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How the ýolder headsý talk: a Jamaican Maroon spirit possession language and its relationship to the creoles of Suriname and Sierra Leone

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HOW THE "OLDER HEADS" TALK: A JAMAICAN MAROON SPIRIT POSSESSION LANGUAGE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE CREOLES OF SURINAME AND SIERRA LEONE

In the interior of Jamaica exist four major Maroon communities, inhabited by the descendants of slaves who escaped from plantations during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and gained their freedom by treaty in 1739. The present-day Maroon settlements — Moore Town, Charles Town, and Scott's Hall in the east, and Accompong in the west — are now nearly indistinguishable, on the surface, from other rural Jamaican villages.[1] Among the things which continue to set the Maroons apart from their non-Maroon neighbors are a number of linguistic features which appear to be found only in Maroon areas. The Maroon settlements have been described by two leading authorities as "centres of linguistic conservatism" (Cassidy & Le Page 1980: xli); but very little substantial documentation has yet appeared in print to back up this claim.[2]

While conducting an ethnographic study among the Jamaican Maroons in 1977–8, I encountered a number of complex linguistic phenomena which were closely tied to the traditional ceremonial sphere in the various communities. A large part of my field study centered around the traditional Maroon ritual known as *Kromanti Play* or *Kromanti dance*.[3] While observing and participating in these

ceremonies, it soon became apparent to me that several more or less distinct language forms, or linguistic "layers," were involved. Kromanti ceremonies center around the possession of participants by ancestral spirits, and therein lies the basis of this linguistic complexity; the ancestors have their own form of speech, quite different from that of living Maroons, and it is this which must be used in order to communicate with them. Any Kromanti Play, then, must involve not only the language of the living, but that of the dead as well. The language of the living is the language of normal, everyday discourse — a form of Jamaican Creole which is essentially the same as that spoken throughout the island. The language of the ancestors is also a form of Jamaican Creole, but one which differs sharply from even the most basilectal forms yet documented, and is only partially intelligible to non-Maroons and those who are unfamiliar with Kromanti Play.[4]

When the living — those who are not possessed by spirits — speak to one another during Kromanti ceremonies, they employ the normal creole. When they address those in possession, they attempt to talk "deep," so that the visiting ancestors will understand. The possessed themselves, either when addressing the unpossessed or others in possession, use only the "deep language" (as it is called by Maroons) which is the subject of this paper. Finally, there is a third language form used in Kromanti Play, known simply as *Kromanti* — the language of the earliest ancestors, many of whom were born in Africa. Kromanti, which is clearly not a form of Jamaican Creole and displays very little English content, is in fact not a functioning language, but rather a highly fragmentary ritual "language" consisting of a number of set phrases and expressions.[5]

This paper will not be concerned, except indirectly, with either the normal creole spoken by the Maroons or the Kromanti "language"; instead, it will focus on the "middle" language, the "deep" creole spoken by those who are conceptually situated in between the living and the most ancient ancestors. This "spirit language" is of special interest, I believe, for it contains features which point clearly to a relationship with the other Atlantic creoles, and in particular, with the creoles of Suriname. As we shall see, several of the features characteristic of Maroon pos-

session speech occur regularly in none of the other Atlantic creoles, except those of Suriname, and Krio, the English-based creole of Sierra Leone. While this paper is primarily descriptive in aim, these parallels with a few particular creoles raise a number of interesting historical questions, and I will address these at a later point. My interpretation of this material is provisional, and I offer the following description in the hope that other creolists will find it useful, and perhaps will be able to make further sense of the data.[6]

The Meaning of "Deep" Language

Before proceeding with a discussion of the linguistic data, a bit of contextualization is necessary. It is important to have some idea of both *how* the language form under discussion is used, and how it is conceptualized by those who use it. Furthermore, it is necessary to point out some of the ways in which extralinguistic factors (strictly speaking) affect the final speech output.

In a sense, the Maroons themselves possess an indigenous model of their language history which roughly corresponds to current linguistic theories concerning creolization and decreolization. At the base of the Maroon continuum — as conceptualized by Maroons themselves — is the "Kromanti language" of the first Maroons, who are said to have been born in Africa. It is said that on the very rare occasions that these earliest ancestors possess dancers at Kromanti Play, they speak nothing but Kromanti.[1] Ancestors from all subsequent generations speak a "deep" form of language which is recognized by Maroons as being clearly distinct from Kromanti (although their speech always includes a number of isolated Kromanti words and expressions). With each descending generation, the ancestral language is thought to become progessively closer to that which is spoken in normal contexts by Maroons today.[8]

This somewhat vague notion of a single shaded continuum notwithstanding, there are actually three fundamentally distinct linguistic forms (or levels) used in Kromanti Play: (1) "standard" Jamaican Creole; (2) the "deep" language (or "spirit language") of the possessing ancestors; and (3) Kromanti, the African lan-

guage of the earliest Maroons (and thus, the "deepest" form there is). This fundamental distinction between Kromanti and the ancestral deep creole (which is English-based) is made by Maroons themselves, for whom the two forms of language have very different significance. Kromanti (also known as "Country") is highly sacred; the deep creole is much less so. Whereas the latter functions, like normal language, to communicate specific messages, much of the "Country" or "Kromanti language" has lost its meaning and taken on "magical" functions. Kromanti is imbued with inherent power, and its primary function today is the attraction and invocation of ancestors — a function which the deep creole, in itself, is thoroughly incapable of performing.[9]

Although the "spirit language" which forms the main subject of this paper is clearly distinct from the Kromanti "language," it includes a limited number of isolated Kromanti lexical items, most of them referring to ritually-significant objects. These Kromanti lexical items are acknowledged by Maroons as such, but when used in isolation, in order to denote specific objects (e.g., "ingkeswa" means "egg"), they lack the invocational power which inheres in a spoken stream of Kromanti.[10]

Upon first hearing, the "spirit language" of the Maroons sounds perhaps more different from the normal creole than it actually is. What creates this impression is the style of delivery. The speech of possessed persons is conditioned by cultural beliefs regarding the fundamental character of Maroon spirits. Such spirits are seen as being inherently fierce, easily excitable, and generally erratic in temperament. It follows that their speech is also erratic and exaggerated in a number of ways. Possessed persons speak at an abnormally rapid clip, and in a very taut, high-pitched tone of voice. The contour of their speech differs considerably from that of normal speech, registering wild ups and downs of pitch, and abrupt shifts of rhythm. All of this contributes to the unintelligibility of this "deep" language to those who are not familiar with Kromanti ceremonies. (When unpossessed participants in Kromanti Play address possessed individuals, they generally attempt to use the ancestral deep creole, but they speak it in a more normal tone of voice, and in most cases actually combine features of the deep creole with the normal creole, rather than "descending" fully to the deeper level.)

In connection with the above, a word is in order concerning the conditions under which the linguistic "sample" presented in this paper was gathered. Although I heard the Maroon "spirit language" spoken repeatedly in the context of Kromanti ceremonies, and to a limited extent learned to use it in order to communicate with possessed Maroons, it was not possible, except in one or two instances, to make tape-recordings of actual possession speech. Tape-recording was absolutely forbidden during actual episodes of possession, and I was warned that any tape-recorder in operation at such a time would be destroyed by the possessed individual. This restriction was very much in keeping with the canons of secrecy applying to Kromanti Play. (Non-Maroons who remain at the site of a Kromanti ceremony after spirit possession has occurred must be sworn to a ritual oath of secrecy; I was obliged to undergo this ritual several times, but was later partially released from the oath by those who had administered it.)[11]

Although tape-recording was prohibited (particularly in Moore Town) whenever possession was in progress, the evidence presented in this paper is not based solely on my own memory of the "deep" language, or the notes I took after ceremonies. During the latter part of my field trip I was able to record several informants who were willing, when asked, to demonstrate the way in which spirits talk — that is, to speak for the recorder "as if" they were in possession. In each such case, the result was a recording which closely adhered to actual possession speech (although "toned down" in style of delivery). (A segment of one such performance has been transcribed and included in Appendix A.) Additional, unsolicited recordings were made of unpossessed individuals addressing ancestral spirits — using an approximation of the "spirit language" — while pouring libations (see Appendix B for one example). These recordings, along with my field notes, form the basis of the discussion which follows. To lend this data further support, and to help clarify certain matters, I will occasionally make reference to the manuscript of an unpublished book written by the present Colonel, or leader, of the Moore Town Maroons, C. L. G. Harris (*The Maroons of Moore Town: A Colonel Speaks*). This work, a general account of life in Moore Town, includes a good deal of valuable linguistic material and a number

of comments on language in Moore Town which have significance for the arguments which follow.[12]

Some Distinctive Characteristics of "Deep Language"

The following brief description of Maroon "spirit language" is concerned primarily with phonological and lexical features, for these are the areas in which this language-form and the normal creole differ most clearly (syntax, for instance, seems to be essentially the same in the two forms of language). In each subsection below, I will point out how the features under discussion contrast with normal Jamaican Creole, using Cassidy & Le Page (1980) as my primary authority on the latter.

A) Vowel Epithesis

Many words in the "spirit language" feature vowel final syllables; in most cases, the equivalent words in normal Jamaican Creole lack this feature. I recorded the following examples (and it is likely that others exist):[13]

waka	"walk"	swiri	"to swear"
luku	"look"	seke	"sick"
gudu	"good"	taki	"talk"
naki	"to hit"	teka	"to take"
lasi	"arse"	wudu	"forest"
fete	"to fight"	wete	"white"
dede	"dead"	aksi	"to ask"
ede	"head"	blada	"blood"
bigi	"big"	dago	"dog"
blaka	"black"	hagu	"hog"
beti	"to bet"	manu	"man"
futu	"leg, foot"	brada	"broad"
gyala	"girl"	arete	"all right"
mutu	"mouth"	hanu	"arm, hand"
meke	"to make"		

According to Cassidy & Le Page (1980: lxiii), vowel epithesis of this sort is rare in modern Jamaican Creole, and most of the few examples they cite (*yeri* "hear," *taki* "talk," *rata* "rat," *uona* "own," *rakatuon* "rockstone," *disaya* "this here") are referred to by them as "archaic." Alleyne (1980: 62–66) concurs with this conclusion, and adds to their list the words *ku* "look!" (which he believes to be derived from an earlier form, *luku;* see also Cassidy & Le Page 1980: 266), and *futu* "big clumsy foot." In Maroon possession speech, in contrast, vowel epithesis is one of the most noticeable features, and part of what makes any particular utterance recognizable as "authentic" spirit language. When Maroons are in possession, they virtually always use the vowel final forms of all the words listed above, as opposed to their normal creole equivalents.

According to several authorities, vowel epithesis is found as a regular feature in none of the modern Atlantic creoles other than those of Suriname (Hancock 1969: 24; Johnson 1974: 125–126; Smith 1977: 1; Alleyne 1980: 62–66). It is thus of particular interest that this is such a prominent feature in the speech of possessed Maroons.

B) Liquids

In "deep" language, many words which feature /l/ in normal creole regularly display /r/ instead. For example:

bere	"belly"
kreba	"clever"
ogri	"evil" (from "ugly")
pre	"place"
kre	"to clear"
priis	"pleased"
krem	"climb"
pripri	"people"
swara	"swallow"
bro	"to blow"
sjref	"self"
braka	"black"

One word which does not occur at all in modern Jamaican Creole also seems to have been derived from a similar process:

prandes "house, home, yard" (from "plantation")

Alleyne (1980: 61–62) states that in the earliest Afro-American dialects, no phonemic distinction between /l/ and /r/ existed; he adds that what he calls "the primitive /l/ ~ /r/ variation" occurs regularly today only in the Suriname creoles. In all the other English-based Atlantic creoles, according to him, this feature occurs only in a few isolated cases, which he refers to as "relics." (For examples from Krio, see Hancock 1969: 68.) For Jamaican Creole, the only documented surviving cases, according to Cassidy & Le Page (1980: lxi), are: *flitaz* "fritters," *talabred* "thoroughbred," *praimali* "primary," *finggl* "finger," and *brufil* "Bluefields." Alleyne (ibid: 62) points out, interestingly, that almost all of the Jamaican cases show a preference for /l/ over /r/, in all positions.

The Maroon cases cited above, then, go against the general Jamaican rule. The only cases I recorded which show a preference for /l/ over /r/ are:

lasi	"arse"
blada	"brother"
debeklin	"dawn" (from "day-breaking")[14]

For most of the cases showing a preference for /r/ over /l/ cited above, there are direct parallels in the Suriname creoles.[15]

Another interesting feature occurring in Maroon possession speech (though only in a very few of the documented words) is liquid deletion. For instance:

kii	"to kill"
puu	"to pull, to take off"
te	"to tell"
baka	"black"

This feature is common in the Suriname creoles, Saramaccan and Ndjuka, but rare in the other Atlantic creoles (Alleyne 1980: 62).

Finally, the "deep" language includes a few examples of the

liquifying of /d/ or /ð/:

tere	"today"
grãfara	"grandfather"

These examples have not been documented for "standard" Jamaican Creole, although a few others have, such as: *nombari* "nobody," *tara* "t'other," and *impyurens* "impudence" (Cassidy & Le Page 1980: lxi). In the Suriname creoles, on the other hand, the liquifying of /d/ has occurred in many cases, and is part of a process which has been shown to have considerable historical depth (Smith 1978).

C) /ai/ becomes /e/

There are several cases of words which feature /ai/ in the normal creole, but whose equivalents in the "spirit language" always have /e/ instead:

Deep Creole		*Normal Creole*
krem	"to climb"	klaim
tem	"time"	taim
prem	"to prime, prepare"	praim
re	"to ride"	raid
wete	"white"	wait
fete	"to fight"	fait
arete	"all right"	arait
net	"night"	nait

According to Hancock (1969: 68), in both the Suriname creoles and Krio, English /ai/ (or /aj/) becomes /e/ (or /ɛ/) — "a fairly regular shift not shared by other creoles, although occurring in a few Guyana Creole items." Cassidy & Le Page (1980) make no mention at all of such a shift for Jamaican Creole.

D) Metathesis of Liquids

Below are a few examples from the deep creole of what appears to

be metathesis:

sjref	"self"[16]
pripri	"people"
blakabwai	"bottle" (from "bottle-boy")[17]

In a recent paper, Sebba (1982) has shown that metathesis of liquids to avoid liquid-plus-consonant clusters occurred regularly in early Suriname creole; he further concludes that such metathesis was also a feature of several other creoles at an early stage. (It should be pointed out that the last two examples above differ from the sort of metathesis discussed by Sebba, in that they are derived from original English words which featured consonant-plus-schwa-plus-liquid clusters, rather than liquid-plus-consonant.)

Although metathesis of liquids is not uncommon in Jamaican Creole (Cassidy & Le Page 1980: lxiii), the above examples apparently occur only in the Maroon "spirit language."

E) Vowel Nasalization

In the Maroon deep creole, certain words feature a sort of vowel nasalization which does not occur in normal Jamaican Creole (except in a few instances). In the words of C. L. G. Harris, the Colonel of the Moore Town Maroons, "in some Maroon words there is a nasal *N* which cannot be properly represented in English" (Harris n.d.: 116). The "nasal *N*" to which the Colonel refers is in fact not a nasal consonant at all, but rather, a nasalization of vowels in certain words. The vowels nasalized in this way in the deep creole sound somewhat similar to the nasalization of vowels which is so common in French.[18] A few examples follow:

nyãs	"yam(s)"
nyũman	"man" (from "young man")
grãfa	"grandfather"
wĩ	"when"
kõ	"to come"
kõ	"cousin"
nãsi	"spider" (from "anansi")

Alleyne (1980: 177) refers to this sort of vowel nasalization in Afro-American creoles as "a recognizable Niger Congo continuity."

F) *na*

Na is used in a number of ways in the deep creole. First, it acts as a verb, "to be" (in the sense of equating); secondly, it is used as a locative preposition. Several examples, taken from full sentence contexts, are offered below:[19]

i na ogri sonti
("It is an evil thing.")

na di wan dat
("That's the one.")

na huma kuda du mi dat sonti?
("Who could have done that thing to me?")

mi na gaad amaiti
("I am God Almighty.")

wĩ yu min de waka na da pre...
("When you were walking at that place...")

wen di suma kõ na pre...
("When the person came to the place...")

if mi no min bin na da pre...
("If I hadn't been at that place...")

yankipong bles na yu
("God bless [to] you.")

im put im afana na sasi
("He put his machete to the ground.")

In his manuscript, Colonel Harris of Moore Town offers several

other examples:

> Emba ting seh Chaal Harris no prem aw tem na foo-foo summa.
> ("Anybody who thinks that Charles Harris does not prime himself at all times is a foolish person.") (Harris n.d.: 56)
>
> Na umma fi peak fi mi...?
> ("Who is to speak for me...?") (ibid: 29)
>
> teh mi ef na Nyakepong ta'k na mi
> ("tell me if it is God who talked to me") (ibid: 3)
>
> na hunty yu cohn yeh fi?
> ("why [is what] did you come here [for]?") (ibid: 105)
>
> nynneah no suhntie, na warra na suhntie?
> ("if food is nothing, what is something?") (ibid: 105)
>
> ta'k na mi...
> ("talk to me...") (ibid: 3)

In some contexts, *na* acts in a way equivalent to how *a* (or sometimes *da*) works in modern Jamaican Creole — for instance, when used as an equating verb ("*na* di wan dat" would be "*a* di wan dat" in normal basilectal Jamaican Creole); or when used as a locative preposition ("im put im afana *na* sasi" would be "im put im mashiet *a* grong" in the normal creole). However, it is also sometimes used in a way which apparently has no parallel in Jamaican Creole — i.e., as a preposition associated with the verbs "talk" and "listen" ("taki" and "arik"). The following sentences, for example, are frequently heard at Kromanti Play: "tak na mi" ("talk to me" — in this context the final vowel of "taki" is usually deleted), and "arik na mi" ("listen to me"). In the normal creole, these sentences would be rendered, respectively, "taak tu mi" and "lisn tu mi" (or, alternately, "lisn mi," or "yer mi"). According to Cassidy & Le Page (1980), modern Jamaican Creole does not make use of *na* for any of the above-mentioned functions.

In Krio and the Suriname Creoles, however — and also in several West African pidgins — *na* functions both as an equating verb and a locative preposition, precisely as it does in the Jamaican Maroon "spirit language." Apparently, none of the English-based New World creoles other than those of Suriname include this feature (Hancock 1969: 36–37; 64–65; 66; 68), although some of them have near equivalents (such as Guyana Creole *a* or Jamaican Creole *a/da*).[20] Once again, we are confronted with evidence which points to some sort of relationship with both Krio and the Suriname creoles.

G) Verbal Markers

There exist in the Maroon "spirit language" two verbal markers which apparently do not occur at all in normal Jamaican Creole: the durative or progressive marker, *e* or *he*; and the future marker, *sa*. A few examples of their use follow:

na honti yu he du ye?
("What are you doing here?")

mi e waka na yengkungku pre
("I'm walking in a Maroon place.")

mi sa du so
("I'm going to do that.")

i sa jet i?
("Will you get it?")

mi sa jet i
("I will get it.")

These verbal markers appear to be used in the deep creole interchangeably with those which occur in the normal creole (i.e., the durative markers, *a*, *da*, or *de*, and the future marker, *wi*).

Hancock (1969: 62–63) tells us that *e* is used as a durative marker in Sranan and Ndjuka (along with an alternate form, *de*),

but it occurs in none of the other English-based Atlantic creoles represented in his word-list. Likewise, *sa* is a future marker in Sranan, Ndjuka, and Saramaccan, but is found in none of the other creoles, except that of Guyana (ibid). According to Cassidy & Le Page (1980), none of these tense-aspect markers — *e*, *he*, or *sa* — occur in modern Jamaican Creole.

H) Interrogatives and Personal Pronouns

One of the most interesting aspects of the Maroon deep creole is the existence of a number of interrogative words (sometimes also used as relative pronouns) which are quite unlike anything found in modern Jamaican Creole. The following occur regularly in the speech of possessed Maroons:

onti, honti[21]	what?	(also, sometimes, which?, where?, or who?)
uma, huma	who?	(also, sometimes, what?)
ufa, hufa, ofa, hofa, houfa	how?	(also, sometimes, why?, or what?)

Here are a few examples of how these words are used in sentence contexts:[22]

onti yu si?
("What do you see?")

onti bot?
("... what about?")

u sabi ampang onti mi sa se?
("Do you understand completely what I'm going to say?")

mi no no onti fi...
("I don't know which...")

mi no sa honti bot hofa in kon...
("I don't know anything about how he came...")

uma fi piik fi mi?
("Who is to speak for me?")

uma kaal mi?
("Who called me?")

na huma kuda du mi dat sonti?
("Who could have done that thing to me?")

hofa bot?
("What about?")

ufa i tan?
("How is he?")

mi no sabi hofa i go
("I don't know how it goes.")

Not only are these interrogatives (and relative pronouns) not found in modern Jamaican Creole, but it seems that they have never been documented before for Jamaica, at any period in its history. Anyone acquainted with the Suriname creoles, however, will immediately recognize strong similarities. Parallels for these words from the three major Suriname creoles (Sranan, Ndjuka, Saramaccan) are listed below:[23]

	Jamaican Maroon	*Sranan*	*Ndjuka*	*Saramaccan*
what?	onti	san?	san?	andí?
which?	onti?	di, odisi?	ondi?	ondí?
who?	uma	o suma?	sama?	ambě?
how?	ufa?, ofa?	fa?	on fa?	ún fá?

It is interesting to note that in earlier forms of the Suriname creoles, some of the words listed above were even closer to the present-day Jamaican Maroon equivalents. For instance, in 1765, the coastal creole (which was to become what is known as Sranan today) had *oe fasi* (i.e., u fasi) for "how," rather than *fa*

(Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 280); and in 1778, Saramaccan featured *ondi* for "what," rather than *andí* (Smith 1978: 115; Schuchardt 1914: 93).

Another interesting feature of the Jamaican Maroon "spirit language" is a sort of structural "harmony" between some of the interrogatives and the corresponding general nouns which seem to be related to them in derivation. For instance:

uma?	who?
suma	person, somebody
onti?	what?, which?
sonti	thing, something

A similar derivational process, and a resulting "harmony" between such pairs, seems to have been involved in the formation of the Suriname creoles, as indicated by the following chart:

	Person	*Who?*	*Thing*	*What?*
Jamaican Maroon	suma	uma	sonti	onti
Sranan	suma, sma	o suma, o sma	sani	o sani, o san
Ndjuka	sama	sama	sani, san	sani, san
Saramaccan 1778	sombre	ambeh	sondi	ondi
Modern Saramaccan	sèmbè, sòmbè	ambě	sondí, soní	andí

Here we have some of the strongest evidence pointing to some sort of special relationship between the Jamaican Maroon "spirit language" and the Suriname creoles. Apparently, none of the other English-based Atlantic creoles (including Krio) have any interrogatives even remotely resembling *onti*, *uma*, or *ufa/ofa* (see Hancock 1969: 66–67). Certainly, nothing similar to these is

found in modern basilectal Jamaican Creole; and Cassidy & Le Page (1980) make no mention of such forms occuring in an earlier stage of the language. The only clear parallels, then, come from the Suriname creoles.

Also interesting is the use in the Jamaican Maroon deep creole of a number of personal pronouns which are not characteristic of the normal creole:

o, a	"he, she, it"
u, i	"you"
am	"him, her, it" (and sometimes, "you," as object)

In the "spirit language," *o* and *a* appear to be used interchangeably, as do *u* and *i*. These forms sometimes occur alongside the normal creole forms; that is, in possession speech, the forms *ĩ* or *im* are sometimes used instead of *o* and *a*, and *yu* often replaces *u* or *i*. However, the speech of possessed persons seems to show a preference for the special forms listed above. These forms, according to Cassidy & Le Page (1980), are not found in modern Jamaican Creole; and they do not usually occur among the Maroons in normal speech contexts. Parallels can once again be seen in the Suriname creoles; in all three (Sranan, Ndjuka, and Saramaccan), *a* is used (along with alternate forms in each case) to mean "he, she, it," and *i* is used in some contexts to mean "you" (Hancock 1969: 60–61). This is not the case, however, for any of the other major Atlantic creoles.

I) A Comparative Word-List

There follows below a listing of words from the Jamaican Maroon "spirit language" which have close parallels in either Krio or the Suriname creoles. In this list the reader will find, in addition to the words mentioned in the above description, a number of other parallels. By listing these all together in one place, I hope to draw attention to the degree of resemblance which exists between the Jamaican deep creole and these other languages.[24]

	Jamaican Maroon ("Spirit Language")	*Normal Basilectal Jamaican Creole*	*Sranan*	*Ndjuka*	*Saramaccan*	*Krio*
arm/hand	hanu, anu	han, an	anu	ana	máu	an
ask	aksi	aks	aksi	aksi	hákísi, ákísi	aks
be (equating)	na	a, da	na, da	na	da	na
big	bigi	big	bigi	bigi	bígi	big
black	blaka, baka, braka	blak	blaka	baaka	baáka	blak
blood	blada, mblada, bladis	blod	brudu	boodu	buúu	blɔd
body, skin	sikin, kin	skin, kin	skin	sikin	sinkíi	skin
book	bukun	buk	buku	buku	búku	buk
brother	blada	breda, bra	brada	baala	baáa	bra
buttocks	lasi	raas, ras	lasi		gogó	ras
carry	chai	kya, kyaa, kyari	tjari	tjai	tjá, tjái	
catch, take	kisã, kisõ	kech	kisi	kísi	kísi	ketʃ
child	pikin, pikibo	pikni	pkin	pikin	miíi	pikin
climb	klem, krem	klaim	kren	kren	subí	klem
come	kõ	kom, kong	kɔm, kɔ̃	koŋ	kó	kam, kã
country	kondri	konchri	kɔndre	konde	kŏndè (village)	kɔntri
dawn	debrekin, debekrin, debeklin	die kliin	de-brɔkɔ	de-booko		do-klin
dead	dede	ded	dede	dede	dèdè	dede
dog	dago	daag, dag	dagu	dago	dágu	dɔg
fight	fete	fait	feti	feti	fèti	fɛt
food	ninyã	fud	naