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Bettina Migge, Isabelle Léglise

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## **Assessing the Sociolinguistic Situation of the Maroon Creoles**

Bettina Migge, University College Dublin

Isabelle Léglise, CNRS, SeDyL

Recent anthropological and socio-historical research on Maroon populations suggests that Maroon communities have undergone significant social change since the 1960s spurred by processes of urbanization. However, to date very little is known about how these social changes are impacting on the Maroon Creoles as there is very little sociolinguistic research being carried out in the region. The aim of this paper is to examine the sociolinguistic context of the Maroon Creoles in the light of data from two recent sociolinguistic surveys carried out in Suriname and French Guiana. The findings demonstrate that the sociolinguistic status of Maroon languages has undergone various changes. Several of them are now well represented in French Guiana and, as additional languages, are gaining speakers both in Suriname and French Guiana. While their speakers increasingly practice them together with other languages, thus displaying their multilingual repertoire, there is little indication that their survival is threatened because their speakers predominantly hold positive attitudes towards them.

### **1. Introduction**

Ever since Bickerton's (1984) claim that Saamaka is the closest reflection of the human blueprint for language, the creole languages of Suriname, and Saamaka, the Eastern Maroon varieties Ndyuka and Pamaka, and Sranantongo in particular, have figured prominently in structurally oriented research on creole genesis (e.g. Byrne 1987; Huttar & Huttar 1994; Veenstra 1996; McWhorter 1992; Migge 1998, 2003; papers in Migge & Smith 2007; Lefebvre & Loranger 2006). Research on these languages and comparisons with their European and African input languages has much furthered our understanding of creole genesis, historical language contact

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and the structural makeup of these languages.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to the relative abundance of structurally, contact linguistics and historically oriented publications on the Maroon Creoles, very little is known about their sociolinguistic situation, including patterns of synchronic language contact affecting these languages. The first collection on the languages of Suriname, *De Talen van Suriname* (Charry, Koefoed & Muysken 1983), discusses macro- and micro-sociolinguistic issues such as language attitudes, structural issues, and political and applied issues. However, the articles deal mainly with three of the roughly twenty languages spoken in Suriname, namely Sranantongo, Sarnámi, and (Surinamese) Dutch. Only the final section focuses on multilingualism in Suriname, devoting a tiny section to issues relating to the other languages of Suriname such as the Maroon languages, Javanese, and Chinese.<sup>2</sup> The findings are of interest, but are partial in that they only treat a few of the languages, are mostly based on broad observations rather than detailed studies and are clearly in need of updating as Suriname has undergone significant social change since the early 1980s. A more recently published collection, *Atlas of the Languages of Suriname* (Carlin & Arends 2002), covers a wider range of languages, namely Amerindian languages, the Creoles of Suriname (both Sranantongo and the Maroon languages) and Eurasian languages (Dutch, Chinese, Sarnámi, Javanese). However, the articles focus mostly on descriptive linguistic and historical issues. Of the four articles on the Surinamese Creoles, two articles examine historical records about the emergence and development of the Creoles of Suriname (Arends 2002a; Smith 2002), one discusses historical

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<sup>1</sup>Note that Sally and Richard Price's research on historical and contemporary anthropological, artistic and political aspects of the Saamaka community has also contributed to our understandings of the genesis and development of creoles (see e.g. Price & Price 1999; Price 2007 and references therein). However, these works have received much less attention in the debate.

<sup>2</sup>The article by Westmaas (1983) which deals with social aspects of code-switching based on a study involving participant observation and interviews has a few paragraphs on the behavior of members from different ethnic groups such as people of Javanese (p. 173-175; 184), Maroon (p. 175-176; 184-185), Chinese (p. 176-177; 185), Creole (170-172; 182-184) and Sarnámi-Hindustani speakers (172-173; 184). It also discusses interethnic interactions (p. 177-179). The practices of Amerindians are not dealt with at all.

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texts that are available for these languages (Arends 2002b) and the fourth article provides a comparative description of the distinctive features of the Maroon Creoles and Sranantongo (Bryun 2002). Both the historical articles and the comparative description of the Surinamese Creoles say very little about the contemporary context of these languages. Arends (2002a: 129) mentions at the end of his article that

[...] the main victims [of Suriname's civil war in the 1980s] were to be found in the interior where thousands of Maroons had no other option but to flee across the Marowijne River, seeking refuge in French Guiana, where many still live today. As a consequence, Ndyuka and Saramaka are now spoken languages in French Guiana, just like Boni, which has been spoken there ever since the Boni Maroons sought refuge there two hundred years ago.

Bryun (2002: 155) adds to this by pointing out that the Maroon languages are not only found in specific locations in the interior of the country as described by Grimes (1996-99), but 'all are represented in the capital Paramaribo as well. Furthermore, speakers of the various languages can be found outside of Suriname, in particular in French Guiana, the Dutch Antilles, and the Netherlands.' The article also makes passing mention of code-mixing as part of a discussion on the form of Dutch words in the Suriname Creoles and contains a brief insert by Maarten Mous and Vinije Haabo on *wakaman* language (p.174), a type of in-group speech used among specific social groups such as vendors and students.

In addition to these two volumes, there are also a few articles that deal with the contemporary linguistic context. Comparing Sranantongo to the Maroon Creoles, for instance, Carlin (2001: 225) argues that since '[t]he other Creole languages are spoken by Maroons in the interior of the country [..., they] have avoided being assigned the ambiguous 'deep' versus 'town' variant status that has become characteristic of Sranan[tongo]. Outside of their own areas, the languages of the Maroons are afforded low status in Suriname.' Carlin (2001: 230) also points out that in contrast to Amerindian languages, the 20<sup>st</sup> century has seen 'the continued growth of all the creoles languages with the possible exceptions of Matawai and Kwinti.' She goes on to note that Amerindian and Maroon children living in villages in the interior of the country have tended to be educationally disadvantaged because they are being asked to follow instruction in Dutch when in fact access to Dutch tends to be difficult outside of the classroom and teachers are generally not proficient in Maroon languages (p. 232). The article also provides a broad overview of

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language practices drawing attention to the predominance of multilingual practices, however, most of the discussion focuses on Dutch, Sranantongo and Sarnámi. There are also two articles by St-Hilaire (1999, 2001) that discuss the languages in Suriname from a language planning perspective. Drawing on socio-historical and census data, St-Hilaire (2001: 1010) argues along the lines of Carlin (2001) that Maroons (along with Amerindians) are ‘the poorest and least educated of all Surinamers. In the interior, the Maroons receive relatively little formal education and rarely achieve proficiency in Dutch.’ Moreover, they are subject to widespread discrimination from the urban population. This situation has, however, been changing somewhat since the late 1950s due to greater numbers of Maroons taking up permanent residence in Paramaribo. St-Hilaire (2001: 1014) argues that usage of Sranantongo is on the rise among all Maroons. Less educated Maroons allegedly employ it to conceal a Maroon identity in public while urban-born Maroon children tend to adopt Sranantongo as their most spoken language – in the 1992 census 57.9% of Maroons in the greater Paramaribo area stated that Sranantongo is their principal language (figures quoted were adapted from Bruijne & Schalkwijk 1994).<sup>3</sup> Usage of Dutch, by contrast, was much less widespread in 1992 as only 18.2% cited it as their main language. Maroon languages continue to be used by all social groups though to different degrees. Between the 1992 and 2004 census, the linguistic landscape of Suriname underwent important changes. The 2004 census revealed, to everybody’s surprise, that the Maroon languages, which in this case are combined figures for Saramaccaans, Aucaans and Paramaccaans (naming conventions are discussed in Section 4), emerged as the third most frequently cited household language in the country. 18.797 or 15.2% of households in Suriname reported using a Maroon language as their primary household language – the two most frequently named languages were Dutch (46.6%) and Sarnámi (15.8%).<sup>4</sup> The Maroon languages fared much less well as second languages though as they were only named by 2% of respondents. In this category it was Sranantongo (37%) and Dutch (23%) that were most frequently reported and a surprising 19% of respondents said that their household does not make use of a second language. While clearly

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<sup>3</sup>Note, however, that 23.9% are noted as speaking ‘other’, but no specific information is supplied what this refers to. We will return to issues around language reporting below.

<sup>4</sup>The 2004 census asked respondents to state both the language that was used most often in their household and the second language of their household.

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useful, the census results only provide a partial description of the linguistic landscape of Suriname. For instance, they do not give us adequate insights into people's linguistic repertoires as they were not able to talk about all the languages that they use, their linguistic practices and language ideologies.

The most recent study of the linguistic situation of Suriname was carried out by the University of Tilburg (the Department of Intercultural Communication). It was commissioned by the *Nederlandse Taalunie*, an intergovernmental organization (the Netherlands, Belgium and Suriname) and its aim was to determine whether or not Dutch should remain the main language of instruction in primary and secondary schools in Suriname. The data was collected by means of a self-administered, written survey administered to primary (4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade) and secondary (2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> class) school children all over Suriname. A second questionnaire was distributed to teachers. The results (Kroon & Yağmur 2010) provide interesting insights into language use, but are not comprehensive. First, it focused on the role of Dutch rather than being aimed at an overall assessment of the linguistic situation, including language ideologies. Second, its self-administered design is problematic because aside from issues around literacy, children in Suriname are not generally encouraged to discuss their language practices. Since only competence in Dutch is commonly explicitly discussed children tend to overestimate their use of the prestige language in an effort to conform to educational norms (see Section 5). Third, the interpretation of the results made minimal reference to local language ideologies, taking children's statements more or less at face value.

Social science research, while not focusing on language per se, provides detailed insights into the changing nature of the life of Maroons. In a short article published in the *New West Indian Guide* in 2002 the anthropologist Richard Price, for instance, critically assessed current knowledge about Maroons. He argued that the population/speaker numbers generally given for Maroons in the literature on Suriname require modification. First, Maroons are nowadays no longer just resident in Suriname and in the traditional villages in the interior of the country. Second, the overall number of Maroons has also increased significantly over the years due to improved living conditions in some areas. His revised estimates, which were inferred indirectly

from other statistics or estimates ‘on the ground’ (Price 2002: 84;),<sup>5</sup> are significantly higher than those that only took into account the Maroons resident in (the interior of) Suriname. He estimated that there were over 50.000 Ndyuka and Saamaka each and about 6 000 Aluku and Pamaka each in 2002. This is twice the number of Ndyuka and Saamaka and about three times the number of Aluku and Pamaka that were usually assumed to exist (e.g. see Carlin 2001). Third, his estimates suggest that the traditional village setting is losing in importance as a place of residence for Maroons because Maroons who leave the traditional village setting overwhelmingly make their new homes in urban centers. He estimated that while only 36% of Aluku Maroons lived outside of their traditional territories in 2002, this percentage was much higher in the case of the other Maroon communities; he suggests that about half of all Pamaka (53%), Ndyuka (46%), Saamaka (50%) and about 3/4<sup>th</sup> of Kwinti (72%) and Matawai (75%) resided outside of their traditional villages at the time. This figure has increased since then and Maroons are now also found all over the globe (Price 2013). Fourth, since the civil war, Maroons have also become a more important presence in French Guiana because according to Price’s estimates about a third of all Maroons resided in French Guiana in 2002. In a small book aimed at a popular audience in French Guiana, Richard and Sally Price (2003) highlight the important cultural and economic contributions of Maroons to French Guiana and their longterm relationship with it. However, despite their important numerical presence and cultural dominance in contemporary western French Guiana many Maroons, and members of the Saamaka community in particular, still face significant problems that hamper their full integration and contribution to society because of issues around the distribution of residency permits and people’s lack of professional qualifications.

Recent socio-historical research (e.g. van Stipriaan 2009a, 2011, 2015), like recent anthropological work, has focused on demonstrating Maroons’ interconnectedness with other population groups in the region and with urban society in particular and its impact on Maroon society. Van Stipriaan (2009a: 146), for instance, argues that throughout their history Maroons have always had contact with people from outside of their communities though at different levels

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<sup>5</sup>See also Price (2013) who suggests that Maroon populations have increased significantly in the last decade or that previous estimates underestimated their size. The most recent Surinamese census suggests that Maroons are the country’s second largest population group.

of intensity. After their flight from the plantations, Maroons were mainly in contact with slaves who helped them assure their livelihood. Since the signing of peace treaties between the Ndyuka and the Saamaka, respectively, and the colonial authorities in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, contacts with non-Maroons increased slowly and diversified. Initially, Maroon men got involved in the colonial wood industry (Thoden van Velzen 2003; van Stipriaan 2009bff), came to town to trade and Maroon delegations came for negotiations with the colonial authorities (van Stipriaan 2009:146). From the middle of the nineteenth century, Maroon men also worked in various capacities (guides, transport, porter) with European explorers (e.g. van Stipriaan 2009b: 117ff; Bilby 2004) and missionaries started proselytizing in the villages. Towards the end of the nineteenth century contact with colonial society increased due to various economic exploitation projects such as balata, gold and later also bauxite mining. Maroon men along with people from coastal Suriname and from outside of Suriname were employed in these ventures as workers, however, Maroon men monopolized the river transport that was part and parcel of the gold and balata exploitation activities in eastern Suriname (van Stipriaan 2009b: 119ff). Especially the river transport business allowed Maroons to earn unprecedented amounts of money. The contacts between Maroons and non-Maroons led to the introduction and integration of a range of new material objects to Maroon villages and thus led to changes in village practices. Although this literature is silent about linguistic effects, it is very likely that Maroon men's more regular engagement with people from other parts of the region and the greater presence of non-Maroons in some of the traditional villages also brought Maroons (and the men in particular) into greater contact with a range of other languages such as Sranantongo, French Guianese Creole, French and Dutch.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, contacts between Maroons and the rest of Surinamese society increased exponentially. Maroon men together with other Surinamese people found work in a number of infrastructure projects such as the construction of railroad tracks from Paramaribo to the Lawa, the airport in Zanderij, the bauxite industry in Paranam, the hydro-electric dam in central Suriname and the European space center in Kourou, French Guiana (van Stipriaan 2009a: 150). However, it was the construction of the hydroelectric dam in the 1960s and the civil war in the 1980s that had a crucial effect on Maroon society (van Stipriaan 2009a: 151, 2011, forthcoming). Both events prompted the displacement of great numbers of Maroons from their traditional villages. People were rehoused in so-called transmigration camps with easier access to



