The Eastern Maroon Creoles or Nenge(e)
Bettina Migge

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The Eastern Maroon Creoles (EMCs) or Nenge(e) are typically classified as conservative English-lexified Caribbean Creole languages because the bulk of their lexicon (76%) derives from English (Smith 1987: 11). However, they display important structural differences to varieties of English and English Creoles in the region and beyond, and are not mutually intelligible with either. The EMCs comprise three main and closely related varieties referred to as Ndyuka or Okanisi, Pamaka, and Aluku.1 The differences between these varieties are mostly found on the phonological level (Goury and Migge 2003: 46–50). The EMCs are part of the Creoles of Suriname – seven related Creole varieties; besides the EMCs, they include Sranan Tongo, the coastal urban creole, and the Maroon Creoles Saamaka, Matawai and Kwinti. The EMCs are spoken by descendants of slaves who fled the sugar plantations of Suriname in the 18th century (cf. Migge 2003: 57; Smith 2002: 131, 141). They are associated with semi-autonomous communities by the same name.

Population statistics are difficult to obtain. Price (2002) conservatively estimated that the three varieties are spoken by some 66,500 people. Ndyuka is spoken by about 32,000 speakers in Suriname, 14,000 in French Guiana, and 4,500 in the Netherlands. By contrast, the 6,000 Aluku speakers predominantly reside in the interior villages and in urban areas of the French overseas department of French Guiana and to a very small degree in metropolitan France and the Netherlands. The estimated 6,000 speakers of Pamaka reside in roughly equal numbers in rural and urban areas of Suriname and French Guiana, and a small number also lives in the Netherlands and metropolitan France. Members of all three communities are well represented in the urban centres of Suriname and French Guiana.

There are two grammatical descriptions of the EMCs. Huttar and Huttar (1994) addresses an academic audience and focuses on the Ndyuka variety while Goury and Migge (2003) is aimed at educators and lay people in French Guiana and deals with all three varieties. Shanks et al. (2000) is a basic English-Aukan/Ndyuka dictionary. Research has focused on structural issues (e.g. Huttar and Koanting 1993b; Huttar and Huttar 1997; Goury 2003; Winford and Migge 2004), historical language contact, specifically the genesis of the Creoles of Suriname, (e.g. Huttar 1981, 1985; Huttar et al. 2007; Migge 1998, 2000, 2003a and b, 2006; Winford and Migge 2007; Migge and Goury 2008; Migge and Winford 2009; Migge and van den Berg 2009), and on sociolinguistic including contemporary contact issues (e.g. Migge 2001, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011; Léglise and Migge 2006; Migge and Léglise 2011, forthcoming) and on applied matters in French Guiana (cf. Migge and Léglise 2007, 2010).

The WAVE survey is based on data obtained from natural recordings of different types (conversations, interviews, stories, political meetings, radio programs) that were recorded in western French Guiana and in Suriname since 1994, observations, elicitations and on the published literature.

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1 In the academic and lay literature, Dutch and English versions of several of these names are common, e.g. Paramaccans or Paramaka(n) instead of Pamaka and Aukan instead of Ndyuka or Okanisi which are speakers’ autodenominations. In the French literature in particular, Aluku is often referred to by the name of Boni. The term Nenge(e) is most widely used among speakers to refer to the language in general while group related terms (e.g. Pamaka) are used in reference to a particular variety (cf. Léglise and Migge 2006).
2 Socio-cultural background

In 1651 100 English settlers and their slaves from Barbados established small farms in Suriname, but by the mid 1660s there were already several sugar plantations (Arends 2002: 116). Around 1665 Sephardic Jews set up plantations on the Commewijne River and the upper Suriname River. The Portuguese element in the Surinamese Creoles is attributed to these settlers (but cf. Smith 1987 and 2002). In 1667 Suriname was taken over by the Dutch. It was under the jurisdiction of the province of Zeeland from 1667–1683 and then became the responsibility of the Societeit van Suriname. Between 1690 and 1775 it expanded rapidly due to the importation of West African slaves who soon outnumbered the European population (Arend 1995: 259–260). Lack of opportunities to learn varieties of English promoted retention of African languages, significant reinterpretation of material from English according to African patterns (cf. Migge 2003), and led to the establishment of highly divergent varieties among most slaves.

