Putting Matawai on the Surinamese Linguistic Map *

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The creoles of Suriname have figured prominently in research on creole languages. However, one variety, Matawai, has to date remained completely unresearched. This paper attempts to address this lacuna. It discusses its history and selected areas of grammar in order to assess the place of Matawai among its sister languages and its development. The linguistic analysis draws on recordings from 2013 and the 1970s. The paper provides evidence to support the view that Matawai is most closely related to Saamaka. However, there are also features that are unique to Matawai and those that appear to be due to either patterns of language contact with the other creoles of Suriname or common inheritance. The paper argues that systematic corpus-based analysis of lesser-used varieties provides new insights into existing debates.

Keywords: Creoles of Suriname, Matawai, language contact, diachronic change, copula, future

1. Introduction

Since the publication of Bickerton's (1984) bioprogram hypothesis, which argued that

Saamaka represents the closest instantiation of the human blueprint for language, the

creoles of Suriame spoken in Suriname and French Guiana have figured prominently

in research on creole genesis. For instance, a corpus of historical documents has been

analyzed to trace the development of Sranantongo (e.g. Arends 1986, 1989; van den

Berg 2007). Research on the Maroon languages (e.g. Saamaka: McWhorter & Good

2012; Ndyuka: Huttar & Huttar 1994; Goury 2003; Aluku and Pamaka: Bilby 2002;

Bilby et al 1989; Goury & Migge 2003; Kwinti: Huttar 1988, Smith & Huttar 1983)

has focused on documenting their grammars and, through comparison with their

African input languages and other contact vernacular, on exploring the processes of

contact and change that led to their genesis (e.g. papers in Migge & Smith 2007,

Essegbey et al. 2013, Smith & Veenstra 2001, Muysken & Smith 2015). There is also some work on the sociolinguistics of the Maroon Creoles (Migge 2015; Migge & Léglise 2013, 2015; Borges 2013). However, one member of this family of languages, Matawai, has not figured at all in linguistic research despite having been the focus of anthroplogical research in the 1970s (de Beet & Sterman 1981; Green 1974). Matawai is generally classified as a Western Maroon Creole and a dialect of Saamaka (McWhorter & Good 2012: xv; Aboh et al. 2013: 27-28). The only published linguistic data consists of a set of examples provided in Hancock's (1987) overview comparison of Atlantic Creoles.

The aim of this paper is to begin to address this lacuna by exploring recordings of Matawai from the 1970s and 2013. The analysis confirms that Matawai most closely resembles Saamaka. However, there are also features that are unique to Matawai and some that it shares with the other creoles of Suriname. Comparison of the 1970s and 2013 data also show that Matawai has been undergoing linguistic change over the last half century.

Part Two discusses the early development of the Matawai community and briefly examines the current sociolinguistic context of the community. Part Three explores several linguistic features. The final section summarized the findings and dicusses their implications.

2. The historical, social and linguistic context of the Matawai community

Not much is known about the origins of the Matawai Maroons. Price (1983: 89-90), notes that

> [t]he plantation origin of Matawáis is peculiarly obscured in all accounts known to me. Plantations Hamburg and Uitkijk are consistently mentioned by Matawáis, but the indicated locations on the lower Saramacca River do not seem to have been used as plantations during the relevant period. In contrast, Matawái migration routes seem relatively clear: south along the west bank of the Saramacca River to Djibi Creek on the east, where they crossed over and established a village by the 1730s; on the Yawe Creek where they lived for a time; then, splitting from the Saramaka contingent […], southwest along the Saramacca River in the late 1730s, all the way to the great mountain of Tafelberg where they established the village of Hánsesipó; and finally, by about

1740, back down into the interior of Tukumútu Creek, where they lived in the very large village of Tuído […].

In the 1740s the Matawai lived together with the (Lángus) Saamaka, first briefly in Hánsesipó and then in the village of Tuído or Toido on the Tukumutu Creek, a tributary of the Saramaca River (de Beet & Sterman 1981: 11).[1]

Following the discovery of the village of Toido,[2] an abortive attempt at a peace treaty in 1747 and a bloody battle at Bakáafétihíla on the upper Saramacca River (see Price 1983: 93-94), the future Matawai established their villages along the Tukumutu and Saramacca River and later along the Saramacca River itself. In 1761 the government signed a peace treaty with these Maroon groups whose leaders were named as Abini, Samsam, Beku and Musinga, respectively. However, the leader of the future Matawai – Musinga – broke the treaty soon afterwards and the group around Beku and Musinga[3] continued to attack plantations and to abduct slaves. The group around Abini eventually "joined the government to battle Musinga and his people" (de Beet & Sterman 1981: 10) which led to Abini's death and a tense relationship between the Matawai and Saamaka.

A new peace treaty was signed in 1767 and the Matawai subsequently established villages in the upper Saramacca region "beyond the two rapids" (Bilawata and Gaandan liba).[4] During the 1820s some Matawai families moved to the outskirts of the plantation area and established the village of Maipaston (Map 1) where they also came into contact with members of the Ndyuka and Saamaka communities who had settled in the area for lumbering. After 1860 the Kwinti or Kofimaka Maroons joined the Matawai on the Saramacca River and founded the village of Pakapaka.

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[1]According to the oral tradition of the Lángus, they "lived with the future Matawái in villages at Djibi and Yawe Creeks" rather than at Hánsesipó. (Price 1983: 92).

[2]It owes its name to the Spanish city of Toledo (Prices pc 2015).

[3]Archival documents treat Beku and Musinga as two separate people while Matawai tradition merges them into one person (Price 1983: 90).

[4] Matawai usually define their territory with reference "to two markers, the Piki Saamaka and Lawaai dan, which were marked by rituals, when passing by" (Miriam Sterman, pc 2016).

