. ***Zot ti pe atann devan loto so kamarad.***
9. ***Mo esper mo pou kapav fini li avan sa wikenn-la.***
10. ***Mo ti pans zot pou vinn isi taler.***

Chapter seven pop quiz answers

1. *Where are you going?*
Kot to pe ale? ✓
2. *I see the dogs.*
Mo trouv bann lisien. ✓
3. *Where were you yesterday?*
Kot to ti ete yer? ✓
4. *I will come with you tomorrow, if you like.*
Mo ava vinn ar twa demin, si to anvi. ✓
5. *I have been here since 11.30am.*
Mo ti isi depi onz-er-edmi gramatin. ✓
6. **Ti ena enn garson ki ti pe aprann koz Kreol.**
There was a boy who was learning to speak Creole. ✓
7. **Li pou gagn fre demin.**
He/she/it is going to be cold tomorrow. ✓
8. **Zot ti pe atann devan loto so kamarad.**
They were waiting in front of their friend's car. ✓
9. **Mo esper mo pou kapav fini li avan sa wikenn-la.**
I hope I will be able to finish it before this weekend. ✓
10. **Mo ti pans zot pou vinn isi taler.**
I thought they were going to come here later. ✓

A Story (in Creole)

The Dog Who Could Sing

Although you may not believe it now, provided you have successfully absorbed the information in all the previous chapters (which may take a couple of re-reads), you will have gained enough knowledge of the Creole language to have a basic conversation about pretty much any subject you want.

Certainly you will need to add to your library of vocabulary (which is where the word list found in part two of this book will come into its own) but you might surprise yourself with how much you can already understand.

To illustrate this point, let's have a look at a silly story, called 'The Dog Who Could Sing', which I originally wrote to read with my own children while we learned Creole together.

Try to read through the story yourself, and see how much you can understand. Don't worry about understanding every word – that will come later. Instead just concentrate on understanding the gist of the story as a whole.

Sa lisien ki ti kapav sante

Kan mo ti tipti, mo ti pe res pre kot enn ti garson ki ti ena enn lisien ki ti kapav sante!

Lisien-la ti apel Jack, e biensir li pa ti kapav sante vreman. Me li ti kapav fer enn tapaz wadire li pe sante, e pou nou bann zanfan, sa ti plis ki sifizan. Nou ti panse ki sa li inkwayab!

Enn zour, kan nou ti pe zwe avek Jack, nou finn mazine ki kikfwa nou kapav fer enn spektak! Alor, nou ti fabrik enn lestrad avek bwat karton, e nou ti vann bann tiket avek tou nou kamarad ek lafami.

Me, ler zour spektak-la finn arive, lisien Jack ti deside ki li pa anvi sante. Malgre tou seki nou ti seye, li pa ti fer enn son. Nou ti fini vann tou tiket, dimounn ti pe atann ki spektak-la koumanse, e nou ti perdi nou star!

'Ki nou pou fer?' mo kamarad finn dir. Li ti pe trakase ki nou bizin kennsel spektak-la.

'Atann enn ti moman,' mo'nn dir vit-vit, 'mo pe mazine.'

Malgre tou mo bann zefor, mo pa ti pe reisi mazinn nanye. Mo ti pre pou dakor ek mo kamarad, ki nou bizin kennsel, kan mo'nn gagn enn lide. Petet kikenn kapav pretann limem Jack.

'Enn top lide,' li'nn dir mwa, 'me aköz to'nn gagn lide-la, sa kikenn-la bizin tomem sa!'

Alor, de-trwa minit apre, mo'nn debark katpat lor lestrad-la e mo finn pretann ki mo enn lisien ki kapav sante. Telman tou dimounn ti pe extra/mari riye, mo'nn panse ki zame zot pou arete.

A Story (in Creole)

Spektak-la ti enn gran sikse. Toulezour depi sa zour-la, dimounn kriye mwa Jack, sa lot lisien ki kapav sante!

So, how did you get on? There was a lot to take in, but we have covered everything contained in this story over the previous chapters. To fully understand the text, though, let's break the story down, with a translation in English.

Sa lisien ki ti kapav sante.

The dog who could sing.

Kan mo ti tipti, mo ti pe res pre kot enn ti garson ki ti ena enn lisien ki ti kapav sante!

When I was small, I lived near a boy who had a dog that could sing!

Lisien-la ti apel Jack, e biensir li pa ti kapav sante vreman. Me li ti kapav fer enn tapaz wadire li pe sante, e pou nou bann zanfan, sa ti plis ki sifizan. Nou ti panse ki sa li inkrwayab!

The dog was called Jack, and of course he couldn't really sing. But he could make a noise a bit like singing, and for us children that was more than enough. We thought it was incredible!

Enn zour, kan nou ti pe zwe avek Jack, nou finn mazine ki kikfwa nou kapav fer enn spektak! Alor, nou ti fabrik enn lestrad avek bwat karton, e nou ti vann bann tiket avek tou nou kamarad ek lafami.

One day, while we were playing with Jack, we decided to put on a show. So, we made a stage out of cardboard boxes and sold tickets to all our friends and family.

