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Lexical Challenges in the St. Lucian Creole Bible Translation Project
by David Frank


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Lexical Challenges in the St. Lucian Creole Bible Translation Project

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1. Introduction

The project to translate the New Testament of the Bible into St. Lucian Creole began in earnest in 1987 after the translators finished three years of natural text collection, linguistic analysis, team-building, and literacy projects. At this writing, in the summer of 1998, the whole New Testament manuscript is complete and is undergoing final revisions and formatting. It should be in print sometime in 1999.¹

A goal we have for the translation is that it not sound like a translation. That is, as much as possible it should sound or read as though this text had originally been produced with the French Creole-speaking people as its primary audience. One problem is that the content is somewhat foreign, though not completely foreign. Another problem is that while Greek was well established as a literary language two thousand years ago, at the present time St. Lucian Creole is not. We have been spurred on by other people’s experiences that translation from a source language is possible, using the resources available in the receptor language, if appropriate skills and training are brought to the task and proper study and attention are given to the challenge.

One question we are commonly asked, when we tell what we are doing, is “How do you translate words that are in Greek but not in French Creole?” This is indeed one of the challenges we face. In trying to make the translation not sound like a translation there are other, perhaps even greater, challenges. How do you make sure the grammatical patterns used are completely natural, and not carry-overs from the source language? How do you make sure to use only images, figures of speech, and idioms that communicate clearly and naturally in the receptor language? How do you recognize and use natural discourse patterns? The solutions to all of these problems can come from the right combination of training, effort, and natural aptitude, and there can be different levels of success. All of our translation is put into first draft by a mother-tongue speaker, but even a native speaker cannot be expected to do a good translation into his own language without an adequate understanding of the source text, without a thorough orientation of translation principles, and without consciously studying the patterns of his own language.

The Greek New Testament source text contains references to geographical (e.g., lake, desert, winter), biological (e.g., camel, fig tree, wheat), political (tribe, emperor, tax), cultural (scroll, tunic, wineskin, cornerstone), and theological (justification, propitiation, righteous, holy, prophesy) concepts that are not natural to the traditional French Creole context. In addition there are other terms that do not necessarily reflect foreign concepts but still are in Greek and not in St. Lucian Creole, like ‘wilderness’, ‘widow’, ‘ancestor’, and ‘ligament’.

¹ This is a report of the activities of a translation team comprised of David and Lynn Frank and Paul and Cynthia Crosbie of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, and mother-tongue translators Mano Leon and Peter Samuel. This project is supported by a grant from the United Bible Societies, and the printed Tèstaman Nèf-la will be published by the Bible Society in the East Caribbean. Peter Samuel collected the data for the glossary. A great many more people than can be named in this paper have also contributed to the project over the years as checkers, reviewers, and sources of information.
Different translations into various majority languages such as English, French, or Spanish reflect different styles of translation. Different styles of translation can each be appropriate for different audiences and uses. Some translations for example would carry over the form including word order, sentence length, etc. of the source language as much as possible into the receptor language. The translation style used in the St. Lucian Creole translation project can be called “meaning-based” or “dynamic equivalent” translation. Rather than simply translating word for word, this translation attempts to extract the meaning of the source text from the form in which it is couched and express that meaning using the forms natural in the receptor language. The goal is to produce a translation that is clear, accurate, and natural.

2. Existing Religious Vocabulary

St. Lucian Creole is not as limited in Biblical vocabulary as one might think. While there are plenty of hurdles to overcome in translating the New Testament in the way of lexicon, grammar, and rhetoric, still St. Lucian Creole has a good foundation on which to build. The Roman Catholic church has been involved in St. Lucia since the days of the formation of the French Creole (see Frank 1993). Long-established Creole words include disip ‘disciple’, zapòt ‘apostle’, fàwizyen ‘pharisee’, nanj ‘angel’, batizé ‘baptize’, glowifyé ‘praise’, and miwak ‘miracle’. A pawabòl (‘parable’) is even a speech genre indigenous to Creole, denoting a message with a hidden meaning.

It is interesting to note that many French Creole nouns are derived from a French preposition or article plus noun. Following are some examples:

- *dlo* ‘water’ < Fr. de l’eau
- *lafwa* ‘faith’ < Fr. la foi (‘the faith’ in English would be *lafwa-a* in Creole)
- *lam* ‘soul’ < Fr. l’âme
- *lèspwi* ‘spirit’ < Fr. l’esprit
- *lévanjil* ‘scripture’ < Fr. l’évangile ‘gospel’
- *nanj* ‘angel’ < Fr. un ange (variant: *lanj* < Fr. l’ange)
- *zapòt* ‘apostle’ < Fr. les apôtres

Besides the specifically Biblical vocabulary that already exists in St. Lucian Creole, there are other affinities that ease the translation task. St. Lucians can identify with the fishing occupation of the disciples or the farming imagery used in the parables. Translating modern-world concepts such as airplanes, computers, x-rays and satellites into Creole would increase the likelihood of having to resort to borrowing to fill the void.

Actually, it could be argued that there are already now words to express such modern concepts in Creole, such as *plén*, *konpyouta*, and *èkstré*. This is a contentious topic of discussion. One might reason that any language can and is expected to borrow vocabulary for foreign concepts from other languages. Both English and French, for example, have done this extensively. But there seems to be a definite value among French Creole speakers, expressed in different ways, that ‘good’ Creole does not have English mixed in. In fact, there are two terms
for the Creole language, Kwéyòl and Patwa, and while Patwa is the more commonly-used term some have identified that label with a vernacular that carelessly mixes English with French vocabulary while Kwéyòl is the ‘pure’ form of the language.

In the New Testament translation, for the most part, except in connection with proper names, only words of French or African origin are used. One notable exception is the word *titcha*, coming from English ‘teacher’. That is one word of English origin that most people would agree has legitimately been borrowed into St. Lucian Creole, and we use it to translate ‘scribe’ as *titcha lwa sé Jwif-la* (‘teacher of the law of the Jews’). It has been argued that some other English words like *sabaf* have already been adopted into St. Lucian French Creole. In this case, the English origin is evidenced by the f coming from the th in Sabbath. Similarly, *taks* ‘tax’ as in ‘tax collectors’ can be argued to be a legitimate borrowing from English into Creole.