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the city which led to more frequent interaction between villagers and Suriname's main urban area, and eventually gave rise to onward migration to Paramaribo (van Stipriaan 2009a: 151). The civil war in Suriname prompted a virtual exodus of Maroons from the traditional village setting to Surinamese and French Guianese urban areas. After the war comparatively few people returned to the interior villages, leaving them partially depopulated. Especially the civil war forced all of Maroon society, and not just men, to engage much more closely both with members of other Maroon communities, but most importantly with members of other sections of Surinamese and French Guianese society, including people from the wider region (Guyanese, Haitian, Brazilian). Maroon children growing up in urban but also in many rural areas today share classrooms with children of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and adults regularly interact with a diverse set of non-Maroons both at work and in their neighborhoods. As a result, Maroons have had to adopt new ways of life. Cash labor activities have replaced subsistence farming and exchange relationships, and social networks are being enriched by contact with people from outside of the immediate extended family network. Women are no longer confined to the domestic sphere but are also participating in the cash labor industry. However, integration into urban life has not been easy for most Maroons both in Suriname and in French Guiana. Work opportunities are not plentiful especially for people with little or no formal education. Maroon women often try to make ends meet by selling goods on the market, as door-to-door or as mobile vendors in the gold mining areas. In both Suriname and French Guiana, women also find temporary or long term employment as cleaners in private houses, schools etc. To supplement their income, they often also maintain a field on the outskirts of the city (Aviankoi & Apapoe 2009: 156). Women who obtain residency papers for French Guiana are also entitled to a range of social benefits which tends to positively impact on their financial stability. Men, by contrast, tend to work in the construction and transport (minibus, taxi, boat) industry or work in the small-scale gold exploitation industry, spending significant amounts of time away from their homes. Less educated Maroons also tend to live in substandard housing in the poorer areas of urban centers, often illegally occupying land and thus often do not have regular access to electricity, running water and proper sanitation (Aviankoi & Apapoe 2009: 157). Professional Maroons are still in the minority in both Suriname and French Guiana, but the number of professional women is increasing. They tend to have better incomes but especially

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professional Maroon women often either live alone or have partners from other ethnic groups (Aviankoi & Apapoe 2009: 157-8), increasing intercultural contact.

Social science research clearly suggests that the life of Maroons has undergone dramatic changes since the middle of the 20th century and particularly since the late 1980s. However, to date we know very little about how these changes are affecting the linguistic situation of Maroons. For instance, we do not know which languages people use and for what purposes, people's views about them as well as their actual patterns of language use. The aim of this paper is to make a first contribution towards filling this knowledge gap by discussing the sociolinguistic situation of the Maroon Creoles based on recent sociolinguistic research carried out in both Suriname and French Guiana. We discuss language practices as they relate to Maroon languages and to speakers of Maroon languages in the two political constituencies as well as identify areas where more research is required. Although Suriname and French Guiana are two distinct social, political and historical entities, we will simultaneously focus on Maroon languages in both contexts. The Maroon populations of the two political constituencies do not (yet) constitute distinct sociopolitical entities. They essentially function as transnational entities that cannot be easily subdivided into two neat socially, historically and politically distinct units. The Maroons living in the two constituencies still align with the same leaders (the *gaanman* and their *kabiten*) and communities (Ndyuka, Saamaka, Pamaka), come from the same traditional villages and extended family networks and have the same rights to traditional lands. There is also quite a bit of regular overlap between Maroons living in the two political constituencies. People regularly cross the border in both directions for a variety of reasons such as medical care, shopping, visiting family members and/or partners, attending family or other cultural events, preparing fields and looking for work. Adults, but also children, have often also lived for shorter or longer periods of time in both constituency, move backwards and forwards between them and the traditional villages, hold or have the right to citizenship of both countries and are acquainted with practices on both sides of the political border, making use of them as they see fit. While we do not want to deny the relevance of the macro-political border, we only treat it as one possible factor among others that affects how Maroon languages are practiced and evaluated. The main goals of this paper are thus first, to explore the situation of Maroon languages in general and second, to identify the factors such as place of residence, gender etc. that impact on how they are practiced and evaluated.

The paper is organized into seven sections. Section 2 presents the data for the study and issues relating to data collection and data analysis. The geographic distribution of Maroon languages is examined in Section 3. Section 4 discusses naming issues and Section 5 examines the linguistic repertoire of speakers of Maroons languages. Language ideologies are explored in Section 6 and language practices in Section 7. The final section summarizes the findings and discusses their implications.

## **2. Data and Methodology**

In order to explore the sociolinguistic situation of the Maroon Creoles, following Léglise (2007a) three complementary types of data sets were collected: first, data coming from two guided interview-based language surveys with children, one carried out in French Guiana and the other in Suriname; second, data obtained in semi-guided interviews with adults; third, observation and recordings of actual language practices. This paper is mainly based on the findings from the guided interview-based language surveys, but also draws on the other data types where appropriate.

The goal of the guided interview-based language surveys was to access on a large scale the (declared) language practices and ideologies of each country's youth. The survey included questions about language use in specific interactional dyads, e.g.:

- *Which language(s) do you use when speaking to*  
*a) your mother: b) your father: c) your brother(s) and sister(s) d) your friends: e) your*  
*mother's parents /your father's parents;*

questions about language acquisition, e.g.:

- *Which language(s) did you speak before starting school [if you speak several languages, in*  
*which language(s) did you learn to speak]:*
- *Which other language(s) did you learn (e.g. from grandparents, school, people in*  
*neighbourhood);*

questions about language use in specific settings, e.g.:

- *Which language(s) do you use most often when you are NOT at school?;*

questions about language ideologies, e. g.:

- *Which languages would you like to learn to write?*

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- *In which language(s) do you feel most comfortable?*

- *Language X, do you speak it well, very well, a little?;*

questions about language transmission, e.g.:

- *Which language(s) did your mother/father speak when s/he was a child?: (your mother's/father's birthplace):*

The interviews followed a grid of questions and were realized with primary school children attending the final grade of primary school (i.e. they were between ten and twelve years of age).<sup>6</sup> It was decided to focus on (upper primary) school-aged children for several reasons. First, persons aged below fifteen make up a significant proportion of each of the two societies (ca. 30%). Second, primary school as opposed to secondary school attendance tends to be quite high. Third, unlike adults, children are easy to access on a large scale through the institution of the school. Fourth, children below fifteen grew up for the most part after the main social changes in the region had taken place and thus their practices are probably indicative of future trends.

Once permission to carry out the language survey had been obtained from a school, the researcher/assistant made a short presentation about multilingualism to the entire class in order to put children at ease and to give them license to talk about languages other than the medium of instruction, and explained the procedures for the survey to the children. Children then attended 10-minute one-on-one guided interviews with the researcher/assistant outside of the classroom while the remainder of the class continued to engage with the lesson. While the interviews followed the grid of questions, interviewers took the time to reword questions if they felt that children had not properly understood and to also follow up on issues.<sup>7</sup>

Carrying out the survey in the school setting clearly has some drawbacks. By focusing only on children who attend formal education, the survey automatically also only selects children who

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<sup>6</sup>Note that in the case of the Surinamese survey, some children were above that age range (between 13-16) because they had either started school late or had repeated one or more grades.

<sup>7</sup>For instance, if children reported that their parents or grandparents used certain languages, but had not reported using these languages themselves, the children were asked about their own competence in these languages. If children reported employing several languages in the same dyad, we often asked them to estimate the relative importance of each language. This allowed us to obtain valuable additional insights into language use and language ideologies.

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have knowledge of the official language, Dutch in Suriname and French in French Guiana, and who also use it. However, since primary school attendance rates tend to be quite high (90% in Suriname UNICEF; 96% in French Guiana (Insee, 2011)) at primary level, this way of accessing interviewees does not unduly skew the sample. Using the official medium of instruction inadvertently runs the risk of giving undue additional importance to this language to the detriment of other languages. We attempted to minimize this by explaining to children in the presentation and during the interview that we are interested in hearing about all the languages that they speak and that our aim is not to test their competence in the official language, a common misconception.<sup>8</sup> We did not feel that it was socially appropriate to carry out the survey in a language other than Dutch in Suriname as it is locally accepted practice to do this ‘kind of work’ in the official language. A systematic change in this practice would have created other kinds of asymmetrical relationships between locally used languages. Nevertheless, we are aware that due to carrying out the survey in the school context, children are likely to echo to a greater extent the school’s views about language.

The French Guianese survey was carried out between 2000 and 2011 as part of an on-going sociolinguistic diagnostic whose aim is to document and explore multilingualism throughout French Guiana (Léglise 2013).<sup>9</sup> Data were collected in primary schools throughout the country. Most of the data come from urban areas located along the coastal strip where 90% of the population lives. Urban areas included Cayenne and its periphery (Rémire-Montjoly, Matoury), Macouria and Kourou in the eastern part and the towns of St-Laurent-du-Maroni, Sinnamary, Iracoubo, Mana, Javouhey and Awala-Yalimapo in the western part of this French overseas region. In rural areas, data were obtained from all the schools situated on the French side of the

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<sup>8</sup>In the presentation to the whole class we explicitly mentioned different languages that are generally not talked about in the school context but that are known to be used in the area to give children license to talk about them.

<sup>9</sup>This research project (Léglise 2000-2013) was funded by the French Ministry for Culture (DGLFLF), and French national research institutions: *Centre national de la recherche scientifique* (CNRS) and *Institut de recherche pour le développement* (IRD) through the research unit *Structure et Dynamique des Langues* and *Centre d'Etudes des Langues Indigènes d'Amérique* (UMR 8202 SEDYL-CELIA).

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Maroni/Marowijne<sup>10</sup> River (Apatou, Mayman, Apagui, Grand Santi, Papaichton, Nouveau Wacapou, Maripasoula, Elahé, Twenké, Taluhen, Antecume Pata) and from schools in villages located in the eastern part of the region such as Roura, Régina, Cacao, St Georges de l'Oyapock and Camopi (see Map 1). To date, more than 2000 interviews have been statistically treated through Excel. The findings are presented in various publications. They have been used to challenge received views about French Guiana's linguistic context (Léglise 2007a) and to discuss education language policies (Léglise & Puren 2005; Alby & Léglise 2005; 2014) and language policies in medical institutions (Léglise 2007b, 2011).

The survey in Suriname was carried out between 2008 and 2010 as part of a research project on language and mobility in the Guiana region.<sup>11</sup> Initial data collected focused on Paramaribo where a large proportion of the Surinamese population resides. While the aim was to get a representative overview of the language practices involving all languages and population groups in the city, an attempt was made to focus on areas where newer rural-urban migrants reside. Data collection in eastern Suriname (Marowijne and Sipaliwini districts) focused on schools in the main urban centers Moengo and Albina, the surrounding villages and schools along the Marowijne/Maroni River from Galibi up to Ampumantapu. Data were also collected in the primary schools along the Paramaribo-Albina road (districts of Commewijne and Marowijne). In western Suriname, data collection took place in all the schools in the district of Coronie and in about 80% of the schools in the district of Nickerie including the towns of Nieuw Nickerie and

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<sup>10</sup>Note that the lower part of the river that constitutes the current border between Suriname and French Guiana is referred to as Maroni in French Guiana, Marowijne in Suriname and as Mawina in the languages of the Maroons.

<sup>11</sup>The research project *Construction of borders and identity among Maroons* (Léglise and Migge 2008-2010), a subproject of the grant DC2MT entitled *The dynamics of migration and cross-border mobility between French Guiana, Suriname, Brazil and Haiti*, was funded by the French National Research Agency (ANR) and by the Inter-Establishment Agency for Research for Development (AIRD). We would like to thank Dr. Robby Morroy and the Lim A Po Institute for helping us to get the project off the ground, and especially Astra Deneus, but also Silvy M. and Simon B. Sana, for their invaluable help with the data collection over the two years. Thanks also go to Dr Troiani for help with processing the Excel data.

Wageningen. In ‘central’ Suriname data collection focused on the schools along and off the Paramaribo-Zanderij road (Wanica district), along and off the Zanderij-Apoera road, i.e. the Para and Sipaliwini districts, including Donderkamp, and in the districts of Saramacca, Brokopondo, Wanica and Commewijne, see Map 1 for details.<sup>12</sup> While we covered all the schools in the Brokopondo district, only about 85% of schools were reached in the districts of Wanica and Commewijne due to some issues with accessibility. To date, just under 3000 interviews have been completed out of which 1554 have been statistically treated through Excel. The findings are presented in (Léglise & Migge 2015).



**Map 1:** Survey locations in Suriname and French Guiana

<sup>12</sup>Data were not collected in some of the interior regions due to difficulties with transport and the prohibitive cost of transportation. It is hoped that data collection will focus on these areas in the very near future.

