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CHAPTER 3

Social and demographic factors in creole formation

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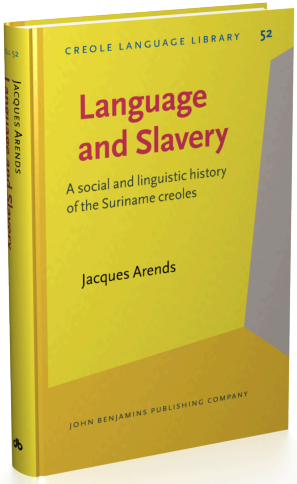

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CHAPTER 3

Social and demographic factors in creole formation

3.1 Introduction

Now that the previous chapter has given us an idea of the larger historical context in which the Suriname creoles were formed, we will now zoom in on two aspects of that history that are of special importance, namely the social and demographic factors that played a role in their formation. Even though many creolists now agree that 'Creole' is a sociohistorical rather than a linguistic category (*cf.* Mufwene 1986a, 2001), that does not mean they devote a lot of attention to studying the sociohistorical context of creolization. Apart from a few exceptions – most notably Chaudenson – the early social history of most creoles is still largely ignored by most creolists. Issues such as the social stratification within the black and white populations of the plantations or the social networks in which they participated as well as their relevance for creole formation have still hardly been touched upon. While sociohistorical evidence may still be scarce for a number of creoles, for Suriname enough information has become available in recent years to tackle these issues.

With regard to demographic questions, the situation is a little better. Le Page (1960) was the first to demonstrate the importance of incorporating historical-demographic research in the study of creole formation, using historical evidence to gain insights into the ethnolinguistic origins of the slaves brought to Jamaica. Even though some of his results are put in doubt by more recent research (*cf.* Arends 2008), Le Page was the first to give an empirical, historical basis to the study of substrate influence in creole languages. Some twenty years later, Baker (1982a) made crucial use of demographic data to refute Chaudenson's 'Bourbonnais' theory about the origin of Mauritian creole. While that debate still continues, Baker's study convincingly showed the importance of the demographics of inter-island migration for creole formation. More recently, scholars such as Singler (1990) and Arends (1995a) used demographic evidence to argue against Bioprogram Theory, showing that, based on the composition of the black population in Jamaica and Suriname, creolization was best seen as a matter of second as well as first language acquisition. Although the publication of Eltis et al.'s monumental (1999) CD-Rom

has made available a vast array of historical-demographic data for many Atlantic creoles, as yet this data source has not been made much use of by creolists. For Suriname most relevant data have already been available since 1990, with the appearance of Postma's (1990) landmark study, which has been the major source for the second part of this chapter. Postma's findings replaced those of Price (1976) (based on Postma 1970), which had been creolists' major source of information on Suriname's demographic history until then.

The remainder of this chapter consists of three sections. Section 3.2 is about social issues, in particular the social stratification of the plantation populations and the external network relations in which both slaves and Maroons were engaged. In Section 3.3, a number of demographic factors are discussed, such as the ethnolinguistic origins of the slaves, the ratios of blacks to whites, bozals to creoles, children to adults, coloureds to blacks, and free to enslaved. In Section 3.4, I will summarize these findings and discuss their implications for the formation of the Suriname creoles.

3.2 Social stratification and network relations[1]

Before going on to the actual discussion, some preliminary remarks may be in order regarding the relevance of sociohistorical evidence for creole formation. First of all, as will be shown below, this evidence may serve to correct certain assumptions about the plantation system which are widely held among creolists, even though they are seldom based on actual historical evidence. One of these assumptions is the stereotypical view of plantations as extremely isolated, strictly bi-stratal micro-societies, which we have shown to be incorrect for the case of Suriname (Arends 2001). Referring to 19th rather than 18th-century Suriname (which is the focus of this section), Lamur (1985: 52–3) writes that 'the pluriformity of the slaves' social life differed fundamentally from the image of uniformity that emerges from the current literature." As far as contacts with the outside world are concerned, a similar 'isolationist' view is often held with regard to Maroon communities. Based on the evidence presented here, this view also needs correction.

Second, while it is not possible at this moment to make any direct links between social structure on the one hand and linguistic structure on the other, it is still useful to get as precise a picture as possible of the social context in which creole formation took place. For instance, the existence of social contacts between slaves from different plantations, between slaves and Maroons, and between Maroons

1. This section is based on Arends (2001).

and the outside world is directly relevant to the question to what extent language contact played a role in creolization. Similarly, information on the social stratification of the slave community may allow us to identify more precisely groups of speakers who played an important role in this process. The evidence presented below suggests that the black overseers may have formed such a group. Finally, the role of internal social networks, both within plantations' black populations and in Maroon societies, will also be discussed.

While, as noted above, important progress has been made in the investigation of sociohistorical factors in creole genesis at the *macro* level, especially with regard to demographics (apart from the references given above, e.g. Parkvall 2000; Singler 1990, 1993a, 1995), remarkably little attention has been devoted to sociohistorical factors at the *micro* level, more particularly the social structure of plantation communities.[2] One of the reasons for this is the (alleged) scarcity of relevant sociohistorical information that is available. Although for a long time this kind of information has been rather scarce for Suriname as well (*cf.* Oostindie 1987), the situation has improved significantly since the last two decades. Well-known works from the late 1940s and early 1950s, such as Van Lier (1977 [1949]) and Rens (1953), have been followed up by a number of highly informative studies, such as Lamur (1987), Oostindie (1989), G. Brana-Shute (1990), Van Stipriaan (1993), Muyrers (1993), Beeldsnijder (1994) and Everaert (1999).

Apart from these studies, which are devoted specifically to (aspects of) the history of Suriname's plantation society at the micro level, several other works have appeared, such as Beeldsnijder (1991), R. Brana-Shute (1989), Hoefte (1996), Lamur (1985, 1990), McLeod-Ferrier (1993) and Dragtenstein (2002, 2004), which touch upon it only marginally, but still contain interesting information on this topic. The fact that both the latter studies and those mentioned before are largely based on primary evidence (i.e. archival documents) adds significantly to their reliability. This is important because contemporary historical works, which have determined the image of plantation life for the past few centuries, often have a tendency to neglect or distort aspects of the world of the slaves, if they provide any original information at all rather than simply plagiarizing their predecessors. In fact, I have tried to avoid relying on tertiary historical sourcesas much as possible, i.e. works which are themselves based on secondary sources rather than original archival research. Due to the state of progress in Surinamese historiography, however, it has not always been possible to exclude such tertiary sources. It may also be important to note that, while some of these works (e.g. Oostindie 1989; Muyrers 1993) are in-depth case-studies, based on data for only one or two plantations, other studies

2. A notable exception, apart from Chaudenson's work mentioned above, is Singler's work (1993b, 1993c) on the French Caribbean.

(especially Van Stipriaan 1993, Beeldsnijder 1994) are based on data for a representative selection of plantations, thereby providing a more generally valid view.[3]

This section contains a detailed discussion of two aspects of the social structure of the plantation system: (1) the internal social stratification of the plantation community and (2) the external relations (i.e. contacts outside the plantation) maintained by the slaves. Since the focus is on social life at the plantation – the primary locus of creole formation – and because the social history of Paramaribo has hardly been investigated as yet (R. Brana-Shute 1990: 121), the urban setting will only be touched upon in passing. Although they are not without possible linguistic relevance, intra-plantation contacts will not be considered explicitly, simply because the type of evidence that would be needed to assess that relevance is largely lacking. If the fact that slaves had a much more elaborate social life than is often assumed – dance and music festivities, such as the *balyar* party, the *pree*, the *banya*, and the *du* (*cf.* Chapter 7), religious events (*winti*), story-telling sessions etc – did have an impact on their language, it is entirely unclear what that impact was. The same is probably true with regard to the Maroons.

As far as the Maroons are concerned, most of the information that is available deals with their contacts with slaves, especially relating to the preparation of escapes. Since such information is discussed below in connection with slaves, it would be a mere duplication to treat it separately with regard to Maroons. Evidence regarding other external contacts of Maroons, however, will be discussed separately.

The discussion will be restricted to the expansion and stabilization phases (i.e. the post-establishment phase) in the development of Suriname's plantation society, i.e. roughly the 1690–1770 period. The reason not to include the equally (or even more) important pre-1690 years in this study is the fact that, apart from Rens (1953), hardly any historical evidence for this period is available.

3.2.1 Social stratification

Until quite recently, the typical image of the New World plantation based on slave labour was that of a strictly bi-stratal mini-society in which the two ethnic groups involved – blacks and whites – formed two 'blocks' that were both

3. Van Stipriaan (1993) is based on archival documents concerning some 200 plantations in the 1750–1863 period, i.e. almost 30% of the total number of Suriname's plantations throughout its existence as a plantation colony. Beeldsnijder (1994) is based on archival documents for 18 plantations, providing data about 2,062 slaves (12% of the total slave population) in the 1730–1750 period. In both cases, the archival documentation consists primarily of plantation inventories (i.e. valuation reports); these data are supplemented by letters, legal records and other archival documents.

internally homogeneous and externally strictly separated from each other. Modern historical research, however, has shown that the situation was much less extreme than is suggested by this picture. The technical complexity of the plantation as an agro-industrial unit brought along a division of labour which inevitably led to a differentiation in occupations and concomitant social stratification. The production and processing of tropical crops, especially sugar, was such that it required the labour of highly specialized technicians, especially sugar boilers, in order to be executed professionally. Once the cane had been cut, it had to be processed within twenty-four hours in order to prevent it from going bad. The juice that was pressed from the cane had to undergo a number of operations during all of which keeping the right temperature was essential. Apart from sugar, a number of by-products were made from the juice, such as molasses and 'dram', the production of which required their own special skills (for further information, see, e.g. Mintz 1987). Although the processing of other crops, such as cocoa and tobacco, was less complex, these too required special skills. As in the case of sugar, all these specialized tasks were performed by blacks.

Apart from these highly specialized tasks involved in the production and processing of plantation crops, there were a number of other skilled professions that, although they were often carried out by whites, were sometimes practiced by blacks, such as those of carpenter, cooper, mason and blacksmith. In addition to that there were a number of tasks pertaining to providing and preparing food for the whites, such as hunting, fishing, gardening and cooking, and the care for the planter and his house. The latter category of domestic slaves included maids, servants, washerwomen etc. The total number of slaves involved in tasks such as these was so high that, added to those groups who were not fit to work (children, elderly, sick), on average less than 50% of a plantation's black population actually worked in the fields (Van Stipriaan 1993, Beeldsnijder 1994). This is in stark contrast to the stereotypical image of the plantation as a place where most slaves are involved in field labour. The division of labour that was a result of this led to a social differentiation among the black population, especially between so-called 'elite slaves' (especially the skilled workers, the domestic slaves, and, of course, the black overseer) on the one hand and field slaves on the other. This differentiation was enhanced by the fact that locally-born and mulattos were clearly preferred for the elite jobs.

The fact that on average the slaves would be 90–95% of a plantation's total population indicates that the group of free persons – who did not necessarily consist only of whites since some skilled jobs could also be performed by free blacks – was usually very small. The total number of whites on an average plantation (50–100 slaves) would be well below five, often no more than two or three (unless the owner's family lived on the plantation, which – except on Jewish-owned plantations – was

the exception rather than the rule). While some owners lived on their plantations, others preferred to live in Paramaribo or even in the Netherlands, leaving the daily operation of their estate to a *directeur*, a plantation manager. When from the late 18th century onwards many plantations came into the hands of banks and other investment companies in the Netherlands, local responsibility was delegated to so-called *administrateurs* 'agents', who would also more often live in Paramaribo than on the plantation. Since on an average plantation skilled workers would often be hired rather than being employed on a permanent basis, apart from the *directeur* and a bookkeeper – if present – the only other permanent white resident(s) would be the one or two white overseer(s). This function, which belonged to the lowest in plantation society and which in many ways was below that of the black overseer, was often performed by former soldiers or sailors. This hierarchy within the white population was already in place in the early 18th century, as appears from the average annual wages mentioned by Herlein (1718: 84–87), who presents the following figures (in Surinamese guilders):

Table 3.1 Annual wages for white plantation personnel: Early 18th century

Professional category	Average annual wage
Manager	700–1500
Mill-maker/Carpenter	250–300
Bookkeeper	200–250
Cooper	200
Surgeon	150–200
White overseer	80–100

This clearly shows that division of labour – *contra* Lamur's (1985) suggestion that this was unknown in Plantation Suriname until the 19th century – was in place as early as the beginning of the 18th century (*cf.* also Oostindie 1989: 449–451; Beeldsnijder 1994, ch. 6).

Looking at the 18th century as a whole and basing ourselves on works which are themselves based on primary evidence such as archival documents (Lamur (1987), Oostindie (1989), Van Stipriaan (1993), Beeldsnijder (1994)), we arrive at the picture in Table 3.2, which presents the social stratification of a plantation's free population. Here not only annual wages but other variables, especially ethnic group and average number per plantation, are included as well. As can be seen from this table, division of labour correlates to a large extent with annual wage. It should be stressed, however, that the picture represented in this table is a *schematic* one, showing tendencies rather than absolute truths.

Table 3.2 Social stratification of free plantation population: 18th century

Professional category	Social/ethnic group	Average annual wage (guilders)	Average number per plantation (50–100 slaves)
Owner	Whites	n.a.	0/1
Administrator	Whites	n.a.	0/1
Manager	Whites	700–1500	1
Skilled worker	Whites, free Blacks, free Mulattoes	200–800	0/1
Bookkeeper	Whites	250	0/1
White overseer	Whites	100	2

Several aspects of this table require some explanation:

- Temporary personnel, such as barbers/surgeons, who visited plantations only occasionally, and certain specialized artisans, who were hired for limited periods of time, are not included in the table.
- The identification of social/ethnic groups from which people were selected for particular tasks does not exclude the possibility that in some cases people from other groups performed these tasks. Thus, in the literature mention is made sometimes of mulatto or even black 'white' overseers, managers, and even plantation owners, but this seems to have been rare, especially at the beginning of the 18th century. According to Lamur (1987: 43), black and mulatto skilled workers became a more frequent phenomenon in the course of the 18th century.
- Annual wages were not given for plantation owners and administrators, since they derived their income directly from the profits of their plantation(s).
- Within the category of skilled workers, wages varied from 200 guilders for coopers to 800 for carpenters (Beeldsnijder 1994: 92). According to the same author (p. 89), usually one (non-captive) carpenter resided permanently on sugar plantations in the 1730–1750 period.
- The bookkeeper's task was often performed on the side by one of the other white personnel (Beeldsnijder 1994: 93).
- The low position of the white overseer (*blankofficier*) in the plantation's hierarchy also appears from regulations for plantation personnel (dating from 1686 and 1725), discussed in Beeldsnijder (1994: 90).
- In the course of the 18th century, especially from the 1750s onwards, after going bankrupt many plantations fell into the hands of overseas owners, such as banks and other financers. According to Beeldsnijder (1994: 63), more than 70% of the plantations was owned by absentee planters from 1770 onwards. Similarly, Oostindie (1993: 34 n90) estimates the percentage of absentee

owners at 70–80% in the 1780–1830 period. Although Beeldsnijder claims that large-scale absenteeism may have begun much earlier, according to Van Stipriaan (1993: 293) around 1750 only 20 to 25% of the plantation owners were living outside Suriname. This phenomenon is known as 'absenteeism' (Van Lier 1977), i.e. the situation whereby the actual Europe-based owner of a plantation was represented in Suriname by an *administrateur* (agent), who resided in Paramaribo rather than on the plantation itself. The actual day-to-day management of the plantation was in the hands of a *directeur* (plantation manager).

- During the expansion and stabilization phases, with the important exception of the Jewish-owned plantations, white women and children were rarely present on plantations. Beeldsnijder (1994: 41) has calculated, on the basis of head tax payments, that at least half of the planters coming to Suriname were unmarried. Jewish planters, however, often lived on their plantations with their families (p. 247). White plantation personnel, especially white overseers, were mostly recruited among unmarried former soldiers and sailors.
- Needless to say, perhaps, all of the above professions were restricted to males.

Taking the same sources that we used for Table 3.2 (Lamur (1987), Oostindie (1989), Van Stipriaan (1993), Beeldsnijder (1994)), we arrive at the following picture of the social stratification among the captive population, given in Table 3.3. Since, for obvious reasons, this hierarchy could not be based on annual wages, it is based on estimated market values. Apart from market value, other variables, especially social/ethnic group and percentage of the overall enslaved population, are included too. Again, it should be stressed that the picture represented in this table is a *schematic* one, showing tendencies rather than absolute truths.