English and to a lesser degree Portuguese were the main European input languages and varieties of Gbe, Kikongo and Akan were the main African input languages to the emergence and development of the Surinamese Creoles (Arends 1995: 240–253). Dutch mainly influenced the Maroon Creoles quite late and initially mostly via Sranan Tongo. Influence from French is still quite marginal. The Maroon Creoles (e.g. EMcs) are assumed to be very conservative because for most of their history these communities kept relatively separate from the rest of the society.

Maroon men have always spent time doing cash labour in coastal Suriname and French Guiana. Since the 1950s increasingly greater numbers of EM men and later also women permanently moved first to urban areas in Suriname and since the 1980s – due to the civil war – mainly to French Guiana and the Netherlands. While alignment with Maroon culture, languages and ethnicity remains high, recent work in French Guiana suggests that young Maroons are increasingly seeing themselves as members of a pan-Maroon community rather than or foremost as members of one of the traditional Maroon communities (cf. Léglise and Migge 2006, forthcoming). Young Maroons are at pains to stress their urban sophistication and codeswitching practices involving Maroon languages and urban-associated languages such as Sranan Tongo, Dutch and French play an important role in negotiating urban identities. Due to contact with these languages through both the agency of Maroons and non-Maroons who learn the Surinamese Creoles, the EMcs are undergoing socio-pragmatic, lexical and to a much lesser degree structural change (cf. Migge 2005, 2007, 2011; Migge and Léglise 2011; Migge and Léglise forthcoming). Socially-based (e.g. residency, education, gender etc) variation is becoming more prominent while regionally or ethnically and situationally-conditioned variation appears to recede.

Formal education is delivered in Dutch in Suriname and in French in French Guiana. In French Guiana the EMcs have been recognized as langue de France and an experimental educational project involving their use is taking place in some schools in the western part of this French region (Migge and Léglise 2010). EMcs are also used in radio broadcasting. Koyeba (Suriname) broadcasts 24 hours and Loweman Pansu (western French Guiana, radio UDL) broadcasts five times a week for two hours.

3 Notable aspects of the Eastern Maroon Creoles/ Nenge(e) WAVE profile

The WAVE questionnaire deals with the morpho-syntactic features of different varieties of English. Out of the 235 features, I rated 44 as ‘A’ (pervasive or obligatory) and 3 as ‘B’ (neither pervasive nor extremely rare). For a complete overview of all 47 WAVE features see the appendix. The remaining 188 features were rated X (‘not applicable’). If it is taken into account that most of the A-rated features are actually obligatory in the EMcs and do not even involve variation with forms typical of standardized varieties of English, the ratings can be taken to be indicative of the relatively great difference that exists between the EMcs/Nenge(e) and standardized varieties of English. There is overlap with non-standardized varieties of English, but even that overlap is
The pronominal system of the EMCs/Nenge(e) shows important differences to that of other varieties of English in several respects. Pronominal forms derive from English pronominal forms (mi ‘I’, you ‘you’, wi ‘we’, den ‘them’), English demonstratives (a ‘s/he/it’ < that) and probably Dutch pronouns, e.g. u ‘you (pl), we’. They are always realized in the same manner across subject, object, dative and possessive contexts (e.g. F5, F6, F9, F18, F19, F21, F22, F23, F24); reduction of mi to m and den to de is frequent in discourse though. The only exception to this is the third person singular pronoun. a is found in subject position and en in object, dative and possessive positions. There is no gender distinction for third person singular pronouns and a is also used as a dummy subject pronoun (e.g. F10). En is also used as a third person singular emphatic subject pronoun and, at least in Pamaka and Aluku, yu is used as an emphatic subject form for the second person singular pronoun i (e.g. F32, F35). The special emphatic pronouns and the invariant pronouns typically occur in cleft constructions to indicate prominence. Unlike English, the EMCs/Nenge(e) employ distinct forms to indicate the second person singular and plural subject, object, possessive, dative pronoun, i and u respectively (e.g. F34). U is also used to index honorific status if it is used to address a single person. In subject and object position, a and en may be replaced in discourse with the NP a sani ‘the thing’ for inanimate referents and di sani ‘the thing’ for human referents (e.g. F3).