Me, ler zour spektak-la finn arive, lisien Jack ti deside ki li pa anvè sante. Malgre tou seki nou ti seye, li pa ti fer enn son. Nou ti fini vann tou tiket, dimounn ti pe atann ki spektak-la koumanse, e nou ti perdi nou star!

But, on the day of the show, Jack the dog decided he didn't want to sing. No matter what we tried, he wouldn't make a sound. We had sold all the tickets, everyone was waiting for the show to start, and we lost our star!

'Ki nou pou fer?' mo kamarad finn dir. Li ti pe trakase ki nou bizin kennsel spektak-la.

'What are we going to do?' said my friend. He was worrying that we would have to cancel the show.

'Atann enn ti moman,' mo'nn dir vit-vit, 'mo pe mazine.'

'Wait a moment,' I said impatiently, 'I'm thinking.'

A Story (in Creole)

Malgre tou mo bann zefor, mo pa ti pe reisi mazinn nanye. Mo ti pre pou dakor ek mo kamarad, ki nou bizin kennsel, kan mo'nn gagn enn lide. Petet kikenn kapav pretann limem Jack.

No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't think of anything. I was about to agree with my friend, that we needed to cancel, when I had an idea. Perhaps someone could just pretend to be Jack.

'Enn top lide,' li'nn dir mwa, 'me aköz to'nn gagn lide-la, sa kikenn-la bizin tomem sa!'

'A great idea,' said my friend, 'but since it was your idea, that someone should be you!'

Alor, de-trwa minit apre, mo'nn debark katpat lor lestrad-la e mo finn pretann ki mo enn lisien ki kapav sante. Telman tou dimounn ti pe extra/mari riye, mo'nn panse ki zame zot pou arete.

And so, a few minutes later, I walked onto the stage on my hands and feet and pretended to be a dog that could sing. Everyone laughed so much, I thought they would never stop.

Spektak-la ti enn gran sikse. Toulezour depi sa zour-la, dimounn kriye mwa Jack, sa lot lisien ki kapav sante!

The show was a great success. Every day since that day people have been calling me Jack, that other dog who could sing.

So, now you have read both the Creole and English versions of the story, go back and read through the story again.

Remember, there will often not be an exact way to translate every sentence between English and Creole, so try and look at how each sentence was written, and spot where the constructions differ in each language.

And Finally

And Finally

We have reached the end of this book, but this is just the start of your journey with this colourful language.

Learning a new language can be confusing at the best of times. The main reason is that, although you may have started to *speak* a little Creole, you are probably still *thinking* in English. This means having to mentally translate everything back and forth between the two languages every time you want to communicate.

To really develop your conversational ability, try not to think of Creole as English with different words. Instead try to get into the habit as soon as possible of keeping each language in its native form. Remember, once you have a grasp of the simple structure of Creole, the rest is just about adding new words to your vocabulary.

Learning just a few new words a day will help you to build an extensive list before you know it. After all, the only way to learn Creole is to speak Creole. And so, I want to leave you with one of the most important sentences you will ever learn in Creole.

Kouma mo dir _____ an Kreol? – How do I say _____ in Creole?

The gap is for you to fill. This book has given you enough knowledge to get out there and start talking, but there is still so much to learn. The real fun is only just about to start. Take this sentence, and this book, and get out there to fill the gaps yourself.

The last phrase I'm going to teach you is this one: ***Bon sans!*** It means *good luck*, and comes with my best wishes for your future learning.

Part Two: English–Kreol Vocabulary List

English	Kreol
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Verbs

able (to be)	kapav
accept	aksepté, aksept
accompany	akonpagné, akonpagn
adjust	azisté, azist
admire	admire, admir
advise (offer council)	konseye, konsey
afraid (to be)	gagn per
allow	permet
annoy	agase, agas
answer	reponn
appear	aparet or paret
apply	aplike, aplik
approach	koste
assure	asire, asir
bathe	lave, lav
be (relating to location)	ete
beat	bate, bat
become	devini or vini
begin	koumanse, koumans
bite	morde, mord
blame	blame, blam
blow	soufle
boast	flate, flat
boil	bwi
boost	stimile, stimil
bored (to be)	agase, agas
borrow	anprinte, anprint
bother	amerde, amerd
bow	inkline, inklin
breathe	repire, respir
bring	amene, amen
broken	kase, kas
brush	brose, bros
build	aranze, aranz or ranze, ranz
burn	brile, bril
burst	eklate, eklat
bury	antere, anter
can (to be able)	kapav
cancel	kensel

English	Kreol
---------	-------

caress	karese, karess
carry	sarye
carve	grave, grav
catch	atrape, atrap or maye, may
chain	ansene, ansenn
change	sanze, sanz
chase	pouse, pous
cheat	frode, frod or trike, trik
chew	masse, mass or moule, mou
choose	swazir
circle	anserkle
claim	reklame, reklam
classify	klasifie
clean	netwaye, netway
clear	efase, efas
climb	grinpe, grinp
close	ferme, ferm
collapse	tonbe, tom
collect	kolekte
collide	tape, tap
come	vini
complain	plengne, plengn
complete	konplete, konplet
compress	konpresse, konpress
concern	konserne, konsern
confuse	abriti
congratulate	felisite, felisit
consent	aksepté, aksept
consult	konsilte
control	kontrole, kontrol
cook	kwi
copy	kopie
correct	korize, koriz
cough	touse, tous
count	konte, kont
cover	kouver
crawl	ranpe, ranp
create	kree
crouch	asize lor lipie
crumple	frwase, frwas
crush	frwase, frwas or kraze, kraz

