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Greeting and social change*

Bettina Migge
University College Dublin

Abstract
This paper discusses greeting routines in the Eastern Maroon community of Suriname and French Guiana. The paper argues that there are two broad sets of greeting routines. They have different origins, linguistic structures and distinct social meanings (e.g. setting, social groups, social relationship). As a result of social changes in the community, their social distribution, frequency and their social meanings are currently changing. The 'urban' greetings are being extended to all kinds of new social spheres and are increasingly losing their negative or subculture connotations while the 'village' greetings are becoming restricted to a relatively small set of situations and kinds of interactions. Moreover, new kinds of greeting practices emerge to symbolically assert existing social distinctions and to mark newly emerging social realities.

Key words: greeting, structure of greetings, social relations, social change, Eastern Maroon community

1. Introduction

Greetings have been a recurrent object of inquiry in several disciplines such as ethnology, linguistics, anthropology and sociology (see Duranti 1997, 2001 for an overview). While in ethnological research greetings were "studied as a means to uncovering some of the evolutionary bases of human behavior" (Duranti 1997: 64), linguistic research has mainly concentrated on the sequential nature of greetings (Schegloff 1968, 1979, 1986; Schegloff and Sacks 1973; Sacks 1975). Ethnographic studies (Goody 1972; Irvine 1974; Salmond 1974; Youssouf, Grimshaw & Bird 1976; Caton 1986, Duranti 1992) provide thorough formal descriptions of greetings in different societies. They focus on their structure, their verbal content, sometimes also their non-verbal acts (cf. Duranti 1992), the contexts of their use, and their interactional meanings. They reveal that greetings play an important role in defining the nature of social relationships, interlocutors' social status or rank and their social identities.

Irvine's (1974) study of greeting among the Wolof of Senegal (cf. Goody 1972), for instance, shows that the way people participate in a greeting activity (e.g. as initiator or as

respondent of a sequence) defines their social status or identities. In situations in which the two parties "do not readily fall into a tacit agreement on their relative positions" (Irvine 1974: 175), they will try to negotiate their status by manipulating their participation in the greeting activity. For example, the most important strategy to claim a "lower" social position, possibly to ward off financial obligations, is to try to initiate the various adjacency pairs that make up the greeting activity.

Other ethnographic studies discuss how greetings define or rather reflect the nature of the social relationship between interlocutors. Discussing greeting among the *sayyid* 'descendants of the prophet Mohamed' and *qabili* 'tribesmen' of the Highlands of Yemen, Cato (1986) shows that the two groups employ different kinds of greetings that iconically index the differences in the nature of the relationship and the social ideology between the two groups. While the former employ asymmetrical greetings to highlight the honor, piety and elevated status of the interlocutor, the greeting exchanges among the latter are symmetrical – "the balance in the give-and-take of communication being an icon of the balance and equality of social relationships" (302).

Finally, Duranti's (1992) highly insightful discussion of ceremonial greetings in formal events such as a *fono* 'council meeting' in Western Samoa illustrates two other important aspects about greetings. First, they are not just verbal activities but also crucially involve non-verbal aspects (e.g. eye-gaze, movement). Second, greetings perform important social functions. They initiate and index a formal interaction and function "as relatively short but complex activities whereby participants can communicate and bystanders find out information about someone's social status or expected role in a particular setting" (683).

Although greetings provide important insights into the social structure and linguistic practices of a community, there are not, to my knowledge, any studies that deal with greeting exchanges in creole communities (but see Fenigsen, Tessonneau, this volume). In this paper I investigate the linguistic structure, social distribution, meanings and functions of greeting exchanges in the Eastern Maroon (EM) community of Suriname and French Guiana (Guyane) based on data from audio-recordings, long-term observation and participation in the community and focused discussions with selected members. The data come mostly from the Pamaka community.

The investigation of the general features of these greetings is based on Duranti (1997) and the analysis of their interactional meanings draws on Goffman's (1967) theory of social face.

Goffman argues that an individual's social face is an image of a person pieced together from the expressive implications of events s/he engages in. It is the positive social value a person effectively claims for him/herself or attributes to another person by the line others assume s/he has taken during a particular contact. To maintain or defend this positive social image, interlocutors engage in face-work, i.e., actions (e.g. avoidance of face-threats) taken by a person to make what s/he or another person is doing consistent with their face.

The study is divided into six parts. Part One briefly presents the EM community. Part Two discusses some of the general aspects of greetings. Parts Three and Four investigate the structure and the social meanings of greetings, respectively. Part Five looks at greetings in the urban context and the last part summarizes the findings and discusses their implications.

2. The Eastern Maroon Community

The EM community consists of three autonomous groups, the Aluku or Boni, the Ndyuka or Okanisi, and the Pamaka. Their traditional villages (*konde*) are mostly located in the interior of the tropical rain forest of Suriname and Guyane along the Marowijne river (Pamaka) and its tributaries, the Lawa river (Aluku) and the Tapanahoni river (Ndyuka). There are also significant Ndyuka settlements along the upper and lower Marowijne River, the Cottica River, and the Sara Creek. The latter two communities are partially autonomous and are locally referred to as the Saakiiki and the Kotika, respectively. Due to migratory movements from the interior toward the coastal region and from Suriname to Guyane, the (French) lower Marowijne region, including the two Aluku villages in that area, has in the last decades become rather multiethnic in nature. It holds important settlements (*kampu*) from all three communities and several mixed settlements in which members from these communities and other maroon groups (e.g. Saamaka and Kotika) live together.

*put **Map** from Huttar and Huttar here.*

These migrations also brought mostly young maroons to the coastal urban centers of the region. Initially, the capital of Suriname, Paramaribo, the border town of Albina and the areas around them were the main center of attraction. However, following the civil war in Suriname and the

country's economic decline in the late 1980s and 1990s, a significant number of EMs has moved to towns in the French overseas department, and particularly to the border town of St. Laurent du Maroni, but also to Mana, Kourou and Cayenne.

