

Early developments (1667–c1800)

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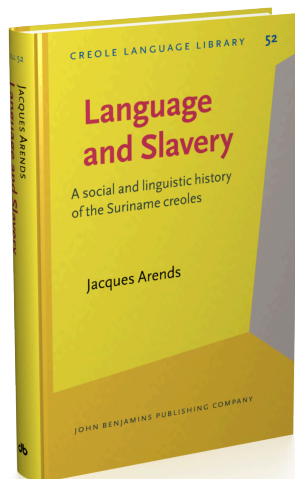
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Early developments (1667–c1800)

Now that we have sketched the historical setting in which the formation of the Suriname creoles took place, it is time to take a look at some linguistic data. While more elaborate textual data will be discussed in more detail elsewhere, we will restrict ourselves here to a presentation of the earliest – i.e. pre-1800 – texts that have come down to us. Although it is difficult to decide precisely at which point in time Suriname Plantation Creole started to diverge into the separate (groups of) creoles, we have split up the discussion in separate sections dealing with Sranan (5.1), Saramaccan (5.2), and the other Creoles (5.3). Due to the large number of early sources for Sranan, Section 5.1 is further divided into five subsections: miscellaneous sources (1667–1763) (5.1.1), Herlein (1718) and Nepveu (1770) (5.1.2), Van Dyk (c1765) (5.1.3), and Stedman (1790) (5.1.5). Section 5.1.4 is devoted to an evaluation of the question of which features in the Herlein fragment may be interpreted as being characteristic of pidginization rather than creolization. The texts themselves, along with a number of other, post-1800 textual sources, are reproduced in Chapter 7.

5.1 Sranan

5.1.1 Miscellaneous early sources (1667–1763)

Part of the data that will be discussed in this section belong to the very oldest texts that are known for Sranan – or rather Suriname Plantation Creole (SPC), the more appropriate term for the earlier stages of Sranan. In some cases they do not really deserve the name ‘text’, as they consist mostly of isolated words and phrases. Nevertheless, because of the light they may shed on the earlier stages of creole formation, it seems worthwhile to discuss them in some detail. Unfortunately, some of the very earliest sources on Suriname, such as Van Berkel (1695), do not contain any information whatsoever to enlighten us on the situation with regard to SPC in the late 17th century. This is especially unfortunate in this case, as Van Berkel worked as a plantation overseer in Suriname for almost a decade (1680–1689). Another early source which is sorely missed here, is Andreas Mauricius’ (c1740) Sranan translation of the *Vraagjes van Borstius* (a version of the Heidelberg

Catechism). Despite considerable efforts, we have not been able to locate this item, which is mentioned in Voorhoeve & Donicie's (1963) bibliography of Sranan and Saramaccan. If it could be found, this text – the earliest substantial source after Herlein – could enhance our knowledge of early Sranan considerably.

Warren 1667. George Warren, the author of *An Impartial Description of Surinam* (1667), claims to have spent three years in the colony (Van Donselaar 1993: 87). Although his work does not contain any words which can be regarded as true Suriname Plantation Creole, it is included here because some of the 17th-century English words used by Warren were incorporated later – in a restructured form – in the Sranan lexicon.

(1)	Warren 1667	Modern Sranan	Meaning
	<i>yawes</i>	<i>yasi</i>	framboesia (a disease)
	<i>muskeeta</i>	<i>maskita</i>	mosquito
	<i>quotto</i>	<i>kwata</i>	spider monkey

Behn 1688. In her novel *Oroonoko, or the royal slave* (1688), set in early plantation Suriname, Aphra Behn uses a few words that may be construed as representing early SPC, even though they are found in a number of other creoles as well:¹

(2)	Behn 1688	Modern Sranan	Meaning
	<i>backearary</i>	<i>bakra</i>	White (person)
	<i>pickaninnie</i>	<i>pikin</i>	child

Hermann 1689. In the *Herbarium Hermann*, which contains a number of names for Surinamese plants, we find one early SPC word (for further information, see Van Donselaar 1996):

(3)	Hermann 1689	Modern Sranan	Meaning
	<i>tassi</i>	<i>tasi</i>	palm species

Merian 1699–1701. Unfortunately, Maria Sibylla Merian's splendid *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* (1705) – her illustrated book on Suriname entomology and botany, based on her fieldwork in Suriname between 1699 and 1701 – contains no information at all on early SPC. That does not mean, however, that she did not make any observations on the language at all. During her stay in Suriname she continued making notes in her *Studienbuch* 'book of studies', which was published in 1976 under the title *Schmetterlinge, Käfer und andere Insekten: Leningrader Studienbuch*. On page 353, Merian writes of a particular worm which is roasted

1. The question whether or not Aphra Behn ever visited Suriname has not been definitively settled (cf. Wekker 1991).

and eaten by the slaves. She then says that a certain beetle is called ‘the mother of this worm’. Although, unfortunately, she does not mention the SPC equivalent of this expression, this remark is interesting in that it suggests that the use of the word *mama* ‘mother’ in expressions such as *mama ston* ‘big rock’ lit. ‘mother (of) stone’ and *mama alen* ‘heavy shower’ lit. ‘mother (of) rain’ may go back to the very early stages of SPC.

Although the *Studienbuch* does not tell us anything about the structure of early SPC, it does contain a number of interesting words, especially relating to flora, which are relevant to the historical development of the lexicon of the Suriname creoles. Some of these are listed below.

(4) Merian 1699–1701	Modern Sranan	Meaning
<i>patates/batates</i>	<i>patata</i>	potato
<i>Annenaß</i>	<i>nanasi</i>	pine-apple
<i>bacove</i>	<i>bakba</i>	banana
<i>babbande/bananne</i>	<i>bana</i>	cooking banana (plantain)
<i>kasafa</i>	<i>kasaba</i>	cassava
<i>bumbelmus/bambelmuß</i>	<i>pompelmusu</i>	grapefruit
<i>Cattun</i>	<i>katun</i>	cotton
<i>Markes Jaas/Marquisjaas/Markessaas</i>	<i>markusa</i>	passion flower
<i>blantagy</i>	<i>pranasi</i>	plantation
<i>Banillie</i>	<i>baniri</i>	vanilla
<i>Suer Sack/Suersack/Zürzack/ZuurZak</i>	<i>sunsaka</i>	soursop

Some of these words, such as *Annenaß* and *Suersack*, should perhaps be seen as late-17th-century Dutch rather than early SPC, just as the words in Warren (1667) may be viewed as 17th-century English rather than SPC. Other words, however, such as *blantagy* and *Banillie*, show clear signs of the restructuring that led to their modern forms: *pranasi* and *baniri*. Although proper names have been excluded from this list, it may be interesting to note that Merian refers to Paramaribo as *barimaribo* or *baliminiribo*.² Although the p~b alternation in words such as *batates* (cf. Eng. *potato*), *bumbelmus* (cf. Du. *pompelmoes*), and *blantagy* (cf. Eng. *plantation*; Du. *plantage*) may be a relic of Merian’s original Frankfurt dialect (Norval Smith, pers. comm.), it is also – though rarely – found in some other sources.

2. In the latter case, perhaps the plantation Palmeniribo rather than Paramaribo is meant (cf. the form *Palmeribo* used for the latter in a court record from 1707 (Van den Berg 2000: 98).

Court records 1702–1725.

- (5) a. W.: *Mingo, joù no man* (CR 1.05.04.01, no 234, f272 v°; 1707)
 b. M.: *Mi man*
 c. W.: *joù go dan*

Morpheme gloss:

- (6) a'. W.: Mingo, you NEG man
 b'. M.: I man
 c'. W.: you go then

Free translation:

- (7) a". W.: 'Mingo, you don't have the nerve' (i.e. to complain to the manager)
 b". M.: 'I do'
 c". W.: 'Then, go'

The other two sentences from 1707 are the following:

- (8) *nù wanti dat* (CR 1.05.04.01, no 234, f268 v°; 1707)
 now want that
 'I want it **now**'
- (9) *jou no meester ovoor mi* (CR 1.05.04.01, no 234, f268 v°; 1707)
 you NEG master for me
 'you are not my master'

The presence of early Sranan material in Court Records was first noticed by the historian Ruud Beeldsnijder (pers. comm.), who drew my attention to the following sentences:

- (10) *Mi no sabi hoe ple alle dem santi kom oppó.* (PCZ no 798,
 I not know which place all the thing come from 5 May 1745)
 'I don't know where all those things come from'³
- (11) *Jae, Mie pothi hem na wan Sij caba.* (PCZ no 798, 13 May 1745)
 Yes I put him on one side already
 'Yes, I put him on one side already'
- (12) *Santi dissi gro na boom tapo.* (PCZ no 798, 28 May 1745)
 Things that grow on tree top
 'Things that grow on trees'

3. All translations are mine unless indicated otherwise.

- (13) *Mie Miesje kiele mie.* (Minutes Hof van Politie no 411, 25 February 1747)
 My mistress kill me
 ‘My mistress will kill me’

Even if the transcription may not always be 100% verbatim, there are clear indications that the data at least reflect natural speech as used by Blacks. For example, the word *kaba* rather than *arede* is used consistently to express the notion of ‘already’, as in (14):

- (14) *mi doe langa hem caba* (CR 1.05.10.02, 798, f–v^o; 1745)
 I do with him already
 ‘I’m finished with him already’

In his Sranan dictionary, Schumann (1783: 50) comments on the use of *arede* with the remark *da Bakkratongo* ‘that is “White Sranan”’; he then proceeds by adding: *Ningre takki “kaba”* ‘Blacks say *kaba*’. Another indication of the authenticity of these records may be found in the repeated use of an insult word such as *you mama pima* ‘your mama’s cunt’. Finally, the occasional use of epenthetic vowels in words such as *bakara* ‘white person’ and *masara* ‘master’ – next to *bakra* and *masra* – may also be indicative of the authenticity of the language, since this type of epenthesis appears to have been typical of Blacks, especially plantation slaves (cf. Focke 1855: xii).

Overt marking of Tense (*ben*), Mood (*zal*, *sal*, *sa*, *saa*, *zoe*) and Aspect (*de*) does not occur in these records until 1745, while the first combination of TMA markers does not turn up until 1757. This is in agreement with Baker’s (1995) finding that combinations of TMA particles appear relatively late in the development of creoles. The earliest combination of markers involves the – quite remarkable – sequence *sa ben*, which occurs in a sentence which is found in three slightly different versions (but invariably with the *sa ben* ordering):

- (15) *evie mi massra ben sendie mie go na Tempatie dan mie sa*
 if my master PAST send me go to Tempati then I FUT
ben soria dem bakara (CR 1.05.10.02, 942, f 260 v^o; 1757)
 PAST show the whites
 ‘If my master had sent me to Tempati, then I would have shown the Whites (something)’

The presence of past tense *ben* in the main clause and the combination of past and future in the subordinate clause suggest that this sentence should be interpreted as a past counterfactual. However, the ordering of the past and future particles found here – *sa ben* rather than *ben sa* – is at variance with the ordering *ben sa* which is the normal one in both early and contemporary Sranan.