English	Kreol
---------	-------

cry	plore, plor
cut	koupe, koup
damage	andomaze, andomaz
dance	danse, dans
dare	oze, oz
deal (with)	gagn zafer avek
deceive	anbete, anbet
decide	deside, desid
declare	deklare, deklar
decorate	dekore, dekor
decrease	diminie
defend	defann
dehydrate	dezidrate, dezidrat
delete	efase, efas
deliver	livre
demonstrate	demontre or montre
depend	depann
descend	desann
desire	desire, desir
despise	meprize, mepriz
destroy	touye, touy
develop	devlope, develop
die	mor
differ	ki diferan ar
dig	fouye, fouy
digest	dizere, dizer
direct	donn direksion
disagree	pa dakor
disappear	disparet
discuss	diskite, diskit
dislike	pa kontan
disperse	disperse, dispers or fane, fann
dispute	diskite, diskit
distribute	distribie
dive	plonze, plonz
divide	divize, diviz
do	fer
drag	tire, tir
draw	desine, desinn
dream	reve, rev
dress (oneself)	abiye, abiy
dribble	reye, rey

English	Kreol
---------	-------

drink	bwar
drip	koule, koul
drive	kondire, kondir
drool	bave, bav
drop	large, larg
drop (allow to fall)	lestonbe
dry	fer sek or met sek
eat	manze, manz
educate	edike, edik
eject	ezeke
embarrass	anbarase, anbaras
embrace	anbrase, anbras
encourage	ankouraze, ankouraz
enter	rantre, rant
escape	sove, sov
exaggerate	exazere, exazer
exchange	esanze, esanz
exist	existe, exist
expect	atann
experience	fer lexpéryans
explode	eklate, eklat or eksploze, exploz
express	exprime, exprim
fall (down)	tonbe, tom
fish	lapes
forget	bliye
fun (to have)	fer gamat
get	gagne, gagn
give	donne, donn
go	ale, al
grasp	trape, trap
greet	salie
grind	kraze, kraz
grip	sezi
guard (to look after)	veye, vey
hide	kasiet
hope	espere, esper
irritate	agase, agas
join	zwenn
jump	sote, sot
justify	zistifie
keep	garde, gard
kiss	anbrase, anbras or ba

English	Kreol
---------	-------

kneel (down)	azenou
knock	tape, tap
know	kone, konn
leak	koule, koul
lift (up)	leve, lev
magnify	grosi
maintain	mintenir
make	fabrike, fabric or fer
manage	dirize, diriz
mark	marke, mark
mark (check accuracy)	korize, koriz
marry	marye
mean (to signify)	sinifie, sinifi
measure	mezire, mezir
meet	zwenn
memorise	memorize, memoriz
mention	mansione, mansionn
merge	zwenn
migrate	emigre
mind	anbarase, anbaras
mingle	melanze avek
minimise	minimize, minimiz
miss (to lack)	manke, mank
miss (to omit)	rate, rat
misunderstand	mal konpran or tronpe, tronp
mix	melanze, melanz
mix up	briye
moan	plengne, plengn
motivate	motive, motiv
mould	moule, moul
mount	monte lor
move	bouze, bouz
move (displace)	deplase, deplas
move (move forward)	avanse, avans
muddle	anbrouye
multiply	miltipliye, miltipliy
murmur	mirmire, mirmir
muster	rasanble, rasanbl
mutter	grogne, grogn
name	apele, apel

English	Kreol
---------	-------

navigate	navige
need	bizin
neglect	neglize, neglig
nip	pinse, pins
note	note, not
notice	remarque, remark
notify	notifie
obey	obeir
oblige	oblize, obliz
observe	obzerve, observ
obstruct	bloke, blok
obtain	gagne, gagn
occupy	okipe, okip
occur	arive, ariv
offend	ofanse, ofans
offer	done, donn
operate	opere, oper
oppose	opoze, opoz
organise	organize, organiz
overdo	exazere, exazer
overtake	depasse, depass
own	posede, posed
pacify	kalme
pack	anbale, anbal or ranpli
paint	pintire, pintir
pant	respire avek difikilte
paralyse	paralize, paraliz
pardon	pardone, pardonn
pardon (to excuse)	exkize, exkiz
part	separe, separ
participate	partisipe, partisip
pass	pase, pass
pat	tape, tap
pay	peye, pey
peek	louke, louk
peel	plise, plis
peep	louke, louk
persevere	persevere
persuade	konvink
pick	ramase, ramas
pick up	ramase, ramas
pierce	perse, pers
plant	plante, plant