In the EMCs both singular and plural pronominal forms combine with the form seefi ‘self’ to express reflexivity, but number distinction is not marked on seefi (e.g. F11, F14). Seefi is also employed in a number of other functions such as an emphatic marker when postposed to an NP or as a reciprocal marker (e.g. F15). Although this issue has not been investigated in much detail, the distribution of the reflexive-marking element appears to closely resemble that of its counterpart in the EMCs’ main substrate input, the varieties of Gbe.

There are eight features that deal with aspects of the noun phrase. Unlike most Englishes, plural is indicated in nouns either via the preposed element den, the definite plural marker (e.g. F50), or via another number-marking modifier, e.g. tu ‘two’, son ‘some’. Den also functions as an associative plural marker (e.g. F52). Singularity is not specially marked. However, definite singular NPs are preceded by the determiner a derived from dat(i) ‘that’ (Arends 1989 for Sranan Tongo). Indefinite singular NPs are typically preceded by the determiner wan ‘one’ (e.g. F66), while indefinite plural and generic NPs do not involve a determiner. In the EMCs demonstrative pronouns, disi ‘this’ and dati ‘that’, are different from demonstrative modifiers. There are three demonstrative modifiers derived from the locational deictic forms ya ‘here’, de ‘there’ and anda ‘over there’ (e.g. F69, F70). They are postposed to definite NP, i.e. one that is preceded by the singular (a) or plural (den) definite determiner; number distinction is encoded in the definite determiner and not in the demonstrative modifier (e.g. F71). While word order is different in the Gbe languages, the non-definiteness of demonstrative modifiers in the EMCs is likely to have emerged due to substrate influence.

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2 Both wi and u are used as first person plural pronouns. U is widely used in Pamaka and Aluku while wi is more typical of Ndyuka varieties.
3 The di in di sani is probably derived from the demonstrative disi which emerged as a definite determiner in the sister language Saamaka instead of a. Today disi only functions as demonstrative pronouns in the EMCs (section 3.2) and Saamaka, but as both demonstrative pronoun and demonstrative modifier in their sister language Sranan Tongo. More research is needed on this aspect.
A possessive relationship between NPs is expressed by simple juxtaposition where the possessor NP precedes the possessed NP (e.g. F77). It may also be expressed using the preposition fu (e.g. F74). In this case, the possessed NP precedes the possessor NP; possessive fu can also select a pronominal object. Both patterns closely resemble similar structures found in the Gbe varieties. Finally, in the EMCs associative plural is expressed by preposing the plural definite determiner den to the name of a person.

3.3 Copular Structures

Copular constructions in the EMCs are clearly different from those found in other varieties of English. Both equative and attributive nominal and possessive constructions generally involve the element (n)ja (e.g. F140) which developed from the focus marker (n)ja in topic comment constructions. In overtly tensed constructions, it is replaced by de because (n)ja is not verbal and thus cannot be preceded by TMA markers; the past marker may follow (n)ja though (e.g. En na be gaaman. ‘he was a leader’). The copula de derives from the English locational adverb there. It is used in locational contexts (e.g. F141), existential contexts (e.g. Moni an de. ‘There isn’t any money.’), with special reduplicated adjectives that express temporary states (e.g. A duk a fu en de natinati. ‘Her towel is in a wet state.’), and variably with some Dutch-derived adjectives (e.g. A (de) zeker. ‘She is sure.’). Existential notions are also expressed using abi ‘have’ (e.g. F206). Property items are verbs and therefore do not require a copular element in predicative position (e.g. F177). In attributive position, they precede the noun (e.g. A baaka buuku ‘the dark/black pair of trousers). The same forms are used in attributive, predicative and adverbial position (e.g. F221). There are close similarities between copular constructions in the EMCs and Gbe languages suggesting that the former were modelled on the latter though input patterns from second language varieties of English clearly played a supporting role.

