pressure.

pressure.

day, 400 and contact, contact. Where an interrogative word was present, the -him often remained. This also is seen in Holmer’s text: Kani tōhim? and kan hag ara hurahê? (164).

In discussing -kai (20.13, p. 150) and pai (20.15, p. 151) Holmer sees the relationship between the two, but possibly his limited examples did not permit him to identify them as the plural and singular morphemes respectively.

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Sranan (also known as Taki-Taki, Negro English, Bush English, and Ningre Tongo) is one of the three creole languages of Surinam (or Dutch Guiana), the other two being Saramaccan and Djuka. Its origin in Surinam goes back to the initial colonization of the area by the English who first arrived in 1651 and soon imported African slaves. Their colony by the year 1665 numbered 1500 Englishmen and 3400 slaves, of whom 400 were Indian (Amerindian?) and 3000 African. In 1667 the Dutch assumed control of the colony, but not before Sranan was fairly well established as a lingua franca. To this day its morpheme stock is predominately English. Pidginization of the language of the English masters might account for the origin of the language, but I prefer to believe that some slaves already spoke a contact language before arriving in Surinam and that this language was re-charged with English under great linguistic and social pressure. Today Sranan is probably the most important vernacular language of Surinam. It has a long history of philological activity, beginning with works published by the Moravian Brethren Mission (e.g. Christian Ludwig Schumann’s dictionary of 1783). Since 1940 there has been a revived interest in the language on the part of the native speakers, some of whom have even produced creditable poetry in it.¹

Concerning the theory implicit in this syntactic analysis, one can raise serious objections; in the description itself, one finds errors and contradictions; but with respect to the field-work upon which it is based, one can only register prize. These three major points, the last being first, are taken up in this review.

This monograph, with its text and notes, teaches a very important lesson about field-work: It is not enough to collect texts with a tape-recorder and then transcribe them, with or without the help of some native speaker of the language. Before they can be put to effective use, they must be carefully gone over with the informant, preferably the one who gave the text in the first place (although using a different informant would also serve a real purpose).

There are two reasons why collaboration with the informant on the editing of the texts is important.

First, his help is indispensable for obtaining a correct translation. This is true even in those situations where the investigator has a hearing-speaking knowledge of the language, for a field-worker probably never acquires such a knowledge of a language that he can translate unassisted. Prolonged exposure to a language, as among missionaries, is not enough to qualify a

person for status above that of a field-worker. Unless the field-worker has made a serious attempt at translating a good amount of highly diversified extemporaneous texts, he will undoubtedly find himself unable to make heads or tails of some sections of the corpus.

Where the analyst does not have this knowledge, it is obvious that there is hardly any reason for him even to collect texts. Without the informant’s help, obscure passages, seemingly grammatical, will defy one’s attempts to make sense out of them. As one who has tried to cope with such difficulties, I am pleased to note that out of the six places where the meaning of the illustrative text is uncertain, two of them made no sense, even to the informant himself!

The second reason that the informant’s help is important is that most texts need to be tidied-up. The field-worker must always expect to find errors in extemporaneous texts, and unless he determines what they are, his work will fall short of the desired perfection. Voorhoeve notes at least eight places where the informant later corrected what he had originally said. (It is not made clear what ‘later’ means, but one gathers that it refers to the time when the wire-recorded text was checked with the informant, not later in the text itself. About the informant’s error is said below.) The one uncorrected error cited by Voorhoeve involves the introduction of a stop, probably in anticipation of that stop in a following word: i.e. bogri (instead of ogri) boi naughty boys.

I suppose that all field-workers tidy up their texts. If they do not do it while working on the text with the informant in very much the way that Voorhoeve did, they do it later when they are preparing the texts for publication. It is all too easy to quietly eliminate textual nuisances. (Of course, one may be compelled to do so, as I was with the analysis of Sango syntax, or else risk the inclusion of many extremely anomalous constructions. What to do with these ‘errors’ is another question. In a really intensive and prolonged study of a language some of these might prove to be normal but rare, as F. Th. Vissar seems to have shown in his An Historical English Syntax.) Voorhoeve has given us an honest text. This commendation does not follow from the adage that “honesty is the best policy,” but from the belief that linguists need all the information they can get, on any language, of the kinds of utterances that informants consider wrong or change for some reason or another.

All corrections subsequent to the original recording will certainly not be wrong. As with this text, an informant may decide to use an alternative construction (e.g. by adding an object to the verb where it was originally left out). Other corrections do not have such an explanation: some involve the shape of a morpheme, others the choice of a word or constituent morpheme, and still others the ordering of morphemes. ‘Mistakes’ are sometimes indicative of linguistic patterns that may have been suppressed under elicitation. Voorhoeve, for example, is probably correct in saying—of the correction of n in kupu, for in kupu in cage—‘The error was... made so often that it cannot be entirely due to accident’ (p. 84). In any case, the linguistic field-worker is under no less compulsion than is the ethnological field-worker to analyze the data, not simply what people say about the data. (Gerald Berreman’s recent monograph on ethnological field-work, Behind Many Masks, does an excellent job of illustrating the importance of getting behind the informants’ attempts to correct impressions that the field-worker may get from their testimonies and their behavior.)

