

# Syntactic Developments in Sranan

## Creolization as a Gradual Process

Jacques Arends

### bron

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Let op: boeken en tijdschriftjaargangen die korter dan 140 jaar geleden verschenen zijn, kunnen auteursrechtelijk beschermd zijn. Welke vormen van gebruik zijn toegestaan voor dit werk of delen ervan, lees je in de [gebruiksvoorwaarden](#).

In memory of my parents

For Melanie, Jasper, Michiel and Tommie

## **Preface**

This study is the result of a research project entitled ‘Syntactic change in Sranan’, which was initiated by my supervisor, Professor Pieter Seuren, and by the late Professor Jan Voorhoeve, the founder of Sranan studies in the Netherlands. The project was financed under number W 39-81 by the Dutch Organization for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO), which assistance is here gratefully acknowledged. I feel I have been lucky to be able to work on a research project that turned out to be so rewarding in so many ways.

There are several people and institutions who I would like to thank for helping me during the preparation of this thesis:

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## Abbreviations

ASP	aspect marker
c.	circa
COP	copula
DEM	demonstrative
DET	determiner
EDD	English Dialect Dictionary
GCCE	Guinea Coast Creole English
HCE	Hawaiian Creole English
LBH	Language Bioprogram Hypothesis
LOC	general locative preposition
MOD	modality particle
MOM. PART.	momentariness particle
MSL	Maroon Spirit Possession Language
NEG	negative marker
NP	noun phrase
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
p.c.	personal communication
REL	relative marker
TMA	tense-mood-aspect
TNS	tense marker
WAPE	West African Pidgin English
WNT	Woordenboek der Nederlandse Taal

## **Part I: Analysis**

## Chapter one: Introduction

### 1.1. Background

In a sense the ‘prehistory’ of this dissertation goes back as far as 1961, when Jan Voorhoeve, the godfather of Sranan studies, wrote that ‘in Surinam we have the unique opportunity to make a study of the process of creolization in its later development.’ (Voorhoeve 1961: 100). This, as far as syntax is concerned, is precisely what the present study is about. It is an investigation of syntactic developments during the 200 years after the first (largely undocumented) century in the history of Sranan (roughly 1750 to 1950). The ‘unique opportunity’ referred to above is given by the fact that many written documents are available, dating back to the latter part of the 18th century.

Among these documents is the famous Neger-Englisches Wörter-Buch by the Moravian missionary C.L. Schumann from 1783 - a treasure of early Creole lexicography - of which a scientific edition was prepared under Voorhoeve's supervision by André Kramp (Kramp 1983). In fact, the quality of the material collected by Schumann provided the impetus for these two authors to write their seminal paper on Syntactic Developments in Sranan (Voorhoeve & Kramp 1982), which produced the preliminary data necessary to design the project of which this dissertation is the result. These findings made it very clear that an in-depth study of syntactic change in Sranan would prove to be rewarding. It is within this context that the present work should be seen as a continuation of a tradition, whose first and foremost inspiration is the person of Jan Voorhoeve.

Of course, the Schumann dictionary is not the only source for historical data on Sranan, but it is one of the oldest and certainly one of the best. For a study of syntactic change, however, the comparison of only one 18th century source with the modern variety will not do, for several reasons. First, changes in a period intermediate between these two that were levelled out soon afterwards (such as is partly the case with the rise of the de-variant for the identifying copula between 1800 and 1850 (see Chapter 2 for details)) would go unnoticed. Second, it would seem wise not to depend on only one source in order to avoid possible idiosyncrasies, misunderstandings or plain errors on the part of the author. Third, the excellent quality of some other sources besides Schumann, such as Focke's 1855 and Wullschlägel's 1856 dictionaries and the Herskovitses' collection of folk-tales from 1936, would turn their exclusion into a missed opportunity. Finally, a number of sources were added in order to spread our data as much as possible over the entire period under study, and some others to include as many native speaker texts as were available.

The period to be investigated was determined as ranging roughly from the middle of the 18th to the middle of the 20th

centuries. Two remarks are in order here, one concerning the starting point and one concerning the point of termination. As to the former, this was determined solely by the lack of data from the preceding period, with the exception of Herlein's sample text from 1718. For obvious reasons this text was included in the corpus, although the next one of any substance (apart from Nepveu's 1765 corrections of Herlein) to emerge dates from half a century later (Van Dyk c. 1770<sup>1</sup>). It seems more realistic, then, to indicate the period under investigation as is done at the beginning of this paragraph than to give the impression that this study covers the entire period from 1718 onwards, including that between this year and 1765. As to the endpoint, that was determined at roughly 1950 in order to keep some distance from recent developments that have taken place, and still are taking place right now, since World War II. These developments, arising among other things from the fact that increasing numbers of speakers from other ethnic groups besides creoles<sup>2</sup> (i.e. African descendants) have started to use the language as a lingua franca, deserve a separate study.

## 1.2. Short sketch of Sranan

Sranan (also called Sranan Tongo (Voorhoeve 1953), Taki-Taki (Hall 1948), Negro-English (Rens 1953) or Nengre (Tongo)) is an Anglophone creole language with a considerable admixture of African, Portuguese and Dutch vocabulary (Voorhoeve 1973). It is spoken in the capital (Paramaribo) and along the coastal strip of the Republic of Suriname<sup>3</sup>, which is located on the north-eastern coast of South America, between Guyana (formerly British Guiana) and the French département d'outremer of Guyane. The number of speakers is estimated at less than half a million, of whom approximately one third is now resident in the Netherlands. Sranan is the vernacular for most creoles (the official language being Dutch), and is used as a lingua franca by speakers from other ethnic groups, such as people of (British) Indian, Javanese and Chinese descent. For excellent, although somewhat outdated, bibliographical introductions to the language the reader is referred to Voorhoeve & Donicic (1963) and to the relevant section in Reinecke *et al.* (1975).

Besides Sranan several other creoles are spoken in

1 See note 8 below for a modification of this date.

2 The word 'creole' here refers to a person of African descent, but throughout this study it is mostly used to refer to 'creole language'.

3 I adhere to the convention that the names of countries should be spelled as they are in the country concerned.

Suriname, mainly in the interior, by the so-called ‘bush negroes’, the descendants of the 17th and 18th century maroons (run-away slaves). Some of these are also English-based and mutually intelligible with Sranan, especially Ndjuka (also called Djuka or Aucan); others in this group include Boni (Aluku), Paramaccan and Kwinti. A different branch is formed by the Portuguese-based creoles called Saramaccan and Matawai, which are historically related to the others (see Smith 1987 for an intriguing exposition of this and related issues).

Sranan is supposed to have come into existence somewhere between 1650, the year of arrival of the first English-speaking colonists and their slaves from Barbados, and 1680, the year when all slaves purchased before 1667 (when Suriname was ceded to the Dutch) had left the colony (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975; Voorhoeve 1983). This assumption is made by those who adhere to this view, since they see no other way of explaining the fact that the ‘new’ black arrivals from West Africa (imported after 1667) managed to continue an English-based language after the English- (or English pidgin/creole-) speaking input had been removed. The resemblances between the Maroon Spirit Possession Language of Jamaica, documented by Bilby (1983), and brought to the island by the British-owned slaves who had left Suriname after 1667, on the one hand, and Sranan on the other seem to corroborate this view. In this thesis a different view is developed, both on the basis of linguistic as well as non-linguistic evidence.

Sranan is (like most other creoles) a clear-cut SVO-language, in which all the properties characteristic of pan-Atlantic-Creole are present. It has an elaborate system of verb serialization, including a serial comparative construction (see Chapter 3; for an extensive discussion of serialization in Sranan see Sebba 1987); it has clefting, including predicate clefting (see Chapter 4); it has a finegrained copula system, including a zero copula with adjectival predicates (see Chapter 2). The verbal system, containing the well-known TMA particles, is aspect oriented, but perhaps changing into tense orientation (Seuren 1981; for a competent discussion of the verbal system as such see Voorhoeve 1957). It has a rigid word order and (almost) no inflection.

There is no comprehensive reference grammar available, but Donicie (1954; second edition 1959) probably comes closest. Although outdated now, it is a competent description of the most important structures in the language by someone who was linguistically informed and knew the language well. Voorhoeve (1962) is a professional syntax, but loses much of its attraction by its idiosyncratic framework and terminology. Much of it is available in a more accessible form in his 1957 article referred to above. Tense, aspect and the copula are discussed within a modern framework in Seuren (1981). The phonological history of Sranan and other creoles of Suriname (notably Saramaccan) is treated in Smith (1987). Echteld (1966) is a study of the English-based part of the



lexicon. The social history of the language has been investigated by Rens (1953); Voorhoeve (1973) is an interesting, but much debated (see, e.g., Smith 1987) exposition of the relexification hypothesis regarding the Suriname creoles. Of course, the *Vorbericht* to Schuchardt's edition of Schumann's 1778 Saramaccan dictionary (Schuchardt 1914) still stands out as the first modern linguistic treatment of Sranan as well as Saramaccan<sup>4</sup>.

### 1.3. Goals and method

The primary goal of this study is to document syntactic developments in Sranan by collecting data from as wide a period and as many sources as possible. This data (in the case of the copula a representative sample of it) is listed in Appendix B (Part Two). The second aim is to analyze the data by searching for explanations for the developments they show. Also, these findings are related to current theories of creolization (e.g. Bickerton's Language Bioprogram Hypothesis (LBH), see Bickerton 1981; 1984) and to the connected 'universals versus substrata controversy' (for a recent collection of papers on this topic see Muysken & Smith eds. 1986). Prominent defendants of the substratum hypothesis are Alleyne (1980) and Boretzky (1983).

In the form in which it is presented here, this dissertation is much more modest, especially in its coverage of different syntactic categories, than its author originally intended it to be. After a first perusal of the sources three more categories, besides the three discussed here, were selected for investigation: verb serialization, complementation with *fu*, and the TMA system. All three of them, on the basis of a preliminary analysis, proved to yield interesting results after an in-depth examination, but their inclusion would have been far too ambitious, given the method that was decided upon (see below) and the obvious limitations of time, inherent to a project like this. Still, it is with pain in the heart that I have left them out, but otherwise the dissertation would probably never have been finished.

The method, then, that necessitated this 'amputation' of the corpus, was to include each and every instance of a given category within (a fixed portion of) each source. Although I am well aware that diachronic syntax is possible without adherence to this principle, and, in fact, is practiced in this way more often than not, it seemed advisable in this particular case not to do without it. First, a major goal of this study is to make available hardly accessible data anyhow, so why not include them all? Second, and more important, the language has not been described from a

4 There are short notes in Greenfield (1830) and in Van Name (1870); in Reinecke (1937) a whole chapter is devoted to the Suriname creoles.

diachronic syntactic viewpoint as yet, so we don't know what to expect as to the amount and direction of change it has undergone. It would seem best then to stay on the safe side and include all data in order to get a realistic picture.

Thus, the results reported in this study are fully based on quantitative data, although in two of the three cases the number of items is necessarily rather small. Where the number of copula-sentences is just below 1200, the ones for clefting and comparison are only around 250 and 200 respectively. In the latter case the actual situation is even worse, since the category of true comparatives (comparison of two NP's along some parameter) numbers only some 70 odd sentences. This problem cannot be avoided since these categories appear rather infrequently in texts, at least compared to copular sentences which are present on every page. Obviously, in cases like these, where the number of occurrences of a given category may be reduced to even 1 (as is indeed the case for the Allative Comparative; see Chapter 3), it becomes rather vacuous to speak about quantitative results. On the other hand, the emphasis put here on coverage of data is not entirely without importance either. For a historically poorly documented language like Sranan it greatly increases the reliability of the data: without the pursuit of complete coverage the single, but very interesting occurrence of the Allative Comparative referred to above would probably have gone unnoticed.

Finally, a word or two will have to be said on theory. Although I am aware that diachronic syntax does not operate in a theoretical vacuum (cf. for instance Lightfoot 1979, where one particular theory of syntax, Chomsky's Extended Standard Theory, is taken as the framework within which syntactic change is studied), I prefer not to commit myself to any theoretical bias as far as this dissertation is concerned. First, its aim, as explained earlier, is largely descriptive, and, second, it is consciously and literally 'pre-theoretical' in the sense that it is intended as a *Fundgrube* precisely for theoreticians, on which to build (or destroy, for that matter) their theories.

#### **1.4. Hypotheses about creolization**

There is one predominant feature of creole languages, regardless of where they have arisen and from which superstrate language they have derived their lexicon, and that is their conspicuous structural similarity. This has intrigued observers from the very beginning and led them to propose all kinds of hypotheses to explain these similarities. (Excellent overviews can be found in DeCamp 1971, 1977; more recent surveys are contained in Mühlhäusler 1986, Holm 1988 and Romaine 1988). The most recent and most interesting among these theories are the monogenesis/relexification-hypothesis (Thompson 1961; for Sranan Voorhoeve 1973), the Language Bioprogram Hypothesis

(Bickerton 1974, 1977, 1981, 1984) and the substratum hypothesis (Alleyne 1980; Boretzky 1983). In the heat of the battle between the latter two the former, which claims a single historical origin for all pidgins and creoles, having later relexified to different superstrate languages, has disappeared from the picture somewhat, but it has found a new advocate (as far as relexification is concerned) in Smith (1987) for the case of Saramaccan. Apart from this work the hypothesis remains largely unsupported, however, especially as regards the problem to explain not only how these similarities came about, but also why they are the way they are. For that reason it will not be considered in any detail here.

The present debate between substratists and universalists was foreshadowed a century ago by the work of such creolists as Lucien Adam (1883) and Adolpho Coelho (1880-1886), who took positions similar to but not identical with those of Alleyne on the one, and Bickerton on the other hand. And then there were the ‘godfathers’ of modern ‘creolistics’, Schuchardt and Hesseling, who always had a more moderate stand in this issue, taking both the factor of transmission and that of creation into account, although tending more to the latter than to the former in the course of their scientific careers (Schuchardt 1909; Hesseling 1905; see Gilbert 1986 for a more elaborate discussion of this issue). It is my opinion that these authors were indeed correct in seeing the truth lying somewhere in the middle, the crucial question being to decide where exactly that somewhere is, in other words to specify as accurately as possible in which areas of language these factors have played their respective roles. This means that what we need is a complementary and differential theory of creolization, that is as true to the facts as possible, but at the same time abstract enough to generate new ideas and to allow interesting generalizations that have a bearing on the central questions of language and its acquisition. I will deal with this issue in more detail in Chapter 5. Here I will briefly discuss the basic tenets of both parties involved in the controversy as it has been going on over the past decade.

The three basic claims of the LBH are the following:

‘The LBH claims that the innovative aspects of creole grammar are inventions on the part of the first generation of children who have a pidgin as their linguistic input, rather than features transmitted from preexisting languages. The LBH claims, further, that such inventions show a degree of similarity, across wide variations in linguistic background, that is too great to be attributed to change. Finally, the LBH claims that the most cogent explanation of this similarity is that it derives from the structure of a species-specific program for language, genetically coded and expressed, in ways still largely mysterious, in the

structures and modes of operation of the human brain'. (Bickerton 1984:173)

The LBH thus states that of all languages those called 'creoles' most clearly exhibit the properties of the 'language bioprogram', the innate structure of Language, wired into the brains of every human individual. The basic idea is that only during the creolization stage the language-learning child, with both parents speaking pidgin<sup>5</sup>, is sufficiently free of the pressure normally exercised by the structures of non-pidgin languages, to have full access to the features of the bioprogram and to realize them in the language it is creating. For it is only pidgins that are not mixed up with all the deviations from and contradictions to the bioprogram like other, 'normal', languages are. Since this innate program is by definition universal, this would explain why all creoles, no matter where they arose or under which lexical flag, are so similar in their structure.

Now, it is clear that this hypothesis relies heavily on the assumption that creolization is an instantaneous, one-generation process: if not - if, in other words, a creole is acquired over several generations, with some (perhaps most) learning it as a second rather than a first language -, it is hard to see how these second language speakers would have access to the bioprogram since they already acquired a non-creole (in most cases West African) language before. As a matter of fact, it is a basic claim of this dissertation that in the case of Sranan instantaneous creolization is a fiction and that on that account the Bickertonian hypothesis must be refuted. (A detailed exposition of this claim will be found in Chapter 5.) It is precisely this exclusion of second language acquisition as a determining process in creolization which allows Bickerton to dismiss all claims of possible transmission of substrate features, since the only possible transmitters are just these second language speakers.

If, however, second language acquisition is included in a theory of creolization, the relevance of substrata becomes quite unavoidable. At the same time - and this is a remarkable difference with an LBH-approach - there is room left for other factors, such as universals of first and second language acquisition (since, of course, it is not only second language speakers who create a creole). Unfortunately, the role of the latter in the creolization process is still largely unexplored.

Quite a different way of explaining the unexpected similarities across creoles of diverse origins is by positing a common (in the case of the Atlantic creoles: West African) substratum. Monographs by Alleyne (1980) and Boretzky (1983) contain a wealth of material relating to structures common to both the Atlantic creoles and certain West African (especially Kwa) languages, that simply cannot be denied. On

5 In addition probably to one or more other languages.

the other hand, Bickerton's criticism of the substratist position, - that its method is defective -, is certainly valid to the extent that it will not do to simply pick out creole features ad libitum and then go on to search through as many West African grammars as are necessary to find a match (or vice versa). Such a method is obviously arbitrary and is correctly accused of applying what Bickerton (1981: 49) calls 'the cafeteria principle' (a term first coined by Dillard (1970)), i.e. an unaccounted way of finding matching pairs for arbitrarily selected features in arbitrarily selected members of two groups of languages.

As to the selection of these languages, this defect can be repaired. First, one can take linguistic evidence into account, relating to levels of grammar other than the one one is interested in (provided, of course, this is not subject to the deficiencies mentioned above). In the case of the present study, dealing with syntax, there are phonological and lexical studies available (Smith 1987; Daeleman 1972; Huttar 1985) that point to a relationship between the creoles of Suriname and certain West African languages. Further, there is a growing amount of historical, demographic and anthropological evidence regarding the ethnic and linguistic background of the slaves that were transported to Suriname during the 17th and 18th centuries (Postma 1970, 1975; Price 1976, 1983). (More on this issue regarding the particular case of Sranan can be found in section 1.7. below, which is entirely devoted to the question of how to select specific substrate languages for investigation.)

As to the former part of Bickerton's criticism of 'substratomania' (as he prefers to call it), - the arbitrariness in the selection of categories (features, structures) to be compared -, there is a less ready answer to that. In a sense, every selection in this respect is arbitrary to some extent (unless, of course, one is able to be fully comprehensive, i.e. to cover the entire grammar of a language). This is so because selection is pre-theoretical in the sense that it is only after comparing certain (arbitrarily selected) structures that one can begin theorizing about a possible explanation for their (dis)similarities. There is as yet no theory available on creolization that is specific enough to predict which categories are most probably transmitted from other languages and which are innovated from the resources of the human language faculty. Also, this matter need not worry us too much, since the criticism can be equally well applied to the Bickertonian approach, where there is no principle whatsoever to determine which categories to examine on their supposedly universal, innate status, and which to leave out. Thus it is entirely unclear why, for instance, the categories studied in this dissertation (copula, comparison, clefting), are not (or only marginally) treated in the two most prominent expositions of the LBH, Bickerton (1981) and Bickerton (1984).

A third point of criticism (although not made by

Bickerton as far as I know) concerns the question of how to decide when two structures in two different languages count as similar. To my knowledge, such a principle is not available right now, so we will simply have to do without it. Also, any principle of such a kind would be completely theory-dependent, for example as to abstractness of representation, which would make it unsuitable for a theory-neutral study as the present one, whose main goal it is to deliver the empirical foundations for theorists to build their theories on. Still the point remains valid that in substratum research individual cases do not have too much force: it is the accumulation of data, the wideness of coverage, the consistency of the evidence, which will have to dip the balance. Apart from all this, the much neglected, but very useful information made available by researchers in Universal-Typological Grammar (such as Stassen 1985 for the comparative construction) can be helpful in delimiting the boundaries within which a given category may manifest itself across the languages of the world. Decisions about (dis)similarities of structures may thus be given a firmer empirical foundation.

Summarizing, my view on the ‘universals versus substrata controversy’ (along with some others: see, e.g., Mufwene 1986) is that it is wrongly stated. It is not so much a matter of contrary as of complementary factors, which should both be invoked in the explanation of Creole structure. The important issue then becomes to determine the relative importance of both types of factors (and possibly others), and to find out what determines the emergence of universal features in some and substrate elements in other areas of syntax (or other components of grammar such as phonology and semantics). My finding that the semantic differentiation of the copula in Sranan into several distinct compartments is a Kwa-feature, whereas the formal marking of this differentiation (i.e. the generalization of locative BE over other copula functions except identification) is probably universally determined, should be appreciated within this context (see Chapter 2 for details). The same goes for my findings regarding the historical development of the comparative system: throughout its history Sranan has used three out of six universally possible types of comparative, all three of them in accordance (or at least not in contradiction) with its basic word order<sup>6</sup>. The three types not found (or only once in one of these cases) are all in disagreement with its basic word order. At the same time, of the types that do occur the one most favoured is the serial comparative which is also prominent in some West African languages. Finally, the fact that Sranan has both predicate

6 From a typological-universal point of view (see Stassen 1985).

clefting and ‘predicate relativization’<sup>7</sup>, - two syntactic procedures which are relatively scarce across the world's languages, but which do occur rather frequently in Niger-Congo -, together with the fact that the two structures are possibly related, points to a West African origin, whereas the occurrence of clefting as such is probably universally determined.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that universals and substrata, at least in the format in which they are studied now, cannot claim exclusivity in the explanation of Creole genesis. Other factors which may be related to but not equated with what is presently understood as ‘universals’, such as universals of second language acquisition and semantic transparency (cf. Seuren & Wekker 1986), should also be taken into account.

### 1.5. Sources and sample

The historical sources that provided the data for this study are listed in Appendix A, together with full bibliographical information, the title in which the source was consulted (if relevant, such as in the case of manuscripts), and the portion of the text that was taken into account. Since there is no absolute measure available as to what constitutes a reliable database, every decision in this respect necessarily remains somewhat arbitrary. It is only after completing the research that one is able to decide with precision what the adequate size of the database would have been, since only then can one be certain which (sub-)categories have really changed and which have remained static. It is in this light that the size of the database for copula constructions (1176 sentences) should be viewed: now, after the investigation has been completed, we know that a sample half this size would have yielded the same results. This is especially true for some subcategories, such as location and existence, where change is much less dramatic than in others. This is the main reason that only about half of the overall copula-sample has been included in Appendix B: to give more examples would only have meant needless repetition.

The fact that some categories (such as the copula) occur much more frequently than others (such as comparison and clefting), implies that it is not feasible to take identical portions of text into account for different categories. If I had done that, the numbers of comparative and cleft sentences in the sample would have been a fraction of what they are now (209 and 259 sentences respectively). (Both subsamples have,

7 Predicate relativization refers to a type of construction where a nominalized predicate is relativized as the direct object of an identical verbal predicate, as in da fadom di a fadom, ‘the fall he fell’, i.e. ‘the fall he had’. It is treated more extensively in Ch. 5.

of course, been included integrally in Appendix B.) The relatively small numbers of data for both of these categories are all the more problematic since they do not constitute monolithic wholes, but are themselves differentiated into several subcategories, which necessarily yield even smaller numbers of data. Thus, whatever I have to say on the very interesting category of predicate clefting in Sranan between 1750 and 1950, is based on the 29 (!) sentences that I have been able to locate, even though some extensive sources, such as Schumann 1783 and Focke 1855, were searched completely. And, as said earlier, my remarks on the ‘true’ comparative construction derive from the 78 sentences that I have been able to identify for this category, using the same extensive sources as for clefting. All this gives an indication of the kinds of problems encountered by the historical creolist who wishes to study a particular construction on an empirical basis.

As to the question of representation, it is impossible (and unnecessary) to represent each source by the same number of data. If we divide (again rather arbitrarily) the 1750-1950 period into four 50-year segments, called Stage I, II, III and IV, then for some of these stages there are more sources available than for others. Also the linguistic quality is not always the same. The latter accounts for the overrepresentation of the Schumann and Focke dictionaries, two specimina of Creole lexicography of an extraordinarily high level. The availability of a number of well-edited native speaker texts from the second half of the 19th century (King 1973, 1981; Kraag 1980; Albitrouw 1978, 1979) necessitated their inclusion in the sample, even though precisely this period (1850-1900) abounds with high quality material even without these sources. This makes it clear that it would be misguided to try to strive for equal representation, although, of course, an effort has been made to keep deviations within reasonable limits.

At this point it would seem desirable to give a short characteristic of each of the sources<sup>8</sup>. After that a few more

<sup>8</sup> As far as biographical information could be obtained, it is presented here (the main sources are Encyclopaedie 1914-1917 and Encyclopedie 1977):

Herlein - - -

Nepveu A son of Huguenot parents he went to Suriname in 1734 at the age of fifteen. Governor of Suriname from 1770 to 1779.

Van Dyk Although no biographical information could be obtained, the search for it was not completely fruitless, since one source (Van der Aa 1852-1878) gave a precise dating for this previously undated work: it is dated there at 1740.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to confirm this date, but a pre-1770 date fits in well with some of its linguistic characteristics. Since the preface refers to a part which is actually not present in the book, it is very well possible that the copy used for this study is an unchanged, although incomplete, reprint of this 1740 edition.

This would mean that Van Dyk's work, and not Magens's (1770) grammar of Negerhollands (as was supposed up to now; see, e.g., Holm 1988: 18), is the oldest Creole grammar known to exist. Since the above information was obtained only after most of the manuscript had been completed, Van Dyk's work is still dated at c. 1770 throughout this thesis.

Schumann A son of a Moravian Brother (who was also a professional linguist), he was born in Berbice, but educated in Europe. He returned to Suriname in 1777, where he first started working on a Saramaccan dictionary (1778) and later wrote his Sranan dictionary (1783).

Stedman Served in Suriname from 1773 to 1777 as a member of the Scottish Brigade to fight the Boni maroons. During this period he is known to have had a relationship with a creole woman called Johanna.



elaborate remarks will be made concerning linguistic quality and reliability. Sources are dealt with in chronological order (see Appendix A):

Herlein (1718) This is a very short (two pages) sample of Sranan dialogue with Dutch translation, designed to

Weygandt - - -

Wennekers - - -

Cesaari - - -

Helmig van der Vegt - - -

Focke A creole born in Paramaribo, he studied law in the Netherlands, and returned to Suriname around the age of 32 as a lawyer in 1834.

Wullschlägel A Moravian Brother/linguist, he stayed in Antigua (1844-1847) and in Jamaica (1847-1849) before he came to Suriname. Returned to Europe in 1855 to become a bishop.

King Born in Paramaribo, he probably learned Sranan as a native language. After teaching himself how to read and write he became the first native writer of Suriname.

Albitrouw A Ndjuka, he probably learned Sranan during his education by the Moravian Brethren in Paramaribo.

Kraag - - -

Helstone A creole born in Suriname, he studied music in Leipzig (1893-1894).

Herskovits American anthropologist, founder of Afro-American studies; together with his wife he carried out fieldwork in Suriname in 1928 and 1929.

Koenders This creole school-teacher was the first cultural nationalist of Suriname and a predecessor of the Wi eygi sani ('Our own things') movement.

Bruma Politician, lawyer and writer; as a law student in Amsterdam he founded the Wi eygi sani movement, meant to promote the Surinamese culture and language.

illustrate the creole for Dutchmen. Besides the readily accessible reprinting in Voorhoeve & Lichtveld (1975), containing the modern Sranan equivalent and a modern English translation, reprintings have appeared in Schuchardt (1914) with its original Dutch translation, and in Rens (1953) with a literal English gloss. Although the original carries the designation ‘second edition’, it is completely identical to the first (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 30). However, the latter's year of publication is not given by these scholars, but it cannot have been prior to 1716, since in that year a preliminary draft of Herlein's work was published. As will be pointed out below in Chapter 5 the fragment displays some pidgin rather than creole features. Although of great value as the oldest Sranan text known to exist, errors in the use of honorifics indicate that this is not an original Sranan dialogue, but rather a Europeanized version of it (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975).

Nepveu (1765) This text contains the corrections by Nepveu of the Herlein fragment. It is possibly the second oldest Sranan text known to exist, and it appears in Voorhoeve & Lichtveld (1975) alongside the Herlein dialogue.

Van Dyk (c. 1770) (but see note 7) This is an introductory language manual containing word lists, some idiom, twelve dialogues and a 65-page sketch of life on a coffee plantation. It is the oldest Sranan text of any substance (112 pages), predating Schumann by at least more than a decade. The work is undated, but I agree entirely with Kramp (1983: 6), who says it was probably written before 1778, the year given by Schuchardt (1914: XXII). The latter arrived at this date on the basis of information about the printer mentioned on the title page, but he does not exclude an earlier date. This opinion is shared by Lichtveld & Voorhoeve (1980) and Smith (1982: 100), who adds some phonological evidence to conclude that the work should be located somewhere between Nepveu's and Stedman's material, that is between 1765 and 1777 (the year of Stedman's departure from the colony). The fact that the latter's notes were only published in 1796 is irrelevant here: they can only have gone back to his personal experience with the language, which took place during his stay from 1772 to 1777. In its kind Van Dyk's manual has become a sort of Urtext for others (notably Weygandt and Helmig van der Vegt) to draw on heavily and even plagiarize unashamedly (see below).

Schumann (1783) The pièce de résistance of Sranan lexicography (Sranan-German). Not being a native speaker himself, Schumann made extensive use of one or more informants, which of course enhances the reliability of his data. Apart from this, Schumann, like most Moravians, is known for his accuracy and his linguistic sophistication. An edition of the manuscript appears in Kramp's dissertation (Kramp 1983), but unfortunately it has never been published

(defective as the edition in some respects may be; see Arends 1984 for a critical evaluation). It is of the same interest as the author's Saramaccanisch Deutsches Wörter-Buch from 1778, which was published by Schuchardt in 1914 and which is a major source for the present study.

Stedman (1796) Linguistic notes scattered throughout the extensive volume, containing little that is of syntactic interest (see Eersel 1984 for some brief remarks).

Weygandt (1798) A language manual in the 'Van Dyk tradition', containing vocabulary, idiom, some grammar, and twelve dialogues, of which numbers 1, 2, 3, 5 and 9 have been largely plagiarized from Van Dyk's dialogues numbers 2, 3, 5, 7 and 11, respectively (as was already observed by Schuchardt 1914:XXIII). According to the Vorbericht (Preface) it represents the city (i.e. Paramaribo) dialect, whereas Van Dyk, according to Schuchardt (ibid.), presents the language as it was spoken on the plantations. The reason for this hypothesis is that the latter would be more archaic, but Voorhoeve & Donicie (1963: 31) interpret this trait as Netherlandization and attribute it to the imperfect competence of a city dweller. In their view Weygandt is more representative of the language as it was actually spoken and thus more reliable.

Wennekers (1822) This is a Roman catholic catechism, written by someone who was not fully competent in the language, to say the least. The language is deviant in all categories investigated in this study: it overgeneralizes the de-copula (also in comparative constructions with pre-adjectival moro) and it shows no clefting whatsoever. From my present perspective this source had better been excluded from the corpus.

Luke (1829) This is the first printed Sranan translation of the gospel according to St. Luke, which in a sense represents a culmination point in a manuscript tradition of New Testament translations begun by C.L. Schumann in 1782/1783 (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963). But although Schumann's Bible translations had great authority until well into the 19th century, it did not form the basis for the 1829 translation of Luke, nor for that of Acts (op. cit.: 49). Nevertheless, stemming from the Moravian tradition, the quality of the translation is generally high.

Acts (1829) The same applies as to the above item. This source was included only for the categories of comparison and clefting because of lack of data.

Cesaari (1836-1837) A poem containing a New Year's wish, according to Lichtveld & Voorhoeve (1980: 276) written by a European or a European influenced creole. Cesaari is not the author, but the Paramaribo deaf-mute who sold these songs on

the streets (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 7). Before their publication in a Dutch literary periodical in 1843 they were published as loose leaflets in Paramaribo in 1836 and 1837.

Helmig van der Vegt (1844) Another (but considerably more concise) language manual in the Van Dyk tradition, consisting of 30 lessons with exercises and vocabulary. It has borrowed heavily from Weygandt: compare lessons numbers 11, 13, 15, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28 in Helmig van der Vegt with dialogues numbers 1, 2, 9, 3, 7, 8 (first part), 8 (second part), 10 (first part), 10 (second part), 12 (first part), 12 (second part), and 12 (pages 131, 136, 141 and 143). Since a large part of the latter was taken from Van Dyk (c. 1770), there is an indirect link between this and the Helmig van der Vegt booklet. Plagiarism has a good side to it too, at least for the linguist, since in some cases it is not literal, so that interesting differences can be observed. Compare, e.g.:

(1) Joe habe retti da ply mi zi hem  
(Van Dyk c.1770: 31)  
You have right that place I see him  
'You're right; that's where I saw him'

(2) Joe abie retie da daplesie mie ben sie em  
(Weygandt 1798: 97)  
You have right is that-place I TNS see him  
'You're right; that's where I saw him'

Apart from spelling differences and the presence of a tense marker in (2) it is especially the emergence of a clefting copula da in (2) which is of interest here. Likewise in the area of the copula system there is a difference between the latter source and Helmig van der Vegt:

(3) Dafoe datie hédé diesie foe mie moe tan?  
(Weygandt 1798: 110)  
Is-for that reason this of me must wait?  
'That is why mine (i.e. my order) has to wait?'

(4) A de vo datti hedde dissie va mi moesoe tan?  
(Helmig van der Vegt 1844: 39)  
It is for that reason this of me must wait?  
'That is why mine has to wait?'

The difference between (3) and (4) may well be due to the fact that Helmig van der Vegt did not recognize sentence introducing da as a separate copula, but instead interpreted it as the pronoun from which it historically evolved, and hypercorrected it into the 'true' de-copula.

Grammatik (1854) This is a brief, but adequate anonymous grammatical introduction to the language, generally attributed to H.R. Wullschlägel<sup>9</sup> (with whose 1856 dictionary it bears certain resemblances), but this is disputed by Voorhoeve & Donicic (1963: 20), who see parallels with

9 See Focke (1855: IX).

Wilhelm Treu's 1850 manuscript grammar, which is itself part of a Moravian grammar writing tradition starting around 1830.

Focke (1855) This is an excellent dictionary (Sranan-Dutch) by a creole, who was probably a native speaker. It contains a short introduction to the language, and odo's are scattered throughout the text. In a review in the journal West-Indië (Moes 1858) a list of errata and addenda, which had been added by the author in his own copy of the book, was published. Though published in 1855, the work was conceived several years before: a preliminary version is dated March 1846 (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 27).

Wullschlägel (1856) This is by far the most extensive printed Sranan dictionary in existence. It is in the Moravian tradition and based on earlier work on the language, such as that by Schumann. As such it contains the typically Moravian neologisms needed for Bible translations, which are absent from Focke. The dictionary (German-Sranan) is concluded with a 40-page listing of some 700 odo's (proverbs) with their translation. Because of its inclusion of archaic and pulpit language it should be consulted with prudence according to Voorhoeve & Donicie (1963: 29), but only small portions from it have been used for this study.

King (1864) This is a 'book of confessions' (bikenti boekoe) by the Matawai 'bushland prophet' Johannes King, who spent part of his youth in the surroundings of Paramaribo, and may thus be expected to have learnt Sranan early youth (perhaps in addition to Matawai - his mother's -, or Ndjuka - his father's language). King, who taught himself how to read Sranan, was converted to Christianity around 1860 and spent most of the rest of his life preaching the Gospel and writing his diaries (for a short bibliographical note see King 1973: 2-8). In the present manuscript he tries to explain the religious life of his fellow 'bush negroes' to Moravian missionaries.

King (1892) This is one of the diaries by the same author, whose main subject is the quarrel with his half-brother Noah Adrai, who was among King's followers at first, but turned into one of his most bitter enemies later on. The quarrel was primarily one of political power (Noah Adrai was appointed granman (chief) of the Matawai tribe in 1870), but it took on religious and moral aspects as well. King should be considered the first true native Sranan author, and one of no little importance too; unfortunately, some of his most interesting work (such as the skreki buku, - 'book of horrors') still awaits to be edited and published.

Albitrouw (1894) This is an account of a messianistic movement among the Saramaccans, led by their tribesman Anake. It was written by the Ndjuka missionary Albitrouw, who was probably educated in Sranan by the Moravian Brethren in

Paramaribo. The manuscript is dated at around 1900 by Voorhoeve & Donicie (1963: 84), but Sterman (the editor of the manuscript) has found indications that it was written even later, since it contains references to later historical developments up to 1915 (Albitrouw 1978: 19). But then again she admits that it must have been based on diaries that were written earlier. These diaries cannot have been begun before 1892, the year when the Anake cult started.

Kraag (1894-1896) This diary is an account of the stay of the missionary-teacher Christiaan Kraag among the Kwinti tribe between 1893 and 1903. I have not been able to obtain any further information about the author, concerning his tribal or linguistic affiliation. He must have been either a native speaker of Sranan or was educated in that language by the Moravian Brethren.

Albitrouw (c.1896) This is an account of the author's missionary work among the Saramaccans in Aurora between 1891 and 1896. The manuscript must have been written during his stay there, since extracts from it have appeared in the Dutch journal Berichten van de Heidenwereld ('Reports from the Pagan World') between 1893 and 1897 (Albitrouw 1979: 12-13). This same source states that, according to references in the manuscript itself, sections of this diary must have appeared in the Moravian journal Makzien vo Kristensoema zieli ('Magazine for Christian Souls'), but in which issues is not clear.

Makzien (1902) A monthly organ in Sranan, published by the Moravian Brethren between 1852 and 1932 (with an intermission from December 1879 till January 1889), containing edifying stories, songs, missionary news, and brief political information (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 100). As in other Moravian writings the style is that of the so-called 'Church creole' (Voorhoeve 1971), but since syntactic differences with 'ordinary creole' are rare, this presents no difficulty for our purpose.

Helstone (1903) The aim of this Sranan grammar (written in Sranan, by a native speaker), - curiously enough -, is to try to replace the creole by the official Dutch language. In order to facilitate the learning of Dutch by creoles, the author thinks it necessary to regularize the creole and bring it into accordance with Dutch as much as possible. This accounts for the strong Netherlandizing flavour of the language, for which reason it should be consulted critically for linguistic purposes.

Makzien (1913) See above under Makzien (1902).

Herskovits & Herskovits (1936) This is a magnificent collection of folk-tales (Anansi tori), riddles, proverbs (some in Saramaccan) and dreams, told by native speakers in

1928 and 1929, and recorded on phonocylinders (which, according to Reinecke *et al.* (1975: 444), are still being preserved today). The stories are presented in broad phonetic transcription. Although I agree with Voorhoeve & Donicie (1963: 91) that these data should be examined critically, their value is still immeasurable. In their *Linguistic Notes* (pp.117-135) the authors compare Sranan with other varieties of creolized English and certain West African languages (such as Twi, Ewe, and Yoruba) and conclude that these pidgins/creoles contain a significant West African element.

Koenders (1946-1949) These articles are taken from a journal called *Foetoe-boi* ('Servant'), which appeared partly in Sranan and partly in Dutch between 1946 and 1956, and of which Koenders was the responsible editor. A native speaker of the language, he was one of the first teachers to propagate its use in education, when it was still considered slightly improper to use it at all.

Bruma (c.1958) This is a play by the Surinamese lawyer and politician Eddy Bruma about a slave uprising in Coronie in 1836. It was performed in Paramaribo around 1958, but it never appeared in print before Voorhoeve & Lichtveld (1975) included it in their anthology of Sranan literature. This source was used only for the category of comparison because of lack of data in other sources.

The relative underrepresentation of native speaker texts in the corpus constitutes a problem that deserves some special attention. Of the 25 sources only Schumann, Cesaari, Focke, King (twice), Albitrouw (twice), Kraag, Helstone, Herskovits & Herskovits, Koenders, and Bruma (almost half of the total number of sources) were produced by or with the help of native speakers. If we look at the amount of data provided by these sources, instead of the sources themselves, the picture gets even worse. But this is a problem that simply cannot be avoided. The Sranan scholar is not in the fortunate position of those studying the development of Negerhollands, in which language a considerable number of 'slave letters', written (or rather dictated in most cases) by native speakers between 1737 and 1768 (Stein 1986) have been preserved.

A meticulous investigation of the Sranan material in the State Archives at Utrecht (the largest collection available) did not yield one native-written source pre-dating the middle of the 19th century, - when there is a sudden outburst of writing, starting with the work of King. This lack of data obviously has to do with the illiteracy that was forced upon the blacks in Suriname until that time. The fact that these data had to be 'enriched' with non-native sources is not as bad as it seems, though, since some of these, especially those of Moravian origin, are of high quality.

The Moravian Brethren in general have a reputation as knowledgeable and accurate observers of language, although a certain normative and Europeanizing influence cannot be

denied. This tendency, however, is largely confined to orthography, phonetics and lexis, and hardly affects syntax. In this context not only Schumann, but also Luke, Acts, Grammatik and Wullschlägel should be highly valued as reliable sources for earlier stages of the language.

Concerning the sample sentences contained in Appendix B, a few words may suffice. The reason for including this Appendix in the first place is to provide other creolists with material that is hardly accessible in any other form. It may be used not only for syntactic research, but for other purposes, such as lexical, phonological or semantic investigations as well. Every sentence is presented in its original spelling (which is often idiosyncratic and inconsistent), with a literal gloss and an English translation. In the code following each sentence in parentheses the first figure refers to the number of the source as it is given in Appendix A; the second figure (after the slash) refers to the number of the page in the source where the sentence can be found. (In the case of edited sources page numbers refer to the edited work: see the fourth column in Appendix A under Place.) Sometimes a third figure is added after a hyphen to indicate that the sentence in question is not the only one within the relevant category attested on that page. Within each category sentences are grouped according to the source from which they were taken. Categories II and III were not divided into subcategories since these samples are small enough to allow for a quick search. Category I (the copula), for which the sample is much larger, was differentiated according to the subcategories as they are treated in Chapter 2.

## 1.6. Selection of categories

The selection of categories studied in this thesis was based on several considerations. First of all, since this is the first extensive study of its kind, it was decided to take at least several categories into account in order to get a more representative picture. Second, a preliminary and cursory reading of the sources revealed which categories showed enough historical development to warrant a profitable detailed investigation. Third, given the aims of this study, the question of whether literature on a certain category within the typological-universal framework was available, also played a role. And, finally, the selection was constrained by the extent to which a historical investigation was manageable within the time limitations set to the research project.

Some of these factors were instrumental in the decision not to include serial verbs into this study, interesting though it is in itself, - the main reason being that one would have to collect data not only on this construction, but also on others (such as prepositions and adverbs) that play a role in its development. The important and widely discussed



TMA-system was excluded from the investigation also, because an adequate treatment of this category would require a full-length study.

In fact, in the actual course of the project the differentiation of the equative copula was hit upon fairly early, and everything else more or less evolved from that in a quite natural manner. Other functions of BE were looked at, such as in adjectival predicates, which led to the inclusion of the comparative. The identification of the sentence introducing copula as a separate category necessitated the examination of cleft sentences as a special subclass. An unplanned side-effect of this was that all the categories selected for investigation turned out to be related to the copula system one way or another - which should contribute to the internal coherence of this study.

### 1.7. Selection of candidate substrate languages

The following West African languages were selected as candidates for having potential influence on the syntactic structure of Sranan: Ewe, Twi, Igbo, Yoruba (Kwa-branch of Niger-Congo), Kikongo, Kimbundu and Tshiluba<sup>10</sup> (Western Bantu). This selection is based on arguments of a linguistic as well as of a historical-demographic nature. Linguistic arguments derive from Lichtveld (1928-1929, a pioneering effort to trace the influence of the 'Western Sudanic' languages on Sranan), Daeleman (1972; but see Price 1975), Huttar (1981; 1984; 1985) and Smith (1987). Historical-demographic evidence regarding the slave trade to Suriname is contained primarily in Postma's seminal studies (1970; 1975; 1976). Further information is available in Emmer (1972), Price (1976) and Van Lier (1977), whereas Goslinga (1985) presents some new calculations, based largely on the material that was used by Postma.

Unfortunately, although essential information concerning the Dutch slave trade in general has been made available by Postma's work, as well as that of some others (Unger 1956; 1958-1960; Van Dantzig 1968), the complaint made by Price (1976: 14) that 'a careful study, using written records of the slave trade to Suriname (...) still remains to be undertaken' (italics mine, JA), is still as valid today as it was when it was written down. Nevertheless, it seems to me that enough information is available to allow a non-arbitrary selection of substrate languages, to say the least.

Historical evidence. The most important source of information on the Dutch participation in the Atlantic slave trade is Postma's 1970 dissertation. Its main findings as

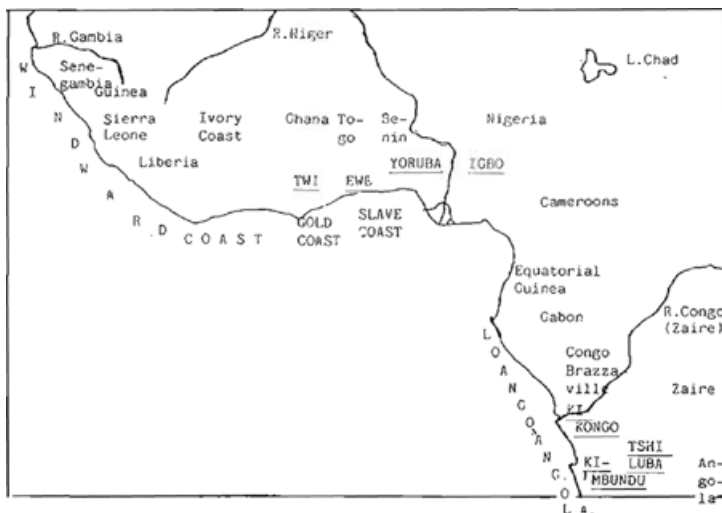
10 Tshiluba was investigated only for the copula system, Kimbundu only for comparison and clefting. The reason for this is that in the initial stage of the investigation no adequate Kimbundu grammar was available to me.

regards the geographical origin of all slaves traded by the Dutch (i.e. to Suriname and elsewhere), are summarized in Postma (1975: 49, Table 8). These figures were extrapolated by Price (1976: 13) to 1640, i.e. beyond the period treated by Postma (1675-1795). Price's table is reproduced here as Table 1:

**Table 1: Regional Origins of Dutch Slaves, 1640-1795 (from Price 1976: 13)**

	1640s-1700	1701-1725	1726-1735	1736-1795
Windward Coast	--	--	4%	49%
Gold Coast	2%	17%	29%	26%
Slave Coast	64%	50%	33%	1%
Loango/Angola	34%	33%	33%	24%

In terms of present topography these four areas are defined as follows (following Price): the 'Windward Coast' corresponds to modern Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and the Ivory Coast; the 'Gold Coast' roughly corresponds to modern Ghana; the 'Slave Coast' is roughly equivalent with the coastal regions of Togo and Benin, and 'Loango/Angola' refers to a region stretching from Cape Lopez to the Orange River. The Dutch slave trade focused on the north of the Zaire river, encompassing the modern states of Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville), and the Angolese enclave of Cabinda. See the map of West Africa below:



Map of West Africa

Although the total number of slaves imported into the colony, - estimated at 175.000 on the basis of detailed archival research (Goslinga 1985: 430) -, is less than half of the total number of slaves traded by the Dutch in their entire ‘slave trading career’, - estimated at 400.000 by Postma (1975: 49) -, it is not unwarranted to take the figures in Table 1 as a reliable guide for the situation in Suriname. First, almost all slaves brought into the colony were imported solely by the Dutch (Price 1976: 13), certainly during the 18th century (Emmer 1972: 744), but also before. The Dutch also supplied the British with slaves during their colonization of Suriname (1650-1667) (Rens 1953: 79), and they are even known to have monopolized the trade to Barbados up to 1663 (Curtin 1969, quoted by Price 1976: 13), from where the first British colonizers brought their slaves in 1651. Second, there is no reason to believe that Suriname did not receive a representative sample of this overall ‘cargo’, although certain preferences with respect to specific ethnic origins were current among slave owners. But although there are more than half a dozen historical works discussing these preferences, they are of little value for the present purpose since they all post-date 1770; besides that, they allow no quantification whatsoever (Price 1976: 15-16).

A problem that remains, however, is that whatever is known about the origin of slaves always refers to the slave shipping port, which is by no means necessarily identical with the slaves' place of origin. It is known, for example, that many Yorubas, taken captive during wars with Ewespeaking tribes, were shipped through Gold Coast ports, where Ewe, not Yoruba, was spoken. This explains why Yorubas are often called ‘Nagos’ in the Surinamese historical literature, ‘Anago’ being the Ewe word for ‘Yoruba’ (Price 1983: 77).

All in all, it seems that we will have to be content with the picture in Table 1, until further research provides more data. This picture, then, reveals that during the first one hundred years of Suriname's existence as a colony (1650-1750) it was mainly Kwa and Western Bantu speaking areas that supplied its slaves. Taking into account the further differentiation of the areas in Table 1, as made by Postma (1970: 181 ff.), as well as the relative importance of the languages spoken in these areas (in terms of numbers of speakers and dominant positions of certain tribes), it seems that from a historical point of view the languages that were selected are good candidates for potential substrate influence.

Linguistic evidence. Linguistic evidence for particular substratal influence falls apart into the three categories of syntax, lexicon and phonology. As to the first, some Kwa-like features were shown to be present in Ndjuka, especially in the areas of predicate clefting and comparison (Huttar 1981). African lexical influence was studied by Daeleman (1972) for Saramaccan, and by Huttar (1984; 1985) for Ndjuka. In both cases a significant Bantu element (more specifically Kikongo, in the case of Saramaccan) could be demonstrated. Like most

other Atlantic creoles Ndjuka turned out to contain a significant proportion of Kwa-derived vocabulary as well. The same is implicitly supposed by Price (1975: 463), who estimates the African-derived portion of the total Saramaccan lexicon at 50% with Kikongo contributing not more than one third. Finally, Smith (1987: 146-147) in his penetrating study based on a huge amount of historical phonological evidence contends that there must have been ‘considerable Gbe (a dialect within the Ewe-Fon cluster, JA) involvement in early Surinam’. He even suggests that Gbe, which still survives in Suriname as a reduced ritual language, was a spoken language in the early days of the colony. I can only add that from a syntactic point of view of the seven West African languages involved in this study Ewe is the one to cause most déja vu experiences in connection with Sranan. To give just one example: both languages have the, universally rare, Allative Comparative (see Chapter 3 for details).

In conclusion, I think it is clear that the linguistic evidence which is available at present only confirms what historical-demographic studies have revealed about ethnic origins of Surinamese slaves, and that both types of evidence fully support the selection of candidate substrate languages that was made in this study. It is especially significant that they both point to the presence of a considerable Bantu element in the creoles of Suriname, a fact which was often neglected before. It is also clear that in the formation period of the language (say between the first 50 and 100 years) it was Slave Coast (i.e. Ewe speaking) rather than Gold Coast (i.e. Twi speaking) slaves that were imported into the colony, which historical fact is fully supported by the linguistic evidence provided by Smith.

## Chapter two: The copula system

### 2.1. Introduction

In this chapter I present a general picture of the historical development of the copula<sup>1</sup> system of Sranan, but I will also, on the basis of the historical evidence, try to clarify some problems of synchronic syntax in this area. I will devote special attention to one particular aspect, *viz.* equation, since it is in this category that the most dramatic changes can be observed. The implications of these changes for the concept of creolization and the explanatory power of universals and substrata for this case will be discussed. At the end of the chapter I will summarize the history of the Sranan copula in a tentative, reconstructed scenario, which should be viewed as a summary rather than a completely worked out hypothesis. Before all this I will begin my exposition with an attempt to try to confirm an explicit hypothesis about the origin of one of the copula functions, i.e. the development of the equative copula from an anaphoric pronoun.