3.4 Tense, mood, aspect

The EMCs have two tense-marking elements, o and be which both precede the main verb. The element o most likely derived from the lexical item go (cf. van den Berg 2007: 188–196; e.g. F114). It is used to express later time reference, intention or predication and predictability. Be which most likely derives from English been is a relative past marker (e.g. F111). It does not obligatorily precede all verbs that express past events especially in narratives. Once a past time frame has been set either by the use of be or by adverbial means, subsequent verbs are not marked by be. A use of be in this context functions to distance an event from the events in the story (i.e. it indicates a past-before-past). Unmarked activity, accomplishment and achievement verbs generally express a past time reference.

The EMCs also have two aspect-marking elements: kaba and e. Kaba follows the verb and conveys that an event is seen as completed. It expresses the sense of a perfect of result with non-statives (e.g. Mi nyan kaba. ‘I’ve eaten already.’), and a sense that a state has begun in the past and is continuing up to a point of reference (A sabi a toli kaba. ‘He knows about the matter already.’). The form kaba derives from the verb kaba ‘finish’ (e.g. F110).

E derives from the copular de. It is essentially an imperfective marker and conveys that events are in progress (e.g. A e wasi osu. ‘He’s cleaning the house.’), continue over a certain time (A yali ya meki en osu. ‘This year he’s building a house.’), including the present, or are habitual (e.g. Ala tudeiwooko a e go a goon. ‘Every Tuesday he works on his field.’). Unlike varieties of English, the EMCs do not have a present tense marker and present time is expressed using e.

There are a number of modality-marking elements in the EMCs. However, only the potential marker sa and the obligation marker mu may also be used to encode politeness (e.g. F127).

Research on the origin of TMA markers suggests that substrate influence definitely played a role in its emergences in the Surinamese Creoles. However, other processes such as the nature of the English constructions that were reinterpreted and pragmatically-based reinterpretations also impacted on the emergence of the TMA system, too.
3.5 Locational and directional phrases

The Surinamese Creoles have very few prepositions and both locational and directional concepts are expressed by elements that do not derive from prepositions in varieties of English. Locational phrases in the EMCs/Nenge(e) are realized using a general locational marker (*n*/*a*) that heads the locational phrase and a nominal locational specifier (*tapu, ondo, mindi*, etc) that follows the NP expressing the broad location. The locational specifier is in a possessive-type relationship with the NP, e.g. *a dagu de na a sutuu ondo* ‘the dog is under the chair [lit. at below of chair]’. The locational specifier *ini* ‘inside’ and to a lesser degree *tapu* ‘top’ are grammaticalizing into a prepositional-type element. *Ini* often precedes the NP or is found preceding and following the NP (e.g. *A sikiifi tapu a pampila.* ‘He wrote on the piece of paper.’). The locational specifier is optional in contexts in which it expresses a habitual relationship between a location and an agent (e.g. *A patu de na a tafa* (*a*) (tapu). ‘The pot is ON the table.’). Several of the locational specifiers derive from English prepositions (e.g. *ondo* (*o*) ‘under’, *ini* ‘in’; e.g. F217) while others derive from nouns (e.g. *tapu* ‘top’, *minidi* (*i*) ‘middle’).

Directional phrases are headed by elements that are related to directional verbs in the language such as *go* ‘go’, *gwe* ‘go way/leave’, *kon* ‘come’, *komoto* ‘come out/from’ (e.g. F149, 150). They are referred to as serial verbs in the literature because they follow other motion-expressing verbs. They express the direction of the motion of the main verb: *go/gwe* express ‘movement away from reference point’, *kon* denotes ‘movement towards a reference point’ and *komoto* conveys ‘movement out of or from a reference point’. As head of directional phrases, they are not verbs in that they cannot be preceded by TMA and negation-marking elements, but are functional elements.