English	Kreol
---------	-------

play	zwe
pluck	kase, kas
polish	poli
pour	vide, vid
pray	priye
precede	presede, presed
precipitate	presipite, presipit
precise	presize, presiz
prepare	prepare, prepar
prescribe	preskrir
preserve	preserve, preserv
pretend	fer samblan
prevent	prevenir
produce	prodir
progress	progrese, progres
prohibit	interdi
promise	promet
protect	proteze, protez
protest	proteste, protest
prove	prouve, prouv
provide	fourni
provoke	agase, agas
pull	rise, ris or tire, tir
push	pouse, pous
put	mete, met
quantify	mizire, mizir
quarrel	lager
query	demann
quit	kite, kit
raze	raze, raz
reach (a destination)	arive, ariv
read	lir
ready	pare
realise	realize, realiz
recall	rapel
receive	resevwar
recharge	resarze
reclaim	reklame, reklam
recline	inkline, inklin
recognise	rekonet
recommend	rekomande, rekomand
record	anrezistre, anrezistr

English	Kreol
---------	-------

recover	degaze
reduce	diminie
reflect	reflekte, reflekt
refuse	refize, refiz
regret	regrete, regret
relax	dekontrakte
remain	reste, rest
remember	rapel
remove	tire, tir
rent	lwe
repair	repare, repar
repeat	repete, repet
resemble	resanble, resanbl
rest	repoze, repoz
restrain	anpese, anpes
return	retourne, retourn
reward	rekompanse, rekompans
rinse	rinse, rins
rip	desire, desir
rotate	pivote
rub	frote, frot
ruin	rwine, rwin
run	galoupe, galoup
rush	degaze, degaz
save	sape, sap
save (to economise)	ekonomize, ekonomiz
say	dir
scare	fer per
scratch	grate, grat
seal	sele
search	rode, rod
see	trouve, trouv
seek	rode, rod
seem	paret
seize	sezi
sell	vande, vann
send	anvwaye, anvway or avoye, avoy
separate	separe, separ
settle	etabli
sew	koud
shake	sakouye, sakouy

English	Kreol
---------	-------

share	partaze, partaz
sharpen	fite, fit
shatter	kase, kass
shave	raze, raz
shine	briye
shout	kriye, kriy
show	montre
shut	ferme
sing	sante, sant
sit	asize, asiz
slap	kalot
sleep	dormi
slide	glise, glis
smile	sourir
sneeze	terne
snif	santi
solve	rezoud
sow	seme
sparkle	briye or glase
speak	koze, koz
specify	spesifie
spell	eple
spend	depanse, depans
spit (out)	crase, cras
split	fann
spoil	gate, gat
spray	spre
spread	propaze, propaz
squat	akroupi
stab	pwagnarde, pwagnard
stand	deboute, debout
start	koumanse, koumans
stick	kole, kol
stink	santi pi
stir	deleye, deley
stop	arete, aret
straighten	drese, dres or fer vin drwat
stroll	mars-marse
submerge	sibmerze
suck	souse, sous
suggest	sigzere, sigzer
surround	antoure, entour

English	Kreol
---------	-------

swallow	avale, aval
sweat	transpire, transpir
sweep	balie
swim	naze, naz
swing	balanse, balans
take	pran
taste	goute, gout
teach	ansegne, ansegn
tease	sikane, sikann or takine, takinn
tell	dir
test	teste, test
thank	remersie
think	panse, pans
threaten	menase, menas
throw	avoye, avoy or lanse, lans
tick	met enn rayt
tire	fatige, fatig
tired (to become)	touye, touy
touch	touse, tous
translate	tradir
transplant	transplante, transplant
travel	vwayaze, vwayaz
tremble	tranble
trick	trike
tumble	tonbe, tom
turn	tourne, tourn
uncover	dekouver
understand	konpran
unite	inir
untie	defer
use	servi
utter	prononse, pronons
verify	verifie
vibrate	vibre
visit	vizite, vizit
vomit	vomi
wait	atann
wait (for)	espere, esper
wake	leve, lev
walk	marse, mars
wander	chake

English	Kreol
---------	-------

want	anvi
warn	averti
wash	lave, lav
watch	gete, get
wear	mete, met
weep	plore, plor
weigh	mezire, mezir or peze, pez
welcome	akeyir
whip	fwete, fwet
whisper	koz dousman or mirmire, mirmir
whistle	sifle
win	gagne, gagn
wipe	souyer
withdraw	tire, tir
work	travay
wrap	anbale, anbal
write	ekrir
yawn	baye

Numbers and counting

number	nimero or nonb
one	enn
two	de
three	trwa
four	kat
five	sink
six	sis
seven	set
eight	wit
nine	nef
ten	dis
eleven	onz
twelve	douz
thirteen	trez
fourteen	katorz
fifteen	kinz
sixteen	sez
seventeen	diset
eighteen	dizwit

English	Kreol
---------	-------

nineteen	diznef
twenty	vin
twenty-one	vint-e-enn
twenty-two	vennde
twenty-three	venntrwa
twenty-four	vennkata
twenty-five	vennsink
twenty-six	vennsis
twenty-seven	vennset
twenty-eight	vintwit
twenty-nine	vintnef
thirty	trant
forty	karannt
fifty	sinkant
sixty	swasant
seventy	swasanntdis
eighty	katrovin
ninety	katrovin-dis
one hundred	san
one thousand	mil
one million	enn milyon

first	premie
second	deziem
third	trwaziem
fourth	katiem
fifth	sinkiem
sixth	sisiem
seventh	setiem
eighth	witiem
ninth	nefiem
tenth	disiem