The absence of an overt copula in sentences (5a),(5b) and (9) above, all of which date from 1707, is consistent with the fact that zero-copulas were not exceptional in early 18th-century Sranan nominal predicates (see Section 3.2 and Chapter 6). In both of other two nominal predicates from the Court Records, dating from 1761 and 1762, the copula *da* is used:

- (16) *mi da bossiman* (CR 1.05.04.06, 313, f 318 v^o; 1761)
 I am bushnegro
 ‘I am a bushnegro’
- (17) *wie da ningre voor joe* (CR 1.05.10.02, 806, f–v^o; 1762)
 we are slaves for you
 ‘we are your slaves’

The use of *da* in sentences (16) and (17) is in accordance with what we know about the development of the Sranan copula from other early sources, in particular Van Dyk (ca 1765), in which *da* and \emptyset are the copulas used in nominal predicates. This lends further support to the idea that the split of the equative copula into two different forms – *da* for the expression of identity and *de* for the expression of attribution –, attested for the first time in Schumann (1783), does not go back earlier than the 1770s (*cf.* Arends 1986, 1989).

The same copula form – *da* – is found in a presentative function in two sentences from 1759, one of which is given below:

- (18) *da him* (CR 1.05.10.02, 947, f–v^o; 1759)
 it-is him
 ‘it’s him’

Again, this is in agreement with the picture that emerges from other sources, which shows that *da* was used in this context in the 1760s. The presentative use of *da* in early stages as in (17) also lends further support to the claim that the development of *da* – originally a pronoun meaning ‘that’ – into a copula originated in presentative contexts such as this.

As far as adjectival predicates are concerned, only one example occurs in the court records. In accordance with the consistent treatment of predicative adjectives as verbs that is familiar from other sources, no overt copula is used:

- (19) *Argus, mie dede* (CR 1.05.10.02, 947, f–v^o; 1759)
 Argus I dead
 ‘Argus, I’m going to die’

The reliability of this adjectival predicate pattern is confirmed by the occurrence of an almost identical sentence in Stedman’s (1790) *Narrative*, which similarly does not contain an overt copula:

- (20) *Massera, we Dede* (Stedman 1790: 434)
 master we dead
 ‘master, we’re going to die’

Finally, let us look at locative constructions. In all five cases found in the Court Records an overt copula – *de/dee/die* – is present, which, again, is in line with the more general picture of the development of the copula presented in Arends (1989):

- (21) *hoe sambre dee* (CR 1.05.10.02, 798, f–v^o; 1745)
 who is-there
 ‘who’s there?’
- (22) *voevoereman de na hosse dappe* (CR 1.05.10.02, 808, f–v^o; 1763)
 thief is LOC house top
 ‘there’s a thief on the roof’

Further discussion of this and other material from the Court Records will be presented in Van den Berg (to appear).

5.1.2 Herlein (1718) and Nepveu (1770)⁴

Apart from the five court record sentences from 1707 presented above, the Herlein fragment (1718: 212–3), consisting of two dialogues plus some isolated words and phrases, contains the oldest known sentences in any of the Suriname creoles. Because of their special interest, we will discuss them in some detail here. Although the Herlein fragment is accessible in a number of places (e.g. Arends & Perl 1995, where it is discussed in much more detail, along with Nepveu’s corrections of it), it is reproduced in this book (see Chapter 6) because of its key importance for a proper understanding of creole formation in Suriname. Apart from the Sranan specimen, Herlein’s book also contains some isolated Sranan words scattered through the text (see Van Donselaar 1996).

The author of the work containing the Sranan specimen, who is indicated only as ‘J. D. Hl.’ in the book itself, may – with a reasonable degree of certainty – be identified as J. D. Herlein (Lichtveld 1966: 28). In the Dedication of his book (p. 2 v^o), the author says that he was in Suriname ‘during the administration of Governor Van der Veen’. Since Van der Veen’s governorship lasted from 1695 to 1707, we assume Herlein was in the colony for some time during this period. On p. 4 r^o Herlein says that, while he partly investigated and observed the customs he describes himself, he is also indebted to one Cornelis Pietersen Ederssen, a merchant in Paramaribo, and to one Adriaan van Zwol, a plantation manager. As

4. This section is largely based on Arends (1995c).

to the Sranan represented in the fragment, there is reason to assume it represents Sranan as observed by a European (see below). This does not mean, however, that it should be discarded as unreliable; it only means we have to be careful in drawing conclusions from it.

The Sranan fragment is introduced by the author as follows: ‘Tot vermaak van de Lezer zullen we, tot besluit van dit Hooft-Deel, hier iets ter nederstellen aangaande de Spraak der Swarten, zo ze van haar op de Zurinaamsche Kust gesproken werd, dewijl haar eigen Moeder-taal niet te verstaan is. Maar om dat d’*Engelschen* deze Colonie lange tijd hebben bezeten, (gelijk voren gewag gemaakt is,) zo hebben ze dier zelve Spraak meest geleerd; dog om dat’er *Negerze* woorden onder lopen, zo werd het *Neger-Engels* genoemd; gelijk blijkt uit dit na-volgende.’ (Herlein 1718: 121–123). ‘To conclude this chapter and for the entertainment of the readers, we shall present something about the speech of the blacks, as it is spoken by them on the Suriname coast,⁵ because their own native language is incomprehensible. However, since the English owned this colony for a long time (as was mentioned), they have mostly learnt their language; but because there are Negro words in it, it is called Negro English; which appears from the following.’

Ironically, not a single ‘Negro’ – in the sense of African – word (with one exception perhaps: *monbie*) appears in the entire fragment.

The linguistically most interesting remark made by Herlein concerns the slaves’ acquisition of English. His phrasing – ‘they have learned their speech mostly’ – seems to imply that the Blacks had some – perhaps even considerable – knowledge of English. A similar expression is used in a remark by one Jan Reeps, a shipwrecked sailor who ended up in Suriname and stayed in Paramaribo (with Governor Van Scharphuizen) for more than six months (July 1693–February 1694): ‘The English have made a colony here and that language is still spoken mostly by the slaves’ (‘De Engelse hebben hier een colonie gemaectt en wort die tael daer nog meest bij de slaven gesproken’; Van Alphen 1963: 307). Although we have to be careful in interpreting these statements, both remarks seem to imply that, in the perception of these observers, Blacks in Suriname around the turn of the 18th century spoke some form of English. But as the Herlein fragment itself clearly shows, early 18th-century Sranan cannot easily be equated with any variety of Early Modern English, if only because of its pidgin-like features (see Section 3.1.5). Apparently, for these Dutch-speaking observers the language they heard the slaves speak was similar enough to whatever English they knew for them to state that the slaves spoke English. These statements indicate that the English element in Sranan

5. The phrase ‘Suriname Coast’ refers to the part of Suriname where plantations were located.

was clearly recognized by these lay observers. This lends some support to the claim that the formation of Sranan was still in its early stages around 1700.

Of those who have commented on the Herlein fragment, both Schuchardt and Rens have expressed as their opinion that Herlein's Sranan is remarkably close to Modern Sranan. According to Schuchardt, apart from some English-derived words which have become obsolete, 'the similarity with the modern variety is very close, almost peculiar' ('Die Übereinstimmung der Sprache mit der heutigen ist sehr gross, fast befremdend'; Schuchardt 1914: xix). Rens, while noting a number of – particularly lexical – differences from Modern Sranan, thought that 'the most striking feature of the fragment... is the structure of its sentences. In this respect the NE [Negro English, JA] of 1700 is not different from the NE of our days' (Rens 1953: 54). As we will show below, these judgments rest upon a rather superficial analysis of the fragment.

Voorhoeve & Lichtveld, while not explicitly expressing an opinion on the issue of similarity, do seem to be aware that Early Sranan and Modern Sranan cannot be simply equated. This appears from the fact that their Modern Sranan equivalents of Herlein's sentences contain numerous structural as well as lexical differences when compared to the original. Apart from lexical and structural differences, they also point at a pragmatic difference, namely the fact that the author of the fragment was 'not aware of the subtle ways in which Surinamese Creoles show respect in their linguistic behavior' (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 279). This appears from the fact that the dialogues do not obey the rules for the expression of honorifics, such as the avoidance of the 'second and third person singular pronouns to refer to people of higher social position or people with whom one is not on intimate terms'. That such honorific rules did indeed exist in 18th-century Sranan, appears from Schumann's 1783 dictionary:⁶

effi Ningre wanni begi Ningre tranga va tru, dem takki: tangitangi, mi hatt-lobbi, mi bossi ju futu, du mi da plessiri! effi Ningre begi bakkra, dem takki: grangtani vo Massra, effi Massra plis va gi mi datti! (Schumann 1783, s.v. *begi*)

If blacks really request something from another black, they say: *tangitangi, mi hatt-lobbi, mi bossi ju futu, du mi da plessiri!* ['thank you, thank you, my dear beloved, I kiss your feet, do me that favour!', JA]; if blacks request something from a white, they say: *grangtangi vo Massra, effi Massra plis va gi mi datti!* ['many thanks Master, would you please give me that! JA]

The existence of these politeness rules in 18th-century Sranan also appears clearly from several instances in Van Dyk's (c1765) reading drama.

6. In fact, the remark, which is in Sranan rather than in German, should be ascribed to his informant rather than to Schumann himself.

While Schuchardt does not touch upon questions regarding the linguistic status of the fragment, such as its reliability and the language variety represented in it., both Rens and Voorhoeve & Lichtveld do. Rens (1953: 53) interprets the use of Dutch-derived words in cases where the English equivalent has remained current up to now as an indication that Herlein's fragment represents the white, probably Dutch, variety of the language. As shown elsewhere (Arends 1989: 123), however, most of the cases adduced by Rens are not necessarily Dutch-derived. To give just one example, the word *agterdina* 'afternoon' (from Du. *achter* 'back' and Eng. 'dinner'), considered by Rens to be an intrusion from Dutch (as opposed to the 'correct' *bakadina*), proves to be a perfectly acceptable 18th-century Sranan word: it occurs both in Van Dyk (c1765: 90) – as *aitre dinatim* – and in Schumann's dictionary (1783: 84) – as *àttara dina*.

Voorhoeve & Lichtveld feel that, due to the non-obeyance of the rules for polite usage referred to above, the fragment 'must have been constructed or elicited by a European, presumably the author himself...It gives the impression of a European speaking with total disregard for polite creole usage.' They add, however, that 'it is possible that the author elicited the text from a Creole speaker, but in that case he has put the text consciously or unconsciously in a European mouth. It is highly unlikely that a Creole would have used such forms in everyday language. The lack of good manners should rather be attributed to the European author' (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 279).

Both Rens (1953: 54) and Voorhoeve and Lichtveld (1975: 283) have noted the presence of quite a number of English-derived words and phrases, which became obsolete later, such as *windels* 'windows', *à reddi* 'already', *bellewel* 'very well', *han(t)sum* 'pretty', and *wil* 'will', which have been replaced by *fensre*, *kaba*, *heri bun/bun fu tru*, *moy*, and *wani*, respectively. As noted by Voorhoeve and Lichtveld, this may suggest that the fragment represents the language as it was spoken on the 'old' plantations, established by the English along the Commewina River. The idea that Herlein represents an 'English' variety of Sranan is supported by the spelling of some English-derived words, such as the following (in parentheses Nepveu's 1770 spelling is given): *draei* 'dry' (*drei*), *gaeu* 'go' (*go*), *liewy* 'live' (*libi*), *love* 'love' (*lobi*), *bie laeu* 'below' (*bilo*). In all these cases Herlein's spelling seems consistently closer to English pronunciation than Nepveu's. Some other cases of 'English' spelling of words in Herlein are the following (in parentheses the spelling in Schumann 1783 is given⁷): *oudy* 'hello' (*odi*), *som bady* 'person' (*somma*), *kase* 'call(s)' (*kari*). We should keep in mind, however, that an English pronunciation is not the only possible explanation for these features in Herlein's Sranan, since some of the differences between Herlein and Nepveu may have been caused by

7. These words do not occur in Nepveu (1770).

internal phonological developments that took place in the fifty years separating both texts and that were independent from the fact that the influence of English pronunciation had diminished during this period.