It is obvious that a great deal of care went into the preparation of the textual data for analysis. The corpus comprised ‘a large number of texts,’ the majority of which was recorded in connection with ethnological research. Some of these texts—including the
one published in this monograph—were “noted down with the help of the speakers themselves” and another linguistically-trained informant (a native speaker?) who is identified as a Research Assistant at the University of Amsterdam. This recorded material was finally “…written up and analysed. That is to say: the various linguistic phenomena were noted on cards and the cards sorted into groups” (pp. 2–3).

There is much else that one would like to know about such a study. (1) We should like to know what was the size of the corpus, measured by the number of words, the number of typed pages, or length in time, or all three. (2) We should like to know how much of the corpus was actually analyzed, for the statements lead one to deduce that all or only part of the corpus was so used. (3) We should also like to know what types of texts were collected (conversations, narratives, etc.) and in what proportion. (4) Finally, we should like to know what part the informants had in the transcription and translation of the texts. It is not clear how much assistance the linguistically-trained informant rendered in this regard. The notes to the published text refer simply to “the informant,” whom one would naturally take to be the original speaker.

These omissions are not mentioned here primarily to point out weaknesses in the project itself, but rather to indicate what information is needed for others to more carefully evaluate the comprehensiveness and methodology of the project. In this respect, Sranan Syntax appears to be no worse than most works of its kind: the conclusions are offered on the platter but we are left to infer as we can what went into the dish.

In addition to the praiseworthy preparation of the texts underlying this study, one other procedure needs to be commented upon—and recommended to field-workers. Once Voorhoeve had identified the constituent parts of Sranan sentences, he experimented with them by putting them in different orders. These ‘inversion tests’ were required by his theory, of course, but since the carpenter is not the only one who uses a hammer, these tests could be used by any field-worker to great advantage. The purpose of the tests is to determine all those sequences of syntactic elements which are meaningfully identical. Thus, he finds that mi e-go tamara and tamara mi e-go mean the same thing, i.e. I am going tomorrow. On the other hand, mi man si means I can see and mi si man means I have seen men. ‘Non-lexical meaning’ must be introduced, however (to weaken, in my opinion, the whole device), to account for the difference in “emphasis” between mi e-go dape and dape mi e-go I go there (p. 21). Although these tests depend very heavily on the reaction of the informant to differently-sequenced utterances and are fraught with many dangers, they can, when used wisely, reveal new possibilities in analysis to the investigator. As Voorhoeve says, these tests “often brought to light constructions which I had not discovered in my text material” (p. 3). These tests can, in other words, be used to supplement the elicitation of parallel utterances (i.e. additional examples of sentences like those which occur in the texts).

As for the rest of the monograph, I find myself in the embarrassing position of having to say that I did not get a clear picture of Sranan syntax from having studied Sranan Syntax. And it appears that more than this work alone is needed to understand the description of the syntax of this interesting English-based creole; one must also read certain other works by the same author, given in a bibliography. In addition, an acquaintance with the theories of W. Gs. Hellinga and A. Reichling, under whom he studied, would undoubtedly illuminate much of the discussion. Because these other works lie beyond the scope of this review, I refrain from making an evaluation of the linguistic theory which our Dutch colleagues are operating with. A critique of the theory
would certainly raise questions concerning Voorhoeve's use of isolability, substitution, inversion, sameness of meaning, to mention just a few concepts.

Thirteen pages are devoted to an introduction, which sets forth the implications of the view that "descriptive linguistics is an experimental science" (p. 4). Experiments with linguistic data result in the definition of *syntactic groups* (these being the 'form-meaning experiments') and of the function of these groups within the *syntaxeme* (these being the 'form-function experiments'). There are therefore two linguistic levels that the analyst must deal with: the meaning-level and the function-level, the one dealing with the correlation between form and meaning, the other with the correlation between form and function (p. 5). The theory requires the adoption and definition of a certain number of terms, naturally. This is all done quite painstakingly, but with far too little exemplification. This is my first criticism. I count only eleven examples of syntactic constructions in the first chapter. In fact, there is far too little exemplification in the whole monograph. One thing that a description of syntax should give the reader is surely an abundance of illustrative material. A raw text is not enough. Yet in two chapters of actual description, contained in thirteen pages, there are only twenty-six examples.

One therefore gets the distinct impression that this is not so much a description of syntax as an exemplification of a particular linguistic theory. Greater service would have been rendered the reader interested in learning about the language, I feel, if the author had clearly and boldly presented the analysis, leaving the methodological and theoretical justifications for an appendix or footnotes. As it is, it is going to be quite difficult for scholars to use this work in making comparisons between it and other creoles which, like it, owe their origin in some way or another to pidgin (or Negro) Portuguese.

