A User's Guide to the Dictionary

This section will provide a general guide to the organization of the dictionary articles, i.e., individual headword and all the materials subsumed under it (the microstructure). Below, representative articles will be presented with the various parts of the microstructure labeled. These presentational diagrams will be followed by an explanation of certain elements that are not exemplified in the sample articles or that require additional information.

Explanatory Chart

| Creole headword in bold face | lenni (lenni [le-nmi], lènni, lèlmi, enmi [e-nmi]), lènni, elmi | n. 1 enemy, foe, adversary 2 rival è·lennmi jire sworn enemy Andre se lènni jire nèg ki asasinen papa l la. André is a sworn enemy of the man who killed his father. |
| Spelling (and therefore pronunciation) variants follow the entry between parentheses and in bold face | lenni (lenni [le-nmi], lènni, lèlmi, enmi [e-nmi]), lènni, elmi | n. 1 enemy, foe, adversary 2 rival è·lennmi jire sworn enemy Andre se lènni jire nèg ki asasinen papa l la. André is a sworn enemy of the man who killed his father. |
| In the few cases where the spelling is ambiguous, the pronunciation is provided in square brackets. Hyphens are used to separate the vowel from the nasal consonant, indicating that the vowel is not nasalized | notab[^1] adj. remarkable Sà se yon aksyon ki notab. It's a remarkable action. |
| English gloss (equivalent) in regular type | naje v intr. to swim Nou pral naje. We're going to swim. è·naje nan gwo dlo to have connections with people who are in the upper class Jan se nèg ki naje nan gwo dlo li ka fastilte ou jwenn yon bon djòb. John has connections with rich people, he can help you find a great job. |
| Illustrative examples are indicated in italics | |
| The English translation follows in regular type | xix |
blan' n. 1 white color 2 Caucasian, white person 3 foreigner, any non-Haitian cf etranje •blan bouke foreign castoff wares [clothes, etc.] Moun sa yo yon paket blan bouke y ap vann. Those people are selling many second-hand imported wares. cf pepe •blan je white of the eye •blan je vêt Caucasian •blan kolo light mulatto •blan kou dan zonbi snow white, pale as a ghost •blan mannan [mizé/poban] poor or destitute White, white trash •blan meriken white American cf nwa ameriken, ameriken nwa

bak' n. 1 backward movement Ou li twò vit pou mwen, ann fè yon ti bak. You’re reading too fast for me, back up a little. 2 reverse [car] Bak machin nan pa fonksyone. The reverse of the car doesn’t work. •fè bak [annaryè] a to back up Attanyon, machin nan ap fè bak! Careful, the car is backing up! cf rale (yon) bak b to regress Peyi a ap fè bak annaryè. The country is regressing.
n. last trick

When playing:

ladennye sou
sou mwen. The

zengiendo fè

youn fe sou

adenyè ki reste

See" refers variants to their

headword

lenmi [le-nmi] (lènmi) see lenmi

benn² [used with ak] adj. full Sakti la benn ak kòb.
The small cloth bag is full of money.

Brackets are also used to note
usage level, particularly to
identify terms considered vulgar
or offensive by Creole speakers

bwa² n. cock, penis [vulg] ...-met(e) anba bwa
[vulg.]. to screw s.o., have sex with s.o. Patwon an
mete sèvant lan anba bwa. The boss screws the maid.
cf konyen

Material in square brackets also
supplements the meaning
provided by the gloss or limits
its application

debakasyon n. 1 disembarking, landing 2 raid [police]
cf debakman

"cf" provides a cross-reference
to a synonym or semantically
related term

ne² n. 1 knot [string, plant, wood, etc.] 2 node 3
ribbon 4 loop 5 knot [nautical measure] 6 ne
godyn an Gordian knot, unsolvable problem [...]

Arabic numeral designates first,
second, third, etc. senses of the
headword

netwaye¹ (netye, netche) 1 v tr. 1 to clean Al netye
chanm ou. Go clean your room. Chanm nan poko janm
netwaye. The room hasn't been cleaned yet. cf pwòpte 2
to wash. Wash out M pral netwaye pou la ak bonjan
zoran si epi siwon. I'm going to wash the chicken with a
lot of sour oranges and lemons. 3 to wipe (off) Bay chany
lan netwaye souye a pou mwen. Have the shoeshine boy
clean the shoes for me. 4 to pick clean [bones] Gad ki jan
mnye netwaye zo a. Look how he's picking the bones
clean 1 v refl. netwaye gôj li to clear one's throat Ou
pa netwaye gôj ou sou moun. You don't clear your throat
in front of people.