The copula was chosen as one of the objects of this study, among other reasons, because it appears to be connected with a central aspect of Sranan syntax, the tense/aspect system (*de* is one of the copula forms as well as preverbal aspect marker). As will be shown later, it is also related to the pronominal system (*da* (later *na*) is one of the copula forms as well as pronoun (*it/that*) and determiner (*the/that*)). Finally, the fact that Sranan, like all other Afro-American creoles (Alleyne 1980: 88), is not at all prone to copula deletion (as is often the case with pidgins and other simplified varieties of English (Ferguson 1971)), but, on the contrary, is rather fine grained in this respect provides an extra reason for an in-depth study.

### 2.2. Origin

In this section I will trace the pronominal origin of one segment of the copula system, the intimately connected forms *da*, *na* and *'a*<sup>2</sup>. First, the existence of a separate sentence

- 1 The term 'copula' as used in this study covers the equative (or equational) as well as the existential, locative and possessive functions of BE, the use of BE in adjectival predicates and its use as a predicator of adverbial and infinitival complements. The term 'equative' covers both the attributive and the identifying copula. The copula in its function as a focussing element in cleft sentences will be discussed in Ch. 4.
- 2 *na* and *'a* are later developments of *da*; in what follows *da* will be used as a cover term for all three forms.

introducing copula da will be posited, and then its pronominal origin and character will be discussed, especially with respect to the light this will shed on some problems of synchronic syntax.

In almost all copula functions where, in non-sentenceinitial position, de is the preferred form, we find instances of da (instead of a de) sentence-initially (cf. (3) and (4) in Ch. 1). This da functions in a way quite similar to French c'est... or English it's..., i.e. as a sentence introducing element, containing a semantically empty pronominal subject. Compare the following sample sentences, where the (a)-sentences have da, whereas the (b)-sentences have de:

possessive:

(1a) da foe mi (Weygandt 1798: 94)  
it(-is) of/for me

‘it's mine’

(1b) datti de vo dem (Schumann 1783: 81)  
that is of/for them

‘that belongs to them’

adverbial:

(2a) da so (Stedman 1796: 362)  
it(-is) so

‘that's the way it is’

(2b) so a de (Wullschlägel 1856: 8)  
so it is

‘quite so’

infinitival:

(3a) da vo taki (Makzien 1902: 1)  
it(-is) for say

‘That means...’

(3b) a de vo wiki froekoe vo go loekoe wrokko  
it is for wake early for go see work

‘you have to wake up early to supervise the work’

(Helmig van der Vegt 1844: 48)

adjective:

(4a) na troe san Bijblie takki (Cesaari 1836:  
280)

it(-is) true what Bible say

‘what the Bible says is true’

(4b) son de tranga kaba

sun is strong already

‘it's very hot already’

(Helmig van der Vegt 1844: 37)

equative (attr.):

- (5a) da wan pleh, dissi de noja tranga na modo  
it(-is) a game, which is now strong in  
fashion

‘it's a game that is very popular now’  
(Helmig van der Vegt 1844: 38)

- (5b) a de foetoeboi gi massra (Focke 1855:  
14)  
he is servant give master

‘he's a servant to his master’

equative (ident.):

- (6a) da mi, Filida (Van Dyk c.1770: 73)  
it(-is) me, Filida

‘it's me, Filida’

- (6b) joe de da Santawan vo Gado (Luke 1829:  
30)  
you are the holy-one of God

‘you (i.e. Christ) are God's holy son’

As regards (4b) it should be noted that the preferred copula with adjectival predicates is  $\emptyset$ , not de, but that does not diminish the value of (4a) as an example of sentence-initial da (in its later development na in this case). Further, it is clear that this use of da is not to be expected with existentials, since there the subject, by definition, cannot be semantically empty. As far as locatives are concerned, there is only one - doubtful - example (the main function of initial da here seems to be that of a clefting element):

locative:

- (7a) da deeja da da winklie foe Masra G.?  
it(-is) here is the shop of Mr. G.?

‘is this where Mr. G.'s shop is?’  
(Weygandt 1798: 105)

- (7b) wan masra dee na doro (Weygandt 1798:  
91)



a gentleman is at door

‘there's a gentleman at the door’

Both the fact that da is virtually obligatory in this position and the fact that it is generalized over almost all de functions, indicate that it should be regarded as a separate and perhaps primary category<sup>3</sup>, from which its use as non-sentence-initial copula was derived. This view is corroborated by evidence pertaining to the deictic origin of da, which we will discuss now.

There is evidence that besides sentence-initial da, lacking semantic content, another form, the demonstrative pronoun datti ‘that’, was used with deictic reference, as in:

3 Holm (1980: 368-369) distinguishes a separate category of introducing copula in Miskito Coast Creole, Jamaican Creole and, for that matter, in Black English.

- (8) datti da<sup>4</sup> somma, dissi ju de suku  
that the person that you ASP look-for

‘that's the person you're looking for’  
(Schumann 1783: 78)

Although da's modern variant a usually only has definite and not deictic meaning, in older Sranan prenomial da was also used as a demonstrative pronoun (Voorhoeve 1953: 53; 73; see also Schumann 1783, s.v. da, which is glossed not only as a definite article, but also as a demonstrative pronoun (dieser, diese, dieses)). It was only later that da was restricted to the role of definite article and that demonstratives were expressed by ‘circum-nominal’ constructions like a man dati, ‘that man’ (lit. ‘the man that’). Also in Saramaccan da is not, as Schumann would have it, a definite article (which is di), but, in Schuchardt's words, a ‘substantivisches Demonstrativ’, equivalent to dat(t)i (Schuchardt 1914a: 58). A relationship between determiner and demonstrative in Sranan would not be very surprising anyhow, at least from a comparative point of view, since equivalents of that are the most common source of definite articles in the languages of the world (Givón 1979: 316). So both the fact that sentence-initial datti is used in a way similar to da and the fact that the determiner da used to have demonstrative meaning lead to the conclusion that both da's were derived from datti and are thus pronominal in origin.

If sentence-initial da is indeed pronominal, this, in combination with its separate status shown above, could very well strengthen the case for it being functionally, as well as historically, a primary category. If this is correct, then its use as an equative copula, placed between subject and predicate, can be derived historically from this primary function through topicalizations like (9), which abound in Schumann's dictionary, and thus seem to have been very frequent in early Sranan:

- (9) ‘adjabre’, da Djutongo (Schumann 1783: 46)  
‘adjabre’, that(-is) Djutongo

‘(the word) “adjabre” is Djutongo<sup>5</sup>’

Here the carefully placed comma designates the pause that is so typical of this kind of construction. This development of the copula is completed when later this resumptive pronoun/copula is reanalyzed as a regular copula in non-topicalized sentences like:

- (10) da somma da wan boen somma  
(Grammatik 1854: 6)  
that person is a good person

‘that's a good person’

4 Since da somma is clearly definite, da cannot be a copula here.

5 Djutongo, according to Smith (1987: 125-127), is not to be equated with Saramaccan, but refers to the mixed Portuguese-English creole, which was its predecessor.

The development of a copula from a resumptive pronoun is by no means a unique phenomenon in the world's languages. Li and Thompson (1976) report it for such diverse languages as Mandarin Chinese, Palestinian Arabic, Hebrew, Wappo (Yukan), and Zway (Semitic). Pronominal copulas have also been reported for the French-based creoles by Saint-Jacques-Fauquenoy (1972), for Kilba (a Chadic language) by Schuh (1983), and for Kikongo by Seidel & Struyf (1910: 38). An example from Guyanais: Guyanais

- (11) mó fré sa maso  
my brother this bricklayer

‘my brother's a bricklayer’

(Saint-Jacques-Fauquenoy 1972: 228)

If this deictic, pronominal origin of da is correct<sup>6</sup>, a number of synchronic problems connected with its use as a copula disappear. For instance, the fact that da cannot be preceded by no (which we would expect it could, if it were a true verb), is explained by its pronominal status. If we take a sentence like (6a) above (which is repeated here as (12)), and analyze da as a pronoun, then this is followed by a zero copula:

- (12) da ø mi, Filida (Van Dyk c.1770: 73)  
it ø me, Filida

‘it's me, Filida’

Now, the rule in Sranan is for the negator to precede the verb and that is precisely what it does in a sentence like (13), where it is followed by the empty copula site. Consequently, we are faced with a da no instead of a no da sequence, and this is the rule for all negative copula sentences:

- (13) da no ø bon zanti? (Van Dyk c.1770: 66)  
it not ø good thing?

‘isn't it good?’

It is interesting to note that da no never occurs between subject and predicate, but in that position is always replaced by a a no sequence, as in (14):

- (14) takiman a no doeman (Focke 1855: 24)  
talkman is-not do-man

‘talking is not the same as acting’

6 It should be noted here that the deictic character of na has already been observed by Voorhoeve (1953: 76-77) and Donicie (1959: 39), although these authors were not able to document this origin historically.

Fairly early on this same negative copula is also found at the beginning of sentences, such as the following:

- (15) a no Gado? (Wennekers 1822: 33)  
it-is not God?

‘is it not God?’

In a few, rare cases the sentence-medial copula under negation is replaced by the locative/existential verb de(e), but this is probably due to heavy Europeanization of the

source in which these sentences are found (Helstone 1903). More important, although da is later replaced by na, the sequence na no is (and always has been) ungrammatical, whether sentence-initially or medially, and always has to be a no instead. The fact that a no makes its appearance long before the change of da into na (which has a as a later variant), excludes the possibility that both a's are one and the same element<sup>7</sup>. It is unclear what the source of negative a is, and this agrees with the observation that a no is perceived as a single morpheme without any internal structure by native speakers of the language (Pieter Seuren, p.c.). In other words, Sranan is a language with a special form for the negated copula, and in this respect it is by no means unique among the languages of the world: this phenomenon also occurs, for instance, in a language like Amharic (Leon Stassen, p.c.).

Another aspect of copular da that can be explained by its pronominal character, is that it cannot be preceded by TMA particles: TENSE + da always becomes ben de; MOOD + da always becomes sa de. Also, it cannot occur in infinitival position:

- (16) da wendje nem ben de Maria (Luke 1829: 8)  
 the girl name TNS be Mary  
 ‘the girl's name was Mary’

mood:

- (17) a sa de troe sani (Weygandt 1798: 101)  
 it MOOD be true thing  
 ‘I suppose it's true’

infinitival:

- (18) a moe de wan boen presi wanten na bigin foe en  
 it must be a good place at-once at start of it  
 ‘it should be a good location right-away’  
 (Albitrouw c.1896: 17)

It is, of course, true that, especially in the later stages (after 1800), the functions performed by de in (17) and (18), *viz.* nominal predication, become increasingly expressed by de anyhow, irrespective of whether it is preceded by a TMA particle, but this does not diminish the value of these examples. It is rather the negative fact that da occurs never in these positions that counts here.

7 This agrees with the observation (due to Renata de Bies) that in spoken language the two forms are reduced differently: e.g., mi na becomes mia, whereas mi a becomes ma.

The same factor that was adduced above in connection with negation, is called upon here. Since da was originally a pronoun and as such was followed by a zero copula, it was this zero element which was to take TMA markers and auxiliaries such as moe. But with da being reanalyzed as a



(Luke 1829: 12)

(22)

en na datra (Seuren 1981: 1055)

he/she is doctor

‘he/she is a doctor’

(23)

da mi, Filida (Van Dyk c.1770: 73)

it-is me, Filida

‘it's me, Filida’



- (24) na datra (Seuren 1981: 1055)  
it-is doctor

‘it’s a doctor’

(Note: hem and en are the oblique and emphatic forms of a, but clearly no emphatic reading is intended in (21) or (22).) The fact that the neuter subject ‘it’ is not expressed at all, as in (23) and (24), is only to be expected in the light of the postulation of a special sentence-introducing, pronominal copula above. The fact that non-neuter subjects cannot be expressed by a in these cases might be explained by assuming (as is indeed done by Voorhoeve (1953: 73)) that the third person singular pronoun a was historically derived from the demonstrative pronoun da/na: in that case both forms would be (at least diachronically) identical, and, as is well known, languages tend to avoid the direct succession of identical forms. Hence, emphatic en, being phonetically very dissimilar to a, was called upon to perform the function of the personal subject.

A problem that remains to be discussed is the phonological change of da (as a copula and as a demonstrative pronoun) into na. Related to the question of the particular choice of na is the question of why this change originated with copular as opposed to deictic da. Copular na is attested from the very first native source at our disposal (Cesaari 1836-37: 280) onwards, through other native speaker texts such as King 1864-70, King 1891-94<sup>8</sup> and Albitrouw 1894, in all of which the pronoun is still expressed as da. Herskovits's tales (1936) are the earliest source in our sample to have na in both functions. If both morphemes do indeed have a common source, as suggested above, why would they not undergo the same phonological change at the same time?

The fact that da could be an artefact of European spelling will not account for this, since in that case one would expect the correct spontaneous spelling na by native speakers in both functions, unless, of course, they had adopted European spelling conventions at the time. (Incidentally, it is known that at least one of them, Johannes King, taught himself how to read and write (King 1973: 3-4), which makes a European spelling implausible, at least for this case.) A possible explanation is that syncretism of the deictic function with English that (and of the related determiner with the) caused this form to retain the older spelling, whereas the change to na for the copula could tentatively be viewed to be influenced by the general preposition<sup>9</sup>. The latter hypothesis may seem far-fetched, but it is interesting to note that Welmers (1973: 312) suggests a relationship for Igbo between prepositional nà and the

8 The manuscript has da, which was changed into na by the editor (King 1973: 11).

9 See p. 38 for further possible evidence.

present action particle nà, which in turn ‘may well be associated with “being at”’. This observation is especially relevant since the morpheme in question in both languages is, at least partially, identical in both form and function. We are left, of course, with the fact that the phonetic difference between both functions is later neutralized.

The latter problem is not accounted for either by Alleyne's hypothesis (which is quite fruitful in other respects) (1980: 89), that in the da/na alternation in various creole languages one can see the modern reflexes of one common historical root \*nda, which yielded na and da as alternants. This hypothesized origin becomes all the more likely as it is known that prenasalized stops were often incorrectly spelt by Europeans (cf. Doncie & Voorhoeve (1963: vii) who report Schumann's (1778) misspellings nju and dju for Saramaccan ndju). Voorhoeve's suggestion that pronominal na could be derived from a Bantu noun class prefix (Voorhoeve 1953: 72-72) in conjunction with Daeleman's observation that the initial ‘nasal compound’ (i.e. prenasalized stop) is proportionally very common in the Kongo languages as a noun class feature lends further support to Alleyne's hypothesis. Both explanations are not mutually exclusive, of course, since phonological and functional causes may very well have reinforced each other.

### 2.3. Historical development

In this section the historical development of the entire copula system, with the exception of clefting (to which a separate chapter is devoted; see Ch. 4), will be described. The copula system as a whole can roughly be divided into four subsystems: location (in the wider sense, i.e. covering existence and possession), adjectival predication, nominal predication and ‘complementation’ - a wastebasket category of sentences where the copula is followed by a, mostly adverbial or infinitival, complement. Since in three of these areas the modern system, by and large, was already established by the end of the 18th century, these three (location, ‘complementation’ and adjectival predication) will be discussed relatively briefly and with an emphasis on their relevance for synchronic problems. In the fourth area (nominal predication or equation), however, a rather dramatic change can be observed, which deserves a more elaborate treatment.

#### 2.3.1. Location, existence, possession

Location/existence. The distinction between these two types of sentences is a notorious problem in traditional grammar. But since this is not the place to try to solve it, I follow one of the authorities in this field and take as a distinguishing criterion for ‘existentiality’ the possibility of deleting the locative adverbial without affecting the

central meaning of the sentence (Lyons 1968: 389-90). The consequence of this strategy is that, for instance, sentence (25) is taken as an existential, whereas (26) is seen as a locative:

- (25) na mindri foe nengre foeroe wisiman de  
LOC middle of negroes many witches are

‘there are many witches among the blacks’  
(King 1864-1870: 17)

- (26) mastra, wini no de na battra (Van Dyk  
c.1770: 61)  
master, wine not is LOC bottle

‘master, there's no wine in the bottle’

The problem in Sranan, however, is a little more complicated in that the existential/locative verb itself (de) is presumably, through a process of zero-derivation, derived from the locative adverb de, ‘there’. That there was a locative adverb de (besides dape) in earlier stages of the language, as there still is today, is indicated by the relevant entries in the dictionaries by Focke and Wullschlägel. The former has two entries for de, one for the locative/existential verb and aspect particle, and one for the locative adverb ‘there’ as in Tan dè, ‘stay there’. The latter gives de and (na) dapee as alternatives under the entry ‘dort, dorthin’ (‘there’ - locative/directional). Although de is not included in its adverbial function in Schumann's (1783) dictionary, I take it to have been present in the 18th century. Its reanalysis as a verb could be explained by positing a pidgin-like stage with zero copulas (as is in fact done in Chapter 5), where the locative adverb would immediately follow the subject of the sentence and would thus be a primary candidate for a category switch to verbal status. Sentences like the following abound, especially in early sources:

- (27) mastra, mi de (Van Dyk c.1770: 47)  
master, I ø there

‘master, here I am’

- (28) mastra den bassia de (Van Dyk c.1770:  
66)  
master the overseers ø there

‘master, the overseers are here’

The fact that de in sentences like these does not have a clear locative meaning, but rather indicates the notion of ‘being present’, is in line with the fact that the true demonstrative locative adverb was (and still is) expressed by dape. This demonstrative function of dape is in agreement with its etymological derivation, i.e. from ‘that place’. This etymology is indicated by etymological spellings like daplesie (Weygandt

1798: 97), da plesie (idem: 135), da presie (idem: 134), da pré (idem: 74), from which an evolution, through metathesis, to drape (the still existing variant of dape) is easily explained.

Returning to our discussion of a criterion for existentiality (i.e. the deletion of the locative adverbial), it will be evident that this criterion is not watertight for

sentences like (27) and (28) above, since both are clearly locatives, although there is no locative adverbial present (since this is ‘part of’ the verb). In spite of this I have not collapsed the categories of existence and location in my analysis, because there is an important difference between what are intuitively true existentials on the one hand and true locatives on the other. This is, as could be expected on semantic grounds, that true existentials, as opposed to locatives, can never have a zero copula, since it is precisely the ‘being’ itself (the existence) which is being predicated, as in:

- (29) fansortoe wisiman de (King 1864-70: 18)  
all-kinds witches are/exist

‘there are all kinds of witches’

This condition, of course, still holds for modern Sranan:

- (30) jorka no de (Donicie 1959: 36)  
ghosts not are/exist

‘ghosts don't exist’

Locatives, on the other hand, can have a zero-copula, although this is largely restricted to pre-dia (‘here’) position. This seeming idiosyncrasy, which has evolved into a categorial rule for pre-dia and into a variable rule for pre-dape position in modern Sranan (Seuren 1981: 1067), will be explained below.

First we will have to discuss the apparent deletion of locative BE before prepositional na, which is attested in only two sources. Both attestations are quoted below, with relevant contextual information:

(People are looking for two men who have disappeared at a funeral ceremony. They go by boat to Kambaloewa, but the men aren't there.)

- (31) Slee na bilosé èn Kambaloewa na oposè.  
Slee LOC downstream and Kambaloewa  
LOC upstream.

‘Slee (which was located) downstream and K.

Den toe kampoe dati ben de moro krosbé na

The two villages DEM TNS be more close-by LOC

upstream, these two villages were the closest in

birti èn den ben de na srefi sé foe da liba

area and they TNS be LOC same side of the river

the area and they were at the same side of the river’  
(Albitrouw 1894: 30)

There are, however, several reasons for thinking that (31) is not a case of copula deletion. First, since the context is in past tense (as appears from the second sentence in (31)), a present tense for the zero-copula runs counter to what one would expect. Second, the configuration of the two sentences in (31) and their relation to each other point to the possibility of a left-dislocated structure, so that both sentences are really only one sentence, with the first being the subject of the sentence as a whole, which (probably because of its ‘heaviness’) is repeated by the ‘anaphoric NP’



is a relatively recent innovation, its first occurrence in the sample being from 1896:

- (34) en wan ipi soema ben dape, omtrenti wan  
20  
and a heap people TNS  $\emptyset$  there, about a  
20

‘and there were a lot of people there, about

soema (Albitrouw 1896: 16)

people

twenty’

In fact, this is the only occurrence of the operation of this rule in the sample, but it has become much more frequent in the modern language, judging by Seuren's statement that ‘BE may likewise be  $\emptyset$  when followed by at least some adverbs of place such as drape (“there”) (an alternative form of dape, JA), as in (...) a (de) drape’ (Seuren 1981: 1067). I take it that pre-dape copula deletion was introduced on analogy with other similar expressions such as NP - de (as in (27) and (28) above) and NP - dia (see below). Both are present in fairly early stages of the language, i.e. the second part of the 18th century. Compare for instance:

- (35) a dea (Schumann 1783: 78)  
it  $\emptyset$  here

‘it's here’

Although pre-dia copula deletion was a variable rule in the early days (see below), it has become categorical fairly early on, at least by the time Focke compiled his dictionary (1855):

- (36) a d'ia (Focke 1855: 47)  
it  $\emptyset$  here

‘it's here’

In spite of the fact that so far I have used the term deletion in connection with these expressions, it should be made clear that, historically speaking, they do not involve deletion at all. As I will demonstrate below, what has happened to de in these contexts is not so much deletion as fusion, i.e. with ia ‘here’, which is the older form of dia and which can be found (although disguised by incorrect spelling) in older stages as in:

- (37) gran tanki fo myn heer a komi ja fo loeke  
great thanks for my Sir he come here for  
look



‘thank you very much Sir for coming here to visit

da pranasi wan trom (Van Dyk c.1770: 93)

the plantation one time

the plantation’

If we correct the obvious misprint komi ja into kom ija (komi has never been an alternative form for kom/kon), the word reads ija, which is a perfectly regular reflex of English ‘here’ (compare dia from ‘deer’)<sup>10</sup>. Even as late as 1855 (Focke 1855: 47) ia is found alongside dia, in a spelling

10 The stress shift from ija to ia is comparable to that in yesi (< ‘ears’).

(iä: acute accent indicates word stress; diaeresis supposedly indicates syllabification) that supports the derivation from an older form ija, that was attested above. In parentheses Focke provides an etymology for dia, but he incorrectly links it to the relative pronoun/temporal conjunction di ('who', 'when'), with which it has nothing to do. The historical evidence clearly indicates that dia is a merger of ia en de, the locative verb 'be'. That this is so appears from older spellings like dea, deeja and deja, while forms like \*dija are never found (which we would expect if Focke's hypothesis were correct):

(38) mie deeja heelie boen (Weygandt 1798: 94)

I am-here very well

'this is the right place for me'

(39) wan briefie foe em deja foe joe

a letter of/from him is-here for you

'there's a letter from him for you here'

(Weygandt 1798: 94)

Also occurring, but rarely, are hybrid forms with doubly expressed de as in:

(40) a de dejaso (Helmig 1844: 43)

he is (is-)here

'he's here'

(dejaso is an alternative form of deja, perhaps modelled on Dutch hierzo, an alternative, substandard form of hier, 'here'.) The presence of an overt locative verb in (40) could possibly be explained by European influence, i.e. as representing bakra tongo, 'white man's Sranan'.

The absorption of de in ia to yield a (superficial) zero copula may have happened on analogy with the very frequent NP - de formula used in locative and existential sentences without a locative adverbial phrase as (27) and (28) above. Because of its frequency and because of its identical semantic domain (location) this structure may have acted as a model for sentences with de ia, leading them to 'delete' their copula by incorporating it into the adverb.

One environment where zero locative verbs occur and which has not been mentioned thus far, is that of direct and indirect questions. Although the normal procedure here is to have an overt copula, there are a few instances in the sample where such a copula is not present, e.g.:

(41) oe plee da klosie diesie joe go tekief?

which place the cloth ø that you go take

'where's the cloth that you were going to pick up?'

(Weygandt 1798: 109)

(42)

mek' 'a moni tan, taki mi pe Kakaforu!

make the money be, tell me where

Kakaforu ø!

‘Let the money wait, tell me where Cock is!’

(Herskovits 1936: 154)

That a zero copula is rather exceptional here appears from the fact that all three sources where it occurs (the two mentioned in (41) and (42) plus Van Dyk c.1770) do have a

surface copula in all other instances of the same pattern, as in:

- (43) mara oe plee da klosie foe mie kamizolo  
dee?

but which place the cloth for my shirt is

‘but where's the cloth for my shirt?’

(Weygandt 1798: 108)

I have no explanation for the occurrence of zero copulas in these cases, except that it could be related to the ‘prototypical’ copula-less cases of location, as exemplified in (27) and (28). That is to say, the absence of a copula in (41) and (42) could be a relic of a purely adverbial status of de in declarative sentences; the matrix sentence from which the interrogative sentence is derived would thus not contain a copula.

Finally, two cases of locative sentences have to be discussed where not a zero copula is used but da, the equative copula which is normally used for nominal predication, especially identification. (The development of this category is discussed below.) The two sentences are from the same source and are of a similar structure, although the second is a cleft, while the first is not:

- (44) déjà da wan boen plesie (Weygandt 1798:  
94)

here is a good place

‘here's a good place for you’

- (45) da deeja da da winklie foe Masra G?  
is here is the shop of Mister G.

‘is this where Mr. G.'s shop is?’

(Weygandt 1798: 105)

(In (45) it is the second occurrence of da with which we are concerned here: the first is the clefting copula, the third is the determiner.) It is clear that the locative verb da in both these cases can have nothing to do with the general preposition na (compare (31) and (32) above where a locative na-copula cannot be excluded completely), simply because this preposition has never had the form da. Rather, it would seem that the selection of da in these cases has something to do with the fronted position of dia. In normal position dia is not accompanied by a locative verb, as was illustrated above (compare (35), (36), (38) and (39)). Now, it could be that as a result of its fronted position the adverb acquires something of a nominal character, since it is in a position which is normally occupied by a subject NP. As a result of this it would be quite logical to have it followed by the equative copula, the copula whose function it is to link two NP's. On the other hand, as these cases are so few in number and their occurrence is restricted to one source, it would not be unwise to allow for

an idiosyncrasy of the author here, which could or could not be related to the specific lect (i.e. bakra-tongo) he was using.

Possession. Although the number of possessive sentences in the sample is very small (some 20 cases), we can confidently say that up to about 1900 possessive predication is expressed

by de fu, ‘be of/for’, ‘belong to’, when the possessed item is definite (compare (46)), while indefinite possessives appear as objects of the verb abi, ‘have’ (compare (47)). Donicie's grammar, however, informs us (Donicie 1959: 39) that in the modern language not de but a (a later development of the copula na) is used with definite possessives, as in (48):

- (46) datti de vo dem (Schumann 1783: 81)  
that is of/for them

‘that belongs to them’

- (47) dem no habi so-hudu dea (Schumann  
1783: 116)  
they not have such-wood here

‘they don't have that kind of timber here’

- (48) a sani a fu en (Donicie 1959: 39)  
the thing is of/for him

‘that belongs to him’

In connection with the latter Donicie notes that a, when preceded by TMA particles, has to change into de (as is also the case with other uses of copular na, see pp.34-35 above). The use of a as a possessive verb in modern Sranan does not come as a complete surprise from a historical point of view, since there is one case in the sample where da is used as the verb of possession:

- (49) da foe mi (Weygandt 1798: 94)  
it-is of/for me

‘it's mine’

In section 2.2. this use of da was explained as a case of the sentence-introducing copula, which was later replaced by a de as in:

- (50) a de vo mi (Wullschlägel 1856: 12)  
it is of/for me

‘it's mine’

It thus seems that there is something like a cyclical movement in the language, as far as the expression of possession is concerned: from da via de to a. Unfortunately, I have no explanation for this development. (It should be noted, in parentheses, that there is one case in the sample where a zero copula is used to express possession, but in view of the source where it is found (Wennekers 1822: 24, see Appendix B) I do not think this should be taken too seriously.)

There is one interesting exception to the rule, stated above, that with indefinite possessives the verb abi appears instead of de. In ascribing mental or physical (especially unpleasant) states to animate (especially human) beings, such as ‘being hungry’, ‘being terrified’, but also ‘being pregnant’, the expression of these states, although in the form of an indefinite or unspecific NP, never appears as the object of abi. Instead, such NP's are either the subject of abi (or a related word like kisi, ‘catch’ or holi, ‘hold’ or even kili, ‘kill’), or they are the prepositional complement in a comitative ‘be with...’ construction. Thus we have for

instance:

- (51) dem poti soema di de nanga hangri  
the poor people who are with hunger

‘the poor people who are hungry’  
(Luke 1829: 12)

- (52) joe sisa Elisabet de nanga bele toe na hem  
your sister Elizabeth is with belly too  
LOC her

‘even your sister Elizabeth is pregnant in her

ouroe jari srefi (Luke 1829: 10)

old age even

old age’

The words that appear in this kind of construction in the sample, besides the ones mentioned above, are: broko hatti, ‘broken hearted’, djompo hatti, ‘restless’ and skreki, ‘terror’. Besides these, there is one case where the roles of subject and ‘state-NP’ are reversed:

- (53) Tigri, wan pina de nanga mi  
Tiger, a suffering is with me

‘Tiger, I’m having a hard time’  
(Herskovits 1936: 150)

This reversal of the roles of ‘patient’ (in the original sense of ‘one who is suffering’) and ‘state’ can also be observed in sentences of the other type mentioned above, i.e. those with abi or its equivalent, as in (54) and (55) below:

- (54) hekki kissi<sup>11</sup> mi (Schumann 1783: 128)  
hiccup catch me

‘I’ve got the hiccup’

- (55) mi kissi hekki (ibid.)  
I catch hiccup

‘I’ve got the hiccup’

11 Compare also korsu e freyri mi, ‘I’m going to have a fever’ (lit. ‘fever is flirting with me’) and korsu kisi mi, ‘I’m having a fever’ (lit. ‘fever has caught me’) (Renata de Bies, pers. comm.).





type occur in West African languages, although maybe not with the same semantic restriction, i.e. that of expressing a, usually unpleasant, mental or physical state:

Tshiluba

- (58) ndi ne muana (Burskens 1946)  
I-am with child

‘I have a child’

Twi

- (59) mewo sika (Balmer & Grant 1929: 58)  
I-am-with money

‘I have money’

Seidel & Struyf (1910: 43) note for Kikongo that ‘le verbe “avoir” s'exprime par kala (...) = être, avec la préposition ye (avec)’ and add that this holds only for alienable possession; unfortunately, they do not provide any examples. In passing, it may be worthwhile to remark that this type of possessive seems to be typically African: in a typological study of 59 languages (Arends 1982: 49) it turned out to occur in only four languages, three of them being African.

As to the ‘catch’ type, an example from Twi is cited by Alleyne (1980: 119, referring to Schuchardt 1979), but unfortunately no gloss or translation is given. The context, though, indicates that the meaning must be something like ‘hunger is catching me’ (cf. (56)):

Twi

- (60) okom de m' (Alleyne 1980: 119)  
hunger is catching me (?)

‘I'm starving’ (?)

More information is available on Yoruba, of which Rowlands (1969: 127) states:

‘The Yoruba way of expressing emotions, sensations and ailments differs from English in that the person involved is usually the grammatical object, not the subject of the verb of the sentence, e.g. the Yoruba for “I feel cold” is òtútù' mí mi, lit. “cold has caught me”.’

Compare in this connection sentence (61) from Sranan, which is an almost exact calque of the Yoruba expression just cited:

- (61) koure morro mi (Schumann 1783: 160)  
cold overpower me

‘I'm very cold’

Rowlands (ibid.) goes on to note that ‘in some cases a reverse order is possible’, implying a semantic difference as to the active participation of the ‘patient’ in the process. The same is true of Sranan (compare (54) and (55)), although the semantic difference may be less salient.

### **2.3.2. Complementation**

This (ill-named) category is intended to cover all instances of copula sentences that do not belong to any of the other categories distinguished within this study. Since what is



Because of the clefting this case is different from what would constitute a clear case of a pre-adverbial zero copula. But still one would expect a surface copula de to remain after the fronting of the adverb so. Unless, of course, there has not been any de present in the non-clefted sentence, but rather na, as in (62) above. In that case a possible explanation could be that the original copula has fused with the clefting copula, with which it is homophonous.

As to the use of a zero copula before ‘quasi-adverbs’: apparently these behave like adjectival predicates, for which omission of the copula is the unmarked option (see section 2.3.3.). The adverbs concerned (none of which is ever attested with a surface copula in the entire sample) are: klari, ‘ready’, lati, ‘late’, noefe, ‘enough’, toemoesi, ‘too much’ (the latter two as non-modifying adverbs, i.e. not accompanying an adjectival predicate), fara, ‘far’ and vanoodoe, ‘necessary, needful’. Some examples are:

(64) tanki mastra a noefe (Van Dyk c.1770: 59)

thanks master it  $\emptyset$  enough

‘please, master, it (i.e. the beating) is enough’

(65) a farra toemoesi (Helmig van der Vegt 1844: 37)

it  $\emptyset$  far too-much

‘it's too far’

The adjectival character is expressed even more clearly with one adverb, klari, ‘ready’, which has a zero copula in finite as well as in infinitival position. The latter is a characteristic feature of true adjectival predicates, as we will see below (section 2.3.3.). Examples include:

(66) n'jam n'jam klarie? (Weygandt 1798: 93)

dinner  $\emptyset$  ready?

‘dinner's ready?’

(67) da n'am n'jam sa klarie na ienie wan affoe

the dinner TNS  $\emptyset$  ready LOC inside a half

‘dinner will be ready in half an hour’

joeroe (Weygandt 1798: 94)

hour

Although none of the other adverbs mentioned here ever appears in infinitival position in the entire sample, we may safely assume that they would behave just like klari, i.e. as adjectival predicates. This only goes to show once more how thin category boundaries are in a creole language like Sranan (cf. Voorhoeve 1981). The same point will be made below with respect to predicate adjectives, when they will be shown to behave like (stative) verbs.

It may be interesting to note in this connection that several of the relevant West African languages do not have a separate category of adverbs. E.g. Rowlands says ‘that Yoruba has no special class of words, like English words ending in “-ly”, which we can obviously label “adverbs”’ (Rowlands 1969: 145). With respect to Twi (Fante) it is said that ‘there are not many words which are exclusively adverbs’ (Balmer & Grant 1929: 139). And, finally, for Igbo the category of adverbs does not appear in a summing-up of the parts of speech in Green and Igwe's grammar (1963: 13). An obvious hypothesis is that the behaviour of adverbs in Sranan may have something to do with substrate influence, but I have not investigated this point any further.

The discussion of *de* as a complement-introducing copula is best divided into two parts, according to the nature of





he is LOC work

‘he's at work’

To summarize, what appears from these examples (and many more in the Appendix) is that, with the one exception of so, which in modern Sranan can have na as a copula (see p. 43), de is and almost always was the obligatory copula with adverbial complements, regardless of their semantic function (temporal, modal, etc.). The fact that it is the locative verb which is selected to perform this function, could very well be related to the fact that what is expressed in the adverbial complement is unstable in terms of the ‘time-stability-parameter’ (Givón 1979: 320-23) and thus unsuitable to be expressed by the ‘time-independent’ equative copula da/na. (See section 2.3.4. for a more elaborate discussion of this point in connection with adjectival and nominal predication; the same argument could be made with respect to the

expression of possession and existence by *de*: both involve a temporal situation, except, perhaps, where a theological concept of eternity is involved, as in *Gado de*, ‘God exists’.)

Turning our attention now to infinitival complements, we will first give a few examples:

- (74) ...da hattibron, disi de vo kom (Luke 1829: 22)  
the anger that is for come  
‘...the anger which is about to come’
- (75) a de vo wiki froekoe vo go loekoe wrokko  
it is for wake early for go look work  
‘you have to wake up early to supervise the work’  
(Helmig van der Vegt 1844: 48)
- (76) a no de vo verandre (Wullschlägel 1856: 7)  
it not is for change  
‘it can't be changed’
- (77) den no de foe feni den (Albitrouw 1894: 30)  
they not are for find them  
‘they couldn't find them’
- (78) disi wanwan soema de toe vo finni, disi de  
these few people are also for find who ASP  
‘those few people can also be found who keep  
kibri dem srefi vo dem fasi dati  
keep them selves from the manners those  
themselves away from those customs’

(Makzien 1902: 4)

(79)

wantem trawan de vo hindre hem nanga  
dem

sometimes others are for annoy him with  
the

‘sometimes others may annoy him with their empty

soso kondre-singi (Makzien 1902: 4)

empty country-songs

folk-songs’

From these examples it appears that *de fu* either gets a future tense interpretation (as in (74)) or a modal interpretation, which involves an obligation (as in (75)) or a possibility ((76) - (79)). Within the latter category there is a difference between (76) and (78) on the one hand, and (77) and (79) on the other: in the former the subject of the sentence performs the semantic function of patient, whereas in the latter the grammatical subject is the agent of the action expressed by the verb. The ‘subject=patient-type’ may be modelled on Dutch, where exactly the same structure is possible:

Dutch

(80)

het is niet te veranderen

it is not to change

‘it can't be changed’

- (81) er zijn enkele mensen te vinden die...  
there are some people to find who...

‘some people can be found who...’

The future tense type (as in (74)) might be modelled on an English structure such as:

- (82) the time which is to come  
‘the time that will come’

Finally, the modal ‘subject=agent-type’ may have been influenced by a related construction with fu which also involves a modal interpretation (although one of obligation, not possibility) and where fu is preceded by abi, not de. It seems clear, by the way, that this abi fu, ‘have to’ construction was taken from English. Some examples are:

- (83) joe no ha' foe go moro (Focke 1855: 41)  
you not have for go more

‘you don't have to go anymore’

- (84) so a fo tan dape te den ben kom  
so he-had for remain there until they TNS  
come

‘so he had to remain there until they came and

feni hem (Herskovits 1936: 166)

find him

found him’

- (85) en so Konum a fo gi Anansi wan  
leti-mindri  
and so King had for give Anansi one  
precise-half

‘and so the King had to give Anansi half of his

kondre fo hem (idem: 172)

land of him

Kingdom’

Note that in glossing (84) I proceed from the assumption that a is a contraction of the pronoun a, ‘he’ and the verb a, ‘have’, a reduced form of abi. Contractions of this type are very frequent in Sranan, and it may very well be that this is what caused all the fuss about fu being a modal auxiliary in Sranan. This idea was promoted by Byrne (1984: 100) and Bickerton (1984: 181), both, I suppose, led by the mistaken idea<sup>12</sup> that fu is a modal auxiliary in Saramaccan:

Saramaccan

(86) i fu naki di mii (Bickerton 1984: 180)  
you for hit the child

‘you should hit the child’

Sentence (85), where the subject is Konum and not a (as in (84)), provides clear evidence that fo is a complementizer preceded by the verb a, and not an auxiliary itself. Apart from that, I have never seen any evidence that fu is a verb in Sranan: it cannot be tensed, infinitized or clefted, as

12 That fu is not a modal in Saramaccan either is supported by Wijnen & Alleyne (1987: 43), who also derive a fu from a a fu, ‘he has to’.

true modals can, such as musu:

(87) a ben moesoe foe fadon (Focke 1855: 82)  
he TNS must for fall-down

‘he had to fall down’

(88) da moesoe joe sa moesoe (Grammatik  
1854: 47)

is must you TNS must

‘you'll have to’

It is ironic that Bickerton rests his claim for the modal status of fu entirely on sentence (84), which he explicitly states (o.c.: 181) he has taken from Washabaugh (1975: 129). The irony is that in the latter article (84) is immediately followed by (85) which, as shown above, provides clear evidence to the contrary with regard to the modal status of fo. This calls for an extension of Bickerton's ‘First Law of Creole Studies’ (Bickerton 1981: 83): not only can every creolist's analysis be directly contradicted by that creolist's own texts and citations, but also by the texts and citations he omits.

### 2.3.3. Adjectival predication

The question of the categorial status of predicative adjectives in Sranan - are they ‘plain’ adjectives or are they (stative) verbs? - has received quite some attention lately. Seuren (1981) sparked off the discussion by claiming that predicative adjectives are adjectives, preceded by an underlying copula which is realized as a zero unless otherwise specified. The reason for him to do so was that, although in ‘prototypical’ cases (i.e. simple declarative sentences) predicative adjectives behave exactly like stative verbs, under certain conditions an overt copula de appears. This happens in contexts where the subject is not immediately followed by the predicate. Until Seuren's article appeared, the generally accepted analysis had been the one by Voorhoeve (1957) who, on the basis of their combinatory possibilities with TMA-particles, chose to classify these adjectives as verbs. In an unpublished paper (Arends 1985), which was a preliminary version of the present chapter, I supported this view, with the restriction that indeed, as Seuren claims, these ‘adjectival verbs’ sometimes behave differently from ‘verbal verbs’ (like sabi, ‘know’). In a recent article Sebba (1986) reacted to Seuren's analysis by adducing evidence for the verbal status of adjectival predicates. Seuren (1986), in his reaction to Sebba, defended his earlier view, but later (1987) accepted the exceptional character of one of these (siki, ‘ill’), which he showed has to be classified as a verb. Although I do not pretend to be able to solve this controversy, I hope my historical data may contribute to a clarification of the problem. In order to get a clear picture of the relevant facts I will first present a survey

of the behaviour of predicative adjectives in a number of different contexts in modern Sranan. After that I will present my historical data in the same order, so as to

facilitate comparison.

## Predicative Adjectives in Modern Sranan

### (a) simple declaratives

- (89) a liba bradi  
the river wide

‘the river is wide’

- (90) \*a liba de bradi  
the river is wide

### (b) infinitives

- (91) a liba musu bradi  
the river must wide

‘the river must be wide’

- (92) a liba musu de bradi  
the river must be wide

‘the river must be wide’

### (c) wh-questions

- (93) o bradi a liba de?  
what<sup>13</sup> wide the river is?

13 It may even be that in a sentence like (93) bradi is not an adjective but a noun (‘width’). Note that I have glossed o as ‘what’, not as ‘how’. The correct gloss of the sentence would have to be: ‘what width the river is?’. In this connection it may be interesting to know that the same type of adjectival predication occurs in a language like Kikongo, where a sentence like ‘they are happy’ is constructed as ‘they are happiness’ (Bentley 1887: 1027). In relation to this it is also important that in my opinion the correct gloss of o is ‘what/which’ (ultimately derived from ‘who’), not ‘how’ as most authors (Echteld 1961: 96; Focke 1855: 45) would have it. The derivation of o from ‘who’ is supported by older spellings like hu, as in hupeh, ‘where’ and hutum, ‘when’ (Schumann 1783: 133-34) and oe as in oe plesse, ‘where’ and oe tem, ‘when’ (Herlein 1718: 280-81). The evidence is strengthened by the fact that the regular reflex of the English diphthong in ‘how’ in Sranan would be ow (as in kow < ‘cow’), whereas /u:/ is regularly reflected as /u/ (cf. tu < ‘two’) (Smith 1987: 436; 462-63). It is also significant that other creoles that have analytical question words (Saramaccan, Haitian, Krio, Negerhollands) always choose the equivalent of ‘what/which’, not ‘how’ (Boretzky 1983: 154). Finally, every Kwa language investigated for this study (Ewe, Igbo, Yoruba and Twi) constructs its question words with an equivalent of ‘what/which’, not ‘how’ (Boretzky o.c.: 155-56; Rowlands 1969: 141, 160, 174; Balmer & Grant 1929: 139). Pieter Seuren (p.c.)



‘how wide is the river?’

- (94) o bradi a liba bradi?  
what wide the river wide?

‘how wide is the river?’

- (95) fa a liba bradi?  
how the river wide?

‘how wide is the river?’

- (96) \*o bradi a liba?  
what wide the river?

(d) preposed modifiers (so, ‘so’, tumusi, ‘very’, nofo, ‘enough’; but not moro, ‘more’ (see under (f))

- (97) a liba de so bradi  
the river is so wide

‘the river is that wide’

- (98) \*a liba so bradi  
the river so wide

- (99) a liba bradi so  
the river wide so

‘the river is that wide’

- (100) \*a liba de bradi so  
the river is wide so

(e) clefts

- (101) na bradi a liba bradi  
is wide the river wide

suggests that the derivation of o from ‘who’ does not constitute evidence for the nominal status of predicates like bradi, because of cases like omeni, ‘how much’ which clearly cannot be analyzed as ‘what + Noun’. I feel, however, that omeni may have been built on analogy with other question words like oten, ‘when’ and (o)pe, ‘where’; this could imply that omeni is a single, unanalyzable unit, in which o is not present as a separate morpheme.

‘the river is really wide’

(102)

\*na bradi a liba (de)

is wide the river (is)

(f) comparatives

(103)

a liba disi moro bradi leki a trawan

the river this more wide than the  
other-one

‘this river is wider than that one’

(104)

a liba disi bradi moro leki a trawan

the river this wide more than the  
other-one

‘this river is wider than that one’

(105)

a liba disi bradi moro a trawan

the river this wide exceed the other-one

‘this river is wider than the other one’

- (106) \*a liba disi de moro bradi leki a trawan  
the river this is more wide than the  
other-one

(g) unrestructured Dutch loans

- (107) mi de enthoesiast (= Du. ‘enthousiast’)  
I am enthusiastic

‘I am enthusiastic’

- (108) \* a de moy (< Du. ‘mooi’)  
she is beautiful

A few remarks will have to be made concerning this survey. First, although (90) is generally considered to be ungrammatical (Sebba 1986: 110), there are some situations, language varieties and groups of speakers for which it is not, at least when the predicate contains a word like tru, ‘true’. Donicie (1959: 38) notes that both a tru and a de tru are possible, although the latter is not for older, monolingual speakers, unless it has a clear emphatic function. It is more frequent in the younger generation, perhaps through interference from Dutch; it also occurs in non-emphatic contexts, and in Europeanized literary and pulpit language (Voorhoeve 1971). Second, although Seuren (1981: 1055) presents (92) as a normal and (91) as a special sociolectal variant, the picture that emerges from my historical sample is somewhat different. This is especially surprising in view of the characteristics attributed to the speakers of the latter variety, which are ‘young’, ‘male’ and ‘urban’. If synchronic variation reflects historical change, one would expect (92) to be the alternative form found more frequently in older sources. Third, as I have been informed (Renata de Bies, p.c.), (94) is indeed grammatical, but it is used very infrequently. This corresponds to my observation that it does not occur in my sample. Fourth, Renata de Bies (p.c.) also informs me that (95) is found especially with older speakers, which is in agreement with the fact that it is found in older sources within the sample. Donicie (o.c.: 98), however, gives (95) and (93) as equivalents, with no additional information. Incidentally, he does not mention (94) at all as a third variant. Fifth, Seuren (1986: 130) suggests that bradi in both (97) and (99) has to be interpreted in a neutral, non-oriented way (i.e. not implying that the river is indeed wide). The non-neutral sentence would involve a double occurrence of bradi, as in:

- (109) a liba bradi so bradi  
the river wide so wide

‘the river is só (terribly) wide’

And, finally, although (106) is generally assumed to be ungrammatical in modern Sranan, it is found as late as 1936, even though most of the occurrences in the sample date from before 1850. (See Ch. 3 for a detailed discussion.):

(110)

bika a ben de moro hei leki Falek

because he TNS be more high than Falcon

‘because he was higher than Falcon’

(Herskovits 1936: 194)

With this synchronic picture in mind we will now proceed to a presentation of the historical data. In doing so we will follow the same order as in the above survey.

(a) simple declaratives. The normal case for predicative adjectives here is to have no overt copula. Only in a minority of cases (approximately 10%) does a copula de appear; most of these cases fall under category (g) or represent instances of the semantic differentiation of adjectives in a stative and a non-stative reading. (Both will be discussed below.) A few examples of sentences which do not belong to either of these categories are:

- (111) a de fulu tumusi, a de go passa abra  
it is full too-much, it ASP go pass over

‘it's too full, it's going to overflow’

(Schumann 1783: 59)

- (112) son dee tranga kaba (Weygandt 1798: 98)  
sun is strong already

‘it's very hot already’

- (113) mi bri' ji de lau (Focke 1855: 17)  
I believe you are crazy

‘are you crazy?’

- (114) Gado wroko de bigi vo troe (Makzien  
1913: 51)  
God work is big for true

‘God's doings are really great’

As far as a rationale for these few cases is concerned, it might be remarked that in (113) and (114) an emphatic intention cannot be excluded: cf. Donicie's remark on the preceding page. As to (111) and (112), a possibility here is that, instead of functioning as stative verbs (as predicative adjectives with a zero copula seem to be doing), these two are used here as non-stative (more specifically inchoative) verbs, i.e. ‘to begin to be full’, ‘to begin to be strong’. In that case de would have to be glossed not as a copula, but rather as an aspect marker de, which is obligatory for this category of verbs in the present tense. That what appear to be adjectives may indeed be used as inchoative verbs, becomes clear from examples like the following,

where bigi, ‘big’ has the meaning of ‘to become big’, i.e. ‘to begin to be big’, not of ‘to be big’ (compare also Seuren 1981: 1048):

- (115) Tyotyoforu n'e go bigi moro. Na so no  
Tyotyoforu not-ASP go get-big more. Is  
so not

‘T. (a small bird) is not going to get bigger.

mo a de bigi (Herskovits 1936: 156)

more he ASP get-big

He only gets this big’

- (116) A no habi fo bigi moro. ‘A so a pikin,

He not has to get-big more. Is so he small,

‘He (i.e. Toad) doesn't have to get any

‘a so a sa tan (idem: 158)

is so he TNS remain

bigger. He will remain as little as he is’

Of course, apart from these tentative explanations, all four of (111) - (114) may reflect synchronic variation as a result of incomplete decreolization.

To show that in the majority of cases a zero copula is used, I will give four examples with the same ‘adjective’ as in (111) - (114). Sometimes a semantic difference can be observed, as between tranga in (112) and in (118):

(117) mi belle fulu (Schumann 1783: 59)  
my belly full

‘I am satisfied’

(118) mi belle tranga (idem: 46)  
my belly strong

‘I have constipation’

(119) dem kom tan leki dem lau (Luke 1829:  
38)  
they come be like they crazy

‘they lost their minds’

(120) mi no bigi yete (Herskovits 1936: 156)  
I not big yet

‘I'm not big yet’

(For many more examples of this type the reader is referred to the relevant section in Appendix B.)

(b) infinitives. Here the situation is similar to that described under (a), i.e. there are a few exceptional cases with a surface copula de (approximately 10%), but in the majority of cases there is no such element. The former are all from the same source (Wennekers 1822), which has been shown to be unreliable on independent

grounds (see sections 2.3.1. and 2.3.2. above; see also section 2.3.4. below). One example is given here:

- (121) datti no sa dee takroe? (Wennekers 1822: 5)  
that not MOD be evil

‘isn't that evil?’

