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ABSTRACT

The Prosodic Structure of Trinidadian English Creole

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This dissertation investigates the linguistic structure of Trinidadian English Creole (TEC), the native variety used by much of the population of the island of Trinidad, in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The thesis examines the organization of prominence relations within the syllable, word, and sentence, and how these phonological structures interface with morphology and syntax in complex ways. The Prosodic Word is shown to encode prominence in the form of a left-edge stress, and through recursion, incorporate morphologically complex words. At higher levels of the prosodic hierarchy, the thesis argues for an Accentual Phrase as an intermediate category, influenced by a confluence of syntactic and phonological factors that help organize prosodic phrasing within the grammar.

Keywords: Creole, Prosody, Linguistics