Summarizing, it seems – notwithstanding Herlein’s remark that the specimen represents the language of the Blacks – that the variety represented by Herlein is most likely the European – although not heavily Dutch-influenced – variety of Sranan; by the end of the 18th century this variety became known as *bakra tongo* ‘Whites’ Sranan’. This means that, although the fragment probably does not represent black speech and should therefore not be taken as representative of ‘deep creole’, it is perfectly suitable for the purpose of comparison with other texts which also represent *bakra tongo*, such as many of those discussed in this book. We will have to be very careful, however, not to project any findings with regard to this variety onto the *nengre tongo* variety, the language spoken by the Blacks.

Continuing now with Nepveu’s (1770) manuscript, his *Annotations* form one long list of *corrigenda et addenda* to Herlein’s (1718) book. As far as the Sranan fragment is concerned, Nepveu not only presents a number of (what he presents as) corrections to Herlein, but he also lists a number of additional words and phrases. While at least four versions of the manuscript are known to exist, the following is based on the fair copy from 1770, which is located at the Municipal Archives in Amsterdam. The entire manuscript is approximately 400 pages long. The Sranan material takes up nine pages, only one of which is taken up by corrections of Herlein, the other eight containing additional Sranan material. Although Nepveu probably knew Sranan quite well, we assume that the variety represented here is *bakra tongo*, the variety of Sranan spoken by Europeans.

Jan (or Jean) Nepveu (1719–1779), the son of Huguenot parents, came to Suriname at the age of fifteen (*Encyclopedie* 1977: 424). He worked as a public servant, before he became (interim) governor of Suriname in 1768, a post he held until his death in 1779 (Wolbers 1861: 826–827). Although he was not a native speaker of Sranan, he probably learned the language at a relatively early age. Since at the time of writing his *Annotations* he had been living in Suriname for more than thirty years, we may assume that by then he had acquired an adequate competence of the language.⁸ Nepveu’s corrections of Herlein plus a selection of the additional Sranan material is reproduced in Chapter 6.

Since the Sranan sources provided by Herlein and by Nepveu are so closely related, we will take them together in our discussion of some of the linguistic features exhibited in these texts. The following (morpho)syntactic categories will be discussed: the article, the copula, serialization, complementation, and question words.

8. His brother Louis, who had a comparable career, knew Sranan quite well, as appears from the Sranan version of the 1762 Saramaka Peace Treaty (see Section 7.1).

Articles. According to Bruyn (1993b: 10), the question whether an article occurs in 18th-century Sranan ‘is often determined by semantic and pragmatic factors other than definiteness, but to some extent the choice between an overt determiner and a bare noun appears to be unpredictable’. This has to do with the history of both the indefinite article *wan*, which is derived from the numeral *wan* ‘one’, and of the definite article *da*, which is derived from the demonstrative *datti* ‘that’. Traces of these origins – in the form of an emphatic element in *wan* and a deictic element in *da* – are still present in the usage of both words as articles. In other words, rather than to conform to some formal distinction, such as that between specific and non-specific (Bickerton 1981), or between individuated and nonindividuated (Mufwene 1986b), the use of articles in 18th-century Sranan is, at least partially, determined by the historical origin of the elements used to fulfill the article function, and by the fact that the process of grammaticalization was not yet completed. Further, Bruyn says, ‘if there is an article present, its main function is to code indefiniteness or definiteness’. In the light of these observations we will now take a look at the use of overt articles in Herlein and Nepveu. In Herlein the only clear case of an overt article, in this case *wan*, is in (23):⁹

- (23) *Kom bosse mie wantem*¹⁰ (H: 122)
 come kiss me one-time
 ‘Come kiss me then’

The Dutch translation of *wantem*, namely *reis* ‘once’, suggests that *wan* in this expression is used as an article, not as a numeral, since in that case we would expect a translation like *éen reis* ‘one time’. On the other hand, *wantem* may be a fixed expression, which affects the status of *wan* in that its presence or absence may not be determined by any syntactic or semantic principle. The same seems to hold for the reduplicated expression *wan tron wan tron* lit. ‘one time one time’ in Nepveu, which is translated as *nu en dan, enkele malen* ‘now and then, a few times’.

Of the four cases of *wan* in Nepveu, three occur in the pattern ‘*da wan* NP’, as in (24); the fourth is an isolated NP – *wan ollo Paaïj* ‘an old man’:

- (24) *da wan boen soma* (N: 275)
 that a good person
 ‘he’s a fine person’

9. For a discussion of the only other – unclear and possibly corrupted – case of *wan* in Herlein, namely *en* in *No mie ben ben akase ta entre ples à reddi wen* ‘No, I have already asked somebody else if I could visit her’, see Arends 1995c: 24.

10. For the three texts which are the focus of this section, sources are abbreviated as follows: H = Herlein 1718, N = Nepveu 1770, and VD = Van Dyk c1765.

In (24) the sentence is introduced by *da*, the deictic pronoun *cum* introductory copula which later gave rise to the development of the ‘true’ – linking – copula (Arends 1989: 25ff). The usage of the article *wan* in this case may have been promoted by a wish to avoid the ambiguity that would result if it were absent: *da boen soema* could be interpreted as ‘the/that good person’. Also, the article may function to signal singularity, since without it, when interpreted as a copular sentence, (24) could be construed as a plural: ‘they are good people’.

As to the definite articles, *da* (sg.) and *dem* (pl.), these do not occur in Herlein at all. Although the latter neither occurs in Nepveu, it should be noted that no plural environments occur in Nepveu, as opposed to Herlein. Of the two cases of *da* in Nepveu, the one in (25) is a deictic element rather than an article; the example is mentioned here nevertheless, since there are good reasons to believe that the article function of *da* has, through a process of grammaticalization, developed out of a deictic function (Arends 1989: 28). In (26) *da* occurs in the fixed phrase *da tem*, lit. ‘the time’, which in 18th-century Sranan is regularly used to express the conjunction ‘when’ (cf. the many examples in Van Dyk):

- (25) *da tem jou plessie* (N: 274)
 the time you like
 ‘Whenever you wish’
- (26) *datem* (N: 280)
 it=is-time/that-time
 ‘it’s time / that time’

In all other cases where *da* might be expected from the point of view of Modern Sranan, there is no article present.

As shown by Bruyn (1993b: 10), the absence of the article in 18th-century Sranan is not ‘clearly related with either nonspecificity or nonindividuation’. The (non-)occurrence of an article is often determined by semantic and pragmatic factors, such as the fact that a noun may have a unique reference by itself, such as ‘the sun’, or the referring function may be performed by some other element, such as a modifying phrase or word, e.g. ‘the name of your master’, or knowledge of the world may imply definiteness, e.g. inalienably possessed nouns, such as body-part words. Other cases where zero-articles are preferred are certain fixed verb-noun combinations, mass nouns, and nouns that are neutral with respect to definiteness and number. As observed by Kramp (1983: 38–41) with regard to Schumann’s 1783 dictionary, an additional environment that favors zero-articles is when a noun follows the general preposition *na*. This pattern, which is still active today – albeit with vowel lengthening on the /a/ – can also be observed in both Herlein and Nepveu: in all five cases in Herlein and all nine cases in Nepveu there is no overt article present. Examples are (27) and (28):

- (27) *Oe tem wie wil gaeu na Ø Riba?* (H: 122)
 which time we will go P Ø river
 'When will we go up the river?'
- (28) *ahakisi effi missie sa tan na Ø Hosso* (N: 274)
 she-asks if madam will be P Ø house
 'She asks if you will stay at home'

If we assume that the same process was responsible in the 18th century as today, namely the merging of the preposition *na* and the article *da/na* into *na*, we have to conclude that either the vowel lengthening was not present in the 18th century or it was not recognized by Herlein nor Nepveu.

We will now give some examples for some of the categories distinguished here.

- (29) -Unique reference:
Ø Zon komotte
Ø sun comes-out
 'The sun rises'
- (30) -Referent determined by modifier:
Oe fasse Ø nam vor joe Mastre?
 which fashion Ø name of your master
 'What's your master's name?'
- (31) Inalienably possessed noun:
tappoe Ø moffo
 close Ø mouth
 'Be quiet'
- (32) Fixed verb-noun combination:
ghi Ø pasi
 give Ø way
 'Make some room'

Finally, while the basic parameter in the late-18th-century Sranan article system seems to be (in)definiteness, rather than (non-)specificity or (non-)individuation (Bruyn 1993b), there are some cases in the Herlein/Nepveu sample where the absence of the article seems to signal the nonspecificity or nonindividuation of the noun. According to Bickerton (1981: 56), non-specific nouns, including those for which the specificity is unknown or irrelevant, in creoles receive no article. In Mufwene (1986b) it is (non-)individuation rather than (non-)specificity, which is held responsible for the absence or presence of the article: nonindividuated nouns receive no article. Although the categories of (non-)specificity and (non-)individuation are certainly not identical, they are collapsed here so as to include all NPs which belong to either category. Both Herlein and Nepveu

categorically use zero-articles with NPs, both singular and plural, that are non-specific and/or non-individuated. Some examples are given below:

- (33) *Tappe* Ø *windels* (H: 123)
 close Ø windows
 ‘Close the windows’

Note that Nepveu similarly has a zero-article in his correction of (34), in which *windels* is replaced by *fenstre* (< Du. *venster*):

- (34) *tappe* Ø *fenstre* (N: 275)
 close Ø windows
 ‘Close the windows’

Summarizing, it seems that both Herlein and Nepveu tend to use what might be called a ‘minimal’ strategy in their use of articles, aimed at maximum reduction of redundancy. This strategy says: only use an article with a noun when it is absolutely necessary, either to determine the referent, its number or (in)definiteness, or to avoid ambiguity, and when this function is not performed by any other means. These other means may be either linguistic, such as in the case of modifiers, or non-linguistic, as in the case of uniquely referring nouns, where knowledge of the world determines reference.

Copulas. Our discussion of the copula is divided according to the type of predicate in which it occurs: presentative, adjectival, nominal, or locative. Looking at the overall Herlein/Nepveu sample and ignoring one or two unclear cases for the moment, we see the following pattern: Herlein has only zero-copulas; Nepveu has *da* as an introductory copula, *de* and Ø as a copula for adjectival predicates, and *de/dea* for locative ‘be’. Unfortunately, nominal predicates – the type which is perhaps most interesting from a diachronic point of view – do not occur in Nepveu, nor do existential and possessive sentences involving ‘be’. Although this in itself diminishes the potential use of the Herlein/Nepveu sample for our understanding of the early- and mid-18th-century copula system, the copula still is a good choice for illustrative purposes because the copula has been extensively studied from a diachronic point of view (cf. Arends 1989). This makes it possible to interpret our findings from Herlein and Nepveu in the context of the overall development.

