RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

M.Ed. In TESL Program
Country Informational Reports

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program
In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

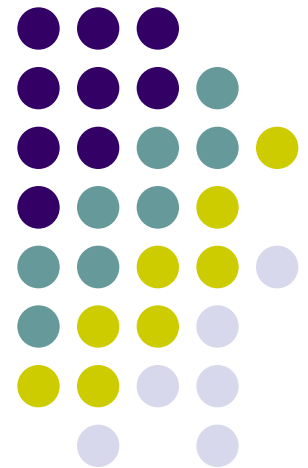Country: Cape Verde
Author: S. Allison Mowrer

Program Contact Person: Nancy Cloud (ncloud@ric.edu)

"To say that Cape Verdeans are resourceful people is not an exaggeration. They have have found ways to emigrate [all over the world]. They have found ways to integrate and become successful. Although coming from a very small group of islands in the Atlantic Ocean, they have a rich culture as seen in their music, arts and crafts, languages, cuisine, and strong family ties." - Alçides da Graça

(CIA World Factbook, 2012)

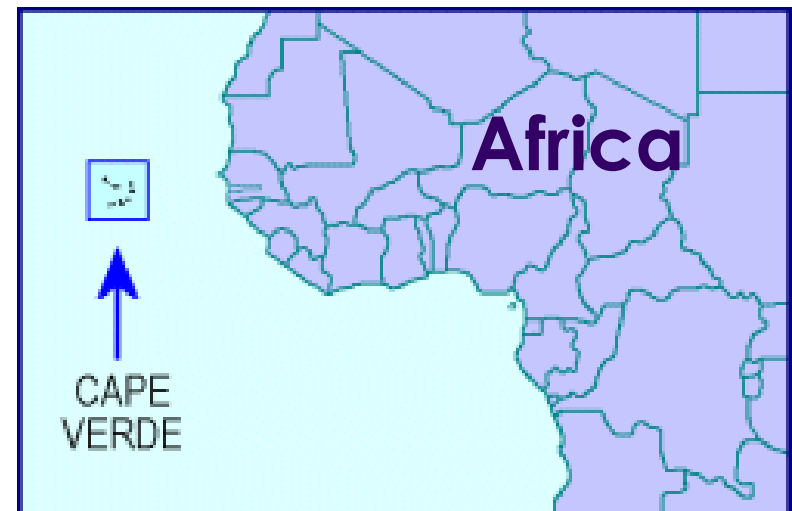# Republic of Cape Verde
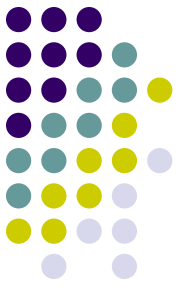
by S. Allison Mowrer

TESL 539 Spring 2012

Geography

- The Cape Verde islands are located off of the **west coast of Africa** near Senegal and Mauritania.
- The archipelago is made of **10 islands**, 9 of which are inhabited.
- The capital, **Praia**, is the largest city and is located on the largest island, Santiago.

Basic Information

- **Population**: 523,568 (July 2012 est.)[1]
  - approximately 125,000 people live in the capital, Praia[1]
- **Official Language**: Portuguese
  (used by the government and schools)
- **Day-to-day Language**: Kriolu (Cape Verdean Creole)
  (a mixture of Portuguese and African languages)
  - There are variations of Kriolu from island to island, especially between the Windward (northern) and Leeward (southern) islands.[2]
- **Ethnic groups**: Creole 71%, African 28%, European 1%[1]
- **Human Development Index ranking**: 133rd out of 187 countries[2]
  - 3rd among countries where Portuguese is spoken[2]
- **Poverty Level**: 30% (2000)[1]
- **Literacy Level**: 76.6% (85.8% male; 69.2% female)[1]
  - **Literacy Level** (15-25 years old): 98% (97% male; 99% female)[3]

[1] *CIA: World Factbook* (2012); [2] *Wikipedia: Cape Verde* (2012) ; [3] *Index Mundi* (2011)

History and Government

- The Cape Verde Islands were uninhabited until discovered in 1456 and **settled by the Portuguese** in 1462.

- Africans were brought to the islands with the growth of the **slave trade**.

- After the slave trade, the islands continued to be important as a **re-supply stop for ships**, especially whaling ships.

- The islands fought for and gained their **independence** from Portugal in 1975.

- Cape Verdean Independence day is celebrated on **July 5th**.

- The government is a stable, democratic **Parliamentary Republic** with a president and prime minister. [1]

(Cape Verde Breaks, n.d.)

Brief overview of history and present day Cape Verde:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5CyvWxi1zs

[1] *CIA: World Factbook* (2012)

Kriolu

ALUPEC alphabet

A B D DJ E F G H I J K L LH M N NH Ñ O P R S T TX U V X Z

- Cape Verdean Creole (Kriolu) is the **oldest creole language** that is still spoken today.[1]

- Kriolu is the **native language** of Cape Verdeans. However, Portuguese is still the official language of the islands and all instruction at all levels of school is taught in Portuguese.

- There are **different dialects** of Kriolu on each island.

- Cape Verdeans have been working since independence to make Kriolu the **official language** of the islands.[2]

- It took many years to develop an **alphabet** for Kriolu that acknowledged both the Portuguese and African origins for Kriolu and that could be used with all dialects.[2]

- The **ALUPEC alphabet** is made of 23 letters and 4 digraphs.

- It was **officially adopted in 1998** and accepted by the government as the only way to write Kriolu in 2005.[2]

- Currently it is only used for **literary purposes** and not in an official capacity.[2]

(Bergner, J., 2011)

[1]*Wikipedia: Cape Verdean Creole* (2012); [2]Baptista M. et al (2010)

Cape Verdean Diaspora

(Afropop.org, 2011)

- More **Cape Verdeans** live outside of the country than within.[1]

- Approximately 500,000 people of Cape Verdean descent live in the U.S. (especially in **Rhode Island** and **Massachusetts**).[2]

- Other places with large Cape Verdean populations include countries in **Europe** (Portugal, France, the Netherlands, etc), **Africa** (Angola, Senegal, etc), and **South America**.[2]

- The **remittances** sent back home from these emigrants are a very important part of the Cape Verdean economy and equal approximately 20% of GDP.[2] More than 1/4 of this money comes from immigrants in the U. S.[1]

- **Border Crossings: The View from Cape Verde** (audio slide show) http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/world/20070624_VERDE_FEATURE/index.html

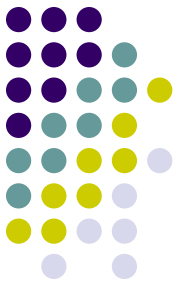[1]Carling, J. (2002); [2]*Wikipedia: Cape Verde* (2012)

Culture of Emigration

- Cape Verdeans have been **voluntarily** immigrating to the U.S. **longer than any other Africans** through connections with commercial whaling and packet ships.[1]

- During the 20th century, Cape Verde went through different periods **of** drought and famine forcing many to seek jobs in other countries.

- Cape Verdean families are **not always "traditional"** because of a tradition of emigration; however, family connections are **still important and strong.**[2]

- **98%** of legal Cape Verdean immigrants to the U.S. in 2010 were admitted due to **family** already living here, which is rare among most African immigrants.[1]

- More than half the respondents to recent government surveys say **they wish to emigrate.**[3]

- The net migration rate of Cape Verde has **dropped considerably** in the past 10 years from -12.37/1000 people to -0.66/1000 migrating out of Cape Verde primarily due to new immigration restrictions.[4]

- Cape Verdean music, art, literature, and poetry are **inspired** by the plight of the emigrant and longing for home and family.[2]

[1]Capps, R. (2011); [2]*Advameg, Inc*. (2012); [3]Carling, J. (2002); [4]*Index Mundi* (2011)

(Becoming America, 2012)

Cultural Identity

- Cape Verdeans are proud to **closely identify** themselves with the **island** they are from and the Kriolu spoken there.[1]

- Race in Cape Verde is **not strictly black or white**. Over 70% of the population come from a mixed background of Africans and Portuguese.

- Cape Verdean immigrants to the U.S. have had a **difficult time aligning themselves** in the strict racial system here.[2]

- **Music** is a very important part of Cape Verdean society.[1]

- Music is influenced by both **Portuguese and African cultures**.

- Important forms include **morna, batuque, and funana**. There are **dances** for each style.

(flags.redpixart.com, 2012)

[1]*Advameg, Inc.* (2012); [2]Machado, D. (1981)
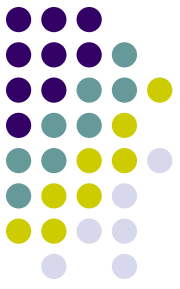
Cultural Characteristics

- Cape Verdeans tend to **stand close together** when talking and use lots of **hand gestures**.
- They **shake hands** as a greeting and often **touch while talking**.
- Although work outside the home is not strictly divided along gender lines, **women are responsible for taking care of the home.**
- In rural areas, children usually learn the same **trade** as their parents.
- Many women are the **main source of income** for their families.

(Dovedani, D., 2011)

- Traditionally, men were the emigrants, but today **both men and women emigrate** for work, while grandparents often raise children on the islands.[2]
- Most Cape Verdeans are poor, so there is **very little difference among classes**. The middle class is growing.
- Remittances (money, clothing, etc) sent home help to **improve the social class** of those on the islands.

[1]*Advameg, Inc.* (2012) [all information unless otherwise cited]; [2] Carling, J. (2002)

Education System: Background

(DuncanCV, 2002)
Elementary school students in Praia

- The majority of the Cape Verdean population (58%) is **25 years or younger**.[1]

(Torbenbrinker, 2010)
Praia Instituto (teacher training school)

- Cape Verde has worked in the past decade to **improve education** by:[2]
  - Promoting **pre-school**,
  - Making primary school **universally available**,
  - Improving and expanding **secondary school**,
  - Developing **higher education** on the islands, and
  - Increasing adult education and **literacy**.

[1]*United Nations* (2011); [2] *UNESCO-IBE* (2006)

Education System

(DuncanCV, 2002)

Kindergarten graduation in Praia

- **Preschool** (3-6 year olds)
  - **Optional**
  - **65%** of 1st graders report having attended a preschool program.
  - **Unequally distributed** throughout the islands
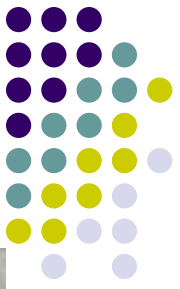 - Poor teacher preparation

- **Primary School** (6 years; similar to 1st-6th grade)
  - Free and **mandatory** for all
  - Teacher training is **improving** but still lacking in some areas.
    - Can vary from >75% of teachers on some islands to <15% on others
  - Discrepancies exist between schooling in **urban vs. rural** areas.
  - **High repetition rates** of students (average of 15% in 2005)[2]
  - Primary school is the first place that many students begin to learn **Portuguese**.

[1] *UNESCO-IBE* (2006) [all information unless otherwise cited]; [2] *UNICEF* (2008)

Education System

- **Secondary School** (6 years broken into 2 year cycles; similar to 7th-12th grade)

  - **Optional** and with tuition (based on family income)

  - Each island has at least **one high school**; there are 4 technical schools.

  - Repetition rate of **23%** in 2005[2]

  - **French and English** are **optional** beginning in the first cycle; one of these languages is **required** in the second cycle (9th-10th grade equivalent) and can be continued into the 3rd cycle depending on college/career goals.

(Cabral,N., n.d.)

(Lopez, D., 2010)

- **Higher Education**

  - **Universities and Polytechnic** schools are being further developed on the islands, including teacher training schools.

  - Many students attend university **abroad**.

[1] *UNESCO-IBE* (2006) [all information unless otherwise cited]; [2] *UNICEF* (2008)

Education Statistics[1]

- In 2007, **86% of students** (85% of boys and 87% of girls) who started school in the 1st grade **finished primary school**.

- In 2009, the net enrollment rate for **primary school** was **83%** (84% for boys and 82% for girls).

- In 2005, the net enrollment rate for **secondary school** was **58%** (55% for boys and 60% for girls).

- In 2005, **8%** of preschool, **78%** of primary, and **62%** of secondary teachers were **trained**.

- In 2005, the **student/teacher ratio** was **26:1** in primary school and **23:1** in secondary school.

(Microsoft Office clipart, 2012)

[1]*UNICEF* (2008)

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M.Ed. in TESL Program
Nancy Cloud, Director
Educational Studies Department
Rhode Island College, HBS 206 #5
600 Mt. Pleasant Avenue
Providence, RI 02908
Phone (401) 456-8789
Fax (401) 456-8284
ncloud@ric.edu

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