Examples with no overt copula include:

- (122) a sa boen na mie foetroe (Weygandt 1798: 92)  
it TNS good LOC me for-true

‘I will be very pleased’

- (123) aránja moe groen, bifósi a lépi (Focke 1855: 11)  
orange must green before it ripe

‘an orange must be green, before it gets ripe’

Within this category many examples can be found to support the view, expressed above, that some predicative adjectives are in fact inchoative verbs. For instance, apart from (124), there are eight more examples where dede means ‘die’, i.e. ‘begin to be dead’ and not ‘be dead’:



- (124) da somma no sa dedde, a dorro kaba  
the person not TNS die, he get-through  
already

‘the man's not going to die, he's through it’  
(Schumann 1783: 88)

- (125) mi fom zomma morre den za ziki kwetti  
I beat people more they TNS get-ill quite

‘If I'll beat these people more, they'll get really ill’  
(Van Dyk c.1770: 57)

- (126) djompo-hátti foe sabakóe  
jump-heart of/for sabakoe (a kind of bird)

‘the fearful nature of the sabakoe prevents it

méki a no kan fáttoe (Focke 1855: 24)  
makes it not can get-fat

from getting fat’

If this view of predicative adjectives as inchoative (i.e. non-stative) verbs could be substantiated by further research, it would open the possibility of a new analysis, somewhat analogous to Alleyne's proposal (1980: 98; 1986) to interpret them as perfective passives of causative verbs. That is, mi siki would have to be interpreted as either ‘I have become ill’ or as ‘I have been made ill’. Note that this view runs counter to earlier proposals, made also by myself and discussed at the beginning of this section, to view predicative adjectives as stative verbs. Within the context of the present, whose aim is mainly historical, I have not investigated this matter any further.

(c) wh-questions. There is only one example in the sample with o:

- (127) o brada (sic) a dee (Weygandt 1798: 107)  
what wide it is

‘how wide is it?’

(Note that bradi is misspelt here as brada.)

Further, there are a few examples with (hoe) fa, ‘what fashion’, ‘how’, but they are either constructed differently (as (128)) or they have a different meaning (as (129))<sup>14</sup>. To show that this construction type did indeed exist in older Sranan in the

14 (128) has de so before the adjective; (129) cannot refer to ‘being dead’ since it concerns the manner in which somebody is actually committing suicide.

same form as it still does now, I present one example from outside the sample (sentence (130)).

(128)   we, jere now fa den heiden kondre  
  well, listen now how the heathen villages

‘well, listen now how heavy life is in the

libi de so ebi (King 1864-70: 16)

life is so heavy

heathen villages’

- (129) hoe fa a didde (Van Dyk c.1770: 75)  
what fashion he die

‘how is he dying?’ (i.e. committing suicide)

- (130) Azáu sâbi fa hem lási brâdi, a  
Elephant knows how its bottom wide, it

‘the elephant knows how broad its bottom is,

swâri kokronoto (Focke 1855: 128)

swallows coconuts

it swallows coconuts’

The fact that (130) is a proverb, representing an older stage of the language, together with the fact that the only other example, (128), is constructed in a deviant way, may very well point to the possibility that the *fa*-type is an older variant, which is now largely restricted to older speakers (see p.52). In view of the fact that there is only one attestation of the *o*-type with *de*, (127), the complete absence of this type with copying of the adjective (cf. (94)) may not be all that significant. In other words: it may very well be due to the (relatively) small size of the sample.

(d) preposed modifiers. Of the nine cases in the sample seven are constructed with *so*, while the remaining two have *piki(en)so*, ‘a little’ as a modifier. Further there are some cases which do not properly belong to this category since there is no preposed modifier involved. Still, they have been classified here, because they correspond to the other cases in that the subject of the sentence is not immediately followed by the predicative adjective. In all cases there is an overt copula present:

- (131) ju no de so poti (Schumann 1783: 53)  
you not are so poor

‘you’re not that poor’

- (132) mie dee piekiensso swakki jetee  
(Weygandt 1798: 97)  
I am a-little weak still

‘I still feel a little weak’

- (133) moro switi joe de, moro mi kan lobbi joe  
more sweet you are, more I can love you

‘the sweeter you are, the more I can love you’

(Grammatik 1854: 13)

(134)

ma foe den boesi kondre moro ebi libi  
but for/of the bush villages more heavy  
life

‘but bushland life is the most difficult’

de (King 1864-70: 16)

is

- (135) syen<sup>15</sup> a de te wi frigiti wi afo  
shame it is when we forget our forefathers

‘but it is shameful when we forget our forefathers’

(Koenders 1946-49: 138)

Note that in (134) as well as (135) contrastive emphasis is involved, which is clearly borne out by the contextual information not repeated here. Summarizing, it would seem that there is a general principle involved, dictating that a surface copula be present when the subject is not immediately followed by the adjectival predicate, unless the intervening element (such as moro or an auxiliary like musu) is conceptually incorporated in that predicate. This accounts not only for the cases under (131)-(132) but also for the other cases presented here, as well as for the behaviour of wh-questions. Seuren (1986b) puts forward a possible explanation for this principle in that its function is to signal non-canonical, i.e. non-S V (0), word order.

(e) clefts. All cases of predicate clefting of an adjectival predicate in the sample involve copying of that predicate. These cases (including some marginal cases which not everybody will agree are clefts: see Ch. 4 for details) are illustrated here by (136) and (137):

- (136) da boi no stoutoe, ma da morsoe a de  
the boy not naughty, but is dirty he is

‘the boy's not naughty, but he's incredibly

morsoe toemoesi (Grammatik 1854: 47)

dirty too-much

dirty’

- (137) na siki Tigri siki, a dede  
is ill Tiger ill, he dead

‘Tiger is very ill, he's dead’

(Herskovits 1936: 152)

(f) comparatives. All three types current in modern Sranan occur in the sample, even in some of the oldest sources.

Besides these copula-less variants we find another one, with an overt copula preceding moro, which is ungrammatical in the modern language. Still, in the sample it has been attested as late as 1936 (Herskovits). All four of these types will be

15 syen is a noun originally, but it clearly functions as an adjective here, illustrating the phenomenon of multifunctionality, so well known in creole languages like Sranan (Voorhoeve 1981).

illustrated by a sample sentence. For further information on the comparative the reader is referred to Ch. 3.

(138)

bakra moro koni leki ningre

white-man more smart than negro

‘whites are smarter than blacks’

(Grammatik 1854: 13)

(139) ju betre morro leki mi? (Schumann 1783: 62)

you better more than me

‘are you better than me?’

(140) a biggi morro mi (idem: 62)

he big surpass me

‘he's taller than me’

(141) hem de moro switi leki joe (Grammatik 1854: 12)

he is more sweet than you

‘he's sweeter than you’

Of the nineteen examples in the sample with preposed moro twelve have a zero copula and seven have de. Of the latter, five are from pre-1850 sources. This clearly indicates that this is the older variant. The transition from the overt-copula-type exemplified in (141) to the zero-copula-type illustrated in (138) can be explained by postulating a process of grammaticalization: in the former moro is still taken as a lexical adverb ‘more’, which, since it is preposed to the adjective, necessitates an overt copula; in the latter it is beginning to be grammaticalized as a comparative inflection of the adjective, comparable to the English ‘-er’ suffix, and thus, with no modifier intervening between subject and predicate, leads to the selection of a zero copula. (This issue will be discussed more fully in Ch. 3.)

(g) unrestructured Dutch loans. In most of the cases where an adjective is involved which phonologically still clearly is a Dutch loan (such as getrouw, ‘faithful’, zeker, ‘certain’, voorzigtig (sic), ‘careful’ and zelfstandig, ‘independent’), a copula appears. But also in this area there seems to have been some variation, as appears from the comparison of (143) and (144), in both of which the adjective has been rephonologized to the same extent (ferkoutoe, ‘having a cold’ < Du. ‘verkouden’ and benauwtoe, ‘anxious’ < Du. ‘benauwd’), whereas it triggers a surface copula in only one:

(142) ala sani disi de onmogelijk na libisoema

all things that are impossible LOC people

‘everything which is impossible for man’

(Kraag 1894-96: 35)

(143) mi de ferkoutoe pikienso (Helmig 1844: 44)

I am having-a-cold a-little

‘I’m having a bit of a cold’

(144)

mi hatti benauwtoe (Wullschlägel 1856:  
7)

my heart anxious

‘my heart is anxious’

Finally, a few remarks must be made concerning an issue which does not fall within the scope of this survey properly, since I cannot relate it to the situation in the modern language. The reason is simply that I have never seen a discussion of the issue from a synchronic point of view. The point I want to discuss concerns the fact that for some



adjectives (e.g. bun, ‘good’) the presence or absence of a copula seems to be related to their semantic differentiation. This differentiation is always related to the category of stativity, i.e. for bun there is a differentiation between two meanings, one stative (‘O.K.’) and one non-stative (‘mentally/physically well’). Relevant examples include:

- (145) a bon (Van Dyk c.1770: 58)  
it good

‘it’s O.K.’

- (146) mi de bun (Schumann 1783: 74)  
I am good

‘I’m fine’

A similar differentiation can be observed in the opposition dede, ‘be dead’ vs. de dede, ‘take pains’:

- (147) yu mama dede na Sotwatrasei  
your mama dead LOC Saltwaterside

‘your mother is dead (has died) at Saltwaterside’  
(Herskovits 1936: 158)

- (148) a de déde de tappoe hem (Focke 1855:  
21)  
he ASP take-pains ASP stop him

‘he’s doing his best to stop him’

In connection with bun perhaps, instead of stativity, the more general notion of ‘time-stability’ (Givón 1979: 320-23) should be called upon here, because this concept will prove to play a major role in the differentiation of the equative copula as well (see section 2.3.4.). If this analysis is accepted, the time-stability-parameter appears to be a central category in the syntax of Sranan: it operates in the verbal as well as in the adjectival and nominal systems. In the former its function is to assign the aspect particle only to non-stative verbs, i.e. mi e waka, ‘I walk/am walking’ vs. mi sabi, ‘I know’; this will not be discussed any further here. Indeed, the difference between one’s ‘being well’ and the time-less concept of something ‘being O.K.’ is not so much a difference of action/process vs. state, but rather one of being time-dependent or not. Thus, on a time-stability-continuum the former would be more on the unstable, the latter more on the stable pole. A similar parameter seems to operate in languages like Ewe and Yoruba, where there is a difference in the predication of characteristics which are permanent and those which are temporary. Thus in Yoruba two different copulas are used, one (jé) to express permanent, and one (se) to express temporary states:

Yoruba

(149) ó jé okùnrin (Rolands 1969: 153)  
he is man

‘he is male’

(150) ó se okùnrin (ibidem)  
he is man

‘he is manly/brave’

It may be significant that in Ewe, where most predicative



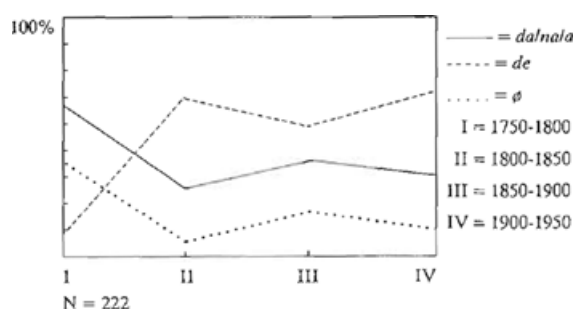


Figure 1: Historical development of the equative copula in Sranan

The most important conclusion to be drawn from this figure is that, somewhere between 1800 and 1850, *de* takes over the prominent position of *da* as the equative copula and that this change is later consolidated. Also, the zero copula shows a clear decline in its usage after 1800. The relatively high frequency of the zero copula in stage I (around 35%) is in agreement with the fact that it is the only copula form to be found in the one pre-1750 source available (Herlein 1718). In other words, the decrease in usage of the zero copula from 100% in 1718 to less than 10% in 1800 supports the idea of the pidgin character of early Sranan and the concomitant hypothesis of gradual creolization which will be discussed below and elaborated more fully in Ch. 5. It will be seen that zero copulas are largely restricted to special contexts, such as negation, which will be dealt with below.

One proviso with respect to Fig.1 should be made. The peak in the proportion of *de* in the 1800-1850 period is due to one source that is prone to overgeneralization of this form in all functions (Wennekers 1822; see also sections 2.3.1., 2.3.2. and 2.3.3.). If corrected for this overrepresentation, the development would be much more gradual than Fig.1 makes it appear to be.

In an attempt to find an explanation for this rather dramatic change the equative category was split up into two subcategories, that of attribution (description, qualification) and that of identification. The first type is exemplified by a sentence like 'That man is a teacher', the second by a sentence like 'That man is my neighbour'.

According to Lyons (1977: 471-472) the syntactic difference between the two depends principally upon two facts: 1) the nominal predicates in the two types do not belong to the same 'expression class', i.e. they cannot be freely interchanged; and 2) subject and complement of identifying, but not of attributive, sentences are freely permutable. If we divide all equational sentences according to these criteria into

these two subcategories, we can clearly see that the rise of de over da is related to the emergence of these separate categories from the - previously uniform - class of equatives. Compare Figs. 2 and 3 (from Arends 1986: 112):

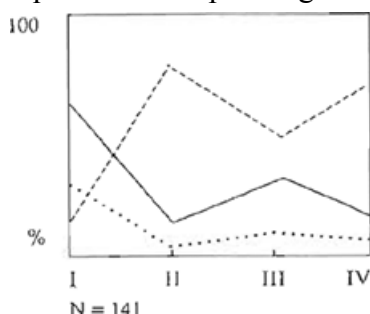


Figure 2: Historical development of the attributive copula in Sranan

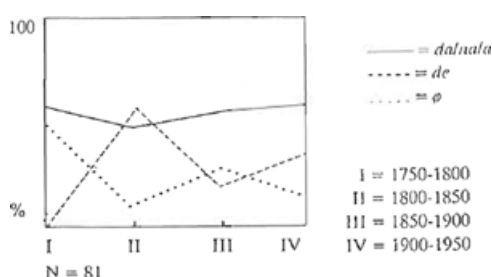


Figure 3: Historical development of the identifying copula in Sranan

(Note that the same remark that was made with respect to the peak in the de-curve in Fig.1 should be made in connection with Figs. 2 and 3.)

Figures 2 and 3 show that, after an initial stage (1750-1800) where da was the preferred copula for attribution as well as identification, the attributive category develops a preference for de (which was already marginally present), while the expression of identity is largely delegated to da. In both cases the other copula is possible as a secondary alternative, whereas the zero copula shows a decline in both functions. As to the origin of the split of the formerly uniform category of equation, I would say that it is most probably the emergence of attribution as a distinct category which has been the driving force in this process. This is based on the idea that the process under discussion is not just one which has to do only with equation, but one which has wider implications in the sense that it is an example of the introduction of the concept of 'temporal instability' into the language (compare section 2.3.3. where this idea is discussed in connection with adjectival predicates). The idea is strengthened by the fact that it is de, the indicator of non-stativity with verbs and certain adjectival predicates, which is selected to mark the category of attribution, whereas da, which was the preferred copula for the undifferentiated equative category in stage I, is reserved for the expression of identity. In other words, the language has changed from a stage where it had only one equative category which was undifferentiated with respect to time (expressed by da), to a stage where it does differentiate its equative category with respect to time by expressing the time-independent category of identification by its 'timeless'

copula da (which cannot be tensed) and by marking the time-dependent category of attribution by its non-stative, i.e. time-dependent copula de.

In order to illustrate this development relevant examples will be quoted from stages I and II, in each case representing the situation which is typical for the period concerned:

Stage I (attribution)

da

- (154) adjossi, da Bakkratongo  
(the word) ‘adjossi’ is Bakkratongo

‘ldadjossi’ is Bakkratongo’ (Europeans' Sranan)  
(Schumann 1783: 46)

∅

- (155) djinja wan bune dressi vo tranga  
ginger ∅ a good medicine for strong

‘ginger is a good medicine against head-aches’

hedde-hatti (Schumann 1783: 84)  
head-ache

(identification)

da

- (156) droifi watra, da wini (Schumann 1783:  
92)  
grape water is wine

‘wine is juice of grapes’

de no examples

∅

- (157) who<sup>16</sup> somma datty? (Stedman 1796: 227)  
what person ∅ that?

‘who's that?’

16 Strangely enough this form is spelled qui somma in the 1799 Dutch translation of Stedman (Pieter Seuren, pers. comm.). I have no explanation for this other than the printer's fancy to insert a French interrogative pronoun here.

Stage II (attribution)

de

(158)

mi wefi de wan bejari soema toe (Luke  
1829: 8)

my wife is an aged person too

‘my wife is also very old’

(identification)

de

(159)

efi joe de Gado pikien (Luke 1829: 26)

if you are God child

‘if you are the son of God’





‘I’m not your slave’

demonstrative

(164)

soortoe maniri dati? (Wullschlägel 1856:  
20)

what manner  $\emptyset$  that?

‘what kind of behaviour is that?’

cleft

(165)

da hem da somma, disi joe soekoe

is he  $\emptyset$  the person that you look-for

‘he’s the one you’re looking for’  
(Grammatik 1854: 19)

As to (163), it will be remembered that the a no sequence, which is normal for negative copula sentences, is a single morpheme for native speakers, so that it may be not quite correct to speak of a ‘zero copula’ in cases like this, it not being at all clear that the a is a copula in the first place. As will be shown in Ch. 4, no instead of a no is also quite frequent in negative cleft sentences. Regarding (164) it should be remarked that the Sranan copula da was derived from the pronoun of the same form, but ultimately from its predecessor dati (compare sentence (8) above), which in (164) apparently fulfills both functions, i.e. that of pronoun and of copula. Finally, in (165) the presence of the clefting copula may be the cause of the absence of the identifying copula, in which case it performs a dual function.

As far as an explanation for the above-mentioned differentiation is concerned, I think it is best seen as a grammatical innovation, aimed at enhancing semantic transparency and resulting in a different form for each semantically distinguishable category (see Seuren & Wekker 1986). Viewed this way, the problem of the structure and differentiation of the equational system has two sides to it - the distribution of forms over different semantic categories, and the semantic distinctions themselves.

As to the first (formal) side, it must be remembered that Givón's time-stability concept was adduced to explain the differentiation of the equative copula. Within this framework the selection of de, the morpheme used as preverbal aspect marker with non-stative verbs and thus already functioning as a marker of time-instability, is a very natural thing to happen, since it is precisely the factor of time-instability which sets attribution apart from identification. But perhaps one might go one step further back into the etymological history of de and see the original, locative function as the main factor in this development.

Location can be seen as a primary category, from which other categories are derived by linguistic metaphor (Anderson 1971). The relation between location, existence and possession is a classic example in this respect (Lyons 1967). For instance, in Niger-Congo the relationship between location and possession is very common (see section 2.3.1.; see also Welmers 1973: 308-309), but, more interestingly for our case, languages of the Kwa branch within this family (such as Igbo, Yoruba and Twi) relate these two categories to the marking of present action (Welmers 1973: 315). This is important because in Sranan preverbal de also serves primarily to indicate present action (traditionally called ‘aspect’ in the literature on the subject): unmarked verbs designate a state (i.e. time-stability), as in mi wroko, ‘I (have) worked’ or mi sabi, ‘I know’, whereas marked verbs indicate present action (i.e. time-instability), as in mi (d)e wroko, ‘I work/am working’ or mi (d)e sabi, ‘I’m beginning to know’.

The impression one gets from this is that in Sranan as

well as in Kwa time dependency ('being in time') is expressed by a spatial metaphor ('being in space'<sup>17</sup>). This explains not only why it is locative de that is selected to mark present action, but also why it is generalized to mark the nonstative members of semantically differentiated pairs of adjectives like bun (see section 2.3.3.) and, additionally, to differentiate time-dependent attribution from time-independent (or maybe more accurate 'time-less') identification. It is significant in this respect that languages that distinguish locative and equative copulas in affirmative present tense contexts, but not in negative or past tense sentences, always choose the locative in the latter case (Leon Stassen, pers. comm.). Although the use of locative (or locative/existential) BE as an equative copula can be demonstrated for Kwa, it is by no means restricted to this group. For instance, Munro (1976) has revealed the existential origin of the equative copula in the Yuman languages. Further investigation will have to show whether the phenomenon has universal aspects or not. For the moment a few examples from Igbo will suffice to show the relationship:

Igbo (location)

- (166) o di n'ulo (Spencer 1924: 74)  
he is LOC house

'he's in the house'

(equation)

- (167) ayi di madu ato (ibid.)  
we are three persons

'we are three persons'

Within this line of reasoning it is only to be expected that non-verbal, tenseless da would be used for the expression of the time-independent relation of identity. That it is also the preferred copula in odo's (proverbs containing timeless truths) (Favery et al. 1976: 89) is not surprising either:

- (168) soema bére da liba (Focke 1855: 10)  
person belly is river

'the human heart is unfathomable'

As to the second part of the problem mentioned above - that of the underlying semantic differentiation of the copula system -, there are strong indications of substrate influence, especially from Kwa. All four Kwa languages that were investigated have a very fine-grained copula system with an abundance of different copula forms: Ewe, Twi and Yoruba have between six and eight different options, through which all kinds of subtle semantic distinctions can be formally

17 This suggestion was made by Leon Stassen (pers. comm.), who also referred me to the articles by Munro and Li & Thompson. In this connection also compare Welmers' observation that 'location and present action appear to show an underlying relationship in a variety of languages' (Welmers 1973: 312).

marked. For instance, Ewe and Twi have a separate copula to express functions like that of ‘minister’ as opposed to other kinds of professions like being a ‘teacher’:

Twi

(169) odzi sofo (Balmer & Grant 1929: 39)  
he-is minister

‘he's a minister’

(170) oye kyerekyerefo (ibid.)  
he-is teacher

‘he's a teacher’

(For Ewe see Westermann (1907: 73 ff.; for Yoruba see (149) and (150) above, where two examples are given to demonstrate the fact that this language has one copula to express temporary, and another to express permanent states.) Although the distinction between identity and attribution is sometimes formally marked in Kwa (as in Igbo (Welmers 1973: 311) and Twi (Balmer & Grant 1929: 39 ff.)), this does not seem to be the crucial difference. Fixed class membership (like ‘being a man’ as opposed to ‘being a linguist’), for instance, is grouped together with identity in Ewe (Westermann l.c.). All this put together points in the direction of time-stability as the crucial factor in the differentiation of the equative category in these substrate languages.

Although, as far as I know, no systematic studies are available concerning universal aspects of copula systems, the ‘pre-Greenbergian’ literature on the expression of BE in the languages of the world (Benveniste 1966; Locker 1954) does not indicate that the differentiation of the equational category is a universal phenomenon. In addition, this differentiation is not accommodated in Bickerton's bioprogram, as he lists the equative as an undifferentiated category (Bickerton 1981: 68). Within the field of creoles it is thus an intriguing question whether this distinction is made in other creoles as well (but has gone unnoticed thus far), or whether Sranan is an exception to the rule. Whether the distinction is universal or not, the locus in time at which the differentiation took place in Sranan (one and a half centuries after the language's inception) makes a bioprogrammatic explanation impossible, since the bioprogram is by definition fully operative only in the first generation of creole speakers.

The general - and rather surprising - conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing is that the underlying semantic differentiation of the equative category seems largely substrate driven, whereas the formal marking of this differentiation appears to be something of a universal phenomenon.

## 2.4. Summary and conclusion

In order to give an overall picture of the development of the Sranan copula I have reconstructed the historical scenario presented in Fig.4. In this scenario the intermediate

character of the equative within the entire copula system is represented by the fact that it derives the morphemes to express and differentiate its function from the two extremes of the copula spectrum, i.e. the truly verbal locative BE (de) on the time-unstable and the clearly non-verbal pronoun (da) on the stable pole of the time-stability continuum:

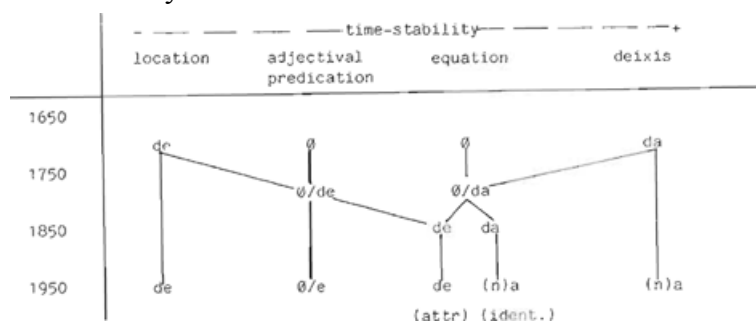


Figure 4: Reconstructed scenario for the development of the Sranan copula

The most important conclusion that can be drawn from the development of the Sranan copula, especially that of the equative, is that creoles do not always become stable systems within one generation. Long after the transition from the hypothesized preceding pidgin stage they are still amenable to large scale restructuring. It is of course true that all languages change, but both the rate at which the particular change, described above, took place, as well as the central character of the domain in which it happened, indicate that it is of a different, perhaps specifically ‘creole’ nature. Or, to put it in the form of a question: could it not be the case that the observed change is somehow still part of the creolization process, in the sense that the language - as a not yet fully stabilized and relatively young system - is still in search of its stable form?

Viewed this way, creolization is not a discrete, single-generation process as some would have it (cf. Bickerton 1984), but rather one that is gradual, extending over a number of generations. It seems worthwhile to contemplate this hypothesis since the idea of ‘instant’ creolization is a basic assumption for the language bioprogram hypothesis, which makes far-reaching claims of a highly abstract and at the same time highly specific nature about the origin of creoles. One would expect any such theory to be based on detailed examination of the known historical facts. As it is, however, this specific theory appears highly vulnerable when held against what historical evidence is available. The

gradual character of creolization does not exclude, of course, universals as a factor in creole genesis. The important question, however, is to determine the relative extent to which these factors are at work and the extent to which they are supplemented by other factors, such as substrata.

## Chapter three: The comparative

### 3.1. Introduction

The comparative construction<sup>1</sup> is not exactly a widely studied phenomenon in modern creole studies<sup>2</sup>. It does not play a prominent role in the discussion about the influence of universals and substrata in Creole genesis, the so-called ‘universals versus substrata controversy’. It is missing, for instance, in Bickerton's argumentation for his language bioprogram hypothesis (Bickerton 1981, 1984). But it is also widely overlooked by some of the major representatives of the ‘substratist position’. In Alleyne's well-known monograph (Alleyne 1980: 154-155) it is only mentioned in passing, and in Boretzky's not as well-known but equally important book only a little more attention is devoted to it (Boretzky 1983: 104-107). It comes as no surprise that both authors, in their attempt to show substrate influence, focus their attention on the type of comparative that is paralleled most closely in Niger-Congo, i.e. the serial construction using an ‘Exceed-

- 1 Within the context of this chapter the category of comparative construction will be restricted to those cases where two NP's are compared on a certain parameter, as in ‘John is taller than Mary’. I follow Stassen's terminology (Stassen 1985: 26) in referring to the parameter (‘be tall’) as the ‘comparative predicate’, the compared NP (‘John’) as the ‘comparée’, and the NP that functions as a yardstick in the comparison (‘Mary’) as the ‘standard’. This restriction implies that sentences where *moro* occurs as a numeral, as in (a), or where something other than two NP's are compared, as in (b), have not been included in the analysis. (The interested reader, however, can be referred to Appendix B, which contains the complete data.)

- (a) morre liki toe ten tien go we na  
bossi  
more than two times ten go away  
LOC bush

‘more than twenty (slaves) have fled to the bush’ (Van Dyk c. 1770: 79)

- (b) joe dé n'jam moro metie lekie brédee  
you ASP eat more meat than bread

‘You eat more meat than bread’  
(Weygandt 1798: 95)

This restriction was made because ‘true’ comparatives are easier to compare among each other and because they cover the whole spectrum of comparative constructions in Sranan.

- 2 At the time of writing I was not aware of Gilman's (1972) study of the comparative in, among others, Cameroonian Pidgin English. Therefore, I have not been able to consult this work.



verb' as in (1):

- (1) lei hati moro soro (Herskovits 1936: 168)  
lie hurt exceed wound

'a lie hurts more than a wound'

As to the particular case of comparison in Sranan, which is the subject of the present chapter, attention has not been overwhelming either. In fact, there is only one paper where it is addressed explicitly (Sebba, 1982), but here an exclusively synchronic, modern point of view is taken. My approach, however, is diachronic, and it aims at describing and, wherever possible, explaining the historical development of the comparative in Sranan from the middle of the 18th century up to about 1950. In order to be able to refer to developments within this period I have, just as in Chapter 1, divided it into four segments: Stage I (1750-1800), Stage II (1800-1850), Stage III (1850-1900) and Stage IV (1900-1950).

As far as the data for this chapter is concerned, it was necessary to expand the original corpus of texts (see Ch. 1) with two additional sources: a fragment of a play by Eddy Bruma, written around 1955 (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 166), and a Moravian translation of Acts from 1829. (See Appendix B for bibliographical information.) The extension of the corpus was necessitated by the sheer scarcity of data on the comparative construction in the selected sources. Although every comparative in each text was noted down, the complete sample numbered not more than 224 sentences, the number of 'true comparatives' (see note 1), however, being only 78. It will be clear that the small size of this sample excludes any kind of quantitative analysis, so I will restrict myself to qualitative remarks in discussing the observed developments. In so doing I will deal with questions like: Which variants have been present in the course of time and what was their structure? How and why have they changed? And, most importantly: What does all this tell us about Creole genesis and development?

Before answering these questions, however, it will be necessary to discuss the characteristics of the comparative in languages that are important in this context, i.e. Niger-Congo and creole languages, and to put the construction in a universal-typological perspective (section 3.2). After a discussion of the historical development (section 3.3) I will try to interpret the observed development in a wider framework in an attempt to demonstrate the special character of syntactic change in a creole language like Sranan. In order to distinguish this type of change, which in my opinion is still part of the stabilization process, from 'normal' language change, I will use the term 'late creolization'<sup>3</sup>.

3 In Arends (1987) I introduced the term 'post-creolization'. However, a possible objection to this term might be the confusion with DeCamp's (1971) notion of the 'post-creole speech continuum'. Whereas the latter refers to the spectrum of varieties that comes into being under the influence of the dominant lexifier language, the former refers to the independent development of a creole (whether the lexifier is present or not), which forms an integral part of the creolization process. Another difference is that postcreolization starts immediately after initial creolization, whereas the genesis of continua is a relatively late development which can only take place after certain conditions of access to education and social mobility have been fulfilled. Therefore, I prefer the term 'late creolization' in this study, which was suggested to me by Pieter Seuren.

(In this connection the reader may be reminded of the development of the equative copula, described in Ch. 2, for which the same term would apply.) I will show that there is no clear dividing line between initial creolization (in the sense of genesis and ‘raw’ formation of a creole) and late creolization (the subsequent stabilization over several generations). I will also show that the much-adhered-to static view of creoles (i.e. modern creoles are more or less the same as their first-generation ancestors) is wrong, at least for Sranan: its comparative system has changed too drastically for this to be true. This is all the more important since the static view is a basic assumption for most current hypotheses about creolization and creole genesis.

### 3.2. General aspects

According to Sebba (1982: 1) the following comparative structures are possible in modern Sranan (all based on the sentence ‘Kofi is bigger than Kwaku’):

#### Comparative structures in modern Sranan

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| (1) | Kofi bigi moro Kwaku<br>Kofi big exceed Kwaku                   |
| (2) | Kofi bigi psa Kwaku<br>Kofi bigi pass Kwaku                     |
| (3) | Kofi bigi moro leki Kwaku<br>Kofi big more than Kwaku           |
| (4) | Kofi moro bigi leki Kwaku<br>Kofi more big than Kwaku           |
| (5) | Kofi moro bigi moro leki Kwaku<br>Kofi more big more than Kwaku |

A few remarks are in order here: first of all, sentence (5) sounds peculiar to me. I have never encountered it, but it is very similar to a structure that occurs twice in my sample,

both in 20th century sources. It is what I call the ‘Mixed Comparative’ and it has the structure of (5), but without leki:

- (6) Kofi moro bigi moro Kwaku  
Kofi more big exceed Kwaku

Second, apparently the type exemplified in (4) with proposed moro does not occur with a surface copula anymore, which is in agreement with my finding that the copula in this kind of structure tends to appear less and less in the course of the development of the language (see below). Finally, although the Exceed-comparative does have a variant with psa as the Exceed-verb, in my sample it is never encountered in true comparatives, and only once in a ‘non-true’ comparative (see below).

In the remainder of this section I will present a survey of the comparative construction in some West African and creole languages and from a universal-typological point of view. The reason to do so will be clear as far as the former two are concerned: Niger-Congo languages have to be examined in order to be able to identify possible substrate influence. Creoles other than Sranan will be quoted wherever it is necessary to point to (dis)similarities between creoles in general. As far as the latter is concerned, the universal-typological aspect is important because of the heavy load that is put on universals by some creolists in their efforts to explain the remarkable similarities among historically unrelated creole languages. Prominent among these creolists is Derek Bickerton, who, like so many others, prefers to equal Universal Grammar with Chomsky's approach of it (Bickerton 1984: 178) and, in so doing, shows his lack of interest in any empirical foundation of the universals which he postulates. In my opinion this approach will lead to straightforward circularity: what is common to creoles is called ‘universal’, and thus part of the bioprogram, - which is supposed to be valid for all languages, not just creoles - and that which is universal - in the sense of ‘part of the bioprogram’ - proves to be typically ‘creole’, because many non-creole languages do not exhibit these ‘universal’ features (such as serialization).

Bickerton tries to get out of this circle by assuming that the bioprogram is suppressed in non-creole languages by the linguistic input presented to the child. But the inevitable question then is: why did these languages ever begin to deviate from the bioprogram, if this is biologically innate? The only way to stay out of the circle is to introduce an independent criterion to establish the universal character of certain creole features. Such independent criteria can be found, I believe, in the published work of a school within modern linguistics known as Typological-Universal Grammar (see, for instance, Comrie 1981). As far as the comparative is concerned, Stassen (1985) presents an excellent study which provides us with such criteria. This work, based on material from 110 languages, representative of the languages of the world, provides us with the data from

which the typology of Table 2 is derived (Stassen o.c.: 39-47). In the remainder of this chapter I will proceed from the classification contained in this typology.

**Table 2: A Universal Typology of Comparison (based on Stassen 1985: 39-47)**

<b>Comparative Type</b>	<b>Basic Word Order</b>	<b>Structure* (X is bigger than Y)</b>
Separative	SOV	X big from Y
Allative	VSO/VOS	X big to/for Y
Locative	SOV/VSO	X big on/at Y
Exceed:Exceed-1	SVO	X big exceed Y
Exceed-2	SVO	X exceed Y (in) bigness
Exceed-3	SVO	X big exceeding** Y
Conjoined	no preference	X big, Y small; X big, Y not big
Particle	no preference	X bigger than Y
Mixed	no preference	different options

It is worth noting that out of the eleven Niger-Congo languages in Stassen's sample only one does not have an Exceed-comparative as its primary option. This language is Mandinka, a Mande language, which has SOV word order, whereas the other ten, drawn from different branches within Niger-Congo, are all SVO, the word order which is congruent with having Exceed-comparatives (see Table 2). Against this background it is not surprising that all of the six Niger-Congo languages which I have investigated for substrate

\* In the various comparative structures given I have abstracted from presence/absence of the copula, word order and comparative marking of the predicate (as in English '-er' or 'more').

\*\* Instead of a participle this form may also be a nominalization.

influence<sup>4</sup> have a variant of this type as their primary option. The Kwa languages within this group prefer an Exceed-1 (this goes for Ewe, Twi and Yoruba; Igbo displays both an Exceed-2 and an Exceed-3 comparative), whereas both Bantu languages use an Exceed-2 structure. These differences are not surprising since the Kwa languages are and the Bantu languages are not serializing languages. The three subtypes of the Exceed-comparative in these languages are illustrated by sentences (7)-(9):

Exceed-1 (Ewe)

- (7) solo lolo wu tedzi (Westermann 1907: 101)  
horse big exceed donkey

‘a horse is bigger than a donkey’

Exceed-2 (Kimbundu)

- (8) iu uatundu una mu kuuaba (Chatelain 1888-89: 114)  
this exceed that in beauty

‘this one is more beautiful than that one’

Exceed-3 (Igbo)

- (9) o no ala oma kara ibe ya (Turner 1949: 215)  
it is in good soil exceeding its fellow

‘it is in better soil than the other’

Besides these primary options some of these languages have a secondary comparative. For instance, Twi has a secondary Exceed-2, whereas Ewe has two secondary constructions: an Allative and a Mixed Comparative. The former, which is illustrated in (10), is restricted semantically to the comparison of age or rank:

Allative (Ewe)

- (10) Kwasi enye hoho na-m (Westermann 1907: 102)  
Kwasi is old-one for-me

‘Kwasi is older than me’

This type is mentioned here, since, as we will see below, older Sranan has a similar construction, which seems to be restricted to the same semantic domain. The mixed type is mentioned because it is a combination of an Exceed and a Conjoined

4 The selected languages are: Ewe, Igbo, Twi and Yoruba from the Kwa-branch, and Kikongo and Kimbundu from the Bantu-family within Niger-Congo. See Ch. 1 for historical and linguistic arguments for the selection of these languages.

Comparative, the latter of which also appears to be marginally present in (modern) Sranan (see below). The Ewetype is illustrated in (11):

Mixed (Exceed-1 + Conjoined Comparative) (Ewe)

- (11) tagbatsu le sue, adede gale sue wu  
fly is small, ant is small exceed

‘an ant is smaller than a fly’

(Westermann 1907: 102)

The remainder of this section will be devoted to a discussion of the variety of comparatives in Sranan without going into the observed historical developments, which is the topic of the next section. The only purpose now is to present a survey of the different options that were used during the

last two and a half centuries. In order to be able to ‘compare the comparative’ across different creoles, data from other creoles will be used now and then. The main source in this connection is Boretzky (1983), which contains information on the comparative in creoles of all European lexical bases: Principense, Sranan, Haitian, Negerhollands, Papiamentu, and Krio. For the French creoles this information can be supplemented by Goodman's comparative study (Goodman 1964: 90-92).

When modern, post-colonial Sranan is taken into account, the following variants can be observed throughout the history of the language. (Data are drawn from historical sources, from linguistic literature and, to some extent, from native speaker informants):

- the Allative Comparative;
- the Exceed-1 and Exceed-2<sup>5</sup> Comparatives;
- the Conjoined Comparative<sup>6</sup>;
- the Particle Comparative (particle leki or na);
- the Mixed Comparative.

With the exception of the Exceed-2, which - to my knowledge - only appears in one other creole, Sranan is not very special in the different options it can use as such; but it is in the combination of these five variants, since there is no other creole, as far as I have been able to determine, which has this combination, synchronically or diachronically, nor any other combination of this size. The question of how to interpret this diversity and what this may imply for the concept of creolization will be dealt with in section 3.4. Right now we will restrict ourselves to a discussion and illustration of these variants.

The Allative Comparative. This type has been attested in

- 5 The only source that mentions the Exceed-2 Comparative for Sranan is Donicie's generally well-informed grammar (1959: 43). It is certainly not a frequent variant, since it does not occur in my corpus and it is not recognized by native speakers. On the other hand, the fact that it does occur in Saramaccan (see sentence (c)) makes its existence in Sranan less implausible:

(Saramaccan)

(c)

a móo mi a kóni (De Groot 1981:  
77)

he exceed me LOC cleverness

‘he's smarter than me’

- 6 An alternative possibility is to view this construction as a Particle Comparative, since one of the options languages have for the particle is a negative element (such as ‘nor’ in certain dialects of English). However, the fact that the comparative marker moro is missing in this construction may speak against this, since it is especially the Particle Comparative that tends to be marked for comparison (Stassen 1985: 37).

my Sranan corpus only once<sup>7</sup>, in a sentence referring to the same semantic domain (the comparison of age), to which this type is restricted in Ewe (see (10)):

Allative

- (12) a grandi va mi (Schumann 1783: 113)  
he old for me

‘he's older than me’

This same construction can also be found in 18th century Saramaccan and in modern Krio (as a secondary alternative):

Allative (Saramaccan)

- (13) ju grandi vo mi (Schuchardt 1914b: 67)  
you old for me

‘you're older than me’

Allative (Krio)

- (14) a big fo yu (Hancock 1987: 31)  
he big for you

‘he's older than you’

The Exceed-Comparative. The Exceed-1 Comparative is expressed by means of a serialization in which the ‘Exceedverb’ is in series with the comparative predicate. Although the Exceed-2 does also contain an ‘Exceed-verb’, it does not use it in a serial construction: the comparative predicate is expressed by a noun or by a verb functioning as a noun, e.g. a nominalization. Because of its serial character the Exceed-1 is seen by many linguists (e.g. Hall 1966: 82) as the Creole comparative: it is a typologically rare construction, it occurs in many creoles, and there is an obvious ‘Kwa connection’. This ‘pan-Creole’ character is not exhibited by the Exceed-2. I have only found it in one other creole: Saramaccan.

Exceed-1

- (15) a biggi morro mi (Schumann 1783: 62)

7 Renata de Bies (p.c.) draws my attention to the existence of a comparative in modern Sranan which has much in common with the Allative Comparative and which is restricted to the same semantic domain (the comparison of age):

- (d) a gi mi fo yari (Renata de Bies, p.c.)  
he give me four years

‘he's four years older than me’

A difference with the Allative Comparative is that this construction must always contain a quantity phrase, indicating the age difference.



he big exceed me

‘he's fatter than me’

Exceed-2

(16)

a moro mi na koni (Donicie 1959: 43)

he exceed me LOC cleverness

‘he's smarter than me’

The Conjoined Comparative. Before discussing some problems in relation to the classification of this construction we will first give some examples. (The construction has not been attested in the sources, but it is

current in present day speech (Hein Eersel, p.c.):

Conjoined

- (17) a law no krabu (Hein Eersel, p.c.)  
he crazy NEG crab

‘he's crazier than a crab’

The Conjoined Comparative in Sranan is restricted semantically to non-human standard-NP's (mostly animals) and human comparee NP's (Hein Eersel, p.c.). An example in Sranan where this condition is not met is given by Alleyne (1980), which finds a literal counterpart in Jamaican, where the construction does not seem to be productive anymore:

Conjoined

- (18) a fisti no kaka (Alleyne 1980: 155)  
it dirty NEG shit

‘it's dirtier than shit’

Conjoined (Jamaican)

- (19) it dirty no shit (Mervyn Alleyne, p.c.)  
it dirty NEG shit

‘it's dirtier than shit’

This type is categorized as a Conjoined Comparative by Alleyne (l.c.), but there are two problems with this analysis, according to which a sentence like (17) would be derived from an underlying conjoined string like ‘he is crazy, a crab is not crazy’. First, the negation no is placed before the subject of the second clause (krabu), and not after it, as is the rule for Sranan. Second, the predicate (law) is missing in the second clause. It could be that both features are related to each other in the sense that after the loss of the second, redundant predicate the negation was reanalyzed as a comparative particle, like na, which has its position before the standard NP. In fact, for a while I was inclined to analyze this Conjoined Comparative as a later development of the Particle Comparative with na, but there are two facts that speak against this. First, the comparative predicate is not marked for comparison (with moro) in this construction, and, second, the Particle Comparative with na is not restricted to the same semantic domain as the Conjoined Comparative. On the other hand, it is known (Stassen 1985) that the particle in Particle Comparatives in some languages is a negative element such as ‘nor’ (for instance in English dialects). The question of the exact classification of this type of comparative can thus not yet be finally settled.

The Particle Comparative. Sranan has two comparative particles historically, leki and na, the latter of which is not in use anymore. Although this type of comparison is very widespread in creoles generally (with the Exceed-1 it belongs to the most frequent types), Sranan is exceptional in the choice of its comparative particles. As

far as I have been able to detect there is no other Anglophone creole that uses a word like leki as a comparative particle (not even a

closely related language like Ndjuka (George Hutter, p.c.)<sup>8</sup>. Most of these use a reflex of English ‘than’ in this function (Hancock 1987: 30-31). As far as na is concerned, it does occur in a few other creoles, notably Gullah and (19th century) Jamaican<sup>9</sup>. Both variants allow for variation with respect to the position of the comparative marker moro: it can occur before or after the predicate. The consequences of this for the presence of the copula will be discussed in the next section. We will now restrict ourselves to presenting some relevant examples:

Particle (leki)

- (20) futu moro hessi lekki boto (Schumann  
1783: 107)  
foot more quick than boat

‘going by foot is faster than going by boat’

Particle (leki)

- (21) wan soema, disi bigi moro leki Salomo  
a person who big more than Solomon

‘someone who is greater than Solomon’

(Luke 1829: 74)

Particle (na)

- (22) Adam moro langa na mi (Focke 1855:  
86)  
Adam more tall than me

‘Adam is taller than me’

Particle (na)

- (23) ju langa morro na mi (Schumann 1783:  
172)  
you tall more than me

‘you are taller than me’

Particle (na) (Gullah)

- (24) i big mo na une (Turner 1949: 215)  
he big more than you

‘he's taller than you’

8 A Dutch etymology for leki (‘(ge)lijk’) could be a possible explanation for this, since Dutch influence has certainly been much weaker in Ndjuka than it has been in Sranan, and completely absent in the other Anglophone creoles.

9 The latest attestation is from 1895 (Cassidy & Le Page 1980: 314).

Particle (na) (19th cent. Jamaican)

(25)

Jamaica long mona rope (Cassidy & Le  
Page 1980: 314)

Jamaica long more-than rope

‘Jamaica is stretched out longer than a rope’

The reason why na is viewed as a comparative particle meaning ‘than’ and not as something else, e.g. a negative element or a locative preposition, will be discussed in the next section.

The Mixed Comparative. The Mixed Comparative is a combination of the Exceed-1 and Particle Comparatives: it contains the adverbial comparative marker moro, ‘more’,

before the predicate, as well as the Exceed-verb moro<sup>10</sup>, ‘exceed’, after the predicate<sup>11</sup>. In the sample it occurs only in post-1900 sources and even there only sporadically, but it seems to be current in modern Sranan:

Mixed

(26) M'ma, fu san ede den bakra moro tranga  
moro

Mama, for what reason the whites more  
strong exceed

wi? (Bruma c.1958: 174)

us?

‘Mama, why are the whites stronger than us?’

Mixed

(27) a moro betre moro whisky (observed at  
a party)

it more better exceed whisky

‘it's better than whisky’

This type of comparative is much more frequent in the Francophone Caribbean creoles, in which the Exceed-verb and the comparative adverb are not homophonous, as they are in Sranan:

Mixed (Dominica Creole)

(28) Yo pli move pase nu (Boretzky 1983:  
105)

they more bad exceed us

‘they are more evil than us’

In principle, constructions like these can be analyzed in two different ways: they can either be viewed as an Exceed Comparative with redundant comparative marking of the predicate (the first of the two occurrences of moro), or as a Particle Comparative with a relexified comparative particle (the second occurrence of moro). The second

10 That moro, besides being an adverb, can also have the function of a main verb appears from sentences such as the following:

(e) hangri morro mi (Schumann 1783:  
194)  
hunger overpowers me

‘I'm starving’

11 As appears from sentence (5) above, there is another Mixed Comparative containing leki after the second moro. Although it does not occur in my sample, the fact that it is known for Saramaccan makes its existence in Sranan more likely.

possibility is less probable, since in that case we would also expect sequences like tranga moro moro (besides moro tranga moro as in (26) above) because of the existence of sequences like tranga moro leki such as in (21). Such sequences, however, do not occur. Therefore, for the time being, the former analysis will be preferred.

### **3.3. Historical development**

The historical development of the comparative construction in Sranan can be summarized as follows:

**Table 3: Historical Development of the Comparative in Sranan**

<u>Type of Comparative</u>	<u>Period</u>				
	Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV	1950-
Allative	+	-	-	-	-
Exceed-1	+	+	+	+	+
Exceed-2	-	-	-	-	(+)*
Particle: <u>leki</u>	+	+	+	+	+
<u>na</u>	+	(+)**	+	-	-
Conjoined	-	-	-	-	+
Mixed	-	-	-	+	+

In what follows some salient features of this table will be discussed, especially:

- a) the disappearance of the Allative and na-comparatives;
- b) the changes in the Exceed-1 and leki-comparatives;
- c) the introduction of the Exceed-2, the Conjoined and the Mixed Comparatives.

Before we can do so, however, it will be useful to discuss the most salient general feature to emerge from the table: the great variety of comparative constructions throughout all of the documented history of Sranan. There is no period in this table with less than three options (although in some cases two of these belong to the same type). In this respect the post-1950 period is clearly the most prolific with five variants representing four types. Next comes Stage I with four variants under three main categories. From a typological-universal point of view this is very surprising: in Stassen's sample of 110 languages only 34 have more than one option, whereas only a few have more than one secondary alternative (Stassen o.c.: 168). In other words: compared to the languages of the world Sranan has a great variety of comparative constructions. (So much for the notion of creoles as 'simple languages'!). Although we have no data from the period of initial creolization, i.e. the genesis of the language, it will be clear that such variety

\* See note 5

\*\* The 'na-comparative' is not attested in my sources during this period, but we can safely assume its existence in view of its occurrence during both of the adjacent periods.



is incompatible with the bioprogram hypothesis. If the bioprogram did indeed ‘program’ one or other type of comparative into the Sranan system, precisely because this type would be biologically determined, then why would this same system, within a few generations, start to escape the program in such a way that it shows a proliferation of types, which - by definition - must be biologically less plausible? This problem will be discussed more fully in the next section. Right now we will proceed to a discussion of some of the characteristic features of Table 3.

(a) The disappearance of the Allative and nacomparatives. The disappearance of the Allative Comparative somewhere around 1800 can best be related to the conceptual domain for which it was used. The fact that these domains are (partly) identical in Ewe and Sranan makes it probable that it was their cultural importance which led to the introduction (or transmission, for that matter) of this type in Sranan. The same factor in reverse, i.e. the diminishing of this importance as a consequence of de-Africanization through time, could be held responsible for its disappearance. In addition there is the fact that the Allative Comparative is a marked option in a non-verb-initial language from a typological point of view (see Table 2). The loss of the Allative Comparative could thus be seen as the result of a tendency towards the avoidance of marked structures.

That the Allative Comparative was not the only alternative to express the comparison of age during the 18th century appears from a source like Weygandt (1798), which has a regular Particle Comparative for this purpose, in which Portuguese-derived grandi is replaced by English-(or Dutch-?) derived jongoe:

(29) mi moro jongoe leki joe (Weygandt 1798: 87)

I more young than you

‘I’m younger than you’

An Exceed-1 type of comparative is the normal way to express age differences in modern Sranan, with the alternative possibility, of course, of replacing jongoe, ‘young’, by owru, ‘old’, and the concomitant reversal of the roles of standard and comparee NP’s:

(30) yu owru moro mi (Renata de Bies, p.c.)  
you old exceed me

‘you’re older than me’

Somewhere between the modern and the 18th century varieties of the language is Focke’s dictionary from 1855, which gives an Exceed construction like (30) but with older grani instead of owru:

(31) joe grani moro mi (Focke 1855: 39)  
you old exceed me

‘you’re older than me’

It thus would seem that the syntactic change from an Allative to an Exceed Comparative was followed by a lexical change from a Portuguese- toward an English-derived word expressing the comparative predicate.



fourth possibility is the one adhered to by Turner (1949: 306) and Cassidy & Le Page (1980: 314). According to the Oxford English Dictionary ‘nor’ was used as a comparative particle up to the end of the 19th century, but according to Joly (1967: 17) (quoted in Stassen (1985: 63)) even up to now in certain dialects, as in:

(American Dialect)

- (32) he's richer nor you'll ever be (Stassen 1985: 63)  
 ‘he's richer than you'll ever be’

Interestingly, ‘nor’ historically had the form ‘na’ (up to the 16th century), and, according to the English Dialect Dictionary (1903: 297), in some dialects it still had this form at the beginning of the 20th century, as in:

(English Dialect)

- (33) mair na tongue can tell (EDD Vol.IV 1903: 297)  
 ‘more than tongue can tell’

This fact is important because this dialectical use of na offers a possible explanation for its introduction into Sranan, which could have happened through the influence of dialect speaking British indentured labourers, who were present in fairly large numbers in Suriname under British rule (Rens 1953: 76ff). All in all, it seems impossible at this moment to decide which of the two derivations should be preferred. An important question in this connection is how frequent the ‘nor-comparative’ was in the period concerned. Typologically, the choice between the two alternatives is irrelevant since in both cases the na-comparative belongs to the category of Particle Comparatives.