I heard a preacher in a countryside church one morning say “*Ou pa sa chapé* righteousness Bondyé” (“You cannot escape God’s righteousness”) and, in a prayer, “*Nou ka wimèséw pou* fellowship sala” (“We thank you for this fellowship”). Is it legitimate to say that it is reasonable and appropriate to borrow an English word any time a Creole word is not readily available? Apart from the problem of comprehension, virtually any St. Lucian would tell you that this is not ‘good Creole’, despite the fact that this sort of borrowing is done all the time. The practice is that *ad hoc* borrowings from English are frequent — that is, choosing the path of least resistance. The value, however, is that English words are to be avoided in good Creole. Once when asking a reviewer of the translation how she would say ‘synagogue’ in Creole, she said, “Most people would probably just say *sinagòg*, but we couldn’t say that!” Even the use of old Creole words derived from French like *long* ‘long’ and *fòm* ‘form’ in the translation has been questioned because they have the appearance of coming from English.

Back to the topic of traditional religious vocabulary in St. Lucian Creole, one last point to make is that there is some archaic vocabulary not really part of anyone’s linguistic competence or performance except in the context of old, memorized prayers. In the present New Testament translation, archaic words like *Lipèw*, *Lifis*, and *Lisentèspwi* have been replace by the contemporary equivalents *Papa-a*, *Gason-an*, and *Lèspwi Bondyé*. An old word *laglwa* meaning ‘glory’ is not used partly because it is not widely known, partly because it is easily confused with other religious terms like *lagwas* ‘grace’ and *lafwa* ‘faith’, and partly because it is difficult to pronounce. Decisions had to be made and are still being debated at this point concerning the use in the translation of other words that may be classified as archaic, such as *lasajès* for ‘wisdom’, *ladwati* for ‘righteousness’, *mizéwikòd* for ‘mercy’, and *ensiswatil* (< Fr. *ainsi soit-il*) for ‘amen’.

3. Vocabulary Needed

As is to be expected in translation, the vocabulary of the Greek New Testament does not always meet up with simple, straight-forward counterparts in St. Lucian Creole. Or, to put it in

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2 I would estimate that, apart from relatively recent borrowings from English, the vocabulary of St. Lucian Creole is about 98% of French origin. There is a handful of words from some sort of African (e.g., bètché for ‘white person’) or Spanish or Portuguese (e.g., sapat for ‘sandal’) origin.

3 Some people we have talked with have tried to help us come up with a way of translating ‘scribe’ that does not rely on a word of English origin, such as sé gwo pèp sé Jwif-la (“the big people of the Jews”), but such solutions seemed to be forced and unnatural. One person we checked with said the real Creole way of saying ‘teacher’ is *enstwitchoute*, a word which nobody else we checked with knew.
terms of meaning-based translation, some concepts that can be expressed in Koine Greek are not easily expressed in Creole. There are different possible solutions, some elegant, some common, some reasonable but not especially felicitous. The solutions to the problem of translating foreign concepts can either solidify and strengthen the Creole language or undermine it.

The easiest solution to the problem of trying to express foreign concepts in Creole is to rely on borrowing. This is done by some people in everyday conversation, by some preachers in the pulpit, in the speech of some government representatives interviewed for the Creole news, for example. But a professional Creole reporter could not keep his job very long if he frequently used English words even where a natural Creole means of expression is not readily available, because this common practice is looked down upon as bad style.

Other solutions, besides conscious borrowing, to the problem of wanting to express foreign concepts include using a slightly more generic term, using a slightly more specific term, and using a descriptive phrase. For example, to say “Are not two sparrow[s] (Greek σπαρραυ/α) sold for a penny?” we might say “two little birds” (dé ti jibyé). To say “It is better that you lose one of your members” (Greek μέλον, referring to ‘body parts’) we could say “…to lose your eye” (pèdi zyé’w). There is no commonly-known word for ‘widow’ (Greek χώρα) in St. Lucian Creole, so we resort to a descriptive phrase: an madamn mawi’y ja mò ‘a woman whose husband has died’.

In order to translate well, the question to ask is not “How is this word translated into Creole?” but rather “How would this idea be expressed in Creole?” The natural tendency is to translate word for word, thus carrying the form of the source language into the receptor language. Training and attention are required for the translator to be able to see beyond the words to the underlying message and then express that meaning meaningfully and idiomatically in the receptor language.

In addition to proper names, which constitute a problem area of their own, and everyday vocabulary, there are about one hundred key terms in the Greek New Testament that had to be rendered somehow in French Creole. For some of these like ‘to worship’, ‘Jew’ and ‘prophet’ a suitable word was already available to make the job easy. For others like ‘blaspheme’, ‘synagogue’ and ‘elder’, much study, thought, dialogue and testing were required before a translation was judged to be satisfactory. In many cases a phrase was required to translate what was a single word in the Greek. Following are some examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Creole Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blaspheme</td>
<td>ensilté non Bondyé ‘insult God’s name’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elder</td>
<td>ofisyé légiliz-la ‘officer of the church’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fast</td>
<td>wèsté san manjé pou adowé Bondyé ‘remain without food to worship God’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentiles</td>
<td>lézòt nasyon ki pa jwif ‘other nations that are not Jews’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idol</td>
<td>fo bondyé ‘false god’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manger</td>
<td>an bwèt koté yo ka bay zannimo manjé ‘a box where they give animals food’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scribe</td>
<td>titcha lwa sé Jwif-la ‘teacher of the law of the Jews’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is an archaic term vév meaning ‘widow’ that most people do not know.
Temple

Kay Bondyé ‘House of God’

It is important to remember when translating that words often have ranges of meaning, including secondary and extended senses, and that there are times when one word in one language with all of its senses cannot be consistently translated the same way in another language. A simple example is that ‘to have’ in St. Lucian Creole would be ni, but to say “She had a baby” (using ‘have’ in the sense of ‘to bear, to conceive’) one wouldn’t use ni but rather fè, ‘to make’: I fè an ti manmay “She made a baby.” The primary senses of English ‘have’ and Creole ni match up, but not the whole set of extended senses.