Table 3.3 Social stratification of enslaved plantation population: 18th-century

professional category	Socails/ethnic group	Estimated market value (guilders)	Approximnate percentage of enslaved population
Black overseer	Creoles/Africans	500–800	2%
Skilled slave	black/mulatto Creoles, Africans	300–1000	10%
Domestic slave	black/mulatto Creoles, Africans	300–500	4%
Unskilled slave, field slave	Africans, black Creoles	300–500	25–60%
Unproductive slave	all groups	<100	20–40%

Again, some additional information is in order:

- The terms 'Creoles' and 'Africans' refer to locally-born and African-born slaves respectively. While Creoles were generally preferred for skilled labour and for domestic tasks (Oostindie 1989: 114–115; Beeldsnijder 1994: 124–5, 139, 149), this was apparently not the case to the same extent for the position of black overseer (*basya*). Even though the number of locally-born male slaves exceeded the number of *basya* positions by far, less than half of these were occupied by Creoles (p. 124, 154).[4] However, although African-born slaves were frequently selected as *basyas*, this should not obscure the fact that in general 'salt water slaves' were looked down upon by Creoles. Oostindie (1989: 115) notes that only those who had been brought to Suriname at a young age had any chance of becoming a skilled labourer.
- In Suriname, as in other colonies, slaves newly arrived from Africa were subjected to a process of 'seasoning', whereby an older slave would acquaint them with plantation life, including the creole language, before they were made to work the fields. *Cf.* Stedman (1988: 528): '…under the Care of Other Old Negro Slaves, they Soon become verry Fat & Sleek, learn the Language of the Colony, &^{c},…', and Anon. (ca.1740:[5] 77): 'If they are females, the manager should have these new slaves married right-away, and if they are males, he should put them in the house of some old slaves, but he should see to it that thay are not suppressed too much for it is customary for such a new slave to serve in an old slave's household and act as a servant, until he understands the language and the work, or until, if he has a woman of his own, he has his own household'.
- Within the category of skilled slaves there was a sub-hierarchy, with carpenters (in a wide sense, i.e. including sawyers and coopers) at the top. And even within this subcategory, a further hierarchy obtained with carpenters (in a narrow sense) at the top, followed by coopers, sawyers and apprentices (Oostindie 1989: 105). Other craftsmen which are sometimes mentioned are blacksmiths, coppersmiths and bricklayers (Oostindie 1989: 105–10). As mentioned earlier, another type of skilled labour that was highly valued because it required great technical skill was that of sugar boiler.
- The number of Mulattoes mentioned in the plantation inventories studied by Beeldsnijder (1994: 125) is surprisingly low, namely 1.5% of the slave

4. This observation is based on a sample of 89 *basya*s.

5. Based on information in the text itself, this work was written sometime between 1730 and 1748. I was made aware of the existence of this text by the late Dr Ruud Beeldsnijder, for which I am very grateful.

population. This may be due to the fact that not only those who were manumitted by their white fathers but also those who were sent to Paramaribo to learn a trade (p. 139) were not included in the inventories. Mulattoes were preferred over Blacks for skilled labour (Oostindie 1989: 115). Within the category of coloured slaves, there was a finely-grained sub-hierarchy depending on the proportion of white ancestry, with its accompanying terminology. In increasing order of 'whiteness' (using the terms that were common in colonial Suriname): *karboeger* (1/8), *sambo* (1/4), *mulatto* (1/2), *quadroon* (3/4), *mesties* (7/8), *casties* (15/16), and *poesties* (31/32) (Stedman 1988: 399, bottom part of Plate 54). The fact that the terminology is more fine-grained at the white end of the scale is indicative of the importance that was attached to light skin colour.

- The category of domestic slaves (in a wide sense, i.e. including not only those who worked in or near the big house but also those whose work was in some way related to the household) was a very diverse one. While some of the domestic tasks were largely restricted to women, others would usually only be performed by men (Oostindie 1989: 109–10, 116). The former include midwife, orderly, maid, washerwoman, seamstress, cook, and nanny (*creole mama*). Typically male domestic tasks were that of *dresneger* (black medical expert), watchman (over cattle, the provision grounds, sluices), cattle-herder, and gardener. Apart from the first, these were often performed by elderly or invalid male slaves, just as the *creole mama* was usually an elderly female slave. Finally, slaves were sometimes sent out to hunt and fish, in order to supplement the food supply for the planter's house.
- The category of unproductive slaves includes persons who were unable to work, either due to age or some physical or mental defect. Slave children started to perform light duties around the age of ten to twelve; around the age of eighteen they were considered to be fully grown workers (p. 180). As noted by Beeldsnijder (p. 116), the average life expectancy of a mid-18th-century Caribbean slave who had survived his first year in the colony was 30 years.
- Some of these positions, e.g. those of *basya* and skilled slave, could be occupied by one and the same person. Also, slaves could be promoted or demoted from one position to another. According to Beeldsnijder (1994: 16), switching between different tasks was the rule rather than the exception on Surinamese plantations. This means that the hierarchy was less fixed than may be suggested in Table 3.3.
- There is some evidence that the categories of black overseers, skilled slaves and domestic slaves formed a kind of 'elite' within the enslaved population. Beeldsnijder (1994: 157) has found some evidence in legal records to support this. This suggests that the stratification within the slave population was primarily a dichotomous one: elite slaves versus all the other slaves.

In what follows, one category within the enslaved population, the black overseer, will be discussed in some more detail. Before doing that, however, I will say a few words about the issue of social stratification within the early Maroon communities. Although little direct historical evidence is available on the social structure of these communities, it is still possible to say a few things about this issue. It is clear that by the time of the 1760s peace treaties, but perhaps even long before that, the administrative system with a *granman* as a chief of the whole 'tribe' and a *kabiten* 'captain' for every village was already in place (*cf.* the text of the Saramaka Peace Treaty in Chapter 7, where the names of the captains are mentioned at the end). A more differentiated system – with a *Groot-Opperhoofd* 'great chief' (i.e. *granman*), a *Majoor* 'major', *Hoofd-Kapiteins* 'head captains', and *Kleine Kapiteins* 'little captains' – existed at least as early as the 1820s (Van Eyck 1830: 265). It is quite likely that the domain of religion also led to social differentiation early on, with religious functionaries, such as the *obiaman*, enjoying high prestige in the community. It is unclear, however, what the linguistic correlates (if any) of this social differentiation may have been.

Going back to the plantations, an important fact about the plantations' residence patterns is that white personnel were by far the least continuous segment of the population. Suriname's 18th-century white population is characterized by Beeldsnijder (1994: 45) as "a white pioneer community consisting of many single men, who had no intention to stay permanently". Towards the end of the stabilization phase (around 1770), the average duration of a manager's residence on a plantation was 5.5 years, while that of a white overseer was as short as 1.1 years (Van Stipriaan 1993: 284–285). In contrast, slaves usually spent large parts of their lives on one and the same plantation. The absence of continuity among white personnel, especially among white overseers, undoubtedly contributed to a situation where the position of the black overseer in the hierarchy, in spite of his colour and his status as a slave, in some respects equaled that of his white counterpart, the *blankofficier*. Other factors also contributed to this state of affairs. Many of a *basya*'s daily activities, such as allocating tasks, supervising work, and executing punishments, made him into an intermediary between manager and slaves. Combined with his knowledge of black culture, this gave the *basya* a degree of power among the slaves which sometimes may have surpassed that of the white overseer. At the same time, however, the *basya*'s role as a buffer between masters and slaves may have had unfavorable consequences for his hierarchical position as well (Van Deursen 1975: 217; Oostindie 1989: 165).

In addition to this, there are some indications that the black overseer not only performed the role of priest in Afro-Surinamese religion but that he played a central role in subversive activities, such as rebellions and escapes, as well (Van der Meiden 1987: 111; Lamur 1990: 112–113; Van Stipriaan 1993: 282; Beeldsnijder

1994: 155). Although Beeldsnijder (1994: 157) is not certain that the *basya* occupied a socially privileged place within the slave community, he adds that in at least one legal document *basya*s are referred to as 'chiefs' among the slaves. The same author (p. 232) mentions a case of a rebellion in 1750 where five out of sixteen conspirators were black overseers. The convergence of the roles of *basya* and priest on Surinamese plantations has been noted by Lamur (1985: 26), who quotes a Moravian missionary's report referring to "…den ersten Bastian welcher zugleich der erste prister ist…" [the highest ranking *basya* who is also the highest ranking priest]. Documents referring to a religious conflict between missionaries and slaves that took place on the plantation Vossenburg around 1850 show that it was especially *basya*s who were involved in this. Lamur (1990: 112–113) concludes from this that the *basya*s "were looked upon by the fellow slaves as functionaries responsible for maintaining the slaves' religious system." Although the evidence is still rather sketchy, it suggests that black overseers were central figures among the plantations' black populations.

The question is, of course, whether the *basyas*' seemingly pivotal role on the plantation had any *linguistic* consequences, and if yes, what these consequences were. Unfortunately, at this stage it is only possible to speculate. One possible avenue through which this question could be pursued is the social networks approach developed by Leslie and James Milroy (L. Milroy 1980). Due to his intermediary position, in between the white and black segments of the population, the *basya* probably had weaker (though not fewer) network ties within the black community than other slaves had. At the same time, his contacts with the few Whites on the plantation were stronger and more frequent than those of most other slaves (except perhaps the domestic slaves who worked in the planter's house). Also, his verbal interactions with white personnel must have involved a more extended vocabulary, including technical terminology relating to the production of crops such as sugar or coffee. The idea that this vocabulary was Sranan (rather than Dutch) is supported by references to the importance of managers and artisans knowing Sranan, which can be found in 18th-century plantation manuals such as Van Dyk (ca. 1765) (see also Beeldsnijder 1994: 86).

From the perspective of the social network model of language variation and change (J. Milroy 1992), this combination of features adds to the *basya*'s potential role as a linguistic innovator. At the same time his prestige as a political and religious leader contributes to his position as a linguistic role model, especially for the African-born slaves, who formed a majority among the black population until the end of the 18th century (Price 1976: 12; *cf.* also Section 3 of this chapter). The question, of course, is whether it is justified to apply this model, which was designed for 'normal' language change, to the process of creole formation. A major difference between the two is that in the latter case we are dealing with

the creation of a linguistic system rather than changes within an already existing language. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to know whether black overseers, many of whom were African-born, were selected from specific ethnolinguistic groups, since in that case the languages spoken by those groups may have played a disproportionately large role in the formation of Sranan.

Unfortunately, no evidence on this matter is available with regard to Suriname. All we have are occasional remarks in contemporary works regarding personality traits of different ethnic groups, the reliability of which is difficult to assess. What is needed is the kind of primary evidence on ethnic affiliation of *basya*s that is sometimes found in plantation inventories or similar archival documents. Some evidence of this kind is available for another colony, namely Cayenne (French Guiana). Singler (1993b: 206–207), based on detailed archival documents from 1690 concerning a sugar plantation in this colony, states that among the African ethnolinguistic groups present on the plantation (including Atlantic, Mande, Akan, Gbe, Yoruba, and Bantu) the Gbe and Akan groups received the highest rankings in terms of productivity. Typically, it was a 'Juda' (an African transported from Ouidah on the Slave Coast, i.e. probably a Gbe-speaker) who served as a black overseer at this plantation.

Similarly, Alleyne (1971: 176), referring to "certain psychological and cultural traits possessed by the Coromanti [Akan, JA]," states that "they certainly seem to have been everywhere leaders of slave revolts," but unfortunately he does not mention any sources to substantiate this claim. Alleyne's claim is in line with the general impression gathered from the literature regarding Suriname to the extent that the Akan were favored among planters, while Loango slaves were considered second choice (Beeldsnijder 1994: 108, 122–123). This is supported by the fact that the average price for a Loango slave was some 20% below that for other slaves (p. 110). Although much more historical research is needed to substantiate the idea that speakers of particular Kwa languages were preferred as overseers, if such a preference were found, it would be in line with the general impression that the influence of Kwa languages on Sranan and other Suriname creoles is stronger than that of Bantu languages.

As far as the urban context is concerned, a development with major social consequences was manumission, i.e. the freeing of slaves on an individual basis, which in Suriname did not begin on a significant scale until well into the 18th century (Brana-Shute 1985[6]). Since manumission was largely restricted to Paramaribo, its implications were especially important for the urban context. The most important of these implications was the emergence of a new class of free blacks and free

6. The remainder of this paragraph is largely based on Brana-Shute (1985: 74–83), one of the very few studies of the social development of Paramaribo in the 18th century.

coloureds, the latter of which were more numerous since they were more often manumitted than blacks. As a result of this, the proportion of free blacks/coloureds to the overall free population rose from around 22% in 1738 to some 60% in 1811 (p. 99). Since manumitted slaves were concentrated in Paramaribo, their proportion to the overall free population there must have been even higher. This means that Paramaribo had not only become very much a black town but also one in which there were far more free blacks than there were free whites. This, combined with the fact that increasing numbers of free blacks were themselves owners of slaves, had a strong impact on the 'plantation ideal' of a completely dichotomous white-black society, as a result of which Paramaribo became a completely different type of society from that of the plantations. In this new context, the free blacks/coloureds, who lived in much closer proximity to whites than did the slaves on the plantations, contributed significantly to the creation of a new urban creole culture.

The emergence of this new group coincided with the growth of Paramaribo from 'a spare, squalid settlement huddled around a fort to a primate capital city that dictates to the rest of the country' (74). While social institutions such as churches (Reformed, Lutheran, Moravian) and synagogues (one for Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews each) had been present from the late 17th and early 18th centuries onwards, it was only during the second half of the latter that new phenomena such as theatres (one for Christians and Jews each), gentlemen's clubs (again one for Christians and one for Jews) and Freemason lodges (which have continued to play an important role in Paramaribo's social life until today) were introduced, along with a school for coloureds. In this same period the first newspapers started to appear.

3.2.2 External networks

Before we turn to the issue of the external contacts maintained by plantation slaves as well as by Maroons, it should be emphasized again that during the post-establishment phase on average less than half of a plantation's black workforce actually worked in the fields (Beeldsnijder 1994: 160, 276; see also Table 3.3 above). This means that the stereotypical view of the plantation as a place where the bulk of the slaves belonged to the anonymous labour force working the fields and having hardly any contact at all with anybody except fellow-slaves is incorrect. Due to the technical complexity of sugar cane processing, which required a considerable portion of the slave population to work at the sugar mill rather than in the field, this seems to be especially true for sugar plantations (Klein 1986: 61–62). The significance of this fact becomes clear when it is realized that a significant part of the formative period of Sranan took place in the context of sugar production; coffee, the other major crop, was not introduced until the second quarter of the 18th century (Van Stipriaan 1993).

The primary source for information on external network relations is Muyrers (1993), which is entirely devoted to this subject. Much of Muyrers' data is based on primary evidence regarding only one plantation (Catharina Sophia), which was owned by the colonial government and which therefore may have been a kind of 'model' plantation. In addition to this, her data refer to the mid-19th rather than the 18th century, which is the focus of this chapter. Nevertheless, Muyrers claims, based on data from secondary 18th- and 19th-century sources, that her data may be considered representative for other plantations from the same and earlier periods.[7] This is confirmed by other studies, such as Keller (1982), R. Brana-Shute (1989), Oostindie (1989, 1993), Van Stipriaan (1993), and, especially, Beeldsnijder (1994), which show that virtually all types of external contacts mentioned by Muyrers for the mid-19th century were common a hundred years earlier. (Studies such as Fleischmann (1984), on the French Caribbean, and Speedy (1995), on Louisiana, show that the existence of relatively frequent external contacts among slaves was by no means limited to Suriname.)

The types of contact listed by Muyrers (p. 99–108) are subdivided here into four categories according to the context in which these contacts took place: work, trade, leisure, and resistance. The list is supplemented with two additional types of contact which are not mentioned by Muyrers. (If no particular source is mentioned in this list, the reference is Muyrers 1993; in cases where a source is mentioned, it is often complementary to Muyrers 1993.)

Contexts enabling external contacts for slaves:

Work:

- Transport of persons, products, necessities, and correspondence by boat to and from Paramaribo, enabling communication with slaves on other boats, on other plantations, and in Paramaribo. Blacks used for this work were mostly skilled slaves, either from Paramaribo or from the plantation. Communication with other Blacks often took place through – sometimes secret – songs (*cf.* the rowing songs discussed in Chapter 7).
- Hiring of slaves from other plantations or from Paramaribo.

7. Apart from archival documents about Catharina Sophia, Muyrers' database includes some fifteen contemporary secondary sources. According to Muyrers, during the 18th century the number and intensity of contacts may have been less than in the 19th century, because sanctions were more severe and the solidarity among slaves from the same plantation was weaker, which enhanced the chance of being betrayed when leaving the plantation without the owner's consent. To some extent, however, this may have been counterbalanced by the fact that in the 18th century ethnolinguistic identity and the relationship between *sipi*s (slaves who had been transported on the same ship) were more important factors of solidarity than living on the same plantation.