As far as an explanation for the loss of the na-comparative during the 19th century is concerned, this will depend on the choice one makes regarding the status of the element na. If we choose the ‘than’ derivation, the loss of the na-comparative could tentatively be explained by Dutch influence. This would mean that leki is derived not from English ‘like’ but from Dutch ‘lijk’. This derivation is supported by the fact

Dyk, which never uses na in ‘true’ comparatives, this element does occur after morro, when this is used as a numeral:

- (g) joe hoendi morre na toe ten tien na  
 bossi  
 you chase more than two times ten  
 LOC bush

‘you have chased more than twenty (slaves) to the bush’ (Van Dyk c.1770: 96)

Another fact, which is less easily explainable, is that with one exception the comparative predicate in the sample sentences containing a ‘true’ na-comparative is always one expressing ‘tallness’ (Sranan, Gullah) or ‘length’ (Jamaican). I have no idea why this should be so.

that the oldest source to contain this form (Van Dyk c.1770) always has a spelling like liki

(likkie, likki, lieke), never leki, which is a perfectly regular reflex from Dutch ‘lijk’ (compare triki from ‘strijken’ (‘to iron’)). It is only from Schumann's 1783 dictionary onwards that spellings like leki and lekki are used. A Dutch etymology is also supported by the fact that Dutch ‘lijk’/‘gelijk’, unlike English ‘like’, was sometimes used in comparative constructions in the 17th century, as in:

(17th century Dutch)

- (34) dees huis is hooger lijk 'tgeen (WNT: 2306)  
‘this house is higher than that’

Whether leki is derived from Dutch or not, a more important fact may be that Dutch is a language which, at least in colloquial varieties, uses the same element to express equality as well as inequality (‘als’). Compare, e.g.:

(Dutch)

- (35) hij is net zo groot als ik  
‘he is just as tall as I’

(Dutch)

- (36) hij is groter als ik  
‘he is taller than me’

Perhaps this dual function of ‘als’ in Dutch has led Sranan to extend the function of leki from solely expressing equality, as in (37), to expressing inequality as well. In any case, the loss of na in comparatives could be explained as the substitution of an English derived item by a Dutch derived construction. In this connection it is interesting to see that Saramaccan also uses one and the same item (kuma, from Port. ‘como’, ‘like’) to express equality and inequality. (Compare (38) and (39).)

- (37) Kofi bigi (so) leki mi (Sebba 1982: 2)  
Kofi big (so) as I

‘Kofi is as big as me’  
(Saramaccan)

- (38) i ta fan kuma womi (Rountree & Glock 1982: 154)  
you ASP talk like man

‘you talk like a man’

(Saramaccan)

(39)

a móo búnu móo kuma fá a bi dé a fési  
it more good exceed than how it TNS be  
at first

‘it's better than it was at first’

(De Groot 1977: 54)

When, on the other hand, we depart from a ‘nor’ origin for Sranan na, the loss of this element could be explained from the fact that its function became opaque after the withdrawal of English in the 1670's. In no other use does na have a negative meaning in Sranan, nor, as far as I know, did it ever have that in the past. The ‘normal’ functions of na (determiner, copula, preposition) have nothing in common with negation. On the other hand, it may very well be the case that this heavy functional load of na was one of the reasons for dropping it as a comparative particle. The fact that na still occurs in some other English-based creoles indicates that the substitution of English by Dutch as the dominant language may indeed have something to do with it. Anyhow,

whichever derivation is preferred, the fact that leki and na have coexisted for a while as comparative particles, together with the fact that leki and not na is the innovative form (since it occurs in no other creole), indicates that the latter simply has been substituted by the former.

(b) The changes in the Exceed-1 and leki-comparatives. Both types of comparatives that have been present through all of the documented period (the Exceed-1 and leki-comparatives), have gone through some changes during that period. First the Exceed and then the leki-comparative will be discussed. The change in the Exceed Comparative is purely lexical: besides moro, which is used as an Exceed-verb from the beginning, psa is introduced in this function in the beginning of the present century. Although there is only one attestation in the sample (sentence (40) below), this variant seems to be fairly normal in the modern language (Sebba 1982: 1, from which sentence (2) above was taken).

- (40) a langa pasa 40 voet (Makzien 1902: 14)  
it long surpass 40 feet

‘it's longer than 40 feet’

It should be remarked that even this one instance of an Exceed Comparative with pasa is not a case of a ‘true’ comparative (see note 1), although the one quoted in (2) is. In this connection it may be interesting to know that in two other Surinamese creoles, Saramaccan and Ndjuka, the function of Exceed-verb is performed by (variants of) moro, whereas (a variant of) pasa is used in absolutive (very Adj.) and excessive (too Adj.) contexts and in comparatives where no standard NP is present. Thus in Ndjuka we can have:

(Ndjuka)

- (41) a langa pasa (Huttar 1981: 317)  
it long pass

‘it's very long’

A similar structure is possible in Sranan:

- (42) Eifeltoren hey pasa  
Eiffeltower high pass

‘the Eiffeltower is higher’ (i.e. than the cottontree mentioned earlier in the poem) (Trefossa in Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 204)

Apart from this use, pasa in all three languages is used in fixed, idiomatic expressions like pasa maiki (Ndjuka), passa marki (Sranan) and pasá maú (Saramaccan). The former two mean ‘past mark’, the latter means ‘past hand’; all three are used to express an absolutive as in (43)).



(Saramaccan)

(43) a limbo pasá máu (Donicie & Voorhoeve  
1963: 85)

it clean past hand

‘it's very clean’

An example of the use of pasa in an excessive context in Sranan is the following:

(44) da soema de njam en dringi toemoesi pasa

the person ASP eat and drink too-much  
pass

‘the man eats and drinks excessively’

(Luke 1829: 48)

The use of a serial verb, like pasa, without an object NP, to express an excessive state (as in (44)) is not unusual in West African languages. It occurs, for instance, in Igbo:

(Igbo)

- (45) o pe-ka (Boretzky 1983: 106)  
it small exceed

‘it's too small’

With regard to the differentiation of moro and pasa for the two functions of comparative and excessive in the Surinamese creoles it may be worthwhile to remark that also in Yoruba two different verbs are used to express these functions. Perhaps substrate influence is responsible for this differentiation in Sranan.

The change in the leki-comparative concerns the rule governing the presence of the copula when moro is preposed to the predicate. When we look at the four stages that we have distinguished we can observe the following development:

Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV
de moro Adj	∅ Adj moro	∅ Adj moro	∅ moro Adj
		∅ moro Adj	

(Note that the table represents tendencies rather than absolute truths.) What emerges clearly from this table is the change from a situation where a copula was (almost) obligatorily present with preposed moro to a situation where it is zero. This change (between Stage I and IV) passes through an intermediate Stage (Stages II-III) where there is a zero copula, but where at the same time moro is postposed to the predicate, thus allowing for a direct succession of subject and predicate. As was described in Chapter 2, it is quite normal for Sranan to have a zero copula in a situation like that. The development can be illustrated by sentences (46) - (48):

de moro Adj (Stage I)

- (46) mie dee morre zatte likki tare drinki hosse  
I am more decent than other drink houses

‘my tavern is more decent than others’  
(Van Dyk c.1770: 46)

∅ Adj moro (Stages II-III)

- (47) wan soema, disi bigi moro leki Salomo  
a person who big more than Solomon

‘someone who is greater than Solomon’  
(Luke 1829: 74)

ø moro Adj (Stages III-IV)

(48)

yu hanu moro hebi leki di fo mi

your hand more heavy than that of me

‘your hand is stronger than mine’

(Herskovits 1936: 188)

The fact that sentences like (48) do not obey the rule for ‘copula insertion’ when subject and predicate do not immediately succeed, might be explained as follows. (The analysis that follows was first proposed in Arends 1985:18-19; see also Seuren 1986: 133.) From Schumann's dictionary onwards the position of moro vis-à-vis the predicate has begun to oscillate, perhaps as a result of the fact that moro in Sranan fulfills the function of English ‘more’, which is preposed to the predicate, as well as that of the morpheme ‘-er’, which is suffixed to it. Interference with the Exceed Comparative, which contains a verb moro behind the predicate, may also have played a role. Since the ‘copula insertion rule’ does not operate with postposed moro, this may have begun to be reanalyzed as an integral part of the predicate, perhaps on analogy with the English ‘-er’ suffix. This may later have been generalized to sentences with preposed moro, which was no longer seen as a separate morpheme intervening between subject and predicate, but which became to be grammaticalized into an affix-like element, forming part of the predicate. As a result of this the rule for ‘copula insertion’ did no longer work, since there was no element intervening between subject and predicate. If this analysis is correct, this development is an important one because it would show a beginning of morphology, the absence of which is generally regarded as one of the distinguishing characteristics of creole languages.

(c) The introduction of the Exceed-2, the Conjoined and the Mixed Comparatives.

The term ‘introduction’ to refer to the appearance of the Exceed-2, the Conjoined and the Mixed Comparatives in my sample after 1900 is a misnomer in as far as it is not entirely certain that these variants have not been in use before. In other words: it could be a coincidence that they have not appeared in my sources, especially where a colloquial variant like the Conjoined Comparative is concerned. The colloquial character may be the reason for it not turning up in written sources, although it may have been in use long before the present century. From a typological point of view there are two reasons for making this type of comparative a primary candidate for incorporation into a creole language: first, its semantic transparency (see note 14 below), which is brought about by the simple parataxis of two clauses, and, second, its neutrality with regard to basic word order.

As regards the Exceed-2 Comparative, I would not be surprised when it turned out to be an older variant, since it appears in several of the substrate languages: as a primary option in Igbo, Kikongo and Kimbundu; as a secondary option in Twi. The fact that it also occurs in Saramaccan makes a recent introduction less plausible. A definitive settlement of this question, however, will have to await further research.

Finally, the Mixed Comparative seems to be a classical example of what is called ‘syncretism’ in anthropology: two elements of diverse origin (the West African Exceed

Comparative and the European Particle Comparative) are combined to form a new, distinctly different construction. I am well aware, though, that this does not explain this construction in a linguistically satisfactory manner. But then again, the question is whether mixed types like these are susceptible to a language-specific explanation. (See Stassen (1985: 236ff) for an attempt to explain these mixed types within universal-typological framework.)

### 3.4. Conclusion

As is well-known, there are two paradigms in modern creolistics within which linguists attempt to explain the most salient phenomena in creole languages: the ‘substrate hypothesis’ and the ‘bioprogram hypothesis’. Apart from the question whether it is justified to regard these, as is often done, as mutually exclusive, this dichotomy can be criticized on another point, viz. its incompleteness. When both hypotheses are reduced to their essential characteristics, they can be described as follows. The substrate factor makes an appeal to the possibility of transmission of language, the incorporation into a language of features and rules from outside. In other words, the substrate factor is external, i.e. it is not part of the grammar in question. The bioprogrammatic approach, on the other hand, makes an appeal to the possibility of creation of language, the selection of features and rules by the innate human language faculty, without any other language interfering. In other words, the bioprogram factor is internal, i.e. it is part and parcel of the grammar in question. Now, the question is whether it is justified for these hypotheses to claim exclusivity as being the only external and the only internal factor respectively. The answer to this question must be negative.

The reason for this is that both factors can be supplemented by others. As regards internal factors one can think of semantic transparency<sup>14</sup>, language universals (in the Greenbergian sense)<sup>15</sup> and, in a transgenerational model of

14 The concept of ‘semantic transparency’ as used here is borrowed from Seuren & Wekker (1986), who operationalize this notion as follows: ‘... a maximization of ST (semantic transparency, JA) involves three strategies for grammar: (1) maximal uniformity of treatment of semantic categories, (2) minimal reliance on rules or rule types that are highly language-particular, and (3) minimal processing. Or to put it briefly, uniformity, universality, and simplicity’.

15 The term ‘language universal’ is understood here as in the branch of linguistics known as Typological-Universal Grammar, which has grown out of the pioneering work of Joseph Greenberg. A universal in this sense is a linguistic feature which is common to (almost) all languages. (See, for instance, Comrie 1981: 17ff). To give just one example of an implicational universal that appears from Table 2: If a language has an Exceed Comparative, then its basic word order is SVO (Stassen 1985: 42).

creolization, language-internal development (i.e. late creolization). An important external factor is made up by the relevant extra-linguistic, especially historical and demographic variables, such as mortality, natality and composition of the population. In my opinion it is unwarranted to exclude such potentially important elements from the discussion.

At this junction it may be important to remind the reader of a basic assumption of modern creolists (not only ‘Bickertonians’), i.e. the, mostly implicit, premise that creole languages, as they are now, present a reliable picture of what they were like at the time of their genesis. This assumption, as far as Sranan is concerned, is plainly wrong. This appears not only from the changes within the comparative system, described in this chapter, but also from the rather dramatic developments within the copula system that were described in Chapter 2. The adherence to this assumption can be explained partly by the almost total lack of historical studies of creoles, but it should, in my opinion, also partly be ascribed to wishful thinking. It would be so much easier if the present state of these languages would be an accurate reflection of the formative stage, since in that case one can immediately start to work on what is considered the really interesting problem, i.e. creole genesis, without having to engage in less spectacular, mostly descriptive historical activities.

The syntactic development of Sranan not only shows that the modern language should not be equated with the Sranan of the first generations, but also that creolization is not an instantaneous, single generation process. Instead it should be viewed as a gradual, trans-generational process. This view is supported by the fact that all of the observed phenomena and changes within the comparative system can be explained without having to take recourse to any bioprogrammatic factor<sup>16</sup>. In fact, it is only the Conjoined Comparative (if it really is one) that asks for something other than an external explanation. And this explanation can be found either in semantic transparency or in language universals.

It thus looks as if the current view of creolization is ready for a re-evaluation. It is for that reason that the term ‘late creolization’ was introduced (cf. note 3). If we

16 An additional factor may be the fact that the comparative is, in Stassen's (1985) terms, a secondary construction, i.e. modelled on a primary construction such as temporal chaining. It is unlikely for creoles to innovate on such secondary constructions (Pieter Seuren, p.c.).

maintain the generally accepted notion of creolization in a modified fashion (i.e. as initial, first generation creolization, leading to the ‘raw’ formation of a creole language), it seems useful to reserve another term for the typically Creole changes after that initial stage, through which the language over several generations tries to reach a more stable form. ‘Late creolization’ thus is not meant to substitute ‘creolization’, it is meant to differentiate and complement this concept. Acceptance of the new term does mean, though, that the concept of creolization gets a partly different content, i.e. of initial, first generation creolization. Therefore, if the terms would not be so cumbersome, it would perhaps be better to distinguish between initial and post-initial creolization, but it does not seem wise at the moment to contribute to a proliferation of terminology as long as empirical research and theory are still in their infancy. Since, however, the concept of late creolization is closely tied up with a transgenerational view of the creolization process, it may be useful to introduce just one other new term, i.e. ‘transcreolization’, merely as a short-hand for the more cumbersome notion of ‘trans-generational creolization’. The two terms should not be identified, however: while late creolization refers to the development after the genesis of the language, transcreolization is meant as a more inclusive notion, encompassing both stages of initial and post-initial creolization.

This view of creolization, of course, has important consequences for any theory of creoles and creolization. It seems inescapable that in this model the factor of transmission should be given a more prominent place, since during several generations the majority of the speakers of Sranan was not native, but, on the contrary, consisted of adult speakers learning a foreign language. (See Ch. 5 for an elaborate discussion of this issue). In this view the role of a bioprogram will be much less important, since it relies entirely on the process of nativization. Where universal factors have played a role, these should rather be sought in the field of untutored second language acquisition.

## Chapter Four: Clefting

### 4.1. Introduction

The position of this chapter at the end of the descriptive part of this diachronic study to some extent reflects its content, i.e. in the sense that the construction under discussion (predicate and non-predicate clefting) does not exhibit that much historical change to begin with<sup>1</sup>. Although as such this result is not exactly what one is looking for in an investigation of syntactic change, it is nevertheless important in its negative outcome, especially when it is seen in its relation to the quite significant changes in the copula and comparative system that have been described in the preceding chapters. On the other hand, although what changes can be observed may be less striking in most cases or even marginal in some, this does not mean that they are less interesting from a purely linguistic point of view.

The fact remains, however, that the syntactic mechanism of clefting as it appears in the modern language was by and large established by the middle of the 18th century and shows no dramatic development in the two centuries after that. It will be clear that this does not fit in very nicely with the gradual, transgenerational view of creolization that was put forward earlier in this study on the basis of the rather slow stabilization of the other two construction types. Of course, there is a possibility - at least theoretically - that clefting has gone through important changes in the pre-1750, i.e. undocumented period, but even if this would be the case (which is unlikely in view of the fact that pre-1750 Sranan was more of a pidgin than a creole language), the rate of stabilization would still be much faster than it is for the other constructions.

This forces us to amend our ‘model’ of creolization to the extent that creolization is not only not an instantaneous, discrete process - as opposed to a gradual, continuous one - , but also that it is not uniform and constant in the rate with which it operates, but variable and differential instead. An important question for future research will be to decide what the factors are that make some structures ‘settle’ faster than others in the creolization process.

As far as clefting is concerned, I will venture the hypothesis that it is the absence of conflict between source and target languages which is the determinant factor. As far as predicate clefting is concerned, this is quite obvious, since it does not occur in English (nor in any other Germanic or Romance language). As to non-predicate clefting, this

1 The data for this chapter was drawn from the same sources that were used for the examination of the copula. The overall sample numbers a total of 298 cleft sentences.



syntactic procedure is largely similar in sub- and superstrate languages, although there are some differences with respect to the position of the ‘cleft marker’ and the presence of a ‘complementizer’ between the ‘focus’ and the ‘non-focus’ part of the sentence<sup>2</sup>. (In section 4.2.1. I will go into the question why Sranan may have chosen to place its cleft marker sentence-initially and to leave its complementizer unexpressed.)

It is important to note, in my opinion, that the adaptation of the view of creolization referred to above is in accordance with the idea that creolization is not a monocausal, but rather a multi-causal process in which no single factor can be held responsible to the exclusion of all the others. Where many factors influence a process it is only natural for this to be a composite and multiform instead of a monolithic and uniform one.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: first, in section 4.2., some formal and functional aspects of clefting will be described, according to whether they occur in all clefts (section 4.2.1.) or only in predicate (section 4.2.2.) or non-predicate clefts (section 4.2.3.). Then, in section 4.3., the developmental change in this construction will be summarized and discussed. Finally, in section 4.4., we will go into the consequences of these findings for the concept of creolization.

## 4.2. Form and function of cleft sentences

### 4.2.1. General aspects of clefting

This section will deal with aspects that are relevant to both types of clefting, i.e. the cleft marker, the complementizer

- 2 The terminology employed in this chapter will be as follows: a cleft sentence is a sentence in which an element is intensified or emphasized by moving it to the head of the sentence and accompanying it with a cleft marker. In Sranan this is the copula da/na or the negative copula a (no); in other languages this may be a determiner, as in Ewe, or a  $\emptyset$ , as in Igbo with direct objects. If the fronted element is a predicate (i.e. a verb or an adjective), this is copied in the original position. A cleft sentence may be divided into two parts, the focus (=clefted element + cleft marker) and the non-focus (=the remaining part of the sentence); the two parts may have an element in between them, usually a relativizer or a conjunction, which we will refer to as the complementizer. Thus in the sentence da duysi tongo joe leri? (Van Dyk c.1770: 29), lit. ‘is Dutch language you learn?’, i.e. ‘are you learning Dutch?’ the following elements can be discerned: da = the cleft marker; duysi tongo = the clefted element; da duysi tongo = the focus; joe leri = the non-focus; the complementizer, as usual, is  $\emptyset$ .

and negation.

The cleft marker. Two aspects of the cleft marker will be discussed: its form and its position. As to the first, it can safely be assumed that the cleft marker da/na, which is obligatorily present in Sranan (but see below), is identical to the equative copula and not to the homophonous determiner. This is so because the phonological change from da to na coincides chronologically with that in the equative copula and not with that in the determiner. Na as a cleft marker is first attested in Cesaari (1836-37), in King (1864-1870) and King (1891-1894), and in Albitrouw (1894), exactly the same sources where equational na appears for the first time; the form of the determiner in all these sources is still da. It is important to note this, since determiners do sometimes occur as cleft markers (for instance in Ewe; see Westermann 1907: 104). The fact that the cleft marker in Sranan is identical to the equative copula is in accordance with the claim that all cleft sentences, universally speaking, are derived from underlying equationals (e.g. Harries-Delisle 1978). In a later source (Herskovits 1936) the cleft marker is sometimes reduced to 'a or a; the first of these reduced forms can also be found in equative sentences in this source. Some examples will serve to illustrate this development:

- (1)                            da                            da disi joe wanni? (Focke  
1855: 149)  
is this you want

‘do you want this one?’

- (2)                            na                            na Noah djaroesoe jagi  
poeroe den na ondro  
is Noah jealousy chase pull  
them LOC under

na kroisi foe joe (King 1891-94: 52)  
the cross of you

‘it's Noah's jealousy that has chased them away from your cross’

- (3)                            'a                            'a so a pikin, 'a so a sa tan  
is so he small, is so he TNS  
stay

‘he will remain as little as he is’  
(Herskovits 1936: 158)

- (4)                            a                            a so gronman fom Keskesi  
te...a kiri hem

is so farmer beat Monkey  
till he killed him

‘that's how the farmer beat Monkey to death’  
(Herskovits 1936: 166)

The negative cleft marker has the form da no in all 18th century sources, with the exception of Schumann (1783) where besides da no also no is used, and a no in all post-1800 texts. (See section 2.2 for an explanation of the ordering (d)a no instead of no da/na in the negative copula; the fact that the negative cleft marker has this form is further evidence that it is a copula and not a determiner.) Compare the following examples:





Yoruba

- (11) aso ni mo rà (Rowlands 1969: 25)  
cloth is I bought

‘I bought cloth’  
Igbo

- (12) o wu na ya ka aga iwusa ya  
it is on him COMP he will-pour it

‘he'll pour it on him’

(Green & Igwe 1963: 46)

Boretzky (1983: 228) thinks that this marked position results from ‘general syntactic rules’, but superstrate influence may have been at work as well, in my view. The fact that da/na emerged in Sranan as a sentence-initial, introductory copula may have been an additional factor. But the most important reason probably is, that in a strict SVO language like Sranan sequences of a clefted NP followed by a copula would be interpreted as a subject followed by its predicate.

There is one example where the cleft marker, although it does precede the focussed element, does not appear at the beginning of the sentence:

- (13) fa mi sa kis' a so pikinso fo na pis'  
how I MOD get is so little-bit of the urine

fo keskesi? (Herskovits 1936: 184)

of Monkey

‘how shall I get only that little of Monkey's urine?’

It appears to me that the fossilization of na so into an unanalyzed, single morpheme entity (which will be discussed more fully below), which is not interpreted as a cleft construction consisting of a copula plus a focussed element, allows it to be placed in sentence-medial position. On the other hand, sentence-medial clefting is not an unknown option from a typological-universal point of view (Harries-Delisle 1978: 432).

The complementizer. Apart from a few doubtful cases, which will be discussed shortly, cleft sentences in Sranan do not contain a complementizer (which may be a conjunction, a relativizer or a particle) between the focus and the nonfocus. It is also absent in most of the relevant substrate languages (Ewe, Twi, Yoruba), but it does appear in Igbo (compare sentences (10) and (12) above). It is also present in English,

although optionally when a direct object is involved; in colloquial speech the relative pronoun can even be omitted with subjects:

(14) it is John (whom) I saw

(15) it is John (who) is responsible here

As in Sranan, the complementizer is absent in most, but not in all creoles. However, when it is present, the cleft marker is usually absent, e.g. in Principense and Guinea-Buissau Creole Portuguese:

Principense

(16) éli ki sa kási aré (Boretzky 1983: 222)  
that REL house king

‘that is the king's house’

Guinea-Buissau Creole Portuguese

- (17) báka ki si pápe (Holm 1988: 181)  
cow REL is superior

‘the cow is superior’

According to Boretzky (1983: 223) the same type of structure is also possible in Haitian, although the example he gives does contain a cleft marker:

Haitian

- (18) se la pli ki tobe pada lanwit  
it's the rain REL fall during the-night

‘it was raining during the night’

(Boretzky 1983: 223)

Perhaps (18) is a mixture of a cleft sentence with only a cleft marker, which is the normal Haitian construction, and one where only a relativizer is present; alternatively, it could also be explained as a product of decreolization.

The structure exemplified in (16) and (17) suggests that in these languages the relative pronoun performs the function of a cleft marker, placed behind the fronted element, which would be in accordance with West African practice. To this might be added that, according to Balmer & Grant (1929) (quoted in Harries-Delisle 1978: 433), the Twi cleft marker na is a merger of the copula ne and the relativizer a. Besides this a post-focus position for cleft markers is also in agreement with universal tendencies.

The absence of a complementizer in the form of a relative pronoun in cleft sentences in creoles generally could be related to the fact that relative clauses in creoles also frequently do not contain relative pronouns<sup>3</sup>, especially in the early stages (Romaine 1988: 242). This is important in view of the hypothesized underlying relationship between clefting and relativization (Schachter 1973). Thus, for instance, in early Sranan sometimes sentences like the following can be found:

- (19) wan libisomma membre, takki, hem kan  
helpi hem  
a person think say he can help him

srefi, a kori hem srefi (Schumann 1783: 130)

self he deceive him self

‘somebody who thinks that he can help himself, is deceiving himself’

3 This opinion is, as far as Sranan is concerned, shared by Boretzky (1983: 211), who states that, since the relative pronoun di(si) is relatively young (derived from Du. ‘die’) and no older relative is found, one can assume that in the older stages relativization was without relativizer.



According to Boretzky (1983: 209) sentences like these still occur in the modern language.

Now we shall examine the few cases where there is something present which at first sight might look like a complementizer, but which in most cases will prove to be something else. First, there are some cases like the following, where disi is probably not a relative pronoun but

a demonstrative, postposed to the pronoun and serving to emphasize it, a procedure quite common in Sranan:

- (20) a no mi disi ben gi disi libi baka, ma da  
wi  
is not I DEM TNS give this life back, but  
is our

boen-ati lobi Helpiman ben gi en libi baka  
good-heart beloved Saviour TNS give his life back

‘I didn't bring him back to life, but our good, beloved Saviour Jesus did’ (Kraag 1894-96: 35)

The fact that the other cleft construction in this sentence does not contain a relative pronoun either strengthens the analysis chosen above.

Then there are two sentences in a dialogue, which are presented by the author (Weygandt 1798) as alternative and semantically identical answers to the question ‘Who's knocking at the door?’

- (21) da soema diesie dee kon loekoe joe  
is somebody REL ASP come see you

‘it's somebody who's coming to see you’ (Weygandt 1798: 124)

- (22) da viesietie diesie joe dee kiesie (ibid.)  
is visitor REL you ASP receive

‘it's a visitor whom you'll be receiving’

Although the original Dutch gloss (‘Het is gezelschap dat gij krijgt’, lit. ‘It is company that you get’) might suggest a cleft interpretation, a non-cleft reading is equally well possible. In the latter case *da* has the function of introductory copula, which is a normal option in early Sranan, especially in response to WH-questions. (Compare e.g. sentence (6a) in Ch. 2, which is also a response to a WH-question.) The remainder of the sentence would then have to be viewed as a normal relative clause introduced by a relative pronoun, which is indeed the interpretation given in the glosses above. The non-cleft reading of (21) is supported by the fact that pragmatically it is not a good candidate for clefting in this conversational context, i.e. it would be odd to emphasize ‘somebody’ in ‘Somebody is coming to see you’ as an answer to ‘Who's knocking at the door?’.

There are two other cases of what look like cleft sentences containing a complementizer (in the form of a conjunction this time), which at closer inspection prove to be cases of right dislocation. The complementizer-like element is *datti*, which is infrequently used as a conjunction instead of *taki* (Grammatik 1854: 65). However, in the source from which both sentences are taken (Focke 1855) the entry

under datti only gives its pronominal function (demonstrative ‘that’). Since both sentences have exactly the same structure only one of them is given below:

(23)

da wan sani datti, a kom méki gi mi

it-is a thing that he come make give me

‘he kicked up a hell of row’

(Focke 1855: 113)

The position of the comma, suggesting a pause after datti, provides further evidence that it is not a conjunction here. Rather it should be seen as a demonstrative pronoun in right-

dislocated position, derived from datti wan sani. The part after the comma is a relative clause without relative pronoun with sani as its antecedent. This non-cleft analysis is strengthened by the fact that right dislocations of this type are common in Sranan, e.g.:

- (24) da wan areen datti (Schumann 1783: 77)  
it-is a rain that

‘that was a terrible shower!’

A final argument is provided by the fact that if (23) were a cleft sentence, its subject datti would most probably have to be followed by a dummy predicate (de)<sup>4</sup>, since subjects have to be followed by their verbs in Sranan.

There is one type of clefting where a complementizer, although disguised as a verb, does indeed appear optionally, and that is where the clefted constituent designates a reason or cause. Whereas in the first of the following examples meki still has to be construed as a verb, with the clefted element as its subject-NP, in the other two it is clearly a conjunction:

- (25) da joe põesoe mi, méki mi fádon (Focke 1855: 105)  
is you push me make me fall-down

‘I fell because you pushed me’

- (26) a no foe hángri-tem héde, méki mi sa káli  
is not for hunger-time reason COMP I  
MOD call

Tája ‘Tata’ (Focke 1855: 130)

‘taja’ (a vegetable) ‘Father’

‘I won’t call “taja” “Father” just because I’m hungry’

- (27) na di a kan frei hei, mek' a tak' so

4 This is supported by the fact that if predicate noun clefting is possible in modern Sranan (which is not entirely clear), the subject of the non-focus will certainly have to be followed by a dummy verb de. This appears from the fact that as an equivalent of ‘my brother is a soldier’ only (a) (although marginally), but not (b) is possible (Hein Eersel, p.c.):

- (a) ? na srudati mi brada de  
(b) \* na srudati mi brada

This constraint seems to hold for other creoles as well: compare e.g. Haitian se ti mun li ye, lit. ‘is little person he is’, i.e. ‘he’s a child’ (Boretzky 1983: 223).

is because he can fly high COMP he say  
so

‘he suggested this because he can fly high’  
(Herskovits 1936: 192)

That meki is not a verb in the latter two sentences is indicated by the fact that it does not have an NP as its subject. Its analysis as a conjunction is supported by the fact that in (26) it is the verb kali and not meki which takes the TMA marker sa, and by the fact that in (27) the subject of tak' has the nominative form a instead of the

oblique form en. Incidentally, the interpretation of meki as a conjunction in cases like these is also fully supported by contemporary linguistic documents, such as Focke (1855: 80), Grammatik (1854: 65) and Wullschlägel (1856: 55), who all demonstrate its use as a conjunction besides that as a verb. Category switches like the one reported here are not at all unusual in creole languages (cf. e.g. Voorhoeve 1980 for Sranan). Compare the following example from Krio:

Krio

- (28) na we I lek yu mek a tok to yu  
is because I like you COMP I talk to you

‘I talk to you because I like you’

(Boretzky 1983:221)

Although meki is still in use as a conjunction in modern Sranan (Donicie 1959: 106), it does not seem to be used in cleft constructions like the ones above anymore (Hein Eersel, p.c.). Rather, it is used as a verb, as in (25) above, suggesting a category switch back to its original status. Thus, the modern equivalent of (26) is the following:

- (29) a no hangri-tem sa meki mi kali Taja  
‘Tata’ is not hunger-time MOD make me  
call taja ‘Father’

‘I won't call “taja” “Father” just because I'm hungry’ (Hein Eersel, p.c.)

Finally, it should be noted that meki in sentences like (26) and (27) is not an obligatory element in the sources I examined:

- (30) a no fu dati ede yu mu ferakti yu  
is not for that reason you should despise  
your

eygi tongo (Koenders 1946-49: 140)

own language

‘that's no reason to despise your own language’

- (31) a no di Tjotjò-fowloe pikien, joe sa  
is not because Tjotjo-bird small you  
MOD

swári hem nánga wiwiri (Focke 1855: 138)

swallow it with feathers

‘the fact that the Tjotjo-bird is small is no reason for you to eat it with its feathers’

The fact that a complementizer turns up only in sentences where either a PP or a full clause has been clefted, suggests that the ‘heaviness’ of the clefted constituent may have something to do with it.

Negation. Although negative clefting occurs with the same kinds of constituents as clefting without negation, in some cases it appears to have the special function of restricting the scope of negation to the one element in the clefted constituent immediately following it. This element may be a gradable adjective (pikin or boi, ‘small’), a quantifier (ala, ‘all’) or a numeral. Viewed that way, negative clefting is simply a way of moving the negative element right before its scope, a procedure which is otherwise impossible, due to its fixed preverbal position. In the case of adjectives, this procedure (traditionally called ‘litotes’) leads to an intensified positive reading as in:

- (32) da no boi-areen fadomm tideh  
is not small-rain fall-down today

‘there was a terrible shower today’  
(Schumann 1783: 65)

This is also possible with predicate clefting:

- (33) da no boi fadomm a fadomm (ibid.)  
is not small fall it fall

‘there was a terrible shower’

- (34) a no alla tafra habi drai foetoe  
is not all tables have turned legs

‘not all tables have turned legs’  
(Helstone 1903: 11)

- (35) a no tien soema ben kom krin (Luke  
1829: 106)  
is not ten people TNS come clean

‘weren't there ten people purified?’

Clefting, however, is not the only means available for restricting the scope of the negation:

- (36) ala soema, di lidom na bedi, a no slibi  
all people who lie LOC bed is not sleep

‘not everybody who is lying in bed is asleep’  
(Wullschlägel 1856: 28)

Anyhow, it seems clear that the function of clefting in (32) - (35) is to disambiguate between the two readings that are possible in a non-cleft sentence. Thus, for instance (34), in a non-cleft structure has the following two readings:

- (37) alla tafra no habi drai foetoe  
all tables not have turned legs

‘not all tables have turned legs’ or: ‘no table has turned legs’





one example for each category (if we accept Seuren's (1987) analysis of siki, 'ill', as a verb, not an adjective):

Adjective

- (39) da boi no stoutoe, ma da morsoe a de morsoe  
the boy not naughty but is dirty he is dirty

toemoesi (Grammatik 1854: 47)

too-much

'the boy isn't naughty, but he is a mucky pup'

Auxiliary

- (40) da moese joe sa moese (ibid.)  
is must you TNS must

'you'll have to'

According to Jansen et al. (1978: 139) auxiliary clefting is not possible for all speakers nor for all auxiliaries in modern Sranan. It is possible for moesoe, also when it is followed by a main verb in the matrix sentence:

- (41) na moesoe mi moesoe waka go na wowojo  
is must I must walk go LOC market

'I really must go to the market'

(Jansen et al. 1978: 139)

This is a viable option in other creoles as well:

Haitian

- (42) se vle yo pa vle luvri  
is want they not want open

'they don't want to open up'

(Boretzky 1983: 223)

As far as clefting of verbs is concerned, between 80 and 90% of these are intransitives: in addition to the two transitives quoted below, there are three pseudo-transitives, of which (45) is an example:

Transitive verb

- (43) da tési joe de tési mi mófo (Focke 1855: 135)  
is taste you ASP taste my mouth

‘you're really trying my secrecy’

- (44) da koksi ju koksi mi (Schumann 1783:  
154)  
is coax you coax me

‘you're really taunting me’

Pseudo-transitive verb

- (45) mi aksi Masra, efi da lesi wi moe lesi  
I ask Master if is read we must read

‘I'm asking you whether we should read (or do something else)’ (Grammatik 1854:  
46)

(The other two cleft pseudo-transitives in the sample are jeri, ‘hear’, and furfur, ‘steal’.)

The majority of clefted predicates, however, is intransitive, as in the following examples:

Intransitive verb

- (46) da komm mi de komm (Grammatik 1854:  
6)  
is come I ASP come

‘I'm coming right away’

- (47) no piki siki ju ben siki (Schumann 1783: 246)  
not little ill you TNS ill

‘you were very ill indeed’

The question as to why it is mainly intransitive verbs that are prone to clefting remains largely obscure to me, although there are one or two things that may be said in order to clarify that issue somewhat. First, there appears to be a relationship with a construction type that I will label ‘predicate relativization’<sup>5</sup> for the moment, which is also used with, - although by no means restricted to -, intransitive verbs. It is illustrated by the following examples. (See Grammatik (1854: 47) for further illustration):

Predicate relativization

- (47) da siki, dissi mi siki, da no Gadosiki  
the ill(ness) that I ill is not God-ill(ness)

‘the illness from which I suffer is not a natural one’ (Schumann 1783: 246)

- (48) di ben hangri vo si da verloesoe, disi da  
who TNS hungry for see the redeem that  
the

Messias sa kom verloesoe Israel (Luke 1829: 18)

Messiah TNS come redeem Israel

‘who were eager to see how the Messiah would redeem Israel’

Unfortunately, none of the cases of predicate relativization in Sranan that I have encountered receives an intensive interpretation, which would obviously strengthen the link with predicate clefting, but it does sometimes in another creole, related to Sranan, i.e. Krio:

Krio

- (49) yu bin fo si di it we i ben de it  
you TNS for see the eat that he TNS ASP  
eat

‘you should have seen how much (or: the way) he was eating’ (Williams 1976: 122)

5 This term was suggested to me by Pieter Seuren (p.c.). Williams (1976: 122) uses the term ‘relativized verbs’, while Sebba (1987: 66) alternatively speaks about ‘topic relativization’ and ‘relative topicalization’ to refer to the same phenomenon.

In Sranan, however, the main function of predicate relativization appears to be the encoding of what in many other languages is expressed by derived nominals:

- (50) da poeloe, di dem poeloe mi (Grammatik  
1854: 8)  
the pull that they pull me

‘my exclusion’

In Yoruba the intensified meaning is caused by the clefting of the entire relativized predicate, including the relative clause:



### Predicate relativization

- (56) da fadom, di a fadom (Grammatik 1854: 7)  
the fall that he fall

‘the fall that he had’  
Cognate object

- (57) a fadomm wan ogri fadomm (Luke 1829: 42)  
it fall an ugly fall

‘it fell completely apart’

That the latter two are related seems pretty clear, but this is not so obvious for the former of the three. Deriving a sentence like (55) from a sentence like (57) means that the clefted predicate is interpreted as the inner object of the identical verb in the matrix sentence. One of the problems in such a derivation would be the disappearance of the article wan, ‘a’. In favour of the object-like status of the clefted predicate, however, speaks the fact that this predicate has been nominalized. That this is so appears from the fact that it cannot take TMA-markers (Jansen et al. 1978: 138), that it can be modified (as in (55) above) and that it takes the equative copula da/na, which is the copula that is preferred with nominal predicates (as was established in Ch. 2; see

also Bynoe-Andriolo & Yillah 1975: 237).

A final feature of predicate clefting that has to be noted is the fact that its function is much more often intensifying (in a wide sense), than (contrastive-)emphatic, a fact which is also noted by Bynoe-Andriolo & Yillah (1975: 234), who say that these structures

‘(...)underline the fact that the subject is actually performing the action mentioned, or is performing it to a marked degree. They are frequently used as exclamations of wonder or astonishment. They are not primarily intended to focus on the action of the verb or to differentiate it from that of some other possible verb (...)’

(Bynoe-Andriolo & Yillah 1975: 234-235)

This is not to say that the contrastive-emphatic function is completely absent in Sranan, as appears from (58) below, but the intensifying function is much more frequent. (Compare sentences (59) and (60) below)

Contrastive-emphatic

- (58) Masra, a no de kre, ma da lafoe a de lafoe  
Master, he not ASP cry, but is laugh he  
ASP laugh

‘he's not crying, Sir, he's laughing’  
(Grammatik 1854: 6)

Intensifying

- (59) da bassia a de bassia (Schumann 1783: 57)  
is bend he ASP bend

‘he's bending down real low’  
(Schumann's translation: ‘er bückt sich recht tief’)

- (60) da furfur a furfur (Schumann 1783: 104)  
is steal he steal

‘he's a real thief’  
(Schumann's translation: ‘er ist ein rechter Dieb’)

The intensifying function, besides the contrastive one, is also found in the substrate languages that do have predicate clefting<sup>6</sup>:

6 Apparently no clefting occurs at all in Kikongo and Kimbundu; predicate clefting appears to be absent in Ewe and Igbo.



Twi

(61)

oyáw nko ara nà wote hó yàw

quarrel EMPH.PART EMPH. PART  
CONJ they quarrel

‘they live in continual quarreling’  
(Christaller 1875: 147)



Yoruba

(65) tani ó rà á? (Rowlands 1969: 26)  
who-is he bought it

‘who bought it?’

Twi

(66) daben na yehun wo? (Balmer & Grant  
1929: 69)  
when is we-saw you

‘when did we see you?’

This also seems to hold for the creoles mentioned above, e.g.

Jamaican:

Jamaican

- (67) a wa Anti sen fi mi? (Holm 1988: 180)  
is what Aunti send for me

‘what has Auntie sent for me?’

Unfortunately, I have no explanation for the fact why Sranan, unlike some other English- and Dutch-based creoles, does not have clefting of question words. Decreolization offers no explanation because of the absence of WH-clefting in early Sranan and because some other creoles that do have this type of clefting, such as Jamaican, have been decreolized to a much greater extent.

Noun Phrases. NP's can be clefted when performing one of the following grammatical functions: subjects, direct objects, indirect objects and predicate nominals, although evidence on the latter two is open to other interpretations as well. The only case<sup>7</sup> where the clefted NP may be interpreted as an indirect object is the following:

- (68) no hem mi aksi (Schumann 1783: 208)  
not him I ask

‘I didn't ask him’

Note that the absence of the copula in negative clefts is a regular feature of this source. The original German translation of (68) (‘ich habe nicht ihn gefragt’) allows for both a direct object and an indirect object interpretation of hem. The latter is supported by the fact that clefting of indirect objects is a normal option in modern Sranan (Hein Eersel, p.c.):

- (69) na Kofi mi gi wan buku (Jansen et al.  
1978: 137)  
is Kofi I give a book

‘I gave Kofi a book’

Subject NP's are clefted more often than direct objects, and direct objects more often than indirect objects, with Prepositional Phrases and predicate nominals in between the latter two. This would seem to fit in nicely with the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy that Keenan and Comrie (1977) found for relativization. An

<sup>7</sup> There is one more possible case of indirect object clefting in the sample:

- (c) da Gado joe moe begi (Grammatik  
1854: 6)  
is God you must beg

‘you should ask God’

Of course, in this sentence a direct object interpretation is just as well possible as in (68).

important difference, of course, is that this hierarchy reflects an implicational universal, based on a cross-linguistic investigation of the possibility of relativization, whereas the Sranan data only reflects a frequency distribution, which, by the way, might be skewed by the overall frequency of different NP types. Although it would be an interesting question to examine whether a similar hierarchy exists for clefting, this could only be answered in a separate study, so I will not go any further into the



The frequency distribution of pronoun clefting reflects that of NP clefting in general, and may similarly be related to the overall frequency of different pronoun functions<sup>8</sup>.

Prepositional Phrases. All of the eleven cases of PP clefting in the sample involve the preposition fu, ‘for’. Eight of these are part of the complex preposition fu...ede, ‘because of’, as in:

8 One other type of pronoun clefting that should be mentioned is the idiomatic, and now obsolete, expression da hem, ‘therefore’ as in:

- (d) joe hiti da sani na gron: da hem mi figi hem (Grammatik 1854: 61)  
you hit the thing LOC ground: is it I sweep it ‘you threw it on the ground, that’s  
why I swept it away’

Since, according to Focke (1855: 45), da hem is short for da hem hede, this can be analyzed as a cleft, lit. ‘is this (the) reason’, i.e. ‘this is the reason’.

- (74) dafoe datie hédé joe no kan werie den  
soesoe  
is-for that reason you not can wear these  
shoes

‘that's why these shoes don't fit’  
(Weygandt 1798: 115)

As was explained earlier, sentences like (74) often contain a complementizer meki between the focus and the non-focus part of the sentence.

Of the three non-causal PP's in clefted position one is final (75), one is possessive (or ablative) (76), and one is benefactive (77):

- (75) a no vo dati mi kom, ma mi wani haksi  
Masra  
is not for that I come but I want ask  
Master

wansani (Grammatik 1854: 61)  
something

‘I didn't come for that, but I want to ask you something’

- (76) da doopoe vo Johannes, da vo hemel a  
ben  
the baptism of John is of/from heaven it  
TNS

de, ofoe vo liebisoema? (Luke 1829: 118)  
be or of/from man

‘did John's baptism belong to heaven or to man?’  
or: ‘was John's baptism from heaven or from man?’

- (77) we, da vo oenoe fosi Gado ben wiekie  
hem  
well, is for you first God TNS awake his

Pikien Jezus (Acts 1829: 162)  
son Jesus

‘well, it's primarily for you that God has awaken his son Jesus’

There does not seem to be any a priori reason why fu would be the only preposition to appear in clefted PP's, although the high proportion of causal PP's might point to a pragmatic factor: perhaps the emphatic expression of reasons and causes is



pragmatically so salient that it leads to this type of focussing. There might also be a bias in the sample, since in modern Sranan other prepositions besides fu can occur in clefted PP's as well:

- (78) na nanga wan gon Jan kiri a sneki  
is with a gun Jan kill the snake

‘Jan killed the snake with a gun’

(Jansen et al. 1978: 138)

Adverbial Phrases. The bulk of clefted Adverbial Phrases (80%) indicate manner, and in 90% of these the fronted constituent is the single adverb so, ‘thus’. Of the rest, the majority encodes either cause, which was treated above under PP clefting, place or time. Each of these will be illustrated below:

Manner

- (79) da so da wortoe kon leti dja toe  
is thus the word come right here too

‘thus the word came right here too’

(King 1894-96: 35)

The very high proportion of so in clefted manner



‘I already called you twice’

As far as place adverbials are concerned, a problem is constituted by cases where na dape occurs at the beginning of the sentence, since in principle na could be a preposition here:

(84) na dape joe sa si taki heiden abi  
is/LOC there you TNS see say heathens have

fansortoe sani foe... (King 1864-70: 18) all-kinds things to...

‘there you'll see that heathens have all kinds of things to...’

In several sources (Schumann 1783: 218; Focke 1855: 99; Wullschlägel 1856: 58) na dape is equated with dape, in which case na probably has to be analyzed as a preposition, which is not implausible in view of the historical derivation of dape from da plesie, ‘that place’ (see section 2.3.1.). The same sources are contradictory, however, in that some (e.g. Wullschlägel) have na dape, whereas others (e.g. Focke) have da dape, while both have da as a copula. The most probable solution is, I think, that na dape may be a cleft construction, but if it is, it is probably a fossilized one like na so. Its fossilization may be responsible for its equation with dape, referred to above.

Clauses. Of the five cases where an entire clause seems to be clefted three involve a typical construction occurring only in odo's (proverbs). The other two have been given above as (25) and (27) in the discussion of the complementizer-status of meki. They are repeated here for convenience as (85) and (86):

(85) na di a ka' frei hei, mek' a tak' so  
is because he can fly high COMP he say  
so

‘he suggested this because he can fly high’  
(Herskovits 1936: 192)

(86) da joe póesoe mi, méki mi fádon (Focke  
1855: 105)  
is you push me make me fall-down

‘I fell because you pushed me’

As far as other creoles are concerned, the only example of clause clefting known to me is the Krio sentence comparable to (85), which is cited as (28) above. Some West African languages (Ewe, Yoruba) appear to be able to ‘cleft’ whole sentences, although the term becomes rather vacuous here:

Yoruba

(87) mo n-foso ni (Boretzky 1983: 225)  
I am-washing it-is

‘I'm washing clothes’

The three cases of clefting in odo's are the following:

- (88) a no so léki arén brákka, a no so a de  
is not so like rain black, is not so it ASP

fadón (Focke 1855: 5)

fall-down

‘the rain won't fall down as hard as it seems’

- (89) a no so léki Páttoe biggi, a no so njanjám  
is not so like pot big, is not so food

sa fóeloe hem (Focke 1855: 98) MOD fill it

‘a pot does not necessarily contain as much as it can’

- (90) a no tid'ia wiwiri fadón na wátra, a no  
is not today leaf fall LOC water is not

tid'ia a póri<sup>10</sup> (Focke 1855: 135)

today it spoil

‘a leaf doesn't rot on the same day it falls into the water’

What is remarkable about (88) - (90) is that the clefting occurs both in the first and in the second clause, the latter of which seems to have the function of resuming the whole clefted first clause. This ‘resumptive cleft’ may be necessitated by the heaviness of the clefted element, i.e. the first clause. It is significant that in all cases of clefting of whole clauses there is an element (either meki or a resumptive cleft) intervening between the focus and the non-focus part of the sentence. This suggests that the resumptive cleft has a function comparable to that of a complementizer.

Finally, two cases have to be mentioned where a whole clause is preceded by na, but still has remained in its original position. The function seems to be the expression of wonder or confirmation, which is not unusual for clefting:

- (91) no, mi no ben taigi taki na Dia morsu?  
now I not TNS tell say is Deer dirty

‘now, didn't I tell you that Deer is dirty?’

(Herskovits 1936: 162)

- (92) di a waka so na yu ston sūt' so  
since it walk so is your testicles sweet so

‘since it happens that your testicles are so sweet’

(Herskovits 1936: 182)

This sentence is reminiscent of the Yoruba sentence quoted as (87) above, where a whole sentence is ‘clefted’. Indeed, the cleft marker nl in Yoruba is also used at the end of subordinate clauses placed before the main clause (Rowlands 1969: 158). Viewed that way, na may also be a marker of subordination, especially in (92) where no other marker is present.

### 4.3. Historical development

In this section the historical development of clefting in Sranan will be briefly summarized. As was already noted in the introduction to this chapter, the period under investigation shows no dramatic developments since the system of predicate

10 The first clause in this sentence is probably best analyzed as a conditional, expressed through parataxis, a procedure which is quite common in Sranan.

and non-predicate clefting was by and large established around the middle of the 18th century. However, what changes have been observed during the investigation will now be recapitulated according to whether a specific feature

has changed its form, has disappeared or has been introduced into the language during this period.

First, there is a formal change in the cleft marker from da to na, which is in accordance with the overall development of the equative copula. Second, the following features or elements have disappeared from the language: the  $\theta$  copula in negative clefts, which is common in Schumann's (1783) dictionary; the use of meki as a complementizer (although it is still used as a conjunction in other sentence types; see Doncie 1959: 106); the use of disi as a complementizer, although its analysis as such is doubtful to begin with; the clefting of WH-elements, although embedded in NP's (as in (63) and (64) above); and, finally, the idiomatic da hem, 'therefore' construction. Third, the following features have been introduced during or after the period under study: clefting of indirect objects has become a normal option; clefting of PP's is not restricted to PP's containing fu as a preposition; and, finally, (although examples are very scarce) clefting of clauses seems to have become possible only by the middle of the 18th century.