Quantities

amount	kantite
big	gro
equal	egal
even	egal or regilie
how (much/many)	komie
much	boukou
multiple	miltip

English	Kreol
---------	-------

numerous	boukou
quantity	kantite
quarter	enn kar
rate	tarif
size	latay
small	tipti

Time and date

Monday	Lindi
Tuesday	Mardi
Wednesday	Merkredi
Thursday	Zedi
Friday	Vandredi
Saturday	Samdi
Sunday	Dimans

wikenn	weekend
yesterday	yer

January	Zanvie
February	Fevriye
March	Mars
April	Avril
May	Me
June	Zwin
July	Zilie
August	Out
September	Septam
October	Oktob
November	Novam
December	Desam

month	mwa
monthly	mansiel

afternoon	lapremidi
afternoon (late)	tanto
anytime	ninport kan
before	avan
date	dat
dawn	lob

English	Kreol
---------	-------

day	zour
day (the)	lizour
early	boner
evening	aswar
immediately	deswit or toutswit
later	taler
long (time)	longtan
midnight	minwi
minute	minit
moment	letan or moman
morning	gramatin
night	lanwit
noon	midi
now	aster-la
nowadays	zordizour
often	souvan
once	enn sel fwa
recently	fek or resaman
soon	biento
time	ler
today	zordi
tomorrow	demin or dime
week	lasemenn
year	lane

People

anyone	ninport ki sann-la
aunt	matant
baby	baba
boy	garson
boyfriend	kopin or pwinter
brother	frer
brother-in-law	bofrer
child	zenfan
childhood	lafans
cousin	kouzin
daughter	tifi
daughter-in-law	belfi
father	papa
father-in-law	boper
female	femel

English	Kreol
---------	-------

fisherman	peser
girlfriend	kopinn
grandchild	ti-zanfan
grandfather	granper
grandmother	granmer
grandparents	granparan
grandson	ti-zanfan
husband	mari or misie
lady	madam
lady (young)	mamzel
male	mal
man	dimounn or zom
man (young)	zennzan
mister	misie
mother	mama
mother-in-law	belmer
nephew	neve
niece	nies
nobody	personn
nurse	ners
people	dimounn
person	dimounn
relative	fami
sister	ser
sister-in-law	belser
son	garson
son-in-law	zann
teenager	adolesan
teens	ladosans
uncle	tonton
wife	fam
woman	fam

Natural world

animal	zanimò
bird	zwazo
bull	toro
cat	sat
chicken	poul
cow	vas
dog	lisien
duck	kanar

English	Kreol
---------	-------

elephant	lelefan
fish	pwason
frog	grenouy
goat	kabri
mammal	mamifer
monkey	zako
mouse	souri
pig	koson
rabbit	lapin
rat	lera
shark	rekin
snake	serpan
tortoise	torti
whale	labalenn

ant	fourmi
bee	mous-dimiel
butterfly	papiyon
centipede	sanpie
insect	bebet
ladybird	poulbondie
mosquito	moustik
snail	kourpa
spider	laregne
worm	lever

branch	brans
bush	bwison
grass	lerb
plant	plant
tree	pie
weed	move lerb

summer	lete
winter	liver

breeze	labriz
cloud	niaz
cyclone	siklonn
dew	laroze
rain	lapli
rainy	lapli / lapli
snow	lanez

English	Kreol
---------	-------

storm	tanpet
thunderstorm	loraz
weather	klima
wind	divan

coral	koray
earth	later
gravity	gravite
moon	lalin
moon (full)	plenn (lin)
nature	lanatir
ocean	losean
sky	lesiel
sun	soley
universe	liniver
world	lemond
worldwide	mondial

The body

abdomen	abdomenn
ankle	sevi
arm	lebra
blood	disan
body	lecor
bone	lezo
brain	laservel or servo
breath	lesouf
cheek	lazou
chest	torax or tors
chin	manton
disease	maladi
dizziness	vertiz
dizzy	tourdi
ear	zorey
elbow	koud
eye	lizie
eyebrow	soursi
eyelash	sil
eyelid	popier
feet	lipie
finger	ledwa
gut	lintestin

English	Kreol
---------	-------

hair	seve
hammer	marto
hand	lame
head	latet
heart	leker
intestine	lintestin
jaw	lamaswar
kidney	lerin
knee	zenou
lips	lalev
liver	lefwa
lung	poumon
mind	lespri
moustache	moustas
mouth	labous
muscle	misk
neck	licou
nerve	ner
nose	nene
shoulder	zepol
skeleton	skelet
skin	lapo
stomach	lestoma
tendon	tandon
thigh	lakwis
throat	lagorz
thumb	pous
toe	ledwa lipie
tongue	lalang
tooth	ledan
vein	laven
voice	lavwa
waist	latay
wrist	pwagne

Around the house

bathroom	sal-debin
bed sheets	dra
bedroom	lasam
kitchen	lakwizinn
roof	tw
room	lasam