The one word that gave us the most difficulty in translating the New Testament was δόξα ‘glory’. The primary meaning of that Greek word is ‘bright, visible splendor’. The same word has a variety of secondary and extended senses. Since there is not a well-understood Creole word for ‘glory’ and we had to translate it according to meaning, the renderings of ‘glory’ in Creole were diverse, as the following examples, all from the book of Luke, show:

2:9 èvèk klèté Bondyé té ka klèwè toupatou anlè yo
“and God’s light was shining everywhere on them”
2:14a An syèl yo ka glowifyé Bondyé, yo ka di i gwan
“In heaven they are praising God, they are saying he is great”
2:32b èk i kay fè Izwayèl on plas pou moun konnèt
“and he will make Israel a place for people to know”
4:6a Mwen kay ba’w tout pouvwa èk wichès sé wéyòm sala
“I will give you all power and riches of these kingdoms”
9:26b lè mwen kay vini an pouvwa mwen ka klèwè kon zéklè
“when I will come in my power shining like lightning”
12:27b pa menm Sòlomonn an tout wichès li ki té sa abiyé otan bèl kon yonn anpami yo
“not even Solomon in all his riches was dressed as nice as one of them”
14:10b Sa kay ba’w lonnè wèspé an zyé lézòt sé moun-an
“That will give you honor respect in the eyes of the other people”
17:18  ki viwè dì Bondyé mèsì
“who returned to tell God thank you”
19:38b Annou glowifyé Bondyé
“Let’s praise God”
21:27 épi pouvwa èk gwan klètè
“with power and great light”
24:26 èk apwé sa i kay jwenn wèspé
“and after that he will get respect”

Another little word that caused difficulty was the preposition διà, ‘through’. The French Creole language is rich in many ways, but it is not exactly rich in prepositions. That is not necessarily a problem for Creole speakers, but it is a challenge when one is translating from
languages that use prepositions, like Greek and English, into Creole. The lack of a Creole word for ‘through’ requires the translator to give a little extra thought, the challenge being, “How would a Creole speaker normally and naturally express the same relationship denoted by this preposition?” Consider Romans 1:2, which says “the gospel he [God] promised beforehand through διὰ [through] his prophets in the Holy Scriptures”. In this verse διὰ is used to denote secondary agency. That is, the prophets did something, but it was ultimately God who was doing it. So we have translated this by saying Bondyé té ja pwonmèt Bon Nouvèl-la an chay tan ki pasé, lè i té fè sé pwofèt-la matché’y adan lévanjil-la, “God had already promised the Good News a long time ago, when he made the prophets write about it in the Scriptures.” In other contexts — where it is followed by an abstract noun rather than a reference to an animate being, for example — ‘through’ would denote something other than secondary agency. In each case the relationship denoted by the preposition would have to be analyzed and expressed in a manner that is appropriate for St. Lucian Creole.

Greek is rich in abstract nouns, and that was another problem area when translating into St. Lucian Creole. Examples besides ‘glory’, discussed above, are ‘fellowship’, ‘righteousness’, ‘knowledge’, ‘majesty’, ‘holiness’, ‘justification’, and ‘redemption’. But many of these abstract nouns are semantically related to verbs, adjectives, or adverbs that do exist in Creole, so the best solution is often to adjust the sentence to use a part of speech other than a noun to translate an abstract noun. To express “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God” in Second Corinthians 4:6, after a great deal of study and thought we came up with pou nou sa wè klètè sala épi kòpwan mizè gwan Bondyè gwan, “for us to be able to see that light and understand how great God is great”. Here the abstract noun “knowledge” was translated by a verb meaning ‘understand’, and “the glory of God” was translated as ‘how great God is great’, using an adjective and an idiomatic grammatical construction that is natural in Creole. In Mark 1:4, which says John the Baptist was “preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” the only one of these four abstract nouns that did not give us a problem was ‘sins’. We ended up saying épi i ka pwéché konmisyon Bondyè ki di sé moun-an pou tounen hòd pèché yo épi batizè, épi Bondyè kay pawdonnen pèché yo, “and he was preaching God’s message that told the people to turn away from their sins and be baptized, and God will forgive their sins.”

4. Testing Methods

Coming up with a way to translate something is only half of the job. We could research and find what religious vocabulary already exists in St. Lucian Creole, or coin a phrase when a term does not already exist, but the problem is in knowing how well a chosen expression communicates. Saying something is easy. Saying something that communicates well and is effective is much more difficult. The methodology used in the St. Lucian Creole Bible translation project involves extensive testing to make sure we have achieved our stated goals of clarity, accuracy, and naturalness.

Here is a list of the different types of checks done on the translation relevant to the topic at hand, viz. lexicon: comprehension checks, team check, consultant check, and consistency checks, and oral read-through. In addition to these checks that were carried out one or more times for each passage of the translation, several surveys were conducted to double check how well certain words were understood and to ascertain the target audience’s preferences.
As the translation progressed over the years, we regularly took out time to do two comprehension checks on each passage translated. We would hire a ‘naive’ language helper who knew Creole well but did not know the Bible well. We would read the translation to him or her a passage at a time and then ask probing questions to see how well the language helper understood the translation. Even when the translation might seem perfect to us, we could usually find places where the meaning was unclear or understood the wrong way by the naive language helper. Sometimes the misunderstandings were astonishing or comical.

Once, when translating the requirements for a church deacon, we used the word méwité, which to us meant ‘deserve’, to say that a deacon must be someone deserving of respect (I Tim. 3:8). When we read this to a naive language helper and asked her to explain what it meant, she said a deacon must be someone who is lacking in respect. Puzzled, we asked her how she used the word méwité and she gave the example Kafé sala méwité sik, “This coffee deserves / is lacking sugar.”

The word manm is sometimes used to mean ‘member’ but it is more commonly used to mean ‘muscle’. One woman we checked with said the phrase sé manm légлиз-la made sense to her: it meant “the muscles of the church”. Similarly, dwa can mean either ‘right’ or ‘bedsheet’, and where we were trying to say that Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of porridge one person thought that he was exchanging his bedsheets for the porridge.

Given our goals of clarity, accuracy, and naturalness, the comprehension checks are designed to check for clarity. To double check the accuracy, a translation consultant abroad studies a back translation into English of our translation and then comes to St. Lucia to conduct his or her own tests similar to our comprehension checks but using an interpreter. To check for naturalness, we read the translation to reviewers, or let them read it if they are able, and we ask them to focus on whether this is the way Creole speakers would really use language. Even though mother tongue speakers draft the translation, when translating from another language it is very easy for the form of the source language to be carried over into the receptor language. The team check, where a native speaker on the translation team other than the one who translated that particular book reviews the translation, is one kind of naturalness check we did. Later, when the whole New Testament was in draft, we held an oral read-through that lasted over a month, in which each book was read out loud by someone other than the translator, and other mother tongue speakers not on the translation team were also present to hear the translation read. This gave another good opportunity to comment on the naturalness of the translation, and many improvements were made on each page of the manuscript as a result.