#### 4.4. Conclusion

Clefting (but not pseudo-clefting) is a universally rare syntactic operation (Harries-Delisle 1978: 436). This excludes a universalist (e.g. Bickertonian) explanation for its occurrence in Sranan and other creoles. Since it does, however, occur in Kwa languages as well as in English, a subor superstrate origin seems inescapable; most probably the two have reinforced each other. As to the particular structure that was chosen in Sranan to encode clefting (i.e. COPULA - FOCUS - NON-FOCUS), this is completely in agreement with universal tendencies for SVO languages (Harries-Delisle 1978: 446). It also agrees with the English structure, except for the absence of a complementizer, which is optional in English depending on the grammatical function of the clefted constituent, and the absence of a dummy subject 'it'.

An explanation for the latter is that dummy subjects are only necessary in languages where a sentence-initial copula may signal a question (o.c.: 446), which is not the case in Sranan. As to the former, no explanation is available from typological-universal research: the only information given by Harries-Delisle is that the nature of the relative clause marker (i.e. an invariant marker or a pronoun) does not influence its deletability (o.c.: 443). An explanation may be found in the fact that relative clauses in Sranan are sometimes unmarked. Another factor may be the fact that no complementizer is used in cleft constructions in most Kwa languages, except Igbo, which is also exceptional in that it has a pre-focus copula while the others have it behind the clefted element.

The ordering which is found in Ewe, Twi and Yoruba (i.e. FOCUS - COPULA - NON-FOCUS) is also compatible with universal



tendencies, although in Harries-Delisle's derivation from an underlying pseudo-cleft (o.c.: 449) this requires an extra operation of the extraction-rule: first it operates on the copula and then on the Non-Focus. The latter fact, i.e. the dual as opposed to the single operation of a rule, may tentatively be held responsible for the structure that was chosen in Sranan, since it is less complex derivationally. Summarizing, it seems that the formal marking of clefting in Sranan is, at least partly, universally determined, whereas its occurrence *per se* is largely a substrate phenomenon. It seems worthwhile noting that a similar conclusion was reached above with respect to the structure of the copula system.

As to the diachronic side of the matter, it seems to me that the relative absence of change points towards an early stabilization of cleft constructions in Sranan. In my opinion two related points emerge from this finding: first, creolization is not a uniform process which affects all areas of syntax at the same rate. In other words, some syntactic constructions stabilize more quickly than others. The other point concerns the question why this should be so, i.e. what is it that makes some constructions 'settle' almost immediately, whereas in others change and variation keep going on, sometimes even to the present day. It will be clear that a lot more research has to be done on other areas of syntax and on other creoles, before the hypothesis of 'differential creolization' can be confirmed. But if so, it will have some important consequences for the concept of creolization.

As far as an explanation of the early stabilization of clefting is concerned, this may have something to do with the fact that, contrary to the comparative and copula systems, there is relatively little conflict between the source and target languages in this particular construction. This is immediately obvious for predicate clefting, but it also goes for non-predicate clefting, at least to some extent. Thus, they agree in the fact that the equative copula is chosen as a cleft marker, that they may omit a complementizer and that the focus is put at the beginning of the sentence, and not at the end, which is just as well possible, universally speaking. In terms of second language acquisition: there is little interference between source and target language.

This line of thought, however, can only be followed when one starts from the premise that second language speakers have played a major role in the formation of Sranan. In my view, it is they who are largely responsible for the continuous input of new impulses into the creolizing language, leading to continuous restructuring over long periods of time. This view is supported by what is known about the, rather exceptional, demographic situation in Suriname during the first century of its existence. This evidence, in addition to some linguistic material revealing the pidgin character of early 18th century Sranan, will be presented in the following chapter.

## Chapter five: The gradual creolization of Sranan

### 5.1. Introduction

A basic assumption of most creolists in the last few decades has been that creolization is a matter of nativization, i.e. first language acquisition. Those who adhere to this view see creolization as a process that consists of the expansion and restructuring of a reduced, communicatively ineffective pidgin into a fully fledged natural language by the first generation of children who have pidgin speaking parents. This view is held, e.g., by Hall (1966: xii), who states that: ‘A creole language arises when a pidgin becomes the native language of a speech community’, but it can also be found in DeCamp's survey of the field (DeCamp 1971: 16) and in a recent introduction such as Todd (1984: 4).

Although the ‘creolization=nativization thesis’ is moderated to a greater or lesser extent in the most recent introductions to the field (Mühlhäusler 1986: 205; Holm 1988: 7; Romaine 1988: 38-41), it is still supported very strongly by Bickerton, when he says that: ‘A creole comes into existence when children acquire a pidgin as their native language’ (Bickerton 1984: 173). Bickerton constrains his definition of a creole as a ‘nativized pidgin’ even further by stipulating that creolization takes place within the first generation of children who have pidgin speaking parents:

‘The LBH (Language Bioprogram Hypothesis, JA) claims that the innovative aspects of creole grammar are inventions on the part of the first generation of children who have a pidgin as their linguistic input, rather than features transmitted from preexisting languages.’ (Bickerton 1984: 173)

This constraint lies at the heart of the LBH because it is a necessary condition for the operation of the bioprogram. For if, as the LBH postulates, creole languages are the result of universal, innate principles that will necessarily work in the absence of a model language (i.e. every non-pidgin language), and only then, the formation of these languages will, by definition, have to take place in the first generation, because it is there that the necessary and sufficient conditions for creolization are fulfilled.

This strong view of creolization as a single generation process could very well be the result of a kind of ‘scientific myopia’: Bickerton originally developed his hypothesis on the basis of data from Hawaiian Creole English (HCE), a language that was formed at the beginning of this century and whose pidgin predecessor could still be traced in living speakers at the time of the investigation (1973-1974). Bickerton's conclusion ‘... that the deficit between pidgin and creole was filled in a single generation by the first locally born group to be exposed to pidginized English’ (1984: 176) may perhaps be justified for the particular case of HCE, but this does not mean it is also valid for the other

creole languages. He would probably have reached a different conclusion if he had taken other creoles into account as well. Besides, it is only an assumption, as Bickerton himself recognizes (1981: 8), that the 1973-1974 Hawaiian Pidgin English (HPE) of his informants adequately represents the HPE of the early pidginization period<sup>1</sup>.

In the remainder of this chapter some additional evidence will be presented to show that Sranan is certainly not a case of ‘unigenerational’ creolization. The evidence consists of historical, especially demographic, as well as linguistic data on the first 100 years in the language's existence. It will show that the necessary conditions for nativization were not present until about the second quarter of the 18th century; in addition to this it will reveal the largely pidgin (as opposed to creole) nature of the oldest known specimen of Sranan (Herlein 1718). In the final section some conclusions will be drawn with respect to a historically realistic model of creolization.

## 5.2. More evidence for gradual creolization

In this section I defend the view that Sranan has not creolized within a single generation, that it cannot even have done so in the light of the available historical evidence. This view is opposed to that of other Sranan scholars, such as Voorhoeve, who assumed a very short formation period: ‘The whole process (i.e. creolization, JA) must have taken place in a remarkably short period of time (between 1651 and 1680).’ (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld, eds. 1975: 277). In earlier publications (Voorhoeve 1971: 307; 1973: 140) this period was narrowed down even more, i.e. from 1651 to 1667, the year the Dutch took over. This view is shared by others, such as Price (1976: 20), although the demographic evidence adduced by this author makes it highly improbable. It is also shared by Bickerton, who does not refer to Voorhoeve, but to Rens (1953) to support his view (Bickerton 1981: 4).

The reasoning behind this assumption is roughly as follows: Suriname was colonized from Barbados by the British in 1650-1651, who brought with them slaves from this and other colonies, such as St. Kitts, Nevis and Montserrat (Smith 1987: 87). In 1667 Suriname was conquered by the Dutch, and in the succeeding years the British left with their slaves, with the result that after 1680 there was hardly an English speaking person in the colony. Now, since Sranan is an English-based creole - so the reasoning goes - it must have come into existence before 1680. (For a further elaboration see also Voorhoeve 1977 and 1983). It is remarkable that for Voorhoeve the only possible source for linguistic borrowing from English is the presence of speakers

1 I owe this observation to Pieter Muysken (p.c.).

of English in the colony. That this is certainly not the only possibility, at least theoretically, is shown by Hancock (1986; 1987), who assumes a West African Creole English (Guinea Coast Creole English) as the ancestor of all Anglophone Atlantic creoles, including Sranan.

Whereas the hypothesis of instantaneous creolization can, at least in principle, be tested for HCE, this is not the case for most other creoles, simply because the necessary historical data is lacking. Nevertheless, most creolists act as if it were confirmed. This is probably the result of an optical illusion: first, it is, often tacitly, assumed that the modern creole differs little from that of the first generation, then the creole is compared to what is known to pidgins in general, and, finally, it is concluded from the enormous structural and functional differences, that creolization must be a relatively fast process, which is completed within one generation.

This conclusion is unjustified, because it rests on a comparison which is unjustified. Where historical linguistic data is available, as for Sranan, it is evident that the modern language is not identical to the 18th century variant, but shows remarkable differences instead. (See Chapters 2, 3 and 4). Unfortunately, this kind of data is not available for most other creoles, or, if it is (as for Negerhollands; see Stein 1986), it has not been examined in any detail. Besides, in order to make the comparison, one should have data not only on the early stages of the creole, but also on the preceding pidgin. This, however, is very rarely the case. We can thus conclude that the unigenerational concept of creolization is the result of the unjustified comparison of two entities on which there is either no or insufficient information or information which has not been examined adequately.

Apart from the post-1750 sources, on which the preceding chapters are based, there is one other fragment in Sranan, dating from 1718. As I will show below, this text contains features which are not creole but typically pidgin, such as absence of copula, articles and TMA markers. These features indicate that the Sranan of the early 18th century, i.e. 50 years after the supposed formation period, was certainly not yet fully creolized. This conclusion is fully supported by the demographic evidence which will be presented below. The consequence of all this is that I assume a longer formation period for Sranan, extending over several generations, i.e. from 1650 to around 1750. (Compare also Hancock 1980).

It will be clear that this calls for a revision of the concept of creolization, at least for Sranan, insofar as it is the result of the acquisition of a foreign language by succeeding generations of newly imported, mainly adult West African slaves. This view is fully compatible with the presence of substrate influence in Sranan, which can be explained as products of transfer from native languages. Furthermore, the dramatic historical changes in Sranan syntax between 1750 and 1950, described in the preceding chapters,

are better explained within a context of long-lasting, continued creolization than in a unigenerational framework. Especially the bioprogram version of the latter makes it hard to see why a language that is structured completely according to innate principles would take the trouble to deviate from them and go through all these turbulent developments.

### 5.2.1. Historical-demographic evidence

What is known about the early demography of the black population of Suriname is largely the result of the pioneering efforts of Richard Price, the foremost scholar of Saramacca history and culture (Price 1976: 6-16). His data concerning origin, age distribution, sex, mortality and natality of the Surinamese slaves shows that the creolization of Sranan can hardly have taken place within a single generation, because the children necessary to perform this process were not present, at least not in sufficient numbers. Although this led other creolists, such as Singler (1986: 142), to the conclusion that Sranan can only have creolized over several generations, it did not do so for Price himself, who accepted Voorhoeve's hypothesis of a very short formation period (1976: 20).

A different position is taken by Smith (1987: 52; 169), who, while admitting that conditions for creolization may not have been fulfilled until around 1735, sees this as no problem since the creolization of Sranan, or rather its predecessor, West African Pidgin English, may have taken place before 1650 on the coast of West Africa. There is some historical-phonological evidence to support this position, such as the v - - >b change that has occurred in words derived from English but not in words derived from Portuguese, Gbe and Kongo. That conditions for creolization were not present in Suriname before 1750 is also recognized by Byrne (1987: 26), who says that ‘... it is (...) probably true (...) that the majority of all slaves did not speak Sranan natively until sometime in the early Nineteenth century’, but who at the same time claims that ‘this does not mean that Sranan as a creole language did not form a century earlier’ (1987: 37, note 18). In support of this he refers to the Herlein fragment, which ‘is most certainly creole’ (ibid.). I will show below that this is an overstatement.

To return to the observations by Price, the most important among them in this respect is the fact that during the first 100 years in the colony's existence (1650-1750) the percentage of locally born black children was always below 10%. In order to give this fact its full weight, I will quote the author at some length here:

‘The large discrepancy between deaths and births of Suriname slaves, coupled with the very high rate of importation, produced a slave population with an unusually high proportion of Africans at almost every period in its history. Indeed, during the sixty years following the Dutch takeover of 1667, the number of

Africans imported in each ten-year period amounted to between 110 percent and 220 percent of the total slave population at the beginning of that same decade... Throughout the first one hundred years of the colony's history, more than 90 percent of the slave population was African-born. Even more striking, at any time until the mid-eighteenth century, over half the slave population consisted of Africans who had arrived in Suriname within the previous decade; and well into that century, over one-third of the slaves had left Africa within the previous five years... On the plantations in Suriname, the population's closeness to Africa must have been even more striking (...), for it was general policy to keep creole slaves (i.e. locally born; see id.: 20, note 12, JA) in the capital, and to send new imports immediately to the hinterland... It follows from this that the plantation population was not only overwhelmingly African, but that it also must have been disproportionately male, and disproportionately adult. Until 1735, more than 70 percent of the total imports to Suriname were male, and children constituted under 7 percent (...); even after the planters began more seriously to encourage breeding as a replacement strategy in the period after 1735, the proportion of female imports did not rise above 40 percent, nor that of children above 22 percent.' (Price 1976: 9; 12)

Price's remark about the percentage of children among slave imports is based on Postma, who says that 'during the seventeenth century few if any children were purchased by WIC (West India Company, the main supplier of slaves to Suriname, JA) ships' (1970: 179). This means that up to 1700 there were practically no other children in the colony than the few that were born there. And even that small number (< 10% until 1750) is considerably reduced (to 3%) if we restrict ourselves to what is assumed by some to be the formative period in the history of Sranan, i.e. 1650-1680 (Price 1976: 10). As appears from Table 4 below, Price estimates the total number of locally born children that were present in Suriname in 1671 at 40 and in 1681 at 90. Assuming that there were around 40 plantations in 1670 (Van Lier 1977: 19) or even less (Encyclopaedie 1914-1917: 343-344), and around 50 in 1680 (Encyclopaedie 1914-1917: 440; Verschuure 1987: 20), it is safe to say that there were only one to two children present at the most on each plantation up to 1680. In reality the number will have been zero in many cases, because locally born children were kept as house slaves in the capital; also, most of the locally born children will have been born from house slaves in the capital, since these were treated better, which probably affected their fertility.

**Table 4: Black Population Growth 1671-1750 (from Price 1976: 10-11)**

Black pop. 1st y. of decade	Av. ann. incr.	%	Av. ann. slave imp.	%	Av. ann. net decr.	%	Suriname slaves 1st y. of dec.	%	
1671-80	1200*	160	13	246	20.5	90	40	3	
1681-90	2800	230	8	434	15.5	210	7.5	90	3
1691-700	5100	240	5	638	12.5	380	250	5	
1701-10	7500	1100	15	1650	22	500	600	8	
1711-20	18000	1100	6.1	2340	13	1210	6.7	1000	6
1721-30	29000	1100	3.7	3190	11	1940	1950	7	
1731-40	40000	1000	2.5	3600	9	2680	3850	10	
1741-50	50000	0	0	2500	5	2500	5	5000	10

**Table 5: 'Africanness' of Suriname Population 1690-1770 (from Price 1976: 12)**

Left Africa within past 5 years	%	Left Africa within past 10 years	%	Born in Africa	%	Total Black Population	
1690	1714	35	3030	62	4636	95	4870
1710	6518	39	11550	64	15990	95	16900
1730	12640	32	22400	56	35240	91	38900
1740	14220	28	25200	50	45000	90	50000
1770	10000	20	17500	35	35000	70	50000

I believe this evidence shows that there were not enough black children present in Suriname until around the second quarter of the 18th century to be able to nativize the pidgin of their parents. The transmission of early Sranan must have largely been a matter of foreign language acquisition by adults and not of first language acquisition by children. The

\* Excluding British-owned slaves (appr. 1000; see Price 1976: 8 (Fig. 2)), removed from the colony by 1680.

evidence is strongest for the 1670-1690 period, but as Table 5 shows, this conclusion is also valid for the 1680-1710 period, since the proportion of locally born slaves did not reach more than five percent during that time. This means that during the first 75 years of its existence Sranan was more of a pidgin than a creole. Such an extended pidgin stage is by no means exceptional: cf. Tok Pisin, which has been in use as a second language for more than a century and which has only recently begun to acquire native speakers (Sankoff & Laberge 1974). A similar situation holds for West African Pidgin English and Cameroonian Pidgin English (Smith 1987: 17-18).

As to the origin of this 'pidgin Sranan', much remains unclear. Theoretically, there are at least three possibilities: first, it may be the result of the slaves' pidginization of either the European English of the British or the Caribbean English of the Barbadian slaves (see below); secondly, it may have been imported from West Africa in the form of West African Pidgin English (WAPE) (see, e.g., Smith 1987: 89); or, finally, it may be a continuation of the English pidgin spoken by the pre-1667 British owned slaves. The latter possibility is least likely, since the existence of a Barbadian pidgin or creole is generally denied (e.g., Hancock 1980: 29<sup>2</sup>; but see Cassidy 1980: 13 for a different view; compare also Burrowes 1983 who has identified some creole-like features in Barbadian English). Of the former two possibilities neither one can be wholly excluded; indeed, both processes may very well have been at work in combination, the assumption being that 'post-1667 slaves' began to pidginize the English of the British planters and their slaves or that they arrived with a basic knowledge of WAPE.

The idea of an extended pidgin phase in the genesis of Sranan fits in well with Hancock's hypothesis that the Anglophone Atlantic creoles are a continuation of Guinea Coast Creole English, which originated on the Guinea Coast in the 17th century and was later brought to the New world (Hancock 1986). Additional, although rather slight, evidence that no English creole was spoken in Suriname before 1700 is found in two quotations from contemporary sources, one a journal from 1693, the other Herlein's work from 1718. The first quotation, from 1693, probably describes the situation as it obtained during the 1680s: 'De Engelse hebben hier een colonie gemaect en wort die taal daer nog meest bij de

2 There are hardly any creole traces in Barbadian English. Furthermore, during the first half-century in the history of Barbados, conditions for creolization were not fulfilled: the number of whites was greater than the number of blacks, while the percentage of locally born blacks was very high (Hancock 1980: 22). (Just for comparison: this percentage was 97% on Barbados in 1817 (Burrowes 1983: 45, note 3), but only 30% in Suriname in 1770).



slaven gesproken' ('The British have founded a colony here and that language is still spoken mostly by the slaves', transl. mine, JA) (quoted by Van Alphen 1963). The other quotation from 1718 probably describes the situation around 1700: 'Maar omdat d'Engelschen deze Colonie lange tijd hebben bezeten, (gelijk voren gewag gemaakt is,) zo hebbenze dier selber Spraack meest geleerd; dog om dat 'er Negerze woorden onder lopen, zo werd het Neger-Engels genoemt' ('But since the British have owned this colony for a long time (as was mentioned earlier), they have learned their language; but because there are Negro words in it, it is called Negro-English', transl. mine, JA) (quoted by Schuchardt 1914b: XVII). Although it should be added that the absence of a creole does not, of course, necessarily imply the existence of a pidgin, it is not hard to imagine that a pidgin version of English would sooner be labelled 'English' by a nonlinguist than a self-contained system like Sranan, whose English affiliation would probably not be recognized at all.

### 5.2.2. Linguistic evidence

The linguistic data that will be presented here to illustrate the pidgin character of early Sranan, i.e. as spoken around 1700, is derived from the so-called 'Herlein fragment' (Herlein 1718: 121-123)<sup>3</sup>. The fragment, which is part of a description of the colony, contains two short dialogues and some isolated words and phrases (Sranan-Dutch), which were probably elicited from an informant (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 279).

The text contains some printing errors and inconsistent spellings (Schuchardt 1914b: XIX; Rens 1953: 53-54) and it probably represents the language as spoken by the European, i.e. not locally born, whites, rather than the plantation creole of the slaves<sup>4</sup>. This appears from the use of a word

3 The fragment was reproduced in various publications and in various ways: in Schuchardt (1914b: XVII-XVIII) with the original Dutch translation by Herlein, in Rens (1953: 142-143) with a literal English translation, and, finally, in Voorhoeve & Lichtveld (1975: 280-282) with English and modern Sranan equivalents plus the corrections of the fragment by Nepveu from 1765.

4 Herlein himself (1718: 121, quoted in Goodman 1987) characterizes the language of his specimen as 'de Spraack der Swarten, zo ze van haar op de Zurinaamsche Kust gesproken werd', i.e. 'the language of the blacks, as it is spoken along the coast of Suriname', i.e. the capital Paramaribo and surrounding area. That it does not represent 'deep', that is plantation creole, appears from the fact that creole rules for honorifics, such as the use of *misi* instead of *yu*, are not obeyed (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 279). That there were two varieties present in the eighteenth century appears from Schumann (1783: 55) who distinguishes *Bakkratongo* (or simply *Bakkra*), 'white man's language' from *Ningre tongo*, 'Negro language', referring to 'white' and 'black' Sranan respectively.

like à redden, ‘already’, which in Schumann's 1783 dictionary receives the qualification ‘Bakkratongo’ (‘White man's language’) and is opposed to plantation creole kaba (Kramp 1983: 50). This does not mean, however, that the fragment is useless as a source of linguistic information, and the fact that Herlein was obviously an amateur linguist does not justify the suggestion by Rens (1953: 53) that he was mainly led by his fantasy.

The examples quoted by Rens to illustrate his idea that the informant(s) must have been Dutch, are not very convincing (Rens 1953: 53). For instance, wil with the meaning of ‘to want’ is not necessarily derived from Dutch; besides, it has the function of indicating the future in at least one of the four cases. The word agterdina is certainly not an invention on the part of Herlein: it occurs (as áttara dina) in Schumann (Kramp 1983: 84), and is used alongside, but not as a synonym of, bakadina, which is used up to the present day. Nam is simply a misspelling for nem, ‘name’: compare the misspelling tem for tam, ‘stay, be’ in the same fragment. The phrase ver wate, ‘why’, finally, rather than being ‘clearly Dutch’, seems to be a (partial) calque on fu san ede, lit. ‘for what reason’. Summarizing, it seems to me that the examples quoted by Rens do not show the overall unreliability of the fragment at all.

As far as the pidgin character of this specimen is concerned, this is not recognized by everybody. All three authors who have reproduced it (see note 3) emphasize the similarities with the modern language. Schuchardt, for example, writes: ‘Die Übereinstimmung der Sprache mit der heutigen ist sehr groß, fast befremdend’ (Schuchardt 1914b: XIX). Rens stresses the syntactic similarities:

‘The most striking feature of the fragment, however, is the structure of its sentences. In this respect the NE (Negro English, i.e. Sranan, JA) of 1700 is not different from the NE of our days. The vocabulary has been extended, certain words have become obsolete, and have given way to others, but the manner of expression, the way of formulating thoughts has remained unchanged.’ (Rens 1953: 54)

Opinions such as these are characteristic for the attitude towards early creole, which was criticized above. They rest upon a superficial analysis of the fragment, and a more detailed examination will certainly reveal pidgin-like features, especially in the area of syntax. We will now proceed to a discussion of these features.

The copula. In all the eight cases of a finite predicative adjective, Herlein uses a zero copula, also in positions where an overt copula is required in later stages.

Therefore it is no coincidence that in some of these cases Nepveu, in his corrections, adds the copula de, as in the following example:

- (1) Oe fasje jou tem? My bon (Herlein 1718: 280)  
what fashion you are? I ø good

‘How are you? I’m fine’

- (2) Oe fasi jou tan? Mi de boen (Nepveu 1765: 280)  
What fashion you are? I am good

‘How are you? I’m fine’

In Chapter 2 I showed that, although predicative adjectives generally follow the rules for stative verbs (i.e. do not have a copula/aspect marker (de), this is not the case for semantically differentiated adjectives such as bun in their non-stative meaning (i.e. ‘good’ as in ‘feeling good’). The same goes for adjectives that are preceded by a modifying adverb such as belle, ‘very’<sup>5</sup>, and the one case in Herlein which is an example of this is likewise corrected by Nepveu:

- (3) My belle wel (Herlein 1718: 280)  
I ø very well

‘I’m very well’

- (4) Mi de bellewel (Nepveu 1765: 280)  
I am very-well

‘I’m very well’

Both sentences in the fragment where the predicative complement is not adjectival, but nominal or adverbial, receive a zero copula. The fact that in none of these cases an overt copula is added by Nepveu agrees with my observation, made in Chapter 2, that up to 1800 a zero copula could be used in these cases:

- (5) Oe som bady Mastre vor joe? (Herlein 1718: 281)  
what person ø master of/for you

5 The fact that belle, ‘very’, is not in use anymore is irrelevant to the point in question. There is one other case of what looks like an adverb preceding a predicate adjective and preceded by a zero copula: Mie jary no grandebon?, ‘Isn’t my garden very nice?’ (Herlein 1718: 280). However, since the word grande is not in use anymore, except in some fixed expressions, I am not entirely certain about its adverbial status.

‘Who is your master?’

- (6) Oe fasse nam vor joe Mastre? (ibid.)  
what fashion name for your master ø

‘What is your master's name?’

The modern equivalent of (5), however, certainly receives a full copula, as appears from the modern translation provided by Voorhoeve & Lichtveld:

- (7) Suma na yu masra?  
who is your master

‘Who is your master?’

(Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 281)

(Note that the modern equivalent of (6) has a different structure, due to the category switch of nem/nen from noun



occur at all in the fragment: the expression of future tense is either left out (as in (10)) or it is given in the form wil (as in (12)). Only the former of these is corrected into sa by Nepveu (as in (11)). Finally, there is one other case of wil which seems to indicate the future and which has been corrected into sa by Nepveu, but which is translated as a volitional auxiliary by Herlein himself (sentences (13) and (14)):

- (10) Akesi of joe tan an house?  
she-asks if you stay LOC house
- ‘She asks if you will stay at home’  
(Herlein 1718: 281)
- (11) Ahakisi offi missie sa tan na Hosso  
she-asks if Mrs. TNS stay LOC house
- ‘She asks if you will stay at home’  
(Nepveu 1765: 281)
- (12) Oe tem wie wil gaeu na Riba?  
what time we TNS go LOC river
- ‘When shall we go to the river?’  
(Herlein 1718: 281)
- (13) à Wilkom loeke joe na agter dina tem  
she TNS(?)-come see you LOC after  
dinner time
- ‘She will (or: wants to) come visit you this afternoon’ (Herlein 1718: 281)
- (14) A sa kom loeke jou na agter dina tem  
she TNS come see you LOC after dinner  
time
- ‘She will come visit you this afternoon’  
(Nepveu 1765: 281)

We may thus conclude that early Sranan did not have the particle sa, although it did have an auxiliary wil; the function of the latter, however, seems to be somewhere in between that of a volitional and a true future tense marker. The fact that sa occurs only in Dutch-based creoles (Negerhollands, Berbice Dutch), in English-based creoles which are spoken in areas where a Dutch creole had been in use earlier (Guyana Creole English, St. Croix Creole English), and in the Surinamese creoles and their offshoot MSL, the ‘Maroon Spirit Possession Language’ of Jamaica (Smith 1987: 97), indicates that this particle was introduced by the Dutch. This would allow for a

relatively late (at least post-1667) introduction into Sranan, which would explain its absence in the Herlein fragment.

The aspect particle (d)e is also absent from the fragment, which is not surprising in view of the fact that also the homophonous, and possibly identical, copula is lacking. It should be remarked, however, that there is only one sentence where modern Sranan does and Herlein does not use a particle. The sentence is not corrected by Nepveu in this respect:

(15) Oe plesse jo liewy? (Herlein 1718: 281)  
what place you live

‘Where do you live?’

Modern Sranan

- (16) Pe yu e libi?  
where you ASP live

‘Where do you live?’

Summarizing, we may conclude that early Sranan does not, or not to any significant extent, use the TMA particles which are so typical for creole languages. The fact that the absence of such particles is characteristic for pidgin languages strengthens the hypothesis that early Sranan was indeed a pidgin.

Articles. There is not one article present in the entire fragment, while there are at least two cases where it is obligatorily present in modern Sranan. None of these was corrected by Nepveu, which could indicate that the later system was not yet fully realized around 1765. That the article system has developed quite slowly is also indicated by Voorhoeve & Kramp (1982: 11), who refer to Schumann (1783), where often a zero article is used (especially with inanimate object nouns in imperative sentences, but also sometimes with animate nouns) in cases where a full article is obligatory in modern Sranan:

- (17) hoppo doro gi mi (Schumann 1783: 132)  
open door give me

‘Open the door for me’

- (18) dem tu brara no lukku tatta va dem  
the two brothers not look father of them

‘The two brothers don't look like their father’ (Schumann 1783: 81)

It will be clear that this gradual development of the article system is completely in line with other syntactic developments, described in this thesis.

The two cases from Herlein are the following:

- (19) Jo wantje smoke Pipe Tobakke? (Herlein  
1718: 280)  
you want smoke pipe tobacco

‘Do you want to smoke a pipe?’

- (20) Oe som bady Mastre vor joe? (Herlein  
1718: 281)  
what person master of/for you

‘Who is your master?’

The modern equivalents of (19) and (20), however, contain an obligatory article:



Modern Sranan

- (21) Yu wani smoko wan pipa (tabaka)?  
you want smoke a pipe (tobacco)

‘Do you want to smoke a pipe?’

- (22) O suma na a masra fu yu?  
what person is the master of you

‘Who is your master?’

Although (22) is not the most natural translation of (20) (compare the more normal equivalent in (7)), it is chosen here for the sake of the argument: it is structurally identical to (20), except for the presence of the article and the copula.

There are some other cases which are less clear, either because they do not have a structural equivalent in modern

Sranan (as (23)), or because they consist of isolated words (as in (25)):

- (23) Oe fasse nam vor joe Mastre?  
what fashion name of your master

‘What’s your master’s name?’  
(Herlein 1718: 281)

Because of the reanalysis of nen as a verb in modern Sranan the question of article placement does not arise here, but it is clear that in an identical structure the article would be obligatory:

Modern Sranan

- (24) Fa yu masra nen?  
how your master is-called

‘What’s your master’s name?’

The fact that the isolated words, contained in a short word list, are given without their articles is not surprising, except for the fact that in Herlein’s translation into Dutch they do get an article:

- (25) Santje Hause Tappe (Herlein 1718: 282)  
‘A thing’ ‘A house’ ‘The roof’

Absence of articles is typical for pidgins (Schumann 1978: 72-74), but certainly not for creoles, which generally have a rather subtle article system (Boretzky 1983: 96-101; Bickerton 1981: 56-58). Thus, the above is one more indication for the pidgin character of early Sranan.

Serialization. There are two cases where Herlein does not, but Nepveu (in one case) or modern Sranan (in the other) do use a serial construction. The first is sentence (8) above, where Herlein uses the single verb akase, ‘ask’, which is changed into sendi hakisi, lit. ‘send ask’, ‘have (somebody) ask’; constructions of this type are regarded as serial verbs by Voorhoeve (1975: 5) and Boretzky (1983: 168). The correction by Nepveu into a causative serial construction is completely in agreement with Herlein’s own translation ‘laten vragen’, i.e. ‘have (somebody) ask’.

The second case is not corrected by Nepveu, but it certainly has to be cast in the form of a serialization in modern Sranan:

- (26) Mie Misisi take joe oudy (Herlein 1718: 280)  
My Mrs. says you hello

‘My mistress sends you her greetings’

Modern Sranan

- (27) Mi misi seni taygi yu odi (taygi = taki gi)  
My Mrs. sends say-give you hello

‘My mistress sends you her greetings’

The latter contains even two serializations, one with seni (as in (9)), and one with gi. That a serial interpretation was indeed meant by Herlein, again, appears from his translation ‘laat de groeten doen’, i.e. ‘have (somebody) greet (somebody)’. As to the construction with gi, this was possible, but not obligatory in Nepveu's days, as can be gathered from Schumann (1783), who gives both a serial and a non-serial variant for constructions with takki:

(28) mi takki tangi na ju (Schumann 1783:  
265)

I say thanks LOC you

‘I thank you’

(29) mi takki tangi gi ju (ibid.)

I say thanks give you

‘I thank you’

The second half of the 18th century could thus very well be a transitional stage between a non-serial and a serial stage in the development of the language. Again, this gradual development is completely in line with other developments described in this study. The fact that serial verbs do not occur in true pidgins (as opposed to expanded pidgins such as Tok Pisin and Cameroonian Pidgin; see Todd 1984: 208) can again be taken as an indication that early Sranan was more of a pidgin than a creole.

It should be added, of course, that the fragment contains some creole characteristics as well, such as the use of bimorphemic question words like *oe fasse*, ‘what fashion, how’ (as in (23)), *oe som bady*, ‘what person, who’ (as in (20)), *oe plesse*, ‘what place, where’ (as in (15)), and *oe tem*, ‘what time, when’ (as in (12))<sup>8</sup>. But this does not diminish the value of the other pidgin-like characteristics discussed above. On the contrary, it is in agreement with a gradual model of creolization as proposed in this thesis, since here the boundaries between pidgin and creole are much less sharp than in the standard view. It may thus very well be that the Herlein fragment represents a stage where the language was just beginning to be creolized.

### 5.3 Conclusion

Although linguistic data on the earliest history of Sranan is scarce and, perhaps, not completely reliable, the arguments for the pidgin character of early Sranan are, in my view, not entirely without value. Their value, however, lies not so much in the isolated facts mentioned in the preceding section, but rather in their accumulation. In other words, it is the combined presence of several pidgin features which leads to the conclusion that early 18th century Sranan was a (creolizing) pidgin. The objection that the Herlein fragment is not completely reliable hereby loses much of its force.

This conclusion is corroborated by the fact that it agrees completely with the demographic evidence. Furthermore, the hypothesis of long-lasting stabilization provides a better explanation for the radical syntactic changes in Sranan after 1750 than does any instantaneous model. They should be viewed as the ‘aftermaths’ of a gradual process of stabilization. Such gradual developments are much harder to accommodate for a theory of ‘instantaneous creolization’,

8 This point was drawn to my attention by Pieter Muysken (p.c.).

because in such a model a creole would not be susceptible to change any more than its non-creole sisters; in fact, in a bioprogram model, creoles would have to change less, because of their unmarked character.

Everything that has been said here could perhaps be dismissed by referring to the supposedly unique nature of Sranan and the circumstances under which it developed. However, in a recent paper on the historical development of reflexives and anti-reflexives in Haitian, Carden and Stewart (1987: 42) reach an almost identical conclusion:

‘We ... suggest that the final parameter settings fit best with a development that depends largely on several stages of reanalysis by adults, rather than on changes introduced in the process of first language acquisition by children ... the HC (Haitian Creole, JA) evidence seems to be hard to reconcile with Bickerton's bioprogram model, which postulates a one-generation development driven by the same properties of the bioprogram that we see in first language acquisition, or with any other “instantaneous”, one-generation model of creolization ... The data leads us instead to a gradualist model in which “creolization” is a process extending over a number of generations of native speakers.’ (Carden & Stewart 1987: 42)

The resemblance of this gradualist model to the transgenerational model proposed in this thesis as well as in earlier publications (Arends 1986, 1987) will be obvious. It is significant, I believe, that of the very few in-depth historical studies of a creole language performed up to now, two would reach an almost identical conclusion. More research, of course, has to be done to test the model, but it is clear that already now it is time for the revision of any single-generation model of creolization. The conclusions reached by Carden & Stewart and by the present study are most threatening, I believe, for Bickerton's theory, since they prove its most basic assumption to be entirely unwarranted. It seems that the ‘Copernican revolution’ in the study of pidgins and creoles which Bickerton called for (Bickerton 1980: 1) has not taken place yet. In the meantime, the historical creolist will continue gathering and analyzing the bits and pieces that are left of early Creole in order to put together a realistic picture of what has been going on in the formation of these linguistic puzzles called creoles.

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## Appendix A: The corpus

### I. Chronological listing

<u>Nr.</u>	<u>Text</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
1	Herlein	1718	Voorhoeve & Lichtveld (eds.) 1975: 280-282
2	Nepveu	1765	ibid.
3	Van Dyk	c.1770	Van Dyk (s.d.)
4	Schumann	1783	Kramp 1983: 44-305
5	Stedman	1796	Stedman 1972: passim
6	Weygandt	1798	Weygandt 1798
7	Wennekers	1822	Wennekers 1822
8	Luke	1829	Anonymous 1966: 6-146
9	Acts	1829	id.: 150-280
10	Cesaari	1836-1837	Lichtveld & Voorhoeve 1980: 292-299
11	Helmig van der Vegt	1844	Helmig van der Vegt 1844
12	Grammatik	1854	Anonymous 1854
13	Focke	1855	Focke 1855
14	Wullschlägel	1856	Wullschlägel 1856
15	King (Berichten)	1864-1870	King 1981: 16-62
16	King (Maripaston)	1891-1894	King 1973: 51-142
17	Albitrouw (Anake)	1894	Albitrouw 1978: 28-80
18	Kraag	1894-1896	Kraag 1980: 34-46
19	Albitrouw (Aurora)	c.1896	Albitrouw 1979: 15-108
20	Makzien I	1902	Makzien 1902: 1-24
21	Helstone	1903	Helstone 1903
22	Makzien II	1913	Makzien 1913: 51-58



23	Herskovits	1936	Herskovits & Herskovits 1936: 150-487
24	Koenders	1946-1949	Voorhoeve & Lichtveld (eds.) 1975: 138-163
25	Bruma	c.1955	id.: 168-181

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## **Part II: Data**

**Appendix B: Sample sentences**

**[Copula]****[Sentence Introduction]**

Herlein (1718) (pp.280-282): no data

Nepveu (1765) (pp.280-282): no data

Van Dyk (c.1770) (pp.47-75)

Of Mastra plessi bekasi da maniri zo alle tem (3/55)

If Master please because it-is custom so all time

‘If you please, because that's always the custom (i.e. to name a colt after the person who announces its birth)’

Hoezomma de na mi hankmake? Da mi Filida mi kom

What-person BE LOC my hammock? It-is me, Filida; I've come

‘Who's there at my hammock? It's me, Filida; I come to see

na mastra (3/73)

to you

you’

Hoe zomma datti? Da da kromanti neger (3/74)

What person  $\emptyset$  that? It-is the Cromanty negro

‘Who is it? It's the Cromanty Negro’

Schumann (1783) (pp.45-93)

da allawan na mi, hufa ju meki datti (4/49)

it-is all-one LOC me, what-way you make that

‘it's all the same to me, how you do it’

da wan bassra-boom (4/57)

that-is a bastard-tree

‘that tree is a hybrid’

da wan biggi somma (4/62)

that-is a big person

‘it's a fat man’

da ju? (4/77)

it-is you

‘is that you?’

Stedman (1796) (passim)

You man? Da boy fasy (5/64)

You ø man? It-is boy manner

‘Are you a man? You behave like a boy’

sooto sooto da Bonny kiry da dago? (5/227)

shoot shoot it-is Boni kill the dog

‘Fire! Shoot! It's Boni (a maroon leader); kill the dog!’

Oan bus adioso-o da so adiosso me de-go (5/362)

One kiss goodbye-o it-is so goodbye I ASP-go

‘One kiss, goodbye; that's how it is, goodbye, I'm leaving’

Weygandt (1798) (pp.91-109)

Da wan Masra diesie dé aksie na joe (6/91-1)

It-is a Master REL ASP ask LOC you

‘It's a gentleman, who's asking for you’

A! da joe Masra! (6/91-2)

Ah! it-is you Master

‘Ah! Is it you, Master?’

Da tem foe jam (6/93)

It-is time for eat

‘It's time to have dinner’

Da no wan joeroe jetee (6/94-1)

It-is NEG one hour yet

‘It's not yet one o'clock’

Da foe mie (6/94-2)

It-is of/for me

‘It's mine’

Da wan helie joeroe foe waka (6/97)

It-is one whole hour for walk

‘It's a full hour's walk’

Da wan pley diesie dee no-ja tranga na modo (6/100)

It-is a (card)game REL BE now strong LOC fashion



‘It's a card game which is very popular now’

Da troe Masra D. dé go trouw? (6/101)

It-is true Master D. ASP go marry

‘Is it true that Mr. D. is going to get married?’

Da da biegie n'joen hosó (6/102-1)

It-is that big new house

‘It's that big new house’

Da no sanie foe takie tangie (6/102-2)

It-is NEG thing for say thanks

‘It's nothing to say “thank you” for’

Dan da tem foe mie go (6/104)

Then it-is time for I go

‘Then it's time for me to go’

Da da retie monie foe em (6/105)

That-is the right money for it

‘That's the right price for it’

Da da srefie Masra (6/106)

That-is the same Master

‘That's the same thing, Sir (that amounts to the same thing, Sir)’

Wennekers [1822] (pp.1-49)

a no Masra? a no Gado? (7/33-1 & 2)

it-is NEG Master? it-is NEG God?

‘isn't it the Lord? isn't it God (who did all this)?’

Luke (1829) (pp.6-38): no data

Cesaari (1836-1837) (pp.292-298)

Soema de jompo janna so? Mi bribi na Cesaari (10/292)

Who ASP jump yonder so? I believe it-is Cesaari

‘Who's limping there like that? I think it's Cesaari’

Shjah! na troe san bijblie takki, na troe san Domine

Fy! it-is true what bible say, it-is true what priests

‘It's true what the bible says and what the preachers preach:

leesie, Wi njan wi switti-moffo nanga sweeti voe wi

read, We eat our sweet-mouth with sweat of our

we earn our bread in the sweat of our faces’

veesie (10/296-1 & 2)

faces

Awassi mi pooti, tokkoe na troe, Mi habi mi libbi voe

Although I ø poor, still it-is true, I have my life for

‘I may be poor, but still it's true: I have to carry my own

tjaari (10/298)

carry

burden’

Helmig van der Vegt (1844) (pp.36-48)

Da wan pleh, dissi de noja tranga na modo (11/38)

It-is a (card)game, REL BE now strong LOC fashion

‘It's a card game which is very popular now’

Datti no de tra fassi alwassi da frien ningre

That NEG BE other way even-if it-is free negroes

‘It (i.e. the Blacks' way of working) isn't any different,

srefi (11/46)

even

even if they are free negroes’

Grammatik (1854) (pp.5-22)

Da mi sisa pikien (12/9)

It-is my sister child

‘It's my sister's child’

Da wan pikinsani (12/11)

It-is a small-thing

‘It's a trifle’

Da wan boen plesi, vo dem slibi (12/19-1)

That-is a good place for they sleep

‘That's a good place for them to sleep’

Soema doe dati? Da mi! (12/19-2)

Who do that? It-is me!

‘Who did that? I did!’

Focke (1855) (pp.1-28)

A no mi (13/1)

It-is NEG me

‘It's not me’

Da mi bére-pikien (13/10)

It-is my belly-child

‘It's my own child’

Ho dei ti-dè? Da fó-de-wróko (13/21)

What day ø today? It-is four-day-work

‘What day is today? It's Thursday’

Da wan tákroe doe datti (13/24)

It-is a bad do that

‘That's bad manners’

Wullschlägel (1856) (pp.1-32)

da wan lau-tori (14/2)

that-is a crazy-story

‘that's a crazy story’

da no you wroko (14/11)

that-is NEG your work

‘that's none of your business’

a no wansani (14/13)

it-is NEG one-thing

‘it doesn't matter’

da wan switi pikien (14/18-1)

it-is a nice child

‘it's a nice child’

da wan boen dresi, a de dresi ala siki (14/18-2)  
that-is a good medicine, it ASP cure all sick

‘that's a good medicine; it cures every disease’

King Berichten (1864-1870) (pp.16-18): no data

King Maripaston (1891-1894) (pp.51-53): no data

Albitrouw Anake (1894) (pp.28-30)

Na adjosi joeroe now (17/29)

It-is goodbye hour now

‘It's time to say goodbye now’

Kraag (1894-1896) (pp.34-36)

En disi piki mi taki da wan foe den pikin foe da  
And this answer me say it-is one of the children of the

‘And he answered me that it was one of the children of the

grankapten Alemoen (18/34)

great-captain Alemoen

“great chief” Alemoen’

Albitrouw Aurora (1896) (pp.15-17): no data

Makzien I (1902) (pp.1-4)

da soema (...), disi de kisi wan njoe hatti, da vo  
the person (...) REL ASP get a new heart, that-is for

‘the person who gets a new heart, that means: a heart that

taki, so wan hatti, disi no lobbi zondoe moro (20/1)

say, such a heart, REL NEG love sin more

doesn't love sin anymore’

Helstone (1903) (pp.27-41): no data

Makzien II (1913) (pp.51-52): no data

Herskovits & Herskovits (1936) (pp.150-166)

Da di “a Ba Tigri miti Ba Todotodo, a tya”

Then when the Brother Tiger meet Brother Toad, he carry

‘Then when Ba Tiger met Ba Toad, he took him away, because

en gowe, bikasi na hem nengere (23/158)

him go-away, because it-is his negro

he was his slave’

A no mi (23/160)

It-is NEG me

‘It's not me’

Tye, mi Konu, yu sa yere taki na tru (23/166)

Tye, my King, you TNS hear say it-is true

‘Tye, my King, you will hear that it's true’

Koenders (1946-1949) (pp.138-142)

suma na un, san un wani? Bun suma, na mi

who BE you, what you want? Good people, it-is me,

‘who are you, what do you want? (We are) good people;

Philip (24/142-1)

Philip

it's me, Philip’

Di den srudati yere na Philip, den poti den gon na

When the soldiers hear it-is Philip, they put their guns LOC

‘When the soldiers heard it was Philip, they put down their

sey (24/142-2)

side

guns’



**[Identification]**

Herlein (1718) (pp.280-282)

Oe som bady Mastre vor joe? (1/281)

Who person ø Master of you?

‘Who is your master?’

Nepveu (1765) (pp.280-282)

Hoe so ma masra for joe? (2/281)

Who person ø master of you?

‘Who is your master?’

Van Dyk (c.1770) (pp.47-75)

joe go ziddom na joe kamere retti liki joe da gran  
you go sit-down LOC your room just like you BE great

‘you're sitting in your room as if you are the owner’

mastra sleffi (3/70)

master self

Hoe zomma datti (3/73)

Who person ø that?

‘Who's that (i.e. the person you're talking about)?’

Schumann (1783) (pp.45-93)

datti da reti nem (4/66)

that ø the right name

‘that's the right name (i.e. bombo for “vulva”)’

da my reti brara, wan tatta, wan mamma (4/68-1)

that ø my real brother, one father, one mother

‘That's my real brother; we have the same parents (i.e. mother and father)’

da tarrawan da mi brara tu, wan tatta, tu  
the other-one BE my brother too, one father, two

‘The other one is my brother too; we have the same

mamma (4/68-2)  
mothers  
father, but different mothers’

da tetei, effi, da tiki, effi, da pisi dotti, pp. da  
the rope or the stick or the piece dirt etc. BE

‘This rope or this stick or this piece of earth is my bribi’

mi bribi (4/69)  
my bribi (i.e. charm)

datti da somma, dissi ju de suku (4/78)  
that ø the person REL you ASP look-for

‘That's the one you're looking for’

hem da Gadolamm, dissi dem ben killi (4/82)  
he ø the Lamb-of-God REL they TNS kill

‘He's the Lamb of God who's been killed’

droifi watra, da wini (4/92)  
grape water BE wine

‘Grapes' juice is wine’

Stedman (1796) (passim)

Who somma datty? (5/227)

Who person ø that

‘Who is it?’

Weygandt (1798) (pp.91-120)

Da oe Masra datie (6/91-1)

Is who Master ø that

‘Which gentleman is it?’

Mie no sabie o sama da em (6/91-2)

I NEG know who person BE he

‘I don't know who he is’

Mie sa go loekoe oe soema datie (6/91-3)

I TNS go look who person ø that

‘I'll see who it is’

Oe sama da joe sneyrie? (6/106)

Who person BE your tailor

‘Who's your tailor?’

Wennekers (1822) (pp.1-49)

Wi moessoe bribi foe wi Reppiman Jesus Christus dee da  
We must believe for our Help-man Jesus Christ BE the

‘We must believe that our Saviour Jesus Christ is the true  
troe Pikien va Gado (7/1)  
true child of God

Son of God’

Lifi Masra Jesus Christus! joe dee Gado Pikien (7/4)  
Sweet Master Jesus Christ! you BE God Child

‘Sweet Lord Jesus Christ! you are the Son of God’

Disi drie: Briebi, Hoopoe, Lobbi den dee den drie morro  
These three: Faith, Hope, Love they BE the three more

‘These three: Faith, Hope, and Love, are the best attitudes

boen fasi va wi hatti na Gado (7/7)  
good ways of our heart LOC God

toward God'

A dee joe Gado, danki Hem (7/16)  
He BE your God, thank Him

'He's your God, be thankful to Him'

Ma joe pikien ben Gado, Bifo joe meki Hem (7/19)  
But your child TNS  $\emptyset$  God, before you make Him

'But your child was God before you gave birth to Him'

Gran Odi, Kruisi! Hoopoe va wi joe dee wawan (7/20)  
Great greetings, Cross! Hope of us you BE only

'Hail Cross! You are our only hope'

Santa Jeje, disi dee da Geest va alla toe (7/21)  
Holy Ghost REL BE the Spirit of all two

'the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of both of them'

joe dee mi nene, joe ben meki mi (7/36)  
you BE my mommy, you TNS bear me

'you are my mommy, you gave birth to me'

Ma loekoe: disi dee da Reppiman va alla soema (7/38-1)  
But look: this BE the Help-man of all people

'But look: this is the Saviour of all people'

hem dee da Pikien va Gado srefi (7/38-2)  
he BE the Child of God self

'he is God's own Child'

hem nem dee Jesus Christus (7/38-3)  
his name BE Jesus Christ

‘his name is Jesus Christ’

bikasi hem ben dee da troe Pikien va da troe Gado (7/40-1)

because he TNS BE the true Child of the true God

‘because he was the true Child of the true God’

hem tori wawan dee Gadotori, troe troe (7/40-2)

his story only BE God-story, true true

‘only his story is truly God's story’

Den mankeri-zonde tegi da fossiwan Gebod

The negligence-sins against the first-one Commandment

‘The sins of negligence against the first Commandment

dee: (7/42)

BE:

are:’

Den zonde va Tattà, Mamà, è Overste dee: (7/44)

The sins of Father, Mother and Superiors BE:

‘The sins of fathers, mothers and superiors are:’

Den mankeri-zonde disi dee fetti nanga da vyfde

The negligence-sins REL ASP fight with the fifth

‘The sins of negligence that are in conflict with the

gebod, dee: (7/48)

commandment BE:

fifth commandment are:’

Luke (1829) (pp.6-38)

Mi da Gabriel, disi de tanapoe na Gado fesi

I BE Gabriel, REL ASP stand LOC God face

‘I am Gabriel, who is always standing before God’

(alatem) (8/8-1)

all-time

Da wendje nem ben de Maria (8/8-2)

The girl name TNS BE Mary

‘The name of the girl was Mary’

a skrivi taki: Johannes da hem nem (8/12)

he write say: John BE his name

‘he wrote down that his name was John’

Da teli ben de da fosi teli, datem di Cirenus

The census TNS BE the first census the-time when Cirenus

‘The census was the first census since Cirenus ruled Syria’

ben de granman vo Siriakondre (8/14-1 & 8/14-2)

TNS BE chief of Syria

Bikasi tidei da Helpiman gebore gi oen na ini da  
Because today the Help-man born give you LOC inside the

‘Because today the Saviour was born for you in the city of

foto vo David, hem da Kristus, da Masra (8/16)  
city of David, he BE (or: ø the) Christ, the Lord

David; he is Christ, our Lord’

Ma di dem soema no ben sabi reti, hoesoema da  
But because the people NEG TNS know exactly what-person BE

‘But because the people didn't know exactly who John was and

Johannes, en di dem alamal ben membre na ini dem  
John, and because they all TNS think LOC inside their

because they all thought secretly that maybe he was Christ

hatti taki, somtem hem da Kristus srefi, vo da hede



heart say maybe he BE Christ self, for that reason  
himself, for that reason John answered them:’

Johannes piki dem alamal taki: (8/22-1 & 8/22-2)

John answer them all say:

Joe da mi lobbi pikien, nanga joe mi habi mi plisiri! (8/24)

You BE my love child, with you I have my pleasure!