- Hiring of skilled workers or contractors from Paramaribo to supervise certain jobs done by local skilled slaves on the plantation (Oostindie 1989: 73, 94–95, 116).
- Apprenticeship with a craftsman in Paramaribo (Beeldsnijder 1994; Oostindie 1989: 114).
- Taking part in the so-called *commando* service, the compulsory service to the colonial government comprising such tasks as digging out creeks, building fortifications,[8] and taking part in military patrols against Maroons. Around the middle of the 18th century, military tasks began to become more professionalized and slaves were used less to perform them (Beeldsnijder 1994: 78, 83). In the 1770s, two regiments of free black soldiers were founded, whose special task it was to bring back runaway slaves and to fight newly formed Maroon tribes such as the Boni.
- Temporary or permanent transfer of whole workforces from one plantation to another (see also Beeldsnijder 1994: 219).
- Banishment of slaves to other plantations as a means of punishment.
- Working at a plantation's provision grounds, which were often located behind the plantation itself (i.e. several miles away from the planter's house), enabling contact both with slaves from other plantations and with Maroons and runaway slaves.
- In the period following the 1760s peace treaties, Maroons would occasionally be hired to work on plantations; it seems, however, that this practice lasted only a few years (Wolbers 1861: 285note§).
- Hunting and fishing by slaves, to supply both their masters and themselves with food.
- Temporary residence of ailing and pregnant slaves in Paramaribo. This did not happen frequently until the last quarter of the 18th century.

Trade:

- Trading at the marketplace in Paramaribo. Note that trading at the market in Paramaribo is mentioned as early as Herlein (1718: 95).
- Trading on the plantations with Maroons, free Indians, and Whites. According to Beeldsnijder (1994: 87, 224), both free Indians and Europeans (soldiers, sailors, and smugglers) came to the plantations in order to trade with slaves. Although trading with Maroons was not officially permitted until the 1760s peace treaties, this seems to have happened quite frequently. A fact which has been neglected up to now is that, due to the intensive trade between North

8. The total number of slaves that planters were officially required to deliver in order to work at the fort in Paramaribo was 300, but this number was never reached by far (Beeldsnijder 1994: 81).

America and Suriname, North Americans were very well represented among sailors visiting the colony. While ships from North America, especially New England, had already been coming (illicitly) to Suriname in the last quarter of the 17th century (Van der Meiden 1987: 55, 71) or even before (Postma 1998: 114), their presence increased considerably during the 18th century. This had to do with the fact that they were the main suppliers of horses, needed for the operation of the sugar mills. The average number of North American ships, with an average crew of around ten, visiting Suriname annually rose from 25 in 1710 to almost 90 in 1790 (Postma 2003: 295; see also p. 300). As noted by Postma (1998: 129), this had a 'significant social impact on the Surinam settlement.' Since American ships remained an average of eighty days in Paramaribo, 'there were always many…American sailors and officers at Paramaribo.' Dutch ships involved in the bilateral trade between Suriname and The Netherlands, with crews averaging from twenty to thirty, even stayed an average of 194 days (Postma 2003: 310). As a result, 'Paramaribo's population must have been increased by several hundred temporary residents on a continuous basis' (Postma 1998: 129–30). In a later article, Postma notes:

> With such lengthy layovers by dozens of Dutch and North American ships, the many visiting sailors and officers must have made quite an impact on the isolated town of Paramaribo. (Postma 2003: 311)

The presence of North Americans in Suriname is especially interesting since many of them must have spoken English, the main lexifier language of the Suriname creoles, which had became less prominent in Suriname with the departure of part of the English in the 1670s. The potential linguistic relevance of the North Americans' presence in Suriname is enhanced by the fact that they frequently visited sugar plantations in order to buy molasses on the spot (Pares 1956: 20, 106–107). While communication with these Americans was in all likelihood largely conducted by the plantation manager or other whites, we cannot exclude that occasionally blacks were involved in these contacts as well.

Leisure:

- Visits of manumitted slaves from Paramaribo. Some plantations had special buildings where former slaves, who had been manumitted and were living in Paramaribo, could stay when they were on a visit (Beeldsnijder 1994: 127, 304 n27).
- Religious gatherings, such as funerals, *winti pree*s (religious sessions), and visits to shared sanctuaries, outside the plantation. While no figures are available for *winti pree*s held on plantations, contemporary Moravian diaries show that 18th-century Saramaccan *pree*s would be attended by up to 500 visitors (Price

& Price 1980: 169). Hoogbergen (1990: 70) notes that slaves owned dugout canoes, which increased their mobility significantly. Lamur (1990: 107), writing about the plantation Vossenburg in the late 1840s, says that "the cult of the slaves at Vossenburg was apparently so important that the place of worship in the bush where the icon of the Supreme God was located was also attended by slaves from the nearby plantations…" Another altar "was located at a distance of one hour walking from the center of the plantation."

- Secular festivities, such as the annual distribution of food and goods around New Year, at which slaves from neighboring plantations would be invited, *baljar* (i.e. dance) parties, and musical performances by so-called *du* societies. A painting by Dirk Valkenburg from 1707 presents iconographic evidence that *baljar* parties were known at least as early as the beginning of the 18thcentury (see also Beeldsnijder 1994: 131). From the late 18th century onwards both free Blacks/Mulattoes and slaves participated in *du* societies, which were devoted to composing and performing song, dance and music (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 16). Festivities where slaves from different plantations were present are mentioned from 1765 onwards (Muyrers 1993: 105).
- Inter-plantation communication through talking drums, *tutu*s (wooden horns) or *bènta*s (finger pianos), used to announce a death or a rebellion or to warn a nearby Maroon community of an approaching military patrol.
- Sexual relationships between slaves from different plantations. Such relationships are reported as early as the beginning of the 18th century (*cf.* the very earliest Sranan sentences discussed in Chapter 6; *cf.* also Herlein 1718: 97; Muyrers 1993: 103–104).

Resistance:

- Maroons' and runaways' temporary residence on plantations, either secretly or openly. Maroons did not always hide (e.g. in slaves' barracks) when visiting plantations; according to Lamur (1985: 11), they were sometimes present quite openly.
- Maroons' visits to their former plantations. This seems to have happened especially with female Maroons who had been abducted from their plantation by force.
- Contacts between slaves in Paramaribo and Maroons living in villages in the surrounding area (Dragtenstein 2004: 23, 40, 42).
- Consultations between slaves and Maroons preceding rebellions, escapes, and plantation raids.[9]

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9. An example of this can be found in Van den Bouwhuijsen *et al.*'s (1988) analysis of the 1750s Tempati rebellion. As stated by Hoogbergen (1990: 76), "rebellion was often the result of collaboration between the slaves who had run away before and the ones who had stayed behind. After the

- Slaves' temporary residence in Maroon communities (*petit marronnage*). As observed by Hoogbergen (1990: 84, 93), "even after the peace settlement [in the 1760s, JA] slaves continued to flee from the Surinamese plantations, while the Maroons themselves avoided the extradition of new fugitives as much as possible…It often happened that the fugitives were only delivered after several years of pressure from the colonial authorities."
- Contacts between black members of military expeditions against Maroon groups and Maroons (Dragtenstein 2002: 124, 126, 127).

Not mentioned by Muyrers are two additional types of contact: those that happened through imprisonment and those that were the result of foreign residence. As to the first, since the number of crimes committed by slaves was relatively low and since the great majority of those slaves who were tried in court received the death penalty (Beeldsnijder 1994: 249), the number of former prisoners among plantation slaves cannot have been very high. As to foreign residence, both slaves, accompanying white families, and free Mulattoes sometimes stayed in Europe temporarily, although the latter only in very small numbers. In the 50-odd years between 1729 and 1781 some 750 Blacks from Suriname (only a few percent of the total black population) visited the Netherlands, where they usually stayed for only a short time (Oostindie 1990: 232). Sometimes, however, their residence lasted longer, as in the case of Elisabeth Samson, a wealthy, free black woman, who lived in Holland for some three and a half years, after which she returned to Suriname (McLeod-Ferrier 1993: 46–7). Lenders (1996) mentions the case of Scipio, a baptized Saramaka Maroon, who by the end of the 18th century accompanied a Moravian missionary on his trip to Holland (paying his own fare). Since European residence generally did not last very long and involved only small numbers of people, its linguistic impact cannot have been very strong. Generally speaking, however, we may conclude that slaves in 18th- and 19th-century Suriname had quite a number of opportunities for establishing and maintaining contacts with people outside their plantation, not only with other slaves, but with Amerindians, Maroons, free Mulattoes, and Whites as well.

As far as the Maroons are concerned, the historical record shows that contacts among different Maroon bands and villages were always rather frequent. In the early stages of formation of each Maroon group, life was nomadic or semi-sedentary and groups were on the move almost continuously. Although the parts of the Suriname rain forest where Maroons lived form an enormous area, especially compared to the small number of people involved (around 5,000 in the mid

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revolt on the plantation of Palmeneribo on the Suriname River in 1758, it appeared that the slaves had been in contact with small groups of Maroons who had been staying near the plantation for seven months without the white people ever aware of it." See also Beeldsnijder (1994: 214, 221).

18th century), it is remarkable how well their internal communication was organized. An important reason for this, of course, was the fact that a well-organized warning system (using horns, drums, or conch shells) was vital in order to defend themselves against military expeditions. Another factor that promoted inter-village contacts is extra-village marriage and its accompanying 'conjugal residence' system whereby partners would spend significant periods of time in their spouse's village (Price 1975). Finally, the fact that the descendants of the earliest generations of runaways formed clearly distinguishable Maroon groups (e.g. the Saramaka), with their own cultural characteristics, as early as the mid-18th century, shows that different villages must have maintained frequent contacts from very early on. As to contacts between different Maroon groups, e.g. the Saramaka and the Ndyuka, much is still unknown, but it is clear that inter-group contacts existed, e.g., in the context of the preparations of the peace treaties. Another possibility for external contact was formed by the fact that a person who was accused of a murder for which there was not sufficient evidence would sometimes be banned to one of the other Maroon groups (Van Eyck 1830: 268).

As far as external contacts (i.e. contacts with Amerindians, whites and enslaved and free blacks) are concerned, there were a number of opportunities for contact in addition to the contacts between Maroons and slaves mentioned above under the categories of Trade and Resistance. Contacts between Maroons and Amerindians, e.g., trade relations between the Ndyuka and the Trio, seem to go back to the period of the peace treaties. These contacts were sufficiently intensive to result in the creation of a new contact language, Ndyuka-Trio Pidgin (Huttar & Velantie 1997; *cf.* Chapter 7 for a sample text). Contacts between the Saramaka and Amerindians, which also primarily involved trade, e.g., in hunting dogs which were trained by the latter, probably go back to the same period. Linguistic traces of these contacts can be seen in the borrowings from Carib, Arawak, and Trio which are still part of the Ndyuka and Saramaka lexicons (although some of these may go back to an earlier period, when Amerindians were employd as slaves on the plantations; *cf.* Chapter 1).

Apart from their confrontations with members of the military expeditions sent out against them, not much is known about contacts with whites in the pre-treaties (i.e. pre-1760) period (some of the verbal exchanges that happened during such confrontations are reported in Chapter 7). It seems clear, however, that opportunities for contacts outside the Maroon community increased when peace was established in the 1760s. As part of the treaties, for example, an exchange of persons took place between Maroons on the one hand and the colonial government on the other. The former sent some of their youth as hostages to Paramaribo while the latter installed a representative *posthouder* 'postholder' among the Maroons (*cf.* the text of the Saramaka Peace Treaty in Chapter 7). Another important post-treaty development, at least among the Saramaka, was the arrival of the Moravian missionaries,

who began their missionary work in 1765, continuing on a regular basis until the 1820s. This had a clear influence on the Saramaka or at least on some of their converts, as appears from the letters written by Grego and Alabi (*cf.* Chapter 7).

In the following decades, Saramaka external contacts increased further, to the extent that '…by the middle of the nineteenth century, Saramaka men from the Upper [Suriname, JA] River had established a fairly stable pattern of brief yearly trading trips to the coast.' (Price 1975: 65). After the abolition of slavery (1863), Saramaka and Ndyuka men became heavily involved in two types of labour which involved frequent contacts with the outside world, logging and river transportation (Price 1975; Thoden van Velzen 2003). They floated their logs in rafts along the rivers to the sawmills that were located in the coastal area, often staying there for long periods of time. A more important opportunity for contact was offered by the gold rush that happened in the southern border area between Suriname and Guyane in the 1880–1940 period and which brought along a great demand for river transportation. Thoden van Velzen (2003: 23), for example, notes that in 1907 there were some 10,000–12,000 (!) gold diggers in the Mana River basin (Guyane) alone (i.e. roughly the same number as Suriname's total Maroon population at the time). As expert river pilots, completely used to dealing with the dangerous *sulas* 'rapids' in the Surinamese rivers, Saramaka and Ndyuka men virtually monopolized river transportation during this period. For Saramakas, this often led to long-term residences away from their homes: 'The preferred pattern throughout this time [i.e roughly 1880–1940, JA] was to spend two or three years in French Guiana followed by a similar period in Saramaka, but even in the nineteenth century, many men stayed 10 or 20 years or even longer at one stretch, and some simply never returned' (Price 1975: 66).

To conclude, this brief discussion has shown that, far from being the completely isolated communities located in the interior of the Suriname rain forest, Maroon groups had fairly frequent contacts with the outside world, from quite early on in their existence. Although it is difficult to assess the linguistic implications of these contacts, it is clear that the Maroon creoles did not emerge in virtually complete isolation, as has often been assumed. This is shown, among other things, by the fact that as early as the 19th century Sranan was widely spoken as a second language among the Saramaka, especially by men (*cf.* Chapter 4).

3.2.3 Conclusion

With respect to the social factors discussed in this paper, two forces can be discerned whose linguistic consequences were more or less opposed: an internal social stratification favoring linguistic differentiation, and an external social network

system favoring homogenization. Early social stratification provides indirect support for the hypothesis, first formulated by Baker (1982b), that creole continua may have arisen quite early on in the formation of creole languages. In a socially stratified population, different groups of Blacks had differential access to the language spoken by the Whites as well as differential motivation to learn it. As a result, a spectrum of varieties may have developed from quite early on. At the same time, early external contacts contributed to the homogenization of creole varieties spoken on different plantations. As a result, one, more or less homogeneous, creole developed rather than a number of different creole 'dialects,' one for each plantation (*cf.* Speedy 1995: 103). Apart from these rather general inferences, it does not seem possible at this moment to make any direct links between this type of sociohistorical evidence and purely linguistic developments. Nevertheless, I think that any historically realistic theory of creole formation should take into account the kind of extralinguistic evidence presented here.

3.3 Demographic factors[10]

> Sugar…has been one of the massive demographic forces in world history.
> S. Mintz (1959: 49)

3.3.1 Introduction

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, demographic issues are of major importance for creole formation – both those related to the (forced) *immigration* of slaves through time and to the slave *population* at any given moment.[11] The most important issue related to immigration is the question of the ethnolinguistic origins of the slaves. Another factor, which has a less immediately obvious linguistic relevance, is the sex and age distribution within the groups of Africans brought to Suriname. These issues will be discussed in Section 3.3.2. The most important issues related to population are the proportions between blacks[12] and whites and

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10. This section is based on Arends (1995a).

11. Although emigration is also relevant, of course, this will not be discussed separately since hardly any information is available on out-migration from Suriname, with the exception of the 'English exodus', which is treated in detail in Chapter 2.

12. I use the term 'blacks' to refer both to people of African as well as people of mixed African-European descent. Only when it is necessary to do so will I use terms such as 'people of colour' or, more frequently, 'mulattos' to refer to people of mixed descent. As to the latter, it should be noted that, in contrast to its original meaning – a person of half African, half European descent – I use 'mulatto' to refer to any person of African-European descent, not just those who

between black children and black adults and the rate of nativization among the blacks. These issues are the topic of Section 3.3.3.1 and 3.3.3.2. Some additional issues, such as the role of the founder population and the black-to-coloured and free-to-enslaved ratios will be discussed in Section 3.3.3.3 and 3.3.3.4.

3.3.2 Factors related to immigration

The immigrants to Suriname fall into two large groups, blacks and whites. While little is known about the exact composition of the latter, quite a lot of information is available on the former. Until recently, the main problem with regard to African influence, at least in the case of the Atlantic creoles, was the fact that the linguistic origins of slaves brought to the New World were not known in enough detail and with enough certainty to allow the identification of relevant substrate languages. This led to a serious methodological problem, in that the range of potentially relevant substrate languages was not sufficiently constrained for parallels between these languages and particular creoles to be of any real significance. While this section does not pretend to completely resolve that problem, it does contribute significantly to a refinement of our knowledge about the African linguistic input into Suriname. It also contributes to the discussion of the respective roles of the locally-born and African-born blacks in the process of creolization by looking at the sex and age distribution among African imports. For this purpose I made a detailed investigation, on the basis of Postma's definitive study of the Dutch participation in the Atlantic slave trade (1990),[13] of the demographic composition of the African immigrant groups that were brought to Suriname between 1675 and 1803.[14]

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are 50% African and 50% European. Terms such as mestizo, quadroon, etc, indicating finer degrees of mixture, will only be used when necessary for the discussion. Also, in accordance with historical reality, such terms as 'import' and 'importation', even though in themselves degrading when used to refer to human beings, will sometimes be used here to refer to the forced migration of Africans to Suriname.

