

William J. Kezerian

Syracuse University, NY
MA Candidate in Linguistics Studies
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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Broad NLP, syntax, French-based Creoles, fieldwork, and bilingualism.
Narrow Syntactic focus marking, Guadeloupean Creole, language documentation, left displacement, language contact, computational linguistics, and argument structure

EDUCATION

2025- **MA, Linguistics**, Syracuse University, NY
Dual concentration in NLP and Linguistic Theory
Thesis advisor: Jaklin Kornfilt
GPA: 4.00 / 4.00

2024 **BA, Linguistics and Comparative Literature**, Summa Cum Laude, University of Massachusetts Amherst, MA
Double major, Minor in French and Francophone Studies
GPA: 4.00 / 4.00

2023 Certificate in TESOL

Summer Schools, Exchanges

2025 VII International Summer School Language Policy and Language Planning, The University for Foreigners of Siena, Siena, Italy

2025 NASSLLI, the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

2024 ESSLLI, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium

2019 Lycée Dumont d'Urville - LaPlace, Caen, France
TA in Intermediate English

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Conference Proceedings

2024 **William Kezerian**¹, Lam An Wyner, Sandro Ansari, and Kristine M. Yu. “Ye Olde French: Effect of Old and Middle French on SIGMORPHON-UniMorph Shared Task Data.” In Proceedings of the 21st SIG-MORPHON workshop on Computational Research in Phonetics, Phonology, and Morphology, pages 39–50, Mexico City, Mexico. Association for Computational Linguistics. [LINK](#)

Edited Volumes

2023 Kami Nguyen, **William Kezerian**, Savannah Weaver, and Livia Iwanicki, “mOthertongue 2023 (Full Issue),” *mOthertongue*, Vol. 28, Article 1, Comparative Literature Department, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

¹First author

PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2025 **William Kezerian**, Vasily Tselioudis, Béatrice Jeannot-Fourcaud, Isabelle Barrière & Renauld Govain. “The Role of *kè* in Guadeloupean Creole Complementation: A comparative syntactic analysis.” To be presented at *Syntax of the World’s Languages X*, University of Potsdam, Potsdam, Germany.
- 2025 **William Kezerian**, Vasily Tselioudis, Béatrice Jeannot-Fourcaud, Isabelle Barrière & Renauld Govain. “Focus and Fronting in Guadeloupean Creole: Examining the role of complementation in focus.” To be presented at *SLE 2025 Workshop: Issues in the formal and functional typology of focus*, Université Bordeaux Montaigne, France.
- 2024 **William Kezerian**, Lam An Wyner, Sandro Ansari, and Kristine M. Yu. “Ye Olde French: Effect of Old and Middle French on SIGMORPHON-UniMorph shared task data.” Presented at the *SIGMORPHON Workshop*, ACL 2024, Mexico City, Mexico.

INVITED TALKS

- 2025 William Kezerian. 2025. “Creole for the Classroom: Linguistic documentation and NLP in empowering native-language education in Guadeloupe.” Presented at *the VII International Summer School Language Policy and Language Planning: Bilingual minds and translangual practices in multicultural contexts*, The University for Foreigners of Siena, Italy.
- 2025 William Kezerian. 2025. “NLP in Language Documentation: A case study on Guadeloupean Creole focus and fronting.” Presented at the *Linguistic Studies Program Research and Creative Scholarship Fest*, Syracuse University, NY.
- 2025 William Kezerian. 2025. “Linguistic interaction in Guadeloupean Creole oral histories: Call and response to facilitate the tradition’s survival.” Presented at the *French Graduate Colloquium*, Syracuse University, NY.
- 2024 William Kezerian, Vasily Tselioudis. 2024. “Subordinate clauses in Guadeloupean Creole: Complementizer dropping, NP/VP focus, and PP focus attachment.” Presented at the *NSF-IRES Conference*, INSPE, Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe.

