

# William J. Kezerian

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MA Candidate in Linguistics Studies  
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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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

## EDUCATION

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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

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### *Peer-Reviewed Conference Proceedings*

2024 **William Kezerian**<sup>1</sup>, 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](#)

### *Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles*

*pending* **William Kezerian**<sup>1</sup>, Béatrice Jeannot-Fourcaud, Isabelle Barrière & Renauld Govain. “Focus and Fronting in Guadeloupean Creole: Examining the role of complementation in focus.”

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<sup>1</sup>First author

### 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.

### PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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- 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

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#### Presented

- 2025 “Testing Clause Boundaries: Focus and Complementation in Guadeloupean Creole.” Presented to *The Research Group on Creole Grammars (GRGC)*, Structures Formelles du Langage, Université Paris 8, France.
- 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 translingual practices in multicultural contexts*, The University for Foreigners of Siena, Italy.
- 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 “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 “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

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#### 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

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**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

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**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

**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

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**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

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

## SKILLS AND CERTIFICATIONS

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<b>Programming</b>	Python, R, JupyterLabs, JavaScript, Bash
<b>Technical Skills</b>	Praat, LaTeX, MS Office, PsychoPy, Canva, ToBI, DARLA, MFA
<b>Certifications</b>	CITI Social and Behavioral Research

## AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

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2025	PAC Grant, GSO, Syracuse University, \$600
2025	CAS-LLL Summer Research Fellowship, Syracuse University, \$375
2024	French Teaching Assistantship, Syracuse University
2024	Tuition Scholarship, Syracuse University
2024	National Science Foundation IRES Grant, \$1,500 <a href="#">LINK</a>
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

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### *Graduate*

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

### *Undergraduate*

<b>Linguistics:</b>	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)
<b>Computation:</b>	Applications of NLP (A), Advanced Computational Linguistics (A), Computational Linguistics (A), Object-Oriented Programming (A)