The mother tongue and primary community language of the EM communities is the Eastern Maroon Creole (EMC). It is classified as a conservative English-lexified Creole. The community recognizes three major EMC varieties that coincide with the three existing EM groups (Aluku, Ndyuka, Pamaka).[1] They are direct descendants of the creole varieties that emerged on the plantations of Suriname between 1680 and 1720 (cf. Migge 2002a, 2003). The three varieties are mutually intelligible but differ slightly on the phonological and the lexical level (cf. Bilby 2002, Goury & Migge 2003). These differences largely function as ethnic markers. The community also recognizes at least three styles of speaking, *lesipeki taki* 'respect speech,' *yunkuman* or *wakaman taki* 'young man's or traveller's speech,' and *kowounu taki* 'common speech.' They are associated with different greeting practices.

Despite contacts with local and increasingly also European urban centers (e.g. Amsterdam, Paris), in the everyday life of EM villagers stratification still plays an important role in what is still a 'traditional' type of social organization. Adults are divided into three broad groups: titled persons, elders and "regular" adults. Titled persons are the members of a maroon government. The official head of an EM community is the *gaaman* 'paramount chief.' The *kabiten* head the different (sub)lineages or villages and the male and female *basia* assist the *kabiten* and the *gaaman*.[2] The *kabiten* (and *gaaman*) carry out the ritual and official business of the community, represent it to the outside and are responsible for keeping it together. Male elders are essentially men above the age of 40 or 45 who lead a respectable life. They aid the titled persons in their work and critically overlook it. Some of them head the extended family groups that make up the different (sub)lineages, lead the organization and carry out minor ritual ceremonies and arbitrate minor disputes. Female elders often serve as medium for avenging spirits and/or organize and overlook the actions of the women of their sublineage or village.

"Regular" adults are women and men roughly above the age of 16. However, adulthood seems to be much more closely tied to certain "social achievements" rather than age. A woman is, for example, said to be an adult when she has children, even if she is only 15 years old. Her status increases with her age but also with the number of children she has at her charge and by the way she maintains her family and household.[3] Men are considered to be of age when they take on

responsibility, i.e., when they take a wife and have children, and obtain the necessary means for being self-sufficient – traditionally, a boat and an outboard motor, a house, tools for preparing fields, building houses etc. Their social standing increases with their age, their achievements, and their relative participation in the socio-political life of the community.[4] The latter is, however, crucially dependent on the knowledge of local traditions, which are acquired gradually throughout one's life. As a result of their young age, young men are generally not considered to be very knowledgeable and therefore tend to be assigned a relatively low social status in the traditional hierarchy.

In the EM community all adults are due respect, but titled persons, elders and older "regular" adults are due special respect. When interacting with them, it is customary to apply or approximate norms of formal or respectful conduct (cf. Migge 2004).

3. When to greet

EM greetings (*odi*), like greetings in other societies, function to identify "a group of people as members of the class of individuals with whom we communicate in public or public arenas" (Duranti 1997: 71). They are obligatorily employed to initiate a focused interaction (Goffman 1967: 7) with an adult who does not belong to one's household or to acknowledge such a person;[5] the greeting of children and youngsters appears to be optional. In the village setting where people generally know each other, mere co-presence or "unfocused interaction" that do not require greetings is rare. It is, however, found in the urban context. Here, members from different communities (e.g. Amerindians, Haitians, Hmongs, Saamaka, Aluku, Ndyuka, local creoles, Europeans) who do not know each other may come to occupy the same space or pass closely by each other without greeting. With members from other communities, EMs generally employ the greetings from the dominant European language, e.g. *bonjour* in Guyane and *daag* in Suriname.

An adult who does not greet another adult they know is usually considered to lack proper manners (*án sabi kiyo*). When it recurs, it is taken as an indication that there is a "problem" and/or that the person lacks proper respect for the other because they treat them as if they are non-proper conversationalists and "not worth the attention implied by the use of greetings" (Duranti 1997: 71). This is an offence that disrupts the social harmony. The wronged person usually complains to the elders of the other person and less commonly to the person her- or

himself in an effort to work out the problem and to receive the proper recognition they are due.[6] However, if the "wronged" person has reasons to believe that the other (younger) person does not know them, they introduce themselves by giving their name and explaining the nature of their family relationship.

Greetings in the EM community "are [also] constitutive of the interactants' public recognition of each other's presence in the same perceptual field" (Duranti 1997: 68) since they occur as soon as two people come into close proximity, roughly within one or two meters of each other. They are typically the first words that interlocutors exchange when they become aware of each other. Usually, it is the person arriving at some location, e.g. house, riverside, who initiates a greeting. However, if they cannot see the person in the location, the latter may also initiate the greeting. When passing by a location in which another (adult) person is visibly located, e.g. when they can be seen sitting in the shade or heard doing things in their house, people feel obliged to greet (*bali odi*). The passing person typically briefly comes to meet the other person in their location, i.e., makes a detour or minimally pauses "in their tracks" during the greeting. Simply calling out a greeting in passing is interpreted as a sign of lack of respect. However, if time constraints do not allow otherwise, it is necessary to either apologize, e.g. give a reason for one's rush, or to try to pass by unseen. When both parties are in motion or meet in the public areas of the village, e.g. the paths, the riverside, the part of the village where "ritual" matters are carried out, the person who first sees the other initiates a greeting procedure and both persons minimally pause for a few moments. If there is a difference in social status between the two people, however, it is the person with lower social rank who is expected to initiate the greeting. Elders, for instance, often "pretend" not to see younger people until they are being greeted by them.

In the case that several people are gathered in the same location, such as a group of women who sit around a cassava roasting pan, or elders gathered for a meeting, the person arriving or passing by generally greets everybody collectively and receives a collective or chorus reply from them. Following a collective greeting, they may then also move to address a greeting at one of the persons present to show them special respect, e.g. in the case of high-ranking persons, or to initiate a focused interaction with that person.

Upon initiation of a greeting sequence, previous verbal interactions, e.g. discussions between several persons, cease but are usually continued once the greeting is over. If the visiting person is of higher social status than the persons present in the location and/or is not familiar with

them, talk usually does not resume (quickly). Non-verbal activities (e.g. food processing, boat-building etc.) are often continued during greetings or resumed immediately thereafter, particularly if the persons greeting know each other well. The people greeting only enter into physical contact, e.g. embrace or shake hands, if they know each other well and had not met for a while. The person(s) being greeted also do not usually get up and/or move towards the arriving person(s) but typically remain in their space. Finally, it is considered disrespectful to directly look at a person when greeting them, particularly if they are of higher social status.

4. The structural properties of greetings in the EM community

In the EM community, as among the Wolof (Irvine 1974: 168), the behavior that may fill the greeting slot is clearly defined. There are two broad sets of greetings in use in the community that differ from each other on structural and socio-pragmatic grounds. This section explores their structural properties.

EM greetings constitute a separate type of exchange that consists of one or more adjacency pairs, "in which the first pair part by one party (A) invites, constraints, and creates the expectation for a particular type of reply by another party (B)" (Duranti 1997: 69). This format allows interlocutors to take part in a joint activity and thereby display "some evidence of mutual recognition and mutual understanding" (Duranti 1997: 69).

The greetings in the first set are quite formulaic in nature. They consist of one statement–statement adjacency pair followed by an acknowledgement (1). The formula uttered by the initiator of the greeting (A) has coupled with it a standard reply given by the addressee (B) that is followed by an acknowledgement also uttered by (A).

Although (A)'s and (B)'s utterances are essentially the same, they can still be distinguished from each other on the basis of peripheral features. (A)'s utterance is usually combined with a vocative phrase consisting of (B)'s official name (1a) or of their title of courtesy (1b) or function title (1c). It is either a summons (1a, e) and precedes the greeting or it functions as a form of address (1b–c) and follows the greeting.[7] Moreover, the emphatic marker *oo* generally (but optionally) also modifies the formula. *oo* is obligatory, however, if (A) greets several people at the same time (1d). B's statement is always preceded by the affirmation expressing word (*i*)*ya*

‘yes,’ and the assertion-marking particle *yee* or the politeness marker *baa* typically follows it. Moreover, it is also possible to alter the paralinguistic features, e.g. loudness, tempo, pitch, of (B)’s statement to convey one’s feelings. The greetings in (1) are typically delivered at a relatively slow speaking speed but when (A) or (B) speaks in a very soft voice and very slowly, drawing out the vowel of the assertion marker, it is usually understood that they are suffering some discomfort. Finally, the acknowledgement is usually expressed by one of the words for ‘yes’ (*eeya*, (*i*)*ya*), or by the politeness marker (*m*)*baa*.

(1) a.	A: Sa Moiboto, a booko u (baka) oo.	‘Sa M., it dawned on us (again).’
	B: Iya, a booko u (baka) yee/baa.	‘Yes, it dawned on us (again)!’
	A: Eeya/Iya.	‘Yes’
b.	A: A kiin u (baka) oo, mma.	‘It became day (again), (female) elder.’ (lit. ‘it cleared us again’)
	B: Iya, a kiin u (baka) yee/baa.	‘Yes, it became day (again)!’
	A: Eeya/Iya.	‘Yes’
c.	A: U weki oo, gaaman.	‘We have awoken, paramount chief.’
	B: Iya, u weki yee/baa.	‘Yes, we have awoken!’
	A: Eeya/Iya.	‘Yes’
d.	A: U miti oo.	‘We meet.’
	B, C: Iya, u miti (baka) yee/baa, papa.	‘Yes, we meet (again), elder!’
	A: Eeya/Iya.	‘Yes’
e.	A: Dda, a tapu u (baka) oo.	‘(Male) elder, it (the night) has fallen (again).’ (lit. ‘it covers us’)
	B: Iya, a tapu u yee.	‘Yes, it has fallen!’
	A: Eeya/Iya.	‘Yes’
f.	A: Kabiten, odi oo.	‘Kabiten, hello’ (lit. ‘greeting’).
	B: Iya, odi yee/baa.	‘Yes, hello!’
	A: Eeya/Iya.	‘Yes’

When someone returns after having been away for a long time, one of the persons in the location, (A), initiates the semantically opaque greeting in (2) as (B) is approaching.

(2)	A: Wada oo!	
	B: Fiiman baa/yee/oo	‘???free person!’

Upon arrival, (A) and (B) hug calling out *atuu* at the same time. (A) then initiates the greeting in (3). EMs argue that this greeting dates from the time of their ancestors’ flight where it was used as a “password” for allowing access to the runaway’s villages. Before admitting someone to their village, the runaway slaves would first try to establish the person’s identity by checking their knowledge of maroon traditions such as greetings.

The second set of greetings consists of question–answer adjacency pairs. Some of these greetings, the indigenous EM ones, involve two adjacency pairs and an acknowledgment. As illustrated in (3) and (4), they are "complicated" chains (cf. Goffman 1981; Caton 1986: 297) because (B)'s first turn consists of the second pair part of the first adjacency pair initiated by (A) and a first pair part of the second exchange. Note that (3) is sometimes preceded by an embrace.

