

## SP2024 BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

### Lexical stress perception by Trinidadian English listeners

Philipp Meer, Ronald Francis and Robert Fuchs.

Research on lexical stress in postcolonial Englishes has focused on speech production. In the Caribbean island of Trinidad, production research indicates the existence of a lexical stress system in Trinidadian English (TrinE) and Trinidadian English Creole (TEC). However, as in postcolonial Englishes more generally, little is known about how Trinidadian listeners perceive stress. Using a forced-choice identification task, the present study investigates the perception of lexical stress in disyllabic words by tertiary-educated speakers of TrinE (N = 46). Participants were presented with 21 truncated word pairs with segmentally identical first syllables but different lexical stress locations. One token had stress on the first, the other stress on the second syllable (e.g. car-in CARton vs. carTOON). Participants were asked to judge which of the words in a pair was the source of the current fragment. Results are analyzed using logistic mixed-effects models for trochaic (first syllable stressed) and iambic (second syllable stressed) words. The findings suggest the existence of a lexical stress system in TrinE at the level of speech perception. They further indicate differences in stress perception across postcolonial varieties of English: there appears to be a greater sensitivity to word stress for TrinE listeners compared to IndE listeners.