The second data set consists of observations and recordings of actual linguistic practices in a range of social domains (Fishman 1964) such as, for instance,<sup>13</sup>

- in the school environment (observations and recordings of natural interactions within the classroom and in the schoolyard),
- in the domestic sphere (observations and recordings of interactions among siblings and with and among different (adult) family members),
- in the public domain (observations and recordings of encounters in the market place, at the post office, in shops etc., and in different work settings such as the hospital, rice factories, construction sites etc).

The third data set consists of semi-guided interviews with adults and aimed to elicit discourses about language. They were carried out in a variety of languages such as Dutch, Maroon Creoles, Sranantongo, English and French. Due to time constraints, our research project in Suriname focused mainly on the first type of data; only some recordings (of unguided language use and semi-guided interviews) and observations have so far been carried out and will be referred to where suitable. In the case of French Guiana, we have at our disposal a corpus of interactions and discourses that were recorded over the years.<sup>14</sup>

### **3. Locating speakers of Maroon languages**

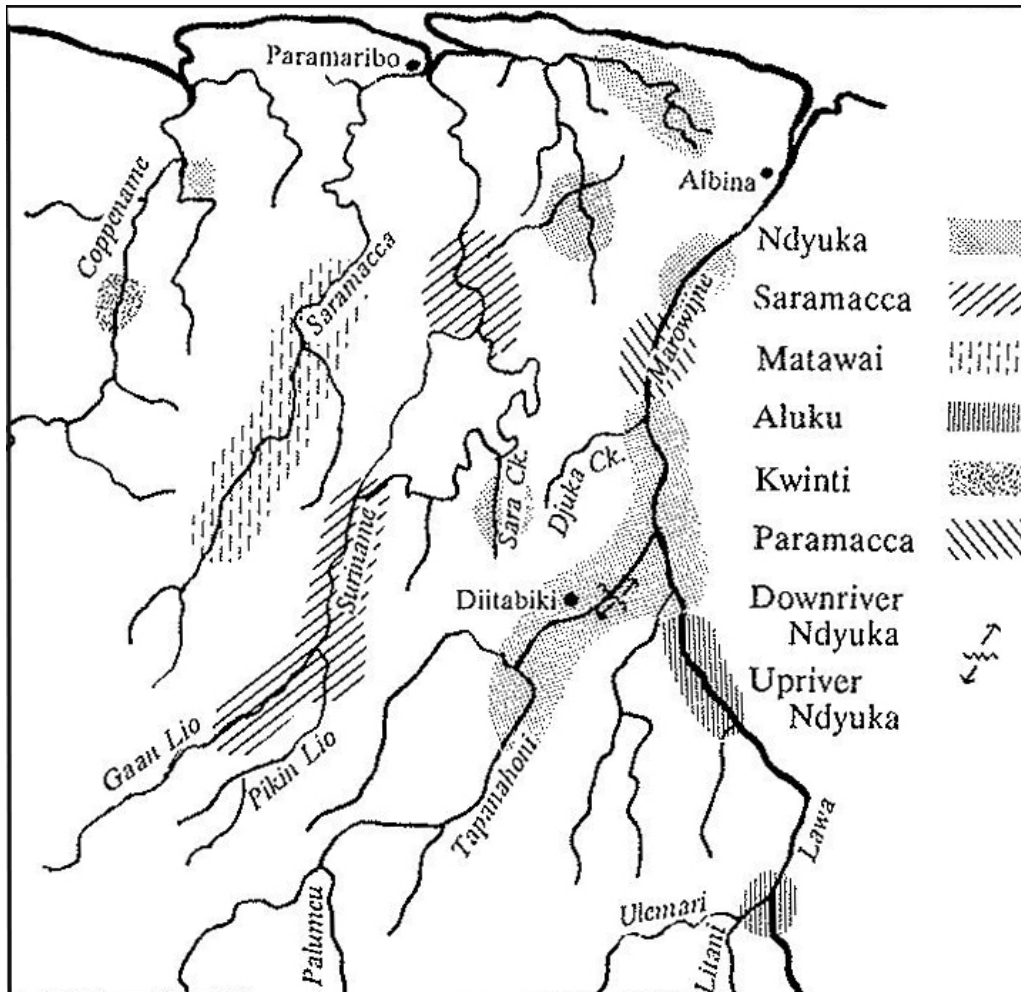
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<sup>13</sup>See Léglise (2005) for analysis of language policy and language choice in the little town of Mana (at the post office, in the rice factories and on construction sites); see Léglise (2007b) for analysis of interactions at the hospital in the town of Saint-Laurent du Maroni; see Léglise & Alby (2006) concerning the language situation of the Amerindian village of Awala-Yalimapo in eastern French Guiana and Léglise & Puren (2005) among others on the school environment.

<sup>14</sup>In French Guiana over one hundred interactions, including interviews were carried out. Interactions (in both constituencies) took place in a variety of places such as in a pub, at friends' houses, in public locations such as the town hall or the passport office, at schools, in the hospital, at the post-office, in shops etc.



Traditionally, the Maroon Creoles were predominantly spoken in the traditional villages of the six surviving Maroon groups which are located some distance from the heavily populated coastal areas in the interior of the country (Map 2). The villages of the Saamaka, Matawai and Kwinti are found in the center of Suriname along the Suriname, Saramacca and Coppename Rivers, respectively, while those of the Aluku, Ndyuka and Pamaka are located along the Lawa, Tapanahoni and Marowijne/Maroni Rivers, respectively. Historical migrations have also led to the establishment of Ndyuka villages along the Cottica and Maroni/Marowijne Rivers and the Sara Creek (Map 2). As documented by research in the social sciences (e.g. van Stipriaan 2009a&b, 2011, 2015; Price 2002, 2008, 2013; Price & Price 2003), this situation has been changing progressively since the middle of the last century and has led to significant change during and after the civil war in the late 1980s.



Map 2: Geographical location of the Maroon languages in Suriname (Huttar & Huttar 1994)

Quantification of the survey data lends support to the findings of historical and anthropological research on Maroons. They show that while the Maroon Creoles are still widely employed in the traditional Maroon villages, their usage is not restricted to these locations. Children throughout French Guiana and in urban areas in Suriname also reported having one or more Maroon languages in their linguistic repertoire. In fact, roughly between 35% and 45% of children interviewed in Suriname and French Guiana, respectively, reported employing a Maroon Creole for some of their interactions. In Suriname, 18% of children interviewed reported speaking a variety of the Eastern Maroon Creole (i.e. Aluku, Ndyuka, Pamaka) which they usually referred to by the name of Aukaans.<sup>15</sup> Only 3% of children said that they speak Paramaccaans and none of the children cited Aluku. A further 10% of children reported speaking Saramaccaans and less than 1% of children claimed Matawai and Kwinti.

A somewhat different distribution emerged for neighbouring French Guiana. Here, more than half of the children reported having varieties of the Eastern Maroon Creole (EMC) in their repertoire (38% Ndyuka, 12% Aluku, 7% Pamaka) while Saamaka was cited by only 4% of children. None of the children claimed Matawai and Kwinti. These results support Price (2002, 2013) and Price & Price (2003) in that they show that only the members of some Maroon communities, namely of the Ndyuka, Pamaka and Saamaka communities, have a presence in both political constituencies.<sup>16</sup> They also suggest that migration to French Guiana did not lead to language loss as children still report using the Maroon Creoles in French Guiana. In fact, the figures suggest that their use is expanding due to migration as the number of children who reported learning and using (some of) the Maroon Creoles as additional languages is higher in French Guiana, especially in the western part of the region, than in Suriname.

The French Guianese school survey revealed that Maroon Creoles constitute the most widely spoken languages in the western towns and municipalities (*communes*) of this French overseas

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<sup>15</sup>Note that when reporting on the survey results in this article, we make use of the language names that were used by the children during the interview. Thus, different names are used when reporting the results for the two countries because French Guianese and Surinamese children used different names or different versions of the same name to refer to the same languages.

<sup>16</sup>Note that this might not accurately represent the actual situation because recent research suggests that Kwinti and Matawai speakers are also migrating to French Guiana.

territory, see Map 1. Ndyuka was cited by 55% of schoolchildren in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni (Léglise 2004) and by 65% in Mana (Léglise 2005). By contrast, the number of children claiming Aluku and Pamaka as part of their repertoire was much lower, about 10% in the case of Aluku and 17% for Pamaka. Saamaka is claimed in both western French Guianese towns, but the numbers are rather low, namely 8% in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni and 2% in Mana. In the rural municipalities along the Maroni/Marowijne River, (Eastern) Maroon languages are, unsurprisingly, the main languages reported as first languages as most of the traditional villages are situated along that river or on confluent ones (Tapanahoni and Lawa Rivers). For instance, in the rapidly expanding rural villages of Apatou and Mayman on the lower Maroni River 93% of children interviewed claimed an Eastern Maroon variety as their first language, while only 4% of children reported speaking Saamaka, 2% French, and 1% an Amerindian language as their first language (Léglise 2007a). Maroon Creoles are also claimed as a first language in other parts of the French Guianese territory such as in the town of St Georges de l'Oyapock on the Brazilian border and in the main urban centers of French Guiana, Cayenne and Kourou, in eastern French Guiana. While only a few speakers of Maroon languages currently reside in the smaller urban areas in the east, their numbers are quite significant and growing in the main towns.<sup>17</sup>

In Suriname, substantial numbers of children reported speaking Maroon Creoles in the main towns in eastern Suriname (Albina, Moengo), the surrounding villages, and in villages along the Maroni/Marowijne River in eastern Suriname. The numbers were also quite high in Paramaribo and south of the city in the districts of Para and Brokopondo (Map 1). By contrast, few of the children interviewed in the coastal areas west of the Paramaribo, especially in the districts of Coronie and Nickerie, but also in the districts of Saramacca and Wanica claimed having a Maroon language in their repertoire. In Moengo, over 90% and in Albina over 60% of school children reported speaking Ndyuka and about 5% of children in Moengo and 10% of children in

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<sup>17</sup>Price & Price (2003: 60ff) and Price (2008) show that there were several, in some cases quite substantial, Saamaka settlements in eastern French Guiana (Régina, Saint-Georges-de-l'Oyapock, Tampak) in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and in the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, in the 1960s many Saamaka left for Kourou because the construction of the European space center provided ample work opportunities. Today only a few elderly Saamaka, but a number of their descendants, usually the children of French Creole origin women, are found in the area east of Cayenne.

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Albina said that they speak Saamaka. In the surrounding villages about 90% of children cited Ndyuka. In the Brokopondo district south of the capital city, nearly 100% of children said that they speak a Maroon Creole. The languages that were most frequently cited are Saamaka and Ndyuka, and a very small number of pupils also said that they speak Matawai and Kwinti. In Paramaribo, about 12.5% of children claimed Saamaka and 17% Ndyuka as their first language. Matawai and Pamaka were each reported by only about 1% of children (but see below).

#### **4. Children's naming conventions for the Maroon languages**

An interesting finding of both surveys was that children in the two countries used different names to refer to Maroon languages, see Table 1 for a summary. In French Guiana, children typically made use of local names (auto-denominations) when referring to Ndyuka and Aluku probably because these names are also commonly used in French. In the case of the other Maroon Creoles spoken in French Guiana, children alternated between auto-denominations and terms typically used in French (Saamaka versus Saramaka and Pamaka versus Paramaka). Children also used indigenous generalizing terms such Businenge(e) Tongo and less frequently also the term Nenge(e). The term Nenge(e) is used among adults to refer to the three closely related languages, Aluku, Ndyuka, Pamaka, in a general, non-contrastive manner (Migge & Léglise 2013: 123; Goury & Migge 2003: 11-12). Nenge with a short final vowel is generally used among Aluku and Pamaka Maroons while Nengee is typical of Ndyuka varieties (Goury & Migge 2003). This cluster of closely related varieties is also called Eastern Maroon Creoles in the academic literature (e.g. Smith 2002; Migge 2004, 2007). In most cases, the term Businenge Tongo refers only to the three dialectal varieties, but at times children also use it to refer to all the Maroon languages spoken in French Guiana, namely Aluku, Ndyuka, Pamaka and Saamaka. Especially children who reported not speaking a variety of Nengee or who said that they had learned it later in life sometimes also used another term, *Takitaki* to either refer to all the Maroon Creoles or only to those originating from Eastern Suriname (Aluku, Ndyuka, Pamaka). Although the term is somewhat pejorative and semantically vague, it is commonly used among non-Maroon adults in French Guiana to designate language practices that belong to the Creoles of

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Suriname (see Léglise & Migge 2006, 2007a; Migge & Léglise 2013 for a detailed discussion of this term and its usage in French Guiana).

In contrast to children in French Guiana, Surinamese children mostly employed Dutch names rather than auto-denominations to refer to all languages. They used *Aukaans* for *Ndyuka*, *Saramaccaans* for *Saamaka* or *Paramaccaans* for *Pamaka*.<sup>18</sup> None of the children employed the term *Dyuka*, which is a highly deprecatory cover term used among non-Maroons in Suriname to refer to Maroons and their languages. The term *Takitaki*, which was previously used as a cover term for all the Creole languages of Suriname (Hall 1948), including Sranantongo, was not used at all by the Surinamese children we interviewed.