(3)	A_1: Mma Gainsa, da u de (mooi)?	'Mrs. G., then, are you well?' (lit. 'then we/you (pl.) exist')
	B_1: Iya, u de (mooi/masimasi) yee/baa!	'Yes, I am well/weak!' (lit. 'we/you (pl.) exist nicely/weakly for sure')
	U seefi de (mooi)?	'And yourself are you also well?' (lit. 'we/you (pl.) self exist nicely')
	A_2: Iya, u de (mooi) yee/baa.	'Yes, I am well. (lit. 'we/you (pl.) exist nicely for sure')
	B: Iya/Eeya.	'yes'
(4)	A_1: Dda Siliman, da u doo en (mooi)?	'Mr. S. did you sleep well?' (lit. 'then we/you (pl.) arrive at it [the day] nicely')
	B_1: Iya, u doo en (mooi/masimasi) yee/baa!	'Yes, I slept well/badly!'
	U seefi? (u doo en (mooi)?)	'(How about) yourself? (Did you sleep well?)'
	A_2: Iya, u doo en (mooi) yee/baa![8]	'Yes, I slept well!'
	B: Mbaa	'Yes'

The question parts have the linear order of a declarative sentence but a question intonation is applied. The question part of the first adjacency pair, (A_1), usually involves a vocative form as in the case of the greetings in (1) while the question part of the second adjacency pair, to my knowledge, never includes such a form. Both also contain a personal address form, the pronoun *u*. It is the first and second person plural pronoun, which is also employed in formal contexts to politely address only one person (Huttar & Huttar 1994: 462), as in (3 & 4).[9] The answer parts, (B_1) and (A_2), are syntactically identical to the question part but have a statement intonation. As in the case of the examples in (1), they are always preceded by the affirmation-expressing word (*i*)*ya* 'yes' and are also typically followed by the assertion-marking particle *yee* or the politeness marker *baa*. Like the greetings in (1–2), (3–4) are generally delivered in a relatively slow tempo.

As indicated by the brackets in (3) and (4), it is possible to emphasize a positive attitude by modifying the question and/or the answer part of the adjacency pair with the property item *mooi* 'nice.' The second part of the adjacency pairs, (B_1) and (A_2), can also be modified by the property item *masimasi* 'weak, bad' or in the case of (3) by the phrase *a wan ana* 'at one hand' to

overtly convey some discomfort. However, in line with the preference for agreement (Sacks 1987), people normally just use the positive reply in (3) and express discomfort using paralinguistic features, if at all.

The greetings in (1–4) may also be linked to make up a ("mixed") discourse chain (cf. Goffman 1981; Caton 1986: 298). The greeting in (3) can be preceded by any of the greetings in (1) while the greeting in (4) may only be preceded by (1a–c) – see (5) for an illustration. Moreover, (4), possibly preceded by (1a–c), may also be followed by (3).

(5)	A_1: Ba Aseengi, u miti oo.	'Mr. A., we meet.'
	B_1: Iya, u miti yee, sisa.	'Yes, we meet, my female friend!'
	A_2: (Iya.)	('Yes')
	Da u de?	'Then, are you well?' (lit. 'then we exist')
	B_2: Iya, u de yee!	'Yes, I am well !' (lit. 'yes, we exist for sure')
	U seefi de?	'You are also well ?' (lit. 'we self exist')
	A_3: Iya, u de baa.	'Yes, I am well. (lit. 'yes, we exist')
	B_3: Iya/Eeya.	'yes'

The inquiry into each other's health (3) is usually initiated by (A) who may or may not officially acknowledge the end of the first greeting.

Finally, the "mixed" chains (5) may be even further extended by adding one or more adjacency pairs that are an inquiry into the well being of A's family – mother, wife, father and/or children. They have the format in (6) and are typically heard if (A) and (B) (and their families) had not seen each other for a long time.[10]

(6)	B: Fa fi i mma? (A de mooi?)	'How about your mother? (Is she well?)'
	or A mma fi i, a de mooi?	'Your mother, is she well?'
	A: A de (mooi yee).	'She is well (!)'

As in the case of the greetings (1–4), (B)'s reply is relatively standardized but other replies (e.g. *a e siki* 'he is (constantly) sick,' *a go a pareis/holansi* 'She left to go to Paris or France/Netherlands') are also possible and are often heard.

The other greetings in the second set involve a simple question–answer adjacency pair usually but are not obligatorily followed by an acknowledgment. The question part involves the question word *fa* 'how' and may also involve a vocative form. In contrast to the greetings in (1–4), the reply (8) is not a repetition of the question phrase (7). There are several possible replies available (8–9) although in actual practice (8a–b) are most frequently used in response to (7a–e).

(B)'s response is usually positive (8) but indifference (9a–b) or discomfort (9c–d) may also be conveyed. These exchanges are usually not part of a discourse chain – but see (12) for an exception.

(7a)	A: (name/sisa/baala), fa i tan?	'Sister/brother, how are you?'
(7b)	A: (name), fa i du?	'How are you doing?'
(7c)	A: (name), fa a e go?	'How is it going?'
(7d)	A: (name), on fa?	'How?' ('What's up')
(7e)	A: (name), fa waka?	'What's happening (lit. walk)?'
(7f)	A: A e go (name)?	'What's up?' (lit. 'is it going?')
(8a)	B: Saaf(i)saafi!/Saflio!	'okay (lit. 'Soft')?'
(8b)	B: Mi de (oo)!	'I am well!'
(8c)	B: A e go!	'I am okay!' (lit. 'it is going')
(9a)	B: Wan wan namo!	'okay' (lit. 'one one only')
(9b)	B: Mi de namo!	'I am just fine.'
(9c)	B: So wanse-wanse!	'soso'
(9d)	B: A ná e go!	'things aren't going well!' (lit. 'it is not going')

While the greetings in (1–4) are considered to be proper native Eastern Maroon or Pamaka greetings, the greetings in (7–9) are said to belong to the coastal, non-maroon Afro-Surinamese population of Suriname, the so-called *fotonenge* lit. 'fort or Paramaribo people,' who generally speak Sranan Tongo, the related urban creole, as their mother tongue.[11] EMs, however, practice sociolinguistic erasure and associate these greetings most closely with young working class men of Afro-Surinamese descent. Today, with the emergence of Sranan Tongo as the main lingua franca in Suriname and parts of Guyane, these greetings are also used in interethnic and sometimes also intra-ethnic encounters by members of other local ethnic groups such as Surinamese-Chinese, Surinamese-Indonesian, Surinamese-Amerindian etc.

5. The social meaning and distribution of greetings in the EM community

On the most general level, the referential content of some of the EM greetings establishes specific temporal units (Duranti 1997: 70). They refer to activities (e.g. rise of sun/dawning, awaking, fall of night) that take place at specific times of the day and come to index these periods of the day. Other greetings, e.g. (1f), (3), (7–9), do not refer to a specific time period. (1f) only acknowledges presence while (3) and (7–9) are an inquiry into health. Because of their "timeless"

content, they can be employed at any time of the day. (1d) acknowledges the mutual presence of the interlocutors. It used to be only employed in the period between midday and the fall of night; however, in recent years it is also increasingly used to greet people in the evening, after dusk, thus replacing (1e).

More importantly, however, "the occurrence of greetings and the ways in which they are carried out identify a particular [social] class of people" (Duranti 1997: 71) and index different kinds of social relationships between interlocutors. The greetings in (1) convey a relatively great social distance between the interlocutors and constitute the encounter being opened as formal. (A) and (B) only establish a minimal common ground, pay each other respect and construct each other as respectable persons in two ways. First, they do not directly and personally address each other. (A) only employs a vocative form to get (B)'s attention and to identify them as the recipient of the greeting. The only permissible vocative forms are the formal forms of address that invoke (B)'s official or positional social identity. (B) does not use personal address forms. Second, (A) does not elicit (personal) information from (B) but just acknowledges (B)'s presence (1f) or states to (B) an obvious and uncontroversial fact that relates to both of them (1a–e), e.g. they both survived the night and that the next day is opening itself up to them (again). (B) supports (A)'s positive face and definition of the relationship when confirming (A)'s assertion and emphasizing its correctness.

In accordance with their emphasis on social distance, the greetings in (1) are used to open up encounters that require greater attention to participants' face. This includes formal events (e.g. appeals, council meetings) and interactions that involve a certain kind of social distance between the interlocutors and/or invoke positional identities, e.g. meetings between elders or between elders or titled persons and younger adults.

Young untitled persons typically address elders and titled persons using the greetings in (1) or (3–4) to pay them respect and to stage themselves as respectful persons. Among young untitled men, these greetings are generally not used for two main reasons: first, their relationships tend to be relatively informal and solidarity-based. Moreover, from the point of view of the traditional ideology, they all have the same (low) social status.[12] Second, they consider them to be old fashioned because they are an integral part of the traditional EM way of life. Young maroons tend to aspire to a modern (urban) life-style and are eager to rid themselves of the stigma of what they consider "rural backwardness."

In everyday situations, e.g. daily greetings between neighbors or people who regularly meet each other and maintain a cordial relationship, only the three-part sequences in (1) are employed while, in more formal contexts the exchange is extended by (3) or (4), see (5). The extension of the greeting ritual indexes the exceptional or greater formal character of the encounter (cf. Duranti 1997).

(A) may also further underscore their respect for (B) by selecting one of the greetings that are widely considered to be older (1a–b and possibly 1e). Younger people often direct such greetings at elders to display their knowledge of local traditions and their (temporary) alignment with the traditional system. In contrast, elders sometimes direct them at younger people to test their knowledge of local traditions.

Overall, the greetings in (3) and (4) convey somewhat less social distance between interlocutors than the greetings in (1).[13] There appear to be two reasons for this. First, (A)'s and (B)'s utterances are somewhat less formulaic. The question parts may be adverbially modified and the answer part may even overtly contradict the question part. Second, the verbal content of the adjacency pairs implies a greater degree of familiarity or a closer relationship between (A) and (B) than those in (1). In (3–4) interlocutors exchange personal information (e.g. about their state of health) and directly relate to each other using pronominal forms of address. The first or second person plural pronoun *u* is typically employed because it conveys greater respect, but people who know each other very well (e.g. siblings or close acquaintances) also employ the second person singular pronoun *i*. Employing these greetings, (A) and (B) pay respect to each other but they also convey that they maintain (at least overtly) a cordial relationship.

Like the greetings in (1), (3) and (4) are mainly used to initiate interactions between and with high-ranking persons and people who deserve special respect such as in-laws. Young untitled persons do not usually employ them among each other. While (4) can be employed every morning, (3) is usually employed after the interlocutors have not seen each other for a while or in situations involving a relatively great social distance.

According to EMs, including those who frequently use them, the greetings in (7–9) invoke very little respect. They are closely associated with young urban working class men of Afro-Surinamese descent, so-called *fotonenge*, who enjoy little prestige in the traditional EM ideology. These young men are closely associated with the coastal cash-labor industry such as the building industry and the transportation industry and with hanging out on street-corners and in bars.[14]

Moreover, they are said to have very little serious interest in local traditions and are closely associated with notions of positive politeness (Brown & Levinson 1989). This way of life is clearly at odds with the (traditional) EM social ideology, which strongly emphasizes social status, negative politeness, kinship relationships and a close commitment to the local community and its traditions. The world beyond the local community, particularly the public urban domain such as the street and bars, are considered to be vulgar and lacking in respect and are hence to be avoided.

The verbal content of these greetings also conveys an absence of proper respect from a traditional EM point of view. First, (A) employs a direct question, involving a question word in the case of (7a–e), to enquire about (B)'s health. In the traditional EM ideology, overt questions are considered to be an imposition. They are usually only directed at people of low social status and possibly those with whom one maintains a close relationship. Second, (A) usually does not employ status-indicating vocative forms or pronouns – only the person's common name or the lowest titles of courtesy (*baala*) and the second person singular pronoun *i* are used or implied (7c–f). They invoke a solidarity-based relationship between (A) and (B). (B)'s response is typically positive but negative answers are also possible. Finally, these greetings are usually delivered in a relatively loud voice and in a much faster tempo than the greetings in (1–3).

Greetings (7–9) are generally not employed with and among elders and (elderly) titled persons. It would be taken to imply that the initiator of the greeting is disregarding the addressee's elevated social status and suggesting that (A) and (B) are social equals.[15] Even among elders and titled persons, this assumption bears a potential for conflict. Moreover, (A) would construct her/himself as impolite and ignorant.

The greetings in (7–9) are, however, commonly employed among young EM men (*kiyo*). The notions of positive politeness associated with them adequately symbolize the informal crew-like solidarity-based relationships that these men (claim to) maintain among each other. These notions and the greetings' close association with young urban working class men whose life-styles are closely aligned with norms and values that contrast with traditional EM ones also function to symbolize the young men's (partial) opposition to the (traditional) EM social ideology and life-style. They appropriate these greetings, just like other features associated with the modern or urban world (cf. Migge 2002b), to constitute a separate powerful "young EM (working) men"

identity; in the traditional EM ideology young men depend on their elders for all socio-political matters even though they fill most of the financial needs of the community.

This group identity and the means to constitute it have their roots in the early migrations of EMs to the coastal region of Suriname. Starting in the 1950s, young EM men increasingly started spending part of the year in the coastal urban region, e.g. the capital Paramaribo or the border town of Albina, or in interior work camps, e.g. the construction of the Afobaka hydroelectric dam, the bauxite mining industry, to engage in cash labor work such as factory work, construction or mining jobs. As part of their acculturation to these multiethnic settings, they learned the various social practices of their urban peers who dominated these settings. This crucially involved learning Sranan Tongo, the related urban creole and main lingua franca of Suriname, and the various social practices associated with its urban varieties such as the greetings in (7–9). As in other bi- or multilingual settings, they eventually adopted linguistic features (e.g. intonational patterns, words) and interactional routines from Sranan Tongo when interacting among themselves as part of their everyday speech repertoire. These symbolized their common urban "working man" experience.[16] Later EM migrants, adopted them as part of their acculturation to the coastal EM community and thereby reinforced their social functions. Today, even young men living in the villages draw on these "urban-EM" practices to project a trendy (*modo*) urban identity and to convey their opposition to the EM establishment.

6. Greeting in the 21st century

Since the end of the 20th century the EM maroon communities have been undergoing significant social change.[17] The civil war in Suriname in the late 1980s and the country's economic decline in the years following it caused many maroons to migrate to the urban centers of French Guiana or to the emerging multiethnic settlements in the interior of French Guiana along the Marowijne River (Apatou, Gaan Santi/Gransanti) and the Lawa River (Maipasula/Maripasoula). These recent migratory movements differ from previous ones in several respects. First, most people leave their villages permanently and only return once in a while for a holiday or for ritual activities, e.g. burials, healings. Second, most of the recent migrants are women and their children who either follow their husband or family, or leave on their own in search of a "better

life" through access to cash labor opportunities, French legal papers and schooling for their children.[18] This migration has left many interior villages depopulated,and due to changes in the daily activities of people and the overall setting in the urban context, extended family and lineage units and the traditional EM socio-political structure and its institutions are increasingly losing social significance.

In the village setting, people's daily activities are determined by social factors such as gender and age. Women are responsible for the domestic sphere and spend most of their time in the village (*konde*) or their horticultural camp (*kampu*). They take care of their own and their husband's house, the well being of their family members (children, elders) and the food production (farming) and preparation. The women from the same extended family unit or lineage typically carry out these tasks together and heavily rely on each other for most of their activities.[19] In contrast to women, (young) men are associated with heavy physical labor and the external public sphere. They build the houses, prepare fields using a slash-and-burn method, hunt, secure transportation, and engage in mostly temporary cash-labor outside of the local community to secure the financial needs of the community. They tend to frequently interact among themselves and with young men from other communities. Their relations with (male) elders tend to be somewhat strained. Finally, (male) elders and titled persons manage the socio-political matters of the community and spend most of their time in the local community. They head the community and its units, represent them to the outside, direct their overall development and keep them together by giving advice to their members, by arbitrating disputes and by organizing and carrying out of ritual ceremonies. As a result, they have a considerable amount of social power, enjoy a great amount of social prestige and are due special respect from the other two social groups.

On the coast, however, the traditional social and occupational differentiation is increasingly being eroded due to the changes in people's social and economic lives. While women, for instance, are usually still responsible for the domestic sphere, they typically also engage in various cash-labor activities to increase the household income. Women with no or very little formal schooling do domestic-type work, reselling and some farming while women with a formal education increasingly try to take up jobs in government offices and the educational system, the most important employers in the region. These work opportunities and/or the various social benefits that a good number of (young) maroon women nowadays receive from the French

government often provide them with greater financial means than their partners or elders. This in turn is increasingly leading to an erosion of traditional status differences and dependencies between women and men/elders. As a result of their financial means, women are able to exercise greater social power over elders and their male partners.[20] Moreover, in the urban setting, where members of the same extended family often do not live in close proximity of each other, women tend to create new social networks with women from other ethnic groups and families who live nearby, and they thereby further decrease their reliance on traditional networks.

