

MICHEL

DEGRAFF:

So it was very, I would say, crucial for me to do this interview in both English and Creole, because I see Creole languages, even in the case of Haiti-- especially in the case of Haiti-- as a particularly revealing and clear test tube or case study to really show how language can be such a powerful tool either for domination or for resistance, either for oppression or for development. So I would love teachers who are watching this video and will look at the course to see how they can adapt the content in order to address similar issues in their own community, because I think that what you see happening in the case of Creole languages also happens in the US, happens in Europe, in Latin America, in Africa, where language is often used as this technology for domination or resistance. And I think this course gives some basic analytical tools to be able to analyze these patterns.

And for me, it's also very important that teachers in Haiti and students in Haiti, including, say, future leaders or policymakers, get to understand this course and the readings and to understand that Haiti could do so much better if teachers, students, leaders had this awareness of how our attitudes towards Creole versus French have played over centuries in keeping the country underdeveloped. And if they could get a better sense of the importance of language in education development, then I think the country would do so much better. For me, it's a key bottleneck that we have to go past in order to really be able to develop a nation, is to be able to understand the history and the nature of your ancestral language and to be able to use it in a more systematic and productive way. If you cannot do that, there is no way that you can develop a whole nation that speaks that language.