RESEARCH

NSF Research Fellowship

- Current **Focus Constructions, Complementizer Dropping, and Definite Clause Deixis within Subordinate Clauses in Guadeloupean Creole.**
Field linguistics research aimed at documenting syntactic phenomena in French-based Creoles in the Lesser Antilles. Combined expertise in python and computational linguistics to create three experiments to test speaker intuitions and elicit grammatical constructions in Guadeloupean Creole. *Supervised by Dr. Isabelle Barrière, Dr. Béatrice Jeannot, and Dean Renauld Govain.* [LINK](#)

Ongoing Master’s Thesis

- Current **Leveraging ASR for improving data analysis in language documentation.**
Developing an ASR model for Guadeloupean Creole using field-collected speech data to aid language documentation and analysis of syntactic features such as focus and complementation. Integrating NLP with field linguistics to address data processing bottlenecks and promote language technology access for speakers of understudied languages. *Supervised by Dr. Jaklin Kornfilt.*

Relevant Graduate Projects

2025	NLP methods for low-resource language documentation: A case study on Guadeloupean Creole Natural Language Processing. Developed and fine-tuned BERT and ChatGPT models to classify media bias in headlines about the Israel-Palestine conflict, focusing on passive voice and agent omission. Achieved 89% accuracy, outperforming baseline heuristics and zero-shot LLMs.
2024	The Passives were Analyzed: Comparing model performance in classifying passive use in news headline bias Applications of NLP. Fine-tuned BERT and ChatGPT models to classify media bias in headlines about the 2004 Israel-Palestine conflict, focusing on passive voice and agent omission. Achieved 89% accuracy with fine-tuned ChatGPT, outperforming baseline heuristics and LLMs.

EMPLOYMENT

Current	NSF-IRES Research Fellow , University of the Antilles, Guadeloupe LINK
Current	Teaching Assistantship , French and Francophone Program, Syracuse University
2022-2024	Teaching Internship , ESL Program, UMass Amherst
2023-2024	French Translator , UMass Daily Collegian
2023	Multilingual Editor , mOthertongue Journal of the Arts, UMass Amherst
2023	French Translator , the International Rescue Committee

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2025	NASSLLI , the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington
2024	ESSLLI , KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium
2024	ToBI Prosody Course , MIT
2024	Intro to R , Harvard University
2023	Programming for Everybody (Python) , University of Michigan
2023	Data structures (Python) , University of Michigan

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2024	Instructor of Record , FRENCH 201, Syracuse University
2023-2024	Instructor , Advanced American Culture and English Language, UMass Amherst
2022-2023	Instructor , Intermediate American Culture and English Language, UMass Amherst
2022-2024	ESL Tutor , UMass Amherst ESL Program
2019	EFL Teaching Assistant , Lycée Dumont d'Urville, Laplace, Caen, France

LANGUAGES

Native/Fluent	English
Advanced	French, Haitian Creole
Conversational	Japanese, Italian
Research	Guadeloupean Creole

SKILLS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Programming	Python, R, JupyterLabs, JavaScript, Bash
Technical Skills	Praat, LaTeX, MS Office, PsychoPy, Canva, ToBI, DARLA, Bed Word
Certifications	CITI Social and Behavioral Research

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

2025	PAC Grant, GSO, Syracuse University
2025	CAS-LLL Summer Research Fellowship, Syracuse University
2024	French Teaching Assistantship, Syracuse University
2024	Tuition Scholarship, Syracuse University
2024	National Science Foundation IRES Grant LINK
2024	Summa Cum Laude graduation honors, UMass Amherst
2023	Luise Bonner Scholarship Fund
2023	Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society
2022	Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Society
2022	Linguistic Society of America
2021-2024	Dean's List, UMass Amherst

SELECTED COURSEWORK

Graduate

Linguistics:	Syntactic Analysis (A), Morphological Analysis (A), Advanced Syntactic Analysis (<i>pending</i>), Sociolinguistics (<i>pending</i>)
Computation:	Natural Language Processing (A), Text Mining (<i>pending</i>)

Undergraduate

Linguistics:	Transformational Grammar (A), Syntax (A), Semantics (A), Linguistic Theory (A), Speech Sounds (A) and Structure (A), The Sounds of Englishes (A), Interpreting and Translation Research and Practice I (A) and II (A)
Computation:	Applications of NLP (A), Advanced Computational Linguistics (A), Computational Linguistics (A), Object-Oriented Programming (A)