There are clear parallels in the Gbe languages suggesting that the broad structural makeup of both, locational and directional phrases, was modeled on substrate patterns.

3.6 Other serial verb constructions (SVCs)

Besides directional serial verb construction (SVC), the EMCs also have a number of other structures in which an element that functions as a main verb in the languages is also used as a functional element. The main elements are *gi* ‘give’, *moo* ‘more’ and *taki* ‘talk, say’ (see below for *taki*). *Gi*-headed phrases are regularly used to express a wide range of meanings such as the recipient of an action, a benefactor of an action, an experiencer of a perception, emotion etc (e.g. F148). *Gi*-headed phrases follow the verb or the object argument. *Gi* is the only serial verb that has clear prepositional characteristics.

Comparison is conveyed by the element *moo* that heads the phrase expressing the standard of comparison and occurs following the predicate (e.g. F80). *Moo* may additionally also precede the predicate. However, in pre-predicate position it only expresses comparison if the standard of comparison is not overtly expressed. In NP contexts *moo* also precedes the property item (*A moo ogi wan e tan ya*. ‘The meanest member [of the family] lives here.’)

It is also possible to combine more than two serial verbs (e.g. F151). This typically involves a situation where a directional serial verb selects a dative object expressed as a *gi*-headed phrase.

3.7 Negation

Besides the sentential negators *ée*, *nono*, *kwetikweti*, there are two verbal negators, *ná* and *á(n)*. *Ná* is used with verbs beginning in a vowel in declarative sentences (*U ná o gwe moo?* ‘You won’t go/leave any more?’), in imperative constructions (*Ná bali so* (overheard) ‘Don’t shout like that.’), and to convey (negative) emphasis,

4 Most people still identify them as structures from Sranan Tongo, i.e. their use involves codeswitching.
Bettina Migge

3.8 Clefting

Clefting is performed using movement in the case of non-sentence initial elements (e.g. object NPs, adverbs) and in most cases the focus element (n)a precedes the moved constituent (e.g. F223). In the case of predicate clefting, the verb is copied to the front of the sentence and a copy remains in the original place. Clefting expresses contrastive focus and non-contrastive focus. It is not generally used for topicalisation which involves post-posing the demonstrative determiners dai to the topicalized NP (Mi ân bii, nei dai án de ye. ‘I don’t believe that, as for this kind of knife, it does not exist!’).

3.9 Complementation

The EMCs, like most languages, have fact-type complements, activity-type complements and potential-type complements. The latter types of complements express that something is about to occur. These kinds of complements are habitually expressed using the element fu in the EMCs. Fu selects both finite and non-finite phrases (e.g. F201). Fact-type complements refer to the fact that something has occurred, is occurring, or will occur. They are introduced by the serial verb taki (< Engl. talk). It functions as a complementizer for verbs of utterance (Data bali taki i abi deki ati. ‘The doctor said (loudly, forcefully) that you are very courageous.’), cognition (Mi be membee taki a be fu Nedelanti. ‘I thought that she was from the Netherlands.’), perception (Mi yee taki i e go a bilo. ‘I heard that you are going down-river.’), evaluative (A tuu taki a ná o du a sani. (elicited/overheards) ‘It is true that she won’t do it.’) and modal predicates (A sa de taki a ná o kon. (elicited) ‘It is possible that he won’t come.’). It also functions as a quotative (Neen a bali taki “Pe ie go so?” ‘Then he shouted saying ‘Where are you going like this.’’). Activity-type complements refer to an ongoing activity or event and do not involve a complementizer (Mi si a e gwe anda. ‘I see him going over there [the other side of the village].’). There are close similarities in the expression of fact-type and potential-type complementation in Gbe and the Surinamese Creoles suggesting that substrate influence played an important role in the emergence of these constructions in these creoles.