‘You are my beloved child, in you I have pleasure!’

Efi joe de Gado pikien, taki dan na da stoon disia,

If you BE God child, talk then LOC the rock this-here,

‘If you are God's child, then speak to this rock so that it

meki a tron brede (8/26)

make it turn bread

will turn into bread’

Da soema a no Josef pikien? (8/28)

The person BE NEG Joseph child?

‘Isn't he Joseph's son?’

mi sabi soema da joe; joe de da Santawan vo

I know who BE you; you BE the Holy-one of

‘I know who you are; you are God's Holy one’

Gado (8/30-1 & 8/30-2)

God

Joe da Kristus, da pikien vo Gado! (8/30-3)

You BE Christ, the child of God!

‘You are Christ, the son of God!’

bikasi dem ben sabi troe taki, hem da Kristus (8/30-4)

because they TNS know true say he BE Christ

‘because they knew for sure that he was Christ’

Hoesoema dati, di de meki spotoe so nanga Gado? (8/34)

Who-person ø that, REL ASP make mockery so with God

‘Who's that, mocking at God like that?’

Dati da Simon, disi a kali Petrus toe, nanga hem brara

That BE Simon, REL he call Peter too and his brother

‘They (i.e. the disciples) were Simon, whom he also called

Andreas (8/38)

Andrew

Peter, and his brother Andrew’

Cesaari (1836-1837) (pp.292-298): no data

Helmig van der Vegt (1844) (pp.36-48): no data

Grammatik (1854) (pp.5-22)

Masra N. hem da basi so (sic) ala dem granmasra (12/12)

Master N. he BE boss of all the big-masters

‘Mr. N. is the greatest of all (plantation-)administrators’

Da hem da soema, disi joe soekoe (12/19)

Is he ø the person REL you look-for

‘He's the one you're looking for’

Focke (1855) (pp.1-28)

Bigiën foe ron na hési wákka (13/11)

Begin of run BE fast walk

‘Running begins with walking fast’

Mi da joe boi? (13/14)

I BE your servant?

‘Am I your servant?’

Mi da Joe brara (13/20-1)

I BE your brother

‘I'm your brother’

foe Joe da foe Joe (13/20-2)

of you BE of you

‘to each his own’

Ho dei ti-dè? (13/21)

Who day ø today?

‘What day is today?’

Táki-man a no dóeman (13/24)

Talk-man BE NEG do-man

‘Saying something is not the same as doing it’

Wullschlägel (1856) (pp.1-32)

disi da mi lobbi pikien, nanga hem mi habi mi plisiri (14/10)

this BE my love child, with him I have my pleasure

‘this is my beloved child, in him I have pleasure’

mi de da ópstaan en da liebi (14/20)

I BE the resurrection and the life

‘I am resurrection and life’

King Berichten (1864-1870) (pp.16-18): no data

King Maripaston (1891-1894) (pp.51-53)

A no hen, Noah srefi, de na soema disi soekoe na ala

Is NEG he, Noah self, BE the person REL seek LOC all

‘Isn't he, Noah himself, the one who's trying in every way

fasi foe pori [a] na wroko foe joe, di joe gi mi foe  
 manners for spoil the work of you, REL you give me for  
 to destroy the work that you charged me to do among the  
 mi doe na den Matoewari-nengre mindri [moese pori]?  
 me do LOC the Matuari-negroes middle

Matuari-negroes?’ (16/52-1)

Hen de Masra; a moro ala Kownoe foe grontapoe (16/52-2)  
 He BE Master; he exceed all Kings of earth

‘He is the Lord; he surpasses all kings of the earth’

Albitrouw Anake (1894) (pp.28-30)

Kwama ben de da laste kerki presi pe Masra Schärf ben  
 Kwama TNS BE the last church place where Master Schärf TNS

‘Kwama was the last parish where Mr. Schärf worked’

wroko (17/28)  
 work

Kraag (1894-1896) (pp.34-36)

En wanten mi aksi en osoema dati disi ben go dede  
 And at-once I ask him who ø that REL TNS go dead

‘And I asked him immediately who it was that had died’ (18/34)

Albitrouw Aurora (1896) (pp.15-17)

Da laste leriman disi ben loekoe en da  
 The last missionary REL TNS look it (i.e. the parish) BE

‘The last missionary to look after it was Mr. Raats’

masra Raats (19/15)  
 Mr. Raats

Mi taki: nono, tamara sonde, wi no kan go (19/17)

I say: no no, tomorrow  $\emptyset$  Sunday, we NEG can go

‘I said: no no, tomorrow's Sunday, we can't go’

Makzien I (1902) (pp.1-4):: no data

Helstone (1903) (pp.27-41)

da woord ‘de’ no dee da hulpwerkwoord dee ‘zijn’, ma a  
the word ‘de’ NEG BE the auxiliary dee ‘be’, but it

‘the word ‘de’ (i.e. the TMA particle) is not the auxiliary

dee wan gezelschapswoord (21/29)

BE an accompanying word

dee ‘to be’, but it is a word to go along with (the pronominal subject)

Wansoema de kom, rai soema dati (21/30-1)

Somebody ASP come, guess who ø that

‘Somebody's coming, guess who it is’

Wansoema dee, rai soema dati (21/30-2)

Somebody be-there, guess who ø that

‘Somebody's here, guess who it is’

Makzien II (1913) (pp.51-52)

Dati da dem, disi nooiti dem kan findi wan reti

That BE they, REL never they can find a right

‘They are the ones who can never find a proper job’

wroko (22/52)

work

Herskovits & Herskovits (1936) (pp.150-166)

Da' Konim kom feni suma de na fufuruman (23/162)

Then King come find who BE the thief

‘Then the King found out who the thief was’

So, na yu furuman? (23/166-1)

So, is you ø thief?

‘So you are the thief?’

Disi ben de mat' Anansi (23/166-2)

This (i.e. the thief) TNS BE friend Anansi

‘This was friend Anansi’

Den mek' wan sabi-taki, tak' na Anansi na na

They make a know-say, say is Anansi BE the

‘They made an announcement that Anansi was the thief’

fufuruma' (23/166-3)

thief

San 'a dati? (23/166-4)

What BE that?

‘What is that?’

Koenders (1946-1949) (pp.138-142)

Dati a no san den kari neger-engels ofu nengre-tongo

That BE NEG what they call Negro-English or nengre-tongo

‘That (i.e. Sranan) is not what is called Negro-English or nengre-tongo (“negro language”)’ (24/138-1)

Neger-engels dati na a broko broko Engels, san wan

Negro-English that BE the broken broken English REL a

‘Negro-English is that broken English which a negro speaks:



nengre e taki: mi no no na presi fu I don't know

negro ASP speak: mi no no in place of I don't know

mi no no instead of I don't know' (24/138-2)

Nengre tongo na a tongo fu ala nengre èn dati wi

Negro language BE the language of all negroes and that our

'Negro language is the language of all Negroes and that is

tongo no de tu (24/138-3 & 24/138-4)

language NEG BE too

not what our language is'

Wi tongo na Sranan nengre-tongo, dati na a tongo

Our language BE Suriname negro-language, that BE the language

'Our language is the Suriname negro-language, that is the

fu na moro bigi ipi Sranan nengre (24/138-5 & 24/138-6)

of the more big heap Suriname negroes

language of most of the Suriname negroes'

Taki san di yu wani, suma sani a no yu sani,

Say things REL you want, people things BE NEG your things,

'Whatever you may say: Things of others are not yours,

suma pe a no yu pe, sor' mi pe di f'

people places BE NEG your places, show me where those of

Abodes of others are not yours. Show me where your own are.'

yu de! (24/140-1 & 24/140-2)

you BE!

he drape, suma na un, san un wani? (24/142-1)

hey there, who BE you, what you want?

'hey there, who are you, what do you want?'



**[Nominal Predication]**

Herlein (1718) (pp.280-282): no data

Nepveu (1765) (pp.280-282): no data

Van Dyk (c.1770) (pp.47-65)

mi blibi joe wan bon maatie fo dem (3/53-1)

I believe you ø a good friend of them

‘I believe you're a good friend of theirs’

mi no negeri fo joe (3/53-2)

I ø NEG negroe of you

‘I'm not your slave’

Hoe zan joe memere joe da mastra fo pranasi (3/56)

What thing you think? You BE master of plantation?

‘Do you think you're the owner of the plantation?’

Schumann (1783) (pp.45-75)

‘adjabre’, da Djutongo (4/46-1)

‘adjabre’ BE Djutongo (i.e. Proto-Saramaccan)

‘(the word) “adjabre” is Djutongo (i.e. not Sranan)’

‘adjossi’, da Bakkratongo (4/46-2)

‘adjossi’ BE Bakratongo (i.e. white-man's-language)

‘(the word) “adjossi” is Bakratongo (white man's Sranan)’

hele da Bakkra tongo (4/48)

‘hele’ BE Bakratongo (i.e. white-man's-language)

‘(the word) “hele” is Bakratongo’ (white man's Sranan)

mi de wan muffina (4/53)

I BE a miserable-person

‘I am wretched’

‘bassia’, da Djutongo (4/57-1)

‘bassia’ BE Djutongo

‘(the word) “bassia” is Djutongo (Proto-Saramaccan)’

Stedman (1796) (passim): no data

Weygandt (1798) (pp.91-102)

A sa dé troe sanie (6/101)

It MOD BE true thing

‘I suppose it's true’

Wennekers (1822) (pp.1-30)

den alla Drie dee wan Gado no morro (7/1)

they all three BE one God NEG more

‘the three of them are just one God’

Joe moffo nanga gnade, Da brede foe wi see (7/17)  
Your mouth and grace BE bread for our souls(?)

‘Your words and your grace are bread for our souls’

Gado na hoedoe Koning dee (7/20)  
God LOC wood King BE

‘God is the King on the cross’

den ogri moffo (...) kan dee bigi vloekoe (7/28)  
the ugly words (...) can BE big swear words

‘these dirty words may be terrible swear words’

den dee louman leki den Heiden (7/29-1)  
they BE fools like the heathens

‘they're fools like the heathens’

foe da hede den memre foe ogri, dee zonde kabà  
for that reason the thoughts of evil BE sin already

‘that's why the thought of evil is already a sin’ (7/29-2)

Luke (1829) (pp.6-25)

Datem di Herodes ben de koning vo Judakondre (8/6-1)  
That-time when Herod TNS BE king of Judea

‘In the days when Herod was king of Judea’

Dem ala toe ben de vroom soema na fesi vo Gado (8/6-2)  
They all two TNS BE devout people LOC face of God

‘They were both devout people before God’

Hoe soortoe odi dati? (8/8)  
What kind greeting ø that?

‘What kind of greeting is that?’

A sa de koning na tapo da famili vo Jakob teego (8/10)

He TNS BE king LOC top the family of Jacob forever

‘He'll be king over the house of Jacob forever’

Loekoe! da pikien disia de wa soema, disi sa meki foeloe

Look! the child DEM BE a person REL TNS make many

‘Look! this child is someone who's going to make many people

Israel-soema fadom (8/18-1)

Israel-people fall-down

in Israel fall’

en a de wan marki (wan getuige), disi dem no sa wani

and he BE a sign (a witness) REL they NEG TNS want

‘and he is a sign (a witness) who they will not be willing

versta (8/18-2)

understand

to understand’

a ben de wan ouroe soema kaba (8/18-3)  
she TNS BE a old person already

‘she was an old woman at the time’

En now a ben de wan weduwe (8/18-4)  
And now she TNS BE a widow

‘And now she was a widow’

en di Pontius Pilatus ben de granman na Judea (8/20)  
and when Pontius Pilate TNS BE governor LOC Judea

‘and when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea’

Wi de pikien vo Abraham (8/22)  
We BE children of Abraham

‘We are children of Abraham’

Josef, disi ben de Eli pikien (8/24-1)  
Joseph REL TNS BE Eli child

‘Joseph, who was Eli's child’

Eli ben de wan pikien vo Matat (8/24-2)  
Eli TNS BE a child of Matat

‘Eli was a son of Matat's’

Cesaari (1836-1837) (pp.292-296)

Ma, awassi wi no de konniman, Wi no habi trobbie  
But although we NEG BE smart-people, we NEG have trouble

‘Although we're not smart, we're alright’ (10/296)

Helmig van der Vegt (1844) (pp.36-43): no data

Grammatik (1854) (pp.5-16)

da soema da wan boen soema (12/6-1)

The person BE a good person

‘He's a good man’

Hem brara da djoe (12/6-2)

Her brother BE Jew

‘Her brother's a Jew’

da tata, disi de wan boen bribisoema (12/11)

the father REL BE a good believe-person

‘the father, who believes’

Te wi de singi, Gotfried de da basi (12/12)

When we ASP sing Gotfried BE the boss

‘Gotfried is the best singer among us’

A no de so wan goedoeman, leki Masra (12/13)

He NEG BE so a wealth-man like Master

‘He is not as wealthy as you are’



Focke (1855) (pp.1-18)

Mi a no dátra (13/1)

I BE NEG doctor

‘I'm not a doctor’

Táki réti a no asránti! (13/5)

Talk right BE NEG impertinence

‘To say the truth is not an impertinence’

Bégi móro bétre léki foefoéroe, ma wróko da bâsi (13/10-1)

Beg more better than steal but work be boss

‘It's better to beg than to steal, but to work is best’

Soema bére da liba (13/10-2)

Person belly BE river

‘Man's heart is unfathomable’

Joe da Boasi, joe lóbi mi, joe kóti mi fiénga (13/12)

Joe BE leprosy, you love me, you cut my finger

‘You love me for your own advantage’

A de foetoeboi gi Mássra (13/14)

He BE servant give Master

‘He's a servant to the gentleman’

Wullschlägel (1856) (pp.1-20)

dati de wan lau-sani (14/5-1)

that BE a crazy-thing

‘that's nonsense’

Ibo da wan spele Abo (14/5-2)

Ibo's (i.e. the tribe) BE a kind Abo

‘The Ibo-tribe belongs to the Abo-negroes’

joe da baboèn-nefi,

you BE baboèn-nefi (lit. baboon-knife, a plant with sharp

‘you have advantage on both sides’

joe de koti na ala toe sei (14/6)

leaves), you ASP cut LOC all two sides

dem de spele (14/9)

they BE fellows

‘they’re of the same age’

dati no wansani (14/13)

that Ø NEG a-thing

‘it doesn’t matter’

a de mi famili (14/17-1)

he BE my family

‘he's my kin’

mi nanga hem de famili (14/17-2)

I and he BE family

‘he and I are related’

a de wan viste na mi (14/17-3)

it BE a dirty LOC me

‘I loathe it’

a de wan boen wrokoman (14/18-1)

he BE a good work-man

‘he's a good worker’

poti a no sjem (14/18-2)

poverty BE NEG shame

‘it's not a shame to be poor’

'soortoe maniri dati? (14/20)

what-kind manner  $\emptyset$  that?

‘what kind of behavior is that?’

King Berichten (1864-1870) (pp.16-17)

da ten di mi Johannes King srefi ben de heiden (15/16-1)

the time REL I Johannes King self TNS BE heathen

‘in those days when I, Johannes King, was a heathen myself’

Son speri soema de, den nen wisiman, na dati de

Some kinds people BE, they be-called witches, is that BE

‘There is a kind of people called wisiman (i.e. witches);

da moro ogri soortoe heiden (15/16-2)

the more evil kind heathen

they are the worst kind of heathen’

Ja troe, mi go na kerki foe bakra kan si taki mi de

Yes true, I go LOC church for white-man can see say I BE

‘True, I go to church so that the whites can see I belong to

wan kerki soema (15/17)

a church person

the church’

King Maripaston (1891-1894) (pp.51-52): no data

Albitrouw Anake (1894) (pp.28-29)

Anake dati de wan Domi-nengre soema (17/28-1)

Anake that BE a Domi-nengre person

‘Anake was a negro of the Domi-tribe’

En den srefi de alaten hoofdkapiten foe  
 And they self BE all-time head-captain of

‘And they (i.e. the clan mentioned earlier) always are

Domi-nengre (17/28-2)

Domi-negroes

captain of the Domi-tribe’

Anake: 1) de wan boen lesiman, ma na ini fini koni

Anake: 1) BE a good lazy-man, but LOC inside fine clever

‘Anake is a lazy man, a true whore, and he thinks highly of

fasi, 2) de wan letileti oeroeman, ma na ini fini

way, 2) BE a true-true whore-man, but LOC inside fine

himself; and he does all this in a very clever way’

koni fasi, 3) de wan leti boen bigimembre soema, ma na

clever way, 3) BE a true good big-thought person, but LOC

ini fini koni fasi (17/28-3, 17/28-4 & 17/28-5)

inside fine clever way

Anake ben de tjariman disi lési, en nanga Asempe (17/28-6)

Anake TNS BE carry-man this time, he and Asempe

‘This time Anake was to carry (the dead body), together with Asempe’

Kraag (1894-1896) (pp.34-35)

èn ala den (...) sa de erfgenaam foe den hemelgoedoe

and all they (...) TNS BE heir of the heaven-goods

‘and all of them (...) will inherit the heavenly goods’ (18/34)

a no de wan boen wan (i.e. prakseri) ma wan toemoesi

it NEG BE a good one (i.e. thought) but a very

‘it's not a good idea but a very bad one’

takroe wan (18/35)

bad one

Albitrouw Aurora (1896) (pp.15-16)

da moro bigi ipi foe den ben de heiden soema (19/16)

the more big heap of them TNS BE heathen people

‘the majority of them were heathens’

Makzien I (1902) (pp.1-3)

so wan hatti (...), disi de wan vijanti vo ala zondoe

such a heart (...) REL BE an enemy of all sins

‘the kind of heart that is an enemy of all sins’ (20/1-1)

da soema, disi (...), hem de wan gelukki soema reti reti  
 the person REL (...) he BE a happy person true true

‘the person who (...) is truly a happy person’ (20/1-2)

We, a no de wan toemoesi dom sani dan vo tan  
 Well, it NEG BE a very stupid thing then for stay

‘Well then, isn’t it a very foolish thing to stay faraway

farawei vo da Helpiman? (20/1-3)  
 faraway from the help-man?

from the Saviour?’

oen ben jeri (...), fa a de wan mooi plesie (20/2-1)  
 you TNS hear (...), how it BE a beautiful place

‘you’ve heard what a nice place it is’

en vo troe a de wan mooi plesi (20/2-2)  
 and for true it BE a beautiful place

‘and it sure is a nice place’

Bikasi da plesi de wan bigi sabana (20/2-3)  
 Because the place BE a big savannah

‘Because the place is a huge savannah’

a de wan bigi hoso di meki nanga pranga (20/2-4)  
 it BE a big house REL make with boards

‘it’s a big house that’s made of boards’

da hoso (...), di de wan mooi hoso toe (20/2-5)  
 the house (...) REL BE a beautiful house too

‘the house (...), which is a beautiful house as well’

da plesi de wan mooi plesi reti reti (20/3)  
 the place BE a beautiful place true true

‘it sure is a very nice place’

Helstone (1903) (pp.27-36)

Dem woortoe: voegoe (...) dee werkwoorden (21/28)

The words: to point (in masonry) BE verbs

‘The words to point etc. are verbs’

da woord ‘de’ (...) dee wan gezelschapswoord (21/29-1)

the word ‘de’ (...) BE a accompanying-word

‘the word ‘de’ (i.e. the aspect particle) is a word that goes along with ...

a kan dee so boen wan persoonlijk leki

it (i.e. the word mi) can BE so good a personal as

‘it may just as well be a personal as a possessive pronoun’

wan bezittelijk voornaamwoord (21/29-2)

a possessive pronoun



Da zin dee wan directezin (21/29-3)

The sentence BE a direct-sentence

‘The sentence is a simple sentence’

Te dem werkwoorden: habi (...) dee da

When the verbs habi ('to have') (...) BE the

‘When the verbs habi etc. are (part of) the predicate of a

gezegde vo wan zin dan... (21/29-4)

predicate of a sentence then ...

sentence, then ...’

Dati dee wan mooi tori (21/30-1)

That BE a beautiful story

‘That's a wonderful story’

Dem bezittel. vnw. dee dem woortoe, di de soori da

The poss. pron. BE the words REL ASP show the

‘Possessive pronouns are the words that indicate the owner

eigenaar vo wansani e.s.m. (21/30-2)

owner of a-thing etc. (en so moro)

of something, etc.’

da woord di dee na hem fesi no dee wan bezittelijk, ma

the word REL BE LOC its face NEG BE a possessive but

‘the word that precedes it (i.e. the aspect particle de) is

wan persoonlijk voornw. (21/31-1)

a personal pronoun

not a possessive but a personal pronoun’

dan a dee wan zelfstandig werkwoord (21/31-2)

then it BE a main verb

‘then it's a main verb’

alla soema dee zondaari (21/31-3)

all people BE sinners

‘everybody's a sinner’

Ma ‘dee’ da wan tegenwoordig deelwoord, te... (21/32-1)

But ‘dee’ BE a present participle when...

‘But dee (aspect marker) is a present participle, when ...’

‘Dee’ da wan hulpwerkwoord (21/32-2)

‘Dee’ BE an auxiliary

‘Dee (aspect marker) is an auxiliary’

dan a no dee wan hulpwerkwoord (21/33-1)

then it (i.e. dee) NEG BE an auxiliary

‘then it's not an auxiliary’

efi da sani dee so troe, ofoe efi a dee wan soso  
 whether the thing BE so true, or whether it BE a mere

‘whether it's really the case or just a wish’

wensi (21/33-2)  
 wish

dem kan dee enkelvoud ofoe meervoud (21/34)  
 they (i.e. pronouns) can be singular or plural

‘they're either singular or plural’

Makzien II (1913) (p. 51-52)

dem no ben sabi reti jete, san fri de (22/51)  
 they NEG TNS know right yet what freedom BE

‘they did not yet fully understand what freedom is’

Herskovits & Herskovits (1936) (pp. 150-160)

A kom teki hem bikasi a nengere fo paiman (23/158-1)  
 He come take him because he ø negroe for debt

‘He took him because he was a slave for the debt’

Bofru ben de d'retoro fo bank (23/158-2)  
 Buffalo TNS BE manager of bank

‘Buffalo was the bank manager’

Den ben de tu sisa (23/160-1)  
 They TNS BE two sisters

‘There were two sisters’

Mi man Dia na wa' tumusi moi man (23/160-2)  
 My male Deer BE a very handsome man

‘My Deer is a very handsome man’

Koenders (1946-1949) (pp. 138-140)

Wi ala di de pikin-pikin fu den nengre disi (24/138-1)

We all REL BE children-children of the negroes DEM

‘All of us who are children's children of these negroes’

Dati wi afo ben de srafu no de wan sani fu syen

That our ancestors TNS BE slaves NEG BE a thing for shame

‘That our forefathers were slaves is nothing to be ashamed of’ (24/138-2 & 24/138-3)

ma broko broko fu wan tra tongo a no de

but broken broken of an other language it NEG BE

‘but it isn't a broken variant of another language’

Dati de wan fu den reyde, di meki... (24/140)

That BE one of the reasons REL make ...

‘That's one of the reasons why ...’

Syen a de te wi frigiti wi afo (24/138-5)

Shame it BE when we forget our forefathers

‘It is shameful when we forget our forefathers’

**[Adjectival Predication]**Herlein (1718) (pp. 280-282)

My bon (1/280-1)

I good

‘I’m fine’

Jou bon toe? (1/280-2)

You good too?

‘Are you fine too?’

My belle wel (1/280-3)

I very well

‘I feel very well’

Jie no draei? (1/280-4)

You NEG dry?

‘Aren't you thirsty?’

Loeke mie Druije se hansum? (1/280-5)

Look my grapes? beautiful

‘See how beautiful my grapes are’

Mie jary no grandebon? (1/280-6)

My garden NEG very-good

‘Isn't my garden very nice?’

Jie no bon (1/281-1)

You NEG good

‘You're not nice (to me)’

Jie monbie toe moussie (1/281-2)

You greedy too much

‘You're very greedy’

Nepveu (1765) (pp. 280-282)

mi de boen (2/280-1)

I BE good

‘I’m fine’

jou boen toe? (2/280-2)

you good too?

‘are you fine too?’

mi de belle wel (or: belwel) (2/280-3)

I BE very well

‘I feel very well’

jou (or: joe) no drei (or: dreij) (2/280-4)

you NEG dry

‘aren't you thirsty?’

loeke mie Druije se hansom (or: mooi) (2/280-5)

look my grapes? beautiful

‘See how beautiful my grapes are’

mi Jarie no mooi (2/280-6)

my garden NEG beautiful

‘isn't my garden beautiful?’

jou (or: joe) no boen (2/281-1)

you NEG good

‘you're not nice (to me)’

jou (or: joe) monbie toe moussi (2/281-2)

you greedy too much

‘you're very greedy’

Van Dyk (c. 1770) (pp. 47-54)

Hoe san joe tan oppe likki joe dede (3/50-1)

What thing you stand up like you dead

‘Why are you acting as if you were dead?’

Joe buy joe lauw (3/50-2)

You boy you crazy

‘Are you out of your mind?’

da tem wan somma sikki anno mos kom na mastra (3/51)

the time a person sick he-NEG must come LOC master

‘when someone's ill, shouldn't he go to his master?’

a Bon mastra (3/52-1)

it good master



‘it's O.K. Sir’

Joe buy gi mi wan sopi mi weri alreddi (3/52-2)

You boy give me a drink I tired already

‘Boy, give me a drink, I'm tired already’

Schumann (1783) (pp. 45-55)

a de fulu tumussi, a de go passa abra (4/45)

it BE full too-much, it ASP go pass over

‘it (i.e. the glass) is too full, it's going to run over’

mi belle tranga (4/46)

my belly strong

‘I'm suffering from constipation’

a teki apankra, datti takki, a drungu (4/50-1)

he take apankra (i.e. liquor) that say, he drunk

‘he's been drinking apankra, that means: he's drunk’

datti krin na wi, dissi njusu Bakkra (4/50-2)  
that clear to us, REL use Bakratongo

‘that (word) is clear to us, who know Bakratongo’

datti morro krin, kaba ‘alla’ Ningre jeri datti  
that more clear, and all Negroes understand it

‘that (word) is clearer and all Negroes understand it’ (4/50-3)

ju no de so poti, ju habi bakka, ma mi no habi bakka  
you NEG BE so poor, you have back, but I NEG have back

‘you're not so bad, you have someone to support you, but I don't’ (4/53)

soutwatra-bakkra de safri, kriolo-bakkra ha tranga heddi  
salt-water-whites BE soft, creole-whites have strong head

‘“salt-water-whites” (i.e. those born Europe) are gentle, “creole-whites” are hard-hearted’ (4/55)

Stedman (1796) (passim)

Massera, we deade, we deade! (5/303)

Master, we dead, we dead!

‘Master, we're dead, we're dead (i.e. we shall die)!’

Weygandt (1798) (pp. 91-95)

A boen na mie foetroe datie mie sie joe (6/92-1)

It good LOC me for-true that I see you

‘It sure is good to see you’

A sa boen na mie foetroe (6/92-2)

It TNS good LOC me for-true

‘I will be very pleased with it’

Da stoepoe glatie foe troe (6/93)

The pavement slippery for true

‘The pavement is very slippery’

Diesie moro hey (6/94)

This (i.e. chair) more high

‘This one is higher’

Wennekers (1822) (pp. 1-12)

Joe no lobbi joe boen Tattà na Hemeli (...), disi dee

You NEG love your good father LOC Heaven (...) REL BE

‘Don't you love your good Father in Heaven who is better

boen morro leki alla-sani? (7/2)

good more than all-things?

than anything?’

Joe no dee sari na joe hatti foe alla joe zonde hede  
 You NEG BE sad LOC your heart for all your sins head

‘Aren't you sad because of all your sins?’ (7/3-1)

Mi dee sari: foetroe mi Masra! (7/3-2)

I BE sorry: for-true my master

‘I am truly sorry my Lord!’

Boen Gado! joe dee morro boen leki alla sani (7/4)

Good God! you BE more good than all things

‘Dear God! You are better than anything’

Joe nem moessoe dee Santa (7/5)

Your name must BE holy

‘Holy be thy name’

mi Gado! joe disi dee morro boen leki alla sani (7/10)

my God! you REL BE more good than all things

‘my God, you who are better than anything’

Luke (1829) (pp. 6-14)

vo da hede mi ben denke taki, a sa boen, mi lobbi

For that reason I TNS think say it MOD good, my beloved

‘That's why I thought it a good idea, my beloved Theofilus,

Theofilus, vo... (8/6-1)

Theofilus, to ...

to ...’

en foeloe tra soema sa blijti vo troe vo hem geboortoe

and many other people TNS happy for true for his birth

‘and many other people will rejoice at his birth’ )8/6-3)

Bikasi mi ouroe kaba (8/8-1)

Because I old already

‘Because I've grown old’

Hem sa grani, en dem sa kali hem... (8/10-1)

He (i.e. Christ) TNS great, and they TNS call him...

‘He will be great and he will be called...’

Cesaari (1836-1837) (pp. 292-298)

loekkoe fa a mangrie (10/292)

look how he thin

‘look how thin he is’

Awassi mi pooti, tokkoe na troe (10/298)

Although I poor, still it-is true

‘Although I'm poor, still it's true’

Helmig van der Vegt (1844) (pp. 36-43)

bikassi mi de siki pikienso (11/37-1)

because I BE ill a-little

‘because I don't feel very well’

Son de tranga kaba (11/37-2)

Sun BE strong already

‘The sun's already hot’

Joe no de boen? (11/41-1)

You NEG BE good

‘Are you not well?’

Mi de siki vo troe jette (11/41-2)

I BE ill for true still

‘I'm still very ill’

Joe no de so siki, no habi fredde vo datti (11/41-3)

You NEG BE so ill, NEG have fear for that

‘You're not that ill; you don't have to be afraid of that’

Den naauw toemoesi (11/43-1)

They (i.e. the shoes) tight too-much

‘They're too tight’

Toe kousoe dikki vo troe toe (11/43-2)

Two stockings thick for true too

‘Two pairs of stockings is very thick indeed’

Da hili no hei noffo (11/43-3)

The heel NEG high enough

‘The heels aren't high enough’

Da leri de boen na joe? (11/43-4)

The leather BE good LOC you?

‘Is the leather O.K. with you?’

Grammatik (1854) (pp. 5-9)

Koning dede (12/5-1)

King dead

‘The king is dead’

Da man, nanga da oeman, nanga da pikien dede (12/5-2)

The man and the woman and the child dead

‘The man, the woman and the child are dead’

Koning wefi dede (12/9-1)

King wife dead

‘The king's wife is dead’

Mi pikien Masra dede (12/9-2)

My little master dead

‘My young master is dead’

da strati doti (12/9-3)

the street dirty

‘the street is dirty’

Baána dieri (12/5-3)

Banana expensive

‘Bananas are expensive’

Focke (1855) (pp.1-7)

A boen (13/1)

It good

‘It's O.K.’

Alwassi fa Jéngi droéngoe, tókoe a sa sabi hem hamáka

Even-if how Indian drunk, still he MOD know his hammock

‘No matter how drunk, an Indian will still recognize his hammock’ (13/3)

Arén brakka (13/5)

Rain black

‘It's going to rain’

Wullschlägel (1856) (pp.1-8)

da boom dede kabá (14/2)

the tree dead already

‘the tree is dead’

taki a no troe (14/3)

say it NEG true



‘say it isn't true’

mi labraka (14/4)

I worn-out

‘I'm worn out’

mi hatti benawtoe (14/7-2)

my heart fearful

‘I'm afraid’

mi banga (14/7-3)

I afraid

‘I'm afraid’

King Berichten (1864-1870) (p.16)

We, jere now fa den heiden kondre libi de so ebi  
Well, hear now how the heathen country lives BE so heavy

‘Well, listen now how hard life is in the heathen villages’ (15/16-1)

Ma foe den boesi kondre moro ebi libi de (15/16-2)  
But of the bush country more heavy life BE

‘But life is harder in the bushland’

Alwasi na boesi kondre a de moro ogri, ma tog (15/16-3)  
Although LOC bush country it BE more bad, but still ...

‘Although it is worse in the bushland, still ...’

King Maripaston (1891-1894) (p.51)

Ke mi lobi helpiman, kibri wi foe ala den skin lostoe  
Oh my beloved help-man, protect us from all the body lusts

‘Oh my beloved saviour, protect us from all the physical

di no boen na joe hai (16/51)

REL NEG good LOC your eyes

desires that you don't approve of’

Albitrouw Anake (1894) (p.28): no dataKraag (1894-1896) (p.34)

Meki den disi kan si taki da makti èn tranga foe joe  
Make the DEM can see say the power and strength of you

‘Show these people that your power and your strength are

bigi pasa marki (18/34)

big pass mark

beyond comparison’

Albitrouw Aurora (1896) (p.15)

We, da trobi ben bigi gi den so den ben begi wan

Well, the trouble TNS big give them so till they TNS beg

‘Well, their disagreement was so serious that they asked a

leriman na foto foe kon koti da trobi gi den

missionary LOC city for come cut the trouble give them

missionary in the city to come and settle it’ (19/15)

Makzien I (1902) (p.1): no data

Helstone (1903) (pp.27-30)

Nowan soema boen (21/27-1)

NEG-one person good

‘No man is good’

No wan soema dee boen (21/27-2)

NEG one person BE good

‘Nobody is feeling well’

No wan soema boen (21/27-3)

NEG one person good

‘No man is good’

Mi dee boen (21/27-4)

I BE good

‘I’m O.K.’

Mi boen (21/27-5)

I good

‘I am good’

soema (...), di no dee tevrede (21/27-6)

someone (...) REL NEG BE satisfied

‘someone who's not satisfied’

soema (...), di dee siki (21/28)

someone (...) REL BE ill

‘someone who's ill’

bika da taki no dee krin nofo (21/29)

because the say NEG BE clear enough

‘because the expression isn't clear enough’

Makzien II (1913) (p.51)

Gadowroko de bigi vo troe! (22/51-1)

God-work BE big for true

‘God's work is truly great!’

Wroko vo slavoetem ben hebi, a pina soema soso!

Work of slavetime TNS heavy, it make-suffer people only

‘In the days of slavery work was hard, it only made people suffer!’ (22/51-2)

Wroko na fitem de switi, a habi blessi, a habi

Work LOC free-time BE sweet, it have blessing, it have

‘Since abolition work is sweet, it brings blessings, it

paiman! (22/51-3)

reward

brings a reward’

Herskovits & Herskovits (1936) (pp.150-152)

A bo' (23/150-1)

It good

‘It's O.K.’

Mi weifi nanga mi p'kin 'e siki ogri, ogri (23/150-2)

My wife and my children BE ill ugly, ugly

‘My wife and children are terribly, terribly sick’

Kakalaka taki, ‘Mi dede! Fa mi de go du?’ (23/150-3)

Cockroach say: ‘I dead! How I ASP go do?’

‘Cockroach said: “I am a dead one! What shall I do?”’

Hontiman, yu kan kom na ini mi hoso, ma yu

Hunter-man, you can come LOC inside my house, but your

‘Hunter, you can come in my house, but your feet are

futu doti (23/152-1)

feet dirty

dirty’

Hontiman frede (23/152-2)

Hunter-man afraid

‘Hunter was afraid’

Dan mi sa go taigi Konim, taki, na siki, Tigri siki, a dede

Then I TNS go tell King say is ill Tiger ill, he die

‘Then I will go and tell the King that Tiger has been very ill and has died’  
(23/152-3)

Koenders (1946-1949) (p.138): no data

**[Existence/Location/Possession]**

Herlein (1718) (pp.280-282): no data

Nepveu (1765) (pp.280-282): no data

Van Dyk (c.1770) (pp.47-75)

Mastra mi de Mastra kalle mi (3/47)

Master I BE Master call me

‘Here I am, Master; did you call me?’

hoe ply a de (3/49-1)

what place he BE

‘where is he?’

Mastra Kiejo de lange ziki man (3/49-2)

Master Kiejo BE with sick men

‘Master, there's Kiejo with the people who are ill’

Mastra zopi no de morre na battra (3/52)

Master, drink NEG BE more LOC bottle

‘Master, there's no more liquor in the bottle’

kaba jam jam no de noefe na pranasi (3/56)

but eat eat NEG BE enough LOC plantation

‘but there's not enough food on the plantation’

hoe py bassia? (3/63)

what place overseer ø

‘where's the overseer?’

Schumann (1783) (pp.45-93)

ju habi bakka, datti takki: ju habi somma, disa de vo ju

you have back, that say: you have people REL BE for you

‘ju habi bakka means: you have someone to support you’ (4/53-1)

da somma de na mi bakka (4/53-2)

the person BE LOC my back

‘that person is after me (i.e. looking for trouble)’

a de na bakkasei (4/54)

he BE LOC back-side

‘he's at the back (of the house)’

a de (4/60-1)

he BE

‘there he is’ (or: it's there, it exists)

a ben de (4/60-2)

he TNS BE

‘he was there’



wan shippi de na bilò (4/63)

a ship BE LOC below

‘there's a ship downstream (i.e. at the mouth of the river)’

a dea (4/78)

he ø here

‘he's here’

datti de vo dem (4/81)

that BE of/for them

‘that belongs to them’

drisanni de dissi mi hangri va kissi, kaba mi no kann

three-things BE REL I hungry for get, but I NEG can

‘there are three things I would like to have, but which I

kissi (4/91)

get

can't have’

Stedman (1796) (passim): no data

Weygandt (1798) (pp.91-109)

Wan Masra dee na doro (6/91-1)

A Master BE LOC door

‘There's a gentleman at the door’

Wan soema dee foe takie nanga joe (6/91-2)

A person BE for talk with you

‘There's someone who wants to talk to you’

Joe ben takie gie em datie mie dee na hosò (6/91-3)

You TNS say give him that I BE LOC house

‘Did you tell him I'm in?’

A dee na foorhoso (6/91-4)

He BE LOC hall

‘He's in the hall’

Mie no sa dee na joe pasie? (6/92-1)

I NEG MOD BE LOC your way

‘Am I not intruding?’

Soema dée diesie dee aksie na joe (6/92-2)

People BE REL ASP ask LOC you

‘There are people asking for you’

Da foe oe soema pletie diesja, Da foe mie

Is of/for what person plate this-here ø? It-is of/for me

‘Whose plate is this? It's mine’ (6/94-1)

Mie deeja heelie boen (6/94-2)

I ø here very good

‘I’m quite alright here (i.e. in this seat)’

Déjà da wan boen plesie (6/94-3)

Here BE a good place

‘Here’s a good place (for you to sit)’

Dee breede deeja (6/95)

There bread ø here

‘There’s your bread!’

Da deeja da da winklie foe Masra G? (6/105)

Is here BE the shop of Master G.?

‘Is this where Mr. G.’s shop is?’

Wennekers (1822) (pp.1-49)

Wi Tattà, joe disi dee na Hemel! (7/5-1)

Our Father, you REL BE LOC Heaven

‘Our Father, who art in heaven’

Joe wanni moessoe dee na gron tappo, so leki na Hemel

Your want must BE LOC ground top, so like LOC Heaven

‘Your wish be obeyed on earth as it is in heaven’ (7/5-2)

joe dee na blessi morro leki alla oema, è na blessi

you BE LOC blessing more than all women and LOC blessing

‘You are blessed more than any other woman, and blessed is

dee da pikien va joe bele, Jesus (7/6)

BE the child of your belly, Jesus

Jesus the child of your womb'

Meki wi begi (...) foe den disi dee na nootoe, na  
Make we pray (...) for them REL BE LOC distress, LOC

'Let us pray for those who are in distress, who are ill,  
zieki, na trobbi (7/12-1)  
illness, LOC trouble

who have problems'

Meki wi begi (...) foe den disi ondro wi hanoë (7/12-2)  
Make we pray (...) for them REL  $\emptyset$  under our hands

'Let us pray for those for whom we are responsible'

Excusie morro no kan dee (7/16)  
Excuse more NEG can BE

'There's no more excuse'

alla sani disi mi habi, alla sani disi va mi joe ben  
all things REL I have, all things REL  $\emptyset$  of me you TNS

'everything I have and everything I own, you gave to me'

gi datti na mi (7/24)

give that LOC me

Luke (1829) (pp.6-38)

Datem di Herodes ben de koning vo Judakondre, wan domine

The-time when Herod TNS BE king of Judea, a priest

‘When Herod was king of Judea, there was a priest of the

ben de vo da speli vo Abia, a nem Zakarias (8/6-1)

TNS BE of the lineage of Abia, he be-called Zakarias

lineage of Abia; his name was Zakarias’

en hem wefi ben de vo dem oeman-pikien vo Aaron, a

and his wife TNS BE from the woman-children of Aron, she

‘and his wife was one of the daughters of Aron; her name

nem Elisabeth (8/6-2)

be-called Elizabeth

was Elizabeth’

We, mi de na mi Masra hanoe (8/10-1)

Well, I BE LOC my Master hands

‘Well, I am at my Lord's mercy’

En blesi moe de nanga da pikien toe, disi de na ini

And blessing must BE with the child too, REL BE LOC inside

‘And blessed be the child, that is inside your womb!’

joe bele! (8/10-2)

your belly

En loekoe! joe sisa Elisabet de nanga bele toe na

And look! your sister Elizabeth BE with belly too LOC

‘And look! Even your sister Elizabeth in her old age is  
hem ouroe jari srefi (8/10-4)  
her old year even  
pregnant’

Bikasi no wansani de, disi Gado no kan doe (8/10-5)  
Because NEG one-thing BE REL God NEG can do

‘Because there's nothing God can't do’

Fa dati kan de, di mi no ben teki man jete? (8/10-6)  
How that can BE, since I NEG TNS take man yet?

‘How is that possible (i.e. to be pregnant), since I haven't been with a man yet?’

Tog no wan soema de na joe heeli famili, disi habi  
Still NEG one person BE LOC your whole family REL have

‘But there's nobody in your whole family with that name’

da nem (8/12-1)

that name

A plati foeloe boen goedoe gi dem poti soema, di

He distribute many good goods give the poor people REL

‘He hands out many good gifts to the poor people who are

de nanga hangri (8/12-2)

BE with hunger

hungry’

We, di dem de dapee (na Betlehem), da tem ben kisi,

Well, when they BE there (LOC Bethlehem), the time TNS arrive

‘Well, when they were there (in Bethlehem), the time came for

vo a meki (8/14-1)

for she deliver

her to deliver’

We, na da srefi buurti som herder ben de na

Well, LOC the same vicinity some shepherds TNS BE LOC

‘Well, there were some shepherds nearby in the fields who

sabana, disi wakti dem meti dapee na neti (8/14-2)

savannah REL watch their animals there LOC night

were watching their flock during the night’

Maria (...) disi ben de nanga bele (8/14-3)

Mary (...) REL TNS BE with belly

‘Mary, who was pregnant’

vo di a ben de vo David hoson nanga famili (8/14-4)

for since he TNS BE of/from David house and family

‘because he belonged to the house and family of David’

We, efi joe wani anbegi mi, wantem ala

Well, if you want worship me (i.e. Satan) immediately all

‘Well, if you agree to worship me all this will be yours

dasani sa de vo joe (8/26)

the-thing TNS BE for/of you

at once’

en a seni mi, vo mi dresi dem, disi de nanga broko hatti

and he send me for me cure them REL BE with broken heart

‘and he sent me to heal them who have a broken heart’ (8/28)

We, a go na ini wan sipi, disi ben de vo Simon (8/32)

Well, he go LOC inside a boat REL TNS BE of Simon

‘Well, he stepped into a boat that belonged to Simon’



Blesi vo oen potiman, bikasi Gadokondre de vo oenoe!  
 Blessing for you poor-men, because God-country BE of you

‘You be blessed, poor people, because God's kingdom is yours!’ (8/38)

Cesaari (1836-1837) (pp. 292-298)

Da ouloe jaari go agéen, Da njoe wan de na doro (10/294)  
 The old year go again, The new one BE LOC door

‘The old year has gone again, the new year is standing at the door’

Helmig van der Vegt (1844) (pp. 36-48)

Djosno mi sa de na joe bakka (11/38)  
 Just-now I TNS BE LOC your back

‘I'll be following you right now’

Hoe pleh da boi de, datti a no kon, so mi kali hem?  
 What place the boy BE, that he NEG come, so I call him

‘Where's the boy, since he doesn't come when I call him?’ (11/39-1)

Masra! mi deja (11/39-2)

Master! I ø here

‘Master, here I am!’

A de dejaso Masra mi miti hem na pasi (11/43)  
 He BE here-so Master I meet him LOC way

‘Here he is, Master; I met him on the way’

Grammatik (1854) (pp. 5-22)

No boi stoon de dapee (12/12)  
 NEG boy (i.e. not few) stones BE there

‘There are a lot of rocks over there’

Foeloesoema ben de dapee (12/14)

Many people TNS BE there

‘A lot of people were there’

Hoemenitron joe ben de na bakrakondre? (12/16)

How-many-turns you TNS BE LOC white-man's-country?

‘How many times have you been in Europe?’

Focke (1855) (pp. 1-28)

Ade (13/1)

he-BE

‘it exists’ (or: he's there; here it is)

Anansi de na mi foétoe (13/4)

Anansi (the spider) BE LOC my leg

‘My leg has gone to sleep’

a de nánga bére (13/10-1)

she BE with belly

‘she's pregnant’

Wan Mamà ben de (13/10-2)

A Mama TNS BE

‘Once there was an old woman’

Di a ben de nánga bigi bére (13/11)

When she TNS BE with big belly

‘When she was pregnant’

Dà pikien de na bobbi éte (13/13)

The child BE LOC breast still

‘The child is still being breast-fed’

A no boi soéma de dapé (13/14)

Is NEG boy people BE there

‘There's a big crowd’

Wullschlägel (1856) (pp. 1-32)

mi de na bakra ondro (14/3-1)

I BE LOC white-man under

‘I'm dependent on the white man’

a no de na mi wani (14/3-2)

it NEG BE LOC my wish

‘it doesn't depend on me’

helpi no de (14/3-3)

help NEG BE

‘there's no relief’

a no ben de (14/6)

he NEG TNS BE

‘he was absent’

mi hatti de na tapo tapo (14/7)

my heart BE LOC top top

‘my heart is in my mouth’

a de vo mi (14/12-1)

it BE of me

‘it's mine’

mi de nanga djompo-hatti (14/12-2)

I BE with jump-heart

‘I'm scared to death’

mi dia (14/17)

I ø here

‘I’m there (i.e. I’m present)’

King Berichten (1864-1870) (pp. 16-18)

Ma tog, na den pranasi, pe heiden soema de,

But still, LOC the plantations where heathen people BE,

‘But also on the plantations where heathens are living

den abi da srefi fasi (15/16-1)

they have the same custom

they have the same (evil) practices’

We, foe heiden maniri fansortoe takroe libi de,

Well, of heathen customs different evil lives BE,

‘Well, there are a lot of different evil practices connected

foeroe-foeroe (15/16-2)

many-many

with the heathen way of life’

Ma tog, da moro bigi sari moe de foe Masra srefi

But still, the more big sorrow must be for Master self

‘But still, the greatest sorrow must be the Lord's’ (15/16-3)

na mindri foe nengre foeroe wisiman de (15/17-1)

LOC middle of negroes many witches BE

‘there are many witches among the negroes’

Te na ini foto dja srefi afoe soema de nanga den

Till LOC inside city here even half people BE with these

‘But even in this city some people still have these ideas’

prakseri ete (15/17-2)

ideas still

Fansortoe wisiman de (15/18)

Different witches BE

‘There are all kinds of witches’

King Maripaston (1891-1894) (pp. 51-53)

Ke, loekoe fa mi pôti hati de nanga sari foe na

Oh, look how my poor heart BE with sorrow for the

‘Oh, look how my poor heart grieves for the way I live

libi foe mi na Maripaston (16/51-1)

life of me LOC Maripaston

at Maripaston’

En doro nomo mi hati de nanga skreki foe na kiri  
 And through no-more my heart BE with fear for the kill

‘And all the time my heart fears the murderous practices

fasi foe Noah (16/51-2)

practice of Noah

of Noah (King's half-brother)’

En mi nanga mi wefi Magdarena èn den pikin foe wi de na  
 And me and my wife Magdalena and the children of us BE LOC

‘And me and my wife Magdalena and our children live a life

wan skreki libi toe, kaba mi habi wan gran Kownoe (16/52)

a fear life too, but I have a great King

of fear, but I have a great King’

Albitrouw Anake (1894) (pp.28-30)

Gwentapoe dati de na leti anoe sé foe da liba (17/28)

Gwentapoe that BE LOC right hand side of the river

‘Gwentapoe is at the right side of the river’

Slee na bilosé èn Kambaloewa na oposé(17/30-1 & 2)

Slee ø LOC below-side and Kambaloewa ø LOC up-side

‘Slee is downstream and Kambaloewa is upstream’

Kraag (1894-1896) (pp.34-36)

en da srefi pikin dati ben de na dopoe leri (18/34-1)

and the same child DEM TNS BE LOC baptism learn

‘and that same child was being taught in order to be baptized’

...taki no wan sani de disi joe no kan doe (18/34-2)

...say NEG one thing BE REL you NEG can do

‘...that there is nothing you can't do’

son foe den Christen èn heiden, disi djaso de taki  
some of the Christians and heathens, REL ø here ASP say

‘some of the Christians and heathens around here are

kaba taki... (18/35)

already say...

already saying that...’

Albitrouw Aurora (1896) (pp.15-17)

Dape foeroe kristen ben de (19/16-1)

There many Christians TNS BE

‘There (in that village) were many Christians’



En wan ipi soema ben dape, omtrenti wan 20 soema  
 And a heap people TNS  $\emptyset$  there, about a 20 people

‘A lot of people were there, about twenty’ (19/16-2)

Makzien I (1902) (pp.1-4)

Mi no frede no wan ogri; bikasi joe de nanga mi (20/2-1)  
 I NEG fear NEG an evil; because you BE with me

‘I fear no evil, because you're with me’

en da hoso vo da driktoro de na tapo wan pikin hei  
 and the house of the manager BE LOC top a small height

‘and the manager's house was on a hill’ (20/2-2)

dem man, disi den wefi vo dem de nanga dem na boesi  
 the men, REL the wives of them BE with them LOC bush

‘the men whose wives are with them in the bush’ (20/2-3)

Wan muzikanti-hoso de toe na mindri da sabana (20/3)  
 A musician-house BE too LOC middle the savannah

‘There's also a bandstand in the middle of the savannah’

Ja no wan placer de, disi no de na ini da fasi disi  
 Yes NEG one goldfield BE, REL NEG BE LOC the manner DEM

‘Yes, there's not one goldfield without these (evil) practices’ (20/4)

Helstone (1903) (pp.27-41)

joe wensi soema moe dee dia, di dee siki (21/28-1)  
 you wish someone must BE here, REL BE ill

‘you want someone to be here who's ill’

Dem werkwoorden, di de teki hulpwerkwoorden neem  
 The verbs, REL ASP take auxiliaries be-called

‘Verbs that take auxiliaries are called main verbs, because  
“zelfstandige werkwoorden”, vodi dem kan dee dem wawan  
“main verbs”, because they can BE they one-one  
they can occur on their own in a sentence’

na ini wan taki (21/29)  
LOC inside a say

Da man di dee na ini da wenkri, a weeri wan hatti,  
The man REL BE LOC inside the shop, he wear a hat,

‘The man in the shop is wearing a hat that's too big’

di bigi vo hem hede (21/30-1)  
REL big for his head

Wansoema dee, rai soema dati (21/30-2)

A-person BE, guess who ø that

‘Someone's there, guess who it is’

Makzien II (1913) (pp.51-52)

Ma trawan de toe, disi kom verdwale! (22/52-1)

But other-ones BE too, REL come go-astray!