Following disputes some of the Kwinti left and established two villages on the Coppename River in 1883 (van der Elst 1974: 12).
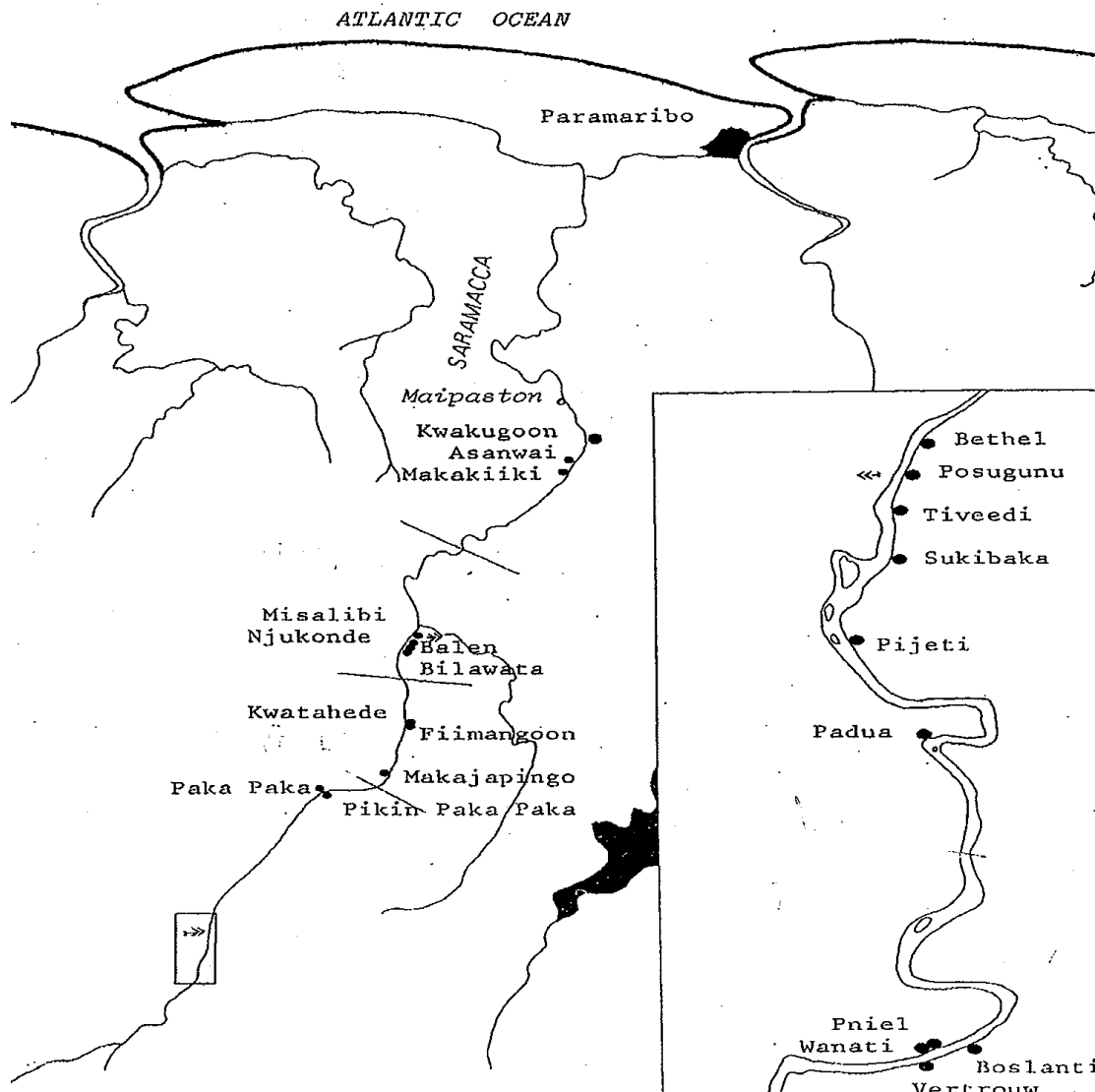
Map 1: Location of the Matawai villages (adapted from de Beet & Sterman 1981: 8).

"After 1860, the Matawai history is dominated by the introduction of Christianity." (de Beet & Sterman 1981: 11). In the 1850s Johannes King of Maipaston had dreams in which god asked him to become a Christian and to spread Christianity. He subsequently established contacts with the Moravian church, converted people in Maipaston to Christianity and undertook missionary trips to the upper Saramacca region and to other Maroon communities. After his brother, the paramount chief (*gaaman*) Noah Adai, banned King from Maipaston over religious differences, he founded the village of Kwataede on the middle river as a Christian center in the 1880s (de Beet & Sterman 1981: 190). The Catholic Church became active in the downriver

region (Bilawata) in the 1920s and its followers founded the upriver village of Padua in 1939.

The Matawai traditionally follow a subsistence life-style engaging in slash and burn agriculture, fishing and hunting. During the 19th century Matawai men increasingly took up seasonal cash labor opportunities. Initially, the lumber trade was the main source of cash income[5] and from the end of the 19th century, other seasonal economic activities such as rubber tapping and small-scale gold mining came on stream. Most of these activities took place along the Saramacca River, but the multi-ethnic workforce brought Matawai men into greater contact with non-Matawai. Cash labor opportunities outside of the region such as gathering of makapalmnuts along the Coppename River and clearing of fields for the rice industry in the district of Nickerie became popular in the middle of the 20st century (de Beet & Sterman 1981: 424).

Expansion of governmental services throughout Suriname from the 1950s onwards also created new work opportunities for Maroons. They were generally not carried out in homogeneous ethnic crews and required people to be on constant stand-by in Paramaribo. This resulted in men spending increasingly longer periods of time on the coast. When jobs became permanent, most men moved their family to Paramaribo (de Beet & Sterman 1981: 453-454) and visits to the villages became rare leading, over time, to the emergence of two communities, an urban and a rural one. The former has continued to grow at the expense of the latter.

On the coast, Matawais, like other Maroons, initially lived outside of the city such as in Lelydorp and along the road to Zanderij but eventually, when new housing became more affordable, settled on the western fringe of the city. In terms of social relations, anthropological work suggests that despite the greater frequency of interactions with non-Matawais and a high rate of out-marriage in the urban context, Matawai-based ethnic and family ties have remained strong in the urban context (de Beet & Sterman 1981: 457-465).

Despite significant mobility to the urban centers, in the 1970s Matawai was still spoken in some nineteen small villages along the shores of the Saramacca River, with populations ranging from about fifteen residents in the smallest village to two hundred residents in the largest, Boslanti (de Beet & Sterman 1981: 13; Green 1974:

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[5] Some of the men also worked as boatmen on the Lawa and Tapanahoni Rivers where they earned considerable incomes.

7). However, especially since the civil war in the 1980s the number of inhabited villages has shrunk to thirteen in 2013 – Pakapaka, Pikin Pakapaka, Makayapingo, Wanati, Fiimangoon were uninhabited and efforts were underway to repopulate Kwataede – and the number of people living in each village has dwindled significantly to a handful of people in the case of most of the villages. The number of inhabitants is slightly larger in Posugunu, the seat of the paramount chief, and in the four-village cluster (Bilawata, Balen, Njukonde and Misalibi, MAP 1) on the upper Saramacca River. Many of the houses have, however, been maintained since people regularly return to *limba paandasi* 'clean village'. Visits to the village are used to carry out important ceremonies and to introduce younger people to Matawai culture.

On the upper Saramacca River, mostly elderly people and women with their younger children remain as most of the men work in the nearby goldmining industry. Women engage in farming activities due to the absence of paid labor. While people are mobile, spending some time of the year in Paramaribo, in late 2013 irregular and costly private river transport and chartered flights were the only means of travel. However, educational services were being expanded and most of the villages had functioning generators that enabled people to watch DVDs and Brazilian TV, if they have a dish.[6]

The downriver region, such as the four-village cluster of Misalibi, Balen, Njun(Jakob)konde, and Bilawata (about three hours upriver from Kwakugoon) and the villages of Asanwai and Makakiiki (a 10-20 minute boat ride from Kwakugoon) are less dramatically depopulated. Access to the coastal area is easier (shorter distance, higher frequency of boats) and the close proximity to the goldmining activities in the region provide cash labor opportunities for both women (resale) and men (mining) (see de Theije 2015). Contacts between the upriver and downriver area appear to lack intensity, however. Unless there are important celebrations (deaths, end of mourning ceremonies), members of the downriver region rarely venture upriver and upriver people make overnight stopovers in the four-village cluster but they rarely come for sustained periods of time. The villagers of the two regions also maintain devisive stereotypes about each other.

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[6]Suriname has a booming DVD market. Nollywood and US films are dubbed into Ndyuka and sometimes Saamaka and amateurs produce local films.

With respect to language, locals make the following subdivisions: The upriver region is associated with 'pure' Matawai, the middle river region is linked to Kwinti and Matawai (and a mix thereof) and the lower river region is designated as 'impure' Matawai due to being influenced by Ndyuka and Saamaka. Apart from Matawai and Kwinti, Sranantongo, Dutch and a more generalized (Eastern) Maroon variety[7] are also used in the region. Traditionally, the latter three were used for communication with outsiders. However, increased contact with the urban areas and schooling has made them into an integral part of the speech community. While Matawai is the default means of communication and is transmitted in the village context, people code-switch and code-mix with Sranantongo and a generalized (Eastern) Maroon variety and to a lesser extent with Dutch to negotiate local identities in intra-community interactions, similar to what happens in other communities (Migge 2015).