English	Kreol
---------	-------

sitting room	salon
toilet	twalet
wall	miray
wash room	twalet
window	lafnet
yard/courtyard	lakour

basket	panie
bath	bin
bed	lili
bin	poubel
binoculars	zime
blanket	molton
book	liv
bottle	boutey
bowl	bol
box	bwat
bucket	seo
bulb	glob
chair	sez
clock	revey
cushion	kousin
door	laport
drain	drin
drawer	tirwar
envelope	lanvlop
glass	ver
glasses/spectacles	linet
handle	pwagne
key	lakle
knife	kouto
mirror	laglas or mirwar
oven	four
pane (window)	karo vit
pillow	lorye
pin	pinn
pin (safety)	zepeng
plug	pleg
pool	pisinn
pot (flower)	vaz
purse	portmone
refrigerator	frizider
scissors	sizo

English	Kreol
---------	-------

screw	vis
screwdriver	tournavis
shower	dous
sink	levie
spade	lapel
spoon	kouyer
stairs	leskalie
suitcase	valiz
table	latab
telephone	telefonn
television	televizion
toilet	twalet
towel	serviet
tweezers	pins
umbrella	parasol
wardrobe	larmwar
wash basin	lavabo
watch (wrist)	mont
wire	difil

Food and drink

bread	dipin
cake	gato
cheese	fromaz
dessert	deser
egg	dizef
olive	zoliv
omelette	omlet
onion	zwayon
pepper	dipwav
potato	pomdeter
rice	diri
soup	lasoup
tomato	tomat
vanilla	lavani

apple	pom
banana	banann
grape	rezin
melon	melon
orange	zoranz

English	Kreol
---------	-------

peach	pes
pineapple	zanana
watermelon	melondo

beer	labier
coffee	kafe
juice	zi
milk	dile
tea	dite
water	delo
wine	divin

Clothes

belt	sintir
button	bouton
coat	palto
dress	rob
glove	legan
pocket	poz
pyjamas	pizama
shirt	semiz
shoe	soulie
skirt	zip
sock	soset
sweater	poulover or triko
trousers	pantalon

Colours

colour	kouler
--------	--------

black	nwar
blue	ble
brown	maron
green	ver
grey	gri
orange	zoranz
pink	roz
purple	violet
red	rouz
white	blan

English	Kreol
---------	-------

yellow	zonn
--------	------

Finding your way

left	gos
near	pre
north	lenor
outdoor	an-plener
outside	deor
right	drwat
south	lesid
there	la
underneath	anba
west	lwes

Places

gate	lantre
ground	later
hospital	lopital
market	bazar
mountain	montagn
over	lor
overseas	lot pei
place	plas
sea	lamer
space	lespas
town	lavit
village	vilaz

Measurements

centimetre	santimet
foot	pie
inch	pous
kilometre	kilomet
metre	met
mile	mil
millimetre	milimet

English	Kreol
---------	-------

Other general vocabulary

ability	kapasite
absence	absans or labsans
absent	absan
absolutely	absoliman
accident	aksidan
advantage	lavantaz
advice	konsey
agree	dakor
agreement	lakor
air	ler
alcohol	lalkol
alike	parey
all	tou
alone	tousel
already	deza
always	touzour
amazement	etonnman
amusement	lamizman
angle	lang
angry	ankoler
answer	repons
anything	ninport ki zafer
appointment	randevou
approval	lakor
bad	move
bag	sak
balance	balans
basin	kivet
beautiful	zoli
because	akoz or parski
behaviour	konportman
belief	krwayans
bend	kontour
benefit	lavantaz
better	meyer
bicycle	bisiklet
birth	nesans
blame	blam
blind	aveg
blindness	avegleman
blow	kou

English	Kreol
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blur	flou
boat	bato
boss	patron
brick	blok
bridge	pon
bright	vif
brush	bro
burst	eklatman
business	bizness
but	me
cane	kann
cap	kap or kasket
card	kart
careful	fer attention
careless	foupamal
cast	kast
castle	sato
caution	prekasion
cautious	pridan
cave	lakav
celebration	selebrasion
centre	sant
chain	lasenn
chalk	lakre
chance	sans
charm	sarm
chase	lasas
cheap	bomarse
cheater	voler
chemical	simik
choice	swa
church	legliz
circle	serk
city	site
claim	reklamation
clean	prop
clear	kler
climate	klima
close (to someone)	proz avec
cloth	latwal
clumsy	maladrwa
cold	fre
cold (a)	lagrip

English	Kreol
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complaint	konplint
completely	konpletman
confuse	konfizion
connection	koneksion
conscious	konsian
cook (a)	kwizinie
cord	lakord
correct	exakt
correction	koreksion
couple	koup
cover	kouvertir
crazy	fou
creation	kreasion
credit	kredi or merit
crime	krim
crowd	lafoul
cruel	kriel
cup	tas
current	kouran
curve	kontour
damage	domaz
damp	mwat or imid
dance	dans
danger	danze
dangerous	danzere
dark	nwar
dead	mor
deaf	sourd
death	lamor
debt	det
decision	desizion
decoration	dekorasion
decorative	dekoratif
deeply	profondeman
defence	defans
defensive	defansi
degree	degre
deliberately	expresman
delicate	frazil
delicious	bon
delivery	livrezon
demonstration	demonstrasion
dependency	dependans

