

***Prosodic and Syntactic Variation in Language Contact Situations:
A Study of French-Speaking Territories in the Caribbean***

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This talk explores language change in French varieties spoken in the Caribbean, driven by contact with Creole (and its substrate languages) in the region. Despite French being one of the most extensively studied languages, its Caribbean varieties—particularly in prosodic and morphosyntactic domains—remain under-researched. These varieties exhibit significant departures from Hexagonal French, shaped by their interaction with typologically divergent languages, resulting in hybrid grammars and intonation systems.

This linguistic context raises compelling questions: What linguistic features are most susceptible to change? What is the directionality of these changes? And what factors act as triggers or inhibitors in this process? Addressing these questions can certainly contribute to a broader understanding of language variation and change.

In my talk, I will outline the historically motivated linguistic landscape of French-speaking territories in the Caribbean and present preliminary findings from a corpus-based study examining variation in prosodic prominence and the expression of syntactic objects. I will also detail the corpus—a collection of unscripted radio programme conversations—and describe the methodologies employed for its automatic annotation and data processing.