The situation is different in the urban (greater Paramaribo) and semi-urban context (Para district) where there is much more intense contact with non-Matawais and thus Sranantongo and Dutch play a much greater role (see also Léglise & Migge 2015). People do not always live close to other Matawais, work with people from a variety of backgrounds and marriages with non-Matawai partners are a regular occurrence (de Beet and Sterman 1981). In the home, many parents promote acquisition of Dutch at the expense of Matawai so that many of the younger people only learn to speak Matawai in their teens as a second language, if at all. Traditional ceremonies (burials, end of mourning cermonies etc) and sporadic visits to the village context have become important sites for language maintenance and language promotion.

This brief discussion suggests that Matawai is in many ways endangered. Price's "guesstimates" (his term) put the size of the Matawai community at between 5,000 (Price 2002: 82) and 7,000 people (Price 2013), arguing that about 1,300 live in the rural areas and about 5,500 in the urban (and semi-urban) context (Price 2013: 326). However, in 2013 at most 300 people were living in the villages throughout the year and given low language transmission rates in urban and semi-urban areas, actual speaker numbers must be well below the population figures cited by Price (2002, 2013). Unlike Eastern Maroon and most Saamaka children, Matawai children often

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[7]People often refer to it as Kwinti but it clearly differs from traditional Kwinti.

also did not feel comfortable to display their ability to speak Matawai during a language survey (Léglise & Migge 2015).

The above discussion suggests that while Matawai is historically closely related to Saamaka – members of these two communities fled from the same plantation areas and also cohabited for some time – a number of factors have led to a lessening of the intensity of contact over time and have given rise to partially separate developments. Such factors include difficult inter-ethnic relationships, geographical distance, the Matawai's greater and earlier involvement with 'town life' due to their intense involvement with Christianity and their close contact with members of other Maroon groups such as the Kwinti and the Ndyuka community. Since the civil war in the 1980s, intensity of contact with other languages has increased due to the fact that the clear majority of Matawai today reside in the greater urban area of Paramaribo and are actively partaking in mainstream coastal society.

3. A preliminary description of the linguistic characteristics of Matawai

In this section I explore some aspects of the Matawai language and compare them to what is known about the other creoles of Suriname. The paper draws on three data sets. First, a small corpus of naturalistic recordings and semi-guided interviews collected in 2013 in the upper Saramacca River villages and Paramaribo. Seven hours of speech coming mostly from older Matawai speakers were analyzed. Second, a corpus of semi-guided anthropological interviews and naturalistic recordings collected in the 1970s on the upper Saramacca River by the anthropologists Miriam Sterman and Chris de Beet during their fieldwork among the Matawai. Eleven recordings involving older and middle-aged members of the community were analyzed. Third, data from formal elicitation sessions with two middle-aged women and one young man. The data on the other Creoles of Suriname come from the published literature and my own data collected since 1994. I will first consider lexical issues, assessing similarities between Matawai and the other creoles of Suriname (3. 1.) and patterns of lexical variation (3. 2.). I then examine two areas of grammar, the nominal copula (3. 3.) and future-marking (3. 4.) in more detail.

3. 1. Notes on the lexicon of Matawai

Matawai shares many content lexical items and function words with Saamaka that are not in general use among speakers of the other creoles of Suriname. Tables (1-2) present a non-exhaustive list of commonly occurring content words in the data such as nouns (1) and verbs (2).[8]

Table 1: Comparison of common nouns: Matawai and the other Surinamese Creoles

Matawai	Saamaka[1]	EMC[2]	Sranantongo[3]	Gloss
amanya	amanya	tama(a)	tamara	'tomorrow'
daka	daka	dey	dey	'day'
(a)ho [ahɔ]	aho [ahɔ]	ho	ho	'hoe'
kamia	kamia	peesi	presi	'place, location'
mau	mau	ana	anu	'hand, arm'
mii	mii	pikin	pikin	'child'
pau	pau	bon, tiki, udu	bon, tiki, udu	'tree, stick'
soni, sondi	soni, sondi	sani	sani	'thing, matter'
tela	tela	soo	syoro	'land bordering water'
tyuba	tyuba	alen	alen	'rain'
woto	woto	toli	tori	'story, matter'

[1]Saamaka (Haboo ms)

[2]Eastern Maroon Creole (Aluku, Ndyuka, Pamaka); the data come from my own data, Bilby's unpublished database for Aluku, Bilby et al (1989) and Shanks et al (2000)

[3]Sranantongo; the data come from Wilner (1994).

Table 2: Comparison of common verbs: Matawai and other Surinamese Creoles

Matawai	Saamaka	Ndyuka/ Pamaka	Sranantongo	Gloss
buta, bisi	buta, bisi	poti, we(l)i	poti, weri	'put, put on'
bai	bai	bali	bari	'call out, shout'

[8]Matawai examples are presented following the orthographic conventions devised by Haboo (ms) for Saamaka which does not make certain kinds of distinctions. Where necessary, such distinctions will be indicated using phonetic transcriptions.

da	da	gi	gi	'give'
de [dɛ]	de [dɛ]	de	de	copula
duumi	duumi	siibi	sribi	'sleep'
tuwe	tuwe	towe	towe	'discard'
konda	konda	taagi	taigi	'tell'
kule	kule	lon	lon	'run'
kumutu	kumutu	komoto	k(o)mopo	'leave'
manda	manda	seni/sende	seni	'send'
paka	paka	pay	pay	'pay'
sindo/un[1]	sindo	sidon	s(i)don	'sit down'
yei	yei	yee	yere	'hear, understand'
yaika	haika	aliki	arki	'listen'

[1]In Matawai the word final nasal is rarely if ever a full nasal but rather a nasalized vowel. There is variation between nasalization and full nasals in the other varieties.

Tables (1-2) show that in the case of content lexical items that are not shared between all the creoles of Suriname, typically those of Portuguese origin, Matawai closely aligns with Saamaka. For instance, Matawai and Saamaka employ the word *mau*, derived from Portuguese *mão* 'hand' while the Eastern Maroon Creoles use *ana* derived from English *hand* to express the meaning of 'hand, arm'.

There are also lexical items that have the same origin in all or most varieties but differ phonologically. Yet again, Matawai is closer to Saamaka. Consider the words referring to 'thing, matter', for instance. Matawai (and Saamaka) employs a back mid vowel [sɔni/sɔndi] while the other creoles use a low vowel [sani]. Other words like 'call out, shout' or 'hold' differ in their syllable structure. The Matawai (and Saamaka) form is monosyllabic (*bai*) while the Eastern Maroon Creoles and Sranantongo use a bisyllabic structure, *bali* and *bari*, respectively.[9] In the case of other lexical items, there is variation between a long vowel and a diphthong. Thus in Matawai (and Saamaka) 'hear, understand' is pronounced with the front diphthong [ey] *yei* while its Eastern Maroon counterpart involves a long mid vowel *yee*. Finally, there are also semantic differences. In Matawai (and Saamaka) the word *pau* appears

[9]This does not hold across the board as Matawai also uses bisyllabic forms, e.g. *holi* 'to hold', and there is variation between mono- and bisyllabic forms.

to express three concepts: tree, log and stick. However, in the Eastern Maroon Creoles and Sranantongo, they are expressed by three separate lexical items: *bon*, *udu* and *tiki*, respectively. Note also that Matawai, like Saamaka, distinguishes higher [e, o] and lower [ɛ, ɔ] mid front and back vowels, respectively. Thus, for instance, the copula is generally realized as [dɛ] in Matawai and Saamaka but as [de] in the varieties.

Table 3 shows that Matawai also shares a number of functional elements with Saamaka. They range from the imperfective aspect (*ta*) and desire (*kɛ*) markers to locational and prepositional forms, determiners, phrasal connectors and question words.