The situation is different for elders. In the urban setting, their traditional social functions and superior social standing are being slowly eroded and their life-styles are converging with those of the younger or lower status persons in the community. While at least some of the elders and titled persons are frequently called on to organize and to perform various ceremonies (e.g. burials, end of mourning periods, cleansings) and to help arbitrate disputes, a number of these and other traditional social functions are increasingly being taken over by the various institutions of the national governments (e.g. police, courts, social workers). Moreover, most elders and titled persons tend to be relatively isolated from their equals/peers, are dependent on their younger family members for their living or have to compete with them in the cash-labor market to make a living. As a result of these changes, their elevated social status is slowly being leveled. The other members of the community and most elders themselves, for the most part, no longer perceive as great a social distance between the members of the different traditional status groups. In everyday settings, younger persons therefore generally no longer feel the need to engage in a great number of special respect rituals towards elders and titled persons, and elders and titled persons, for their part, no longer feel the need to insist on such rituals. This new way of life, often referred to as *bakaa libi* ‘European’ life-style, is also spreading to the village setting, though not as rapidly partly because the living circumstances are changing at a much slower pace in that context.

Greeting practices in the community have, as a matter of course, also been affected by these changes. The most important change has taken place in the overall distribution of the different kinds of greetings. Among the urban EM population, greetings (7–9) are much more widely employed than the indigenous EM greetings (1–5). This is partly due to two things. First, there are more young and middle-aged EMs than elders living in the urban context. Second, these greetings are historically associated with the urban setting. However, in recent years greetings (7a–c) are also increasingly used by younger people to elders and sometimes also among the

latter. This is somewhat surprising because, from a traditional point of view, by using these greetings, (A) suggests that they are socially equal to (B), maintain a solidarity-based relationship with (B) and construct themselves and (B) as persons with low social status. In the urban context, these overt social meanings are generally not considered to be face-threatening anymore, particularly by elders who have spent a considerable amount of time in the urban coastal centers. In everyday interactions with young urban EMs, they commonly employ and "accept" particularly greetings (7–9) as the default greetings; these greetings convey their solidarity with young urban men and their membership in the currently prestigious young enterprising community rather than the subsistence-based rural village setting. The use of formal greetings automatically produces the expectation that the initiator of the greeting is intending to discuss official matters, e.g. local politics, making requests or appeals etc.

Although the greetings in (7–9) are generally associated with solidarity and equality among interlocutors, it is still possible to index social distinctions. Essentially, with elders (and among elders), some of their informal properties are exchanged with respect-inducing ones that are also characteristic of the indigenous greetings in (1–4). For example, the more familiarity-conveying second person singular pronoun *i* and the first person singular pronoun *mi* are replaced with the respect-conveying second person plural pronoun *u*. Names are combined with titles or the Dutch/Sranan Tongo-derived titles *Omu* 'uncle' and *Tante* 'aunt' are used in place of names. Moreover, the greetings are delivered in a relatively slow tempo (10). I have also heard people adding the emphatic particle *oo* or the politeness marker *baa* to emphasize the respectful nature of the interaction. This blending effectively constructs the relative leveling of status differences.

(10)	A: Papa A., fa u tan (oo)?	'Elder A., how are we doing?'
	B: Papa, u de (baa).	'Elder, we are well.'

The emerging mainstream character particularly of the greetings in (7a–c) and the resulting loss of their earlier 'subculture' association is also motivating young EM men to find new linguistic means for indexing their separate group identity. Among young men, the greetings in (7d–f) are currently more commonly used than (7a–c), for example. Moreover, young men also continuously invent or adopt new greetings for use among themselves to maintain and affirm their difference to both women and elders (11). These newly emerging greetings are very short sequences that either consist of one word (11) or just of a visual sign, such as thumbs up, when

passing each other. They underscore this group's desire to distance themselves from what are often felt to be "time-consuming" and outdated politeness practices.

(11)	A: Cool/orgi?	'Is everything cool/okay?'
	B: Cool/orgi!	'Everything is cool/okay!'

In the urban context, the greetings in (1–5) are generally considered very ritualistic and old-fashioned because they invoke traditional social hierarchies, positional social identities and identify the person using them as someone who is intimately associated with the traditional EM life-style. They have therefore come to be largely reserved for events and situations in which these matters are central to the interaction. They are obligatorily used among people gathering for formal events, e.g. *kuutu* 'council meeting' events and all kinds of ritual ceremonies, and by persons who want to initiate official business, e.g. make a formal appeal. They are also employed on a regular basis with and among elders and titled persons who are closely aligned with the upriver community, e.g. people who live there and/or who command a great amount of social power in the community, and among in-laws, e.g. son in-law to mother in-law and among sisters in-law.[21] It would still today be difficult to address these groups of people using anything other that the greetings in (1–4). However, persons of higher social status have the opportunity to change the footing of the interaction to a more informal one by addressing their interlocutors using one of the greetings in (7–9). Such informal greetings (12c) typically follow more formal ones (12a–b) initiated by the younger/lower status person (12).

(12)	(a)	A: U miti oo, gaaman.	'We meet, paramount chief!' (good afternoon)
		B: Ya, u miti yee, sisa.	'Yes, we meet, (madam)!'
	(b)	Da u de?	'Are we well?'
		A: Ya u de yee!	'Yes, we are well!'
		U seefi de?	'How about yourself?'
		B: Ya, u de baa.	'Yes, we are well.'
		A: Iya.	'Yes'
	(c)	B: Beti, on fa?	'What's up Beti?'
		A: Saaflio.	'(I am) okay.'

7. Conclusion

The two (or three) sets of greeting routines that are in common usage in the EM community have clear social meanings and contextual associations that are partially constituted by their linguistic form. While the indigenous and highly formulaic ones (cf. 1) index a (great) social distance between interlocutors and invoke positional identities, the very "direct" urban ones (cf. 7–9) construct a great common ground between interlocutors and constitute them as social equals. The possible third set (cf. 3–4) is intermediate between these two sets. By drawing on their social meanings and contextual associations, greetings are habitually employed to negotiate social relationships and people's social image. They are being affirmed by picking a contextually appropriate greeting to open up an encounter, but they are being challenged or undermined by selecting one that does not conventionally fit the context or when omitting to greet.