Table 1: Summary of the Naming Conventions for the Creoles of Suriname

Auto-denomination	Suriname	General term (Suriname)	French Guiana	Generalizing terms (French Guiana)	Terms used in the academic literature		
					Individual	General	
Aluku	Aluku, Boni	Aukan(er)s, Dyuka	Aluku, Boni	Nenge(e), Businenge(e) Tongo, Takitaki	Aluku	Nenge, EMC <sup>1</sup>	
Kwinti	Kwinti		-		Kwinti	-	
Ndyuka, Okanisi	Aukaan(er)s		Ndyuka		Ndyuka	Ndyuka	Nengee, EMC
Pamaka	Paramaccaan(er)s		Pamaka		Pamaka	Pamaka Paramacca Paramaka	Nenge, EMC
Matawai	Matawai,	Dyuka	-		Matawai	-	

<sup>18</sup>There was some variation in naming practices with respect to *Aukaans*, *Paramaccaans*, *Saramaccaans* and *Matawai* though. For instance, children used the term *Aukaans* (the Aukaan language), *Aukaaner* (people of Aukaan background) and *Aukaaners* (the language of the Aukaaner people). The indigenized term *Okanisi* (Aukaans) was never cited. For *Matawai*, we found the following variants: *Matawai* – also the autodenomination – and *Matuariërs*.

	<i>Matuariërs</i>					
Saamaka	Saramaccaan(e r)s	Dyuka	Saamaka	Takitaki	Saramacca Saramaka	-

<sup>1</sup>EMC: Eastern Maroon Creoles.

In contrast to traditional descriptions, which typically list six Maroon Creoles and Sranantongo (see Table 1), our survey participants in Suriname mostly only claimed two Maroon languages, Aukaans and Saramaccaans. The names for the lesser used Maroon Creoles, namely Pamaka/Paramaccaans, Kwinti and Matawai, were consistently used by children in the traditional villages, but rarely outside of them, especially in urban areas. It is entirely possible that we accidentally missed speakers of these languages in Paramaribo due to their overall smaller numbers (see next section) or that they have a much greater tendency to abandon their language when leaving the traditional villages. However, there is some indication that the low reporting of these languages may be due to the impact of local language ideologies. For instance, in several instances we noticed that children were in fact utilizing Aukaans as a neutral cover term in order to refer to a lesser-used Maroon language such as Pamaka and Kwinti.<sup>19</sup> In other instances, Aukaans was used either in order to “simplify a complex situation for the interviewer”,<sup>20</sup> or to avoid displaying difference to the majority or ‘the norm’ as there is a general feeling among speakers of lesser-used varieties that they are being picked on for being different.

In the Surinamese survey, it was also noticeable that when terms other than Aukaans were used by the children, such terms were employed to designate the practices of others rather than their own. For instance, children spontaneously identified themselves as speaking Aukaans, but

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<sup>19</sup>For instance, a girl said that she grew up speaking Aukaans, but then reported that her mother and her maternal grandparents speak Pamaka. When asked whether she also speaks Pamaka, she affirmed, saying that this is the language she commonly uses with most of her family members.

<sup>20</sup>Maroons tend to think that non-Maroons do not understand the socially salient subdivisions between the different Maroon communities and languages. Instead of explaining them or insisting on them, there is a tendency to simply use the terms and practices commonly used by non-Maroons in interactions with non-Maroons.

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sometimes used terms such as *Ndyuka* or *Sarakriki (Saakiiki)*, *Kotika*, *Paramaccaans* when designating the linguistic practices of others in their network, particularly the practices of grandparents and parents. Upon further discussion with some children during the interview, it transpired that the latter terms were not seen to be entirely equivalent to *Aukaans*. *Aukaans* appears to designate a general or unmarked (modern?) variety while the other terms designate regionalized or marked varieties of the same linguistic complex. For example, according to several children in Suriname, *Ndyuka* designates the speech of Maroons from the Tapanahoni villages and sometimes also from French Guiana. From a linguistic point of view, this suggests that Maroon speech is not only ethnically stratified, but that people are also making other social distinctions, such as distinguishing between rural and urban speech. Given the frequent use of the term *Aukaans* (94%) as opposed to other related terms, it appears that children are aligning with the general, unmarked (urban) Maroon speech community rather than the village setting.

## **5. The linguistic repertoire of speakers of Maroon Creoles**

Given that both Suriname and French Guiana are multilingual countries, one of the aims of the surveys was to investigate the nature of children's linguistic repertoires. What languages do they report speaking, what purposes, functions and social domains do they assign to the different languages that they say they speak? For the purpose of this paper, we specifically investigated the responses of all the children who reported having one or more Maroon languages in their linguistic repertoire. The aim was to identify the status or place of Maroon languages in children's linguistic repertoires, their relative frequency and manner of use, and the purposes or contexts in which children use them. Before examining these issues, we first give a brief overview of the linguistic context of each country based on the findings from the overall survey data (see also Léglise & Migge 2015 and the published literature).

### **5. 1. Brief overview of the linguistic landscapes of French Guiana and Suriname**

Both Suriname and French Guiana are multilingual and are each home to a typologically diverse set of languages that are summarized in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: Languages spoken in Suriname

Official language	Amerindian languages <sup>1</sup>	Creole languages	Asian languages	‘Newer Arrivals’
Dutch <sup>2</sup>	Kari’na <sup>3</sup> Trio Arawak/Lokono Wayana	Aluku Ndyuka Pamaka Kwinti Matawai Saamaka Sranantongo	Sarnámi Javanese Varieties of Chinese	Brazilian Portuguese Guyanese English/Creole Haitian Creole Varieties of Chinese

<sup>1</sup>Carlin (2001: 226) also mentioned four other Amerindian languages, Akuriyo, Sikiiyana, Tunayana and Mawayana whose speaker numbers were very low, ranging from between 5 to 10 speakers, at the time.

<sup>2</sup>It appears that Dutch is not decreed the official language of Suriname in the Surinamese constitution. Its exclusive use in education appears to be conventional and is essentially a continuation of (colonial) language practices.

<sup>3</sup>Note that *Kari’na* is the spelling used in Suriname while *Kali’na* is used in French Guiana (see Table 3). The form *Kari’nja* is a recent spelling from Western Suriname (Wayambo river area).

Tables 1 and 2 show that while the two political entities do not share the same official language, there is overlap in terms of the other languages spoken in the two countries. Both constituencies are home to the same broad categories of languages, namely Amerindian, Creole and Asian languages, but they do not always share the same languages. For instance, the two countries only share three out of the seven main Amerindian languages spoken in the region. However, in both constituencies, only less than 5% of the population reports speaking an Amerindian language. Creole languages are spoken in both constituencies, but there is only partial overlap with respect to the actual languages. While French Guiana boasts a number of French-based Creoles, including the former French Guianese lingua franca, French Guianese Creole, and Antillean French Creoles, it is only Haitian Creole that is currently represented in both countries due to more recent patterns of migration (see Laëthier 2015). Suriname has six Maroon Creoles in



addition to its lingua franca, Sranantongo, but only four of the Maroon Creoles and Sranantongo are also reported to be spoken in French Guiana. In terms of Asian languages, both countries have a small number of speakers of varieties of Chinese, though they do not always share the same varieties of Chinese,<sup>21</sup> but the other three Asian languages are not shared. While all Asian languages initially came to Suriname during the period following slavery when Indian and later Javanese and Chinese workers were hired to work as indentured laborers on Suriname’s plantations, Hmong and varieties of Chinese only came to French Guiana relatively recently. Hmong is spoken by people from Laos and their descendants who were resettled by the French government in the 1970s (Géraud 1997). There are also demographic differences between these languages in the two constituencies. While speakers of Sarnámi and Javanese together constitute a significant proportion of Surinamese society – they represent 25% and 13% respectively of the linguistic repertoires of schoolchildren, see Léglise & Migge 2015 – speakers of Hmong and Chinese varieties constitute less than 2% of French Guianese society (Léglise 2007a).<sup>22</sup> Finally, more recent waves of migration in the wider region have recently led to the establishment of four languages – Brazilian Portuguese, Haitian Creole, various Chinese varieties and (Guyanese) English/Creole – in both countries.

Table 3: Languages spoken in French Guiana

Official language	Amerindian languages	French Creoles	English Creoles	‘Newer Arrivals’
French	Kali’na Arawak/Lokono Wayana Emerillon/Teko Palikur Wayampi (Wayāpí)	Fr. Guianese Creole Martiniquain Guadeloupean St. Lucian	Aluku Ndyuka Pamaka Saamaka Sranantongo	Hmong varieties of Chinese Brazilian Portuguese Haitian Creole Guyanese English/Creole

<sup>21</sup> For details on varieties of Chinese in Suriname, see Tjon Sie Fat (2009, 2015).

<sup>22</sup>Sarnámi, locally also referred to as Hindoestaans, is the result of contact between several northern Indian languages such as Avadhi, Bhojpuri, and Magahi.

Despite their linguistic diversity, both states only promote the use of their official (ex-colonial) language through their education system where these languages function as the only media of instruction. The other languages play a minor role in the official discourse of both countries and are often described as ‘ancestral or heritage languages’, essentially relegating them to the past and to the domestic and local community sphere. Official bodies in both countries, however, make selective use of some of these languages for some purposes such as front-line health services, political campaigning and artistic purposes, and at times to facilitate interactions with people who have little or no knowledge of the respective official language. In French Guiana, French Guianese Creole (eastern region), varieties of the Eastern Maroon Creole and/or Sranantongo locally often referred to as Takitaki or (Busi)nenge Tongo (western region) and Brazilian Portuguese (eastern region) are used for such purposes. In Suriname, it is Sranantongo that generally serves these purposes. Outside of a few experimental projects that are currently on-going in French Guiana (Migge & Léglise 2010; Alby & Léglise 2014), none of these regional lingua franca or other languages are officially used or prompted in schools.

## 5. 2. The linguistic repertoires of Surinamese children who reported speaking Maroon languages

Examining children’s responses to the survey questions, we found that Maroon languages were not only claimed as first languages (L1), but also as additional languages (L2, L3, L4). That is, while some children reported that one or more Maroon languages were their language(s) of primary socialization, others said that they learned it/them later in life or that it was only one among several languages that they were exposed to during primary socialization. Depending on when a child said that they learned a particular language, we will refer to it as an L2, L3, L4 etc. The survey results for Suriname show that Maroon Creoles represent 19% of the L1s reported by the children, but a total of 34% of children said that one or more Maroon language is part of their linguistic repertoire (Léglise & Migge ms). Thus, about 15% of the children interviewed reported using a Maroon Creole as an additional language besides one or more other languages of primary socialization. While all Maroon languages in Suriname appear to be used as both L1s and as additional languages, there are differences in frequency with respect to the different languages. Table 4 demonstrates that Aukaans was the most frequently cited Maroon language among the

schoolchildren we interviewed in Suriname, both as an L1 and as an additional language. Although the Saamaka community is generally estimated to be of the same size as the Ndyuka community, fewer children cited Saramaccans as an L1 or an additional language overall. Given the small number of children who reported Paramaccans as an additional language, it appears to mainly function as an L1. Matawai and Kwinti both have small overall speaker communities and the ratio of L1 to additional language users is somewhat lower in the case of Matawai than in the case of the other languages.

Table 4: The place of Maroon languages in children’s linguistic repertoire in Suriname

Reported as:	Aukaans	Paramaccans	Saramaccans	Matawai	Kwinti	Sranantongo
L1	11%	3%	4%	0.2%	0.6%	6 %
L2	4%	0.5%	2%	0.2%	0.3%	30%
L3	3%	0.6%	1.5%	0.1%	0.06%	37%
L4 &L5	2%	0.5%	1%	0.06%	0.06%	7%
in the repertoire	19.5%	4.5%	9%	0.6%	1%	79.5%
	24%					

When the figures for the Maroon languages are compared to those for Sranantongo, it is quite clear that the Maroon languages do not function as national lingua francas in Suriname. The ratio of L1 to additional language users is much higher in the case of the Maroon languages than in the case of Sranantongo which, like a true lingua franca, has only a tiny group of L1 users and a significantly larger number of L2, L3 etc users. Nevertheless, these figures demonstrate that Maroon languages are increasingly also used as additional languages rather than exclusively as L1s in Suriname.

The number of children who say that they speak a Maroon Creole (as an L1 or as an additional language) varies throughout the country, however. Table 5 shows that Aukaans plays an important role on the Suriname-French Guianese border in eastern Suriname (Léglise & Migge **ms**) while only a small number of children reported speaking Saramaccans and only as an additional language; even Sranantongo appears to have a larger L1 community than Saramaccans.

Table 5: Maroon languages in children’s linguistic repertoires in the eastern Surinamese towns of Albina and Moengo

Reported as:	Aukaans	Saramaccans	Sranantongo
L1	52.5%	0%	8.5%
L2	15%	2%	10%
L3	7%	0%	56%
L4 &L5	0%	2%	8.5%
in the repertoire	74.5%	4%	83%

By contrast, in the district of Brokopondo, which is currently situated about a two-hour car ride south of Paramaribo, nearly twice the number of children who reported speaking Aukaans as an L1 and more than three times the number who reported speaking it as an L2 said that they spoke Saramaccans as an L1 or an L2, respectively. Nevertheless, Aukaans still has a substantial presence both as a first and as an additional language in the Brokopondo area, see Table 6. In both areas Maroon languages are not only the most frequently cited first languages but also function as important second languages, infringing on Sranantongo’s lingua franca function.

Table 6: Maroon languages in children’s linguistic repertoire in the district of Brokopondo

Reported as:	Aukaans	Saramaccans	Sranantongo
L1	22%	48%	3%
L2	6%	19%	5%
L3	14%	11%	33%
L4 &L5	8%	4%	16%
in the repertoire	50%	82%	57%

Table 7 shows that Maroon languages are less well represented as L1s in the country’s capital than in the other two areas, lending some support to the common assumption that Maroon languages are mostly practiced in the ‘districts’. Note, however, that both Aukaans and Saramaccans have nearly twice as many L1 speakers as Sranantongo, the creole language most closely associated with Paramaribo. Sranantongo though continues to be the uncontested lingua

franca of the capital as it is the most frequently cited additional language among the children interviewed.