Table 3. Comparison of selected functional elements in Matawai and other Creoles of Suriname

Matawai	Saamaka	Ndyuka/ Pamaka	Sranan	Gloss
Tense, Mood and Aspect Markers				
ta	ta	e	e	imperfective aspect
bi	bi	be	ben	past time
ke [kɛ]	ke [kɛ]	wani	wani	desire
kaa	kaa	kaba	kba	completion
Locational & prepositional Concepts				
ku	ku	anga	nanga	'with'
dendu	dendu	ini	ini	'inside'
basu	basu	ondo(o)	ondro	'under'
liba	liba	tapu	tapu	'on (top)'
Determiners				
di	di	a	a	Determiner (def, sg)
de, den	dee	de(n)	de(n)	Determiner (pl, sg)
hila/(h)ii	hia/hila	hii/ala	ala	'all (of), the whole'
Phrasal connectors				
noo [nɔɔ]	noo [nɔɔ]	neen	dan	Temporal markers
(h)en/da	hen, da	da	dan/ne	Consecutive marker
Question words				
an(di)	andi	san	san	'what'

ambe [ambɛ]	ambe [ambɛ]	sama	suma	'who'
o di	undi	ondi, (on) sowtu	(on) sortu	'which'
o ten/o yuu	unten/unyuu	on ten, yuu	(on) yuru	'when'

3. 2. Patterns of lexical variation

There are some lexical elements that were identified as being distinctive of Matawai by Matawai consultants.[10] Table 4 lists these items and their counterparts in the other creoles of Suriname. Some of their uses are illustrated in examples (1-7).

Table 4: Distinctive lexical features in Matawai

Matawai	Saamaka	Ndyuka/ Pamaka	Sranantongo	Gloss
me/me(i)ki [mɛ/mɛ(i)ki]	mbei	meki/e	meki	'make'
dolu	dou	doo	doro	'arrive'
seepi	seei	seefi	srefi	'self, even'
yaika	haika	aliki	arki	'listen'
sombe [sɔmbɛ]	sembe [sɛmbɛ]	sama	s(u)ma	'person'
se	naase [naasɛ]	pe	pe	'where'
to	o	o	o	'future'

(1) **me**   a   sa   wooko, te   di   man   ko   a   mu   si. (M4)[11]
     make   it   POT   work   when   DET   man   come   he   OBL   see
     'Make it work, when the guy comes he must see [it functioning].'

(2) dee   sikowtu   **dolu**   kaa. (M9)
     DET-PL   police   arrive   compl
     'The police had arrived already.'

(3) a. di   womi   **seepi**   waka   ko   piki   mi   taa   [...] (M1)
       DET   man   self   walk   come   respond   me   say

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[10]Note that two of these forms *sombe* and *seepi* are also attested in Saamaka. However, they appear to be secondary strategies in Saamaka.

[11]This code indicates the recording from which this example originates.

'The man himself came to tell me … .'

b. mi an ta yaika de **seepi**. (M7)

I NEG IMPF listen them self

'I did not even listen to them.'

(4) dat' wani taaki te i go, i nango **yaika** gaansombe woto.

that want say when you go you IMPF-go listen elder story

'That means when you go there, you are going to listen to elders' stories.'

(5) dee oto **sombe** de a di se konde ala. (M3)

DET-PL other people COP LOC DET side village over-there

'The other people were at the other side of the village over there.'

(6) a taa "we da **se** u to si di gaan dan?" (M2)

he say well then side we FUT see DET big rapid

'He said "where will we see the big rapid?"'

(7) fa u **to** seeka dede soni fu di mama?' (M1)

how we FUT arrange death thing POSS DET female.elder

'how will we arrange the death ceremonies for the elder?'

While Matawai speakers consider these lexical forms as an integral part of Matawai, in actual speech, they are subject to variation with forms ideologically linked to other varieties. Table 5 gives the frequency count for each variant in the 2013 recodings.

Table 5: Frequency distribution of 'distinctive' lexical items in the 2013 recordings

Tape	*me-me(i)ki* *meki* (EMC-SR) *mbei* (SM)	*dolu* *doo* (EMC) *dou* (SM)	*seepi* *seefi* (EMC) *seei* (SM)	*se* naase (SM)	*to* *o*	*sombe* *sembe* (SM) *suma* (SR)
M4	**17-18**/1/0	**17**/5/0	**21**/0/0	**4**/0	37/40 (48%)	0/49/7
M5	**8-15**/4/0	**19**/2/0	**8**/0/0	**3**/1	9/50 (15%)	0/20/3
M3	**7-12**/0/0	**6**/0/0	**4**/0/0	**2**/0	9/23 (28%)	15/14/0
M9	**3-16**/0/0	**18**/0/0	10/23/1	0/0	1/97 (1%)	0/43/1
M7	**3-8**/0/0	**24**/4/1	**19**/2/0	**3**/0	30/40 (43%)	6/19/0
M2	**4-9**/0/0	**6**/2/0	0/1/0	1/0	5/19 (26%)	0/8/0

M1	**14-12**/0/0	**5**/2/0	**8**/1/1	**3**/0	24/33 (42%)	3/17/1

Table 5 shows that while some forms identified as Matawai (*me-me(i)ki*; *se*) indeed occur near- or categorically in the recordings, others such as *to* and *sombe* and, to a lesser degree *dolu* and *seepi*, are subject to variation. No variation was recorded for *yaika*. Comparison with the 1970s recordings suggests that the variation found in the 2013 data is not new but is increasing and appears to be leading to language change in the case of some lexical elements. Take for instance *sombe*. In the 1970s recordings (Table 6) *sombe* emerges as the dominant variant[12], while its use is much less prominent in the 2013 recordings where only elderly persons variably use it. Thus, although Matawais appear to show ideological attachment to the historical form (*sombre*) and appear to have preserved it as a dominant form for expressing 'person' at least until the 1970s, like Saamaka speakers, they are now increasinly replacing it with a different variant, *sembe*. It is unclear whether this change is driven by contact with speakers of Saamaka or by internal processes of change.

Table 6: Frequency distribution of variants for 'person' in the 1970s recordings.

Tape	*sombe*	*sembe*	*suma*
M1.1	21 (91%)	2 (9%)	0
M1.2	20 (80%)	5 (20%)	0
M2.1	0	8 (100%)	0
M2.2	25 (32%)	17 (22%)	36 (46%)
M3.1	2 (100%)	0	0
M4.1	49 (53%)	39 (42%)	4 (5%)
M6.1	16 (55%)	9 (31%)	4 (14%)
M6.2	26 (84%)	2 (6%)	3 (10%)
M7.1	36 (78%)	10 (22%)	0
M8.1	44 (85%)	8 (15%)	0

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[12] The variation in the 1970s recordings is mostly context-based. *suma* is typically found in interview-like elicitation sessions while *sombe/sembe* appear more frequently in formal and informal interactions.

M8.2	49 (87%)	1 (2%)	6 (11%)

Like *sombe*, *seepi* and *dolu* each vary with another form in the 1970s (Table 7) and 2013 (Table 5) recordings. However, their frequency distributions are rather similar in both data sets suggesting that we are dealing with a case of stable variation. The form identified as Matawai by speakers of the language emerged as the dominant variant in both cases.[13]

Table 7: Frequency distribution of variants for 'self, even' and 'arrive' in the 1970s recordings

Tape	*seepi*	*seefi*	*dolu*	*doo*
M1.1	14	0	33	0
M1.2	16	0	21	2
M2.1	7	0	10	0
M2.2	3	0	10	2/3
M3.1	0	0	5	5
M4.1	80	0	17	0
M6.1	21	4	0	0
M6.2	20	1	7	1
M7.1	15	0	21	0
M8.1	12	0	17	0
M8.2	9	0	14	0

The data also reveal other patterns of variation that speakers did not, however, remark on. Some of them are possibly driven by language contact. Take for instance the expression of 'if, or'. While Hancock (1987) argued that Matawai employs *efu* as a marker of subordination and conditionality, consultants rejected *efu* in favor of *ee*, identifying *efu* as Sranantongo.[14] Analysis of the recordings suggests that variation

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[13] The high rate of usage of *seefi* in M9 is probably an outlier. The high frequency of *seefi* is most likely due to this speaker's close associates with urban culture.