English	Kreol
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dependent	dependan
deposit	depo or depozit
desire	dezir
detail	deta
development	devlopman
difference	diferans
different	diferan
difficult	difisil
difficulty	difikilte
direct	direk
directly	direkteman
dirt	salte
dirty	sal
disadvantage	dezavantaz
discovery	dekouver or trouvay
discussion	diskision
disorder	dezord
disorderly	an dezord
distance	distans
distant	distan or lwin
distribution	distribision
doctor	dokter
doubt	dout
drawing	desin
dream	rev
drink (a)	bwason
drop	gout
dry	sek
duplicate	kopi
each	sak
easily	fasilman
easy	fasil
economical	ekonomik
economy	lekonomi
edge	bor or rebor
education	ledikasion
effect	lefe
effective	efektif
effectiveness	lefikasite
electric	elektrik
electrician	elektrisien
electricity	kouran
embarrassment	lanbara

English	Kreol
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encouragement	lankourazman
end	lafin
engine	moter
English	Angle
enough	ase
environment	lanvironnman
equipment	lekipman
error	erer
event	evennman
ever	dezavantaz
every	sak
evidence	prev
exact	exak
exaggeration	exazeration
example	lexanp
except	exsepte
exception	exsepsion
excess	anplis
exchange	esanz
existence	lexistans
exit	sorti
expensive	ser
extremely	extra or mari
fashion	lamod
fishing	lapes
flight	vol
game	zwe
gift	kado
girl	tifi
giver	doner
gold	lor
golden	dore
good	bon
great	gran or top
grief	sagrin
how	kouma
however	selman
hunger	fin
hungry	gagn fin
jealous	zalou
jealousy	zalouzi
journey	vwayaz
just	zis

English	Kreol
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kick	kout or pie
kind	bon
knot	ne
knowledge	konesans
letter	let
lie	manti
like (this or that)	kouma
machine	masinn
mail	kourye
main	prinsipal
mainly	prinsipalman
marriage	maryaz
married	marye
may (be able to)	kapav
maybe	kitfwa
mean	vedir
meaning	sinifikasyon
meat	laviann
medicine	medsinn
meeting	reunion
mercy	pitie
mess	dezord
message	mesaz
method	metod
middle	milie
mile	mil
mine	pou mwa
miniature	miniatir
minimum	minimum
miserable	malere or miserab
mistake	fot
most	laplipar
mostly	sirtou
motion	mouvman
motorbike	moto
mouldy	mwazi
mouldy (to go)	gagn mwazi
movement	mouvman
muddle	dezord
music	lamizik
must	bizin or nesaser or obligatwar
my	mo bann

English	Kreol
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myself	momem or mwa
name	nom
narrow	mins or retresi or sere
natural	natirel
naturally	natirelman
naughty	move
neat	an-ord or prop
neatly	an-ord
necessary	neseser
necessity	nesesite
need	lebezwin
negative	negatif
nerve (courage)	kouraz
nerves	trak
nervous	nerve
new	nef or nouvo
newspaper	zournal
next	prosin or swivan
nice	agreab or bon or zoli
no	non
noise	tapaz
noisy	ki fer tapaz
none	okenn
nonsense	ninport
normal	normal
nostril	trou-nene
nothing	nanye
nuisance	nwizans
numb	angourdi
nutrient	aliman nitritif
object	kiksoz or l'obze
observation	lobzervation
obstacle	obstak
obstruction	obstriksion
obvious	evidan
occasion	lokazion
odd	bizar
odour	loder
off (switch)	tengn
offence	ofans
offensive	ofansif
offer	lof or of
office	biro

English	Kreol
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official	ofisiel
officially	ofisielman
oil	delwil
old	vie
on	lor
oneself	limem
only	zis
open	ouver
opening	ouvertir
openly	ouvertman
opportunity	loportinite
opposite (of)	kontrer
option	opsion
or	ouswa or swa
ordinary	ordiner
organisation	lorganizasion
organiser	organizateur
original	orizinal
other	lot
our	nou or pou nou
out	deor
outsider	etranze
oval	oval
owe	dwa
owner	proprieter
oxygen	loxizenn
packet	pake
page	paz
pain	douler
painful	penib
paint	lapintir
pair	per
pale	pal
panel	pano
panic	panik
paper	papie
paradise	paradi
paragraph	paragraf
parallel	paralel
parent	paran
part	par
part (of)	an parti
particular	partikilie

English	Kreol
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partition	klwazon or partision
party	fet
passage	pasaz
passenger	pasaze
passport	paspor
past	lepase
path	santie or semin or sime
patience	patians
pattern	patern
pause	poz or silans
pavement	trotwar
paw	lapat
payment	peyman
peace	lape
peaceful	kalm or trankil
pear	pwar
pedestrian	pieton
peg	pins
pen	plim
pencil	kreyon
pencil case	plimie
pencil sharpener	fitwar
perfect	parfe
perfume	parfime
perhaps	kapav
pester	manz lavi
phone (mobile)	portab
photo	foto
picture	tablo
piece	morso
pile	enn ta
pity	pitie
plan	plan
plane	avion
plaster	plak
plastic	plastik
plate	pla
platform	lestrad
pleasant	agreab
please (formal)	silvouple
please (informal)	silteple
pleasure	plezir
pliers	pins