13. In what follows, 'Postma' (without year of publication) will always refer to Postma (1990). Readers wondering why I do not refer to Eltis et al.'s (1999) more recent CD-Rom should realize that as far as the trade to Suriname is concerned Eltis et al. is entirely based on Postma's (1990) data.

14. This is the period covered by Postma's own data. Both the pre-1675 and the post-1803 periods have been studied by other scholars: Binder (unpublished data) and Chander (1988). Part of Binder's data are summarized in Postma (Table 2.2, p. 35); additional data were later made available to me by Postma through personal communication. Chander (1988) is left out of the discussion here, since the post-1803 period is relatively unimportant for the purpose of this book.

3.3.2.1 *Africans*

In this section some quantitative aspects of the immigration of Africans into Suriname will be discussed, both with respect to their ethnolinguistic origins and with respect to their age and sex distribution. Most of what will be said here is based on Postma's detailed study (1990) of the Dutch Atlantic slave trade. It should be noted that, although the subject of Postma's book is the Dutch slave trade in general rather than their trade to Suriname, his work is highly useful for the purposes of this chapter, since the Dutch trade accounted for practically all of the import to Suriname throughout the slavery period, both during the monopoly of the West India Company (WIC) (i.e. until 1738) and during the free trade period (i.e. from 1739 onwards) (Postma 1990: 180, 201–205, 211). Through meticulous archival research Postma was able to obtain data on the numbers of slaves and on the place and year of their embarkation and disembarkation for 581 ships landing some 200,000 slaves in Suriname in the 1675–1803 period.[15] For most of these shipments the documents provide information on all of these variables; in a minority of cases information is limited to part of them. For 51 shipments additional information regarding age and sex of the slave cohorts is given. It should be noted that in by far the majority of cases the quantitative information is precise, i.e. specific figures are mentioned in the archival documents. The fact that slaves were economically highly valued merchandise, ensures that, purely as a matter of good book-keeping, their numbers were recorded accurately, which enhances the reliability of these figures considerably. Where exact figures are lacking, they are compensated by Postma's educated estimates, based on his calculations of average slave cargoes and average mortality rates during the middle passage. It seems safe to say, therefore, that the figures given below present a historically realistic picture of the demographics of the African immigration into Suriname.

3.3.2.2 *Origins*

Little is known with absolute certainty about the origins of slaves imported into Suriname before 1675, i.e. those brought from Barbados in the 1650s or acquired later by the English. (As to the possibility of the Sephardic Jews bringing slaves with them from Pernambuco, this was shown to be highly unlikely: *cf.* Chapter 2).

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15. Postma's (2003) recalculations of the Dutch slave trade, based on several important publications which appeared since 1990, did not lead to significant adjustments for the trade to Suriname, especially not for the early period which is most important from a linguistic point of view. The total number of slaves imported into Suriname between 1668 and 1803 is now calculated at almost 185,000 (Postma 2003, Table 11.5). This is only slightly higher than the figure of around 182,000 I arrived at on the basis of Postma (1990). Although Postma (2003) does not talk about ethnolinguistic origins, pending evidence to the contrary I assume his reassessment does not have serious consequences for his earlier findings.

Although we may suspect that the first English settlers brought some slaves with them, when they started their colonizing efforts in Suriname in 1651, their numbers were probably quite low. After all, one of the reasons for the colonization of Suriname was the overpopulation of whites, not blacks in Barbados; in fact, there even was a shortage of slaves in Barbados at the time (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 2). After the beginning of the sugar boom in the 1650s, there simply was not enough land to provide a living for the more than 30,000 whites, mostly ex-indentured servants and small tenants, who lived on the island (Beckles 1990; Van der Linde 1966: 44). At the time of the colonization of Suriname, there were about 8,000 servants in Barbados, mainly Scots and Irish (Smith 1947: 332). The white population of other islands from which colonists came to Suriname, such as St Kitts, Montserrat and Nevis, also contained a considerable proportion of servants at that time (Smith 1947: 172). This explains the predominance among the first settlers in Suriname of former indentured servants, who did not have the money to buy more than one or two slaves (Rens 1953: 58).

As to the slaves that the English did bring from Barbados, most of these had been purchased there from Dutch slavers, since 'up to 1663, the slave trade to Barbados was practically a Dutch monopoly' (Curtin 1969, quoted in Price 1976: 13; *cf.* also Beckles 1990: 32). This means that, to get an idea of the African origins of these slaves we can take the figures for the overall Dutch trade in the pre-1675 period. Unfortunately, the earliest figures available go back no further than 1658. The percentages for the Dutch trade in the 1658–1674 period are as follows (Postma 1990: Table 5.2):

Table 3.4 African origins in the overall Dutch slave trade (1658–1674)

Windward Coast	4.3%
Gold Coast	10.4%
Slave Coast	28.0%
Loango	13.9%
Unknown origin	43.4%

Apart from the much higher percentage of unknown origins, and the somewhat higher proportion of Gold Coast slaves, these figures are comparable to the ones provided for Suriname for the 1675–1720 period in Table 3.5 below. Assuming that the Dutch trade to the English in Barbados was a reflection of the overall trade, we may conclude that the origins of the slaves brought from Barbados are roughly identical to the origins of the ones imported during the first fifty years under Dutch rule (*cf.* also Beckles 1990: 32–3).

As to the slaves bought by the English after their arrival in Suriname, these were also largely imported by Dutch slavers (Price 1976: 13). Although Postma

does not provide any pre-1675 Suriname-specific figures, we are not left in the dark completely in this regard. This is due to unpublished research by Franz Binder, discussed in Chapter 2, which has unearthed evidence about 9 shipments between 1667 and 1675. Although the information is much scarcer than for post-1675 shipments with regard to a number of variables, place of origin is given in most cases: remarkably at least 5 out of these 9 came from 'Calabary', i.e. the Bight of Biafra, a region which provided hardly any slaves to Suriname in the post-1675 period (except two shipments in the 1680s; see below). Interestingly, recent research has shown that this area was also the main supplier for Barbados in the 1660s (Morgan 1997: 126). As shown in Appendix II, another 844 Bight of Biafra slaves were brought to Suriname in 1685 and 1686. This is linguistically relevant as the languages spoken in the Bight of Biafra area belong to other language groups (e.g. Cross River languages, such as Ibibio) than those spoken in the areas that became the major suppliers later on. Their role may be especially important as speakers of these languages belonged to the earliest slave cohorts who arrived in Suriname.

To the extent that any slaves were brought to Suriname from Pernambuco (but see Chapter 2), these had also been acquired from Dutch slavers (Postma, pp. 19–22). Based on the Dutch import to Brazil in the relevant period (Postma 1990: Table 1.1), we can say that the geographical origins of these slaves were largely identical to those of the Suriname imports in the decades following Dutch take-over.

Archival documents are much richer for the post-1675 period. Appendices 1 and 2 in Postma (1990: 308–48) list all 1209 Dutch shipments between 1675 and 1803 for which archival records were found. For a quarter of these (310, i.e. 25.6%) the New World destination was not recorded. This does not mean, however, that a proportionate part of these 'unknown destiny ships' arrived in Suriname. On the contrary, Postma (Tables 8.2 and 9.2, pp. 186, 212) estimates that in the entire 1668–1803 period a total of only 6,490 slaves arrived in Suriname from ships without verified destination (2,140 between 1668 and 1734 and 4,350 between 1735 and 1803). Also, according to Postma, the importation by Dutch interlopers or foreign ships in the 1668–1734 period 'can hardly have been significant enough to alter the overall picture' (p. 187–8), and the same goes for unrecorded shipments in the 1732–1803 period (p. 212). Therefore, Postma's data on the origin, destination, and numbers of slaves, brought to Suriname by the Dutch between 1651 and 1803, can be regarded as an accurate and reliable representation of the historical facts.

Of the 899 ships for which the New World destination was recorded, 556 (61.8%) delivered their cargoes in Suriname, with another 25 listed with a mixed Suriname-Guiana destination. It may be important to stress that Table 3.5 below is based on historically accountable facts rather than estimates and projections.

Table 3.5 Place of departure of slaves imported into Suriname (1652–1803)[16]

	Grain Coast		Gold Coast		Slave Coast		Bight of Biafra		Loango		Subtotal	Unknown		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	N	%	N
1652–1679									260	5.4	260	4,574	94.6	4,834
1680–1689			325	3.3	3,010	30.8	844	8.6	4,561	46.7	8,740	1,032	10.6	9,772
1690–1699					3,147	42.8			2,999	40.8	6,146	1,203	16.4	7,349
1700–1709			657	8.3	5,587	70.6			1,147	14.5	7,391	528	6.7	7,919
1710–1719					5,020	69.0			1,589	21.8	6,609	668	9.2	7,277
1720–1729			6,261	65.3	2,695	28.1			251	2.6	9,207	380	4.0	9,587
1730–1739	276	1.5	9,462	53.7	5,602	31.8			1,097	6.2	16,437	1,192	6.8	17,629
1740–1749	3,796	17.3	1,626	7.4	478	2.2			4,941	22.5	10,841	11,093	50.6	21,934
1750–1759	11,959	46.8	5,125	20.0					5,927	23.2	23,011	2,517	9.9	25,528
1760–1769	14,003	39.4	6,001	16.9	320	0.9			12,686	35.7	33,010	2,517	7.1	35,527
1770–1779	11,293	45.2	4,840	19.4					8,193	32.8	24,326	654	2.6	24,980
1780–1789	2,719	62.0	1,165	26.6					500	11.4	4,384			4,384
1790–1803	2,652	54.4	1,137	23.3					902	18.5	4,691	180	3.7	4,871
Total	46,698	25.7	36,599	20.2	25,859	14.2	844	0.5	45,053	24.8	154,396	26,538	14.6	181,591

16. This table does not include slaves brought by the English from Barbados or purchased by them from non-Dutch slavers between 1651 and 1667, in both cases probably very few (Price 1976: 13). For the 1652–1675 period the data have been supplemented with data from Postma's Table 2.2 (p. 35) and Figure 12.4 (p. 301).

Since Table 3.5 may be difficult to interpret, the same information is represented graphically in the following figure.

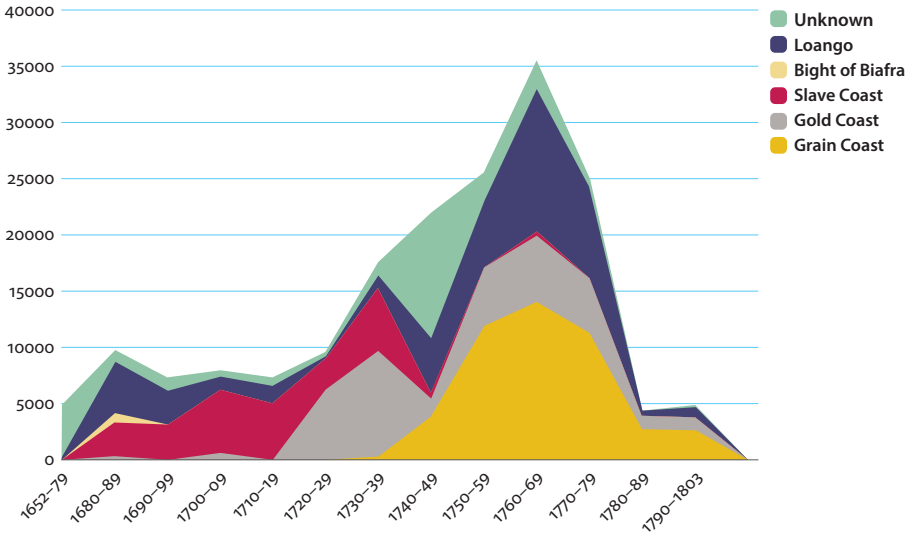

Figure 3.1 Place of departure of slaves imported into Suriname (1652–1803)

Before discussing some of the details of Table 3.5 and Figure 3.1, let me first explain the meanings of the geographical terms used here, especially as they are not always identical to how they are used in other works. They correspond roughly to modern geographical terms as follows (Postma 1990: 57–60; 122–123; for more detailed topographical information, see the excellent maps in Fage 1978).

> *Grain Coast*. Although the term 'Grain Coast' (also known as 'Pepper Coast' or 'Malagueta Coast') refers to the entire region[17] stretching from Sierra Leone to western Ghana, as far as the Dutch slave trade is concerned it was almost exclusively restricted to Liberia and, especially, Ivory Coast.
> *Gold Coast*. This term refers to central and eastern Ghana up to Accra.
> *Slave Coast*. This includes eastern Togo, Benin, and western Nigeria.
> *Bight of Biafra*. This refers to the Niger Delta region and eastern Nigeria.
> *Loango*. This term (derived from the name of a Dutch trading post north of the Congo River) refers to the area stretching from southern Cameroon down to Cabinda, with an emphasis on the area including Cabinda (just north of the Congo River), the coastal regions of the two Congos, and southern Gabon. Note that in contrast to Postma's hyphenated term 'Loango-Angola', 'Loango' in this

17. Needless to say, I am referring to the coastal regions of the countries mentioned in this paragraph; the question as to how far inland recruitment of slaves stretched is discussed in some detail below.

> book does *not* include Angola, although, of course, slaves from Angola may have been shipped from the Loango area.

A few remarks about the category 'Grain Coast' as used in Table 3.5 and Figure 3.1 are in order here. As noted above, Table 3.5 and Figure 3.1 are based on Appendices 1 and 2 in Postma (1990). In these Appendices, Postma uses the undifferentiated category of 'Guinea Coast' for the post-1738 period, when the WIC had lost its monopoly on the slave trade. In this period, the free traders were mainly active in the Upper Guinea area, where they worked from ships rather than from castles or forts. Since this makes it impossible to identify exactly the places of embarkation for their ships, Postma used the undifferentiated category of 'Guinea Coast'. At the same time, however, we know that these free traders purchased most of their slaves in the Liberia/Ivory Coast region, going on to the Gold Coast only in case they had not succeeded in acquiring a full cargo of slaves. Since on average, 70% of these cargoes were acquired in the Liberia/Ivory Coast region (see below), I allocated 70% of all 'Guinea Coast' shipments to the Grain Coast category and the remaining 30% to the Gold Coast. Although for the linguistic questions I am dealing with here the post-1738 period is less crucial than earlier periods, it may still be useful to motivate this decision a little bit more elaborately by quoting Postma at some length here, especially since such a large proportion of the overall African immigration to Suriname is involved.

> Occasionally, slaves were purchased in the Senegambia region, but as a rule the acquisition of slaves commenced on the coasts of present-day Sierra Leone and Liberia. Cape Mesurado, where Monrovia was subsequently built, was the most frequent starting point of slave acquisition. The average free-trade slave cargo, according to this sample [i.e. Postma's Table 5.8, JA], was nearly 70 percent complete before the Gold Coast was reached, making the Windward Coast (the approximate equivalent of today's Liberia and Ivory Coast) one of the principal slaving areas for the Dutch. All export regions taken together, the Dutch free traders may well have obtained 40 percent of their slaves from the Windward Coast. Cape Lahou in particular and the Ivory Coast in general clearly emerged as the most prolific supplier of slaves in this region. (Postma 1990: 122–123)

About the ships for which the Gold Coast is recorded as their place of departure Postma says the following:

> The ships designated as having boarded their slaves at Elmina [the most important Dutch fort on the Gold Coast, JA] did not necessarily obtain all their slaves on the Gold Coast; usually it meant that Elmina was their last port of call in Africa. In 1744 the WIC director at Elmina reported that most of the free traders purchased their slaves on the Windward coast, sailing on to Elmina only when their cargo was still deficient. (Postma 1990: 120–121)

Although Postma's remark is confined to Elmina, we may infer from his earlier quotation as well as from remarks made elsewhere in his book that it also applies to the other Gold Coast forts and trading posts. The validity of the 70/30 allocation is supported by the fact that it results in an overall percentage of Grain Coast slaves in the post-1738 period of 39.6%, which is completely in agreement with Postma's estimate of 40% mentioned above.

It should be stressed that, while all toponyms used above refer only to the coastal strips of the areas involved, from where slaves were shipped, this does not imply that the origins of the slaves purchased by the Dutch were necessarily limited to these areas. Although the question of the *exact* regional origins of the African slaves is a notoriously difficult one, recent historical research has made it possible to identify these regions with more precision than before. On the basis of extensive demographic research, Manning (1990) has made educated estimates of the maximum distances of different supply areas from the coast as well as how these changed through time. Postma (1990) relates the location of supply areas to internal political developments in Africa. Since the issue is of paramount importance from a linguistic point of view, it will be dealt with in some detail here.

However, before going into Postma's and Manning's findings regarding the slavers' radius of action, it will be useful to discuss the numerical and geographical distribution of the relevant languages in the relevant periods.[18] As far as the Guinea Coast (the area stretching from Senegambia to the Bight of Biafra) is concerned, Hair (1967) has shown, on the basis of detailed historical research, that there has been little change over the past 300 to 500 years:

> If we…compare the ethnolinguistic inventory of today with that of the period before 1700, we find a striking continuity…the ethnolinguistic units of the Guinea coast have remained very much the same for three, four or five centuries.
>
> (Hair 1967: 247)

As to the numerical distribution of these languages, unfortunately no historical data are available. In order to get some idea of the relative numbers of speakers in the relevant period, we have to rely, with all due caution, of course, on extrapolations from present-day figures. (But note that what we are interested in is proportions rather than absolute numbers.)

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18. The term 'language' is a simplification since in the case of Akan, Gbe and Kikongo we are dealing with clusters of languages (or language varieties) rather than separate languages, some of which are mutually intelligible while others are not. The numerically most important among them are Ewe and Fon (Gbe), Kikongo (Kikongo), and Twi (Akan).

What is important for the African substrate with regard to Suriname, is the fact that the areas from which slaves were recruited are linguistically much less diverse than West Africa as a whole. The most important language clusters spoken in these areas, Gbe (Kwa) and Kikongo (Bantu), have relatively many speakers and are distributed over relatively large areas. The total number of speakers of Gbe and Kikongo may be estimated at 7 million – 4 million Gbe, 3 million Kikongo (if Kikongo in a wider sense is included the total figure becomes around 11 million) (source: <www.ethnologue.com>). These two language clusters, which together constitute less than 0.5% of all Niger-Congo languages, are spoken by some 5% of all Niger-Congo speakers. Extrapolating these figures to 17th and 18th-century Africa, we may conclude that Suriname's major pre-1720 recruitment areas were exceptionally homogeneous from a linguistic point of view, especially when seen in the light of the high degree of linguistic diversity which is the norm in West and West-Central Africa.

The Suriname case provides decisive evidence against the idea that the linguistic heterogeneity among the slaves was too strong to allow a significant influence from any African language or language cluster. This notion of profound linguistic heterogeneity among slave populations in Caribbean colonies, is based on the fact that West and West Central Africa belong to the linguistically most diverse regions of the world, coupled with the assumption that planters adhered to a linguistic divide-and-rule strategy ensuring that slaves from different language background were mingled on plantations in order to prevent them from planning rebellions or any other kind of insubordinate activity. It is becoming more and more clear, however, that, despite the frequent mention of the divide-and-rule strategy in the contemporary literature, it constituted a *desideratum* on the part of the planters rather than an actual practice. (For that reason it would be better to refer to it as the 'mixing myth'.) In fact, in some colonies the supply of slaves was so scarce that planters did not have any choice as to the ethnolinguistic background of the slaves they bought to work their plantations.

Recent research on the Atlantic slave trade shows that the linguistic diversity of West and West Central Africa was not equally reflected among the Africans who were taken to the New World. The claim that slaves brought to the Caribbean formed relatively homogeneous groups is supported by Eltis et al.'s (1999) data base, which leads historians to conclude that 'the distribution of peoples from West Africa in the Americas was far from random' (Eltis & Richardson 1997: 8). In other words, rather than drawing slaves from all over coastal West and West Central Africa, *specific* regions in the New World recruited their slaves from *specific* regions in Africa. Since this finding is of major importance for theories of creole genesis, the passage where it is articulated most clearly is quoted here in full:

> [O]n the issue of transatlantic links, the picture of African coerced migrants arriving mainly in a mix of peoples – often on the same vessel – needs revising. Like the free migrant and indentured servant trades, systematic geographic patterns existed. Scholars should now turn to exploring what these mean both for Africa and for African influences in the shaping of the New World. (Eltis 2001: 41)

Although this observation in itself is not new (*cf.* Curtin 1969), its importance lies in the fact that it is based on a data set covering some 27,000 transatlantic voyages (two thirds of the estimated total) concerning all major slave trading nations (Eltis et al. 1999).

The importance of ethnic homogeneity cannot be easily overestimated as it has been demonstrated convincingly that the degree of homogeneity of the substrate plays an important role in determining the extent of substrate influence (Singler 1988; Smith, Robertson & Williamson 1987). The importance of linguistic homogeneity is further enhanced by the fact that, contrary to the stereotype of linguistic mixing on the part of the planters, plantation populations were relatively homogeneous. An important piece of evidence is provided in Anon. (ca.1740), a manual for plantation managers written by an experienced planter. He writes:

> Usually the slaves prefer to marry women from their own nations [i.e. ethnic groups, JA], and in such cases arguments, jealousy, or family problems will not occur easily. In my opinion, the reason for that is, among other things, that the man knows how to treat his wife and the woman knows how to treat her husband according to the customs of their nation. If, however, a man and a woman of different nations get together, there will always be differences between them. Therefore, when buying slaves one should be very careful in coupling them to slaves of a different nation and one should see whether there is a man or a woman on the plantation who needs one. (Anon. ca. 1740: 60–1)

Speaking about the early history of Sranan, Focke confirms this practice of promoting rather than discouraging ethnolinguistic homogeneity among the slaves:

> Whenever possible, the Africans, who, belonging to different peoples, spoke different languages, were allocated upon their arrival, to their fellow countrymen among the slaves to be taken care of and seasoned. An important part of their task was to teach the local language, i.e. the Negro-English thus knocked together, to these 'green blacks'. (Focke 1855: viii)

Ethnolinguistic homogeneity was valued so highly that even Maroon groups were occasionally organized along ethnic lines, a relic of which can still be found today in the names of a Saramaka clan, called Lángu (Loango), and a Saramaka village, called Pápa (i.e. Popo) (Hoogbergen 1992: 284–285, 294).

As far as the Loango area is concerned, there is some evidence that Kikongo speaking slaves were well represented among the slaves purchased in this area, since 'the decline of the once powerful Kongo state to the southwest [of the Dutch trading area around Loango seems to have contributed to the steady supply of slaves after the middle of the sixteenth century' (Postma 1990: 101). With regard to the Slave Coast area Postma (p. 99) says that up to around 1730

> …located about fifty miles from the coast [north of Ouidah, JA], Dahomey had long been one of the weaker brother states in the Aja system.[19] They had often been the object of slave raids from their more powerful neighbours…
>
> (Postma 1990: 99)

This suggests that among Slave Coast slaves, it was primarily Dahomeyans, i.e. Gbe speakers who arrived in Suriname. Finally, in the Gold Coast area at the beginning of the 18th century the Asante kingdom came to power, first in the western and interior parts of the region, later also in the eastern part. At the same time, the Fante took over power in the coastal area (Postma, p. 94). This suggests that Gold Coast slaves brought to Suriname were mostly non-Asantes and non-Fantes. Linguistically speaking, this means that, as far as the Akan (Kwa) language cluster is concerned, Akuapem Twi and Abron rather than Asante or Fante were imported into Suriname. Interestingly, the three languages mentioned here (Kikongo, Gbe and Twi) are precisely those that have survived as ritual languages in Suriname (Smith 1987: 88).

Postma's remarks above are supported by Manning's (1990) observations. These are summarized below:

Table 3.6 Maximum radius of slave recruitment areas (Source: Manning 1990: 62–70)

	Before 1700	**After 1700**
Grain Coast	<200 km	<200 km
Gold Coast	ca 100 km	ca 300 km
Slave Coast	<200 km	<200 km
Loango	ca 300 km	300–600 km

As can be seen from Table 3.6, supply areas stretched into the interior for more than 200 kilometers only in the Gold Coast and Loango areas. If we concentrate on the periods and areas relevant to Suriname, we see that both in the Slave Coast and in the Grain Coast area slaves were brought from no further than 200 kilometers from the coast. With regard to the Slave Coast, which was of major importance

19. The Aja king ruled over other monarchs in the Slave Coast area during this period.

for the period of creole formation in Suriname, Manning is quite specific about the language area where slaves came from:

> In addition, according to recorded ethnic designations of slaves exported from the region [i.e. the Slave Coast area, JA], *the overwhelming majority of these slaves were from the Aja (or Gbe-speaking) peoples* of the coastal fringe in the period up to the late eighteenth century. (Manning 1990: 67, italics mine, JA)

For the Grain Coast, which did not become a supply area for Suriname until after 1740, this means that slaves from these areas were speakers of languages belonging to such groups as Kru, (southern) Mande and (southern) Atlantic, rather than languages spoken in the interior. Since the Dutch Grain Coast trade was concentrated in the Cape Lahu area, speakers of western Kwa languages will also have been present among the slaves.

About the Gold Coast area, which did not become important for Suriname until after 1720, Manning (p. 65) says that after 1700, the supply area shifted from the core to the periphery of the Akan-speaking region. After 1750, when there was a rise in the number of Suriname slaves from the Gold Coast, it shifted to the north and northwest of the Asante empire, which by then had become much expanded (p. 135). This means that Suriname slaves from this region were more likely to be speakers of Akuapem Twi and Gã (in the 1720–1740 period) and Anyi-Baule and Abron (in the 1750–1780 period) than Asante and Fante.

Loango was the only supply area that had a large hinterland from the beginning, which was expanded even more in the course of the eighteenth century. Although the first (pre-1720) wave of Loango slaves entering Suriname, which consisted largely of Kikongo speakers, already may have contained speakers of non-coastal languages, the second (post-1740) wave, which was brought from as far inland as the Ubangi River valley and the northern hinterland of Angola, must have contained speakers of other Bantu languages, especially Kimbundu.

Finally, in the Bight of Biafra area Ibibio rather than Igbo speakers were purchased (p. 69). Although this area only provided slaves for two short periods of time – 1667–1674 and 1685–1686 – this is important because these slaves arrived at such an early stage. The five shipments in the 1667–1674 period are especially relevant since they formed more than half of the shipments recorded for that period. In addition to that, this period, which formed the transition of Suriname from an English to a Dutch colony, was a crucial one in the formation of the Suriname creoles.

The combined evidence provided by Postma and Manning strongly suggests that the range of major substrate languages can be narrowed down to two clusters, Gbe and Kikongo, with a somewhat more diverse group of western Kwa languages (Akuapem Twi, Abron, Gã, Anyi-Baule) playing a secondary role. These findings,

based on modern quantitative research, are supported by what earlier sources have had to say about the ethnolinguistic origins of Surinamese slaves based on the alleged 'characteristics' of different ethnic groups. As noted by Price 1976: 15–16), the lists of African 'nations' compiled in such works

> are problematical, however, not only because they provide no quantification but also because the major ones…all postdate 1770, leaving us with little systematic information from the Suriname side of the Atlantic about which 'types' of slaves were imported (and in what ways) during the whole first century of the colony's history, when local Afro-American institutions, languages and other cultural systems were being forged. (Price 1976: 15–16)

This problem is remedied to some extent by the fact that recently an important pre-1770 source (Anon. ca.1740, first discussed in Beeldsnijder 1994) has come to light which presents some relevant information on this issue. Writing about the origins of the slaves, the author, a Surinamese planter, says that 'the slaves are of many diverse nations…the best known nations are Cormantins, Papas, Fidas, Loangos, Congos etc.' (Anon. ca.1740: 56).

Another problem with regard to these early sources is formed by the fact that it is often very difficult to determine exactly which ethnic groups are referred by the names used in them. This is so for a variety of reasons, e.g. because these names are represented in idiosyncratic spellings or because they are the names used by other groups rather than the groups itself or because they are no longer in use. Wooding (1981) has made a detailed study of the names mentioned in the four sources mentioned by Price – Hartsinck 1770, Stedman 1796 [1790], Teenstra 1835, and Hostmann 1850. Taking into account several older sources too, such as Dapper (1668) and Bosman (1704), as well as the internal military and political developments in 18th-century West Africa, Wooding (1981: 26) reaches the following conclusion:

> On the basis of the identified tribes, it appears that the Afrosurinamese population comes mainly from four West African linguistic groups: Mandingo, Fante-Akan, Ewe-Fon and Western Bantu. (Wooding 1981: 26)

Although Wooding's identification of the major ethnolinguistic groups is not completely identical to mine (*cf.* especially his reference to Mandingo), this can be explained by the fact that Wooding's study was published before Postma (1990) had become available. Taking into account Postma's findings, however, it becomes clear that the early authors support the identification of the major ethnolinguistic groups made on the basis of modern quantitative research. This is further supported by the fact that it is precisely the groups from the regions identified as the major recruitment areas in my study – Gold Coast (Akan), Slave Coast (Gbe), and

Loango (West Bantu) – which are shown by Wooding to have made the largest contribution to the formation of the Surinamese religious system known as *winti* (Wooding 1981: 289).

In terms of identifying the major ethnolinguistic groups as such, the picture presented in Table 3.5 and Figure 3.1 by and large confirms the calculations made by Price (1976: 13), which were based on Postma's (1970) earlier, much less complete, study (which does not present any Suriname-specific figures). However, with regard to the distribution of these groups through time there are some marked differences (for full details, see Arends 1995a, Table 1.4). One of these is the fact that the proportion of Gold Coast slaves in the 1726–1735 period was twice as high as calculated by Price. Also, the proportion of Loango slaves was higher in the 1651–1700 period and lower in the 1701–1735 period than calculated by Price.

One example may serve to illustrate the linguistic relevance of these adjustments. The fact that the immigration of Loango slaves between 1650 and 1750 was largely concentrated in the first half of that period, rather than being equally divided over this entire period, as assumed by Price, may explain why the Bantu contribution to the lexicon of the Suriname creoles is much greater than would be expected on the basis of Price's figures (*cf.* Huttar 1985: 64).

Bantu-speaking slaves simply were present in Suriname in a greater proportion in the early period than assumed until now and for that reason exerted a stronger substrate influence.

The most important conclusion to be drawn from Table 3.6 and Figure 3.1 is the fact that both the quantity and the regional origins of slaves were subject to considerable fluctuations. If we divide the entire 1652–1803 period into four subperiods (1652–1690; 1690–1720; 1720–1740; 1740–1803), the overall pattern can be summarized as follows. In the first period African immigration is roughly equally divided between Slave Coast and Loango. In the second period Slave Coast slaves form roughly two thirds and Loango slaves one third of the imported Africans. The third period witnesses a sudden rise of Gold Coast imports, taking up two thirds of all immigration, while the Slave Coast segment decreases to one third and the Loango segment almost disappears. Finally, the last period is dominated by the Grain Coast trade, taking up almost half of the immigration, while the Loango and Gold Coast segments each take up roughly one quarter and the Slave Coast segment disappears. Quantitatively speaking, the Suriname import of slaves doubled in each successive period (if the last two decades of the 1740–1803 period, when the Suriname trade dropped drastically, are left out of account): it increased from an annual average of below 400 in the first period, via 750 and 1350 in the second and third periods to 2650 in the final period.

These findings about the slave trade to Suriname amply demonstrate that we should not rely on overall figures to inform us about the relevance of potential substrates: both the timing and the compactness of substrate language input have to be taken into account. Thus, the influence from Grain Coast languages is much smaller than would be expected from the sheer numbers of their speakers, simply because they arrived so late on the linguistic scene. In the same vein, the influence from Slave Coast and Loango languages (Gbe, Kikongo) is disproportionately strong, simply because their speakers arrived early and almost to the exclusion of speakers of other languages.

Linguistic evidence for the influence of these two language clusters on the Suriname creoles has been adduced for almost every level of the language system: lexicon (e.g. Daeleman 1972; Huttar 1985), phonology (e.g. Smith 1987), morphology (e.g. Braun 2005), syntax (e.g. Bruyn 1995a; Migge 1998), and (lexical) semantics (Huttar 1975). Generally speaking, the influence of Bantu appears to be largely lexical, while that of Gbe ranges over all linguistic subsystems. It is not clear to what extent this might be related to structural differences between the two language clusters, in particular the fact that Gbe has a rather isolating morphology while that of Kikongo is more of the agglutinating type: is a language with 'little morphology' more likely to leave structural traces in a language contact situation than a language with 'more morphology'? Of course, the question is put far too crudely here, but it certainly warrants further investigation, all the more so as the structural influence of Bantu languages is surprisingly small in many West-Atlantic creoles, not just those of Suriname (in spite of the fact that West-Central Africa was by far the largest supplier of slaves to the New World (Eltis 2001: Table II)). At the same time, however, one should not forget that the possible substrate influence of Bantu languages has received far less attention on the part of creolists than the languages of West-Africa, especially Kwa.

The fact that the two languages for which substrate influence has been demonstrated most convincingly, i.e. Kikongo and Gbe, are those which were spoken by the two ethnic groups which dominated slave immigration in Suriname during the first seventy years, suggests that substrate influence played its part predominantly during the first two or three generations of slaves. We have to be cautious, however, since substantial (especially lexical) influence of Twi, a language which was practically absent in Suriname until the 1720s, has also been demonstrated. Nevertheless, it seems safe to say that the primary candidate languages to subject to further investigation with regard to structural influence in the Suriname creoles are Gbe and Kikongo.

3.3.2.3 *Age and sex distribution*

Another demographic variable that is important for the reconstruction of creole formation in Suriname is the age composition of the slave cohorts that entered the colony. Especially the question whether or not these cohorts contained significant proportions of children is important, since, if this turns out to be the case, these African-born children formed part of the non-adult segment of the black population in Suriname. In other words, it is not necessarily the case that the entire group, or even a majority, of black children present at some point in time in Suriname consisted of children who were born there. Although it has sometimes been assumed that there were hardly any children among the imported slaves (Bickerton 1992; but *cf.* Arends 1994), this was certainly not the case for Suriname:

> The number of children and youths [3–15 years, JA] transported from Africa by Dutch slavers remained fairly steady until the free-trade period [i.e. 1735, JA], when their numbers increased. In the Brazil trade [1637–1645, JA] 13 percent were counted as youths, and these percentages remained about the same for the remainder of the WIC trade [until 1735, JA], although individual human cargoes might vary considerably. During the first decades of the free trade the number of young slaves increased to 20 percent and it reached a peak during the 1770s, when about a quarter of the slaves were below the age of fifteen. This does not take into consideration the very young children and infants who remained with their mothers. There are only sporadic references to these little ones, and a meaningful statistical assessment of them is therefore out of the question.
>
> (Postma 1990: 231)[20]

The issue, of course, is not without importance, because the proportion of locally-born slave children is an essential element in determining the role of first language acquisition in creolization. Evidently, in order to arrive at reliable estimates of the number of locally-born slave children, we have to take into account the fact that part of the non-adult slave population was born in Africa. Although no information on the place of birth of Suriname's black population at different points in time is available, there is an indirect way to estimate the proportion of African-born children among the entire non-adult black population (see

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20. Because so little is known with certainty about the presence of infants among slave cargoes, and because their chances of survival were probably not too good, both during middle passage and after arrival in Suriname, in what follows the assumption is made that no children at all below the age of three were imported into Suriname. Note, however, that among the few Suriname-destined slavers for which data on children below the age of three are available, there is one (the *Rusthof*) that reports the presence of approximately 100 infants on board (Postma 1990: 231). It should be kept in mind, therefore, that the estimates of the numbers of African-born children that will be presented below are on the conservative side.

Section 3.3.3.2 below). For this we make use of the fact that for Suriname we have relatively reliable figures for the age distribution both among the imports from Africa and among the black population, at specific points in time. The archival documents with respect to immigration, on which Postma's calculations are based, contain information about the age composition for 13.6% of all Dutch slavers and for 10.3% of all Suriname-destined Dutch slavers. Table 3.7, which is based on Postma's Tables 10.1 and 10.2, shows that between 1680 and 1803 the proportion of children (3–15 years) among the Suriname slave imports varied between 13.8 and 23.3 percent:[21]

Table 3.7 Percentage of children (3–15 yrs) in a sample of Suriname imports and in a sample of the overall Dutch trade (1680–1803)

	Overall Dutch trade	Suriname imports
1680–1749	11–12%	13.8%
1750–1759	19%	17.9%
1760–1779	24–25%	23.3%
1780–1803	21%	22.7%

A comparison of the Suriname figures with those for the overall Dutch trade shows a close correspondence between the two. The fact that with regard to the age distribution of the imported slave cargoes the Suriname sample corresponds so closely to the overall Dutch sample, both in the percentages of children imported and in the distribution of these percentages over time, clearly enhances the reliability of these figures. Further, the fact that there are no reasons to assume[22] that the presence of children was limited to the sample of the cargoes for which data on age composition have been found, allows us to project the sample data onto the entire Suriname import without distorting historical reality too much. The results of this projection are shown below:

21. Note that these figures are considerably higher than those given in Postma's earlier work (1970: 104, 179–81), where it is stated that hardly any children were purchased by the Dutch before 1700, whereas their proportion grew to 7.5% between 1700 and 1735 and to 21.5% between 1735 and 1803.

22. Although Postma does not confirm the representativeness of the sample explicitly, I assume that if there were any reasons to suppose that the sample was *not* representative, he would have mentioned them. Compare also the fact that, while almost all ships transported both men and women, data on sex distribution have been preserved for only 172 cargoes on a total number of 1,209 shipments. It may be assumed, therefore, that children were on board of most ships for which no age data were recorded.

Table 3.8 Projected percentages and numbers of children (3–15 yrs) among slaves imported to Suriname (1680–1803)

	Children (3–15 yrs)	
	%	N
1680–1729[23]	15.2	6,555
1730–1759	15.2	10,298
1760–1779	23.4	13,956
1780–1803	22.7	2,263
Total	18.3	33,072

The findings presented in Table 3.8, combined with information on the age composition of the black population at specific points in time discussed further below, allow us to estimate the proportions between African-born and locally-born black children in Suriname at specific points in time. This will be done in Section 3.3.3.2 below.

The proportion of children among slave cohorts differed according to place of departure. The percentages of children are as follows:

Table 3.9 Percentages of children among slaves imported to Suriname (1684–1803)

Grain Coast[24]	20.8%
Gold Coast	15.4%
Slave Coast	10.0%
Loango	23.2%
Unknown	14.8%

The differences between the recruitment areas have to do with the fact that the overall percentage of children among slave cargoes increased between the end of the 17th and the end of the 18th century (*cf.* Table 3.7 above). Therefore, the percentage of children from the Slave Coast, a region that was important in the beginning of slave importation, is lower than that of children from e.g. the Grain Coast which did not begin to supply slaves until later.

23. Note that the periodizations given in Tables 7 and 8 are not identical.

24. With regard to post-1740 undifferentiated Guinea Coast ships and post-1740 Gold Cost ships, the same procedure was followed as for Table 3.5, i.e. 70% of these cargoes were allocated to the Grain Coast and 30% to the Gold Coast category. For explanation see the remarks accompanying Table 3.5.

Finally, I will say a few words about the sex distribution among Africans brought to Suriname. The ratio of males to females among African imports was roughly 6 to 4. This means that the Dutch, in contrast to most other slave trading nations, almost succeeded in arriving at the 2-to-1 sex ratio among their slave cargoes which was considered 'ideal'. The low proportion of women among Suriname imports may well be one of the causes for the relatively low percentage of black children that were present in Suriname during the first one hundred years (see Section 3.3.3.2).

3.3.2.4 *Europeans*

In contrast to the immigration of blacks, very little is known about the immigration of whites. The information that is available is largely limited to estimates of the numbers of the different groups of immigrants; information on other variables, such as sex and age, is usually lacking. Since the pre-1667 immigration of English and Sephardic Jews was already discussed in Section 2.3, it will only be summarized here. At least four to five hundred English must have come to Suriname in that period, coming not only from Barbados but from St Kitts, Nevis and Montserrat as well (Rens 1953: 14). As to their ultimate origin, many of them appear to have derived from the south of England, in particular the area around London (Smith 1987). While it is not clear how many of these immigrants were indentured labourers, there can be no doubt that a fair number of them belonged to that category. Since by far most indentured labourers in that period were Irish, this must also have been the case for Suriname. This means that at least part of them were native speakers of Gaelic, not English. In other words, for them, just as for the African slaves, interethnic communication on the plantations involved the use of English as a second, not a first, language. This is especially relevant in view of the fact that these servants, who were the group closest to the African slaves in terms of social distance, played an important role in the formation of Sranan.

The number of Sephardic Jews who came to Suriname in the 1665–1667 period is estimated at some 200 at most. Part of them came from Pernambuco while others came directly from Europe; ultimately they all derived from the Iberian Peninsula, of course, with Portuguese and Spanish as their primary languages. In the last quarter of the 17th century they were complemented by Ashkenazic Jews coming from or via Amsterdam but ultimately deriving from Eastern and Central Europe. Although no information about their language(s) is available, it is reasonable to assume that Yiddish and German would have been part of their linguistic repertoire. This is relevant since there has been a continuous presence of German, especially Low-German, in Suriname from early on (see below).

As regards immigration in the post-1667 period, information is largely restricted to those who were involved in military activities, i.e. sailors and soldiers. Of the 735 men in the fleet that took Suriname in February 1667, only 125 stayed behind upon its departure in April of that year. Suriname's 'reconquest' in 1668 brought another 450 men in 1668; it is not clear how many of them stayed behind. Other groups of soldiers who came to Suriname in 1680 (152 men) and 1683 (611 men) only stayed for a limited period of time (Schaafsma 1966). Generally speaking, however, soldiers tended not to return to Europe, as noted by Postma on the basis of archival evidence (Postma 2003: 320). In spite of the limited duration of their residence, these groups may still have played a linguistically relevant role because they formed a significant part – between a quarter and a third – of the overall European population of the colony. In addition to that, some sailors and soldiers stayed in Suriname after the expiration of their contract, of them, trying to make a living in the colony, for example, as a white overseer. As to the origin of these sailors and soldiers, it is important to know that in this period Dutch ships as well as Dutch armies contained large numbers of foreigners (around 50%), a majority of whom were from areas where Low-German was spoken (Van der Sijs 2004: 50). Since 17th-century Low-German was more or less mutually understandable with Dutch, one might surmise that this had some influence on the Dutch spoken in Suriname, e.g. in the form of koinéization. Whether such influence can still be detected in modern Surinamese Dutch is unclear.

Another group among the Dutch immigrants about whom we have a little information are the people who were brought to Suriname as *servanten* (comparable to the indentured labourers in the English colonies). Between 1685 and 1691, a group of 177 Dutch orphans was brought to Suriname, but this experiment was never repeated (Van der Linde 1966: 56). Forced labour was also used to some extent, but it seems that generally speaking Dutch attempts to use indentured labour were unsuccessful (Van der Linde 1966: 52ff, 82).

3.3.3 Factors related to population

While the previous section dealt with *immigration*, we will now turn our attention to the demographics of the *population* of Suriname at different points in time. It is important to discuss these topics separately because, although the two are obviously related, they may certainly not be equated. For example, the ethnic composition of the African population at a certain point in time *t* is by no means necessarily identical to that of the immigration during a certain period *p* preceding *t*, if only because there was already an African population present at the beginning of *p*. At the same time, distinguishing the two systematically is somewhat artificial because

they are so closely related, for example in cases where we do have immigration data but no population data. In those cases, we will have to use the former to fill in gaps regarding the latter. I will begin by discussing developments in the ethnic composition of the overall population in terms of African versus European descent. Then, what little evidence is available about the national and regional origins of the European population will be presented. Finally, the rate of nativization of the black population, i.e. the rate at which the proportion between the locally-born and the African-born changed in favor of the former, will be discussed.

3.3.3.1 *Africans and Europeans*

Apart from enlarging enormously our knowledge of the African immigration into Suriname, Postma (1990) has also added substantially to what we know about the development of Suriname's population, both of its black and white segments. Postma's data, covering the years 1684–1754, are nicely supplemented by Van Stipriaan (1993), who presents figures for the 1752–1862 period. Taken together they cover the entire period of slavery except the first quarter of a century (1651–1684). While most figures predating Postma (1990) are based on estimates and extrapolations rather than hard data, these two authors have based their calculations on archival documents, especially those concerning the payment of so-called 'head taxes',[25] which were 'paid on an annual basis by the free citizens for members of their families, their servants, and their slaves' (Postma, p. 185). Apart from census figures, which are very rare, head tax payment figures from the most specific data about population growth available. Unfortunately, they are not entirely unproblematic. First, new settlers were exempt from these taxes for their first ten years in the colony (Postma, p. 185). Second, these taxes were sometimes evaded by underreporting, i.e. reporting lower numbers of slaves than were actually present (Van Stipriaan, p. 311n). Postma has estimated the deviation due to the former factor at maximally 10%. As to underreporting, Van Stipriaan has calculated the following multiplication factors for three different years: 1.1 (1752), 1.41 (1774), and 1.76 (1795). These figures are based on a comparison of head tax payment figures with a sample of plantation inventories providing full data on numbers of slaves.

It should be noted that, while Van Stipriaan included these multiplication factors in his calculations, Postma did not do so with regard to the 10% deviation percentage. Since multiplication factors for other years are not available, I have chosen to present the figures from both authors in Table 3.10 as they are given by them. In order to make the figures presented by these two authors fully

25. In Van Stipriaan's case only the figures for 1752, 1774 and 1795 are based on head tax data. The remaining figures are based on a diversity of sources, mainly archival documents.

comparable, Postma's figures should be adjusted by adding 10% and by applying a multiplication factor, which, extrapolating from Van Stipriaan's calculations, may be estimated at somewhere between 1.0 and 1.1.

The information provided by Postma and Van Stipriaan was supplemented with data from other sources, especially for the initial period, but these are based on estimates rather than head tax payments. Since the initial period is least documented, figures are given for as many years and from as many sources as could be found, in order to counterbalance potentially deviant estimates. A result of this is that some discrepancies appear, most notably between the figures for the white population in 1666 given by Williamson (1923) and by Voorhoeve & Lichtveld (1975) (500 versus 2,200). Apparently, the latter did not include the large number of deaths caused by the 1665 epidemic (see Chapter 2) in their calculations until 1668. Nevertheless, on the whole the figures for the initial period are sufficiently consistent to be considered reasonably reliable.

Table 3.12 below presents the ethnic composition (in terms of European versus African descent) of Suriname's population between 1651 and 1862. With regard to the category of blacks, we should note that this does not include Maroons. Although it is notoriously difficult to estimate their number, it is still useful to list the most reliable estimates found in the literature:

Table 3.10 Numbers of Maroons (1678–1863)

Year	Number	Source
1678	350–400	Price (1976: 23)
1679	700–800	Price (1976: 23–4)
1702	1,000	Hoogbergen (1992: 39)
1738	6,000	Brana-Shute (1985: 90n41)
1749	3,000	Van der Meiden (1987: 109)
1786	7,000	*Encyclopaedie* (1977: 87)
c1800	6,200	Wolbers (1861: 538–9)
1863	8,000	*Encyclopaedie* (1977: 87)

The numbers of blacks mentioned in the historical sources (which form the basis for the column 'blacks' in Table 3.12) probably also do not include manumitted slaves. These were present from around 1700 onwards but their exact number before the last quarter of the 18th century is very difficult to assess (Beeldsnijder 1991: 7). In any case, their numbers did not exceed a few percent of the entire black population until the end of the 18th century, when their number started to grow rapidly, as can be seen in Table 3.11.

To the extent that the figures for blacks are based on head tax data, these may also include Amerindian slaves. However, although Amerindians were kept as

Table 3.11 Numbers of manumitted slaves (1783–1830)

Year	Number	Source
1783	598	Beeldsnijder (1991: 25)[26]
1787	650	Hoogbergen (1992: 58)
1791	1,760	Hoogbergen (1992: 58)
1812	3,075	Van Lier (1977: 71)
1830	5,041	Van Lier (1977: 71)

slaves until well into the 19th century (Brana-Shute 1989), their numbers always remained very low, so even if they are included in the category of blacks, this cannot have made a big difference. Based on tax data, Van der Meiden (1987: 54), for example, gives a number of 134 Amerindian slaves for 1684. Oudschans Dentz (1949: 13), however, claims there were no less than 500 Amerindian slaves in 1671 (in addition to the 2,500 black slaves), a figure that carries some weight as it is based on a historical document (a letter written by the colonists to the States of Zeeland (*Encyclopaedie* 1914–1917: 613)). Pending evidence to the contrary, I assume the number of 'slaves' or 'blacks' given in historical sources to refer only to black slaves.

Table 3.12 Growth of black and white population in Suriname (1651–1862)

	Blacks	Whites[27]	Direct source	Ultimate source
1652	200	150–200	Williamson 1923: 163	Calendar of State Papers
1653/1654[28]	?	350	Van der Meiden 1987: 18; Rens 1953: 78	Biet 1664
1661	2,000	1,000	Williamson 1923: 163; Van der Meiden 1987: 20	Calendar of State Papers
1663	1,500–2,000	2,000–2,500[29]	Williamson: 164; Rens: 79; Van der Meiden 1987: 20	Calendar of State Papers

(*continued*)

26. Note that the figure of 598 manumitted slaves given for 1738 (instead of 1783) by Van Lier (1977: 71) and Hoogbergen (1992: 58) goes back to a printing error in Van Hogendorp (1801) as convincingly demonstrated by Beeldsnijder (1991: 25–26).

27. It is unclear whether soldiers are included in this category. Soldiers formed a fluctuating, but at times considerable part of the white population. For example, in 1675 the regiment formed one fourth of the entire European population and a hundred years later, in 1773, the 500 soldiers who came to Suriname to suppress the revolt of the Boni maroons likewise formed approximately one fourth of the entire white population.

28. Van der Meiden (1987: 18) takes the date of Biet's visit to Suriname to be January 1653, while Rens (1953: 78) assumes it to be January 1654.

29. This number is based on the fact that the total population for this year is given as ca 4,000, combined with Rens' estimate of the number of slaves as 1,500–2,000.