Sometimes when reading the translation out loud we know our translation is technically correct but we still get some valuable feedback as to how it comes across. Once, upon hearing a selection of the manuscript read aloud, some people gasped when they heard the word djanmèt and said that word couldn’t be used in the Bible. They were accustomed to hearing the archaic ‘harlot’ in the King James Bible, which did not convey a lot of meaning to them.

The St. Lucian Creole word sab means ‘sword’ and lanm means ‘blade’, so to say ‘two-edged sword we said sab dé lanm, literally ‘sword of two blades’. The only problem is that sab can also mean ‘sand’ and lanm can also mean ‘wave’, so one person in our oral read-through said sab dé lanm sounded like it meant the ‘sand of two waves’. We had to be vigilant in
watching for anything unnecessarily crude-sounding, anything comical-sounding, and anything that did not sound like the way people really talk.

In addition to all the usual tests and checks we decided to carry out a couple of surveys. The first was to check a set of fifteen religious terms that we had been disputing among ourselves. Most of these were words that might be classified as archaic, and we wanted to determine whether they were well enough known to use in the translation. About half of the words we tested this way, such as kwayan ‘believer’, ladwati ‘righteousness’, and bèlè pouwva, a phrase we were experimenting with to translate ‘glory’, were rejected, and about half were retained, including lasajès ‘wisdom’, lagwas ‘grace’, and lanmityé ‘selfless love’. Some people misunderstood mizéwikòd, ‘mercy’, to mean ‘a curse’, so we decided to use it only in a few unambiguous contexts and use something like tchè fèb, ‘weak heart’ (a Creole idiom), elsewhere.

One of the words we tested in this first survey and ended up rejecting was nati, which is supposed to mean ‘nature’. We had already gotten indications that people might misunderstand it to refer to dreadlocks. Our surveyors were testing nati with a group of villagers by reading First Corinthians 11:7. There was a young Rasta listening in from a distance, and when the survey was finished at that one site he called the surveyors over and said he was very happy to hear that verse, because it confirmed that God really does have dreadlocks. The verse in question had read An nonm pa ni pyès wézon pou kouvè tèt li, paski Bondyé ja fè’ y menm kon i menm Bondyé yé, épi i ja ba li an nati ki menm kon sa li, or “A man does not have any reason to cover his head, because God has already made him just as he God is, and he has already given him a nati that is just like his own.” The surveyors, mother tongue translators Peter Samuel and Mano Leon, could not convince the man that that is not what that verse was supposed to be saying.5 Needless to say, the use of the word nati in the translation was rejected after that.

A second survey was conducted in June, 1998, not to assess comprehension and familiarity but to try to understand what people’s preferences were. A focus of the survey was on English influence versus French influence. Concerning proper names, generally the ones more closely resembling the English names like Pita, Jémz, and Androu were preferred over the ones closer to the French like Pyè, Jak, and Andwé. The respondents embraced the use of some English borrowings as normal, like taks for ‘tax’ and sabaf for ‘sabbath’, while rejecting others like sinagòg for ‘synagogue’ and yis for ‘yeast’. We are still awaiting the preferences from the Roman Catholic Church, which is in the majority in St. Lucia, before we will consider the survey to be finished.

5. Decisions and Conclusions

A number of factors have to be considered in order for a translation to achieve maximum effectiveness. Accuracy and faithfulness to the original text are of course of primary importance, but a translation cannot be judged to be accurate apart from consideration of the effect it has on its audience. Is a word like méwité an “accurate” translation of ‘deserve’ if a hearer understands it to mean something else? That is actually a controversial question in some circles, but we

5 The Rasta insisted that if the Bible said that then it must be true. It occurred later to the surveyors that they might have quoted him Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians (2:13), which read, “When you were dead in your spirits because your life was a life of sin, you had not yet cut off and thrown away your sinful nati.”
believe that words do not have objective meanings but rather serve as vessels to carry meanings, which are functions of both speaker’s intent and hearer’s understanding.

Apart from questions of accuracy and comprehension, the effectiveness of a translation depends on how the message is received. Is it in a language form that the intended audience will respect and to which they will pay attention? Acceptability cannot take priority over accuracy, but still it is an important factor in judging a translation. We have sought in our translation to use a language form that is respectable and should have the salutary effect of not only attracting an audience but also reinforcing St. Lucian Creole as a language.

Our testing methods have helped us determine what communicates and what is acceptable as good Creole. One further question remained — that of dialect variation — and we had to come up with a metric to help us determine which variant forms to use. Following is a list of some of the dialect variation we had to deal with:

- *apwézan* ~ *abwézan* ‘now’
- *asèpté* ~ *aksèpté* ‘to accept’
- *bouzwen* ~ *bizwen* ~ *bwizen* ‘to need’
- *dèwò* ~ *dòwò* ‘outside’
- *ében* ~ *enben* ‘or’
- *édè* ~ *endè* ‘to help’
- *enswi* ~ *enstwi* ‘to teach’
- *fidji* ~ *fidjay* ‘face’
- *kòdanné* ~ *kòdonné* ~ *kondanné* ‘to condemn’
- *konpwnn* ~ *kopwann* ‘to understand’
- *kouyé* ~ *kwiyé* ‘to call’
- *lawivyè* ~ *lòvyè* ‘river’
- *mansonj* ~ *manchòz* ~ *manchonz* ‘lie’
- *padan* ~ *patan* ~ *padantan* ~ *paditan* ‘while’
- *piski* ~ *paski* ~ *paskè* ‘because’
- *ponmèt* ~ *pwonmèt* ‘promise’
- *pwen* ~ *pwan* ‘to take’
- *tchébé* ~ *tchenbé* ‘to hold’
- *tiyé* ~ *tiwé* ‘to remove’
- *voyé* ~ *vowé* ~ *vwéyé* ‘to send’

Since all of these forms except probably *tchébé* are derived from French, we settled on the metric of choosing from among the variant forms used in the translation the one that was closest to the French. The idea was that the one closest to the French would likely be the nucleus around which the other variants revolved.