‘But there are others, who have gone astray!’

So soema ben de toe, disi ben lasi dem tem vo soso

Such people TNS BE too, REL TNS loose their time for nothing

‘There were also those who wasted their time just like that’ (22/52-2)

Trawan de, disi ben habi wan krin verstand vo da

Other-ones BE, REL TNS have a clear understanding of the

‘There are others who had a clear understanding of this

fri en dem njoe verpligti vo fri (22/52-3)

free and the new obligations of free

freedom (i.e. emancipation) and the obligations it entails’

Alwasi dem no winni foeloe, jete dem tanapoe de na

Although they NEG win much, still they stand-up BE LOC

‘They may not make a big profit, but they're standing on

tapo dem eigen foetoe (22/52-4)

top their own feet

their own feet’

Herskovits & Herskovits (1936) (pp.150-166)

Tigri, wan pina de nanga mi (23/150)

Tiger, a suffering BE with me

‘Tiger, I'm having a hard time’

Tigri dia (23/152)

Tiger ø here

‘Tiger's here’

Mek' 'a moni ta, taki mi pe Kakaforu! (23/154-1)

Make the money wait, tell me where Kakaforu ø

‘Let the money wait. Tell me where Cock is!’

Kaka de na ondro bedi (23/154-2)

Cock BE LOC under bed

‘Cock is under the bed’

Mek' 'a moni ta', taig' mi, pe den de (23/154-3)

Make the money wait, tell me where they BE

‘Let the money wait. Tell me where they are’

na beki watra di de na ondro na bom (23/154-4)  
 LOC-the basin water REL BE LOC under the tree

‘into the basin of water that was under the tree’

Ba Tigri na Ba Konkoni ben de (23/158)  
 Brother Tiger and Brother Rabbit TNS BE

‘There were Ba Tiger and Ba Rabbit’

Koenders (1946-1949) (pp.138-142)

suma pe a no yu pe, sor' mi pe di  
 people places BE NEG your places, show me where those

‘abodes of others are not yours; show me where your

f' yu de! (24/140)

of you BE!

own are!’

Den matrosi, di ben de srafu tu, ben de tu na ini  
 The sailors, REL TNS BE slaves too, TNS BE too LOC inside

‘The sailors, who were also slaves, were in the plot

na barki (24/142-1)

the plot

(i.e. a conspiracy) as well’

wan skuna, di ben de fu en masra (24/142-2)  
 a schooner, REL TNS BE of his master

‘a schooner, that belonged to his master’

**[Adverbial/Infinitival Complementation]**Herlein (1718) (pp.280-282)

Oe fasse nam vor joe Mastre? (1/281)

What fashion name for your Master ø?

‘What is your master's name?’

Nepveu (1765) (pp.280-282)

Hoe fasi nem for joe Mastre? (2/281)

What fashion name for your Master ø?

‘What is your master's name?’

Van Dyk (c.1770) (pp.47-65)

Tanki mastra a noefe (3/59)

Thank-you (i.e. for being whipped!) master it ø enough

‘Thank you, master; it's enough’

Schumann (1783) (pp.45-75): no dataStedman (1796) (passim): no dataWeygandt (1798) (pp.91-102)

N'jam n'jam klarie? (6/93-1)

Eat eat ø ready?

‘Dinner's ready?’

A no latie jetee (6/93-2)

It NEG ø late yet

‘It's not late yet’

Da n'am n'jam sa klarie na ienie wan affoe joeroe

The eat eat TNS ø ready LOC inside a half hour

‘Dinner will be ready in half an hour’ (6/94-1)

Pardon mie a no dee so (6/94-2)

Pardon me it NEG BE so

‘Pardon me, it's not like you say’

Dan joe lobie foe dee joe wawan (6/99)

Then you love for BE you one-one

‘You like to be all by yourself then’

Oe latie joe memree wie dee? (6/101-1)

what late you think we BE?

‘What time do you think it is?’

Oe latie dan? (6/101-2)

What late (it/we) ø then

‘What time is it then?’

Wie sa dee na aiti joeroe (6/101-3)

We MOD BE LOC eight hours

‘It must be around eight o'clock’

A latie so kaba? (6/102)

It ø late so already

‘Is it that late already?’

Wennekers (1822) (pp.1-30)

alla sani moessoe dee foe da glorie va Gado na nem va

all things must BE for the glory of God LOC name of

‘everything (i.e. all our acts) must be for the glory of God

wi Lifi Masra Jesus Christus (7/5-1)

our Sweet Lord Jesus Christ

in the name of our sweet Lord, Jesus Christ’

Masra dee nanga joe (7/6)

Master BE with you

‘The Lord is with you’

Wi Masra nanga joe (7/18)

Our Master ø with you

‘Our Lord is with you’

Luke (1829) (pp.6-25)

Masra de nanga joe (8/8)

Master BE with you

‘The Lord is with you’

Bikasi da hanoe vo Masra ben de nanga hem (8/12)

Because the hand of Master TNS BE with him



‘Because the hand of the Lord was with him’

Glori moese de vo Gado tee na tapo (8/16)

Glory must BE for God till LOC top

‘There be glory for God in heaven’

en da gnade vo Gado ben de nanga hem (8/18)

and the grace of God TNS BE with him

‘and God's grace was with him’

da hattibron, disi de vo kom (8/22)

the heart-burn, REL BE for come

‘the wrath, which is about to come’

En a ben de vo si, fa santa Jeje zakka kom na

And it TNS BE for see how holy Ghost TNS descend come LOC

‘And one could see how the Holy Ghost came down in the shape

ondro leki wan duivi (8/24)

under like a pigeon

of a pigeon'

Cesaari (1836-1837) (pp.292-298): no data

Helmig van der Vegt (1844) (pp.36-43)

A de fo horro vo wakka (11/37-1)

It BE four hours for walk

'It's a four hours walk'

Wi sa de na aiti horro (11/37-2)

We MOD BE LOC eight hours

'It must be around eight o'clock'

A farra toemoesi (11/37-3)

It ø far too-much

'It's too far'

Njam njam klari (11/38)

Eat eat ø ready

'Dinner's ready'

A de vo datti hedde dissi va mi moesoe tan? (11/39)

It BE for that reason DEM of me must wait

'That's why mine (i.e. my order) has to wait?'

Go loekoe hoe meni horro wi de (11/42-1)

Go look what many hours we BE

'Go see what time it is'

A de pikien morro sebi horro (11/42-2)

It BE little more seven hours

‘It's almost seven o'clock’

Da ben toe horro, dissi mi go slibi (11/42-3)

It TNS  $\emptyset$  two hours, when I go sleep

‘It was two o'clock when I went to sleep’

Go loekoe dan iffi den sa klari noja so kaba (11/42-4)

Go look then if they MOD  $\emptyset$  ready now so already

‘Go see then if they're perhaps finished by now’

Grammatik (1854) (pp.5-16): no data

Focke (1855) (pp.1-18)

A de baäde (13/6)

It BE plenty

‘There's plenty of it’

A de na brákka (13/17-1)

She BE LOC black

‘She's in mourning’

A de nánga hem brára (13/17-2)

He BE with his brother

‘He's drunk’

Wullschlägel (1856) (pp.1-20)

sweri taki a no de so (14/5)

swear say it NEG BE so

‘to deny something’

a no de vo verandre (14/7)

it NEG BE for change

‘it can't be changed’

so a de (14/8)

so it BE

‘quite so’

a de leki mi si boom (14/9)

it BE like I see trees

‘it is as if I'm seeing trees’

now a de na wi (14/10)

now it BE LOC us

‘now it's up to us’

dati no kan de, kweti kweti (14/11-1)

that NEG can BE, quite quite

‘that won't do at all’

dati no mag de (14/11-2)

that NEG may BE

‘that won't do’

da dati vanoodoe (14/13)

is that  $\emptyset$  necessary

‘that's what it's all about’

a de vo mi famili (14/17)

he BE of my family

‘he's my relative’

a de na wroko (14/18-1)

he BE LOC work

‘he's at work’

de na wan poti gebrek-fasi (14/18-2)

BE LOC a poor want-fashion

‘to be very poor’

de na wan mofina fasi (14/18-3)  
BE LOC a poor-person fashion

‘to be very poor’

a de na hai jete (14/19)  
he BE LOC eyes yet

‘he's still up (i.e. awake)’

King Berichten (1864-1870) (pp.16-17): no data

King Maripaston (1891-1894) (pp.51-52): no data

Albitrouw Anake (1894) (pp.28-29)

Da tori foe Anake de so: ... (17/28)  
The story of Anake BE so: ...

‘The story about Anake is as follows: ...’

Den taki: we, san de foe doe dan? (17/29-1)  
They say: well, what BE for do then

‘They asked: well, what's the matter (i.e. what's wrong)?’

So da gwentì èn bribi foe ala heiden Djoeka de(17/29-2)  
So the custom and belief of all heathen Ndjuka's BE

‘hat's the custom and belief of all heathen Ndjuka's’

Kraag (1894-1896) (pp.34-35)

We, so den doe so leki da wet ofoe gwentì foe den de  
Well, so they do so like the law or custom of them BE

‘So they did as their law or custom tells them’ (18/35)

Albitrouw Aurora (1896) (pp.15-16)

Dati ben de foe si troe na en fesi (19/16-1)  
That TNS BE for see true LOC his face

‘One could see it clearly in his face’

Kapten ofasi, fa a de joe ben doe joe pligti, joe koti  
Captain how, how it BE, you TNS do your duty, you cut

‘Captain, how are things, did you do your duty, did you  
da presi? (19/16-2)  
the place?

chop the place?’

Makzien I (1902) (pp.1-3)

Dem kampoe vo dem wrokoman, dem dati no de vo pranga; dem  
The camps of the workmen, the DEM NEG BE of boards; they

‘The workmen's huts are not made of boards; they're made

de vo wiwiri (20/2-1 & 20/2-2)

BE of leaves

of leaves'

Helstone (1903) (pp.27-31)

Na ini so taki leki disi, da woord 'dati' no

LOC inside such say like this the word 'dati' (that) NEG

'In a sentence like this the word dati is not visibly

dee vo si, ma tog a dee vo verstaa (21/28-1 & 21/28-2)

BE for see, but still it BE for understand

present, but it should be (tacitly) understood'

now, (na da tem di wi dee) (21/28-3)

now, (LOC the time REL we BE)

'now, in the present time'

Efi wi dee (so fara) vo lobbi makandra, boen vo wi(21/38)

If we BE (so far) for love each-other, good for us

'If we are capable of loving each other, that's good for us'

Som werkwoorden no dee vo verdrage da gezelschaps 'de'

Some verbs NEG BE for tolerate the accompanying de

'Some verbs don't get the aspect particle de' (21/31-1)

So leki fa mi dee, no trobi mi (21/31-2)

So like how I BE, NEG trouble me

'Don't trouble me right now'

Dia a dee krin vo si, dati da woord 'de' no dee vo

Here it BE clear for see, that the word de NEG BE for



‘Here one can clearly see that the word de is not isolated’

hem wawan (21/31-3 & 21/31-4)

its one-one

so dati da ‘e’

so that the ‘e’ (i.e. the aspect particle; variant of ‘de’)

‘so that you can always only hear the “e”’

wawan dee vo jeeri allatem (21/31-5)

only BE for hear all-time

mi dee vo joe speli (21/31-6)

I BE of your lineage

‘I belong to your clan’

a kan dee (21/31-7)

it can BE

‘it may be so’

mi dee sondro wroko (21/31-8)

I BE without work

‘I’m out of work’

Makzien II (1913) (p.51)

wi kondre en (...) wi piple so leki fa a de nojaso

our country and (...) our people so like how it BE now

‘our country and our people, as they are now’ (22/51)

Herskovits & Herskovits (1936) (pp.150-160)

A bo', mi klari gi yu, ma sidon pikinso (23/150)

It good, I ø ready give you, but sit-down a-little

‘O.K., I’m ready for you, but sit down a little’

'A so a pikin, 'a so a sa ta. Na so hem mama na hem

Is so he small, is so he TNS stay. Is so his mama and his

‘Little as he is, so he will remain. His mother and his

papa (23/158)

papa ø

father are like that’

So langa yu no ter' homeni na asisi de, mi no ka' gi'

So long you NEG count how-many the ashes BE, I NEG can give

‘As long as you don't count how many ashes there are, I can't

'a moni baka (23/160)

the money back

give back the money’

Koenders (1946-1949) (pp.138-142)

Dati na so (24/142)

That BE so

‘That's true’

**[Comparison]**

Herlein (1718) (pp.280-282): no data

Nepveu (1765) (pp.280-282): no data

Van Dyk (c.1770) (pp.1-112)

Joe jam morre metti liki briddi (3/27)

You eat more meat than bread

‘You eat more meat than bread’

Da heri no kan kissi morre bon misi liki dissi

The gentleman NEG can get more good miss than REL

‘This gentleman cannot have a better bride than the

a za kissi (3/33)

he TNS get

one he is going to have’

Mi jam morre likki joe (3/40)

I eat more than you

‘I eat more than you do’

Joe no de morre bon likki na disi manmatim (3/42)

You not BE more good than LOC this morning

‘Aren't you feeling better now than you were this morning?’

Ai mi slibi morre likki drie uri tem (3/41)

Yes I sleep more than three hours time

‘Yes, I've been sleeping for more than three hours’

mie dee more zatte likki tare drinki hosse (3/46)

I BE more? (short?) than other drink houses

‘my tavern is cheaper than the other ones’

Bassia fom trawan gi da homan morre liki joe  
Overseer beat the-other give the woman more than you

‘Overseer, give the other woman a better beating than  
gi da fossiwan (3/48)  
give the first-one

you gave the first one’

jou moese fom dem morre likkie joe doe (3/53)  
you must beat them more than you do

‘you should beat them more than you're doing’

zensi a de na pranasi a habi morre likki drie ten  
since he BE LOC plantation he have more than three time

‘since he came to the plantation he had more than thirty  
tien homan kaba (3/65)  
ten women already

women already’

homan de na hosse habbe alletem morre bon lieke fiele homan  
 women be LOC house have always more good than field women

‘domestic slaves are always better off than field slaves’ (3/66)

morre liki toe ten tien go we na bossi (3/79)  
 more than two time ten go away LOC bush

‘more than twenty have fled into the bush’

da gron no mosse morre biki liki wan hondert na  
 the ground not must more big than one hundred and

‘the fields should not be over 150 acres’

vyfi ten tien akkers (3/87)  
 five time ten acres

den myki plysiri morre na drie de na bakke makanderen  
 they make fun more than three days LOC back each other

‘they've been making fun for more than three days in a row’ (3/93)

joe hoendi morre na toe ten tien na bossi (3/96)  
 you chase more than two time ten LOC bush

‘you chased away more than twenty into the bush’

Mi no potti wan zanti na da brifi morre likki mi  
 I NEG put one thing LOC the letter more than I

‘I didn't write anything in that letter except to invite

kalle da mastra lange schrifi man fo kom jussena (3/97)  
 call the gentleman with write man for come just-now

the gentleman and his clerk to come by once’

Schumann (1783) (pp.44-305)

ju betre morro leki mi? (4/62-1)  
 You better more than me?

‘Are you better than me?’

a biggi morro mi (4/62-2)

He big exceed me

‘He's bigger than me’

a langa morro mi (4/62-3)

He tall exceed me

‘He's taller than me’

datti wi takki morro hesi, leki: da glassi de fulu ‘vo’

That we say more quickly than: ‘da glassi de fulu “vo”

“We would rather say that than “da glassi de fulu “vo” wini””

wini (4/104)

wini’

meki mi go na sorro, futu moro hessi lekki boto (4/107)

Make me go LOC shore, foot more quick than boat

‘Let me go ashore, I can go faster on foot than by boat’

dem gongossa morro dago (4/112)

They vicious exceed dog

‘They're more vicious than a dog’

a grandi va mi (4/113)

He old for me

‘He's older than me’

datti takki: ju habi so ougri hatti, têh ju no kann

That means: you have such evil heart, till you NEG can

‘That means: you have such an evil heart, that you can't

habi hem morro ougri na so, leki hufa ju habi hem (4/123)

have it more evil than so like how you have it

have it more evil’

a hati morro pepre (4/149)

it hot exceed pepper

‘it's hotter than pepper’

tog, effi somma skrekki, wi takki morro hessi: a kikki

still, if someone startle, we say more quickly 'a kikki

‘Still, if someone has been startled we would say 'a kikki

bakka; leki: a pussu bakka (4/151)

bakka' than 'a pussu bakka'

bakka' rather than 'a pussu bakka’

ma tog mi no habi so menni kompe, no morro leki wan

but still I NEG have so many friends, NEG more than one



‘but still I don't have so many friends, not more than a few’

tu dri (4/156-1)

two three

bikasi kompe de hali morro klossi bai na hem, leki mati

because kompe ASP draw more close by LOC him than mati

‘because a kompe draws more closely to him than a mati’ (4/156-2)

kwassikwassi pori morro dago leki ougrimeti srefi (4/169)

kwassikwassi destroy more dogs than tiger self

‘a kwassikwassi kills even more dogs than a tiger’

ju langa morro mi (4/172-1)

you tall exceed me

‘you're taller than me’

ju langa morro na mi (4/172-2)

you tall more than me

‘you're taller than me’

you de morro langa leki mi (4/172-3)

you be more tall than me

‘you're taller than me’

da nefe de morro bun leki da tarrawan (4/175-1)

this knife BE more good than the other-one

‘this knife is better than the other one’

datti de moro betre, leki hufa ju ben meki hem da fossitron

this be more better than how you TNS make it the firsttime

‘this is better than how you did it the first time’ (4/175-2)

a de morro langa leki mi (4/175-3)

he BE more tall than me

‘he's taller than me’

a langa morro na mi (4/175-4)

he tall more than me

‘he's taller than me’

mi sa gi ju morro leki datti (4/176-1)

I TNS give you more than that

‘I shall give you more than that’

mi sa gi ju morro na so (4/176-2)

I TNS give you more than this-way

‘I shall give you more than this’

ju no kann kissi hem morro betre na so (4/176-3)

you NEG can get it more better than this-way

‘you can't get it better than this’

ju no kann kissi hem morro betre leki so (4/176-4)

you NEG can get it more better than this-way

‘you can't get it better than this’

mi wakka morro na ju (4/176-5)

I walk more than you

‘I walk better than you’

ju hatti no kann morro ougri, leki hufa a de (4/176-6)

your heart NEG can more evil than how it BE

‘your heart can't be more evil than it is’

ju hatti no kan pori morro na so (4/176-7)

your heart NEG can spoil more than this-way

‘your heart can't be spoilt more than it is’

mangri fütü somma morro betre leki fattu (4/185)  
thin fit people more better than fat

‘it is better to be thin than to be fat’

pakkira krassi morro na pingo (4/214)  
pakkira mean more than pingo

‘a pakkira is meaner than a pingo’

da pikin Ningre langa morro na ju (4/221)  
the small negro tall more than you

‘the little negro is taller than you’

ju tranga morro mi (4/282)  
you strong exceed me

‘you're stronger than me’

Stedman (1796) (passim): no data

Weygandt (1798) (pp.1-144)

Moro lekie retiemindrie (6/7)  
More than right-middle

‘More than half’

Mie moro jongoe lekie joe (6/87)  
I more young than you

‘I'm younger than you’

Da no ben moro lekie alfoe wan (6/94)  
It NEG TNS  $\emptyset$  more than half one

‘It only struck half past twelve’

Joe dé n'jam moro metie lekie brédee (6/95)  
You ASP eat more meat than bread

‘You're eating more meat than bread’

Tidee da weerie dé moro mooi lekie esredee (6/98)

Today the weather BE more nice than yesterday

‘Today the weather is better than it was yesterday’

Tan mie sneyrie sa sabie datie moro betree lekie mie

Wait my tailor MOD know that more better than me

‘Wait, my tailor will know that better than I do’ (6/106)

Mie no moe abie moro lekie fo jarie (6/108-1)

I NEG must have more than four yards

‘I only need four yards (of cloth)’

Mie dé gie joe moro betree koopoe lekie wan trawan

I ASP give you more better buy than a other-one

‘I'm selling you at a better price than anyone else’ (6/108-2)

Den ben dé werie toedrie tem pasa moro biegie wan (6/111)

They TNS ASP wear two-three time pass more big one

‘Some time ago people were wearing bigger ones’

Mie no dee doe moro lekie den takie gie mie (6/115)

I NEG ASP do more than they talk give me

‘I only do what I'm told to do’

Mie lobie foe dee nanga joe moro lekie nanga wan trawan

I love for be with you more than with a other-one

‘I love to be with you more than with anyone else’ (6/121)

Joe dé sie mie foe wan soema diesie kiebrie sanie na

You ASP see me for a person REL cover thing LOC

‘Do you think of me as someone who will keep things to

hatie foetroe? No moro lekie wan trawan troetroe (6/123)

heart for-true? NEG more than a other-one true-true

himself? Not more than anybody else, that's for sure’

mara foeloe sama dé loekoe moro na da pliesierie

but many people ASP look more LOC the pleasure

‘but many people will emphasize the pleasant rather than

lekcie na da takroesey (6/143)

than LOC the ugly-side

the unpleasant side (i.e. of plantation life)’

Wennekers (1822) (pp.1-42)

Joe no lobbi joe boen Tattà na Hemeli (...), disi dee

You NEG love your good Father LOC Heaven (...), REL BE

‘Don't you love your good Father in Heaven who is better

boen morro leki alla-sani? (7/2)

good more than all-thing?

than anything else?’

joe no kan holi morro leki wan man offo wan oema (7/3)

you NEG can hold more than one man or one woman

‘you cannot have more than one man or one woman’

Boen Gado! joe dee morro boen leki alla sani (7/4)

Good God! you BE more good than all thing

‘Dear God! you are better than anything else’

joe dee na blessi morro leki alla oema (7/6)

you be LOC bless more than all women

‘you are blessed more than any other woman’

mi dee lobbi joe nanga alla mi hatti morro leki alla sani

I ASP love you with all my heart more than all thing

‘I love you more than anything else, with all my heart’ (7/7)

Joe sa lobbi Gado morro leki alla sani (7/8)  
 You MOD love God more than all thing

‘You shall love God more than anything else’

joe disi dee morro boen leki alla sani (7/10)  
 you who BE more good than all thing

‘you who are better than anything else’

Na joe wi meki paiman Nanga ibri ogri doe,  
 LOC you we make debt with every wicked act

‘With every evil deed we run into greater debts with you

Gran morro leki paiman Va trà Soema na wi (7/18-1)  
 big more than debt of other people LOC we

than the debts other people have with us’

Morro alla Santa Oema Da zegi dee na joe (7/18-2)  
 Exceed all Holy Women the bless BE LOC you

‘Blessings be with you more than with any Holy Woman’

Den pikien moessoe memre, offi den kom na  
 The children must remember, if they come LOC

‘When they come to confess, children should remember

biekti-kamera, foe den kom Morro na fesi va Gado  
 confessional-box, for they come more LOC face of God

they're standing before God rather than before man’

leki na fesi va wan soema (7/31-32)  
 than LOC face of a person

Troetroe; mà Gado Masra disi ben meki datti, a morro  
 Truettrue; but God Master who TNS make that, he more



‘True, but God who made that is more beautiful than all that’

mooy leki alla dasani (7/34)

beautiful than all that-thing

joe srefi dee betre leki joe Gado (7/36-1)

you self BE better than your gods

‘you yourself are better than your gods’

A no betre foe pratti na wan louw pleziri, disi

It NEG better for part LOC a foolish pleasure, REL

‘Isn’t it better to quit a foolish pleasure than to

kabà wantem, leki pinà na faya teego teego? (7/36-2)

finish once, than suffer LOC fire ever ever?

suffer in hell for ever and ever?’

A no betre srefi foe pina alla soortoe trobbi na

It not better even for suffer all kinds trouble LOC

‘Isn’t it even better to suffer all kinds of trouble on

disi grontappo, na disi sjatoe libi, leki foe dee na  
this earth, LOC this short life, than for be LOC

this earth, during this short life, than to suffer God's

Gado-straftoe allatem doro doro? (7/38)

God-punish all-time through through?

punishment for ever and ever?'

joe no (sic) sa lobbi Gado morro leki alla sani (7/41)

you NEG MOD love God more than all thing

'you shall not love God more than anything else'

Den mankeri-zonde tegi da fossiwan Gebod dee:

The lack-sins against the first-one Commandment BE:

'The sins of negligence against the first commandment are:

(...) foe hoopoe morro na kondre offo na wan soema

to hope more LOC country or LOC a person

to put more faith in the world or in a person than in God'

tappo, leki na Gado tappo (7/42-1)

top, than LOC God top

(see above): foe lobbi wan soema offo wan sani morro

for love a person or a thing more

'to love someone or something more than God'

leki Gado (7/42-2)

than God

Luke (1829) (pp.6-146)

Masra de nanga joe, a blesi joe moro leki ala tra oeman

Lord BE with you, he bless you more than all other women

‘The Lord is with you; he's blessed you more than any other woman’ (8/8)

Oen no moe haksi moro foeloe moni, leki lanti ben potti  
You NEG must ask more much money than land TNS put

‘You shouldn't ask for more money than the authorities have determined’ (8/22-1)

wan trawan sa kom na mi baka, disi tranga moro leki mi  
a other-one TNS come LOC my back REL strong more than me

‘someone else shall come after me who is stronger than me’ (8/22-2)

ma tog da moro lage soema na Gadokondre de bigi  
but still the more lowly people LOC God-country BE big

‘but still the lowliest people in the Kingdom of Heaven

moro leki hem (8/46)

more than him

are bigger than him'

Wi no ha noti moro, leki vijvi brede nanga toe fisi

We NEG have nothing more than five bread and two fish

'We have nothing but five loaves of bread and two fishes' (8/58)

wan trawan, disi de tranga moro leki hem (8/74-1)

a other-one who BE strong more than him

'someone else who is stronger than him'

sebi tra jeje moro (...), disi ogri moro leki hem srefi

seven other ghosts more REL ugly more than him self

'seven more ghosts that are more evil than himself' (8/74-2)

En so a kom moro ogri nanga da soema na bakatem,

And thus it come more ugly with the person LOC back-time

'And thus things went worse with that person than they

leki a ben de na fositem (8/74-3)

than it TNS BE LOC first-time

were at first'

we, dia oen de si wan soema, disi bigi moro leki Salomo

well, here you ASP see a person REL big more than Solomon

'well, here you see someone who is bigger than Solomon' (8/74-4)

we, dia oen de si wan soema, disi bigi moro leki Jonas

well, here you ASP see a person REL big more than Jonah

'well, here you see someone who is bigger than Jonah' (8/74-5)

bikasi oen waarti moro leki foeloe pikin fowloe (8/78)

because you ø worth more than many small birds

‘because you are worth more than many little birds’

Da liebi no waarti moro leki da njanjam (8/80-1)

The life NEG  $\emptyset$  worth more than the food?

‘Isn't life worth more than food?’

en skin no waarti moro leki dem klosi? (8/80-2)

and skin NEG  $\emptyset$  worth more than the clothes?

‘and isn't your body worth more than clothes?’

We, oenoe no waarti moro leki dem fowloe? (8/80)

Well, you NEG  $\emptyset$  worth more than the birds?

‘Well, aren't you worth more than birds?’

Hoesoema vo oen sa man, vo holi da liebi vo hem

Who-person of you MOD be-able for hold the life of him

‘Who among you will be able to keep his life for half an

wan hafoe joeroe moro langa (leki Gado ben potti hem) (8/82)  
a half hour more long (than God TNS put it)

hour more than God has determined?'

dem Galileasoema (...) ben de moro ogri zondaar leki ala  
the Galilee-people TNS BE more ugly sinners than all

'those Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans'

dem tra Galilea-soema (8/86-1)  
the other Galilee-people

oen denke taki, dem ben doe moro foeloe ogri leki ala dem  
you think say they TNS do more much evil than all the

'do you think they did more evil than everybody else who

tra soema, disi de liebi na Jerusalem? (8/86-2)  
other people who ASP live LOC Jerusalem?

lived in Jerusalem?'

bika somtem a ben verzoekoe wan tra soema moro, di  
because maybe he TNS invite a other person more REL

'because he may have invited somebody else who is more

grani moro leki joe (8/92)  
important more than you

important than you are'

So srefi toe dem sa plisiri na ini hemel vo wan  
Thus same too they will rejoice LOC inside heaven for one

'In the same way there will be more joy in heaven about one  
enkli zondaar, disi draai hem liebi, moro leki vo  
single sinner, REL turn his life, more than for

single sinner who has changed his life than about  
negitentien na negi regtvaardiki soema, disi no ha  
ninety and nine righteous people, REL NEG have  
ninety nine people for whom there is no need to change  
vanoodoe vo draai dem liebi (8/96)  
need for turn their life  
their lives'

Ma tog (alatem) dem pikien vo disi grontapo na ini  
But still (all-time) the children of this earth LOC inside  
'But still the children of this earth are smarter in their  
dem afeersi vo dem dem koni moro leki dem pikien vo  
the affairs of them they smart more than the children of  
doings than the children of light'

letti (8/100-1)  
light

No wan foetoeboi kan dieni toe masra, zondro vo a  
 NEG one errand-boy can serve two masters without for he

‘One errand-boy cannot serve two masters without loving  
 lobbi da wan moro leki da trawan (8/100-2)  
 love the one more than the other

one more than the other’

Ma tog moro hesi Gado sa poeloe hemel nanga grontapo  
 But still more quick God MOD pull heaven and earth

‘But still God will rather take back heaven and earth than  
 baka, leki a sa poeloe da moro pikin letre vo da wet  
 back than he MOD pull the more small letter of the law

to take back the tiniest letter of the law’ (8/102)

A ben sa de moro betre vo da soema, efi dem ben tai  
 It TNS MOD BE more better for the person, if they TNS tie

‘It would be better for that person if they would tie a big  
 wan bigi stoon na hem neki, soengoe hem na ini dipi zee,  
 a big stone LOC his neck sink him LOC inside deep sea

stone around his neck to sink him into the deep sea than for  
 leki hem de seti trapoe gi wan vo dem pikinwan dia,  
 than he ASP set traps give one of the little-ones here

him to set traps for one of the little ones here to make him  
 vo a fadom (8/104)  
 for he fall-down

fall down’

Moro hesi wan kameeli sa go na ini hai vo wan nanai,  
 More quick a camel MOD go LOC inside eye of a needle



‘It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle

leki wan goedoeman sa kom na Gadokondre (8/110)

than a wealth-man MOD come LOC God-country

than for a wealthy man to enter God's kingdom’

da poti weduwe disia ben potti moro foeloe na ini

the poor widow this-here TNS put more much LOC inside

‘this poor widow here put in more than all the others’

leki ala dem trawan (8/124)

than all the other-ones

Acts (1829) (pp.150-280)

Oen srefi kan kroetoe dati, efi a sa reti na Gado fesi,

You self can decide that, if it MOD ø right LOC God face

‘You can decide for yourselves if it's right in the face of

vo wi harki oenoe moro leki Gado (9/164-1)  
for we listen you more than God

God for us to listen to you rather than to God'

En da soema (...) ben ouroe moro leki fotentien jari  
And the person TNS old more than forty years

'And that person was already over forty'  
kaba (9/164-2)  
already

Wi moese harki Gado moro leki liebisoema (9/170)  
We must listen God more than life-people

'We should listen to God rather than to people'

A moro switi vo gi sani, leki vo teki sani (9/244)  
It more sweet for give things than for take things

'It's sweeter to give than it is to take'

Dem ben de moro leki fotentien soema, disi ben sweri  
They TNS BE more than forty people REL TNS swear

'More than forty people swore the oath'

da sweri (9/256)  
the oath

no moro leki twaalvoe dei pasa, sinsi mi ben go na  
NEG more than twelve days pass since I TNS go LOC

'not more than twelve days have passed since I went to

Jerusalem vo aanbegi (9/260)  
Jerusalem for pray

Jerusalem to pray'

mi si wan letti vo hemel na pasi, a blinkri moro leki zon  
I see a light of heaven LOC road it shine more than sun

‘I saw a light from heaven on the road that shone more fiercely than the sun’  
(9/268)

Cesaari (1836-1837) (pp.292-298): no data

Helmig van der Vegt (1844) (pp.1-56)

A morro jongoe leki mi pikien (11/21)

He more young than my child

‘He's younger than my child’

Mi no de doe morro, leki den takki gi mi (11/43)

I NEG ASP do more than they tell give me

‘I only do what I'm told to do’

Grammatik (1854) (pp.3-67)

Hem de moro switi leki joe (12/12)

He BE more sweet than you

‘He's nicer than you’

Bakra koni, moro leki ningre (12/13-1)

White-man smart more than negro

‘The white man is smarter than the negro’

Bakra moro koni leki ningre (12/13-2)

White-man more smart than negro

‘The white man is smarter than the negro’

Jan switi, moro leki David (12/13-3)

Jan sweet more than David

‘Jan is nicer than David’

Masra N. moro koni, leki ala tra bakra (12/13-4)

Master N. more smart than all other white-men

‘Mister N. is smarter than all the other whites’

Masra N. koni, moro leki ala tra bakra (12/13-5)

Master N. smart more than all other white-men

‘Mister N. is smarter than all the other whites’

Masra N. koni moro ala tra bakra (12/13-6)

Master N. smart exceed all other white-men

‘Mister N. is smarter than all the other whites’

Jacob ben lobbi Joseph moro tranga, leki ala dem tra

Jacob TNS love Joseph more strong than all the other

‘Jacob loved Joseph more than all his other children’

pikien vo hem (12/13-7)

children of him

Wan bigi stoon moro hebi, leki wan pikinwan (12/14-1)

A big stone more heavy than a little-one

‘A big rock is heavier than a little one’

Jonge hasi moro boen, leki ouroewan (12/14-2)

Young horses more good than old-ones

‘Young horses are better than old horses’

Da wiwiri vo da blaka dagoe moro safoe, leki di vo

The hair of the black dog more soft than that of

‘The hair of the black dog is softer than that of the

da wetiwan (12/14-3)

the white-one

white dog’

Da moro pikin brara sabi moro foeloe, leki da moro  
The more small brother know more much than the more

‘The young boy knows more than his older brother’

bigiwan (12/14-4)

big-one

Wan soema kan si tra soema foutoe moro hesi, leki di  
A person can see other people faults more quick than those

‘It's easier to see other people's faults than one's own’

vo hem srefi (12/36-1)

of him self

Soema kan si trawan foutoe moro hesi, leki di vo  
People can see other-ones faults more quick than those of

‘It's easier to see other people's faults than one's own’

dem srefi (12/36-2)

them self

Trawan kan si trawan foutoe moro hesi, leki di vo  
Other-one can see other-one faults more quick than those of

‘It's easier to see other people's faults than one's own’

hem srefi (12/37-1)

him self

Dem kan si tra soema foutoe moro hesi, leki di vo  
They can see other people faults more quick than those of

‘It's easier to see other people's faults than one's own’

dem srefi (12/37-2)

them self

Wi kan si tra soema foutoe moro hesi, leki di vo

We can see other people faults more quick than those of

‘It's easier to see other people's faults than one's own’

wi srefi (12/37-3)

we self

Joe kan si tra soema foutoe moro hesi, leki di vo

You can see other people faults more quick than those of

‘It's easier to see other people's faults than one's own’

joe srefi (12/37-4)

you self

A bigi moro, leki hem brara (12/62-1)

He big more than his brother

‘He's taller than his brother’

Mi lobbi Jan moro, leki mi lobbi Adam (12/62-2)

I love Jan more than I love Adam

‘I love Jan more than Adam’

Focke (1855) (pp.1-152)

Bégi móro bétre léki foefoéroe, ma wróko da bâsi (13/10)

Beg ø more better than steal but work BE boss

‘To beg is better than to steal, but to work is best’

A móro bétre léki (13/11)

It ø more better than ...

‘It's better than ...’

bétre wan háfoe éksi, leki sóso bóeba (13/13)

better a half egg than just skin

‘half a loaf is better than no bread’

Joe gráni móro mi (13/39)

You old exceed me

‘You're older than me’

Ai ba! joe kóni móro mi! (13/62)

Well friend! you smart exceed me

‘Well friend! you're smarter than me’

Joe moe krom joe hánoe móro na so (13/67)

You must bend your hand more than this-way

‘You should bend your hand even more’

Móro na so (13/84-1)

More than this-way



‘More than that’

No móro léki toe (13/84-2)

NEG more than two

‘Only two’

Adám móro lánɡa na mi (13/86)

Adam ø more tall than me

‘Adam's taller than me’

Wullschlägel (1856) (pp.9 & 159: entries als, ‘than’, and mehr, ‘more’)

a moro bigi leki mi (14/9-1)

he ø more big than me

‘he's bigger than me’

a bigi moro leki mi (14/9-2)

he big more than me

‘he's bigger than me’

a bigi moro mi (14/9-3)

he big exceed me

‘he's bigger than me’

a moro langa na mi (14/9-4)

he ø more tall than me

‘he's taller than me’

no moro leki reti (14/159-1)

NEG more than rightly

‘quite rightly’

moro leki toe jari pasá kabá (14/159-2)

more than two years pass already

‘more than two years have passed already’

moro leki wantron (14/159-3)

more than one-turn

‘more than once’

King Berichten (1864-1870) (pp.16-25)

den loekoeman, den gi den bigi lespeki moro leki den

the priests, they give them big respect more than the

‘they respect the priests even more than the chiefs’

edeman srefi (15/19-1)

chiefs self

bikasi ala soema poti fertrow na den tapoe moro leki

because all people put faith LOC them top more than

‘because everybody puts even more faith in them than in God’

(na) Masra Gado srefi (15/19-2)

(LOC) Master God self

Di den sabi taki mansoema abi takroe lostoe na

Since they know say man-person have wicked lust LOC

‘Since they know that men have more evil physical desires

skin moro leki den (15/21)

body more than they

than they have’

Wan tra sani agen, leriman, a de na foto dja moro

One other thing, teachers, it BE LOC city here more

‘There's one other thing, teachers, which occurs more often

foeroe leki na boesi kondre èn na pranasi (15/22)

much than LOC bush country and LOC plantation

here in the city than in the bush or on the plantations’

King Maripaston (1891-1894) (pp.51-61)

èn no wan tra libisoema de na disi grontapoe, di kan  
and NEG one other person BE LOC this earth REL can

‘and there's nobody on this earth who believes in

bribi Gado moro leki hen (16/54-1)

believe God more than him

God more firmly than he does’

We, di Noah kosi mi moro leki ala den tra dinari

Well, since Noah curse me more than all the other servants

‘Well, since Noah (King's half-brother) cursed me more than any other servant’  
(16/54-2)

Noah de moro tefréde foe jere, leki (te) mi Johannes

Noah BE more satisfied for hear than (when) I Johannes

‘Noah would rather hear others speak than me, Johannes

King taki (16/54-3)

King talk

King’

Johannes King abi boen nen toemoesi na kondre, moro leki

Johannes King have good name too-much LOC country more than

‘Johannes King has a much better reputation in the country

hen (16/56-1)

him

than him (i.e. Noah, King's half-brother)’

bikasi Johannes King abi bigi nen moro leki hen (16/56-2)

because Johannes King have big name more than him

‘because Johannes King has a much bigger name than he has’

Disi de bigi moro ala goedoe di de

This BE big exceed all treasures REL BE

‘This (church) is a greater treasure than all others that

foe soema kari nanga nen na na heri grontapoe (16/59)

for people call with name LOC the whole earth

can be named on this earth’

En na kerki (...), dati de na goedoe di bigi moro ala

And the church that BE the treasure REL big exceed all

‘And the church is the biggest treasure of all’

tra goedoe (16/60-1)

other treasures

A hari den abra go na ini na srefi sondoe leki fa hen

He pull them over go LOC inside the same sin like how he

‘He persuaded them to commit the same sin that he committed,

srefi de na ini toe, èn moro ogri srefi leki hen  
self BE LOC inside too and more evil even than him

and even worse' (16/60-2)

a teki sani foe grontapoe moro warti leki sani foe Masra  
he take things of earth more worth than things of Master

'he valued worldly things more highly than the things of the Lord' (16/61-1)

We, di Noah soekoe toemoesi bigi fasi foe grontapoe,  
Well, since Noah seek too-much big fashion of earth

'Well, since Noah has been after worldly things more than

moro san di Gado gi hen (16/61-2)  
exceed thing that God give him

after the things God gave him'

na hanoë foe Masra Gado sa fadon na oen tapoe bakaten  
the hand of God TNS fall-down LOC you top later

'God's hand will fall down on you later with more strength

moro ogri leki na fosi (16/61-3)  
more ugly than LOC first

than at first'

Albitrouw Anake (1894) (pp.28-37)

Na mindri (foe) den Domi-nengre den srefi abi wan ede  
LOC middle (of) the Domi-negroes they self have one head

'Among the Domi-negroes there was a family that was more

èn moro bigi èn é famiri moro leki den trawan (17/28)  
and more big and high family more than the other-ones

important and more highly esteemed than the others’

Den sa gi en moro strafeo leki Anake èn Akinboto

They TNS give him more punishment than Anake and Akinboto

‘They’ll punish him more severely than Anake and Akinboto’ (17/36)

Kraag (1894-1896) (pp.34-43)

Den ben abi moro leki den kan gebroiki srefi (18/38)

They TNS have more than they can use even

‘They had even more than they could use’

Albitrouw Aurora (1896) (pp.15-24)

Dja de wan moro boen presi foe bow kerki leki jana(19/18)

Here BE a more good place for build church than yonder

‘This is a better place to build a church than over there’

Makzien I (1902) (pp.1-18)

a tan leki na ini goutoe-boesi jee habi moro  
 it stand like LOC inside gold-bush you-ASP have more

‘it's as if there are more heathens than Christians in the  
 foeloe heidensoema leki kristen (20/3)  
 much heathen-people than Christians

gold forest’

ja dem ben soengoe go moro dipi srefi leki da gron  
 yes, they TNS sink go more deep even than the ground

‘yes, they sunk even more deeply than the bottom of the  
 vo da swampoe ben de (20/12)  
 of the swamp TNS BE

swamp’

A moro boen hem go na ini da swampoe leki wi (20/13)  
 It ø more good he go LOC inside the swamp than we

‘It's better for him to go into the swamp than for us’

A langa pasa 40 voet (20/14)  
 It long pass 40 feet

‘It's longer than 40 feet’

jete Masra Jezus ben hopo moro vroekoe leki dem (20/17)  
 still Master Jesus TNS get-up more early than them

‘but still our Lord Jesus had got up before them’

Wansani, disi de moro hebi leki wan bigi stoon, de gi  
 One-thing that BE more heavy than a big stone ASP give



‘Something which is heavier than a big rock gives us

wi brokohede (20/18)

us break-head

sorrow’

Helstone (1903) (pp.1-56)

Dem letter di habi wan moro duidelijk klank moro dem

The letters REL have a more clear sound exceed the

‘The letters that sound more clearly than the others are

trawan dem kali “klinkers” na hollandsch tongo (21/1)

other-ones they call klinkers LOC Dutch language

called klinkers (i.e. vowels) in Dutch’

Dem woortoe di meki dem toe laatste zin moro langa

The words REL make the two latter sentences more long

‘The words that make the latter two sentences longer than

dan da fosiwan dem kali “bepalingen” (21/6)  
 than the first-one they call bepalingen

the former are called bepalingen (i.e. adjuncts)’

Honi moro switi dan soekroe (21/12-1)  
 Honey ø more sweet than sugar

‘Honey is sweeter than sugar’

Mi moro ouroe dan joe (21/12-2)  
 I ø more old than you

‘I’m older than you’

mi wiwiri moro weti toe dan di vo joe (21/12-3)  
 my hair ø more white also than that of you

‘my hair is also whiter than yours’

Joe wani boto moe waka moro hesi dan stoomboto? (21/12-4)  
 You want boat must walk more quick than steamboat

‘You want a boat to go faster than a steamer?’

Mi moro langa dan joe (21/12-5)  
 I ø more tall than you

‘I’m taller than you’

Dagoë moro gauw dan alla meti (21/12-6)  
 Dogs ø more adroit than all animals

‘Dogs are more adroit than any other animal’

ma keskesi moro koni dan alla (21/12-7)  
 but monkeys ø more smart than all

‘but monkeys are smarter than any other animal’

Vo gi sani moro switi dan vo teki (21/12-8)  
 For give things ø more sweet than for take

‘It's nicer to give than it is to take’

A moro switi moro honi (21/12-9)

It  $\emptyset$  more sweet exceed honey

‘It's sweeter than honey’

ma da wan kan dee moro betre dan da trawan (21/12-10)

but the one can BE more better than the other-one

‘but the one may be better than the other’

Anna moro deki dan Johanna (21/12-11)

Anna  $\emptyset$  more fat than Johanna

‘Anna's fatter than Johanna’

dati mi si moro dan wan soema (21/14)

that I see more than one person

‘that I see more than one person’

en so sreefi dem kan taki vo moro foeloe dan vo wan  
and thus same they can talk of more much than of one

‘and in the same way they can talk about more than just

enkli sani nomo toe (21/19)

single thing only too

one single thing’

Makzien II (1913) (pp.51-57): no data

Herskovits & Herskovits (1936) (pp.150-306)

A taki pikinso moro lati a ben taigi Tigri (23/150)

He tell little more late he TNS tell-give Tiger

‘He arranged a time with him a little later than with Tiger’

Lei hati moro soro (23/168-1)

Lie hurt exceed wound

‘A lie hurts more than a wound’

ef lei sa hati moro leiki dati? (23/168-2)

if lie MOD hurt more than that

‘whether a lie can hurt more than that’

ma na karu fo Syensyen kom moro moi leiki di

but the corn of Syensyen come more beautiful than that

‘but Syensyen's corn grew better than Anansi's’

fo Anansi (23/178)

of Anansi

dan den ‘e go nak’ den srefi fo si suma hanu moro

then they ASP go hit them self for see who hand ø more

‘then they were going to strike each other to see whose

hebi leik' trawan (23/186)

heavy than other-one

hand was heavier’

ma yu hanu moro hebi leki di fo mi (23/188)

but your hand  $\emptyset$  more heavy than that of me

‘but your hand is heavier than mine’

Da' mi sab'-tak' mi sa frei moro hei leiki wan (23/192-1)

Then I know-say I MOD fly more high than one

‘In that case I know I should fly higher than anybody else’

suma ka frei moro hei leik' tra wan (23/192-2)

who can fly more high than other ones

‘whoever can fly higher than anybody else’

bika' a ben de moro hei leki Falek (23/194)  
because he TNS BE more high than Falcon

‘because he was higher than Falcon’

Yu sab' na horo moro mi, so na yu mu go (23/196)  
You know the hole exceed me, so is you must go

‘You know the hole better than I, so it's you who must go’

So Kaiman koni moro Anansi (23/198)  
Thus Alligator smart exceed Anansi

‘So Alligator is smarter than Anansi’

Tigri skreki moro furu leiki na fos' tro' (23/206)  
Tiger startle more much than the first turn

‘Tiger was more alarmed than he was at first’

So dat' na fro ben moro kon' leik Anansi (23/226)  
So that the wife TNS ø more smart than Anansi

‘So that his wife was more clever than Anansi’

Koenders (1946-1949) (pp.138-158)

Ibri pipel abi na ini en libitori takru, ogri,  
Every people have LOC inside its life-story evil, ugly,

‘Each nation has in its own history unpleasant, ugly, and

fisti momenti, na wan moro leki na trawan (24/138-1)  
dirty moments, the one more than the other-one

dirty periods, the one more than the other’

na pipel dati don moro den afo fu wi (24/138-2)  
the people DEM stupid exceed the forefathers of we

‘those people are more stupid than our forefathers’

Moro trangawan lek' yu sa tek' lefensi fu Kwasiba  
More strong-ones than you TNS take revenge for Kwasiba

‘Stronger ones than you will take revenge for Kwasiba

èn Afi (24/152)

and Afi

and Afi’

Bruma (c.1955) (pp.168-180)

M'ma, fu san ede den bakra moro tranga moro wi?  
Mama, for what reason the whites more strong exceed us

‘Mother, why are whites stronger than us?’ (25/174-1)

Mi tagi en taki den no tranga moro wi, ma a no  
I tell him say they NEG strong exceed us, but he NEG

‘I told him that they were not stronger than us, but he

bribi mi (25/174-2)

believe me

‘didn't believe me’

taki den no moro mendre leki den bakra (25/174-3)

say they NEG  $\emptyset$  more less than the whites

‘that they are not inferior to the whites’

Mi sa tranga moro en (25/178-1)

I TNS strong exceed it (i.e. the storm)

‘I'll be stronger than it’

A no mi meki yu pondo bigi moro ala den trawan?

Is NEG I make your boats big exceed all the other-ones

‘Have I not made your boats bigger than all the others?’ (25/178-2)



**[Clefting]**

Herlein (1718) (pp.280-282): no data

Nepveu (1765) (pp.280-282): no data

Van Dyk (c.1770) (pp.1-112)

Da duysi tongi joe leri (3/29)

Is Dutch language you learn

‘Are you learning how to speak Dutch?’