Table 3.12 (*continued*)

	Blacks	Whites	Direct source	Ultimate source
1665	3,000	1,500[30]	Williamson 1923: 164	Calendar of State Papers
1666	2,400	500[31]	Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 3; Williamson 1923: 164	historical documents & old maps; Byam 1665–667[32]
1667[33]	2,000	?	Rens 1953	??
1668	1,850	1,070	Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 3	historical documents & old maps
1671	2,500	800	Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 3	hist. documents & old maps
1673	3,000	?	Rens 1953: 80	various historical sources
1675	1,800	550–600[34]	Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 3; Mulert 1917: 404–6	letter by Governor Versterre
1679	1,000	460	Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 3	hist. documents & old maps'
1684	3,326[35]	652[36]	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data

30. Note that this only refers to 'men capable of wearing arms' (Williamson,1923: 164). The epithet 'capable of wearing arms' is added frequently, but by no means always, when numbers of whites are mentioned in early sources. This raises the question whether the other figures presented in the column 'Whites' in Table 3.12 only refer to *weerbare mannen* 'able-bodied men' (as they are called in Dutch sources) or to all whites (including women, children and elderly). Due to lack of information, this problem, which is especially relevant to the 1651–1680 period (for which no head tax data are available), cannot be solved here. At the same time, it should be realized that the numbers of white women and children in this period cannot have been very high.

31. The sudden drop from 1,500 to 500 whites was the result of a major epidemic (Williamson 1923: 164).

32. Rather than mentioning specific historical sources, Voorhoeve & Lichtveld (1975: 2) say their figures are based on 'historical documents, both English and Dutch, and…old maps', referring to several 20th-century publications, such as Rens (1953; 1954 [=1982]) and Van Renselaar (1966). Although these works make extensive use of historical works and old maps, these are not specifically mentioned under 'Ultimate source', since it is not exactly clear what their relationship is to the figures presented by Voorhoeve & Lichtveld.

33. This date refers to early 1667, before the take-over by the Dutch late February that year.

34. Approximately half of these were English. According to Mulert (1927), the composition of the white population in 1675 was as follows: 120 English 'families' (either a single or a couple with or without children), 80 of whom were bound to leave the colony later that year; 57 Portuguese Jewish men; and 247 Dutch men, 119 of whom were soldiers. The number of children is not mentioned.

35. This figure differs from that presented by Van der Meiden (1987: 54). For a decomposition of the latter into adult males and females, and children, see Table 2.8.

36. This figure is supported by a letter by Governor Van Sommelsdyk, who mentions 1,200 whites in 1684, including the ca. 600 soldiers who had arrived with him the year before. This figure differs from that presented by Van der Meiden (1987: 54). For a decomposition of the latter into adult males and females, and children, see Table 2.8.

Table 3.12 (*continued*)

	Blacks	Whites	Direct source	Ultimate source
1694	?[37]	?	Oudschans Dentz 1949: 18	'census data'[38]
1695	4,618	379	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1700	8,926	745	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1705	9,763	733	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1710	12,109	845	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1715	11,664	838	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1720	13,604	933	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1725	14,327	947	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1730	18,190	1,085	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1735	22,196	1,266	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1744	25,135	1,217	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1749	c30,000	c1,500	Van der Meiden 1987: 14[39]	estimate by planter S. du Plessis in *Recueil* 1752 (vol.1: 271)
1752	37,835	?	Van Stipriaan 1993: 311	head tax data
1754	33,423	1,441	Postma 1990: 185	head tax data
1774	59,923	?	Van Stipriaan 1993: 311	head tax data
1783	51,096	2,133	Beeldsnijder 1991: 25–6	Van Hogendorp 1801 (based on head tax data)
1787	57,650	5,356	Oudschans Dentz 1949: 32	'census data'
1791	?[40]	?	Oudschans Dentz 1949: 33	'census data'
1795	48,155	?	Van Stipriaan 1993: 311	head tax data
1812	50,725	2,124	Wolbers 1861: 565	census data[41]
1836	46,879	?	Van Stipriaan 1993: 311	head tax data
1854	38,545	?	Van Stipriaan 1993: 311	head tax data
1862	36,484	?	Van Stipriaan 1993: 311	head tax data

37. Oudschans Dentz does not distinguish between blacks and whites but only gives an overall number, 6,423, which he claims is based on 'the first census in Suriname'.

38. I use scare quotes here since Oudschans Dentz does not provide any information as to which 'census' he is referring to here (*cf.* also his figures for 1787 and 1791). The census taken by the English in 1812 is generally recognized to be the first serious census to have taken place in Suriname.

39. According to Van der Meiden (1987: 108), minors are not included in these figures.

40. Oudschans Dentz does not distinguish between blacks and whites but only gives an overall number, 58,120, which he claims is based on a 'census'.

41. This is the first professional census taken in Suriname; according to Wolbers (1861: 565), it was performed 'with utmost care'.

Table 3.13 Composition of the population on 12/31/1684.[42] Source: Van der Meiden (1987: 54)

	Male >12	Female >12	M+F <12	Total
Christians	362	127		
Jews	105	58		
Christians + Jews	467[43]	185	90	742
African slaves	1,842	1,384	618	3,844
Amerindian slaves	39	67	28	134

When compared to the earlier figures given by Price (1976: Fig.1, Table 1, pp. 8/10), some strong discrepancies appear: from 1710 onwards Price's figures for the black population are (much) too high. The reason for this is that Price, referring to Van Lier (1971), calculated his figures by extrapolating from an incorrect figure for 1738, which ultimately goes back to Van Hogendorp (1801: 327). As was convincingly shown by Beeldsnijder (1991: 25–6), '1738' in Van Hogendorp's work must be a typographical error for '1783'. In other words, the number of blacks given by Van Hogendorp (51,694) for 1738 was not reached until almost fifty years later, in 1783.

The consequences of this typographical error are considerable, since it affects virtually all other estimates made by Price. From a linguistic point of view, the most important among these are those relating to birth and death rates, since these immediately affect his estimates of the number of locally-born slaves present at different points in time. It was these figures on which my earlier contention (Arends 1989, 1993a) was based that there were not enough locally-born children on the plantations to enable a bioprogram-like formation of Sranan. As will be shown in more detail in Section 3.3.3.2 below, the new data provided by Postma (1990) demand an adjustment of these figures.

What is especially interesting about these population figures from the perspective of language acquisition is the development of the black-to-white ratio, since this may tell us something about the access Africans had to Europeans as speakers of the 'target language'. A rough calculation of the development of that ratio, based on Table 3.10, is represented in Table 3.14.

Between the beginning of slave importation in the middle of the 17th century and the end of the 18th century, the black-to-white ratio shows a continuous increase, from 1: 1 in 1651 to almost 25: 1 in 1783. After 1783 the ratio remains more

42. This figure does not include the ca 300 soldiers who had come with Van Sommelsdyk in 1683.

43. Based on taxes, therefore reliable according to Van der Meiden.

Table 3.14 Development of black-to-white ratio (1652–1830)

1652	1:1
1661	2:1
1671	3:1
1684	5:1
1700	12:1
1744	20:1
1783	24:1
1830	18:1

or less constant, until 1830, when it drops to 18:1. The dramatic increase of the proportion of blacks to whites between 1651 and 1783 is a result of the increase of the black population, which was not due to natural growth, but to large-scale importation, coupled with an extremely slow growth of the white population during this period. As Table 3.11 shows, blacks' access to white language models deteriorated rapidly from the very beginning of colonization in 1651. The proportion of blacks to whites increased dramatically during the 1670s and, especially, the 1680s, due to the expansion of the colony, in particular the number of sugar plantations. Blacks' access to native speakers of English was reduced even further by the fact that in this same period a significant part of the English and their 'old' (pre-1667) slaves left the colony. Whatever the role of the non-English colonists as language models may have been, it is clear that that role was quickly diminished by the increase of the black-to-white ratio after 1680.

As to the origins of the white population, only very little truly quantitative information is available. More frequent are general remarks concerning the overall composition of the white population in terms of European descent. For example, Wolbers (1861: 171–3), referring to the mid-18th century, writes that 'the white population of Suriname consisted of a mixture of several European nations', including Dutch, French, Germans, and Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews. That this was already so at the beginning of the 18th century (and probably before) appears from Van der Meiden (1987: 74), who bases his claim on archival documents. As regards the quantitative information we do have, it is important to present whatever information is available. Table 3.15, based on the *Register der getrouwde persoonen aan Paramaribo* ('Record of persons married in Paramaribo') for the years 1687–1700, included in the *Generael Kercke Boeck* ('General Church Book') presents the national origins of these people:

Table 3.15 National origins of whites married in Paramaribo between 1687 and 1700. Source: Van der Linde (1966: 58)

National origin	Men	Women	Total
Netherlands	50	73	123
France	27	10	37
Germany	21	5	26
Sweden	3	1	4
Denmark	2	–	2
England	2	2	4
West India and Brazil	1	4	5
North America (New York)	1	–	1
East India (Batavia)	1	-	1
Total	108	95	203

Clearly, this table is not fully representative. Apart from the fact that it is only based on marriage records, it is also restricted both spatially (it only relates to Paramaribo) and temporally (it only covers the 1687–1700 period). In addition to that, it does not include Portuguese Jews, since most of them lived – and married – in their own enclave, Jews' Savannah. In 1684, i.e. only three years prior to the period covered in Table 3.15, Jews formed approximately one third of the total white population (Rens 1953: 79), a situation which continued throughout the next century. By the end of the 18th century, when many Jewish planters had left their plantations and moved to the city, Jews formed more than half of the white population of Paramaribo (excluding soldiers) (Cohen 1991: 80). From a linguistic point of view, it is important to know that at this time most Sephardic Jews still spoke Portuguese as well as Spanish (Cohen 1991: 113).

Despite its incompleteness, Table 2.10 confirms the picture that we find in the historical literature, namely that white 17th-century Suriname was an extremely diverse and multilingual society. Dutch was by no means the only or even the major European language used by whites: throughout the 17th and 18th centuries: the Dutch were never a majority among the white population and Portuguese and French were widely used. Van Stipriaan (1993: 32) notes that in 1737 no less than half of all plantations was in the possession of non-Dutch owners: French (25%[44]), Portuguese (18%), and English/German (7%). Although the exact linguistic consequences of this heterogeneity cannot be easily determined, it seems clear that it favored the use of Sranan as a lingua franca among whites (see Chapter 4 for further information).

44. The high figure for French owners in 1737 may serve to explain a remark made by Anon. (c1740: 80–1), who, talking about 'Negro-English', says that 'on plantations that used to be owned by French many French words are used'.

As to the regional origins of the people of Dutch descent, these are presented in the table below.

Table 3.16 Regional origins of whites of Dutch descent married in Paramaribo between 1687 and 1700

Regional origin	Men	Women	Total
Holland	25	42	67
Zeeland	12	18	30
Utrecht	1	3	4
Gelderland	2	2	4
Overijssel	4	3	7
Friesland	–	1	1
Brabant	1	3	4
Drente	1	–	1
'The Southern Provinces'[45]	4	1	5
Total	50	73	123

Table 3.16 shows that half of the people of Dutch descent came from the province of Holland (roughly the area between Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht), while Zeeland accounted for another sixth. Apart from other factors, this may be related to the fact that as a colony Suriname was very much connected to these two provinces, first to Zeeland (1667–1683), then, after the establishment of the Societeit van Suriname in 1683, to the city of Amsterdam. Although this bias in the regional origins of Dutch inhabitants of Suriname may have had an impact on the formation of Sranan (as well as, of course, Surinamese Dutch), at this moment too little is known to go into this matter any further.

3.3.3.2 *The rate of nativization among the Blacks*

Although, as noted above, the earlier estimates made by Price (1976: 12) on the basis of Postma (1970), can no longer be maintained, it still holds true that the nativization of the black population of Suriname was an extremely slow affair. Van Stipriaan (1993: 341) has calculated, on the basis of sample figures gathered from archival documents, the proportion of African-born slaves to the whole enslaved population as 71% in the third quarter and 52% in the fourth quarter of the 18th century. In other words, more than one hundred years after the first Africans arrived in Suriname, two out of every three slaves living in Suriname had been born in Africa, not in Suriname.

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45. This refers to what is now the Dutch province of Limburg and the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium.

The high degree of Africanness of the slave population throughout the 18th century also becomes evident from data on the 'rate of replacement', i.e. the ratio of the number of slaves imported in a certain period to the number present at the beginning of that period. As shown in Table 3.17 and Figure 3.2, until 1700 the black population, the vast majority of whom had been born in Africa themselves, was continuously being supplemented and outnumbered by new arrivals from Africa. Although this tendency lessened somewhat in the 18th century, until 1750 the black population, more than two thirds of whom were African-born themselves, continued to be supplemented and replaced by huge numbers of new arrivals. In other words, during the entire formation period of Sranan the 'African connection' remained extremely strong, keeping the channel for cultural and linguistic input from Africa wide open.

Note that for one particular decade the immigration-to-population ratio is especially high, indeed astronomical, namely the 1680–1699 decade, when almost 10,000 new slaves were imported while at the beginning of that decade there were only some 1,500 blacks present in the entire colony. In terms of demographic development, the impact of such a change cannot be easily overestimated. To appreciate this, just try to imagine that eight or nine out of every ten people in your society are recent immigrants. In terms of language acquisition this implies that bozals' access to seasoned slaves as target language models became progressively more difficult, to the point of being almost non-existent, during these years.

Table 3.17 Ratio of slave import per decade to slave population present at beginning of decade (1651–1799)

	Number of blacks present in Suriname at beginning of decade[46]	**Number of immigrated blacks per decade**[47]	**Proportion of immigration to population**
1651–59	–	200	n.a.
1660–69	2,000	2,800	1.4:1
1670–79	2,000	3,500	1.8:1
1680–89	1,500	9,850	6.6:1
1690–99	6,000	7,345	1.2:1
1700–09	8,926	7,773	0.9:1

46. For those years (1660, 1670, 1680, 1690, 1760, 1770, 1780, 1790) for which no exact figures are available, we have to work with estimates. These estimates are based on the figures for the surrounding years in Table 3.12 and the annual import figures in Postma's Table 2.2 (p. 35). As a result of this, the replacement rates for these years are less exact than those for other years.

47. Figures for the period 1651–1679 are estimates based on Postma's Table 2.2 (p. 35) and my Table 3.4.

Table 3.17 (*continued*)

	Number of blacks present in Suriname at beginning of decade	Number of immigrated blacks per decade	Proportion of immigration to population
1710–19	12,109	7,617	0.6:1
1720–29	13,604	10,538	0.8:1
1730–39	18,190	18,603	1:1
1740–49	23,666	22,734	1:1
1750–59	29,818	26,412	0.9:1
1760–69	45,000	34,443	0.8:1
1770–79	55,000	25,206	0.5:1
1780–89	50,000	4,690	0.1:1
1790–99	50,000	3,943	0.1:1

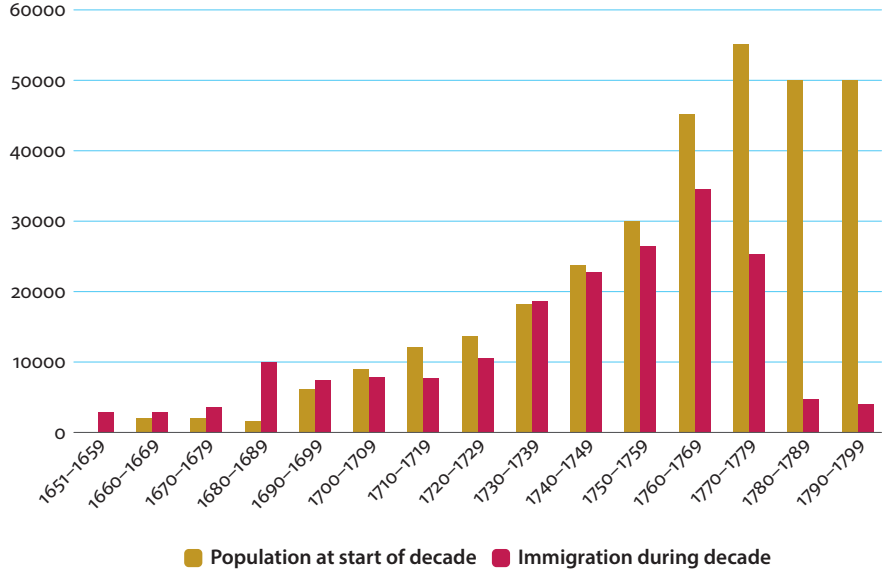

Figure 3.2 Ratio of slave import per decade to slave population present at beginning of decade (1651–1799)

The slow speed of nativization of black Suriname also becomes evident from Oostindie's and Van Stipriaan's (1993: ch. 10) work in this area. Oostindie (1989, p. 99) presents the following figures for the sugar plantation Roosenburg:

Table 3.18 Percentages of locally-born slaves on sugar plantation Roosenburg

1733	27.3
1762	37.1
1768	49.2
1811	58.8

Things were not better on the other plantation studied in detail by Oostindie, Mon Bijou – a coffee plantation: here, as late as 1811, only 56% of all slaves were locally born. The most striking results of Van Stipriaan's research, based on a large number of archival documents covering some 200 plantations, are the following: Death rates exceeded birth rates right until emancipation; in other words, Suriname's black population experienced a negative natural population growth during the entire slavery period (Table 3.15, p. 318; *cf.* also Oostindie 1989, Table 1, p. 132). As late as the end of the 18th century the mortality rate was 40.7 per 1,000 (Table 3.16, p. 323), while the birth rate remained below 20 per 1,000 in the same period (Table 52, p. 332). This means that without continuous massive importation from Africa, Suriname's black population would have been doomed to extinction. As late as 1835, the average age at death for all those plantation slaves who survived past the age of ten, was 37 years, while it was below 30 for the entire black population. It is especially the combination of an extremely high death rate and a low birth rate which caused the nativization of the black population to proceed at a very slow pace. This means that there was a continuous and massive influx of speakers of African languages into Suriname for more than one hundred years after the onset of colonization. The most important linguistic implication of this, of course, is that African languages were in a position to leave their traces in the emerging creoles throughout the entire period during which they were formed.

