

Contemporary French in Africa and the Indian Ocean

This project conducts in-depth studies of varieties of French in 8 different countries/areas where French coexists with local languages.

About the project

The project, CFA, studies usage, varieties and structure in three types of sociolinguistic contexts:

- countries with a local majority language functioning as lingua franca - Central African Republic, Mali, Senegal
- countries without such a language - Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivor Coast
- islands where French and Creole developed simultaneously- (Mauritius, Reunion)

Objectives

The main objectives of the project are:

- describe the 8 varieties from a phonological, syntactical and sociolinguistic point of view, and test different linguistic hypotheses on our data
- study differences/similarities between the 8 varieties and analyze the role of different factors on language change: external factors, social factors; inter-language factors, interference from other languages; internal factors, inherent structural traits facilitating changes.

Cooperation

An international group of researchers from France, Norway and a number of African countries participate in the project, linked to the Phonologie du français contemporain (PFC) project (Phonology of Contemporary French) project. Using the same method for all the enquiries ensures the comparability of the data, linguistic and sociolinguistic, which are entered into a freely accessible database.