

Table 1: Consonants

| | | Labial | Dental | Alveolar | Palatal | Velar |
|------------|-----------|--------|--------|----------|---------|-------|
| Stops | Voiceless | p | t | | | k |
| | Voiced | b | d | | | g |
| Fricatives | Voiceless | f | | s | ch | |
| | Voiced | v | | z | j | |
| Affricates | Voiceless | | | | tch | |
| | Voiced | | | | dj | |
| Nasals | | m | n | | | gn |
| Liquids | | | | l | | r |
| Glides | | | | | y | w |

Orthography and Basic Phonology

Haitian Creole has an alphabet of approximately 34 symbols that represent the basic sounds of the language. The orthography used to represent these symbols corresponds to the standard orthography proposed in 1979 by the *Institut Pédagogique National* (IPN). Owing to a presidential decree issued in September 1979, this orthography was declared the official spelling for Haitian Creole, and as such it supersedes the previous spellings that have been used. Those are, respectively, the McConnell-Laubach devised in 1943 by an Irish Protestant missionary, Ormonde McConnell, and an American literacy expert, Frank Laubach; and the Pressoir in 1947 by the Haitian scholar Charles-Fernand Pressoir.

In addition to the consonants included on Table 1 above, Haitian Creole has two additional, marginal consonants. *H* appears in a very limited set of words such as *hougan* ‘voodoo priest’ and *housi* ‘voodoo priestess’; *ng*, a velar nasal like that of English “thing”, appears in a few words like *pinga* ‘do not’ and *ping pong*.

There is also a third glide, *u*, the front-rounded equivalent of back-rounded *w*. It appears in a few words, such as *uit* ‘eight’ and *uithèm* ‘eighth’.

Table 2: Vowels

| | Front | | Central | Back |
|----------|-----------|---------|---------|------|
| | Unrounded | Rounded | | |
| High | i | u | | ou |
| High-Mid | e | eu | | o |
| Low-Mid | è | eù | | ò |
| Low | | | a | |
| Nasal | en | (un) | an | on |

The front-rounded vowels *u*, *eù*, and *eu* seem more common in the urban variety of Haitian Creole. In addition to the three

nasal vowels listed on the Table 2, there is a marginal front rounded nasal vowel *un* that occurs only in four or five words, such as *pafun* ‘perfume’ and *lundi* ‘Monday’.

Zéphir, Flore. 2001. Haitian Creole. In: Garry, Jane and Carl Rubino (eds.) *Facts About the World's Languages: An Encyclopedia of the World's Major Languages: Past and Present*. New York/Dublin: H. W. Wilson.