A second criticism is that while Voorhoeve leans very heavily on his inversion tests mentioned above, he has not admitted their limitations. In the first place, he had to depend on the opinion of the informant as to whether an utterance was 'right' or 'wrong.' He apparently felt satisfied with their responses, for he commends them because they were "able to react spontaneously and without preconceived ideas" (p. 3). Elsewhere, however, he confesses that the "informants appeared to be very uncertain" about certain kinds of inversion tests. He concludes that the construction is not wrong but only artificial (p. 25). Has he not fallen into the danger inherent in translation-type elicitation where the field-worker puts words, so to speak, in the informant's mouth?

My final criticisms are miscellaneous and, taken by themselves, are trivial; as an aggregate, however, they certainly detract from the quality of the book. (a) Being a translation from a manuscript in Dutch, Sranan Syntax contains a few deviations from standard English. (b) In many places it lacks clarity in organization (chapter 2, by way of example, is quite heterogenous). (c) Some terms need defining. (d) There are a few inconsistencies of style (like 'chapter III' and 'chapter 3') and fact (like the reference to the text as having been wire-recorded, p. 2, and tape-recorded, p. 83). (e) All Sranan citations are literally translated into English, even the long illustrative text. Some of them needed paraphrasing (e.g. *a san tan wan her pis ten the thing stayed a whole piece time*), and the text certainly would have been improved with a summary paraphrase.

In conclusion, I should like to say that notwithstanding certain unfelicitous aspects of this work, the author deserves our appreciation for having taken up the study of a creole language with such seriousness. He obviously knows Sranan well. Linguistics does not yet have enough data on the world's languages to call a moratorium on
field-work, even on pidgin and creole languages which are still looked upon with much disfavor by non-linguists with responsible positions. This very disfavor demands haste in their study, for while ‘natural,’ ‘normal’ languages will persist as long as there are speakers, the creole languages, for sociological reasons, seem almost certain to perish first.

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DOUGLAS RAE TAYLOR

This monograph on The Saramaccan Vocabulary will be of considerable value, not only to the student of creole languages, but to all those who are interested in linguistic change. It takes the form of an introductory and explanatory chapter (i–viii) followed by a Saramaccan-Dutch dictionary (1–117). The latter, containing some two thousand lemmata, alphabetically ordered in an orthography based on phonemic analysis, is both historical and comparative in that the earlier form of the same word as given in Schumann’s manuscript Saramaccanisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch, dated 1778, and the word’s modern Sranan equivalent in phonemically based transcription are listed—in so far as either has been found—opposite each entry. Below this come the glosses and, in very many cases, derivatives and examples of usage (often illustrating extended meanings or idioms). Forms peculiar to either of two villages whose speech was more particularly studied are indicated by parenthetic (Li) for Golfo or (Lo) for Lombé. A sample of the format is: bid/ [Schumann] bilá/ [Sranan] drai: draaien, omkeren; mi bidá bûka, ik heb mijn woorden teruggetrokken.

Saramaccan is one of at least three creole languages now spoken in Surinam; the others being Sranan and Ndjuka or Djuka. Little is known of the last-named, or, it would seem, of Matawari, which may be a fourth creole, or perhaps merely a dialect of Saramaccan. Sranan and Saramaccan are said to be clearly and closely related. Father Donicie has published an article—and is to publish a larger work—on their grammatical concordances. But with comparatively little opportunity for mutual influence, they have evolved in different directions from the start; and owing to lexical and phonological divergence these two creoles are not, at the present time, mutually intelligible. It was formerly believed that the considerable Portuguese element in the Saramaccan lexicon (31 items of the Swadesh 100-item test-list, as against only 4 in Sranan1) came from the Sephardic Jews who had settled in Surinam; but Herskovits showed this theory to be unfounded, and thought this element to be due, rather, to a preponderance, among those slaves who fled to the bush, of Africans already acquainted with the Afro-Portuguese pidgin of the West Coast ‘factories’. The latter hypothesis would also explain the greater proportion of African words in Saramaccan than in Sranan (p. i).

Saramaccan contains the following short vowels: i [i], e [i, e], è [e], a [a], ô [o], o [u], u [u]; and each of these bears a relevant low or high tone: the former unmarked, the latter indicated by the acute accent, and forming, in the cases of è and ô, a wedge (here replaced by the circumflex). There are two

1 Other figures obtained from this list for Saramaccan and for Sranan may be shown as follows (some forms appear opposite more than one item; and this is indicated by parenthetic figures giving the number of different forms attributed to a particular ancestry):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presumed Source</th>
<th>Saramaccan</th>
<th>Sranan</th>
<th>Common</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English:</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eng. or Dut.:</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch:</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port. or Sp.:</td>
<td>31 (30)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dubious:</td>
<td>11 (9)</td>
<td>11 (8)</td>
<td>9 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sources:</td>
<td>6 (5)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>