Table 7: Maroon languages in children’s linguistic repertoire in Paramaribo

Reported as:	Aukaans	Saramaccaans	Sranantongo
L1	7.5%	7%	3%
L2	5%	3%	46%
L3	4%	1.5%	12.5%
L4 &L5	1%	1%	6%
in the repertoire	17.5%	12.5%	67.5%

Of the children who claimed a Maroon Creole as their main language of socialization and family language, 94% asserted speaking Dutch (referred to as *Nederlands*) as a second language. Those living in urban areas said that they use Dutch in a number of contexts such as in school, with friends and in many cases also with some of their family members such as with one of their parents and/or with their grandparents.<sup>23</sup> In a good number of cases, school children also said that they used both Dutch and a Maroon Creole side-by-side with their parents, grandparents (and siblings). Children who said that they speak a Maroon Creole as an L1 often also reported speaking Sranantongo in interactions with friends in particular (see Figure 1 below). Finally, a

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<sup>23</sup>Interestingly, in a number of cases children reported speaking Dutch with one or more of their grandparents and a Maroon Creole with one or both of their parents. This runs counter to the generally assumed pattern of transmission for official languages among speakers of minority languages. The typical pattern is that the younger generation (parents) is more likely to be involved in the transmission of the official language than grandparents who are often more involved in the transmission of the minority language. The differences in language use/transmission patterns between parents and grandparents are probably indicative of social change, including changes in language attitudes. It may also be indicative of changes in the relationship between children and parents – rather than enforcing a strictly hierarchically-based relationship, parents may nowadays be more willing to allow their children to fully participate in the minority culture. This issues requires further investigation.

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few speakers of Maroon languages also said that they speak languages like English and to a lesser extent Spanish, Portuguese or French as L3, L4 etc. These were learned either from family members who live abroad, or from acquaintances of immigrant background. In the case of English, several children mentioned that they learned it from watching TV. In rural contexts, Dutch is typically cited as the language used for education and for communication with people from Paramaribo. Both Maroon Creoles – their L1 and in some cases also other Maroon Creoles – and Sranantongo are used for communication with friends and family members, including parents.

Children who said that they speak a Maroon Creole as an L2 (27%) often (50%) said that they had learned it either from one of their parents or step-parents, or from their grandparents. They also generally reported using it with them while they reported using other languages, such as Dutch, as their language of primary socialization. In some cases, children reported learning a Maroon Creole from friends at school or in their neighborhood and primarily employed it in these contexts. For instance, in the district of Brokopondo where both Aukaans and Saramaccans are widely spoken as family languages (Table 6), children often said that they had learned the respective other Maroon Creole either from an in-married family member or from (some) friends at school (see Figure 1 below) and generally also used them with these people.

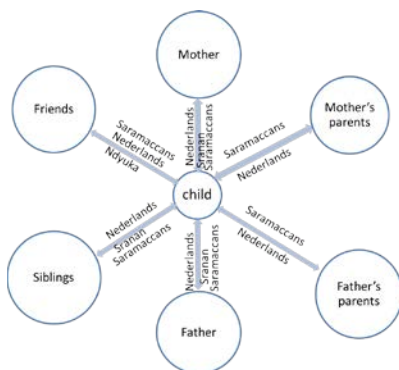


Figure 1: Languages used by a 14 year boy from the Brokopondo district (Léglise & Migge 2015)

### 5. 3. The linguistic repertoires of French Guianese children who reported speaking Maroon languages

In contrast to Suriname, the Maroon Creoles, and particularly the Eastern Maroon Creoles or Nengee, play a much more important role in French Guiana, see Table 8. A total of 19% of the children interviewed throughout this overseas region reported speaking a variety of Nengee as their L1 and 7% said that Saamaka has this function in their repertoire. Sranantongo was mainly reported as an additional language, particularly as an L3 or L4, though to a much lower degree than in Suriname. The Maroon languages also function as additional languages in French Guiana and their overall vehicularity, and that of Ndyuka in particular, is comparable to that of Sranantongo in French Guiana.

Table 8: Maroon Languages in children’s linguistic repertoires in French Guiana

Reported as:	Eastern Maroon Creoles/ Nengee				Saamaka	Sranantongo
	total	Aluku	Ndyuka	Pamaka		
L1	19%	4%	13%	2%	7%	3%
L2	4%	1%	5%	0%	1%	3%
L3	11%	1%	8%	2%	1.3%	9%

The figures in Table 8 suggest that the conditions for intergenerational language transmission in western French Guiana are excellent for varieties of Nengee, but also for Saamaka; this contrasts with other local languages such as Amerindian languages whose speaker numbers are generally in decline though well established (Léglise & Alby 2006). Table 9, however, suggests that all varieties of Nengee are not maintained to the same degree. While Aluku has a long history in French Guiana and is often named as an L1 by children and parents, its usage and transmission is lower than that of Pamaka and particularly Ndyuka. In the western French Guianese town of Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni children’s usage of Pamaka and particularly Ndyuka is higher than that of their parents and grandparents. This suggests that Pamaka and Ndyuka appear to be transmitted by about two adults out of three while Aluku is transmitted by less than two out of three adults (Léglise 2004).

Table 9: The importance of different Eastern Maroon languages as L1 in the repertoires of children and parents in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni as reported by children (Léglise 2004)

First language named :	of father	of mother	of child	Average of parents	Tendency
Aluku	4%	6%	5,3%	5%	=
Pamaka	6%	7%	8%	7%	++
Ndyuka	31%	34%	40%	32%	+++
Total EMC	41%	47%	53%	44%	

In the light of such high intergenerational transmission rates in western French Guiana, it is possible to hypothesize that we are dealing with a case of additive bilingualism where the first language is very positively evaluated by its speakers and functions as an important means of group identification among L1 speakers of Aluku, Ndyuka and Pamaka (Léglise & Migge 2005). Taken together, the varieties of Nengee, among which there is a high degree of mutual intelligibility, constitute more than half (53%) of all the L1s reported in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni and also function as a target for language learning. They also function as linking languages, connecting communities on both sides of the French Guiana/Suriname border and across the two borders (Léglise & Migge ms).

In French Guiana, 90% of the children who named a variety of Nengee as their L1 stated speaking French as an L2. Only about 23% of children reported speaking French as an L3. 60% of children who said that they speak Ndyuka as their L1 and French as an L2 generally only spoke these two languages possibly because they both have a high value on the western French Guianese linguistic market: French is the official language and Ndyuka has an important weight within the western French Guianese population. Children who reported a Maroon language other than Ndyuka as their L1 also reported speaking one or more other additional languages besides French such as another variety of Nengee (26%), English (18%), Sranantongo (12,3%) and/or French Guianese Creole (10%). Figures 2 and 3 give us insight into how additional languages are learned at school and used in particular settings such as in the playground and in certain interactional dyads such as among friends and in the family.



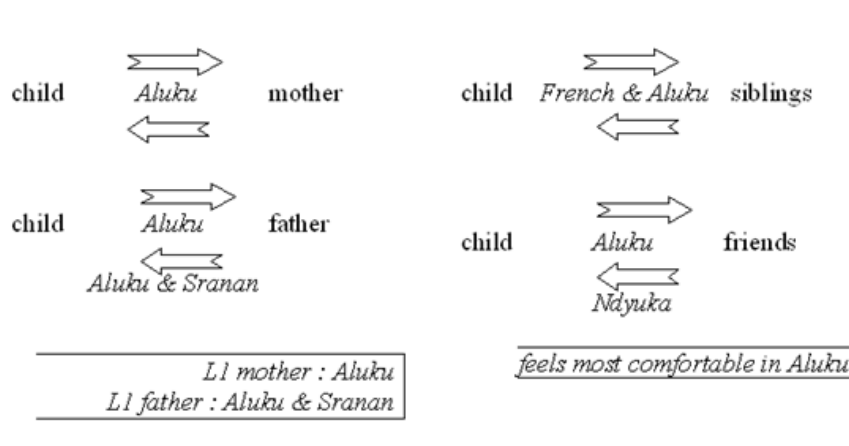


Figure 2: Patterns of language use of a 10-year-old child in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni I (Léglise 2007a)

In Figure 2 we see the language practices of a ten-year-old boy in western French Guiana who was born in the village of Grand Santi on the border with Suriname and has been living in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni since he started school. He reported speaking four languages: Aluku, French, Sranantongo and Ndyuka. He considers Aluku his L1 and French his L2 and asserted speaking and understanding both of them pretty well. He learnt French at school but also speaks it with his siblings. He employs Aluku with all of his family members. In addition to Aluku, he is also addressed in Sranantongo (his L3) by his father and employs it when visiting Suriname. As for Ndyuka, he acquired it through interactions with his friends. However, he maintains that he addresses them in Aluku rather than in Ndyuka.

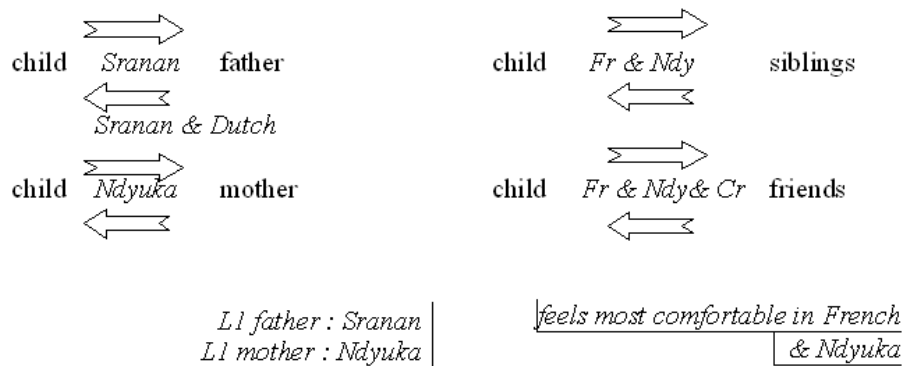


Figure 3: Patterns of language use of a 10-year-old child in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni II (Léglise 2005)

Figure 3 presents the language use of another ten-year-old child who also lives in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni. He reported speaking five languages, namely Ndyuka, Sranantongo, Dutch, French and French Guianese Creole. Some languages are linked to a specific interlocutor or class of interlocutors – Sranantongo and Dutch are associated with the father and French Guianese Creole with friends – whereas Ndyuka and French are spoken with several different interlocutors. Note also that this child reported actively using most of these languages.

## **6. Language Ideologies**

The surveys in Suriname and French Guiana also investigated people's language ideologies because language ideology stands in a dialectical relation with social, discursive, and linguistic practices and has an important impact on them (Woolard 1992: 235). They have an important impact on local, national and family-based language policies, including language transmission and language learning (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994: 63). Language ideologies are broadly defined as “the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests” (Irvine 1989: 255). They are beliefs, or feelings, about languages as used in their social worlds” (Kroskrity 2006: 498) such as beliefs about the superiority or inferiority of a given language (variety) or beliefs about the (in)appropriateness of a language (variety) in a certain situation or among certain groups of speakers. Language ideologies are multiple in nature because groups of people tend to be characterized by various degrees of heterogeneity and therefore typically involve different kinds of positionality and produce different kinds of perspectives on the same issue. People also differ with respect to their awareness of local language ideologies. Language ideologies mediate between social structure and forms of talk, and play an instrumental role in creating and representing social and cultural identities. They are always interested rather than neutral serving the needs and ideas of specific social groups (Kroskrity 2006: 501-510). In the survey, we accessed people's overt language attitudes by asking children which languages they would like to learn and why and which languages they do not want to learn and why. We also analyzed people's ways of talking about languages and the ways in which they assigned them to settings or interlocutors as well as how

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they rate their competence in them. The discussion of the survey results suggest that while attitudes towards the Maroon Creoles are improving, children are ambivalent about their place and function in both societies.

## 6. 1. Views about the Maroon Creoles in Suriname

Carlin (2001: 225) argues that the creole languages of Suriname, both the Maroon Creoles and Sranantongo, are traditionally afforded low overt social status by Surinamese society as a whole despite the fact that they, and Sranantongo in particular, are widely used in Suriname. This is probably due to three main reasons: First, they are not used in formal education and are therefore associated with people who lack formal education. Second, they are linked to people living in isolated rural areas which in the current dominant Surinamese social imagination do not carry high social prestige.<sup>24</sup> Third, a high proportion of Maroons living in urban areas resides in poorer neighborhoods, does not have professional qualifications and leads a precarious life (Aviankoi & Apapoe 2009). Unlike Sranantongo, the Maroon Creoles tend to be highly valued in Maroon villages where they also function as the main medium of communication (outside of the school context). Among Maroons, they are strongly aligned with a locally valued culture and identity that is also perceived to be superior to that associated with Sranantongo (see Migge 2004, 2005a&b, 2007; Migge & Léglise 2011). Urban Maroons deem knowledge of ‘one’s’ Maroon language to be important for participation in extended family networks and in ceremonies, and to assert a Maroon identity. However, they also emphasize the need for being bilingual in Dutch and a Maroon language or, more broadly, to know languages other than ‘their’ Maroon language as this provides access to better jobs and mainstream culture.

The survey results provide some evidence to suggest that children in Suriname perceive Maroon languages, or at least some of them, as having low status in the wider society. For instance, we noticed that some children were not comfortable reporting certain Maroon Creoles

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<sup>24</sup>Of course, there are also historical reasons for the low social prestige of so-called creole languages (cultures and people) such as their association with slavery and the common view that they are ‘makeshift’ languages because of their close association with language and culture contact (see Mühleisen 2002).

