This hour:

• Creole language syntax: Fronting
  • Declarative contexts
  • Interrogative contexts
  • Relative clause contexts
Fronting

- Definition: realization of a constituent in the first position of the sentence

Derives from observation that certain phrases occur in initial position, though they might be expected to occur elsewhere:

1) I find fronting fascinating.
2a) Fronting, I find fascinating.
2b) Fronting, I find ___(empty category) fascinating.

Typically find fronting of information already active in the discourse, or background information. i.e., serves to reactivate, or newly emphasize, a topic.
Declarative Contexts

1.) **Topicalization:**
   - Non-verbal expression
   - No additional marking
   
   e.g. Saramaccan
   
   **Feledi** mi si a di djai (NP)
   Freddy 1SG see LOC the garden
   “Freddy, I saw (ec) in the garden.”

   - Main or embedded clauses
   
   e.g. **Mi meni taa a di djai mi bi si en**
   1SG think [that LOC the garden [1SG +ANT see 3SG]]
   “I think it is in the garden that I had seen him (ec).”
Unbounded (originates in embedded clause, but surfaces in initial position of the main clause)

\[\text{e.g. } \text{Di gwamba Kofi sabi taa mi njan} \]
\[\text{The meat Kofi know that 1SG eat} \]
\[\text{“The meat, Kofi knows that I eat (ec).”} \]

2.) Cleft: fronted element + marker

• Marker or “highlighter” = equative copula

\[\text{e.g. Jamaican} \]
\[\text{A tief im taan} \]
\[\text{It’s thief 3SG turn} \]
\[\text{“It’s a thief he turned into.”} \]
Declarative Contexts

3.) XP + focus particle
   e.g. Saramaccan ‘de’
   \textit{Di buku de mi bi ta lesi.}
   the book there 1SG PAST NONP. read
   “That book there I have been reading.”

4.) Predicate cleft (predicate doubling):
   Movement of a (stage-level) verb to clause-initial position, leaving copy behind
   e.g. Haitian ‘se’
   \textit{Se mache Jan mache al lekol.}
   FOC walk John walk go school
   “John walked (did not run) to school.”
Declarative Contexts

4.) Predicate cleft (predicate doubling): Movement of a verb to clause-initial position, leaving copy behind. 4 types:

a.) prototypical

b.) temporal adverbial clauses  
   *e.g. Haitian* (note: unmarked)  
   \[ \text{Rive Jan rive Mari pati.} \]  
   arrive John arrive Mary leave  
   “As soon as John arrived Mary left.”

| clausal adverbial clauses  
| “Because John arrived Mary left.” (same sentence as in b.)

d.) bridge (factive) clauses  
   *e.g. Haitian* (note: unmarked)  
   \[ \text{Rive Jan rive a fe li kontan.} \]  
   arrive John arrive DET make 3SG happy  
   “The fact that John arrived made her happy.”
1.) WH-movement (question formation)

*e.g. Jamaican*

\[ Wu \ yu \ tink \ se\ *gowe/im \ lik \ (ec) \]

who 2SG think that leave/3SG hit

“Who do you think *left/he hit?”

2.) relative clause to phrase-initial position; clause becomes a predicate of the head NP or antecedent

*e.g. Saramaccan*

\[ di \ womi \ di \ mi \ wooko \ ku \ en \ (possessor \ NP) \]

the man REL 1SG work with RP-3sg

“the man I worked with”