[14] It seems that consultants' outright rejection of *efu* was an artefact of the elicitation context which by its very nature draws heightened attention to differences between language varieties.

between *ee*, a form hitherto associated with Saamaka, and *efu*, used in the other creoles of Suriname and in the early Saamaka records (Arends & Perl 1995), is not a new phenomenon. Variation does not appear to be stable though because while *ee* is the dominant marker of conditionality in the 1970s data (*ee*: 98 vs *efu*: 37) both *ee* and *efu* have closely similar frequencies in the 2013 data (*ee*: 43 vs *efu*: 37). This might suggests that *efu* is encroaching on *ee*. Finally, there are functional differences between the two elements. While *efu* functioned mostly as a marker of conditionality (8a), it was also used as a subordinate clause marker (8b). By contrast, *ee* was only found to head conditional phrases (9).[15] Taken together, the available data suggest the following path of development: *efu* was the marker of conditionality in the early period, at a later stage *ee* became the dominant marker and since about the 1970s *efu* seems to have been gaining ground over *ee*. It is possible that the latter development is being spurred by Matawai speakers' greater contact with the other creoles of Suriname.

(8) a. **efu** i   ku   wan   sombe bi   de   a   wan   pisi   kamia,
        if   you with DET   person PAST COP LOC DET   part   place
        un   ta   libi   moymoy. (M3)
        we   IMPF   live   nice-nice
        'If you and someone were together in a place, we lived well with each other.'
     b. mi an   sa   **efu** a   ná   glati   fisi.   (M7)
        I   NEG know if   it   NEG-COP   smooth   fish
        'I'm not sure if it's not catfish.'
(9) **ee** i   a   taku soni so i   an   nango   a   tila   de.
        if you have mean thing so you NEG   IMPF-go LOC shore there.
        'If you have such bad things, you aren't going to shore there.' (Bosilanti)

Another pattern of variation involves the potential mood markers *sa* and *man* which are used to express ability, permission and epistemic and deontic possibility. Winford & Migge (2007) showed that the Eastern Maroon Creoles employ *sa* mostly in positive contexts and *man* (Pamaka, Aluku, urban Ndyuka) or *poy* (Ndyuka) in

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[15]There were also a handful of contexts where both *ée* and *efu* expressed the meaning of 'maybe' *u ta de ee na feifi* 'We were maybe five'.

negative contexts while Saamaka uses *sa* in both positive and negative contexts.[16] In the Matawai data recorded in 2013, similar to the Eastern Maroon Creoles pattern, *sa* is predominantly found in positive contexts including questions (10a) while its use was much less frequent in negative contexts (10b-c) where *man* clearly predominated (*sa*: 9 vs *man*: 53). The 2013 pattern, however, appears to be the result of a change in progress because *sa* clearly predominated in negative potential contexts in the 1970s data (*sa*: 38 vs *man*: 5). This change in frequency distribution is most likely the result of influence from Sranantongo because the majoirty of the tokens involving *man* were preceded by the negative marker *no* which is closely associated with Sranantongo. However, by the same token, the fact that consultants during the elicitations often also juxtaposed *man* with the Matawai negative markers *ná* and *á(n)* suggests that it is becoming an integral part of the Matawai modality system.

(10) a. twalfu lampeesi aa di i **sa** waka go a tila. (M4)
　　　12 landing-places there REL you can walk go LOC shore
　　　'There are twelve boat landing places where you can go to shore.'

　　b. mi taa "gaan baa ta tapa plein da mi, mi an **sa** kon."
　　　I say big brother IMPF stop plane give me I NEG can come
　　　'I said, "my big brother is going to stop the plane due to me, I am not
　　　allowed to leave.' (M7)

　　c. te mi no **man**, a probleem di ko a mi, mi an
　　　when I NEG can DET problem REL come LOC me I NEG
　　　man los en op, en na 'mi an **sa** dendee'. (M2)
　　　can solve it up it FOC I NEG can resolve
　　　'When you cannot, the problem that I have, I cannot resolve it, that is
　　　[that means] 'I cannot resolve it'.'

　　Yet other patterns of variation appear to be language-internally motivated. Two such patterns concern deictic adverbs. Matawai, like all the creoles of Suriname, distinguishes three degrees of proximity (11a) – *aki* 'here', *de* 'there', *ala* 'over there' – and these elements also function as demonstrative modifiers (11b).

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[16]S*a* may also be negated in the Eastern Maroon Creoles, but this occurs rarely and mostly in epistemic contexts. *Man* is also used in positive questions of ability.

(11) a. mi begi hii sembe di de **aki**, taki taa […]. (M1)

I beg all person REL COP here say say

'I ask all the people who are here, saything that […].

b. komisaisi seepi bi o kon a lasti u di mun **aki**.

commissioner self PAST FUT come LOC last of DET month here

'The commissioner would be coming on the last (day) of this month.'

These three Matawai forms closely resemble those found in Saamaka. There are two exceptions though. According to McWhorter & Good (2012: 188-9), the form used to express the second degree of proximity, *de* 'there', varys with *naande* in Saamaka. They argue that *naande* derives from a combination of the locational marker (*n*)*a* and the adverb *de* that was originally "used when a more explicit deixis is desired" (188). There is also variation in the Matawai data, however, it involves *de* and *ade* (12) and their distributions differ in the two data sets. In the 2013 recordings *ade* and *de* occur 70 and 71 times, respectively, and they both function as demonstrative modifers encoding the meaning of 'that' and as locative adverbs meaning 'there'.

(12) a. de froisi; Makajapingo seepi sombe an dɛ **ade**. (M7)

they move name self person NEG COP over-there

'They moved away; even at Makajapingo there aren't people over there.'

b. a án bi de a di se **ade.** (M3)

she NEG PAST COP LOC DET side there

'She wasn't in that part.'

c. te i dolu **de** i lai dee lai fi'i gwu kekekee.

when you arrive there you load DET-PL stuff for'you IDEO IDEO

'When you arrive there, you load your stuff altogether one after the other.'

d. fa de kai di kamia **de**? (M7)

how they call DET place there

'What do they call that place?'

In the 1970s recordings, in contrast, *de* (155) is more prominent than *ade* (71) and *ade* functions only as a locative adverb and only occurs in clause initial position (13a), possibly preceded by the consecutive markers *noo, hen* or *da*. Unlike *ade, de*

functions as both a demonstrative modifer and as a distal locative adverb (13b-c). The differences between the two data sets suggest that *ade* has expanded its distribution and is now encroaching on that of *de*.

(13) a. nɔɔ Meliyedi, **ade** de kon miti a wan. (M4.1)

      then name there they come meet LOC one

      'Then Meliyedi, there they came to get together.'

  b. di de kumutu **de** baka, nɔɔ en de kon koti Apeefunda

      when they leave there again then then they come cut name

      'When they left from there again, then they came to make Apeefunda.

  c. omeni u bai di teepi **de**? (M6.2)

      how-much you buy DET tape-recorder there

      'For how much did you buy that tape recorder there?'

The second difference to Saamaka relates to the third degree adverb *ala* which is variably realized as [alaa], [ala] and [aa]. [alaa] is an emphatic form and is found clause initially or in exposed position (14d). [ala] functions as both demonstrative modifier (14a) and as a locational adverb (14b) while [aa] is only used as a locational adverb (14c). In the 1970s recordings, [aa] (136 tokens) outnumbers [ala] (77 tokens) in the latter context while [ala] (176 tokens) is more frequent than [aa] (34 tokens) in the 2013 data.