It is widely recognized that Martin Luther, in translating the Bible into German in the early 1500s, established New High German as a standard among a set of dialects. Any good encyclopedia would state this fact in articles on Luther, the German language, or German literature. See the article in the 1991 World Book Encyclopedia on German literature, for example, which states, “Martin Luther translated the Bible into German, thus preparing the way for a standard German language.”

A Bible translation published in St. Lucian Creole should have the effect of promoting Creole literacy. St. Lucian Creole could technically be considered a written language, because of the books published in Creole by SIL and other groups like the Folk Research Centre. But for all practical purposes Creole remains an unwritten language for the majority of the population, which remains unaware of the books published in Creole. Attempts to teach Creole literacy have
not met with much success because of lack of interest. Motivation is the most important factor in the success of any literacy program, and having something people want to read is the most important motivating factor. The Scriptures in St. Lucian Creole will give people something they will be motivated to learn to read.

Our purpose in translating the New Testament into St. Lucian Creole was not primarily to reinforce the language or to establish French Creole as a written language, but we believe the St. Lucian Creole New Testament, and perhaps some day the complete Bible, will have those effects.

References


Appendix: A Glossary of Selected St. Lucian Creole Religious Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creole Word</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adowé</td>
<td>TR V to worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sé an lèspwi nou sa adowé Bondyé paski i menm sé an lèspwi. (see also glowifyé) [&lt;Fr adorer]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>batenm</td>
<td>N baptism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batenm pòpòt ka menon gwan nòs. (see also batizé) [&lt;Fr baptême]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>batizé</td>
<td>ADJ, TR V baptized; to baptize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I kay batizé Dimanch pwochen. (see also batenm) [&lt;Fr baptiser]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bèlzibòb</td>
<td>PROP N (var: Bèlziboul)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beelzebub, prince of the devils  Nonm sala move kon Bèlzibòb. (see also Satan, djab, denmou) [&lt;Eng Beelzebub]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bennédiksyon</td>
<td>N blessing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I jwenn bennédiksyon an tout sa i fe. (opp: modisyon) [&lt;Fr bénédiction]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benni</td>
<td>ADJ, TR V blessed; to bless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I mandé Bondyé pou benni’y avan’y alé. (opp: modi) [&lt;Fr bêni]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bondyé</td>
<td>PROP N (var: Dyé)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God  Sé Bondyé ki fè syèl épi latè-a. [&lt;Fr bon Dieu]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chapèl</td>
<td>N shrine, sanctuary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ou sa adowé Dyé adan chapèl li. (see also légлиз) [&lt;Fr chapelle]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chapit</td>
<td>N chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouvè Labib ou épi li liv Twavay chapit yonn, vèwsé yonn. (see also vèwsé) [&lt;Fr chapitre]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chaplé</td>
<td>N rosary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papa mwen ka di chaplé’y dé fwa pa jou. [&lt;Fr chapelet]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>denmou</td>
<td>N demon, devil, evil spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sé moun-an pitché kouwi paski yo di denmou bawè yo. (see also Satan; syn: yvé lèspwi, mové lèspwi, djab) [&lt;Fr démon]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disip</td>
<td>N disciple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jézi té ni an chay disip ka swiv li mé i té ni douz zapòt. (see also zapòt) [&lt;Fr disciple]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>djab</td>
<td>N devil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misyè-a té faché paski sé moun-an di’y i lèd kon an Djab. (see also Satan; syn: denmou, yvé lèspwi) [&lt;Fr diable]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dlo benni</td>
<td>NP (var: glo benni)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holy water  Pwèt-la sèvi glo benni pou benni sé moun-an. [&lt;Fr de l’eau bêni]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dwèt</td>
<td>ADJ straight, righteous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Batis té ka maché dwèt épi lavi’y té nèt. (opp: kochi) [&lt;Fr droit]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyé</td>
<td>PROP N variant of Bondyé.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ensiswatil</td>
<td>INTERJ amen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An non di Lipèw, Lifis, Lisentèspwi, ensiswatil. (syn: amèn) [&lt;Fr ainsi soit-il]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>étonnèl</td>
<td>ADJ eternal, everlasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonm-lan ki sové-a kay jwenn lavi étonnèl. (syn: diwant) [&lt;Fr éternel]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fawizyen</td>
<td>N Pharisee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sè Fawizyen-an té hayi Jézi épi yo fè konplò pou tchewy. (see also Sadisyen) [&lt;Fr pharisien]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fwè</td>
<td>N brother, fellow Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tout moun ki ka sèvi Dyé sé fwè mwen ében sè mwen. (see also sè) [&lt;Fr frère]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gajé</td>
<td>N practitioner of gajé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyé madamn sala tou dous mé mwen tan moun di i sè an gwo gajè. (see also gajé, tchenbwa; syn: jan gajé) [&lt;Fr gageure?]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gajé</td>
<td>N, INTR V witchcraft; to practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>witchcraft  Yo di nonm sala ka gajé épi i fè on moun mal. (see also gajé) [&lt;Fr gager?]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glowifyé</td>
<td>TR V to praise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwen ka glowifyé Dyé èk tout tchew mwen. (see also adowé) [&lt;Fr glorifier]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ipokwézi</td>
<td>N hypocrisy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipokwézi byen konmen adan légлиз atchwilman. (see also ipokwit) [&lt;Fr hypocrisie]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ipokwit</td>
<td>N hypocrite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Sè Fawizyen-an té ipokwit paski yo ka fè akwèdi yo té ka swiv Bondyé mé tchew yo té mové. (see also
ipokwézi] [<Fr hypocrite]

jès N supernatural trick I fè an ti jès pou jan gaʝé-a pa té sa fɛ’y anyen. (see also gaʝé, tchenbwa) [<Fr geste]

Jézi PROP N (var: Jézi Kwi) Jesus Jézi sè sèl gason Bondyé. [<Fr Jésus]

Jézi Kwi PROP N (var: Jézi) Christ, Jesus Christ Jézi Kwi mò asou kwa Kalvè pou pèché nou. [<Fr Jésus Christ]

jijman N judgment Asou jou jijman tout moun kay doubout douvan Dyé. (see also kondannasyon) [<Fr jugement]

jistifyé ADJ; TR V justified; to justify Bondyé ka sèvi lagwas li lè i ka jistifyé lèzòm.. (opp: kondanné) [<Fr justifier]

Jwif N Jew Bondyé té sèvi sé Jwif-la pou pwézèvé lévanjil-la. [<Fr Juif]

Kalvè PROP N Calvary, the place where Jesus was crucified Jézi Kwi mò asou kwa Kalvè pou pèché nou. [<Fr calvaire]

katéchis N catechism Lè mwen té piti pwèt-la té ka toujou moutwé mwen katéchis. [<Fr catéchisme]

katolik ADJ Roman Catholic Papa mwen ka alé légiz katolik. [<Fr catholique]

kòdennèt N a white cord used as a belt for religious vestments Pwèt-la ka mawé wen’y épi an kòdennèt. (see also sann) [<Fr cordonnet]

kondannasyon N condemnation La pa ni pyès kondannasyon pou an moun ki ka kwè an Jézi. (see also kondanné, jijman, pinisyon; opp: pawdonnab, salvasyon) [<Fr condamnation]

kondanné ADJ, TR V (var: kòdanné) condemned; to condemn Nonm-lan ki pa kwè an gason Dyé-a ja kondanné. (see also kondannasyon, pinì; opp: jistifyé, pawdonnen) [<Fr condamner]

konfésé TR V to confess Si nou konfésé pèché nou Jézi kay pawdonnen nou. (opp: manti) [<Fr confesser]

konmandé TR V (var: konmandé) to command, to order Jézi ja konmandé tout nonm pou wépanti. (see also konmandman) [<Fr commander]

konmandman N (var: konmandman, konmandan) commandment, command, order Jézi di sa ki enmen’-y-la kay ni pou swiv konmandman’-y. (see also konmandé, lwa) [<Fr commandement]

konpasyon N compassion Jézi ka moutwé konpasyon asou tout moun ki kwiyé asou non’-y. (syn: tchè fèb, mizéwikòd, pityé) [<Fr compassion]

konsyans N conscience Bondyé mètè an konsyans an tout nonm pou moutwé yo ki sa ki bon épi pa bon. [<Fr conscience]

konvèti ADJ converted to Christianity I ni douz lanné dépi mwen té konvèti. (see also sovè) [<Fr convertir]

koupab ADJ guilty Sé moun-an ki pa wépanti-a, Bondyé kay jwenn yo tout koupab asou jou jijman-an. (opp: innozan) [<Fr coupable]

kwa N cross Pou swiv Jézi ou sipozé pòté kwa’w. (see also kwisifyé, kwisifiks) [<Fr croix]

kwayans N belief, faith Tout kwayans nonm sala sé an tchenbwa. (see also kwè, konfyans; syn: lafa) [<Fr croyance]

kwè INTR V to believe Bondyé kay sovè tout sa ki kwè an li. (see also kwayans) [<Fr croire]

kwisifiks N crucifix I ni moun ki kwè kwisifiks-la p’òko pouwi toujou. (see also kwa) [<Fr crucifix]

kwisifyé ADJ; TR V crucified; to crucify I té ni dé volè ki té kwisifyé épi Jézi. (see also kwa, kwisifiks) [<Fr crucifier]
kwityen N (var: kwétyen) Christian  
An kwityen sé an nonm ki ni Lèspwi Bondyé an li. [<Fr chrétien]

labé N priest Labé-a ka mouté toulé  
dimanch pou fé lannmès. (syn: pwèt, pè)  
[<Fr l'abbé]

Labib PROP N (var: Bib) Bible  
Labib-la sé pawòl Bondyé. (see also lévanjil)  
[<Fr la Bible]

lachawité N (var: chawité) charity, kindness  
Nonm-lan ki di i enmen Bondyé-a sipozé fè lachawité.  
[<Fr la charité]

lachè N flesh; sinful human nature  
Lèspwi mwen vle sévi Dyé, mé lachè mwen fèb.  
(see also kò; opp: lèspwi)  
[<Fr la chaire]

ladjablès N (var: adjablès) a name for a  
kind of evil spirit: a beautiful woman with  
one cow's leg  
Moun di si an ti manmay alé anba wazyé li yonn ladjablès kay pwen'y.  
(see also ti bolonm)  
[<Fr la diablesse]

lafwa N faith  
Jézi djéwi sé sa ki té ni lafwa an li. (see also kwayans, konfyans)  
[<Fr la foi]

laglwa N (var: lagwa) glory  
Lè Moziz wè laglwa Bondyé i twanblé.  
(archaic)  
[<Fr la gloire]

lagwas N grace  
Bondyé sèvi lagwas li pou i té sa fè mwen viv an diféwan lavi.  
(see also bonté, pawdonnab; syn: favè)  
[<Fr la grâce]

lajwa N (var: jwa) joy  
I sé an lajwa pou kouté pawòl Bondyé.  
(syn: lakontantman; opp: twistès)  
[<Fr la joie]

lam N soul  
Tout moun ni an lam épi apwé jijman-an lam-lan kay alé an syèl ében lanfè.  
(see also lèspwi)  
[<Fr l’âme]

lanfè N hell  
Tout nonm ki pa wépanti, yo kay alé lanfè. (opp: syèl)  
[<Fr l’enfer]

lanmès N mass, church service  
Pwèt-la ka mouté toulé dimanch pou fé lanmès. (see  
also légli)  
[<Fr la messe]

lanmityé N brotherly love, affection  
Si ou sé on kwityen ou sipozé ni lanmityé pou tout  
moun. (see also lanmou, enmen; opp: hayisans)  
[<Fr l’amitié]

lansan N incense  
Pwèt-la toujou ka bwilé lansan lé i ka fé lanmès. (see also  
pafimen)  
[<Fr l’encens]

lapé N peace  
Lè an nonm aksèpté Dyé i ka jwenn lapé an tchè’y. (see also wipo)  
[<Fr la paix]

lapwiyè N (var: pwiyè) prayer  
Mwen ka mandé Bondyé pou wéponn lapwiyè mwen.  
(see also pwédyé)  
[<Fr la prière]

lasajès N (var: lachajès, sajès) wisdom  
Labib-la ka enstwi nou lasajès Bondyé.  
(opp: kouyontwi)  
[<Fr la sagesse]

légliz N church  
An légliz sé an koté moun ka alé adowé Dyé. (see also lanmès)  
[<Fr l’église]

lèspwi N spirit, ghost  
Lèspwi-a ki adan an nonm, sé sa ki ka kondwi nonm-lan. (see also lam; opp: lachè)  
[<Fr l’esprit]

Lèspwi Bondyé PROP N (var: Lèspwi Dyé)  
Holy Spirit  
Tout nonn ki wépanti kay wisivwè Lèspwi Bondyé.  
(syn: Lisentèspwi)

lévanjil N scriptures  
Lévanjil-la sé pawòl Bondyé épì si ou swiv li ou kay plè Bondyé.  
(syn: Labib)  
[<Fr l’évangile]

lézòm N man, mankind  
Lézòm pa pou viv asou pen tousel. (see also nonm)  
[<Fr les hommes]

Lifis PROP N God the Son, Jesus  
An non di Lipèw, Lifis, Lisentèspwi, ensiswatil.  
(closing of prayer) (archaic; see also Bondyé; syn: Jézi Kwi)  
[<Fr le fils]

Lipap PROP N Holy Father, the Pope  
Pwèt-la kay mennen péché’w bay Lipap.  
[<Fr le pape]
Lexical Challenges in the St. Lucian Creole Bible Translation Project

Lipèw PROP N God the Father An non di Lipèw, Lifis, Lisentèspwi, ensiswatil. (closing of prayer) (archaic; see also Bondyé; syn: Papa Bondyé) [<Fr le père]
Lisentèspwi PROP N God the Holy Spirit An non di Lipèw, Lifis, Lisentèspwi, ensiswatil. (closing of prayer) (archaic; syn: Lèspwi Bondyé) [<Fr le Saint-Esprit]
lonmen TR V (var: nonmen) to christen, to name Mwen kay nonmen ich mwen-an Dimanch sala. [<Fr nommer]
lonnè N honor, respect An nonm sipozé bay manman'y épi papa'y lonnè. (see also onnowé; syn: wèspé) [<Fr l'honneur]
lowizyon N charm; object used for supernatural personal protection Pyèsonn pa sa fé nonm sala anyen paskè i ni an lowizyon. (see also jès) [<?]
maji nwè N black magic: a kind of supernatural power involving entering into people's houses to do harm, especially to do physical and sexual abuse and especially to women; a person who practices black magic Yo di plas sala benyen maji nwè épi pyèsonn pa vlé wèsté la. (see also zèb, tchenbwa, gajé) [<Fr magie noire]
malédisyon N jinx Nonm sala oublijé ni malédisyon; machin li toujou ka kwazen. (see also modisyon, lowizyon) [<Fr malédiction]
miwak N miracle Jézi fè djèwi moun épi fé lòt miwak lè i asou latè. [<Fr miracle]
mizewikòd N (var: mizewékòd) mercy, compassion, pity Jézi, mwen ka mandéw pou ou ni mizewikòd asou mwen. (see also pawdonnab; syn: konpasyon, pityé) [<Fr miséricorde]
modi ADJ, TR V accursed; to curse Nonm sala modi paski i ka bat manman'y. (see also modisyon; syn: ni on malédisyon; opp: benni) [<Fr maudit]
modisyon N curse Bondyé pasé modisyon'y asou sépan-an ki kwennen Adanm. (see also modi, malédisyon; opp: bennédiksyon) [<Fr maudit]
monsenyè N bishop, Monsignor Pwèt sala sé on monsenyè atchwilman. (see also pwèt) [<Fr monseigneur]
movèzté N wickedness, evil Pou lapéti movèzté nomm, Bondyé détwi latè-a èk on délì. (syn: méchansté; opp: bonté) [<Fr mauvais]
nanj N (var: lanj) angel Nanj Bondyé ka toujou vèyé sé icli-a asou latè. (see also lèspwi; opp: denmou) [<Fr un ange]
Nòtsenyè PROP N the Lord Nou ka pwédyé an non Nòtsenyè Jézi Kwé. (see also senyè) [<Fr Notre Seigneur]
Nwèl N Christmas Pwèskè tout nasón ka sélèbwé Nwèl. [<Fr Noël]
pafimé TR V (var: pafimen) to surround or fill with smoke Pwèt-la pafimé kay-la pou kouvi dèyè on vyé lèspwi. (see also lansan) [<Fr parfumer]
Pak N Easter Légliz-la té plen èk moun asou Dimanch Pak. [<Fr Pâques]
pastè N (var: pasta) pastor Apwé pastè-a fini pwéché, sé moun-an té ka mimiwé. (see also pwèt) [<Fr pasteur]
pawabòl N parable Jézi sèvi an chay pawabòl pou i té enstwi sé moun-an. (see also listwa) [<Fr parabole]
pawadi N heaven, paradise Jézi di yonn an sé nonm-lan ki té kwisifyé épi'y-la, 'Jódì-a ou kay épi mwen an pawadi.' (syn: syèl; opp: lanfè) [<Fr paradis]
pawdonnab N pardon, forgiveness Si ou konfésé péché'w ou kay jwenn pawdonnab. (see also pawdonnen, salvasyon, mizewikòd, pityé, lagwas; opp: kondannasyon, pisisyon) [<Fr pardonnable]
Lexical Challenges in the St. Lucian Creole Bible Translation Project

pawdonnen ADJ; TR V; pardon, to forgive Jézi ni pouvwa pou pawdonnen péché. (see also pawdonnab; opp: pini, kondanné) [Fr pardoner]
pawfé ADJ (var: pèwfé) perfect Jézi sé sèl nomn ki viv an lavi pawfé asou laté sala. [Fr parfait]

pè N; priest Nonm-lan alé konfésé péché’y bay pè-a. (syn: pwèt, labé) [Fr père]

péché N; INTR V; sin; to sin Jézi, mwen ka mandé’w pou pa kité mwen péché. (see also movèzté, méchansté, péchè) [Fr pécher]

peñitans N penitence Apwé nonm-lan konfésé péché’y i alé fè pennitans li. (see also pawdonnab, pinisyon, sakwifis) [Fr pénitence]

pèsikité TR V to persecute Paski mwen ka swiv Dyé, sé moun sala ka pèsikité mwen. (see also twoublé, anbété, pèsikasyon; opp: édé) [Fr persécuter]

péwi INTR V to perish, to die Bondyé, pa kité mwen péwi an péché mwen. (syn: mò; opp: viv) [Fr périr]