The label ‘presentative’ refers to the use of *da* as a sentence-introducing element, which could be interpreted either as a copula incorporating its subject – ‘(it) is’ – or as a deictic element followed by a zero-copula – ‘that/it (is)’. While ten cases of presentative *da* occur in Nepveu, as in (35) below, there are none in Herlein. This does not mean it did not exist in Herlein’s time: there are simply no environments where presentative *da* could possibly occur in the Herlein fragment.

- (35) *da wan biggi leij* (N: 275)
 that(=is) a big lie
 'that's a big lie'

All adjectival predicates in Herlein have a zero-copula,¹¹ even in cases where an overt copula is required in Modern Sranan, e.g. when the adjective is preceded by a modifier, such as *belle* 'very' or *grande* 'very' (or their modern equivalent:

- (36) *My Ø belle wel* (H: 121)
 I Ø very good
 'I'm very well'

With one exception (to be discussed below), Nepveu has zero-copulas too, also when a past tense is expressed. This means that Nepveu's system of adjectival predication is identical to that of Modern Sranan.

- (37) *aben Ø hansom* (N: 275)
 he/she-TNS Ø beautiful
 'he/she was pretty'

Predicates expressing a physical or mental state, which have zero-copulas in Herlein, are explicitly corrected by Nepveu, as in:

- (38) *mi de boen* (N: 274)
 I am good
 'I am well'

Unfortunately, there is only a single case of a nominal predicate in the entire Herlein/Nepveu sample. In this sentence (41), which is from Herlein, no overt copula is used.¹² The fact that Herlein's sentence is not corrected by Nepveu suggests that also in mid-18th-century Sranan it was not uncommon to have a zero-copulas in this context. This is in line with the earlier finding that zero-copulas in nominal predicates are not unusual in late 18th-century Sranan (Arends 1989: 60):

11. The wording used here does not imply any preference with regard to the question whether predicative adjectives are verbs rather than adjectives (cf. Sebba 1986; Seuren 1986). In other words, the terms 'copula' and 'zero-copula' refer simply to the presence and absence, respectively, of the element *de* in adjectival predicates.

12. Schuchardt (1914: xix), who excludes the possibility that *som bady* is from E. 'somebody', does recognize a copula here: interpreting *ba* as 'brother' and *dy* as *de*, he analyzes the sentence as *oe som ba de Mastre vor joe?*, 'who, brother, is your master?' However, since it is clear that *sma* 'person' developed historically from 'somebody' (and (*o*) *sma* 'who' from 'which somebody'), this interpretation has to be rejected. Cf. also McWhorter (1997: 107) who also sees a copula in *dy*.

- (39) *Oe som bady Ø Mastre vor joe?* (H: 122)
 which person Ø master of you
 ‘Who’s your master?’

While no existential or possessive sentences occur in the Herlein/Nepveu sample, we find a number of locative sentences in Nepveu, all of them involving the locative verb *de/dea*. The form *dea* for *de*, which was demonstrated elsewhere (Arends 1989: 37–38) to be a fusion of *de hija* ‘be here’, is also found in some other 18th-century sources, such as Weygandt (1798: 94).¹³

- (40) *a de nami heddi* (N: 279)
 it is P-my head
 ‘I won’t forget’
- (41) *joedea* (N: 281)
 you-are(=there)
 ‘are you there?’

Summarizing, the copula system in Herlein, like his article system, can be described as ‘minimalist’, aimed at maximum reduction of redundancy. Although this may be a consequence of the fact that, at least to some extent, Sranan was still a pidgin in the early 18th century, (see below; cf. also Arends 1989: 122ff), there are at least two other possibilities. First, it may be a symptom of the foreigner talk character of the English that was used by the Europeans in the early days (cf. Ferguson 1971), or it may be a feature of the interlanguage variety of English, that was used by the blacks in the early days when the ethnic composition of the population still allowed some degree of successful second language acquisition. Of course, all three factors may have played their role.

Serialization. There are no clear cases of serial verb constructions (SVCs) in Herlein and the few unclear cases which could tentatively be interpreted as such all present too many difficulties to be of any real significance (cf. Arends 1995c: 36–37). In Nepveu, however, we do find a few instances of SVCs. Apart from the causative SVC in (42), the only other cases of SVC’s in Nepveu are the directional in (43) and the completive in (44):

- (42) *no mi sendi hakisi, na tara plessi a redi* (N: 274)
 ‘No, I already had someone ask at someone else’s place’

13. Note that, while Nepveu glosses adverbial *dea* as ‘there’, it is glossed as ‘here’ by Schumann (1783 s.v. *dea*); Nepveu’s equivalent for ‘here’ is *hia(so)*. For further details of the development of locative adverbs and verbs in Sranan, cf. Arends (1989: 33–39).

- (43) *wakkago*
walk-go
'go away'
"gaat heen"

(44) *a jam kaba*
he eat finish
'he has eaten'
"hij heeft gegeten"

(N: 277)

(N: 281)

Interestingly, the V + *go* and V + *kaba* SVCs are among the five types of serialization that occur in Van Dyk (see below).

Complementation. Although *fu* – the element used as a complementizer in later stages of Sranan – does occur as a preposition in both Herlein and Nepveu, it is never used as a complementizer in these sources. All of the cases where a complementizer could possibly have been used involve the matrix verbs *wani* 'want to' and *sabi* 'know how to'. In view of the fact that the use of a complementizer with these matrix verbs is optional in later stages (Focke 1855; Schumann 1783), the absence of *fu* in Herlein and Nepveu is not surprising (*cf.* Plag 1993).

Question words. Compared to the relatively undeveloped state of the features discussed until now, the development of the question word system in Herlein is surprisingly advanced. Apart from the word for 'why', all the question words that are found in Herlein have the bi-morphemic WH-Noun pattern (e.g. 'which place' for 'where') that is familiar from many creoles. Table 5.1 below lists all the question words that occur in Herlein and in Nepveu:

Table 5.1 Question words in Herlein 1718 and Nepveu 1770

	Herlein 1718	Nepveu 1770
'how'	<i>oe fasse, oe fasje</i>	<i>hoefasi, hoe fasi, ou fasi, hoefisi</i>
'where'	<i>oe plasje, oe plesse</i>	<i>hoe plesi, hoe sey</i>
'when'	<i>oe tem</i>	<i>hoe tem, oe tem</i>
'who'	<i>oe som bady</i>	–
'why'	<i>ver wate</i>	–
'how many'	–	<i>oe meni</i>

A few remarks may be in order with regard to this table. First, the absence of some question words, such as the equivalents of 'what', 'which', and 'how' (as a degree adverb) is best interpreted as a consequence of the small size of these text samples. Second, the occurrence of *ver wate* in Herlein is the only one ever found in a Sranan text; other 18th-century sources, such as Van Dyk, have variants of

fu san ede ‘for what reason’ or (*oe*) *fa* ‘what way’, ‘how’ for ‘why’. Third, *oemeni* in Nepveu has the literal meaning ‘how many’, i.e. it is not used as a degree adverb in combination with an adjective, as it is in some later sources, such as Schumann (1783). Fourth, only full forms occur: there are no cases where either the question particle is absent or the noun is phonetically reduced, or both. The latter type does occur in late-18th-century Sranan, e.g. in Schumann 1783, who has *hu fa* for *hu fasi* ‘how’, *hu peh* for *hu plesi* ‘where’, *sanni* for *hu sanni* ‘what’, and *somma* for *hu somma* ‘who’ (Bruyn 1993a).

5.1.3 Van Dyk (c1765)

Pieter van Dyk’s language primer, containing word lists, some idiom, twelve dialogues and a 65-page ‘reading drama’ about life on a coffee plantation, is the oldest Sranan text of any substance (112 pages), predating Schumann by at least more than a decade. Although traditionally Magens’ 1770 description of Negerhollands is held to be ‘the first published grammar of any creole language’ (Holm 1988: 18), it is predated by at least one year by Van Dyk’s. While the book itself is undated, we know it must have been published in or before 1769, since in that year it was noticed in a journal entitled *Nieuwe Vaderlandsche Letter-Oefeningen* (Van Trier-Guicherit 1991: 33).¹⁴ It may be interesting to know that Van Dyk’s booklet was known to Stedman, who refers to ‘...this mixt speech/in Which I have even Seen a Printed Grammar’ (Stedman 1790, in Price & Price 1988: 515–16).

With regard to the author, Pieter van Dyk, very little is known. Van Trier-Guicherit (1991: 33), who has done archival research in order to obtain biographical information on Van Dyk, has found that in the 1747–1765 period at least three Pieters van Dyk lived in Suriname, but she adds that the information is too scant to be able to determine whether one of these is the author of the book. She also adds that the name may be a pseudonym. On the title page of the book itself it is said that the work was ‘composed and published after many years of experience’, which suggests that the author lived in the colony for a considerable number of years. If this is true, it would enhance the linguistic value of the text. Lichtveld and Voorhoeve (1980: 243), based on the fact that the white overseer in the drama is depicted with much sympathy as a noble person, wonder whether Van Dyk may himself have worked as a *blanke officier* ‘white overseer’ on a plantation in

14. Note that this is twenty years earlier than Schuchardt’s (1914: xxii) provisional post-1778 dating.

Suriname. In view of the many historically correct sociocultural¹⁵ details in the text this could well be true, something which would enhance considerably the overall reliability¹⁶ of the book as a source of early Sranan.

In addition to bibliological and historical evidence, some linguistic evidence has been put forward in order to locate Van Dyk chronologically vis-à-vis other 18th-century sources, such as Nepveu (1770) and Schumann (1783). Smith (1982: 100), discussing the development of nasal-stop clusters – as in *wanti~wandi* ‘want’ –, has suggested that Van Dyk should be dated after Nepveu. This is based on the fact that Herlein contains only the form with /nt/ – *wantje, wanto* –, Nepveu both forms with /nt/ and with /nd/ – *wanti, wandi* –, and Van Dyk only the form with /nd/¹⁷ – *wandi, wande*. To this may be added that later sources, such as Schumann (1783) and Weygandt (1798), have a simple nasal instead of a nasal-stop cluster – *wani* or spelling variants thereof –, which suggests that Van Dyk is prior to Schumann 1783. It should be noted, however, that differences between sources may be due to dialectal variation as well. It has been suggested by Schuchardt (1914), for example, that Van Dyk represented the more conservative plantation language, while Weygandt reflected the less archaic city variety.¹⁸

15. Compare e.g. the rather detailed descriptions of a *pre* ‘play’, i.e. a slaves’ party, on pages 106–9 and of contemporary funeral rituals on pages 111–2. Compare also scattered references to plantation customs, such as certain physical cruelties as the *Spaansze Bok* (p. 50), the custom to name a new born horse after the slave who first informs the owner of its birth (p. 55), the typically Afro-American way of committing suicide by swallowing the tongue (p. 75), precise indications of the amount of work which is reasonable to demand of a slave (p. 59, 64), remarks concerning the specific character traits of slaves of certain tribal origin (p. 69), and rather detailed remarks concerning climate conditions (p. 80). The accuracy of these sociocultural observations adds to the overall, and thus to the linguistic, reliability of the work.