(14)a. dee de **ala**. (M4)

      they COP over-there

      'They are over-there.'

  b. hii dee kamia **ala** mi waka pasa. (M4)

      all DET-PL place over-there I walk pass

      'I've passed through all of these places.'

  c. hila sembe go **aa**. (M7)

      many person go over-there

      'Many people when over-there.'

  d. **alaa** u too go, noo mmanten, noo di a to

      there we together go then morning then when it FUT

      kumutu, a ta teki sembe tya ko. (M3)

leave   it   IMPF   take   people   carry   come

'Over there we all went, then in the morning, when it [the train] will be

leaving (Kwakugoon), it was bring people (to Kabel).'

Finally, contrary to Saamaka which has been found to "not have an alveopalatal fricative [ʃ] (often written as sj or sy for Sranan) in its consonant inventory." (McWhorter & Good 2012: 11), Matawai, like the Eastern Maroon Creoles Aluku and Pamaka (Goury & Migge 2003: 31), does palatalize alveolar voiceless fricatives before high vowels (15). This feature was very prominent in the 1970s recordings and is still a noticable feature in the 2013 recordings.

(15)   a. [paandaʃi] 'village'   e. [piʃi] 'piece

     b. [baʃia] 'assistant'   f. [buʃikonde] 'Maroon area'

     c. [ʃindɔ] 'sit down'   g. [kiʃi] 'get'

     d. [ʃi] 'see'   h. [boʃlanti] '(village of) Bos[i]lanti'

3. 3. Nominal copula environments

Nominal and possessive copular constructions in Matawai exhibit some unexpected difference to Saamaka. The literature on the copular domain in the creoles of Suriname showed that there are two copular morphemes with different distributions in these languages. *De* (<English 'there') is fully verbal and occurs in locational, existential and other predicative contexts except for ascriptive contexts since property items are generally verbs (Migge 2000; Winford 1997).[17] The other copula derives from the demonstrative pronoun *datti* (< English 'that') and is thus pronominal in origin (Arends 1986: 107). Its copula function emerged from its use as a sentence-introducing or presentative particle functioning as a resumptive pronoun in topic-comment-type constructions (Arends 1986: 107). Based on an analysis of early records written in Sranantongo, Arends (1986: 110) showed that *da* then changed to (*n*)*a* sometime in the 18th century. It is indeed currently realized as (*n*)*a* in Sranantongo and the Eastern Maroon Creoles. However, in Saamaka it is still realized

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[17]The copula *de* is realized as [dɛ] in Saamaka and Matawai.

as *da*. Arends (1986: 111-114) furthermore shows that *da* was the main copula element in predicative equative contexts in Sranantongo until about 1800. After 1800 two changes occurred. First, *de* became more frequent and second, *da* narrowed its distribution. He argues that these changes are related to the emergence of

> two distinct categories from the (previously uniform) class of equatives. […] [T]he attributive category develops a predilection for *de* (which was already, although marginally, present), while the expression of identity is delegated to *da*, with *de* (which was originally absent in this function) appearing as a secondary alternative. (Arends 1986: 112)

The distribution described by Arends (1986) for Sranantongo resembles that of Saamaka. In Saamaka *da* typically occurs in so-called identificational contexts (16a) while class equatives or so-called attributive constructions generally employ *de* (16b), with *da* appearing optionally (McWhorter & Good 2012: 182). *Da* is also found optionally in possessive contexts, where it varys with zero rather than with *de* (16c). Finally, *da* is replaced by *de* in overtly tensed constructions (16d). Based on this distribution, McWhorter (1997) argues, contra Arends (1986), that *de* initially functioned as an all-purpose copula and that *da* (later) encroached on *de* in identificational contexts.

(16) a. Mi **da** Gadu. (McWhorter & Good 2012: 178)   Saamaka

I   COP God

'I am God.'

b. Etnel **de/(da)** wan   malenge-ma. (Aboh et al. 2013: 33)

name COP   DET   lazu-AGT

'Etnel is a lazy cat.'

c. Di   buku aki **da/ø/*de** u   mi.   (McWhorter & Good 2012: 182)

DET book here COP   POSS me

'This book is mine.'

d. Di   fosu líbisɛmbe   bi   **de** (***bi da**) Adam.

DET first human.being PAST COP PAST COP name

'The first human being was Adam.' (McWhorter & Good 2012: 179)

In the Eastern Maroon Creoles, unlike Sranantongo and Saamaka, (*n*)*a* is used as the main predicator in equative constructions, including both attributive (17a) and

identity-expressing (17b) constructions, and in possessive contexts (17c). It is only replaced with *de* in overtly tensed constructions (17d-e) (Migge 2002).

(17) a. I **na** modoman. (ND 3)   Ndyuka/Eastern Maroon
　　　you　COP　style.person
　　　'You are a person who adheres to modern style.'

　　b. Disi **na** mi eygi baala. (ND 3)
　　　this　COP　my　own　brother
　　　'This is my real brother [not a classificatory one].'

　　c. A Baa B. **a** fu Mainsi. (ND1)
　　　FOC　Mr B　COP　POSS　name
　　　'It's Mr B who is from [i.e. belongs to] Mainsi.'

　　d. Dati be **de** a moo pikin wan fu ala den. (ND2)
　　　that　PAST　COP　DET　more　little　one　of　all　them
　　　'That was the smallest one of them all.'

　　e. A be mu **de** M. (ND 4)
　　　it　PAST　must　COP　name
　　　'That should be M.'

The Matawai copula domain appears to pattern more closely with that of the Eastern Maroon Creoles rather than with Saamaka. First, Matawai employs *na* rather than *da* in equative contexts (18a-b). In the 1970s recordings *na* was the only copula that was used in equative contexts (218 tokens) and in the 2013 recordings *na* (172 instances) clearly outnumbered *da* (5 tokens). During elicitation, consultants rejected the use of *da* (18c), identifying it as Saamaka.

(18) a. di gaan lanpeesi, [h]en **na** disi. (M3)   Matawai
　　　DET　big　landing.place　it　COP　this
　　　'The big boat landing area, it is this one.'

　　b. legede womi, yu **na** legedeman. (M1)
　　　gossip　man　you　COP　gossiper
　　　'You are a gossiper.'

　　c. mi *na/*da* wan/di sista. (EH)
　　　I　COP　DET　nurse

'I am a nurse.'

The few *da* tokens that occurred in the 2013 recordings (19) all involved some sort of emphasis. This could suggest that they are in fact instances of code-switching for purposes of emphasis (Migge 2015). Further investigation is necessary.

(19) hen **da** penkusu. (M7)
 it COP alcoholic.cane water
 'It's what they call alcoholic cane water.'

A second difference to Saamaka is the fact that *na* may also function as a focus or presentative marker in general (20a-b) and in topic comment constructions (20c).

(20) a. mi an sabi, **na** dii yai. (M7)
  I neg know it's three year
  '[How old was he?] I don't know, it's three years.'
 b. **na** kapiten mi bi mu da en. (M4)
  foc kapiten I past must give it
  'It's to the kapten that I should give it.'
 c. di muyee f'en, **na** D, di womi, hen na A. (M7)
  det woman poss.him cop/foc name det man it cop A
  'His wife, it's D; the man, he is A.'

This resembles the use of *na* in the Eastern Maroon Creoles (Migge 2002) and in Sranantongo (Arends 1986). In Saamaka, *da* does not function as a focus or presentative marker. This function is carried out by the postposed focus marker *we* and the marker of new information *noo* (McWhorter & Good 2012: 181).[18]

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[18]The recordings contained a very small number of postposed *we* and *noo* overall. Such constructions generally involved question words (i) or adverbials (ii/iii). There were many constructions with preposed *we* and *noo* that seemed to have a (contrastive) focus function but these were not used in copula constructions (iii). Further research on focusing devices in Matawai is needed.