3.10 Qualifiers

There are two qualifiers that express intensification in the EMCs. Gaan ‘very’ only occurs in attributive position (Mi teki wan gaan bigi beenki so. ‘I took a very big basin like that.’). The element te is found in VPs only (a sama de masonson nyoni te. ‘That person’s brain is very small.) The form tumisi cannot be used to express intensification as it encodes the meaning ‘too much’.

3.11 Sentence structure: Questions

Yes/no questions in the EMCs do not involve movement, but simply rising intonation (e.g. F229). Questions with wh-words do not involve inversion or auxiliary support (e.g. 228). If the subject NP is being questioned, no movement occurs. However, in the case of other, non-initial elements, the wh-word is moved to sentence-initial position.
4 Problematic issues: What the WAVE profile does not show

WAVE is focused on comparing divergent features in varieties of English. Since Creoles generally only emerged with influence from English (or another European language), but are not easily classifiable as later descendants of earlier varieties of English, i.e. are different languages, the WAVE matrix cannot fully capture the distinctive nature of most Creoles. It can possibly capture the distance that exists between standardized and non-standardized varieties of English, on the one hand, and conservative creoles, on the other hand. Two aspects appear a bit problematic to me. First, rather than looking at entire subsystems, the WAVE matrix is very much concerned with individual, often idiosyncratic features. I feel that in order to get a full picture of the nature of the similarities and differences, it is useful to compare entire subsystems and as part of that to pinpoint the exact functions of specific idiosyncratic features. In the description of features above I have tried to do that by also providing some additional information about the context in which a feature is embedded. Second, as in the case of most comparative projects, there is a heavy focus on purely structural issues while lexical and pragmatic issues are not dealt with. From the point of view of human’s actions and perceptions in contexts of contact, the latter may have been more or at least equally important. More study in this area would be beneficial in order to properly understand contact issues, to which the study of varieties of English ultimately belongs.

Apart from the issues discussed above, two additional structural features appear to merit some discussion as well. One feature concerns predicate reduplication. Reduplication is productively employed in the EMCs but not in English. There are two types of predicate reduplication processes in the EMCs. One of them can be referred to as stative reduplication because it derives from adjectives that express resultative or temporary states. The resulting elements are found in predicative position but must combine with the copular de (A be de sabisabi. ‘She knows [that I would do this move]’ [lit. She was in a state of knowing]; En uwii de lusulu. ‘His hair is in an unbraided state’ [i.e. you can start braiding now]). Stative reduplication seems to have emerged due to substrate patterns. The other process of predicate reduplication gives rise to verbal elements that express approximation, i.e. that a property is not (yet) fully developed (Den osu bookobooko. ‘Their house is dilapidated’), or distributedness (A impi fu mi piitipiiti. ‘My shirt is ripped in several places’). Whether or not a distributed or approximative meaning results depends on the meaning of the predicate that is being reduplicated. These elements may also function as attributive adjectives in NPs (A well en piitipiiti impi. ‘She wore her (in several places) ripped shirt.’).

The second area deals with the expression of reactions, diseases or pains and emotions. Unlike English, they are expressed using transitive verbs in the EMCs. The disease, reaction and emotion-expressing NP is found in subject NP position and functions as an agent while the person or body-part affected appears in object position and functions as a patient to whom things are happening (Pisi e kii mi. ‘I have to pee.’; Feba/Tyali kisi en. ‘She has the flu/She is sad.’; Mi bee e nyan mi. ‘I have a stomach ache.’).