16. Van Dyk’s book is considered unreliable by Kramp (1983: 6–7), because of its ‘errors’ and inconsistent spelling. It is certainly true that the spelling is inconsistent, but the question is whether that makes the text unreliable. Knowing that even the spelling of the author’s native language – Dutch – was not consistent, let alone standardized, at the time, we may cast some serious doubt on this assertion. As to the ‘errors’ contained in this text, these are unfortunately not illustrated by Kramp. Voorhoeve & Donicie (1963: 31) also doubt the reliability of the book, interpreting the archaic character of the language as a result of ‘Netherlandicization’ and attributing it to the imperfect competence of a city dweller. I believe these judgments are the result of a superficial examination of the text, treating forms that deviate from the standard variety as aberrant. It is one of the purposes of this introduction to show that only a thorough examination and comparison of this book with other early texts can tell us something about its value as a source for early 18th-century Sranan.

17. Apart from *wandi*, Van Dyk also has the variant *wan*, which, being a monosyllabic word, is ‘subject to other phonological factors’ (Smith 1982: 99).

18. As we will see later, Donicie’s (1951: 158; cf. also Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 31) diametrically opposed claim that Van Dyk represents *urban* Sranan, based on the frequent use of reduced epithetic vowels (as in *smoke* instead of *smoko* ‘smoke’), is not viable.

Quite surprisingly, none of these authors mentions the possibility that the differences between Van Dyk and later 18th-century sources could be related to normal diachronic phonological developments. A cursory glance at the development of paragoge in 18th-century Sranan suggests that the distribution of paragogic vowels in Van Dyk fits perfectly in the pattern of change from only reduced vowels in Herlein (1718) via a mixed pattern in Nepveu (1770) to largely full vowels in Schumann (1783). In view of the brief time-interval between Van Dyk (c1765) and Schumann (1783), the most likely explanation for the relatively big difference between the two is that the former, as claimed by Schuchardt, represents the more conservative variety of the language, as it was spoken on distant plantations.

As to the aim and contents of Van Dyk's book, according to the subtitle and the 'Dedication', the book is aimed at merchants doing business with the colony, as well as at plantation owners, directors (owners' representatives at the plantations), carpenters, blacksmiths and others, in order to learn to understand the slaves and be understood by them. The book has a moral goal as well, which is to teach the reader how to become beloved and respected and not to commit inhumane cruelties. But here – something not unusual in Dutch society, especially in those days – merchant and minister walk hand in hand, as appears from the remark immediately following, that such cruelties can only turn good slaves into bad ones, which is to the disadvantage of 'all interested parties'.

The book contains 112 pages, including the title page and the dedication. The actual text consists of a fifteen-page vocabulary (15 pages), containing not only isolated words, but short phrases and some sentences as well, a three-page list of *Gemeene Spreekwyzen* 'Common Idiom', 24 pages of *t'Zaamenspraaken* 'Dialogues', and a 66-page 'reading drama' – a play meant to be read rather than performed. The drama is called *Het leeven en bedryf van een Surinaamsze directeur, met de slaaven, op een koffi-plantatie* 'The life and business of a Suriname plantation manager with his slaves on a coffee plantation'. The book is a language primer, rather than a grammar in the strict sense of the word: it does not give any rules, paradigms and so on; its emphasis is on providing useful words and phrases and on initiating the novice to the socio-cultural context of plantation society. Notwithstanding that, its value as a source of information on early Sranan, as we will see below, cannot easily be overestimated.

5.1.4 Comparing Herlein, Nepveu, and Van Dyk

5.1.4.1 A second look at Herlein's Sranan

Before going on to discuss Van Dyk's text, there is one other aspect of Herlein's text that merits some discussion. Although it would be rash to say that Herlein's Sranan represents a pidgin stage in the development of Sranan, there are some features

in the fragment that could certainly be interpreted that way. At the same time, however, it should be recognized that the distinction between creole and pidgin is not as clear-cut as was once thought. In addition to that – and this is something that is often overlooked – we only have a very limited knowledge of which features are typical for pidgin languages. Nevertheless, we observed that Herlein's Sranan exhibits several features – the absence of copulas, TMA markers, articles, and serial verb constructions – that suggest that at the turn of the 18th-century Sranan still showed several traces of what may have been a pidgin past.

To begin with the copula, in all eight cases of a finite predicative adjective, Herlein does not have an overt copula, including in positions where this would be required in later stages of Sranan. Therefore, it is no coincidence that in some of these cases in Nepveu's corrections the copula *de* is added, as in the following example:

- (45) *Oe fasje jou tem? My bon* (Herlein 1718:280)
 what fashion you are? I 0 good
 'How are you? I'm fine'
- (46) *Oe fasi jou tan? Mi de boen* (Nepveu 1765:280)
 What fashion you are? I am good
 'How are you? I'm fine'

The use of a zero copula by Herlein agrees with Ferguson's observation (1971: 146–147) that in simplified versions – such as pidgins – of languages that have an overt copula – such as English – this copula is often omitted.

Of the modern TMA particles *ben* (Tense), *sa* (Modality), *go* (Tense), and *de* (Aspect), only the first occurs in the Herlein fragment. There is only one attestation of it, in an obscure double form – *ben ben* – in what is an obscure passage anyway. If we leave this doubtful case out of consideration, there is not a single instance of TMA marking to be found in the entire fragment. The expression of future tense is either left implicit – as in (47) – or it is expressed by *wil* – as in (49). Only the former of these is corrected into *sa* by Nepveu – as in (48):

- (47) *Akesi of joe tan an house?* (Herlein 1718:281)
 he-asks if you stay LOC house
 'She asks if you will stay at home'
- (48) *Ahakisi offi missie sa tan na Hosso* (Nepveu 1765:281)
 she-asks if Mrs. TNS stay LOC house
 'She asks if you will stay at home'
- (49) *Oe tem wie wil gaeu na Riba?* (Herlein 1718:281)
 what time we TNS go LOC river
 'When shall we go to the river?'

Although the aspect particle (*d*)*e* is also absent from the fragment, it should be noted that there is only one sentence where it could have occurred (it is not corrected by Nepveu):

- (50) *Oe plesse jo liewy?* (Herlein 1718:281)
 what place you live
 ‘Where do you live?’

On the basis of these limited data, it seems fair to conclude that in Herlein’s days Sranan did not yet have a fully developed TMA system.

Another feature that is reminiscent of what is often found in pidgins is the absence of articles. There is not one article present in the entire fragment, while there are at least two cases where it would be obligatory in modern Sranan:

- (51) *Jo wantje smoke Pipe Tobakke?* (Herlein 1718:280)
 you want smoke pipe tobacco
 ‘Do you want to smoke a pipe?’
- (52) *Oe som bady Mastre vor joe?* (Herlein 171:281)
 what person master of/for you
 ‘Who is your master?’

Finally, there are two cases where Herlein does not use a serial construction – a feature that is not frequently found in pidgins – where this would be used in Modern Sranan. In one of these cases a serial construction is provided by way of correction by Nepveu: Herlein’s use of the single verb *akase* ‘ask’ is changed by Nepveu into the serial *sendi hakisi* lit. ‘send ask’, i.e. ‘have (somebody) ask’. Although the second case is not corrected by Nepveu, it certainly would be cast in the form of a serial construction in modern Sranan:

- (53) *Mie Misisi take joe oudy* (Herlein 1718:280)
 My Mrs. says you hello
 ‘My mistress sends you her greetings’
- (54) *Mi misi taygi¹⁹ yu odi* (Modern Sranan)
 My Mrs. sends say-give you hello
 ‘My mistress sends you her greetings’

In spite of the presence of these pidgin-like features, it should not be forgotten that the Herlein fragment also contains several creole characteristics, such as the use of bimorphemic question words like *oe fasse* ‘what fashion, how’, *oe plesse* ‘what place, where’, and *oe tem* ‘what time, when’. The most reasonable interpretation of

19. Note: *taygi* < *taki gi* lit ‘say give, say to (someone)’.

the facts, therefore, seems to be that Sranan around the turn of the 18th century was in transition from a pre-creole (pidgin?) to a creole stage.

5.1.4.2 *Van Dyk*

The following morphosyntactic categories found in Van Dyk's Sranan will be analyzed in this section: periphrastic constructions (circumlocutions), question words, articles, the copula, clefting, the comparative, and serial verbs. For all these categories the language represented in Van Dyk is compared both with Herlein and Nepveu and with some of the other 18th-century sources, such as Schumann 1783. Occasionally, Stedman 1790²⁰ and Weygandt 1798²¹ will be referred to as well. Sometimes it is useful to take later stages of the language, as represented in Focke 1855, Wullschlägel 1856 and the *Woordenlijst* (Anon. 1980), into account too.

In most of these aspects, Van Dyk's booklet represents a variety of Sranan that on comparative grounds may be characterized as mid-18th-century Sranan, a variety intermediate between the early and late 18th-century varieties represented by Herlein and Schumann, respectively. Although this is not surprising in view of the dating of the book, there are several indications that Van Dyk represents a relatively early stage of Sranan in a deeper sense as well. In at least some respects, such as the use of periphrastic construction as opposed to lexicalised expressions in later sources, Van Dyk's language seems to be only partly creolized, thus constituting an intermediate developmental stage between the somewhat pidgin-like variety of Herlein and the more fully creolized variety of Schumann.

Periphrastic constructions. On pages 10, 11 and 16 of Van Dyk's book a number of references to persons (mostly in terms of their professional occupation) are given, most of which are not designated by simple or complex nouns, but by circumlocutions, as in (55):

- (55) *wan zomma disi nay klossi* (VD: 16)
 a person who sews clothes
 'tailor'

20. For Stedman's Sranan material the primary source is the edition by Price & Price 1988, which is based on the original 1790 manuscript. For a more elaborate discussion of Stedman's Sranan, see Arends (1995d).

21. Since parts of Weygandt 1798 are plagiarized, though in not completely identical form, from Van Dyk (as was first noticed by Schuchardt 1914: XXII), it could be clarifying to make a detailed, point-by-point comparison of both works. (A preliminary study along these lines was made by Del Negro 1993.) Establishing the exact differences between identical structures in both sources may yield detailed insights into the development of Sranan in the second half of the 18th century.

This type of circumlocution, not necessarily restricted to the names of professions, is typical for pidgins, not for creoles, as appears e.g. from Mühlhäusler (1979: 232), who gives examples like the following from Tok Pisin (from the pre-creolization stage):

- (56) *man bilong kamda* (Mühlhäusler 1979: 233)
 man belong carpenter
 ‘carpenter’

The great majority (15/17) of the cases where Van Dyk uses a circumlocution are expressed by lexicalisations in Schumann (1783). The first of the two cases where Schumann optionally uses a circumlocution is ‘blind man’, which is paraphrased as *anno habbe hay* ‘he/she does not have eyes’ by Van Dyk (p. 11), and alternatively as *blindeman* ‘blind man’ or *wan somma nanga hai tappa* ‘somebody with eyes closed’ by Schumann (p. 64). The second case is *da homan habi bile* (Van Dyk, p. 10) ‘the woman has belly’, ‘a pregnant woman’, which is paraphrased as *uman nanga belle* ‘woman with belly’ by Schumann (p. 59).²²

All the other cases of circumlocution in Van Dyk are expressed by nouns both in Schumann and Wullschlägel. Most of the circumlocutions in Van Dyk have the form of an NP containing a relative clause, either with – as in (55) – or without – as in (57) – overt relativizer:

- (57) *kalebassi no broke jeti* (VD: 16)
 calabash not broken yet
 ‘virgin’
 “Een Maagd”

The concept of ‘virgin’ is expressed as *njuwendje/nju-nju-wendje*²³ ‘young girl’, ‘very young girl’ by Schumann (p. 300), and as *njoe-wendje* ‘young girl’ by Wullschlägel (p. 136).

