

MICHEL

DEGRAFF:

My name is Michel DeGraff, and I've been teaching in linguistics at MIT for the past 21 years already. And I'm the faculty instructor for the course on Creole languages and Caribbean identities. So my research is about trying to understand how languages evolve over time. And what happens when new languages are created. Say, for example, in the Caribbean in my native Haiti where Haitian Creole emerged in the 17th, 18th century. So we try to understand that patterns of development of the languages we call creole languages. And in terms of the structure, but also I have an applied side to my work where I try to understand how best to use say, Haitian Creole and other local languages in education and how that's crucial for development of countries like Haiti.