5 Conclusion

The WAVE questionnaire is a useful tool for classifying varieties that belong to the English language complex. It can be used as one measure for determining a variety’s relative degree of non-standardness and thus helps towards developing a linguistic classification of varieties of English that can be compared with socially-based classifications. In the long run, it would be useful to embellish this kind of matrix with others that take into account a wider set of linguistic features, e.g. typological data, and social features.
### Appendix:
Overview of WAVE features attested in the Eastern Maroon Creoles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>feature</th>
<th>Eastern Maroon example</th>
<th>rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>alternative forms/phrases for referential (non-dummy) 16</td>
<td>Da i luku a ini a [pointing at cupboard], da i luku na a sani =cupboard ondoo, i o si a patu.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘Then look inside the [cupboard], then look underneath it/the thing, you’ll see the pot.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>generalized third person singular pronoun: subject pronouns</td>
<td>– A tek fa den kafi en mar gi tu. ‘She also had sex with what’s her name’s husband again too.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– A fufeli fu nyan kwaka ye. ‘He’s sick of eating baked cassava!’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– A án kuku! ‘It [food] has not been heated.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>generalized third person singular pronoun: object pronouns</td>
<td>– A haafu patu fu mi, da i diki en kon gi mi tu. ‘My meat pot, bring it to me too.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Neen a taki, “pe a uman de?” Neen mi taki “a de, kon u o go ne en esiesi nou. ‘Then she said “where is the woman?” Then I said, “she’s there, let’s quickly go to her.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– A leti fa i si yoyo e kisi en [a man] ya, ala en ondoo ana fuu te a fuu te a fuu kwakwakwaa.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘Exactly the same way that you see that he’s got heat boils [lit.: how heat boils have befallen him] this time, his armpit was completely covered in heat boils.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>benefactive “personal dative” construction (using the object form of the pronoun)6</td>
<td>– Na Apatou gi en a pampil a kon a data. ‘It’s [the doctor of] Apatou that gave her a paper for coming to the doctor [in St. Laurent].’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Mi o soli i sama a mi. ‘I’ll show you who I am.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– A soli den a osu eside (elicited) ‘She showed them the house yesterday.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>no gender distinction in third person singular</td>
<td>See example for feature 5</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>regularized reflexives paradigm</td>
<td>mi/a/u/den naki mi/en/u/den seefi anga tiki. ‘I/she/you (pl)/they hit myself/herself/yourself/themselves with a stick.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>no number distinction in reflexives (i.e. plural forms ending in -self)</td>
<td>See examples in 11</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>absolute use of reflexives (e.g. as topic marker)</td>
<td>– Ma efu i án boli alisi, u seefi, a kwaka u e njan ‘But if you don’t cook rice, as for us, it is baked cassava that we eat.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Soso alisi seefi, a án man boli fu den pikin fu den njan ‘Even just rice, she cannot [i.e. does not] cook for the children to eat.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>subject pronoun forms as (modifying) possessive pronouns: first person singular</td>
<td>Mi ppa weli fu nyan kwaka. ‘My father is tired of eating baked cassava.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>subject pronoun forms as (modifying) possessive pronouns: first person plural</td>
<td>Anga u boto u be kon, oo! ‘We (pl) came with our boat.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>subject pronoun forms as (modifying) possessive pronouns: third person plural</td>
<td>Den pikin mu puu den susu. ‘The children have to take off their shoes.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>you as (modifying) possessive pronoun</td>
<td>I án gi mi i beenki. (elicited) ‘You (sg) did not give me your plate/bowl!’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>second person plural pronoun forms other than you as (modifying) possessive pronoun</td>
<td>– Efu u lobi u uman, da u mu lobi bun anga den. (overheard) ‘If you (pl) love your wife(s), then you have to behave well towards them.’</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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5 When referring to a person, *di san* ‘this thing’ is frequently used as one way of avoiding name calling.

6 Note that subject, object and dative object pronouns are the same, except for the 3rd person singular pronoun where the latter two are different from the subject pronoun.
II. Noun phrase

50 plural marking via preposed elements (e.g. ol, olgeta; etc.)

52 associative plural marked by postposed and them/them all/dem (Note: by associative plural we mean a plural form indicating that reference is made to the named referent plus several other people closely associated with him/her (e.g. family, friends or colleagues).)

66 indefinite article one/wan

69 yon/yonder indicating remoteness

70 proximal and distal demonstratives with 'here' and 'there': this here, that there; dis-ya, dis-de; dem-ya, dem-de; dis ya/dis de, dem ya/dem de, etc.