The equivalents in the other sources are *skrifman* ‘write man’ (Schumann, p. 249; Wullschlägel, p. 51) and *klerki* ‘clerk’ (Wullschlägel, *ib.*). Generally speaking,

22. It seems significant that both cases of periphrasis in Schumann do not have the form of a main sentence nor of an NP containing a relative clause, which is the ‘canonical’ form for circumlocutions in Melanesian Pidgin (Mühlhäusler 1979), but rather of an NP containing a PP. Thus, Schumann, who has phrasal periphrasis, forms an intermediate stage between Van Dyk, who has sentential periphrasis, and Wullschlägel, who has no periphrasis at all in these cases.

23. The difference between both forms appears to be a rather subtle one and refers to what the Moravians seem to have perceived as varying degrees of ‘virginness’: a *njuwendje* is a virgin in the technical sense, while a *nju-nju-wendje* is a girl who has never had anything to do with a man, whatsoever.

both Schumann and Wullschlägel have a preference for compounding with *man* 'man' to refer to this type of concept. Cf. *skrifiman* 'write man' (Schumann, p. 249; Wullschlägel, p. 51). The fact that *man* is used to refer to females as well as to males (e.g. *helpiman* lit. 'help-man' for 'midwife', Schumann p. 128) is the result of a grammaticalization process, which made possible the use of *man* as a gender-neutral agentive suffix.

Apart from these circumlocutions there are five cases where Van Dyk uses a noun, either a simple noun, like *dakteren* 'doctor' or a compound, like *koepa man* 'cooper' (lit. 'cooper man'). All of these are also expressed by nouns in Schumann and Wullschlägel. It thus seems that the only productive way of making new nouns to refer to persons, namely by compounding (or suffixing) with *man*, is used only in a limited number of cases in Van Dyk.

[cf. Braun (2001), Braun & Plag (2003), Van den Berg (2003)]

Question words. In a comparative study of question words in pidgin and creole languages, Muysken & Smith (1990:900) conclude that 'question words in eighteenth century Surinam creoles do not support the gradualist view of creolization'. This conclusion is based on their finding that 'from the early eighteenth century on a full-fledged transparent system [of question words, JA] had emerged in Sranan' (ib.). Although this observation is in agreement with our findings discussed above, it should be noted there are several omissions in Muysken & Smith's (p. 898) listing of question words in the 18th-century sources they used (Herlein 1718, Van Dyk c1765, Nepveu 1765 and Schumann 1783), especially with regard to Schumann and Van Dyk. In addition to the forms cited, Schumann also contains *husortu* for adjectival 'which', *hudissi* for 'who', *va husanni heddi* (alongside *va huheddi*) for 'why', and *humenni* for 'how' as a degree adverb with adjectives. Other omissions include the use of *hu* for adjectival 'which' in Van Dyk and Schumann, and of *hu* for 'how' as a degree adverb with adjectives and *hoe tem* for 'when' in Van Dyk.²⁴ In the next table, these additional data are taken into account as well.

If we take these additional data into account, a clear difference emerges between Van Dyk and Schumann: in several cases – 'where', 'who', 'which', 'how' – the latter has two or even three alternatives where Van Dyk has only one. The non-occurrence in Van Dyk of these variants, as opposed to their occurrence in Schumann, may be related to the fact that Van Dyk represents an earlier stage in the development of the language, which, although adequate, did not yet have the possibilities for stylistic variation we find in Schumann (cf. Labov 1990).

24. Incidentally, there is also a singular use of *wat zan* 'what thing' instead of *hoe zan* 'which thing' in Van Dyk (p. 21).

Table 5.2 Question words in 18th-century Sranan

	Herlein 1718	Van Dyk c1765	Nepveu 1770	Schumann 1783
<i>o sei</i> ‘where’	–	–	+	+
<i>(o) sortu</i> ‘which’	–	–	–	+
<i>odi</i> ‘who’/‘which’	–	–	–	+
<i>omeni</i> ‘how’	–	–	–	+
<i>o</i> ‘which’/‘how’	–	+	–	+
<i>(fu) san ede</i> ‘why’	–	+	–	+
<i>(o) san</i> ‘what’	–	+	–	+
<i>(o) fa</i> ‘how’	+	+	+	+
<i>(o) pe</i> ‘where’	+	+	+	+
<i>oten</i> ‘when’	+	+	+	+
<i>(o) sma</i> ‘who’	+	+	+	+
<i>ver wate</i> ‘why’	+	–	?	–

Notes. Because of their inconsistent spellings across and within different sources the question words are represented according to modern orthography. The meaning of ‘how’ for *o* and *omeni* refers to their use as a degree adverb, i.e. in combination with an adjective.

Finally, the occurrence of the form *ver wate* in Herlein might be explained as a symptom of the more heavily English-influenced character of Herlein’s Sranan, which is also present in several other respects (see above). It may be a syncretism of the form *fu san ede* lit. ‘for what head’ which is found from Van Dyk and English ‘what for’. Reflexes of the latter meaning ‘why’ occur in other English-based creoles, such as St Kitts English Creole (Bruyn 1999) and Krio.

Articles. A provisional investigation of a small fragment of Van Dyk’s booklet (pp. 20–26) suggests that articles are obligatorily absent in the environments noted by Kramp (1983: 38–41) for Schumann (1783): inanimate subjects, inanimate objects and complements of the preposition *na/nanga*. Some examples are:

- (58) *nakki na Ø dore* (VD: 20)
 knock P Ø door
 ‘knock on the door’
- (59) *kotti Ø kande* (VD: 20)
 cut Ø candle
 ‘put out the candle’
- (60) *Ø Zon trange* (VD: 22)
 Ø sun strong
 ‘the sun is hot’

It should be noted, however, that many of these cases also fall in one of the environments for zero-articles that were distinguished above for Herlein and Nepveu. Needless to say, much more research is required in this area (see Bruyn 1995a: 80–92 for a fuller account).

The copula. As to the copula, again only the most salient characteristics of the Van Dyk text will be mentioned here. In order to put the Van Dyk data into perspective, they are complemented with our findings from Herlein and Schumann (1783) in the table below:

Table 5.3 The nominal copula in 18th-century Sranan

	Ø	<i>da</i>	<i>de</i>
Herlein 1718	+	–	–
Van Dyk c1765	+	+	–
Schumann 1783	+	+	+

The preference for Ø, together with the infrequent use of *da* and the absence of *de*, in nominal predicates in Van Dyk reflect the fact that this source is chronologically intermediate between Herlein – where the only case of nominal predication has a zero-copula – and Schumann – where we find a more differentiated system. In the latter source, identification (‘John is the man with the hat’) and attribution (‘Mary is a linguist’) are in most cases expressed by two distinct copula forms (*da* and *de*, respectively), while in a minority of cases Ø is used. As to adjectival predication, we find that the Modern Sranan pattern of copula absence in declarative sentences with the adjective directly following the subject was already established at the beginning of the 18th century. However, with regard to the expression of the copula in adjectival predicates where the adjective is preceded by a modifier, such as *nofo* ‘enough’ or *tumusi* ‘very’, Van Dyk seems to be in line with the early-18th-century system (as represented in Herlein), where no copula is expressed, rather than the middle- and late-18th century system (as represented by Schumann), where a copula *de* is obligatory in this environment.

- (61) *Mastra a Ø noefe ogro*
Master it Ø enough bad
‘Master, this is bad enough’

(VD: 48)
- (62) *ju no de so poti*
you not are so poor
‘you’re not in such a bad situation’

(Schumann 1783: 53)

Summarizing, it seems that, although the general rule for copula-selection in adjectival predicates was already present in the early 18th century, the more specific rule for preposed modifiers was in flux until the end of the 18th.

Clefting. With regard to clefting, we can distinguish several sub-types, according to the element being moved to the front of the sentence. Following this classification, we can reconstruct the development of the cleft-construction in the 18th century as presented in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 The development of clefting in Sranan (1718–1798)

	Question wd	Clause	PP	Predicate	Adverbial	NP
Herlein 1718	–	–	–	–	–	–
Nepveu 1770	–	–	–	–	–	–
Van Dyk c1765	–	–	–	–	+	+
Schumann 1783	–	–	–	+	+	+
Weygandt 1798	–	–	+	–	+	+

The two subtypes of clefting that do occur in Van Dyk – with adverbials and NPs –, are only found in a very limited number: only two cases of each were attested in the entire text.

- (63) *da zo hede den no de worke noeŋe*
 is so **head** they not ASP work enough
 ‘that’s why they don’t work hard enough’

- (64) *No da zibi²⁵ fom*
 no is **seven** strike
 ‘no, the clock strikes **seven** [not eight, JA]’

Of the other types of clefting represented in Table 5.4, none occurs in Van Dyk. Clefting of WH-elements does not occur at all (at least in clear cases) in any of the sources spanning the 1718–1950 period analyzed, while clefting of clauses is a late-19th-century development. PP clefting and predicate clefting emerge by the end of the 18th century, in Weygandt 1798 and Schumann 1783, respectively:

- (65) *Dafœ datie hédé joe no kan werie den soesoe* (Weygandt 1798: 115)
 is-for **that head** you not can wear these shoes
 ‘that’s why these shoes don’t fit’

25. Although *zebi* ‘seven’ is a numeral, as the subject of this sentence it seems to function rather as an elliptical NP, *i.e.* ‘seven strokes’.

- (66) *da lei ju lei*
is lie you lie
‘that’s a lie’

(Schumann 1783: 175)

Summarizing, we observe a chronological development in clefting, such that the construction is restricted at first mainly to some fixed expressions (Van Dyk) and becomes more diversified and more productive in the course of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Comparatives. Restricting ourselves to the types of comparative found in Van Dyk (c1765) and Schumann (1783) – the Particle Comparative (with a particle comparable to English ‘than’, i.e. X more Adjective Particle Y) and the Exceed Comparative²⁶ (a serial construction containing a verb ‘to exceed, to surpass’, i.e. X Adjective exceed Y) –, the expression of comparison is as represented below:

Table 5.5 The expression of comparison in Van Dyk (c1765) and Schumann (1783)

	Exceed Comparative	Particle Comparative	
		<i>leki</i>	<i>na</i>
Van Dyk c1765	–	+	–
Schumann 1783	+	+	+

The main types are illustrated below:

- (67) *ju langa morro mi*
you tall exceed me
‘you’re taller than me’

(68) *joe no de morre bon likki na disi manmatim*
you not are more good than P this morning
‘Don’t you feel better than you did this morning?’

(69) *Adam móro lánga na mi*
Adam more tall than me
‘Adam’s taller than me’

(Schumann 1783: 172)

(VD: 42)

(Focke 1855: 86)

While in Van Dyk the expression of comparison is restricted to only one construction – the Particle Comparative –, we find a more differentiated system, with two different possibilities – the Exceed Comparative and the Particle Comparatives, the latter with either *leki* or *na* – in Schumann. Summarizing, it seems clear that in the options available for the expression of comparison Van Dyk represents a

26. The terminology is borrowed from Stassen 1985.

stylistically more restricted language variety when compared to other 18th-century (and later) sources. Apparently, the Sranan of Van Dyk's days had not yet reached a stage of development where it was deemed necessary or functional to have several options for the expression of one and the same semantic content.