(such as Kwinti, Matawai, Saamaka) as their primary language of socialization because they initially reported another language, notably Dutch or another Maroon Creole such as Aukaans, as their home language. In other cases, children initially underreported usage of their native Maroon language by suggesting that it only played a minor role in their repertoire, i.e. they declared it as an L4 or L5 only (see also Table 9).<sup>25</sup> Interviewers' observations suggest that this was particularly common among speakers of Saamaka in urban areas.

Another possible piece of evidence in support of the view that Maroon languages are afforded low social status in Suriname is the fact that relatively few of the children interviewed throughout Suriname said that they wanted to learn a Maroon language in response to the questions *Which languages would you like to learn to speak?* and *In which languages would you like to learn to write?* The few children who said that they wanted to learn to speak a Maroon language (better) typically had family members or friends who spoke the Maroon Creole in question. Relatively few children spontaneously responded that they wanted to learn to write a Maroon language that they claimed as their L1 or as an additional language. Many of these children reconsidered their answer though when explicitly asked (e.g. *So you don't want to learn to write Aukaans/Saramaccans?*), arguing that they would in fact be interested in learning to write in their L1 or L2 if an opportunity arose. The lack of overt desire to learn the Maroon Creoles (and other local languages such as Javanese, Sarnámi) among Surinamese children may be due to low levels of overt prestige that they are afforded outside of specific networks. However, responses from children to the question *Are there any languages that you do not want to learn?* suggest that another factor, namely the positionality that these languages imply, might play a more important role. While very few children cited a Maroon language or Sranantongo in

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<sup>25</sup>In both cases, the fact that they in fact frequently used the language only became apparent either because they said that their parents and/or grandparents spoke it or they lived in an area where the Maroon language was widely spoken. Once the interviewer asked them directly about their usage of the Maroon languages in question, they generally asserted using it which then prompted a reassessment of the responses to all the previous questions during the interview.

response to the question *Which languages do you not want to learn to speak?*,<sup>26</sup> those who did mention them (and other languages) rarely explained their dislike in terms of negative characterizations of the language ('it is ugly', 'it is not nice', 'it is not good', 'it inhibits learning of Dutch'). Instead, children said that they did not want to learn the language because they did not belong to that (ethnic) group. In fact, most speakers of Maroon languages, like other children in Suriname, typically desired to learn non-local languages such as English, Spanish and Portuguese. They are perceived as languages that will allow them to access the rest of the world, provide them with better job opportunities in the future and access the world of family members that live abroad or friends from these countries.<sup>27</sup> This indicates that the Maroon languages (like other local Surinamese languages) function as important symbols of ethnic belonging in Suriname. In this regard, it is interesting to note that in several cases negative comments about Maroon languages also came from speakers of other Maroon languages. For instance, Matawai-speaking children in two Matawai villages said that they disliked the closely related Saramaccans. In villages in the Brokopondo district where speakers of Saramaccans and Aukaans are often in regular contact due to the mixed character of these villages, speakers of both Saramaccans and Aukaans expressed negative opinions about the respective other language and their speakers.<sup>28</sup>

Self-assessment of language competence has been widely used in psycholinguistics and language learning for measuring language attrition and language proficiency (see for example Clark 1982; Oscarson 1989). As self-reports and self-assessments are good ways to obtain insights into norms (Labov 2006 [1966]: 300-323), that is attitudes or linguistic ideology from

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<sup>26</sup>A good number of children responded that they want to learn all languages, or that they like all languages. Only Chinese (Chinees) and Hindostaans (Sarnámi) attracted a number of negative comments that often related to their speakers, i.e. 'they were rude to me', 'they are not nice'.

<sup>27</sup>Few children in Suriname said that they wanted to learn a local language such as Sarnámi, Javanese etc. If they did mention locally spoken languages, they usually wanted to learn them because they were the languages of their friends and neighbors or of their ancestors, as in the case of Amerindian children (Léglise & Migge 2015).

<sup>28</sup>Most of these villages were founded after the constructions of the hydroelectric dam at Afobaka to house the people who had been displaced due to the construction of the dam.

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interviewees, for sociolinguists they also constitute, a covert or indirect measure for assessing language attitudes as people are asked to assess their involvement with a language rather than directly comment on their feelings about it. As an interpretative hypothesis, we consider a high competence rating as indicative of a high involvement and positive alignment with that language, which may be linked to people’s social positioning and/or global ideology. Conversely, a low rating would be linked to a low level of involvement or a lack of willingness to align with the language in question. This may be due to several reasons: it may be indicative of global norms and local language hierarchies, internalization of norms and processes of minoritization (Léglise & Alby 2006), or it may show a global or individual feeling of linguistic insecurity (Bucci & Baxter 1984; Bretégnier & Ledegen 2002) and/or low self esteem (Ho-A-Sim 2007). Tables 10 and 11 show that most of the children who reported speaking a Maroon Creole asserted a high competence. While the proportion of children who assessed their competence as high (very good and good) in these languages was higher among children who reported Aukaans or Saramaccans as their L1, the proportion of children who rated their competence positively was fairly high for all their user communities.

Table 10: Children’s self-assessment of their speaking competence in Aukaans and Saramaccans in Suriname

	Aukaans			Saramaccans		
Reported speaking it :	Very good	Good	a little	very good	Good	a little
As an L1	63%	18%	19%	71%	8%	18%
As an L2	49%	12%	39%	33%	15%	52%
As an L3&4	50%	15%	35%	50%	25%	25%

Table 11: Self-assessment of competence among L1 speakers of four minority languages in Brokopondo

L1	Positive self-assessment for production	Positive self-assessment for comprehension
Aukaans	88%	90%
Matawai	85%	85%
Saramaccans	82%	91%
Sranantongo	83%	83%

The figures for Aukaans and Saramaccans are overall comparable. However, note the comparatively low proportion of children who assert a high competence in Saramaccans as an L2 compared with the comparatively high proportion of children who declared a high competence in Saramaccans as an L3 in Table 10. The former might be indicative of the fact that these children are at pains to distance themselves from membership in the Saramaccans-speaking community (in the interview setting). By contrast, the latter is likely to be due to the fact that these children are in fact regular speakers of Saramaccans but were not comfortable to openly assert that fact and therefore initially underreported the importance of that language in their linguistic repertoire.

Evidence of children’s positive alignment with Maroon languages are further strengthened when the figures in Tables 10 and 11 are compared to those in Table 12 which presents Maroon children’s competence ratings in Dutch. Table 12 demonstrates that children who said that they speak a Maroon Creole as their L1 report a much lower speaking competence in the official language than in their L1 (Table 11). While around 80% of L1 speakers of Aukaans and Saramaccans rate their competence in their L1 as very good or good, only half of these children (40%) also rate their competence in Dutch in the same way. This suggests that about half of the children who speak a Maroon Creole as an L1 probably do not use Dutch very often. In fact, many of these children who mostly reside in rural areas said that they wanted to learn more Dutch in addition to learning another foreign language such as English or Spanish.

Table 12: Self-assessment of competence in Dutch by L1 speakers of Aukaans and Saramaccans in Suriname

	Production in Dutch as L2		
Reported speaking as:	very good	Good	a little
Aukaans as L1	20%	20%	60%
Saramaccans as L1	30%	10%	60%

In summary, the results from the Surinamese survey indicate that while attitudes towards Maroon languages are not entirely positive, they are not entirely negative either. People who reported having a Maroon language in their repertoire, i.e. are part of a Maroon network, displayed quite positive overt and covert attitudes towards this language. However, underreporting of their usage among some of these children in the presence of non-Maroon interviewers suggests that children are aware of negative attitudes towards these languages among non-Maroons. At the same time, the very low number of overtly negative statements about these languages among all the children (speakers and non-speakers) in the survey suggests that Maroon languages do not carry a negative stigma either, instead they, like other local languages, appear to be conceptualized as languages of specific social networks or (ethnic) groupings.

## 6. 2. Views about the Maroon Creoles in French Guiana

The creole languages originating from Suriname are referred to as *les créoles à base anglaise* [*de Guyane*] ‘the English-based Creoles [of French Guiana]’ in the French literature since 1999. They have had a somewhat complex history in French Guiana. Especially the Maroon Creoles Aluku and Saamaka but also Ndyuka and Pamaka have a fairly long association with French Guiana due to their (male) speakers’ long presence in and involvement with river transport (Saamaka, Aluku, Ndyuka), the construction industry, small-scale trading and gold-mining, and the establishment of horticultural camps (Ndyuka, Pamaka) in this French overseas region (Price & Price 2003). Many of the residents of the border town of Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni also used to have active contact with the population in the Surinamese border town of Albina and have some competence in Sranantongo. Negative stereotyping of Maroons had intensified starting in the late 1980s due to the heavy influx of mostly Maroon refugees during the Surinamese civil war in the



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1980s,<sup>29</sup> continued migration both from the interior of Suriname and from urban areas during the 1990s and the early part of the new millennium and the significant social changes in the region that arose due to this migration. The Maroon Creoles in particular became associated with ‘lack of development and education’ and people in French Guiana were at pains to dissociate themselves from these languages and their speakers.<sup>30</sup> In recent years, the situation has been changing due to an ideological change in favor of greater recognition of Maroons and Amerindians that is underway in western French Guiana. This seems to be spurred by four developments. First, metropolitan French people who reside in (western) French Guiana – and whose numbers have grown significantly as a result of the significant social change in the area – increasingly make an effort to learn what is locally referred to as *Takitaki*, i.e. Eastern Maroon varieties, Sranantongo or a combination thereof, in order to negotiate their local integration (Thurmes 2007). Second, due to the local predominance of Maroons – they constitute about 60% of the population in western French Guiana – everybody has to engage with Maroons and their languages on some level and develop a position or view about them (Migge & Léglise 2013). This has to some extent had the effect of qualifying negative stereotypes. Third, recent anthropological research has demonstrated that the term *Guyanais* (French Guianese) has recently broadened its reference (Jolivet 2007). Whereas it used to designate only people of French Guianese Creole origin in the 1970s, it is now also frequently used to refer to people of Amerindian and Maroon origin (in official quarters, but not necessarily to the same extent among members of these two population groups). That is, due to recent significant changes in the composition and size of the western French Guianese population and particularly in the light of on-going immigration from the wider region (Guyana, Brazil, Haiti) and further afield (China), Amerindians and Maroons are now being projected as an integral part of French Guianese

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<sup>29</sup>Refugees first came from the Cottica region (Ndyuka) in eastern Suriname and later also from the eastern Surinamese upriver villages along the Tapanahoni and Maroni/Marowijne Rivers (Ndyuka, Pamaka) and from the Suriname River (Saamaka).

<sup>30</sup>See for example negative attitudes towards Maroons and Maroon languages at the hospital (Léglise 2007b) and views about *Takitaki* (Léglise & Migge 2006; Migge & Léglise 2013).

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society and as rightful ‘local population groups’.<sup>31</sup> While this is clearly a strategy of political hijacking (Hidair 2008), it is leading to an improvement of local attitudes towards members of these population groups and their languages.<sup>32</sup> Fourth, the Maroon Creoles, but not Sranantongo, achieved some local recognition when they were designated *langues de France* ‘languages of France’ in 1999 (Cerquiglini 2003). Theoretically, they can now be used in the public sphere. However, French remains the only official and the only officially promoted language of French Guiana.

In the French Guianese survey, children singled out Sranantongo, rather than Maroon languages, as a language that they did not want to learn, despite the fact that many of the children’s parents and possibly the children themselves regularly use Sranantongo (or rather elements thereof, see Migge 2007; Migge & Léglise 2011). They rejected it because it is the language of Surinamese people (‘I don’t want to learn this language because it’s what the Surinamese speak’). This suggests that Sranantongo does not only carry national associations, but also that issues of national belonging play an important role in decisions about language learning:<sup>33</sup> children of immigrant background essentially assert their belonging to French Guiana by verbally distancing themselves from Sranantongo, a national symbol of Suriname. Like their Surinamese counterparts, French Guianese children also showed low interest in learning Maroon languages and other locally spoken languages such as ‘Brazilian’ (Portuguese) and ‘Haitian’ (Creole) that are locally linked to immigrants. Especially ‘Haitian’ and ‘Saramaka’ are afforded low prestige and children who participated in the survey frequently said that they did not want to

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<sup>31</sup>One of the reviewers rightly pointed out that this does not yet fully apply to people of Saamaka origin. They constitute ‘a special case (a partial exception here), in that so many of them remain without French resident papers so that their ‘integration’ remains more of a question/problem than that of most Ndyuka and Pamaka, not to mention the Aluku.’

<sup>32</sup>For instance, there are festivals celebrating maroonage, at official functions Maroon cultural groups are invited to perform and issues of maroonage and aspects of Maroon culture (arts, traditional stories) have come to figure to a small extent in schools that have a significant proportion of Maroon children.

<sup>33</sup>It also shows that children interviewed at school apply European notions of what constitutes a state rather than local ones (Piantoni 2002; Léglise & Migge 2005)

learn them. Children generally ridicule these languages and the people who speak them by using terms like ‘*Haïtien!*’ (or wordplays like ‘*Haïchien!*’ or ‘*Aiti*’)<sup>34</sup> and ‘*Saramaka!*’ as insults (Jolivet 2002; Price & Price 2003; Léglise 2004).