In the migratory context, where "modern" or "urban" social norms and living circumstances exert pressure on the social relationships and identities of people, greeting routines are employed in different or new ways to constitute the newly emerging realities. For instance, the indigenous, formulaic greetings become restricted to a few exceptional contexts while the urban, direct greetings are adopted as the default greeting by most members of the community. Moreover, new greetings emerge, existing greeting routines are being modified, and the indigenous and "urban" greetings are combined. These new forms function to affirm existing social differences in the new context and to construct newly emerging differences, as well as symbolize people's critical distance to the traditional EM social hierarchy.

The investigation of greeting routines also provides important insights into the social structure of the community and its social and linguistic categories. In relation to the former, it reveals that the EM community is traditionally a relatively stratified society. Social group membership is based on gender, age, and social activity, achievements and knowledge of local traditions. With respect to the latter, the study suggests that the members of the community recognize two broad types of life-styles which I will call *businenge libi* 'maroon life' and *bakaa libi* 'European life,' respectively. While the *businenge libi* involves the use of the EMC and knowledge of and adherence to traditional EM traditions, the latter approximates Sranan Tongo practices and is associated with local urban norms and values. The *businenge libi* also emphasizes positional identities and social relationships that are based on social distance and mutual respect. *Bakaa libi*, on the contrary, is locally perceived to stand for social norms such as informality,

solidarity and directness. Moreover, the study provides further evidence of the existence of a focused formal style in the EMC (cf. Migge 2004).

Notes

[*] This paper has benefited from comments by George Huttar and Susanne Mühleisen. All remaining errors are, of course, my own responsibility.

[1]Saakiiki, Kotika and the Ndyuka spoken on the lower Marowijne differ somewhat from the Ndyuka varieties spoken on the Tapanahoni but still share the main distinctive features with that variety.

[2] Until recently, only men could hold a *kabiten* position. However, due to pressure from the government of Suriname, the Pamaka and Ndyuka recently also created separate women *kabiten* positions.

[3] There is also a right of passage ceremony for women, *gi pangi* 'give wrap-around-skirt.' Girls take part in it when they are about 15 years old. The ceremony for boys, *gi kamisa* 'give a kind of loincloth,' is quite rare nowadays.

[4] Note that the notions of 'to be old' and 'to be honorable/knowledgeable' are both expressed by the same word, *gaandi*.

[5] Pamakas usually say that people who *siibi a wan osu ná e gi odi* 'people who sleep in the same house do not greet each other.'

[6] Complaints about improper greeting behavior are quite frequent and tend to be indicative of more serious interpersonal problems.

[7] There are three female (*sa*, *tia/tante*, *mma*) and male (*ba*, *tii/omu*, *dda/ppa*) titles of courtesy and several function titles (e.g. *gaaman* 'paramount chief,' *kabiten* '(sub)lineage head'). While *sa* is used with women of low social status, *mma* is employed with women of great social importance, and *tia/tante* is the title for women of intermediate rank (cf. Migge 2001). Note that participants' relative age and the nature of their relationship also play a role in the assignment of titles. For instance, a man who is in his thirties will address a man who is in his forties and with whom he is not very familiar using the title *Omu/Tii* or even *Ppa/Dda* if he wants to pay special respect.

[8]It is also possible to say *Iya, u doo en* (*mooi*) *yee baa mama/papa*.

[9]It is not really clear whether the polite usage of *u* is related to/derived from its first or second person plural usage. In (1c) it seems best to argue that *u* includes the speaker and the addressee. This inclusion possibly functions as a further device of indirectness to effect politeness (G. Huttar, p.c., August 2004). However, in examples (3–4) it does not appear to include the speaker but just the addressee and possibly by implication also her/his family. See also Mühleisen (this volume) for a discussion of this issue.

[10] It may also be employed if (B) does not know (A)'s family.

[11] They are the descendants of slaves who remained on the plantations.

[12] For young men it is generally much more difficult to gain social rank than for young women because for them social rank is tied to traditional knowledge (see above). They therefore tend to be much more opposed to the traditional system than young women. Moreover, as a result of their engagement in the cash labor industry, they are much more closely aligned with urban norms and values than young women.

[13] An informant pointed out that (1c) conveys less respect than (4). This appears to be mainly due to the fact that (4) is considered to be older.

[14] Earning money in itself is not a problem; however, when this becomes the only thing that someone is interested in, it is considered problematic because it tends to lead to jealousy and community problems.

[15]I once observed a situation in which a young man used (7c) to greet a youngster who was arriving in a boat with several other people. One of the elders in the boat thought that he was being addressed and immediately protested this status-inappropriate greeting: *Baala, piimisi, mi anga i, u ná biya*. 'Brother, we are not persons of the same age group.'

[16] Women still today make much more careful use of Sranan Tongo features because they carry (negative) associations that are much more difficult to sustain for women (cf. Migge 2002b?).

[17] As has been made abundantly clear in Price & Price's (1999) book on *maroon art*, the maroon societies of Suriname, just like any community, have never been static societies but have always been subject to change. However, it seems as if the current social changes are on a different scale compared with previous ones. They may

easily result in their members' complete integration into local mainstream culture and thus a complete loss of these societies' current distinctive properties (cf. Price & Price 2003).

[18] Most children, particularly older ones, in traditional villages do not have easy access to schools, and boarding opportunities are rare and expensive in both Guyane and Suriname. Note also that a great number of maroon children have a right to French citizenship because they are mostly born in the hospital of St. Laurent. Finally, French resident cards or citizenship do not only allow an easier access to the world but they also mean access to all kinds of social money which is a great help in an economically quite depressed region.

[19] Not just blood relations but also in-laws tend to collaborate for all kinds of daily activities. The strength of either of these networks depends on residence patterns.

[20] Among EMs living in St. Laurent, there is currently much talk about how women are dominating their male partners because of their financial means.

[21] In recent years more and more elders have been "obliged" to move to the coast mainly because most or all of their children now reside on the coast.

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