Serialization. The following verbs occur in serial verb construction in Van Dyk and Schumann:

Table 5.6 The development of serialization in Sranan (1750–now)

	Van Dyk c 1765	Schumann 1783
<i>seni</i> + V	–	–
V + <i>taki</i>	–	+
V + <i>moro</i>	–	+
<i>poti</i> + V	–	+
<i>sidon</i> + V	–	+
<i>teki</i> + V	–	+
V + <i>gi</i>	+	+
V + <i>kaba</i>	+	+
V + <i>kon</i>	+	+
V + <i>go</i>	+	+
V + <i>poti</i>	+	+

Notes. Because of inconsistencies in spelling, the modern orthography of the verbs in question is used.

The most remarkable aspect of this table is, of course, that Van Dyk is so much poorer in the variety of serial constructions than Schumann. Of the eleven sub-types of serialization which are mentioned for Modern Sranan, only five are attested in Van Dyk, as opposed to ten in Schumann. In addition, there is one sub-type, V + *gi*, which is restricted in the selection of V in Van Dyk, since it is combined only with *taki*. As far as the differentiation of serialization is concerned, the variety represented in Schumann is almost identical to Modern Sranan, whereas in Van Dyk serialization is present as such, but its differentiation into several sub-types has proceeded only partially.

Two conclusions present themselves in relation to the foregoing. The first has to do with the value and reliability of older creole texts and is largely restricted to Van Dyk, since the Nepveu and, especially, Herlein texts are too small to judge their reliability in a well-founded manner; moreover, Herlein, being the oldest source and separated from the others by half a century, cannot be compared with other sources that precede or follow it with a more or less limited time interval. Now, the conclusion with respect to Van Dyk is that the variety of Sranan

contained in it is more systematic than is sometimes assumed for this type of material. Although questions may be asked about exactly what variety of Sranan is represented in the book – whether it may be *bakra tongo* (whites' Sranan) rather than *nengre tongo* (blacks' Sranan) – the fact is that the variety that it represents fits in systematically, in practically all aspects that were investigated, between the varieties that surround it chronologically. This result would be extremely unlikely if Van Dyk's book were an unreliable and linguistically naive rendering of the language. In other words, strong opinions on the alleged unreliability of early creole sources, which are frequently expressed, usually without any empirical support (e.g. Bickerton (1988:281)), will have to be suspended, since they may be refuted by detailed comparisons with other contemporary texts.

Second, the – admittedly somewhat cursory – examination of several aspects of the language represented by Herlein, Nepveu and Van Dyk, shows that numerous developments have taken place during the second fifty years (roughly 1700–1750) after the beginning of slave importation into Suriname in the 1650s. What is especially striking is that in several of these cases, e.g. question words, comparatives, the developments concern the addition of new options for existing syntactic mechanisms rather than the introduction of new syntactic mechanisms *per se*. In other cases, such as serialization, the domain of a syntactic mechanism is expanded so as to include new subtypes. The development of Sranan during this period, then, was not restricted to purely linguistic expansion, but included the introduction of stylistic options as well. What this means for our understanding of creolization, e.g. the question of exactly which developments are part of the creolization process and which developments belong to normal language change, depends on the definition of the essential features of 'creole' and 'creolization'. If variation is not included in the definition, then some of these developments may pose no threat for instantaneous models of creolization. If, however, variation is viewed as an integral or even central element of language (cf. Milroy 1992), then some of the developments described in this introduction may throw a new light on our understanding of creolization, in that variational expansion plays a prominent role in the early development of creole languages.

5.1.5 Stedman

Although it has been claimed that the Sranan represented in Stedman's *Narrative* is not representative of the language as it was used by native speakers (Eersel 1984²⁷), this claim was based – at least implicitly – on a comparison with modern Sranan. Our comparison with 18th-century Sranan will show that Stedman's Sranan is not as idiosyncratic, neither phonologically nor syntactically, as was suggested by Eersel. On the contrary, Stedman's variety may by and large be considered representative of 18th-century Sranan as we know it from sources such as Herlein (1718), Nepveu (1770), Van Dyk (c1765), Weygandt (1798), and Schumann (1783) dictionary.

This does not necessarily imply, however, that all these sources accurately reflect 18th-century Sranan as it was actually spoken by black native speakers, the so-called 'deep Sranan' or *nengre tongo* 'negro language' of the plantations. At least some of them are more likely to represent the variety known as *bakra tongo* 'white man's language', the Sranan spoken by the whites, some of whom spent more time in Paramaribo than on the plantations. On the other hand, at least one source Schumann's (1783) Sranan dictionary – is based on the information provided by one or more native speaker informants and it may therefore be considered a relatively reliable source for the *nengre tongo* variety.

With respect to the language variety reported by Stedman, we should note that most of the sentences he quotes are accompanied by an indication as to *who* actually uttered the sentence in question. Although I am aware that this in itself does not provide an absolute guarantee for the reliability of the material, it does indicate that what Stedman intended to represent was the language of the Blacks, not that of the Whites or some intermediate variety. Compare also, in this connection, Stedman's own remarks with regard to his competence in the language, which he himself considered to be very good.

27. Eersel does not say explicitly on which edition of the *Narrative* his paper is based, but from the fact that he gives 1796 as the year of publication and from the fact that the quotations are all in exactly the same spelling as in the 1796 edition (as edited by Rudolf van Lier (1972)), I conclude that it is based on Van Lier (1972). Since Eersel wrote his paper, a new edition, based on the original manuscript from 1790, has appeared (Price & Price 1988). These authors found that, as a result of heavy editing by a ghost writer, the 1796 edition differs in significant respects from the 1790 manuscript version (see also Arends 1991). However, as far as linguistic information is concerned (apart from orthographic matters), differences are only slight, and will be noted where this is relevant. Therefore, quotations from Stedman in the present paper are all from the 1790/1988 edition, since this should be considered as the 'Urtext'. Apart from this, it should be emphasized that the Sranan material in the 1790 manuscript goes back to the period of Stedman's stay in Suriname (1773–1777), during which he kept a notebook. Therefore, it is legitimate to characterize his variety as 1770s' Sranan. A precise dating is important in order to be able to compare Stedman's Sranan with chronologically adjacent sources such as Nepveu (1765), Nepveu (1770) and Schumann (1783).

With all the provisos we may want to make about the reliability of early ‘European’ Sranan documents as sources for the 18th-century language as it was actually spoken, we are still entitled to use them as points of reference to compare the Stedman material with. People like Herlein, Van Dyk, Nepveu, Schumann and Weygandt were, roughly speaking, in the same position as Stedman with respect both to the language they described and to its speakers. They were, as far as we know, all white. They all entered the colony as adults or, in the case of Nepveu, as an adolescent. As far as we know, none of them spoke the language natively. And they were all ‘amateur linguists’, although their linguistic abilities may have varied quite a bit. This means that, apart perhaps from Schumann’s informant-based dictionary, there is no reason to assume that these sources differ significantly in the extent or direction of their deviations from the actual spoken language.

Below I will discuss the phonological and syntactic evidence presented by Eersel in support of his claim. Eersel notes three phonological features in Stedman’s Sranan that strike him as somehow idiosyncratic.

The insertion of schwa in CC clusters. The insertion of schwa in a form like *backera* ‘white person’, where this is not present in modern Sranan (which has *bakra*), is certainly not restricted to Stedman: we find forms like *backearary* (Behn 1983/1688), *Bakkerare* (Herlein 1718) and *bakkerà* (Van Dyk c1765) in other 18th-century sources as well (in Nepveu 1770 a full vowel is present: *bakkara*). Although the other example given by Eersel – *masera* ‘master’ – does not occur with schwa insertion in other early texts, it does fit regularly in the phonological development from *mastre* (Herlein 1718), through *mastra* (Van Dyk c1765) to *massra* (Nepveu 1770; Schumann 1783). Finally, a third form which has a vowel inbetween two consonants in Stedman,²⁸ *togeddere* ‘together’ (not mentioned by Eersel), also has this in the Schumann dictionary (spelled *tegédere*).

In other words, the insertion of schwa in CC clusters, rather than being a ‘Stedmanism’, is a normal feature of mid-18th-century Sranan. It is especially frequent in Van Dyk’s (c1765) Sranan primer, which dates from roughly the same the period from which Stedman’s data are drawn.²⁹ A quick search through Van Dyk yields more than a dozen forms with inserted schwa, where the modern va-

28. The term ‘inserted vowel’ is not appropriate here since it is present in the etymon (‘together’) from which the word is derived. Still, the example is relevant, because the issue is whether consonant clusters in Stedman are systematically broken up, regardless of their etymology. Also, there are many other words with schwa inbetween two consonants in the etymon, which are rendered with schwa in 18th-century texts (especially Van Dyk) but without it in modern Sranan.

29. In fact, Van Dyk’s book is referred to by Stedman, although its exact title is not mentioned by him (see Arends 1991).

riety has consonant clusters. Some examples are (the modern variant is given in parentheses): *watera* (*watra*), *gottere* (*gotro*), *kondere* (*kondre*), *takkeri* (*takru*), *tigri* (*tigri*), *kroekete* (*kruktu*), *abere* (*abra*), *middeere* (*mindri*), *seribi* (*sribi*), *hameri* (*amra*), *dakteren* (*datra*), *kouwere* (*kowru*), and *ouwere* (*owru*). Interestingly, most of the forms containing inserted vowels in Van Dyk have consonant clusters in Schumann (1783) (except *krukkutu* and *kandera*), which suggests a diachronic development, in which Stedman occupies a position intermediate between Van Dyk and Schumann.

In fact, some of the words containing inserted vowels in Van Dyk do occur in Stedman without schwa (e.g. *tigri* and *kondre*). More generally, if one takes a close look at the Stedman text, it appears that consonant clusters are not as rare as suggested by Eersel. The 1790 edition contains forms like *Cramaca* and *prasel-la* (*Caramaca* and *parasalla* in the 1796 edition³⁰). This further undermines the suggestion that vowel insertion should be looked upon as something typical for Stedman.

Absence of vowel reduction and elision in reduplications. In contrast to Modern Sranan, reduplications in Stedman are always given in full, as in *keesee-keesee* ‘monkey’ and *weeree weeree* ‘grass’, as opposed to the reduced forms, *keskesi* and *wiwiri* (or, with gemination, *w’wiri*), found in Modern Sranan. Again, this feature cannot be claimed to be typically ‘Stedmanian’, because unreduced reduplications, like *kesi kesi* and *wiri wiri*, can also be found in other early sources like Van Dyk (c1765), Nepveu (1770), and Schumann (1783). The latter also has the alternative *keeskees*, showing the beginning of vowel reduction; the same phenomenon appears from the form *fourfouro* (in the special meaning of ‘to live in concubinage with someone’, not the usual meaning of ‘to steal’) in Nepveu (1770). Other reduplications found in Stedman, but not mentioned by Eersel, include *wassy-wassy*, *tay-tay*, *mocco-mocco*, *monkee-monkee*, and *peeteeco-peeteeco*. In so far as these forms are mentioned by Schumann, they are similarly given in their full form (e.g. *wassiwasssi*, *mokko mokko*), with the exception of *tetèi* (which also occurs in the spelling *tetèh*). Similarly, Nepveu (1770), apart from the reduced form *fourfouro* mentioned above, only contains full reduplications, such as *fomfom*, *hafoe hafoe* and *queti queti*. All in all, this suggests that generally speaking reduplications were only beginning to be reduced by the end of the 18th century and that full reduplications were the norm in Stedman’s days. This means that, in this regard too, Stedman does not represent some idiosyncratic version of 18th-century Sranan.