piwifyé TR V to purify Bondyé kay voyé on difé ki kay piwifyé sa ki bon êk détwi sa ki pa bon. (see also nétwayé) [Fr purifier]

pwéché TR V to preach Apwé pastè-a fini pwéché, sé moun-an té ka mimiwé. [Fr prêcher]

pwédýé INTR V (var: pwíyé Dyé) to pray An nonm sipozé pwédyé bay Bondyé toulé jou. (see also lapwiyé) [Fr prier Dieu]

pwèt N; priest Pwèt-la ka mouté toulé Dimanch pou fè lammès. (see also monsényè; syn: labé, pè) [Fr prêtre]

pwèzbité N; rectory, parsonage Madanm-lan antvé an pwèzbité-a èk i vòlê manjé pwèt-la. [Fr presbytère]

pwofèt N (var: pofèt, pòfèt, pwòfèt) prophet Izaya té on pwofèt lotan avan tan Jézi. [Fr prophète]
sabaf N sabbath Asou jou sabaf-la ou sipozé pozé. (syn: jou pozé) [Eng sabbath]
sadisyen N Sadducee Sé sadisyen-an pa té ka kwè an wèzéwèksyon épi an nanj. (see also Fawizyen) [Fr sadducéen]
sakwifis N; sacrifice Pou ou sa swiv Bondyé ou ni pou fè an chay sakwifis. (see also pennitans, lotèl) [Fr sacrifice]
salvasyon N; salvation Sé Bondyé sèlman ki sa ba’w salvasyon. (see also sové, pawdonnab, mizéwikòd, lagwas) [Fr salvation]
Samz PROP N (var: Sam) Psalms Wézon-an i modi kon sa sé paski an moun li dé Samz asou tèt li. (see also Labib, lévanjil) [Fr Psautres]
Satan PROP N Satan, the Devil Satan toujou vlé nou péché. (see also djab, vyé lèspwi, denmou, Bondyé) [Fr Satan]
sè N; (var: sésé) sister, fellow Christian Tout moun ki ka sévi Dyé sé fwè mwen ében sè mwen. [Fr sœur]
sèman N; oath, pledge Lè an nonm batizé i ka fè sèman pou swiv Bondyé. (see also sèwmanté; syn: pwonmèt) [Fr serment]

sen N; saint Sen Pyè té an nonm ki swiv Bondyé èk tout tchè’y. (archaic; see also kwityen) [Fr saint]
senyè N lord, master Jézi sé senyè lavi mwen. (see also Notsenyè; syn: mèt) [Fr seigneur]
sòvé N; savior Jézi sé sòvé laté-a. (see also sové, Notsenyè) [Fr sauveur]
sòvé ADJ; TR V; saved; to save Jézi sé sèlman ki sa sové an nonm. (see also sové,
salvasyon, konvèti; opp: pèdì) [<Fr sauver]
syèl N heaven Pou an nonm sa antwè an syèl
i ni pou aksépté Jézi Kwi kon sovè’y. (syn: pawadi; opp: lanfè) [<Fr ciel]
tantasyon N temptation Jézi édé mwen pou mwen pa tonbè adan tantasyon. (see also tanté, péché) [<Fr tentation]
tanté TR V to tempt Latè sala benyen bagay ki sa tanté an nonm ki ka éseyé viv dvèt.
(see also tantasyon, péché) [<Fr tenter]
tchenbwa N obeah: a supernatural manipulation of nature, such as to curse someone or to gain posessions Ou sa fè tchenbwa kon ou vle, lè jou’w vivé ou oblijé mò. (see also maji nwè, zèb, gajé)
[<Fr tchenn + bwa?]
témwenyaj N (var: témwennaj) testimony Témwenyaj sézé-a touché tchè mwen. (see also tèstifyé, sèman) [<Fr témoignage]
tèstifyé INTR V (var: tèstifié) to testify I sé an bagay ki wèd pou an moun tèstifyé kont mwenman’y memn. (see also témwenyaj)
[?]
ti bolonm N name for a kind of evil spirit: a very small, midget-sized, flesh-eating, manlike creature that is usually owned by someone Sé nonm sala ka sèvi ti bolonm pou fè vyé twavay ba yo. (see also ladjablès) [<Fr piti bon homme]
twadisyon N tradition, custom Sé Fawizyen-an ka swiv twadisyon pasé pawòl Bondyé. (see also lakoutim) [<Fr tradition]
twayi TR V to betray I sété Jida ki twayi Jézi.
[<Fr trahir]
vèwsé N verse Ouvè Labib ou épì li liv Twavay chapit yonn, vèwsé yonn. (see also chapit, Labib) [<Fr verset]
vyé lèspwi NP evil spirit Jézi té ka toujou tiwè vyé lèspwi andidan sé moun-an lè i té asou latè. (see also Satan; syn: mové lèspwi, denmou, mové lam, djab)
wéjwi INTR V (var: widjèwòtè) to rejoice Nonm-lan ki an Dyé-a ka toujou wéjwi. (see also lajwa) [<Fr réjouir]
wépanti INTR V to repent, to turn from one’s sins Tout nonm ki pa wépanti, yo ka yè lanfè. (see also wépantisman) [<Fr repentir]
wésisité INTR V to be recuscitated, to be revived, to be raised Apwé twa jou Jézi wésisité hòd lamò. (see also wézéwèksyon) [<Fr ressusciter]
wézéwèksyon N resurrection, becoming alive again I ni an pil moun abwézan ki pa ka kwè an wézéwèksyon-an. (see also wésisité) [<Fr résurrection]
wilizyon N (var: wélikyion) religion An chay moun kwè wilizyon sa sové yo, mé sa pa vvè. (see also lafwa, kwayans) [<Fr religion]
zapòt N apostle Jézi swézi douz zapòt pou yo té sa épì’y tout lè. (see also disip) [<Fr les apôtres]
zèb N white magic, a milder form of obeah than tchenbwa Nonm sala ka fè zèb pou fè sè manmay li-a fè byen an lékòl. (see also tchenbwa, maji nwè, gajé, wimèd wazyé) [<Fr les herbes]
zonbi N zombie: a person who rises from the dead to do evil Misyé-a di i pa té sa antwè an kay li paski i té ni on zonbi ki doubtout bô lapòt-la. (see also gajé, tchenbwa, maji nwè) [?]