English	Kreol
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point	pwin
poison	pwazon
pole	polone
police	lapolis
poor	pov
portion	porsion
position	pozision
possession	posesion
possible	posib
post	lapos
post (job role)	(plas) travay
powder	lapoud
power	pouvwar
praise	eloz
prayer	lapriyer
precise	presi
preparation	preparasion
prescription	lordonans
presence	prezans
present (timeframe)	prezan
press	lapres
price	pri
pride	fierte
priority	priorite
private	prive
problem	problem
procedure	prosedir
process	prosesis
profit	profi
property	propriete
protection	proteksion
public	piblik
publicity	piblisite or reklam
punch	koudpwin
pure	pir
purity	pirte
purple	mov
purpose	lintansion
qualification	kalifikasion
quality	kalite
quarrel	bagar
question	kestion
queue	lake

English	Kreol
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quick	rapid
quickly	vit
quiet	trankil
race	lekours
radio	radio
rag	sinfon
rage	laraz
rather (than)	plito
raw	kri
razor	razwar
reaction	reaksion
reason	la rezon
reasoning	rezonnman
receipt	resi
recent	resan
recovery	retablisman
reform	reform
regular	regilie
release	liberasion
religion	relizion
request	reket
respect	respe
respectable	respektab
responsible	responsab
rhythm	ritm
rib	kot
rich	ris
ring	bag
river	larivier
riverbank	bor larivier
road	semin or sime
rock	ros
rope	lakord
rough	brouyon
round	ron
rubbish	salte
rude	malelve
ruin	larwinn
rust	larouy
sad	tris
safety	sekirite
salt	disel
same	parey

English	Kreol
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sand	disab
sauce	lasos
school	lekol
science	sians
screen	lekran
seat	siez
secret	sekre
selection	seleksion
self	mwa
serious	serye
shame	laont
shape	form
sharp	fite
shelf	letazer
shell	koki
shiny	briyan
shiver	frison
shock	sok
shop	laboutik
short	kourt
sick	malad
sickness	maladi
side	kote
sieve	taminn
sigh	soupir
sign	sign
signature	signatir
silence	silans
silent	trankil
silver	larzan
simple	simp
sincere	sinser
sincerity	sinserite
sip	ti-gorze
slice	trans
slim	mins
slope	lapant
slow	dousman
smart	elegan
smell	loder
smoke	lafime
smooth	lis
soap	savon

English	Kreol
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soft	mol or mou
sole	semel
solid	solid
soluble	solib
something	zafer
song	sante
sort	espes
soul	lespri
sound	son
sour	eg
special	spesial
speech	diskour
spirit	lespri
sponge	leponz
sport	spor
spot	tas
spring	printan
square	kare
star	zetwal
steam	vaper
steel	lasie
step	pa
sticky	kolan
stiff	red
still	ankor
stone	ros
story	zistwar
straight	drwat
strange	etranz
stranger	etranze
street	lari
strong	for
structure	striktir
student	etidian
stupid	kouyon
substance	sibstans
sudden	enn kout
sugar	disik
suggestion	sizestion
superb	siper
surely	sirman
surprise	sirpriz
sweet	dou

English	Kreol
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talk	kozri
tall	long
tasty	bon
teacher	profeser
team	lekip
tear	larm
teeth	ledan
temper	karakter
temperature	tanperatir
tendency	tandans
that	sa
that (is what)	seki
theatre	teat
theory	teori
thick	epe
thickness	lepeser
thief	voler
thin	mins
thing	kiksoz
thirst	laswaf or swaf
thirsty	gagn swaf
this	sa
threat	menas
through	atraver
tick (a)	rayt
ticket	tiket
tidy	an-ord
tight	sere
tin	bwat konserv
tiny	miniskil
tip	bout
tire	larou
tired	fatige
tiredness	lafatigue
together	ansam
tool	zouti
top	some
torch	tors
tough	dir
train	trin
transport	transpor
trap	pieze
trash	salte

English	Kreol
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tray	plato
treasury	trezor
trick	trik
trip	exkirsion
trouble	problem
true	vre
trust	konfians
truth	verite
try	seye, sey
type	tip
ugly	vilin
ultimate	final
unbalance	dezekilibre
uncomfortable	infonfortab
unlucky	malsanse
unsure	insertin
untidy	an dezord
until	ziska
upside-down	anba-lao
useful	itil
usual	abitiel
utility	itilite
validity	validite
value	valer
vapour	lavaper
variant	varyant
variation	varyasion
variety	varyete
various	boukou or diferan
vertical	vertikal
vest	zile
vision	vi
visitor	viziter
voyage	vwayaz
wage	lapey
war	lager
warm	tied
wave	vag
weak	feb
weakness	febles
wealth	rises
wedding	maryaz
weight	pwa

English	Kreol
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weird	bizar
well	bien
well-known	renome
wet	mouye
what	ki
wheel	larou
wheelbarrow	bouret
when	kan
where	kot
who	ki
who (direct question)	ki sann-la
why	kifer
wide	larz
wild	sovaz
wing	lezel
wise	saz
wish	ve
with	ar or avek or ek
without	san
wood	dibwa
wooden	an dibwa
wool	lalenn
word	mo
worker	travayer
wrapper	anbalaz
wrong	pa bon
yes	wi
young	zenn
youth	zenes