Da zoe joe doe ale tem (3/31)

Is thus you do all time

‘You always do it that way’

No da zibi fom (3/32)

No is seven beat

‘No, the clock strikes seven’

Ai da da ply mi kommote (3/35)

Yes is that place I come-out

‘Yes, that is where I'm from’

Da zo mi (sic) moe doe alletem (3/39)

Is thus we must do all-time

‘That one should always do’

joe habi bon hatti temoesi fo negere da zo hede den

you have good heart too-much for negroes is thus reason they

‘you're too good for the slaves, that's why they don't

no de worke noefe (3/53)

NEG ASP work enough

work hard enough’

den homan diesi habi bele den no kan holli lieki den  
the women REL have belly they NEG can hold like the

‘the women who are pregnant can't work like the others,

tarrewan da zo myki (3/57-1)

other-ones is thus make

that's why’

da zo joe moes takki (3/57-2)

is thus you must talk

‘that you should say’

den no kan holli den tikki passi den go we da zo  
they NEG can hold they take road they go away is thus

‘they couldn't reach (the fixed amount of work), that's

myki (3/67)

make

why they ran away’

da zo mi za beri dem di zomma kili den sleffi (3/76)

is thus I TNS bury the REL people kill them self

‘that's how I'll bury people who kill themselves’

da zo mi zal takki (3/77)

is thus I TNS talk

‘that I will say’

a Takke(-)re zo menni da zo myki oenno no worke (3/86)

it bad so many is thus make you NEG work

‘conditions on the plantation are so bad that you don't work’

nuwe negere no kan doe da worke da zo myki den go

new negroes NEG can do that work is thus make them go

‘unseasoned slaves can't do that work, that's why they

we (3/88)

away

ran away’

da zo bakkera moe libi na wan pranasie (3/98)

is thus white-man must live LOC a plantation

‘that's how a white man should run a plantation’

Da zo mi de doe (3/102)

Is thus I ASP do

‘That's what I'm doing’

oenno moes pree bon dore te de brokke da zo

you must play well through till day break is thus

‘enjoy yourselves till the break of day, that's what

mi wandi (3/108)

I want

I want'

Da zo wi jarri didde zomma go (3/111)

Is thus we carry dead people go

'That's how we carry our dead (to their burial)'

Schumann (1783) (pp.44-305)

da bassia a bassia (4/57)

is bend he bend

'he's bending down real low'

da no boi gudu da somma habi (4/65-1)

is NEG small wealth that person have

'he's very wealthy'

da no 'pikin' gudu a habi, a habi hem fulu (4/65-2)

is NEG small wealth he have, he have it much

'he's very wealthy, he holds many riches'

da no boi-areen fadomm tideh (4/65-3)

is NEG small-rain fall-down today

‘it has rained an awful lot today’

da no boi fadomm a fadomm ((4/65-4)

is NEG small fall-down it fall-down

‘it has rained an awful lot today’

da so ju takki? (4/77-1)

is thus you say

‘is that what you're saying?’

da reti ju du so (4/77-2)

is right you do thus

‘it's right for you to do that’

da so dem meki datti? (4/77-3)

is thus they make that

‘is that made that way?’

no pikin drungu a drungu (4/92)

NEG small drunk he drunk

‘he's as drunk as a lord’

da fufur a fufur (4/104)

is steal he steal

‘he's a real thief’

da go mi de go (4/110)

is go I ASP go

‘I'm leaving right now’

no mi takki datti? (4/119-1)

NEG I say that

‘didn’t I tell you so?’

no mi takki datti (4/119-2)

NEG I say that

‘I didn’t say that’

da no ebriwan sa pai vo hem srefi? (4/128)

is NEG everyone MOD pay for him self

‘shouldn’t everybody take his own punishment?’

da koksi ju koksi mi (4/154-1)

is taunt you taunt me

‘you’re really taunting me’

da komm mi de komm (4/154-2)

is come I ASP come

‘I’m coming right now’

da lei ju lei (4/175)

is lie you lie

‘you're a liar’

no so mi ben takki? (4/207-1)

NEG thus I TNS say

‘didn't I say just that?’

no so mi ben takki (4/207-2)

NEG thus I TNS say

‘I didn't say that’

no ju ben du datti? (4/207-3)

NEG you TNS do that

‘didn't you do that?’

no tideh srefi mi si ju? (4/207-4)

NEG today self I see you

‘didn't I see you this very day?’

no tideh mi si ju (4/208-1)

NEG today I see you

‘I've seen you long before this day’

no mi wawan wanni datti (4/208-2)

NEG I one-one want that

‘it's not just me who wants that’

no datti wawan mi wanni (4/208-3)

NEG that one-one I want

‘I don't want just that’

no hem mi haksi (4/208-4)

NEG him I ask

‘I didn't ask him (hem direct or indirect object)’

no mi haksi hem (4/208-5)

NEG I ask him

‘I didn't ask him’

no so a de? (4/208-6)

NEG thus it BE

‘isn't it just as I tell you?’

no so a de (4/208-7)

NEG thus it be

‘it's not like that’

da reti ju takki so (4/233)

is right you talk so

‘it's quite right for you to say so’



no pikin siki ju ben siki (4/246)

NEG small sick you TNS sick

‘you've been very ill’

da so ju takki? (4/251-1)

is thus you say

‘did you say that?’

da so ju klossi (sic) mi? (4/251-2)

is thus you curse me

‘how can you abuse me like that?’

Stedman (1796) (passim): no data

Weygandt (1798) (pp.1-144)

Da no joe ben takie datie? (6/83-1)

Is NEG you TNS say that

‘Didn't you say that?’

Da no den ben takie datie? (6/83-2)

Is NEG they TNS say that?

‘Didn't they say that?’

Da oe Masra datie, Joe sabie hem? (6/91)

Is what Master that, you know him?

‘What kind of gentleman is it; do you know him?’

Da foe oe soema pletie diesja (6/94)

Is for what person plate this-here o

‘Whose plate is this?’

Da so soema de goo? (6/96)

Is thus people ASP go?

‘How can you leave like that (i.e. without saying goodbye)?’

Joe abie retie da dapsie mie ben sie em (6/97)

You have right is that-place I TNS see him

‘You're right, that's where I've seen him’

Da deeja da da winklie foe Masra G? (6/105)

Is here is the shop of Mister G.?

‘Is this Mr. G.'s shop?’

Da foe datie héde diesie foe mie moe tan? (6/110)

Is for that reason this for me must wait

‘That's the reason why mine (i.e. my suit) has to wait?’

Dafoe datie héde joe no kan werie den soesoe (6/115)

Is-for that reason you NEG can wear the shoes

‘That's why you can't wear these shoes’

Da no em da da hatie lobie? (6/122)

Is not he is the heart love

‘Isn't he your lover?’

Da mie papa kiesie em na wan foe en kompee na fransie

Is my father get it LOC one of his friends LOC french

‘My father got it from one of his friends in France’

kondree (6/123)

country

Da Viesietie diesie joe dee kiesie (6/124)

Is visitors REL you ASP get

‘You're going to have visitors’

Wennekers (1822) (pp.1-29): no data

Luke (1829) (pp.6-146)

Da so Masra ben doe na mi, now di a membre mi

Is thus Master TNS do LOC me, now that he remember me

‘This is what the Lord has done for me when it pleased

nanga hem boenhatti, vo a poeloe da sjem na mi

with his good-heart, for he pull the shame LOC my

him to take away my shame from everybody's eyes’

fesi na ala soema hai (8/8)

face LOC all people eye

Bika da so da wet vo Masra ben taki:... (8/16)

Because is thus the Law of Lord TNS say:...

‘Because that's how God's law prescribed:...’

Da so Johannes gi dem soema foeloe tra vermane

Is thus John give the people many other admonitions

‘With this and many other admonitions John preached the  
moro, ala di a ben preeki da Evangelium (8/22)  
more, all while he TNS preach the Gospel

Gospel to the people’

A no brede wawan de holi soema liebi, ma ibriwan

Is NEG bread only ASP hold people life, but everyone

‘Man doesn't live by bread alone, but by each word of  
woord vo Gado toe (8/26)  
word of God too

God as well’

bika da so a de go pori da njoe klosi (8/36)

because is thus he ASP go spoil the new cloth

‘because by doing that he will waste the new piece of cloth’

Hoefasik (sic), wan blinde soema sa man vo sori pasi  
 What-fashion, a blind man MOD be-able for show path

‘How can a blind man show another blind man around? Won't  
 gi wan tra blindeman? a no dem ala toe sa fadom  
 give an other blind-man? is NEG they all two MOD fall-down

both of them fall into the hole?’

na ini gotro? (8/42)

LOC inside gutter

Hoefasi? da joe de da soema, disi de vo kom, ofoe  
 What-fashion? is you BE the person, REL be for come, or

‘Are you the one who shall come or should we expect someone  
 somtem wi moe verwakti wan trawan? (8/46)  
 perhaps we must expect an other-one

else?’

We, da so dem go (8/58)

Well, is thus they go

‘That's how they left’

Disi de mi lobbi pikien, da hem oen moe jeri! (8/62)

This BE my love child, is him you must hear

‘This is my beloved son, listen to him!’

We, da so dem go na wan tra pikin foto (8/64)

Well, is thus they go LOC an other small town

‘Well, after that they left for another village’

Ja, mi Tata! bika da so joe ben finni boen vo doe

Yes, my father! because is thus you TNS find good for do

‘Yes, Father! because that's how you wanted it’ (8/68)

(Oen si?) da so a de waka, efi wan soema de zoekoe

(You see?) is thus it ASP walk, if a person ASP seek

‘That's what happens to someone who collects wealth on

foeloe goedoe na grontapo, ma a no habi wan goedoe

many goods LOC earth, but he NEG have one good

earth but who is not rich in heavenly goods’

na Gado (8/80)

LOC God

Da so Jezus ben waka dem foto nanga dorpoe doro,

Is thus Jesus TNS walk the cities and villages through,

‘That's how Jesus passed through cities and villages,

leri soema, ala di a ben de na pasi vo go na

teach people, all while he TNS BE LOC road for go LOC

teaching people, while he was on his way to Jerusalem’

Jerusalem (8/88)

Jerusalem

A no tien soema ben kom krin? pee dem tra negi

Is NEG ten people TNS come clean? where the other nine

‘Have not ten people become purified? Where then are the

de dan? (8/106)

BE then?

other nine?’

Da doopoe vo Johannes, da vo hemel a ben de, ofoe vo

The baptism of John, is of heaven it TNS BE or of

‘John's baptism, did it come from heaven or from man?’

liebisoema (8/118)

life-people

We, da so a leri dem na ini temple na dei (8/128)

Well, is thus he teach them LOC inside temple LOC day

‘Well, that's how he taught them in the temple during the day’

da dem ben tjari da njoesoe kom gi dem Apostel (8/142)

is they TNS carry the news come give the Disciples

‘they brought the news to the Disciples’

Da so Jezus meki dem hai kom krin, vo dem kom

Is thus Jesus make their eyes come clean for they come

‘That's how Jesus opened their eyes so that they would

versta dem Boekoe (8/146-1)

understand the Books

understand the Scriptures’

Da so a de na Boekoe, en so Kristus ben moese  
Is thus it BE LOC Books and thus Christ TNS must

‘That's how the Scriptures speak about Christ's

pina (8/146-2)  
suffer  
sufferings’

Acts (1829) (pp.150-238)

Jezus vo Nazaret, da soema, disi (...). Da hem oen ben  
Jesus of Nazareth, the person REL (...). Is him you TNS

‘Jesus of Nazareth, the man who (...). Him you have

teki (9/156-1)  
take  
taken’



We, meki da heeli hosoe vo Israel sabi now troe troe  
Well, make the whole house of Israel know now true true

‘Well, let the whole house of Israel know truly that it  
taki, da srefi Jezus, disi oenoe ben kruisi, da hem  
say the same Jesus REL you TNS crucify is him

is this same Jesus that you have crucified whom God  
Gado ben potti vo Masra en vo Kristus (9/156-2)  
God TNS put for Master and for Christ  
has made Lord and Christ’

We, da vo oenoe fosi Gado ben wieki hem Pikien Jezus  
Well, is for you first God TNS awake his child Jesus

‘Well, it's primarily for you that God has awaken  
his son Jesus’ (9/162)  
da hem oen moese harki (9/178)  
is him you must listen

‘To him you should listen’  
Da so Filippus kom toe na da foto Samaria, a  
Is thus Philip come too LOC the city Samaria, he  
‘Thus Philip also came to the city of Samaria and  
preeki Kristus gi dem (9/18)  
preach Christ give them

preached the Messiah to them’  
da hem dem ben kili, hanga na wan hoedoe tapo (9/196)  
is him they TNS kill, hang LOC a wood top

‘Him they have killed by hanging him on a cross’  
Da so dem seni dem gowe (9/218)

Is thus they send them go-away

‘Thus they sent them away’

Da so da woortoe vo Masra ben gro nanga tranga, tee

Is thus the word of Master TNS grow with strength till

‘Thus God's word grew in strength till nobody could stop

no wan soema no ben kan tapo hem moro (9/236)

NEG one person NEG TNS can stop it more

it anymore’

Cesaari (1836-1837) (pp.292-298)

Wi no leeti vaja nanga gaasi, wie no sabie boekkoe,

We NEG light fire with gas, we NEG know books,

‘We don't make light with gas, we don't read any books,

Wi de wrokko na Pranaasi na dati gi den koekkoe!  
 we ASP work LOC plantation is that give the cake!

we work on the plantation and that provides our food!' (10/298)

Helmig van der Vegt (1844) (pp.1-56): no data

Grammatik (1854) (pp.3-67)

Da Joseph taki so (12/6-1)

Is Joseph say so

'Joseph said so'

Da Gado joe moe begi (12/6-2)

Is God you must beg

'You should ask God'

Da mi doe dati (12/6-3)

Is I do that

'I did that'

Da mi srefi wani so (12/6-4)

Is I self want so

'I want that myself'

Da dede joe moe dede (12/6-5)

Is dead you must dead

'You'll have to die'

Da kom mi de kom (12/6-6)

Is come I ASP come

'I'm coming right now'

Masra! A no de kre, ma da lafoe a de lafoe (12/6-7)

Master! He NEG ASP cry, but is laugh he ASP laugh

‘Sir! He's not crying, he's laughing’

A no boi lafoe, mi ben lafoe (12/12-1)

Is NEG small laugh I TNS laugh

‘I split my side laughing’

A no boi plisiri, dem ben habi (12/12-2)

Is NEG small pleasure they TNS have

‘They were having a lot of fun’

A no boi boen, dem soema ben doe wi (12/12-3)

Is NEG small good these people TNS do us

‘These people have done us a big favour’

Da hem da soema, disi joe soekoe (12/19)

Is he the person REL you look-for

‘He's the person you're looking for’

Mi no de bari, ma da taki mi de taki soso nanga hem  
I NEG ASP scream, but is talk I ASP talk only with him

‘I’m not screaming, I’m only talking with him’ (12/64-1)

Mi srefi no ben si dasani, ma da jeri mi ben jeri soso  
I self NEG TNS see the-thing, but is hear I TNS hear only

‘I didn’t see it myself, I only heard about it’ (12/46-2)

Mi haksi Masra, efi da lesi wi moe lesi? (12/46-3)

I ask Master, if is read we must read

‘I ask you, if we should read (not e.g. write)’

Da kaba joe de kaba? (12/46-4)

Is finished you BE finished

‘Are you finished?’

Foeloe wroko libi abra jete da joeroe, di dasani  
Much work leave over still the hour when the-thing

‘Was there still a lot of work to be done when that

kom pasa? No, no, Masra, ma da kaba dem ben kaba  
come pass? No, no, Sir, but is finished they TNS  $\emptyset$  finished

happened?, No, no, Sir, they were just finished’ (12/47-1)

Joe sa tan pikinso jete? No no, da go mi moe go

You TNS stay a-little still? No no, is go I must go

‘Are you going to stay for a while? No no, I have to

baka wantem? (sic) (12/47-2)

back at-once

go back at once’

Da moesoe joe sa moesoe (12/47-3)

Is must you TNS must

‘You’ll have to’

Da dede joe sa dede (12/47-4)

Is dead you TNS dead

‘You shall die’

Vo stoutoe? Da boi no stoutoe, ma da morsoe a de

For naughty? The boy NEG naughty, but is dirty he BE

‘Naughty? The boy isn’t naughty, but he’s very dirty’

morsoe toemoesi (12/47-5)

dirty too-much

Da so wi alamala potti mofo makandra (12/48)

Is thus we all put mouth each other

‘That’s how we all agreed’

A no vo dati hede (or vo dati) mi fom joe, disi  
Is NEG for that reason (or for that) I beat you, since

‘The fact that you lost the cent, that's not the reason why I  
joe lasi da sentsi: ma di joe no wani jeri mi  
you loose the cent: but because you NEG want hear me

beat you, but that you don't want to listen to me’ (12/61-1)

A no vo dati mi kom, ma mi wani haksi Masra wansani  
Is NEG for that I come, but I want ask Master one-thing

‘I didn't come for that, but I want to ask you something’ (12/61-2)

Joe hiti dasani na gron: da hem mi figi hem (12/61-3)  
You hit the-thing LOC ground: is it I sweep it

‘You threw it on the floor, that's why I swept it away’

Mi basi ha toemoesi tranga wroko: da hem mi no ben  
My boss have too-much strong work: is it I NEG TNS

‘My boss had a lot of work to do: that's why I

kan kom na skolo so meni langa (12/61-4)  
can come LOC school so many long

couldn't come to school for so long’

Focke (1855) (pp.1-152)

Da mi Joe de kóli ana? (13/4)

Is me you ASP fool, is-it?

‘You're not fooling me, are you?’

A no so léki arén brakka, a no so a de fadon (13/5)

Is NEG so like rain black, is NEG so it ASP fall-down

‘Things are not always as bad as they seem’

A no boitróbi a meki nánga mi (13/14-1)

Is NEG small-trouble he make with me

‘He made a big fuss’

A no boi soéma de dape (13/14-2)

Is NEG small people there

‘There's a lot of people there’

Da Joe doe dátti? (13/20-1)

Is you do that?

‘Did you do that?’

Da kom mi de kom de (13/20-2)

Is come I ASP come MOM. PART.

‘I'm coming right away’



Da dátti tja' dà trobi (13/21-1)

Is that carry the trouble

‘That caused the trouble’

A no tidè mi taki joe ... (13/21-2)

Is NEG today I tell you ...

‘I’ve told you a long time ago ...’

A no trâ-de'-trâ-de' nomo mi pai joe? (13/22)

Is NEG other-day-other-day only I pay you?

‘Didn’t I pay you just the other day?’

Da so dà pikien de bari dóro (13/26)

Is thus the child ASP scream through

‘The child is screaming like that all the time’

Da mi Gádo pai joe (13/37)

Is my God pay you

‘My God has revenged me’

Di sóema pótti gongotè na son, da hem

REL person put gongote (dried banana) LOC sun, is he

‘The person who puts the gongote in the sun, he should

de wákki arén (13/39) (cf. 13/124)

ASP watch rain

watch out for rain’

Da joe hiti mi (13/45)

Is you hit me

‘You made me fall’

Da tê Jána Joe komóto? (13/49)

Is till yonder you come-out?

‘Did you come all the way from there?’

A no mi lafoe koni-kóni, di a no ha tére (13/69)

Is NEG I laugh rabbit because it NEG have tail

‘I didn't laugh at the rabbit for not having a tail’

Da joe méki a fadòn (13/80)

Is you make he fall-down

‘You made him fall’

Da so wi pótti mófo makándra (13/83-1)

Is thus we put mouth each other

‘That's how we agreed’

Da wan mófo dátti a gi mi! (13/83-2)

Is a mouth that he give me

‘He talked back at me’

Na kibri ji de kibri anâ? (13/85)

Is hide you ASP hide is-it?

‘You're not hiding, are you?’

Ningre wânni fri foe sóesoe héde; a no sâbi taki da

Negro want free for shoe reason; he NEG know that is

‘The negro wants to be free in order to be able to wear

likdóroen a de go kisi (13/89)

corn he ASP go get

shoes; he doesn't know that he's going to get corns’

Da so dà han de njam mi dóro nomo (13/90)

Is thus that hand ASP eat me through no-more

‘That hand is hurting me all the time’

A no so léki Páttoe bigi, a no so njanjám sa fóeloe

Is NEG so like pot big, is NEG thus food MOD fill

‘The pot doesn't necessarily contain as much food as

hem (13/98)

it

it possibly can’

Da dâpe' mi pótti hem (13/99)

Is there I put it

‘I put it there’

Da joe póesoe mi, méki mi fádon (13/105-1)

Is you push me make me fall-down

‘Your pushing me made me fall’

A no mi ben ópo dà dóro poo (13/105-2)

Is NEG I TNS open the door? (even?)

‘It wasn't even me who opened the door’

A no sabakóe wawán hábi lánɡa fóetoe (13/111)

Is NEG sabakoe one-one have long feet

‘Not only sabaku's (a bird species) have long feet’

Dà sani, di joe sábi, no sa kílí joe; ma dà sanì, di

The thing REL you know NEG MOD kill you; but the thing REL

‘Not what you know, but what you don't know, that will kill

joe no sábi, da hem sa kílí joe (13/112)

you NEG know, is that MOD kill you

you’

Da wan sanì datti, a kom méki gi mi! (13/113)

Is a thing that he come make give me

‘He made a big fuss!’

Da so a de na mi skien dóro nómo (13/119)  
Is thus he BE LOC my skin through no-more

‘He’s after me all the time’

Da so a de (13/121-1)  
Is thus it BE

‘That’s how it is’

Mi da gongoté-godo: mi no de  
I BE gongote-gourd (calabash with gongote flour) I NEG ASP

‘I’m like a pot with flour: my mouth is white just like that,

njam, da soso mi mofo de witti (13/121-2)  
eat, is without-reason my mouth BE white

although I don’t eat any of it’

Dà sóema, disi pótti gongoté na son, da hem  
The person REL put gongote (dried banana) LOC sun, is he

‘The person who puts the gongote in the sun, he should watch

moe wákki arén (13/124) (cf. 13/39)  
must watch rain

out for rain’

Da mi joe de kom spéiti, nanga dátti? (13/125-1)  
Is me you ASP come nag with that

‘Did you come to nag me with that?’

Da wan spéri mira de drápe! (13/125-2)  
Is a bunch ants BE there

‘There’s an awful lot of ants over there!’

Iffi da déde soema spoen joe de loekoe, joe no sa driengi  
If is dead person spoon you ASP look, you NEG MOD drink

‘If you wait till you'll inherit a spoon, you won't have any

brafoe (13/126-1)

broth

broth’

Da spottoe mi de méki (13/126-2)

Is joke I ASP make

‘I'm only kidding’

A no joe sréfi potti hem de? (13/126-3)

Is NEG you self put it there

‘You put it there yourself, didn't you?’

Dà mófo disi táki: ‘tai’, da hem sa táki: ‘lóesoe báka’

The mouth REL say ‘tie’, is it MOD say ‘loosen back’

‘The same mouth that said “tie” will say “untie”’ (13/129)

A no foe hángri-tem héde, méki mi sa káli Tájá

Is NEG for hunger-time reason make I MOD call taja (root

‘It's not because of famine that I will call taja “Father”’

‘Tata’ (13/130)

species) ‘Father’

Da dátti méki a kom tan so (13/131)

Is that make he come BE thus

‘That's why he is like that’

Da tési joe de tési mi mófo (13/135-1)

Is taste you ASP taste my mouth

‘You're really trying my secrecy’

A no tidè mi ta'i gi joe ... (13/135-2)

Is NEG today I say give you ...

‘I told you a long time ago ...’

A no tid'ia wiwiri fadón na wátra, a no

Is NEG today-here leaf fall-down LOC water, is NEG

‘A leaf that falls into the water won't decay on the

tid'ia a póri (13/135-3)

today-here it spoil

very same day’

A no di Tjotjò-fowloe pikien, joe sa swári hem

Is NEG because Tjotjo-bird small you MOD swallow it

‘Even though the Tjotjo-bird is small, you won't swallow

nánga wiwíri (13/138)

with feathers

it with its feathers’

Da so dem míra de tróbi dóro nómo (13/142-1)

Is thus the ants ASP trouble through no-more

‘These ants are a permanent nuisance’

A no boi tróbi mi kisi (13/142-2)

Is NEG small trouble I get

‘I had a lot of trouble’

Da toe tron kabà mi báli joe, di foe dri ton (sic),

Is two turn already I call you, that of three turn,

‘I’ve already called you to order twice; don’t make me do

lóekoe boen (13/143)

look good

it a third time’



Da disi joe wanni? - Wè? (sic) (13/149-1)

Is this you want? - Sure!

‘Do you want this one? - Sure!’

Wullschlägel (1856) (pp.1-32)

da joe tori mi? (14/11)

is you betray me

‘did you betray me?’

da kom mi de kom (14/13-1)

is come I ASP come

‘I’m coming’

da dati vanoodooe (14/13-2)

is that ø necessary

‘that's what we need’

da hem kweki da piklen (14/20)

is he bring-up the child

‘he brought the child up’

da so wi potti dati (14/28)

is thus we put that

‘that's how we decided’

King Berichten (1864-1870) (pp.16-18)

Son speri soema de, den nen wisiman, na

Some sort people BE, they be-called wisiman (witches), is

‘There is a kind of people called “wisiman”, that's the worst

dati de da moro ogri sortoe heiden (15/16)

that BE the more evil sort heathen

kind of heathen’

We, na so srefi wan wan nengre de na wi trawan

Well, is thus same one one negroes BE LOC we other-ones

‘Well, there are some negroes among us who are just like  
mindri, di abi foeroefoeroe sortoe takroe sani: wisi,  
middle, REL have many-many sorts evil things: “wisi”

that and who have many kinds of evil things: black magic and  
nanga tra ogri sani moro (15/17-1)  
(i.e. black magic) and other evil things more

other bad things’

Ma na kibri fasi den de doe dati, bikasi den sabi

But is hide fashion they ASP do that, because they know

‘But they do it secretly, since they know that, if somebody

taki efi soema sabi den sa kiri den (15/17-2)  
say if person know they MOD kill them

knows about it, they'll get killed'

Na so foeroe kerkiman abi da law prakseri na nofo  
Is so many church-men have the crazy idea LOC enough

'So many faithful people still have crazy ideas and

pranasi ete nanga da obia sani (15/17-3)  
plantations still and the "obia" (charm) thing

carry charms in a number of places'

So srefi na den pranasi, dape bakra de, na so  
Thus same LOC the plantations, there whites BE, is thus

'On plantations where white people live they do exactly

den doe toe (15/17-4)  
they do also

the same thing'

We, na den soema dati den kari leti obiaman (15/18-1)  
Well, is the people DEM they call true 'obiaman (i.e. witchdoctor)

'Well, those people are called real "obiaman"'

King Maripaston (1891-1894) (pp.51-52)

Ke mi lobi helpiman, loekoe, a no na srefi Noah disi srefi  
Oh my love help-man, look, is NEG the same Noah DEM self

'Oh my beloved Saviour, look, didn't this very same Noah

ben meki barki nanga kroektoe gado na Maripaston? (16/52-1)  
TNS make bargain with crooked gods LOC Maripaston

himself make agreements with wicked gods in Maripaston?' (16/52-1)

A no hen, Noah srefi, de na soema disi soekoe na ala

Is NEG he, Noah self, BE the person REL seek LOC all

'Isn't Noah himself the one who's trying to destroy your

fasi foe pori na wroko foe joe (16/52-2)

fashion for spoil the work of you

work in every way?'

Ke Masra, loekoe, na Noah djaroesoe jagi poeroe den na

Oh Lord, look, is Noah jealousy chase pull them LOC

'Oh Lord, it's Noah's jealousy that chased them away from

ondro na kroisi foe joe (16/52-3)

under the cross of you

under your cross'

Albitrouw Anake (1894) (pp.28-29)

We, da so wan dri moen na baka dede foe da kapiten  
Well, is thus a three moon LOC back death of the captain

‘Well, some three months after this captain's death the  
disi, da ten kisi foe... (17/28)  
DEM the time catch for...

time came to ...’

Foe disi na da famiri dati ben de edeman alatem  
For this (=for) is the family DEM TNS BE head-man all-time

‘For this family always furnished the priest for the cult  
foe da kroektoe gado foe den disi nen Mafoengoen  
of the crooked god of them REL is-called Mafoengoen  
of their false god Mafoengoen’ (17/28-1)

Bika da so wan gwenti ala heiden Djoeka abi (17/29-1)  
Because is such a custom all heathen Ndjuka have

‘Because this is a custom of all heathen Ndjuka's’

Disi lési toe den ben denki na den botoman  
This time too they TNS think is the rowers

‘This time too they thought it was the rowers the captain's  
da kapiten jorka go loekoe na pasi (17/29-2)  
the captain ghost go look LOC path  
ghost was looking for’

Kraag (1894-1896) (pp.34-35)

...taki: ‘oen lobi wan, a no mi disi ben gi dis i libi  
...say: ‘you love ones, is NEG me DEM TNS give DEM life

‘... said: ‘beloved ones, I didn't give back his life, but  
baka, ma da wi boen-ati lobi Helpiman Jesus ben gi  
back, but is our good-heart love Help-man Jesus TNS give  
our beloved and good Saviour Jesus did’

en libi baka (18/35-1 & 18/35-2)  
his life back

Da so da wortoe kon leti dja toe (18/35-3)  
Is thus the word come right here too

‘Thus the word came right here too’

We da so den gi na Aron wan eri batra sopi  
Well is thus they give LOC Aron a whole bottle drink

‘Well, they gave Aron a whole bottle of liquor for him

foe en wawan (18/35-4)

for him one-one

alone'

Albitrouw Aurora (1896) (pp.15-16): no data

Makzien I (1902) (pp.1-4)

we da 'Makzien' no wani tan na baka toe na ini

well, the 'Makzien' NEG want stay LOC back also LOC inside

'well, the "Makzien" doesn't want to stay behind in that

vo dati, ma leki wan boen en lobbi vriend vo oen hosoo,

of that, but like a good and love friend of your house,

respect, but like a good and beloved friend of your house

da so a kom feliceeri

is thus it come congratulate (i.e. bring New Year's wishes)

it today also congratulates all its readers'

tidei oen alamala toe, di de lezi hem (20/1)

today you all too who ASP read it

a de taki: Mi pikien, gi mi joe hatti! Da so a de

he ASP say: My child, give me your heart! Is thus he ASP

'he says: My child, give your heart to me! Thus he's calling

kali joe jete, mi brara, mi sisa, ja nojaso nanga

call you still, my brothers, my sisters, yes right-now with

you still, my brothers and sisters, yes, right now with this

da Makzien disi toe (20/2-1)

the Makzien DEM too

issue of the “Makzien” too’

Bikasi da so nomo joe sa kan tron wan gelukki soema dia  
Because is thus only you MOD can turn a happy person here

‘Because this is the only way you can become a happy person

na grontapo (20/2-2)

LOC earth

on this earth’

Da so, efi joe de na ini da placer disi, dan a

Is thus, if you BE LOC inside the gold-field DEM, then it

‘That (i.e. the description given earlier in the text) gives

tan leki joe de na wan klosibei pranasi, a no geersi

BE like you BE LOC a close-by plantation, it NEG look-like

the impression, when you're at this gold-field, you are at a



goutoe-boesi kweti-kweti (20/3)

gold-bush quite-quite

nearby plantation; it doesn't look like a gold-forest at all'

We da so a ben de fositem toe nanga dem soema vo

Well is thus it TNS BE first-time too with the people of

'Well, at first the people of Mr. De Jong's gold-field

masra 'de Jong' placer (20/4-1)

Master De Jong gold-field

behaved like that too

En da so wi ben teki da besluiti vo holi kerki na

And is thus we TNS take the decision for hold church LOC

'And that (i.e. the circumstances described earlier in the

Zondei mamantem en na neti (20/4-2)

Sunday morning-time and LOC night

text) is how we decided to hold services on Sunday mornings and evenings'

Da so safri safri nanga da blesi vo Masra wan reti

Is thus softly softly with the blessing of Master a true

'That's how slowly and with the blessings of the Lord

verandre ben kom na ini da placer (20/4-3)

change TNS come LOC inside the gold-field

something really changed on the gold-field'

Helstone (1903) (pp.1-56)

Da vo dahede a dee da 'onbepaalde lidw' (21/7)

Is for that-reason it BE the 'onbepaalde lidw' (i.e. indefinite article)

‘That's why it is called the indefinite article’

na di vo mi mi gi joe (21/8-1)

is that of me I give you

‘I gave you mine’

na dede a de dede dee (21/8-2)

is dead he BE dead MOM. PART.

‘he's dying right now’

na dededede a dee (21/8-3)

is dead-dead he BE

‘he's as dead as a door-nail’

A no alla tafra habi drai foetoe (21/11)

Is NEG all tables have turn legs

‘Not all tables have turned legs’

Mi ben denki dati na aiti banknotoe Jeane de wroko (21/17-1)

I TNS think that is eight bank-notes Jeane ASP work

‘I thought Jeane earned eight bank-notes’

Da vo da hede tra woortoe dee, di de kom na

Is for that reason other words BE, REL ASP come LOC

‘That's why there are other words, which are used in

pleesi vo dem neem, dem kali dem “voornaamwoorden”

place of the nouns, they call them “pronouns”

stead of nouns; they're called pronouns’ (21/17-2)

dati a no Julius wawan kan leni joe, ma tra soema

... that is NEG Julius only can lend you, but other people

‘... that it's not just Julius who can lend you money, but

habi moni toe (21/18)

have money too

other people too’

So leki dem aanwijzende voornaamwoorden dee vo soori

So like the demonstrative pronouns BE for show

‘Just like demonstrative pronouns point to a person or a

soema ofoe sani, da so dem vragende voornaamwoorden

person or thing, is thus the interrogative pronouns

thing, in the same way there are interrogative pronouns that

dee vo haksi na persoon, zaak ofoe sani (21/23)

BE for ask LOC person, object or thing

ask for a person or a thing’

ma net so leki ‘fa’ dee wan lettergreep nomo,

but just so like ‘fa’ (‘how’) BE one syllable only,

‘but just like “fa” has only one syllable and “hoefa” has  
en “hoefa” habi toe, da so da  
and “hoefa” (“how-fashion”) have two, is thus the  
two, in the same way the concept of “hoefa” has more  
opvatting vo “hoefa” habi moro foeloe beteekenis toe (21/24)  
idea of “hoefa” have more much meaning too  
meaning too’

Ma a no allatem da naamwoord habi da ‘de’ vanoodoe,  
But is NEG all-time the noun have the ‘de’ necessary

‘But (subject) nouns do not always need “de” to show the  
vo soori da tegenwoordige tijd (21/29)  
for show the present tense  
present tense (of the following predicate)’

A no alla werkwoorden de haksi, dati da naamwoord moe  
Is NEG all verbs ASP ask that the noun must

‘Not all verbs demand the (subject) noun to be accompanied

habi wan gezelschaps “de” (21/38)

have a company “de”

by “de”

No taki ‘mi gebore na da jaari ...’, bika a no

NEG say ‘I give-birth LOC the year ...’, because it NEG

‘Don’t say “mi gebore na da jaari ...”, because you didn’t

joe gebore joe sreefi, ma joe mama ben gebore

you give-birth you self but is your mama TNS give-birth

give birth to yourself, but your mama did’

joe (21/39)

you

Da so a dee nanga alla dem werkwoorden di no habi

Is thus it BE with all the verbs REL NEG have

‘That’s the case with all verbs that have no “de” in

“de” na dem fesi na da aantoonende wijze

“de” LOC their face LOC the indicative mood

front of them in the present tense’

onvolm. tegenw. tijd (21/40)

imperfect present tense

Ma a no allatem dem woortoe disi habi wan a parti (sic)

But is NEG all-time the words DEM have a distinct

‘But these words (i.e. reduplications) do not always have a  
beteekenis (21/5)  
meaning

separate meaning’

Da so mi kom na joe (21/56)  
Is thus I come LOC you

‘In this condition (in this way) I came to you’

Makzien II (1913) (pp.51-52)

Vo wroko, dati dem no ben lobbi, ma vo liebi en vo  
For work, that they NEG TNS love, but for live and for

‘They didn't like to work, but to live a life of pleasure,

plisieri, da dati dem ben zoekoe! (22/52)  
pleasure, is that they TNS seek

that's what they were looking for!’

Herskovits & Herskovits (1936) (pp.150-200)

Na Konim ben poti Tigri diaso, fo mi lere hem  
Is King TNS put Tiger here-so for I teach him

‘The King placed Tiger here for me to teach him

taki (23/152-1)

talk

how to talk’

Nowan suma mu' sabi-taki na mi kiri Tigri (23/152-2)  
NEG-one person must know-say is I kill Tiger

‘Nobody should know that I killed Tiger’

Dan mi sa go taigi Konim, taki, na siki, Tigri siki,  
Then I TNS go tell King say is sick Tiger sick

‘Then I will tell the King that Tiger has been very ill and

a dede (23/152-3)

he dead

has died’

Tyotyoforu n'e go bigi moro. Na so  
Tyotyoforu (i.e. bird species) NEG ASP go big more. Is thus

‘Tyoty-bird is not going to grow bigger. He is only that

no mo a de bigi (23/156)

no more he BE big

big’

A denk' taki na wan suma bar' gi hem taki en mama  
He think say is a person call give him say his mama

'He thought a person called out to him that his mother was

dede (23/158-1)

dead

dead (whereas, in fact, it were Anansi's children calling)'

'A so a pikin, 'a so a sa tan (23/158-2)

Is thus he small, is thus he TNS stay

'Little as he is, so he will remain'

Na so hem mama na hem papa (23/158-3)

Is thus his mama and his papa ø

'The same goes for his mother and father'

Ma ef a mankeri, mi n'e gi 'a moni baka, bika'

But if it miss, I NEG ASP give the money back, because

'But, if it is short, I won't give the money back to you,

na hondert xulde yu be' gi mi, na hondert mi mu

is hundred guilders you TNS give me, is hundred I must

because it's a hundred guilders you gave me and it's a



gi yu baka (23/158-4) give you back

hundred I must give you back'

No, mi no ben taigi taki na Dia morsu? Now, I NEG TNS tell say is Deer dirty  
(23/162-1)

'Now, didn't I tell you that Deer is truly dirty?'

Da' Ba Anansi go si na poptie, da' a denki Then Brother Anansi go see the doll, then  
na wan he think is a

'Then Ba Anansi saw the doll and thought there was a person

suma dape (23/162-2) person there

there'

Na yu kaka, na Mi Kaka (23/162-3) Is your shit BE My Shit (i.e. Anansi's  
name within the context of this story)

'Your shit appears as my shit'

So ala dei na suma den kom luku na gro', Thus all days the person they come look  
na karu the ground is corn

'So every day the man came to look after the field and there

mankeri (23/164) miss

was corn missing'

A so dyariman kom, a taki, 'So, na yu Is thus garden-man come he say: 'So is  
you ø

'In that situation the gardener came and said: "Aha,

furuman?' (23/166-1 & 23/166-2) thief?'

you are the thief?'"

A so, gro'man fom Keskesi te ... a kiri Is thus groundman beat Monkey till ... he  
hem (23/166-3) kill him

‘That's why the farmer beat Monkey to death’

Den mek' wan sabi-taki, tak' na Anansi They make a know-say say is Anansi BE  
na na fufuruma' the thief

‘They made it known that Anansi was the thief’ (23/166-4)

A denki taki na Gadu ben de taki He think say is God TNS ASP talk  
(23/168-1)

‘He thought it was God speaking’

Na Konum srefi pot' mi dia (23/168-2) Is King self put me there

‘The King himself put me here’

Ma ala dati na Anansi ben de taki na ini But all that is Anansi TNS ASP say LOC  
na kaka inside the excrement

‘But all this Anansi was saying from inside the excrement’ (23/168-3)

Da' Konum kom kisi bigi syem, bika' a Then King come get big shame because  
no hem ben is NEG he TNS

‘Then the King grew very ashamed because he hadn't

du dati (23/170-1) do that

done that’

Dan a go taigi Konum taki na so den si Then he go tell King say is thus they see  
Anansi komopo Anansi come-up

‘Then he went to tell the King that they saw Anansi come out

na ini na sani (23/170-2) LOC inside the thing

from inside the thing (i.e. the excrement) just like that’

Na go' ben de kiri den na busi (23/172-1) Is gun TNS ASP kill them LOC bush

‘It was gun that had been killing them in the bush’

Tigri sen' kari ala meti fo den kom na Tiger send call all animals for they come  
dede hoso, LOC dead house,

‘Tiger had all the animals come to a funeral, because

bikasi na go' dede, na feanti fo ala meti because is gun dead, the enemy of all  
(23/172-2) animals

gun was dead, the enemy of all animals’

Ma na so mi lobi dyompo, dyompo But is thus I love jump jump  
(23/174)

‘But that's how I like to jump all the time’

Ma mi papa Tigri 'e dede, na hem baka But my father Tiger BE dead, is his back  
hem bro (23/176) it breathe

‘But my father Tiger is dead, (and still) his backside breathes’

den taki, ‘Sa’ mek’ Syensyen kot’ na karu they say, ‘What make Syensyen cut the  
so? Wa corn thus? A

‘they said: “What made Syensyen cut the corn like that?

moi karu.’ Da’ taig’ den suma taigi, na beautiful corn.’ Then-he tell the people  
Anansi tell, is Anansi

Such fine corn.” Then he told the people that Anansi made

mek’ en kot’ ‘a karu (23/180) make him cut the corn

him cut the corn’

Yu ben kori mi nanga karu, a no mi kis' You TNS cheat me with corn, is now I  
yu nanga mama get you with mama

‘You cheated me with the corn, now I cheat you with my mother’ (23/182-1)

Da' Tigri aksi hem, tak', ‘Sa' yu nyam!’ Then Tiger ask him, say, ‘What you eat!’  
A taigi a He tell the

‘Then Tiger asked him: “What are you eating?” He told

Tigri taki, na wan pis' fo en ston a nyam Tiger say, is a piece of his stones he eat  
(23/182-2)

Tiger it was a piece of his testicles he was eating’

Mi Tata, fa di fo yu bigi fatu de sūt' My father (i.e. Tiger) how those of you  
big fat BE sweet

‘My father, how very sweet must be your big and fat ones

a so sūti so! (23/182-3) is so sweet so

(i.e. testicles)’

A no yu kir' mi brada? (23/184-1) Is NEG you kill my brother’

‘Is it not you who killed my brother?’

Da' taki, ‘Sa' yu dring dan?’ Anansi taki, Then-he say, ‘What you drink then?’  
‘Na pikin Anansi say, ‘Is little

‘Then he said: “What are you drinking then?” Anansi said:

keskesi pisi mi 'e dringi’ (23/184-2) monkey urine I ASP drink’

“It's a young monkey's urine I'm drinking”

Ta'! A so keskesi pisi sūti! (23/184-3) Wait! Is thus monkey urine sweet

‘What, is monkey's urine that sweet?’

Fa mi sa kis' a so pikinso fo na pis' fo How I MOD get is thus little of the urine  
keskesi? of monkey

‘How shall I get only that little of monkey's urine?’ (23/184-4)

Ma na Dagu ben habi na wroko fo go      But is Dog TNS have the work for go  
luku te 'a watra                                      look till the water

‘But Dog had the task to keep an eye on the water till it

hati (23/186-1)                                      hot

was hot’

A no prakseri taki, na so Anansi hanu      He NEG think say, is thus Anansi hand  
hebi (23/186-2)                                      heavy

‘He had not thought that Anansi's hand was so heavy’

Na so, Tigri naki Konkoni; a denki taki na Anansi en ben Is thus, Tiger hit Rabbit; he think say is Anansi he TNS

‘That (i.e. the intrigue told earlier in the story) is why

naki (23/188-1 & 23/188-2) hit

Tiger hit Rabbit; he thought he had hit Anansi’

A no sabi taki ‘a Dia a naki (23/190-1) He NEG know say is Deer he hit

‘He didn’t know it was Deer he hit’

Den no ben sabi taki na so Anansi du (23/190-2) They NEG TNS know say is thus Anansi do

‘They didn’t know that Anansi did this’

Dan den ala kom prakseri taki, ‘Efu na Anansi tranga Then they all come think say, ‘If is Anansi strong

‘Then both of them wondered whether Anansi was really so?’ (23/190-3) thus?’

that strong’

Ma di den ‘ar’ te den weri, na Walfish kom pikinso But when they pull till they weary, is Whale come little

‘But when they had pulled until they were weary, Whale came na shoro (23/190-4) LOC shore

a little to the shore’

Dan den go na Leo, go taigi Leo taki mek’ a kar’ wan Then they go LOC Lion, go tell Lion say make he call a

‘Then they went to Lion to have him call a

komparsi, bika’ na Leo ben de konum fo ala meti (23/192-1) council, because is Lion TNS BE king of all animals





Na Falek kom presiri di a yere so, bika' Is Falcon come please when he hear thus,  
dat ben because that TNS ø

'Falcon was pleased when he heard this, because that was

langa tem na en hede (23/192-3) long time LOC his head

in his mind for a long time'

So dati Falek ben denki taki na hem ben So that Falcon TNS think say is he TNS  
sa de konum, ma a MOD BE king, but it

'So that Falcon had thought he would be king, but it did not

no ben kom fa i ben denki (23/194-1) NEG TNS come how you TNS think

happen as you had thought'

Na dat' meki fo en nya' Kakalaka te tide Is that make for he eat Cockroach till  
(23/194-2) today

'That's why he (i.e. Cock) eats cockroaches to this day'

Anansi taki, 'Suma hor' mi so?' Na sani Anansi say, 'Who hold me thus?' The  
taki, 'Na mi thing say, 'Is I

'Anansi said: "Who holds me like that?" The thing said:

a fringi' (23/196-1) ?(it?) fling'

"It's I who fling"

So Anansi ben kiri furu meti di no ben Thus Anansi TNS kill many animals REL  
sabi taki NEG TNS know say

'In that way Anansi had killed many animals who didn't

'a so Anansi ben du (23/196-2) is thus Anansi TNS do

know that this was what Anansi did'

Ma Kaiman ben sabi taki na so Anansi But Alligator TNS know say is thus  
ben kiri den Anansi TNS kill the

‘But Alligator knew that it was in this way Anansi had

tra meti (23/196-3)

other animals

killed the other animals’

Kaima' taki, ‘Fa yu de sen' mi go dape  
dan? Yu sab’

Alligator say, ‘How you ASP send me go  
there then? You know

‘Alligator said: “Why do you send me there? You know the

na horo moro mi, so na yu mu go’  
(23/196-4)

the hole exceed me, so is you must go’

(fishing) hole better than I, so it's you who must go”’

Dan Konu sen' kar' Tigri taki na so      Then King send call Tiger say is thus  
 Anansi taki (23/198)                              Anansi say

‘Then the King had someone tell Tiger that it was like that Anansi spoke’

Koenders (1946-1949) (pp.138-142)

Efi fu yu brede ofu prisiri yu mu leri wan    If for your bread or pleasure you must  
 fremde    learn a foreign

‘When you must learn a foreign language to earn a living or

tongo, leri en bun, ma a no fu dati ede yu    language, learn it well, but is NEG for  
 mu    that reason you must

for pleasure, do it well, but that (i.e. the fact that you

ferakti yu eygi tongo èn trowe en ...      despise your own language and  
 (24/140)    throw-away it

may have to speak some other than your native language) is no reason to despise  
 or reject your own language’

## Summary

This dissertation contains a description of the historical development of some syntactic constructions in Sranan (a creole language of Suriname). The period under study begins around 1700 and ends around 1950. The sentence types discussed in this study are: copula constructions, comparatives, and cleft sentences. Data was obtained from historical sources, of which about half was written by native speakers; the authors of the other half of the texts were people who knew the language well, such as Moravian missionaries.

The data from this investigation leads to the conclusion that the creolization of Sranan was a gradual process, which extended far into the nineteenth century. This is important because up to now it was generally assumed - although without empirical support - that creolization is a quick process, which is completed within one or two generations. The importance of this conclusion is enhanced by the fact that the outcome of the present study is fully warranted by the historical-linguistic data. The conclusion is confirmed by historical-demographic data: in the supposedly formative period in the history of Sranan (1650-1700) there were simply not enough children present at the plantations to perform the creolization process.

The question arises whether the gradualist model of creolization is unique for Sranan or whether it is valid for other creoles as well. To answer this question a lot of diachronic research on creole languages is necessary. If the gradualist hypothesis would be confirmed for other creoles, this would necessitate an essential revision of the concept of 'creolization'. In view of the fact that creoles are more and more often adduced to settle fundamental theoretical issues, this would not be without importance.

## Samenvatting

In dit proefschrift wordt de historische ontwikkeling beschreven van enkele syntactische constructies in het Sranan (Surinaams creools). De onderzochte periode loopt van ongeveer 1700 tot ongeveer 1950. De besproken zinstypen zijn: copulaconstructies, comparatieven en gekloofde zinnen. De gegevens werden verkregen uit historische bronnen waarvan ongeveer de helft van moedertaalsprekers afkomstig is; de andere helft werd geschreven door mensen die de taal goed kenden, zoals bijvoorbeeld Herrnhutter zendelingen.

De gegevens die het onderzoek heeft opgeleverd, leiden tot de conclusie dat de creolisering van het Sranan een geleidelijk proces is geweest, dat tot ver in de negentiende eeuw doorliep. Dit is van belang omdat tot nu toe steeds - hoewel zonder empirische ondersteuning - werd aangenomen dat creolisering een kort durend proces is, dat in één of hooguit enkele generaties voltooid wordt. Het is des te meer van belang omdat de conclusies van dit onderzoek wel geheel op historisch-linguïstische gegevens zijn gebaseerd. Deze conclusies worden bovendien bevestigd door historisch-demografische gegevens: er waren in de veronderstelde formatieve periode in de ontwikkeling van het Sranan (1650-1700) eenvoudigweg niet voldoende kinderen op de plantages aanwezig om het creoliseringsproces uit te voeren.

De vraag is nu of het graduele creoliseringsmodel uniek is voor het Sranan of dat het ook geldig is voor andere creoolse talen. Om deze vraag te kunnen beantwoorden zal veel diachroon creolistisch onderzoek gedaan moeten worden. Mocht de gradualistische hypothese ook voor andere creoolse talen bevestigd worden, dan zou dat een wezenlijke herziening van het begrip 'creolisering' noodzakelijk maken. Gezien het feit dat deze talen steeds vaker worden aangevoerd om fundamentele theoretische kwesties te beslechten, lijkt dit niet geheel zonder belang.

## **Curriculum vitae**

Jacques Arends werd op 1 mei 1952 geboren in Gendt. In 1971 slaagde hij voor het eindexamen Gymnasium-B aan het Canisius-College in Nijmegen. In 1973 begon hij aan de studie Nederlands aan de Katholieke Universiteit van Nijmegen. In 1979 behaalde hij het kandidaatsdiploma Nederlands en in 1982 het doctoraaldiploma Algemene Taalwetenschap. Van 1983 tot 1986 werkte hij aan een ZWO-project, getiteld 'Syntactische verandering in het Sranan', waarvan dit proefschrift het resultaat is. Sinds 1985 is hij docent Nederlands aan de Rijkshogeschool, Opleiding Tolk-Vertaler, in Maastricht.

## Stellingen

### behorende bij het proefschrift ‘*Syntactic Developments in Sranan. Creolization as a gradual process*’ door J.T.G. Arends

1. De creolisering van het Sranan is een gradueel proces geweest, dat zich over een aantal generaties heeft uitgestrekt.
2. Creolisering is geen uniform, maar een gedifferentieerd proces, waarvan het tempo varieert met het voorwerp van creolisering.
3. Creolisering is evenzeer een kwestie van vreemde- als van eerste-taalverwerving.
4. De oudste bekende creoolse grammatica is niet J.M. Magens' ‘Grammatica over det Creolske sprog...’ (1770), maar Pieter van Dyk's ongedateerde ‘Nieuwe en nooit bevoorens geziene onderwijzinge in het Bastert Engels, of Neeger Engels...’, dat dateert uit 1740.

A.J. van der Aa (1852-1878). Biographisch Woordenboek der Nederlanden.

5. In de achttiende eeuw bestond er in Suriname behalve een stads- en een plantageversie nog een aparte ‘blanke’ versie van het Sranan, Bakra Tongo (of: Bakra) genaamd.
6. In de Neerlandistiek moet meer aandacht besteed worden aan de koloniale variëteiten van het Nederlands, zoals het Negerhollands en het Berbice Dutch.
7. Een gedetailleerd onderzoek naar de vroege demografische geschiedenis van Suriname, in de trant van Baker's studie van Mauritius, vormt een onmisbaar onderdeel van de geschiedschrijving van het Sranan.

P. Baker & C. Corne (1982). Isle de France Creole. Affinities and Origins.

8. Om de rol van universalia in het creoliseringsproces op haar waarde te kunnen schatten, moet de creolistiek gebruik maken van de onderzoeksresultaten van de Typologisch-Universale Grammatica.
9. Dat de beste popmuziek van de jaren tachtig gemaakt wordt door enkele heren van middelbare leeftijd (verenigd onder de naam ‘Traveling Wilburys’), stemt tegelijkertijd tot vreugde, verdriet en verbazing.

10. Het is de ironie van de geschiedenis dat het kinderprogramma ‘Sesamstraat’, dat oorspronkelijk werd opgezet om o.a. verbale achterstand weg te werken, door zijn chaotische en lawaaierige karakter misschien eerder een dergelijke achterstand veroorzaakt.
11. Promoveren is niet in alle opzichten ‘naar voren bewegen’.
12. Suriname moet blijven!