3.3.3.3 *The creole-to-bozal ratio among slave children on the plantations*

Another important linguistic issue related to the rate of nativization of the black population is the question to what extent the formation of the Suriname creoles was a matter of second rather than first language acquisition. In this connection it is important to have an idea of the proportion between African-born and locally-born children, both among slaves and among Maroons. I will first discuss this issue with regard to the plantations, Unfortunately, no archival data about the place of birth of the black population are available. However, it is possible to estimate the proportion of African-born and locally-born children in an indirect way. This can be done by combining data on the age distribution among the black population at specific points in time (see Table 3.19 below) with data on the age distribution among the

African imports (see Table 3.8 above). It should be noted that although the figures in Table 3.19 are not corrected for tax exemption nor for underreporting, this is not really a problem here since what we are interested in here is the proportion of children on the overall population rather than absolute numbers.

Table 3.19 Age distribution among the black and white population (1684–1830)

	Blacks			Whites			Source
	>12 (n)	<12 (n)	<12 (%)[48]	>12 (n)	<12 (n)	<12 (%)	
1684[49]	3,226	618	16.1	652	90	12.1	Van der Meiden (1987: 54) (head tax data)
1702	7,353	1,193	14.0	?	?	?	Hoogbergen (1992: 304n53) (head tax data)
1705	8,433	1,330	13.6	601	132	18.0	Postma (1990: Table 8.1) (head tax data)
1710	10,372	1,737	14.3	672	173	20.5	id.
1715	9,702	1,962	16.8	671	167	19.9	id.
1720	11,347	2,257	16.6	767	166	17.8	id.
1725	11,945	2,382	16.6	785	162	17.1	id.
1730	15,391	2,799	15.4	909	176	16.2	id.
1735	18,799	3,397	15.3	1,038	228	18.0	id.
1744	20,707	4,428	17.6	1,028	189	15.5	id.
1754	27,533	5,890	17.6	1,275	166	11.7	id.
1830	32,350	16,434	33.7	?	?	?	Oomens (1986: 156) (based on Teenstra 1835, 1842)

48. Unfortunately, my earlier Table 2.6 in Arends (1995a) contains a serious mistake: the figures given there, both for black and white children, represent the percentages of children below twelve as a proportion of the number of persons above twelve rather than as a proportion of the entire population. *Mea culpa*. The good news – at least from my point of view – is that the correct percentages, which are considerably lower than those given in Arends (1995a), strengthen my argument that the percentage of black children was abnormally low.

49. The figures given here for 1684, based on head tax data summarized by Van der Meiden (1987: 54), replace those given in Arends (1995a). These earlier – strikingly deviant – figures were based on head tax data as summarized by Van der Linde (1966: 50). Since Van der Meiden's figures are much more in line with those given for other years, I prefer those over Van der Linde's. I have no explanation as to why the figures presented by these two authors differ so widely (but *cf.* note 38 in Arends 1995a).

The low percentages for black children are confirmed by the figures given by Oostindie (1989), who, in his in-depth study of the sugar plantation Roosenburg, notes that the percentage of black children below 15 was as low as 11% in 1720, only rising to around 25% in the 1760–1800 period, and to 41% in 1852 (Oostindie 1989: 76). These percentages are very low when compared to the figures presented by Singler (1995: Table 5) for Martinique and Haiti: an average of around 15% during the first 65 years in Suriname's existence against 25% and 30% for comparable periods in Haiti and Martinique, respectively. This is undoubtedly related to the fact that the percentages of children as well as women in the trade to Suriname were lower than those in the French trade (see below).

On the basis of Table 3.8 and Table 3.19 the proportion of African-born to locally-born slave children can now be estimated as follows. (The calculation will only be demonstrated for one year, 1702, but the principle works the same for other years.) The number of black children (0–12 years) present in the colony in 1702 is 1,193. Since Amerindian slave children are also included in this number, we have to adjust it slightly, say to 1,100. Projecting the Suriname sample figures for the age distribution among African immigrants (Table 3.8) on the entire Suriname import reveals that between 1693 and 1701 approximately 1,200 African children (3–25 years) were imported. (The 1693–1701 period is the period during which children were imported who were potentially still below the age of thirteen in 1702.) Since almost all children in the 12–15 age span that were imported prior to 1702 were past the age of twelve in 1702, we have to subtract approximately one quarter from the total of 1,200 (assuming even distribution of imported children over the 3–15 age span[50]). This leaves us with a group of approximately 900 children between the ages of three and twelve that arrived in the nine years preceding 1702.

Before we continue, it should be noted that, due to the absence of accurate mortality figures for this period, it is impossible to calculate the exact proportion of African-born to Suriname-born black children. The earliest reliable mortality rates available are from the middle of the nineteenth century: at that time almost 40% of all black children (by then all Suriname-born) died before the age of five. The mortality rate for children between the ages of five and ten was much lower, i.e. 3–4%. (Van Stipriaan 1993: Table 3.19, p. 330). Apparently, the age of five was critical for survival in Suriname. Note that this percentage obtained at a time when for more than fifty years planters had been making serious efforts to improve the living conditions for their slaves – especially since the late 1820s, when the policy of

50. Since it is known that generally-speaking slave traders had a strong preference for adolescents and young adults, my assumption of even distribution across the 3–15 age span is probably not correct. However, since no age-specific figures are available, I am forced to make this assumption. Later on I will apply a correction factor to account for this bias.

so-called *lotsverbetering* (lit. 'improvement in one's fate', i.e. amelioration policy) was initiated. Therefore it would be reasonable to assume that in the 18th century a higher mortality rate, say 50%, among black children obtained (note that this is a very conservative estimate). Departing from this mortality figure we can estimate the number of African-born children in 1702 as follows.

If, as we may assume in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the 900 imported children were evenly divided over the 3–12 age span, then some 300 of them were below the age of six upon arrival in Suriname. If 50% of these died (assuming that African children were subject to the same critical age as locally-born children[51]), then some 150 of them were still alive in 1702. Of the remaining 750, some of those who arrived while past the age of five will have died before 1702. Since mortality at this age was relatively low, let us put this number at 50. Then, we have to subtract from the remaining 700 children all those who had passed the age of twelve by 1702. Again assuming even distribution of the imported children over the age span, we can estimate the proportion of these at approximately 50%, i.e. 350 children. This leaves us with a total of 350 African-born children on a total of 1,100 black children. In other words, approximately one out of every three black children present in Suriname in 1702 had been born in Africa. This does not necessarily mean that this proportion obtained throughout Suriname, since the situation on the plantations was different from that in Paramaribo. Since locally-born children were preferred as domestic slaves in the city while new imports were immediately sent to the plantations, the ratio of locally-born to African-born children on the plantations must have been lower than 2-to-1. However, as noted above, my assumption of even distribution across the 3–12 age span among imports is probably not correct. If we let these two factors cancel each other out, we arrive at a proportion of locally-born to African-born children on the plantations as 2-to-1.

It is not surprising that applying the same method to later years (1730, 1754) yields higher creole-to-bozal ratios among children (in the range of 5-to-1), simply because, however slowly, the process of nativization of the black population still continued. Still, the conclusion to be drawn from these figures is that, as far as the role of children in creole formation is concerned, this was clearly not a matter of

51. This, of course, is open to doubt: it is possible that the critical age for survival should be stated in terms of years since arrival rather than birth. In that case, the African children surviving past the age of five should be estimated at a lower number. In addition, differential mortality rates between African-born and locally-born children may have played a role as well. But note that, although in general (i.e. across the Caribbean) mortality rates for African-born seem to have been higher than for locally-born, Van Stipriaan (1993: 325) suggests that Suriname may have been an exception to that rule. For the purpose of this chapter I assume critical age and mortality rates to be equal for African-born and locally-born children.

first language acquisition only. Every African child between ages three and twelve arrived in Suriname with knowledge of one or more West African language(s). Since all black children on the plantations, whether they had been born in Africa or Suriname, (as well as, if present, the white children, for that matter) were taken care of by a *creole mama*,[52] they grew up in close contact with each other. This means that there were ample opportunities for Suriname-born and African-born children to influence each other in their language acquisition processes, although in exactly what ways is impossible to say.

3.3.3.4 *The creole-to-bozal ratio among Maroons*

Although no historical documents are known that contain figures on the proportion between the African-born and locally-born segments of the Saramaka population in the 18th century, there is sufficient information available on the basis of which this proportion can be estimated. Due to limitations in the data, these calculations are subject to two restrictions: first, they can be made for two years only, 1702 and 1749; second, they apply to the *entire* Maroon population, which from ca. 1730 onwards includes not only the Saramaka but the Ndyuka as well, whose formation began around that time (Hoogbergen 1990: 73). Since by 1749 the proportion of locally-born among the latter most likely was lower than it was among the Saramaka (due to the fact that their formation began almost 50 years after the Saramaka), the incorporation of the Ndyuka in these calculations has a negative effect on my calculation of the proportion of locally-born. In other words, the proportion of locally-born among the Saramaka was probably higher than appears from the calculations below.

As noted by Hoogbergen (1990: 71), '[b]ased on information received from the plantations, the authorities in the districts – the so-called *burgher-kapiteins* – held a record of all '-awayaway' or 'returned' slaves.'[53] On the basis of these records, Hoogbergen estimates the number of runaways per year at 0.5% of the entire Surinamese black population in that year. However, only one third of these (i.e. 0.17%) stayed away from the plantations permanently. The fact that reliable figures (based on head tax records[54]) of the black population for the 1702–1749 period are available (see Table 3.10 above), makes it possible to calculate the numbers of permanent runaways in this period by projecting the 0.17% figure on these figures:

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52. The name refers to the fact that most of these children were 'creoles', i.e. born in Suriname.

53. *Burgher-kapitein* (lit. 'civilian captain') was the highest rank in a *burgher militia* (lit. 'civil militia').

54. Due to underreporting, these figures should be raised by approximately 10% (Arends 1995a: 257–58).

Table 3.20 Estimated numbers of permanent run-away slaves (1702–1749)

	Number of blacks at beginning of period	Estimated number of permanent run-away slaves per period
1702–09	9,345[55]	127
1710–19	12,109	214
1720–29	13,604	265
1730–39	18,190	361
1740–49	23,666[56]	402
Total		1,369

Addition of 10% (because of underreporting) yields a total number of around 1,500 permanent runaways for the entire 1702–1749 period.

A reliable estimate of the proportion of locally-born among the Maroon population in 1749 is possible if, in addition to the 'immigration' figures in Table 3.17, we have at our disposal population figures for the 1702–1749 period. These figures are provided by Hoogbergen, a leading scholar in Suriname Maroon history, who estimates the number of Maroons present in Suriname in 1702 and 1749 at 1,000–1500 and 6,000, respectively (Hoogbergen 1990: 73,75). Since the same author, in a later publication (Hoogbergen 1992: 39), gives 1,000 as the number of Maroons in 1702, I will proceed from that figure.[57] By combining population figures and immigration figures, the number of locally-born Maroons in 1749 may be estimated at some 4,500, i.e. 3/4 of the Maroon population.[58] This figure is in agreement

55. Since no figure is available for the year 1702, I have taken the mean of the figures for 1700 and 1705.

56. Since no figure is available for the year 1740, I have taken the mean of the figures for 1735 and 1744.

57. Van der Meiden (1987: 109), referring to a letter written by Governor Mauricius in 1750, estimates the total number of Maroons around this time at 3,000 (*cf.* Table 2.5 above). The difference may be explained by the fact that some Maroon areas (especially the Eastern and North Eastern regions, where new Maroon tribes such as the Ndyuka had started to form recently) are included in Hoogbergen's calculation (p. 75) but not in Van der Meiden's (p. 109).

58. This figure is calculated as follows. The difference between the Maroon population in 1749 (6,000) and in 1702 (1,000) is 5,000. Subtraction from this figure of the 1,500 newcomers who joined the Maroon groups in this period yields 3,500. However, part of these newcomers were not alive anymore in 1749, say one third, i.e. 500. Part of the original population of 1,000, almost all of whom were African-born (Price 1976: 32), was not alive anymore in 1749 either, say half, i.e. 500. Therefore, we have to raise the number of 3,500 locally-born with an extra 1,000, yielding 4,500 locally-born. This means that roughly three quarter (4,500 out of 6,000) of the Maroon population in 1749 had been born in Suriname.

with Price's (1976: 34) estimate that around 1770, i.e. 20 years later, 'about 99% of the Saramaka population would have been Suriname-born.'

Comparing these figures with those for the plantations shows an enormous difference.

On the basis of Van Stipriaan's (1993: 341) calculations, based on plantation records for a sample of 5,555 slaves, the percentage of locally-born slaves in 1749 can be estimated at a maximum of 25%.[59] This means that by 1750 the nativization among Maroons had progressed at least three times as far as it had among slaves. The fact that the nativization rates of the two populations among whom two creoles emerged – Saramaccan and Sranan – differ so markedly, shows that the formative processes that produced them differed in certain respects, in particular the fact that first language acquisition played a bigger role and second language acquisition a smaller role in the case of Saramaccan than of Sranan.

3.4 Summary and conclusion

Before I go on to summarize the major findings of this section, there is one additional conclusion that can be drawn. Relating the figures and estimates presented above to what is the most reliable information regarding the numbers of plantations in Suriname (Wekker 1991[60]), we can calculate the average black population per plantation at different points in time. Starting with an average of around ten slaves per plantation in the 1660s, the number rose to around twenty in the 1670s. Once the expansion phase was well on its way, it jumped to around seventy at the turn of the 18th century, leveling out at 45–60 in the first half of the 18th century. While the average adult black population went up and down throughout this period, the non-adult population remained more or less constant. On average there were between seven and ten black children per plantation, two of whom had been born in Africa. This means that even as late as 1750 for every locally-born

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59. Since the proportion of locally-born slaves was 29% for the 1750–1769 period and 48% for the 1780–1809 period, an estimate of 25% for 1749 seems realistic. The 25% estimate is supported by the fact that Beeldsnijder (1994: 125), based on plantation inventories for a sample of 2,062 slaves, calculates the proportion of locally-born slaves in the 1730–1750 period at 16.2%, a figure which, due to inaccuracies in plantation inventories, was probably higher in reality.

60. Wekker's (1991) figures, based on extensive historical-cartographic research, are the most reliable to date. I adjusted Wekker's figures downward somewhat to correct for the timber estates that are included in his category of 'plantation'. Timber estates were very different from plantations in many respects which are linguistically relevant: only males worked there, there were no children, and the slaves enjoyed a much greater degree of independence.

child acquiring the creole as a first language there were around ten African-born adults – for whom learning the creole was a matter of second language acquisition. Clearly, the formation of Sranan was no less a matter of second as it was of first language acquisition.

Summarizing the main results of this section, it is clear that, with the exception of the early but poorly documented shipments from the Bight of Biafra, almost all slaves that were imported into Suriname during the first 75 years of its existence were shipped from the Slave Coast and from the Loango area. Gold Coast and Grain Coast slaves did not arrive until after the foundations of the Suriname creole languages had been laid. This means that the primary candidates for substrate influence are Kikongo and Gbe. Secondary influence may have been exerted by Kwa languages from the Gold Coast area, such as Twi. Other languages, such as those belonging to the Kru, Mande and Atlantic branches of Niger-Congo, were not represented in Suriname during the formative period of the Suriname creoles. Therefore, the West African substrate in Suriname may be characterized as relatively homogeneous.

It was also shown that the rate of nativization of the slave population was extremely slow: more than one hundred years after colonization still more than 70% of that population was African-born. During the first fifty years of colonization the entire population was outnumbered by new arrivals from Africa every three to five years; during the next fifty years this happened almost every ten years. While there was little vertical (generational) continuity within the black population itself, due to high death rates and low birth rates, there was an enormous amount of horizontal continuity in terms of an ongoing stream of cultural and linguistic input from Africa, which lasted until the last quarter of the 18th century. This means that creole formation in Suriname was to a large degree a matter of second rather than first language acquisition. Since the substrate was relatively homogeneous, this also means that there was ample opportunity for the substrate languages to leave their imprint on the emerging creoles.