Despite its dominance in (western) French Guiana, the survey also elicited negative comments about Ndyuka. Children who did not report it as belonging to their repertoire said that ‘there is no reason to learn it because it is not nice’ and that ‘it’s for the blacks’. In addition to displaying negative attitudes towards Ndyuka, many of these children also refused to recognize that there are effectively three different varieties – Aluku, Ndyuka, Pamaka – and instead used a negative generalizing term, *Takitaki*, to denote them (Léglise & Migge 2006; Migge & Léglise 2013). The entity associated with *Takitaki* carried negative associations for 7% of children in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni and for 17% in the small town of Mana. It was linked to the following types of assessments: ‘I don’t like this language, it’s not nice’, ‘I don’t understand this language’, ‘it’s not necessary to know it’, ‘I don’t like the people who speak it’. On-going research in eastern French Guiana has so far produced the same kinds of negative evaluations. While children who claimed a Maroon language as their L1 did not comment negatively about these languages, there is evidence that they, or at least a good proportion of them, nevertheless have somewhat ambivalent feelings about them. For instance, when asked which languages they would like to learn to write, only 17% of L1 speakers of Ndyuka stated that they wanted to learn to write Ndyuka and only 6% asserted being able to write in Ndyuka. Compare this with similar figures for Brazilian Portuguese where 36% of L1 speakers said that they in fact already know how to write it and a total of 65% asserted that they want to learn it. These results suggest two things about local views about Maroon languages in French Guiana. First, children who do not speak it often do not accept the currently officially promoted view that Maroon Creoles are an integral part of the French Guianese linguistic landscape despite their long term presence (Price & Price 2003) and their official recognition (Migge & Léglise 2010) in French Guiana. Second, L1 speakers do not assign them high overt prestige as they do not want to invest additional effort

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<sup>34</sup>*Haïchien!* is a wordplay which links the French pronunciation of Haitian [aisjɛ̃] and *chien* [ʃjɛ̃] ‘dog’. *Aiti* is another wordplay which links the French pronunciation of Haiti [aiti] to the Eastern Maroon word for ‘eight’ [aiti].

into these languages; they prefer to invest into educationally-relevant languages. For their L1 speakers, Maroon languages appear to essentially function as languages of solidarity.

As in Suriname, French Guianese children generally wanted to learn internationally recognized languages that are also taught in local schools. In western French Guiana, children thus mostly expressed a desire to learn English and Spanish, the main foreign languages taught in French secondary schools (Alby & Léglise 2014), rather than (Brazilian) Portuguese, Dutch and local languages of French Guiana. At the time of the survey, Dutch was taught only in three secondary schools in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni, ten of the local languages of French Guiana, including some of the Maroon Creoles (Aluku, Ndyuka, Pamaka) and Amerindian languages, figured in an experimental education project aimed at L1 speakers of these languages,<sup>35</sup> and Portuguese was not taught at all. Despite their partial integration into the local education system, local languages are often not considered fit for educational purposes.

Tables 13-15 examine covert language attitudes among French Guianese children. The high figures for self-assessment of competence indicate that L1 speakers of Maroon languages in French Guiana (Table 13, 14), like their Surinamese counterparts (Table 10, 11), strongly align with these languages because they overwhelmingly rate their competences as high – in fact, the figures obtained for French Guiana are higher than those for Suriname. Self-assessments for competence among L2 and L3 speakers reflect general trends: children’s relative competence ratings decrease in step with the relative degree of involvement or use that they declare for that language.

Table 13: Children’s self-assessment of their competence in Nenge(e) and Sa(r)amaka in French Guiana

Report speaking it :	Nenge(e)			Sa(r)amaka		
	very good	Good	a little	very good	Good	a little
As an L1	79%	13%	4%	73%	20%	7%
As an L2	24%	24%	51%	50%	0%	50%

<sup>35</sup>French Guianese Creole is also facilitated in the nationally run program *Langue et culture régionale* (Goury et al. 2000; Migge & Léglise 2010) and is now part of a bilingual education program (Alby & Léglise 2014).

As an L3&4	15%	15%	70%	8%	8%	84%
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Maroon (and Haitian) children’s positive assessments favorably contrasts, for instance, with children who reported Kali’na, an Amerindian language, as their L1 (Table 14). Kali’na speaking children’s low self-assessments for understanding and particularly speaking competence in Kali’na and the discrepancy in the figures for the two types of competence are much lower. According to Léglise & Alby (2006), these figures suggest that Kali’na children’s identification with the language is problematic: it appears that they do not want to fully admit that they are speakers of that language, i.e. ‘I speak it, but not well, not really, maybe just about’. Low assessments do not necessarily correlate with language shift though because, as shown by the authors, Kali’na is well transmitted within the family in the western part of French Guiana. Instead, they link the low self-assessment results to the conservative views of Kali’na adults who consider their children’s practices to be problematic because, like other bilinguals, they usually code-mix and code-switch between Kali’na and French.

Table 14: Self-assessment of competence among L1 speakers of four minority languages in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni

L1	Positive self-assessment for production	Positive self-assessment for comprehension
Kali’na	50%	80%
Aluku	78%	100%
Haitian Creole	100%	100%
Saramaka	80%	80%

Table 15: Self-assessment of competence in French by L1 speakers of Nenge(e) and Sa(r)amaka in French Guiana

	Production in French as L2		
Reported speaking as:	very good	Good	a little

Nenge(e) as L1	30%	29%	37%
Sa(r)amaka as L1	48%	33%	19%

The French Guianese figures for self-assessment of competence in French lend further support to the hypothesis that Maroon children’s desire to distance themselves from Maroon languages, and particularly Sa(r)amaka, was relatively high in the interview setting. In contrast to Suriname, a relatively great proportion of children in western French Guiana asserted a high competence in the official language although learning conditions are roughly similar in both constituencies in rural areas and possibly slightly better in Suriname in urban areas. The figures in Tables 13, 14, 15) then suggest first that Maroon children want to overtly identify as French (in addition to Maroon) and second that many of the children have internalized the dominant French notion that acceptance as French requires positive alignment with the French language; it confirms that French Guianese language policies towards the official languages are efficient (Alby & Léglise 2014).

In summary, the results from the French Guianese survey indicate that although Maroon languages have attained some level of official recognition in French Guiana, this view has not been fully accepted by the French Guianese population (children). Non-speakers still see them as non-prestigious immigrant languages. Speakers of these languages, generally overtly positively align with them, but conceptualize them as languages of solidarity.

## 7. Language practices

Survey data of the type discussed in previous sections provides important insights into the factors that govern language use and changes in language practices. However, it cannot give us comprehensive insights into actual language practices because people’s descriptions of their language practices do not (always) match up with what they are actually doing (Labov [1966] 2006). It is therefore necessary to carry out an analysis of situated language use. As part of our research projects we observed and recorded a range of private and public interactions in both rural and urban settings. The discussion in this section mainly focuses on the situated practices of adults because due to reasons of accessibility we were not able to record a lot of children’s

language use. While this situation is not ideal, our observations in a range of contexts such as the school context, the family and neighborhood context suggest that children's linguistic practices are similar to those of (especially younger) adults.

Most generally, we found that Maroon languages were widely used and are the preferred medium of interaction in family and intra-Maroon interactions in both rural and urban contexts. In child-parent interactions, it was quite common for parents to use the Maroon Creole as the main language of interaction or, especially in urban contexts, together with other languages. In rural contexts in particular, persistent use of languages other than the Maroon Creole on the part of children was interpreted as rudeness. Professional parents with a Maroon background generally made a concerted effort to promote the official language among their children, usually encouraging children to become bilingual in a Maroon Creole and the official language of the country. While Sranantongo is generally also used to some degree, its use does not appear to be overtly encouraged.<sup>36</sup> On the contrary, in several instances children were scolded by parents for using Sranantongo-associated expressions.

In the urban context, many Maroons who have attended formal education shift to Dutch/French in public settings because addressing unknown people in an urban professional context in a Maroon language or Sranantongo is generally considered impolite in both countries, suggesting that the official languages still dominate the public sphere. For people who do not speak the official language, the use of greetings in the official language before switching to another language such as Sranantongo is the most typical way of approximating this norm. Example (1) is a case in point. Here L, a middle-aged Maroon woman who apart from some speaking competence and listening comprehension in Sranantongo practically only uses Pamaka visits the passport office in Paramaribo together with one of the authors. While the latter sat down to the side of the counter, L proceeded to the counter addressing the officer (O):

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<sup>36</sup>In fact, especially in French Guiana, it appears that we are often dealing with a srananized mode of speaking Nenge(e)/EMC which functions as a distinct social variety or register of Nenge(e)/EMC (e.g. example 5) rather than as a separate language. Some of the children we interviewed also appeared to conceptualize the relationship between Sranantongo and Nenge(e)/EMC in this way because they did not mention that Sranantongo is part of their repertoire.

(1) [In the passport office at about 11:30.]

1 L: Goedenmiddag, meneer. ‘Good afternoon, sir’

2 O: Goedemiddag, mevrouw. [pause] Wat kan ik voor U doen?

‘Good afternoon, madam. What can I do for you?’

3 L: Mijn passpoort, a e verfal tra mun. ‘My passport, it’ll expire next moon.’

4 O: Mevrouw, *dan i mus mek*’ en baka hoor. ‘Madam, then you have to renew it, right.’

Sranantongo: italics; Dutch: underlined; EMC/Sranantongo shared items: regular

In (1) L greets the passport officer in Dutch (line 1) because Dutch is the unmarked language for carrying out official interactions in government offices in Suriname. The officer returns the greeting and asks L about the purpose of her visit (line 2) in Dutch. L then starts off her response to O in Dutch, but quickly switches to what is heard as Sranantongo (line 3) to state the purpose of her visit because she is not able to carry out an entire interaction in Dutch. O then accommodates to L and continues the interaction in Sranantongo. This kind of practice is common in Suriname where almost everyone in the country has some competence in the national language, Sranantongo, but knowledge of Dutch is still unevenly distributed across society. In French Guiana, by contrast, members of the local establishment are often of French Guianese Creole or metropolitan French origin and often do not (or do not want to) speak (a version of the) Maroon Creole or Sranantongo. People who do not speak French or French Guianese Creole therefore often bring along a facilitator who will carry out the interaction in the official language for them or who will translate for them. Both adult relatives and children often take over this role.

In rural areas where Maroon languages are widely spoken, they are the main languages used in interactions among villagers and professional staff of Maroon origin will also freely use them. However, professionals (e.g. teachers, medical staff) often employ code-mixing with Sranantongo and to a lesser extent the official language to display their difference to regular villagers and to assert that they are ‘developed’.<sup>37</sup> Example (2), where two women talk about one of the women’s (B) children’s place of residence in town, illustrates this. B works as an assistant

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<sup>37</sup>People often use the Dutch word *ontwikkeld* to reference the notion of worldly and sophisticated.



teacher and comes from the Pamaka village in which the recording takes place while A is a fully qualified teacher and comes from another village in the Brokopondo area.

(2) [Three women are talking about the place of residence of B's children.]

1 A: Na a *sey* f' en den meysje fi i e tan *ofu* na **abaa se**?

'Do your girls live right next to her or across the way?'

2 B: Mm! (unclear)

3 A: Mi e bedoel efu na ... 'I mean if it's ...'

4 B: Na a **sem pasi**.<sup>38</sup> 'It's the same street.'

5 A: Ma na a *sey dati of* na *abra sey*? 'But is it on that side or on the opposite side?'

6 B: **Eyee!** Na **abaa se pasi**. 'Yes, on the opposite side of the path.'

7 A: Oho! Mi **á** sabi te **anga** now, (unclear) *ben sori* mi wel.

'Really! I didn't know until now, ?? showed it to me alright.'

8 B: Mi **án** sabi pe **oo!** Na tu **leysi** mi pasa den, mi **si** den de, ma fu gadu, mi **án** man sabi **moo**.

Kande efu mi o waka pasa de baka (unclear) mi o sabi fa fu leg i uit.

'I don't know where! I passed by them twice, I saw them there, but honestly, I don't remember any more. Maybe if I walked by there again I'll know how to explain it to you.'

9 A: Na a, wan *amandra* bon *no de drape*? 'It's the, isn't there an amandra tree there?'

10 B: Mi **án** sabi **moo!** 'I don't remember.'

EMC: bold; Sranantongo: italics; Dutch: underlined; EMC/Sranantongo shared items: regular

In (2) A and B converse in Nenge(e)/EMC while peeling cassava together with a few other local women. During the conversation, A repeatedly draws on Sranantongo (lines 1, 5, 7, 9) and to a lesser extent on Dutch (lines 3, 7). Interactionally, this has the effect of voicing her close alignment with town life. A's behavior contrasts with that of B who, despite being able to speak Sranantongo and Dutch, chooses to draw primarily on Nenge(e)/EMC or elements shared between Nenge(e) and Sranantongo to negotiate her close alignment with the local community.

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<sup>38</sup>*Pasi* is realized with a voiceless alveo-palatal fricative which is characteristics of Pamaka rather than with a voiceless dental fricative which is associated with Sranantongo and varieties of Ndyuka. The same is applies to *leysi* and *si* in line (8).

Maroon professionals living in the urban context often compartmentalize languages according to social activity: professional communication is carried out in the official language that functions as a kind of metalanguage while the Maroon Creole or rather code-mixing and code-switching between the Maroon Creole and Sranantongo and/or the official language is reserved for informal interactions such as joking and everyday talk. A case in point was an interaction that one of the authors observed in a radio station in Paramaribo. All the presenters were speakers of Maroon Creoles and consistently used them on the air as the radio station targets Maroon populations in rural districts. However, they generally switched to Dutch when discussing production-related issues. Small talk between recordings or after work, such as when packing up their stuff, was realized in what is best described as a Ndyuka style of speaking that was heavily influenced by Sranantongo. Similar practices were also observed among children. When they talked about school related issues at home, they either switched to the official language or heavily drew on lexical material from the official language. However, when they conversed about mundane issues, use of the official language was quite rare, particularly in French Guiana.