30. The fact that some forms, like the ones above, contain an inserted vowel in the 1796 edition, where we find consonant clusters in the original 1790 manuscript, indicates how careful one should be in drawing conclusions from a few isolated words in one specific source.

Meke instead of *meki*. While Eersel suspects Ndyuka influence in a form like *meke*³¹ ‘make’ (instead of *meki*), this is probably just a matter of spelling: Stedman sometimes uses *e* to indicate /i/, as in *me* ‘I, me’. Also, the sentence in question is given by Stedman as a quote from a Boni rebel in a story told by one of Stedman’s fellow soldiers, which makes it extremely difficult to establish what variety of the language is exactly being reported here.³² The probability of Ndyuka influence is diminished further by the fact that Stedman has *likee*³³ ‘like’, which has the form *liki/leki* in 18th-century Sranan (Van Dyk and Schumann, respectively). If Stedman’s Sranan were influenced by Ndyuka, we would expect to find a form like *leke* (the Ndyuka form is *eke*), since the latter has the same phonological pattern as *meke*.

As regards syntax, Eersel notes four features that strike him as characteristic of Stedman’s variety of Sranan.

The form da instead of (n)a, for definite article, copula, and presentative. In Stedman we find the sentence *sooto sooto da Bony Kiry da Dago?* ‘shoot, shoot, it’s Boni (the Maroon leader), kill the dog’, where *da* (instead of modern *na*) is used both as a presentative and as a definite article. Although there are more examples with *da* in these two functions in Stedman, no examples can be found where it is used in a ‘true’ copular function, in spite of Eersel’s assertion to the contrary. But even if this were the case, it would not support Eersel’s hypothesis, because, as appeared above, *da* was the usual form for all of these three functions in 18th-century Sranan. The form *de* and the zero-copula are used only marginally in the 18th-century sources, while *na* does not appear until well into the 19th century. For instance, we can still find *da* in copular function in Focke’s (1855) dictionary, which may be seen as one of the most reliable sources for 19th-century Sranan: *soema bere da liba*, lit. ‘man’s belly is a river’ (Focke 1855: 10); *da mi bere pikien*, lit. ‘it’s my belly child’ (Focke 1855: 10). The use of *da* as an article can be attested until the very end of the 19th century, for instance in Kraag’s diary, e.g. *da grankapten* ‘the great chief’ (Kraag 1894–1896: 34).

31. Modern Ndyuka has *teke*, *meke*, *eke*, where Modern Sranan has *teki*, *meki*, *leki*. Theoretically, the possibility of Ndyuka influence on the Sranan Stedman was confronted with, cannot be excluded since, as Eersel notes, ‘the Dyuka are reported by Stedman to come and go as free men in and out Paramaribo’ (p. 8). On the other hand, if there was Ndyuka influence on Sranan at the time, we would expect to find it in other 18th-century sources too. So far, there are no indications that would point to such influence (e.g. with regard to the forms mentioned above).

32. Eersel (1984: 2) suggests that the Boni variety of Sranan cannot have developed that far from Sranan in the 1770s, since the tribe was formed after the peace treaties with the already existing maroon tribes had been signed in the 1760s.

33. Double <ee> in Stedman’s orthography stands for /i/.

Zero copula – instead of na – in nominal predicates. Nominal predicates in Stedman receive no overt copula, as in *you man?*, ‘are you a man?’, and *me man*, ‘I am a man’. Absence of copula in cases like these is not at all exceptional in 18th-century Sranan. In fact, one out of three predicate nominal sentences in our corpus has no overt copula. Compare e.g. the following sentence from Schumann’s dictionary: *djinja wan bune dresi*, ‘ginger is a good medicine’ (Schumann 1783: 84). The absence of the copula in WH-questions, as in Stedman’s *who som ma datty*, ‘who is that?’, has continued even longer, as appears from the following sentence from Wullschlägel’s (1856) dictionary: *soortoe maniri dati?*, ‘what kind of behavior is that?’

Aspect marker de – instead of e. In this respect Stedman’s Sranan is completely in accordance with other pre-1900 sources in which *de* is exclusively used in this function.³⁴ Compare e.g. a sentence like *hangri de kili mi*, lit. ‘hunger is killing me’ (Schumann 1783: 120). There is one case that leads Eersel to suggest that *e* was the form as it was actually spoken. He wonders whether *me* in *so langa me leeby* might be a contraction of *mi* and *e*, which is a regular phonological process in Modern Sranan. But, as was mentioned earlier, *me* or *mee* in Stedman always stands for *mi* (the latter is not attested in the book even once), as appears from environments where it cannot possibly have been contracted with *e*, as in *me masera*, ‘my master’, *mee saloby you*, ‘I shall love you’, and *kebree me*, ‘cover me’.

Future marker sa – instead of alternation between sa and go. Eersel’s claim that Stedman uses only *sa*, not *go*, is simply incorrect. Careful examination of the sample sentences also reveals a functional differentiation between *sa* and *go*: *sa* seems to indicate irrealis modality, as in *Gado Sa Blesse da Woma*, ‘God bless this woman’, and in *Mee Saloby you langa alla Mee Hatty so langa mee leeby*, ‘I shall love you with all my heart as long as I live’, while the function of *go* seems to be restricted to the marking of immediate future tense, as in *Son de go Sleeby caba*, lit. ‘the sun is already going to sleep’, and in *mee de go dede*, ‘I am going to die’.³⁵ In

34. Incidentally, in every instance in Stedman where the aspect marker *de* occurs, it marks the verb *go*, either as a main verb, as in *me de go*, ‘I am leaving’, or as a future auxiliary, as in *son de go Sleeby*, lit. ‘the sun is going to sleep’. Although the small size of the sample does not allow any firm conclusions, this may suggest that aspect marking originated with the verb *go*, perhaps modelled on the English ‘be going to’ construction, and was extended later to other verbs.

35. As appears from Schumann (1783) *dede* can be both adjective (‘dead’) and verb (‘die’). That *go dede* should be construed as FUT + Verb and not as FUT + Adj (in which case it could be related to Dutch *doodgaan*, lit. ‘go dead’, i.e. ‘die’), appears from the fact that no overt copula appears inbetween the future marker and the verb: an overt copula is obligatory before adjectives in infinitive position, i.e. *mi go de dede*, ‘I shall be dead’.

the latter case, the context clearly reveals the immediacy of the predication, since the sentence is uttered by someone who is deadly wounded, whereas in the former immediacy is inherent in the utterance itself, since there is no point in uttering it unless the event is actually going to take place very soon.

This functional differentiation of *sa* and *go* is fully in agreement with a general tendency that can be observed in the development of future marking in 18th-century Sranan. Starting from a situation where we have variation between *wil* and zero, in Herlein (1718), and passing through a stage with practically undifferentiated use of *sa*, in Van Dyk (c1765), we see a development towards a functional differentiation between *sa* and *go* in Schumann and later sources,³⁶ the former of which is used to indicate remote future or irrealis modality, while *go* is restricted to indicate near future. This differentiation still exists up to the present day (cf. Wendelaar & Koefoed 1988).

Summarizing, the Sranan as reported by Stedman does not in any significant way deviate from the language as it is known from other 18th-century sources. What from the perspective of the 20th-century variety appear to be idiosyncracies on Stedman's part, are in reality normal features of 18th-century Sranan as we know it from other sources.

5.2 Saramaccan

[*Editor's note.* Clearly, this section is incomplete. There were no indices as to its further content]

In this section we discuss the earliest data on what is presented in the sources as Saramaccan, even though it is not always clear whether what is actually given is Saramaccan, Sranan, or a combination of the two (some degree of bilingualism was not uncommon among Saramaka).

In the same collection of documents, we also find the phrase *Gran Cassa*,³⁷ lit. 'big house', i.e. the house where a meeting of Whites and Maroons was held (Dörig 1763, in De Beet & Price 1982: 170).

36. Interestingly, the only two cases of *sa/go* in Nepveu (1770) seem to confirm the idea of a functional differentiation: *sa* (in the form *sal*) is used in a (negative) promise, viz. *mi no sal lobi him moro*, 'I shall not love him anymore'; *go* is used to indicate immediate future, viz. *a go a wakka*, 'he is going' (the repetition of the subject pronoun *a*, which is not found elsewhere, is not discussed here).

37. The phrase *gran casa* 'big house' and its equivalents (*grand case* etc) is widespread in the Caribbean.

5.3 The other Suriname creoles

In contrast to Sranan and Saramaccan, the early history of Suriname's third major creole, Ndyuka, is almost completely undocumented. The earliest known manuscript, not available to the author, is an 18-page wordlist dating from the beginning of the 20th century (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 102). Apart from that, a few isolated sentences have been recorded from the period of the negotiations leading to the peace treaty of 1760, a period when Ndyuka was closer to Sranan than it is now (see Chapter 7).

One sentence that might be construed as representing 1770s Boni (which at that time must have been even closer to Ndyuka than it is now) is given by Stedman (1790), who explicitly attributes it to a Boni Maroon. As the sentence shows, since the Boni Maroons had only recently begun to escape from the plantations, their language cannot have differed much from the plantation creole (ignoring Stedman's English-influenced orthography):

- (70) *Son de go Sleeby caba Mekewe liby den tara dago tay*
 sun ASP go sleep already make-we leave the other dogs until
tamara. (Stedman 1988 [1790]: 124)
 tomorrow
 'The sun is going down already; let's leave the other dogs until tomorrow.'

As far as the other Creoles (Paramaccan, Kwinti, Matawai) are concerned, no early data are available. That means that everything that will be said about the historical development of these languages is necessarily based on indirect evidence.

5.4 Introducing early texts

As far as the languages treated in this book are concerned, until now we have seen little more of them than isolated words, phrases and sentences, often analyzed in rather minute detail. In order to give an idea of what the Suriname creoles looked like in earlier stages, I have collected a number of early texts which are presented here together with their translation into English. The texts have been selected for various reasons: either because they represent a particular genre or language variety, or because of their special historical or documentary value, or because of their sheer beauty and power of expression. They have been divided into two categories: oral texts (Chapter 6) and written texts (Chapter 7). Because of the rather special character of religious texts, Chapter 7 has been subdivided into two separate sections: one on secular texts (7.1), the other on religious texts (7.2). Unless

noted otherwise, the texts have been transcribed exactly as they are presented in the original, including inconsistent spellings and (apparent) typographical errors. In cases where words are not separated by spaces where this would be expected, such as *daso* for *da so*, the 'correct' alternative is added in parentheses. Punctuation has been adapted wherever that seemed necessary. While these texts are presented here without much linguistic analysis, it is to be hoped that future researchers will make use of them for that purpose. The diversity of the texts presented here – especially the oral texts, largely neglected until now – will certainly help to broaden the basis for the reconstruction of creole formation in Suriname.