71 no number distinction in demonstratives

74 phrases with for + noun to express possession: the for-phrase follows the possessed NP

77 omission of genitive suffix; possession expressed through bare juxtaposition of nouns

80 regularized comparison strategies: extension of analytic marking

III. Verb phrase: tense and aspect

110 finish-derived completive markers

111 past tense/anterior marker been

114 go-based future markers

IV. Verb phrase: modal verbs

127 non-standard use of modals for politeness reasons

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7 This distinction is only made for 2nd and 3rd person singular pronouns. But note that the 2nd person singular emphatic form yu may also be used in non-emphatic contexts in Ndyuka; further research is needed.

8 Den is really a definite plural determiner; non-definite plural NPs do not select den.

9 be is a relative past marker. It is generally not used when a past frame has been set; in fact, if it is used in clearly past marked contexts, it typically expresses past before past (cf. Ford and Migge 2007).

10 The current future marker o derives from go.
V. Verb phrase: verb morphology

other forms/ phosphrases for copula ‘be’:
before NPs

- Mi na gaaman. ‘I’m a/the king’.

before locatives

- U án de a tabiki. ‘We aren’t on the island.’

serial verbs: give = ‘to, for’

- Kon go iti baafu gi en. ‘Come let’s put [lit. throw] some sauce on it [his meal].’
- Kon mi e puu gi i. ‘Come, I’ll pull it out for you.’
- Ma mi yee a án bun gi en. ‘But I hear he does not like it [lit. not good for/to him].’
- A lon gi sikoutu. ‘She ran from the police.’

serial verbs: go = ‘movement away from’

- Da u ná a fu tya mi go! ‘Then you don’t have to bring me [there].’

serial verbs: come = ‘movement towards’

- I tya ala a patu kon a osu? ‘Did you bring the entire content of the pot to the house/home?’

serial verbs: constructions with 3 verbs

Solanga i (teki) tya kon en, a o bay en. ‘As long as you bring it to her, she’ll buy it.’

VII. Negation

multiple negation / negative concord

- A án taki ná wan sani seefi. ‘He didn’t even say anything.’

invariant non-concord tags (including eh?)

- A e ley no? ‘She’s lying, right?’

VIII. Agreement

‘deletion’ of copula be: before AdjPs

- Den du fu A. Ø bigi taaku. ‘The ones belonging to A. are very big.’

X. Complementation

for-based complementizers

- Mati a taanga fu fom en. ‘My friend, it is hard to beat him.’
- Ma dati wani taki a án duo a a puu en. ‘But that means that the day for her to harvest it [the cassava] has not yet come.’

for (to) as infinitive marker

- A yuu án doo fu bay den sani. ‘The time to buy these things has not yet come.’

existentials with forms of have

- A abi man di lobi fufuu. ‘There are men (people) who love to steal.’

XII. Adverbs and prepositions

use of postpositions (either StE prepositions or postposed preposition-like elements)

- Wan koko lampu de na a bangi tapu ye. ‘An oil lamp is on the stool!’
- A de a dyiko ondo ya. ‘It is under the rubbish heap.’

adverbs have the same form as adjectives

- Waka kon gau! ‘Come quickly.’
- A gau te! ‘She is very fast.’

XIII. Discourse organization and word order

other options for clefting than StE

- Na M. gwe anda. ‘It is M. who left to go over there.’
- Na Alibina a be e tan tuu? ‘It’s in Albina that she was actually living?’
- Na koti den be koti en baka. ‘They OPERATED [lit. cut] on her again.’

no inversion/no auxiliaries in wh-questions

- Pe M. de? ‘Where is M.? ’
- San ne en? ‘What is it?’
- Sama e takitaki? ‘Who is chattering?’
- Ch. e mulki it? ‘Is Ch. annoying you?’

no inversion/no auxiliaries in main clause yes/no questions

- Den án gi i a sani? ‘They didn’t give you the thing?’
References


Winford, Donald, and Bettina Migge. to appear. Fact-type complements in Gbe and the Surinamese creoles. Lingua.