While rural Maroons generally welcome it when (European) foreigners make an effort to speak a Maroon Creole and are happy to support their learning efforts, this is traditionally not the case with Maroons who project an educated and/or urbanized identity in Suriname and French Guiana. The latter tend to be uncomfortable using languages other than the official language and often assert lack of comprehension of the Maroon Creole. Even approximation of English tends to be preferred to the use of a Maroon Creole or Sranantongo, at least at an initial meeting. At times, explanations of the sort ‘S/he does not speak Dutch’ or ‘S/he likes speaking/she speaks Ndyuka’ from another Maroon/local might help to ‘justify’ the use of a Maroon Creole. However, in many cases educated Maroons still, at least initially, prefer to approximate Sranantongo practices rather than to employ a Maroon Creole, both as a way of marking the foreign interlocutor as a member of the outgroup and in order to assert their own sophistication. While this behavior is still common, it is by no means universal any more. Increasingly outsider’s genuine use of a Maroon Creole is interpreted as a sign of local engagement and positive attitudes to Maroons. For instance, in several of the schools in rural Suriname such as on the Marowijne/Maroni River and in the Brokopondo area teachers were happy to converse with one of the authors in Nenge(e)/EMC once they were told that she speaks it and positively

commented on the fact that she can speak it. This usually took place outside of the classroom, however.

In interactions between members from different Maroon groups, two types of strategies of accommodation are common. First, in contexts in which speakers of different Maroon Creoles have been living in close proximity for a while, e.g. the Brokopondo district in Suriname and some neighborhoods of Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni (French Guiana), and most people generally have enough competence in the respective other Maroon language (e.g. Aukaans/Ndyuka in the case of Saamakas or Saramaccans/Saamaka in the case of speakers of Eastern Maroon languages), they tend to each speak their own variety possibly with some degree of accommodation. This is also the strategy pursued by the radio stations *Konyeba* in Suriname and *Loweman Pansu* in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni that primarily target local Maroon audiences (Migge 2011). In (3) the radio presenter, Basia Ayeni of Loweman Pansu, is asking the local representative of the Saamaka community to describe and comment on downriver marriage practices. Basia Ayeni poses his question in Ndyuka and kabiten Sanna, the representative of the Saamaka community replies in Saamaka. There is no attempt at translation, suggesting that it is assumed that people can understand enough Saamaka to follow the discussion.

(3) [Basia Ayeni of Loweman Pansu is discussing down-river marriage practices among the Saamaka with the representative of the Saamaka community]

Basia Ayeni: *Wee kabiten dda Sanna, basia Sanna, u na a se fu a Saamaka se anda. Enke nownow, kande wan Saamaka biya efu wan Saamaka muyëë – u be gi piimisi, den sama u be gi piimisi kaba yee. U ná o pay e gi piimisi namo so moo – Efu wan sama efu wan kiyoo anga wan Saamaka muyëë miti ya so, den sa akisi sama a ya so, efu a famii de ya so, efu i o sende den go a Saamaka?*

‘Well, Kabiten Sanna, Basia Sanna, you are from Saamaka. Nowadays, maybe a young Saamaka man or a Saamaka woman – we apologized [for speaking frankly], listeners, we apologized already! We won’t continue to apologize anymore – If someone, or if a young man and a Saamaka woman get together here [downriver], can they marry here if the family is here or will you send them to their Saamaka village?’

Basia Sanna: *We basia Ayeni, mi o kai manda den, mi meni taa a musu. Nou a ta kengi paakisei.*

*Nou a di konde, ufa di konde libi de, ufa di konde libi di de á bi da muyëë a bakaa konde aki. (unclear) Nou te i go a Saamaka nou, i go tei, ma nounou aki nou di soni kon, biya, enke fa nounou sembe kon hiya nou abi di bëë di i o go tei, den o taigi i, den o da i di muyëë aki, i kan tou, u de, ma nou den o piki i tamaa i go tei en a gaan saamaka.*

‘Well, Basia Ayeni, I will send them, I think that it has to be [that way]. Now ideas are changing. Now in the village, before there was village life, the village life that existed before, it was not possible to marry downriver. [...] then you went to Saamaka and married, but now it is happening, young men, now that people have become plentiful downriver, thus there are these clans that will marry [here], they will tell you, they will give you the woman in marriage here, you can get married, you are together, but they will tell you tomorrow you’ll take her to Saamaka ...’

Nenge(e): regular; Saamaka: italics

Second, it is not uncommon to see speakers of one Maroon language shift or approximate another Maroon language. For instance, in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni, Saamakas often shift to Nenge(e) or Nenge(e) and Sranantongo when communicating with speakers of Nenge(e) varieties while speakers of Nenge(e) varieties do not typically approximate Saamaka – if it does occur, it tends to be for comic effect when reporting speech or for *modo* ‘showing off’. In other contexts such as in Kourou in French Guiana and the Brokopondo district in Suriname where speakers of Saamaka outnumber speakers of Nenge(e) varieties, Saamaka practices are also used by speakers of Nenge(e). Example (4) comes from an interaction between a Pamaka man (A) and two young Saamaka women in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni. A is chatting to the two of them (K, C) at his house about various things. In the conversation, all three of them alternate between elements from Saamaka, Nenge(e), Sranantongo and shared elements as a way of accommodating to each other.

(4) [ discussion between A, a Pamaka man, and K & C, two Saamaka women.]

1 K : womi A, andi da de disi ? ‘A, who are these ones?’

2 A : a wantu mii de a faansi ‘It’s some children who are in metropolitan France.’

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3 K : den *mii fi* i noo? ‘Your kids?’

4 A : *no* ‘No.’

5 K : i sisa? ‘Your sister?’

6 A : sisa? *No mi baa* ‘Sister? No, my brother.’

7 C : *di mii aki a gei* mi sabi en disi. ‘This child, it seems like I know this one.’

8 A : *no man* ‘No, man.’

9 K : wan *bi kon aki tok*, A? ‘One came here, right?’

10 A : *no, no, no* ‘No, no.’

[...]

11 C : diilengi *de de no* ? ‘Are they triplets?’

12 A : *no, no, no oo*, ná diilengi. ‘No they are not triplets.’

13 C : **na andi pali di weti** wan de? ‘Who’s got the whitish child there?’

14 A : *di weti* wan de, *hen da di boy u mi tok*. ‘The whitish one there, he is my child, right.’

Saamaka: italics & underlined; Sranantongo: italics; Nenge(e): bold; shared elements: regular

While the Maroon languages are still practiced monolingually, it has become common place for people from all walks of life and age-groups to engage to varying degrees in bilingual or multilingual practices (see Migge 2007). In this kind of interaction, what is shared between the Maroon languages and Sranantongo serves as a matrix frame, and lexical items from Sranantongo, Maroon languages and the official language(s), but also from other languages such as English are inserted into that frame. Each switch does not have a special indexicality, but it is the overall pattern that displays their linguistic competence and voices their modern sophistication and ‘development’ (Migge 2007; Migge & Léglise 2011, 2013). Example (5) comes from a discussion of several men in their 30s at the market of Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni.

(5)

1 Sa: I *no* si G? ‘You haven’t seen G?’

2 B: *No jon*. ‘No man.’

3 Sa: Efi i si a man **ya taagi** en taki mi o (unclear). A man **mu** e gi mi wan sani fu mi teki wan sani gi en. Now mi kon a **doro sey** a man **no** de fu si.

‘If you see him around, tell him that I’ll (unclear). The guy should give me something in order for me to get something for him. Now I’ve come to town and the guy is not around.’

4 B: oho ‘oh’

5 Sa: **Taagi** en mi go luku wan pampila a *lameri* **da** mi o **pasa** luku en **ya** baka.

‘Tell him that I’ve gone to the town hall to check up on paper work then I’ll come to look for him again.’

6 B: A bun. ‘ok’

7 J: A man *disi ferandert yere*. ‘This guy has changed!’

8 B: *Aii* a boy di gi *wi a uwii ya* a taki a abi wan *moutain* fu **seli**.

‘Yes, the guy who gave us this weed, he said he has a mountain bike for sale.’

9 J: Wan *moutain bike*. Te wan man e si mi den sowtu fasi de, i e kon **taagi** mi taki i e suku wan **baysigi** fu bay of wan *brom*, kewoon mi o *taygi* i taki na wenki i **mu** go, mi a *no wenkri*. Na *lek fufurman* a man e si *yu tok, eee man*.

‘A mountain bike. When someone treats me in this way, you come and tell me that you are looking to buy a bike or a motorbike, I’ll tell you straight away that you have to go to a shop. I’m not a shop. It’s as if the guy sees you like a thief, right, no man.’

12 B: *Trutru tori da a mu* go a *wenkri*. ‘True story, then he should go to a shop.’

13 J: A man e kon **taagi** i taki a wani bay wan **baysigi** mi *no skrif* *budik*. A mi *skin (unclear)* i *ben taagi* a man meki a go a *wenkri of mek’* a go *fufuur* wan.

‘The guy comes to tell you that he wants to buy a bike, I haven’t written shop on me. It’s my skin (unclear) you told the guy to go to a shop or to steal one.’

EMC: bold; Sranantongo: italics; Dutch: italics & underlined; English: bold, underlined & italics; French: underlined; shared EMC & Sranantongo: regular.

## 8. Conclusion

Anthropological (e.g Price 2002; Price & Price 2003) and socio-historical (van Stipriaan 2009a,b, 2011, 2015; van Stipriaan & Polimé 2009) research has demonstrated that Maroon communities have undergone significant social change over the last fifty years and that change has much intensified since the late 1980s. Due to the construction of the hydroelectric dam in the

1960 and the civil war in Suriname in the 1980s, great numbers of Maroons were displaced from their traditional villages and were forced to find a new, though often difficult life elsewhere such as in Paramaribo, French Guiana and in Europe. Most of those who left did not return to their villages in the interior of Suriname and many of those who had initially returned or had initially stayed subsequently also came to settle permanently in urban and semi-urban areas. Maroon's exodus from the traditional areas has changed the social, ethnic and linguistic landscape of (western) French Guiana. The sociolinguistic survey data examined in this paper confirm that Maroon Creoles, and particularly Aukaans/Ndyuka, have taken a foothold in urban areas in the region as just over a third (35%) of the children interviewed in Suriname and three-fourth of those interviewed in French Guiana reported using a Maroon Creole for some of their interactions; their proportion was even higher in western municipalities of French Guiana where more than half of the children claimed a Maroon language and in eastern Surinamese towns such as Moengo where more than 90% of children reported speaking them (Léglise and Migge 2015). This suggests that migration, urbanization and increased participation in the urban multi-ethnic and multilingual contexts has not led to language attrition among Maroons. Instead, it seems that they are gaining speakers because they are also reported as additional languages especially in western French Guiana.

Urbanization of Maroons has, however, changed the linguistic repertoires and linguistic practices of Maroons. The survey results for both constituencies show that Maroon Creoles are now practiced as both L1s and as additional languages in both urban and rural areas. About 15% of the children interviewed in Suriname and 10% in French Guiana reported using a Maroon Creole as an additional language besides one or more other languages of primary socialization. Plurilingualism was not restricted to children who declared Maroon languages as additional languages though, but was equally common among those who claimed a Maroon language as their L1. While Maroon languages appear to play a more important role in the linguistic repertoires of children in urban contexts, their importance was by no means negligible in rural areas in both constituencies. Unsurprisingly, children most frequently claimed the official language of their respective political constituency in addition to a Maroon Creole, but other languages such as other Maroon languages, Sranantongo and English also figured in children's repertoires. Other local languages, by contrast, were rarely reported. Observations among children and adults also demonstrated that Maroons, like other multilinguals, do not simply have

distinct languages in their repertoires that they use in different contexts, but that they increasingly engage in bilingual and multilingual practices, involving patterns of code-mixing and code-switching. These practices are becoming mainstreamed and are gaining local salience, being socially contrasted with monolingual practices that are increasingly identified as traditional and rural or polite.

Social changes have also affected people's perceptions of Maroon Creoles. Traditionally, they were perceived as low prestige languages among non-Maroons but were highly valued among Maroons. The findings of the surveys in this regard are somewhat contradictory suggesting that urbanization of their speakers and social change have not yet led to a full re-evaluation of their status. Covert measurements of attitudes such as self-assessment of competence demonstrated that speakers of these languages continue to have a positive orientation to these languages. Children in both constituencies who reported speaking a Maroon language either as L1 or as additional language overwhelmingly rated their competence as high suggesting that they positively align with it. The Surinamese survey registered very few negative comments about Maroon Creoles, but few children throughout Suriname registered a desire to learn them because their use, like that of other local languages, continues to confer a certain ethnic (and possibly social) positionality. The French Guianese situation contrasts with that in Suriname in that after a period of intense negative attitudes towards Maroon Creoles, they are now officially promoted as an integral part of the newly recognized multilingual local reality and have gained some degree of official recognition as 'languages of France'. This positive orientation towards them is not fully representative of attitudes on the ground though as the French Guianese survey elicited a fair number of negative comments about them, suggesting that Maroon languages are still viewed as the languages of (recent) immigrants by some sections of society.

Sociolinguistic surveys of the kinds reported on here provide valuable information about language practices because they allow accessing a relatively large population. They provide vital insights into language ideologies that have an important impact on how languages are used. However, surveys based on guided-interviews must not only avoid pre-empting answers by asking only suggestive or presuppositional questions, but equally crucially, responses have to be interpreted in the light of observational data and findings from the analysis of actual interactions in order to fully comprehend people's responses. Respondents' responses are never neutral, but are selected in relation to the social and historical circumstances and the context of interaction,



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including the physical and social setting and the participants. When studying language contact, survey data is an indispensable tool for describing synchronic contact settings that can then be further investigated using a range of other methods such as structural linguistic and qualitative methods.

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