(i) anfa 'fa w*e*?', mi taa 'mi kon' (T1.1)

A third difference to Saamaka occurs in possessive constructions where, according to McWhorter & Good (2012: 181-2), copula *da* is optional (16c). In the Matawai recordings, *na* was generally present in possessive constructions (20a), as in equivalent constructions in the Eastern Maroon Creoles (17c). Copula absence only occurred in the case of object fronting (21b-c) involving the distal demonstrative pronoun *disi* which performs emphatic indexing and is found in all the creoles of Suriname (22)[19].

(21) a. di   mii   ta   taki,   hen   'mi   **na**   fu   Balin'. (M1)

     DET   child   IMPF   talk   FOC   I   COP   POSS   name

     'The child was saying, I'm from Balin.'

   b. dee   mama   u   mi,   Ø   disi,   yei. (M1)

     DET.PL   mother   POSS   me   COP   this   assert

     'This is [one/a female elder of] my mother ['s generation].'

   c. en   tata   konde,   Ø   disi. (T1.2)

     his   father   village   COP   this

     'This is his father's village.'

(22) a. u   gaasama,   Ø   disi.   Pamaka

     our   ancestor   COP   this

     'This is our ancestor.'

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   ok   how   FOC   I   say   I   come

   'Ok, 'what?', I said 'I'm coming.''

(ii) a   so   noo   mi   sabi   den. (M5)

   it   so   NI   I   know   them

   'It's like that I know them.'

(iii) [reply of the ritual responder]   so   we   kapiten 'That's right, kapiten.' (T4)

                               so   FOC   kapiten

(iv) a   taa   'hem?, w*e*   se   mi   de   aki'? (M4)

   he   said   he   FOC   side   I   COP   here

   'He said 'he? Well, where am I?''

[19]Copula absence is also typical in all the creoles of Suriname in constructions that predicate 'today' with a day of the week, e.g. *tide, munde* 'Today is Monday' (EMC).

b. Mí   tatá,   **Ø**   dísi.   Saamaka

I-POSS   father COP this

'This is my father.'   (McWhorter & Good 2012: 180)

A fourth difference to Saamaka involves negation of *na/da*. According to McWhorter & Good (2012: 1978-9), "*da* is negated via replacement with negator *ná*." However, in Matawai this option (23a), which is probably best interpreted as a fusion between the copula and negative marker into one high toned and lengthened morpheme, is only one of three possibilities. A second common strategy consists of post-posing the negation marker to copula (*n*)*a* (23b) and a third but less commonly used option involves replacing copula *na* with copula *de* (23c). All three options are also employed in the Eastern Maroon Creoles (Huttar & Huttar 1994: 134, 136).

(23) a. didɛ na   turis,   ma   disi **na**   turis. (M4)

    that COP tourist but this NEG.COP tourist

    'That's a toursit, but this is not a tourist.'

b. ma   dia   **a**   **na**   di   waki wan. (M5)

    but   that COP NEG DET wait one

    'But that one is not the waiting bench.'

c. ná koleika,   mi **an** **de**   basia. (M2)

    foc colleagues   I   NEG COP village.assistant

    'It's not colleagues (we are), I'm not a basia.'

The equative copula domain in Matawai, however, also displays difference to that of the Eastern Maroon Creoles and Sranantongo. While the past marker *be* in the former and *ben* in the latter may be combined with copula and focus *na* (Huttar & Huttar 1994: 134; Arends 1986: 109), see (24a), this does not seem to be possible in Matawai (like in Saamaka (16d)). Constructions in which the Matawai past marker *bi* follows *na* (24b) were rejected by Matawai consultants and they also do not occur in the recordings. Instead, *na* is replaced by the copla *de* (25c) in such contexts.

(24) a. we,   **na**   **be**   en   uman.   Pamaka

    well she-COP PAST his   woman

    'Well, she was his wife.'   (EMC-PM12)

b. mi	**na**	***bi**	wan	sista.		Matawai
I	COP	PAST	DET	nurse	(Matawai-EH)	

c. ma	di	muyee	**bi**	**de**	gowtuman.	Matawai
but	DET	woman	PAST	COP	gold.worker	

'But the woman was working in gold mining.'   (Matawai-M9)

Finally, Matawai (25a), like all the Surinamese Creoles (25b-c), replaces the copula *na/da* with *de* in constructions overtly marked for tense, mood and aspect because *na/da* is not verbal.

(25) a. mi **ke/o** **de/*na** wan sista.[20]   Matawai

    I want/FUT COP DET nurse

    'I want to/will be a nurse.'   (Matawai-EH)

  b. Mi tata **o** **de** di kabiteni.   Saamaka

    POSS father FUT COP DET captain

    'My father will be the village head.' (McWhorter & Good 2012: 179)

  c. A **musu de** Rasta.   Pamaka

    it OBL. COP name

    'That/it must be Rasta.'

The Matawai recordings include a small number of constructions in which *de* occurred in untensed positive class constructions (26). There were three such constructions in the 2013 data and twelve in the 1970 data. In the elicitations, the Matawai consultants did not judge them to be ungrammatical but expressed a preference for *na*. Note that spontaneous use of *de* in untensed equative constructions often cooccurs when locative *de* was used in previous connecting sentences.

(26) a. mi a wan muyee mii, ma a an de aki, a **de** jefrouw

    I have DET woman child but she NEG COP here she COP teacher

    a Brownsweg. (M 7)

    LOC name

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[20]The consultants argued that *mi wani toon wan sista* 'I want to become a nurse.' is the most common way of rendering the notion of 'to become'.

'I have a daughter, but she is not here, she is a teacher in Brouwnsweg.'

b. a de a wan muyee yedi, di muyee de aa, di muyee **de**

it COP LOC one women head DET woman COP there DET woman COP

basia, a de a Kwakugoon. (M2.2)

assistant she COP LOC name.

'It [the ancestor spirit] is in a woman's head, the woman is there, the woman is an assistant to the kapiten [and] she lives in Kwakugoon.'

The findings summarized in Table 8 show that equative constructions in Matawai most closely resemble those in the Eastern Maroon Creoles. Matawai does not distinguish identity and class nominal contexts as both employ the same copula, *na*. As in the Eastern Maroon Creoles and Sranatongo, *na* in Matawai can also be used as a focus marker and in possessive contexts, and be involved in the same kinds of negation strategies. The main difference is the fact that, like *da* in Saamaka, it cannot co-occur with the past marker. Two of its properties – replacement with *de* in overtly tensed constructions and absence before post-posed *disi* – are shared by all the creoles of Suriname.

The findings from Matawai further support Arends' (1986) scenario of the development of the copula domain. Essentially, copula *de* and *da* appear to have emerged concurrently but in different contexts. Subsequently, *da* changed to *na* in most of the varieties and in some of the varieties, Sranantongo and Saamaka, it narrowed its distribution to identity contexts, while in other varieties (Eastern Maroon Creoles and Matawai) they retained their original distrbution.

Table 8: Comparison of the properties of copula *na/da* in the Creoles of Suriname

Features	Matawai	Saamaka	Sranantongo	Eastern Maroon Creoles
morpheme	*na*	*da*	*na*	*na*
Equative contexts - identity contexts - class contexts	+ +	+ -	+ -	+ +
Possessive contexts - use of *na/da* - Ø preceding *disi*	+ +	(+) +	+ +	+ +
Focus function	+	-	+	+
Negation - replaced by *de*	(+)	+	(+)	(+)

- merging with neg	+	-	+	+
- cop + neg	+	-	+	+
TMA				
- replaced by *de*	+	+	+	+
- cop + past	-	-	+	+

3. 4. Expression of the future

The literature on the Creoles of Suriname identifies preverabl *o* as the marker of predictive future. According to van den Berg (2007: 191-192) it derives from the English verb *go* in a construction where it is either combined with the imperfective marker, i.e. (*d*)*e go*/*ta*(*n*) *go,* or used on its own.[21] Matawai differs from its sister languages in that it makes use of the preverbal marker *to*. *To*, however, alternates with *o* (27).

(27) a. te   mi go   now, mi ku   di muyee aki **to** taki. (Bos)

      when I   leave now I   with DET woman here FUT talk

      'When I leave (from here) now, I and this woman will talk.

   b. iya, bika   basi seepi **o**   ko.

      Yes because boss self   FUT come

      'Yes, because the boss (politician) will come (to the meeting).'

In several of the 2013 recordings *to* only accounted for less than 50% of future tokens (Table 5). This contrasts with their distribution in the 1970s recordings where *to* by far outnumbered *o* (Table 9)[22] in most recordings, suggesting that *o* is competing with *to*.

Table 9: Variation between *to* and *o* in the 1970s Matawai data

	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	3.1	4	6.1	6.2	7.1	8.1	8.2
to	36	60	63	126	19	69	16	20	18	16	19
	92%	80%	83%	93%	24%	70%	59%	65%	42%	46%	59%

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[21]*Sa* expressed uncertain future in the early documents and was associated with Europeans' linguistic practices (van den Berg 2007: 188ff, 196).

[22]The high number of *o* tokens in 3.1 is due to frequent repetition of a sentence containing *o*.

o	3	15	14	10	62	30	11	11	25	19	13
	8%	20%	17%	7%	76%	30%	41%	35%	58%	54%	41%

To and *o* in Matawai have mostly the same distribution which, in turn, also resembles that of *o* in the other creoles of Suriname. Both *to* and *o* can be combined with activtiy-denoting, dynamic verbs and with more stative verbs (28).

(28) a. a   to sabi   en, na saamaka womi! (M 4)
      he FUT know it   FOC saamaka man
      'He will know it (the word), he is a Saamaka.'
   b. dee   muyee to de u   den   teeee. (T 1.2)
      DET   woman FUT be   for them   for a long time
      'The women will be together/among themselves for a long time.'
   c. di muyee aki   o   sabi   snel oo. (M 4)
      DET woman here FUT know   fast EMPH
      'This woman will know things fast!'

To, like *o*, may also be combined with the aspectual marker *ta* and its suppletive form *nango* (29). The recordings and elicitations also revealed two instances of *o ta* but none of *o nango* (30).

(29) a. de **to ta**   soigi noo a ta   hali di pondo. (M5)
      they FUT IMPF suck then it IMPF pull DET barge
      'They will be sucking dirt, then he will be pulling the barge for river goldmining (further away).'
   b. di   i   to   si wan sombe a pasi, di   i   **to nango**,
      when you FUT see DET person LOC path when you FUT going
      noo soso gowtu to puu a   i   buka. (T1.2)
      then only gold   FUT pull LOC your mouth
      'When you'll see a person on the path, when you'll be going, only gold will come out of your mouth.'

(30) a. komputer   a   **o   ta**   sei.
      Computer   he FUT IMPF   sell

'He will be selling computers.

b. nɔɔ mi **o** **ta** soli i se de miti. (T2.2)

    then I FUT IMPF show you where they meet

    'Thus I will be showing you where they met.'

The recordings and elicitations did not produce any instances of *bi to*, but a few instances of *bi o* and one instance of *bi to* expressing conditionality occurred in the recordings and in the elicitiations (31).

(31) a. mi sikiifi di biifi taki a **bi** **o** moo bunu efu u

        I write DET letter say it PAST FUT more good if we

        no mu koli u moo. (M4)

        NEG must trick us anymore

        'I wrote the letter saying it would be better if we did not trick ourselves any more.'

   b. nomo da ee na so i **bi** **to** dede, …. (M4)

        only then if NEG so you PAST FUT die

        'Only then, if it's like that you would die, …'

O, but seemingly not *to*, may be combined with the negative possibility-expressing auxiliary verb *man* (32). However, both *to* and *o* do not appear to cooccur with the obligation marker *mu*.

(32) i ná **o** **man** go a libase. (M4)

    you NEG FUT ability go LOC top.side

    'You cannot go to the top part.

Finally, as in the other Maroon Creoles (Migge & Winford 2009), uncertain future may be expressed by combining the adverb *kande* with either of the two future markers (33a) or by using the potential marker *sa* (33b).

(33) a. kande u to komoto flukufluku kon aki baka. (M4)

        maybe we FUT come.out early.early come here back

        'Maybe we'll leave early and then/to come back here.'

b. de   sa   kaa   yu. (M4)

    they   may   call   you

    'They may call you (for that meeting).'

Together, these data suggest that Matawai is unique among the creoles of Suriname in that it has a distinct future marker *to*, which, however, alternates with, *o*, the variant found in its sister languages. At this stage, the etymological origin of *to* is unclear. Comparison of the 2013 with the 1970 data suggests that the variation between them is not stable. It appears to be affected by factors such as speech style, residency patterns and age. Further research is required.

4. Conclusion

This paper investigated the lesser-used and linguistically unexplored Surinamese Maroon Creole Matawai from both a sociohistorical and linguistic perspective in order to determine its relationship to its sister languages. The analysis confirms statements in the literature that place Matawai in the so-called 'Western branch of the Creoles of Suriname' (Smith 2002). Although we know little about its origin, there is ample evidence that the founders of the Matawai community were in close contact and formed a single residential unit with parts of the Saamaka community in the early years. Moreover, Matawai shares many lexical items, both content and function words, with Saamaka.

However, Matawai is not identical to Saamaka. There are several features, including patterns of variation, such as the form of the nominal copula and the make up of the equative copula domain, palatalization of /s/ and the use of *man* that are not shared with Saamaka. Some of these features most likely emerged due to contact with speakers of other creoles, such as Kwinti, Ndyuka and Sranantongo (e.g. use of *man*). Other features, such as the copula *na* and the structure of the equative copula domain, but possibly also palatalization and variation in the expression of the marker of conditionality probably date from earlier periods such as the 19th century and in some cases even the early plantation varieties. Further research on the dating of changes is necessary. Other patterns of variation, such as those found among locational adverbs appear to be due to internally motivated change. Finally, it was shown that Matawai has its own future marker, *to*, which is not attested in any of the other varieties and its ethymological origin is unclear.

The analysis shows that Matawai speech is characterized by a fair amount of variation which appears to affect all levels of grammar. While some of this variation may turn out, at least in part, to be conditioned by social factors if a larger, socially stratified sample of recordings is used, the historical perspective presented here suggests that Matawai is in fact in the process of undergoing (a fair amount of) change. The fact that Matawai speakers appear to increasingly adopt features of more widely spoken creole varieties in Suriname might be indicative of the fact that Matawai is not only undergoing quantiative (loss of speakers) but also so-called qualitative attrition in that it is losing its original features and thus becoming more like its sister languages (Borges 2013. Further research on this issue is needed.

The analysis in this paper confirms that detailed attention to lesser-used varieties of creole languages is necessary in order to fully understand the development of and the relationships between related creoles languages. Lesser-used varieties such as Matawai reveal new elements, types of structural patterns and patterns of variation that, in turn, make it possible to reassess or confirm existing theories such as the development of the copula domain. The paper also suggests that comparative approaches that compare data from related languages on the one hand and comparable data sets from different time periods using both descriptive and quantiative methods of analysis are important for understanding directions and processes of language change. Such multiple data sets help to trace changes and to obtain further insights into types of changes.

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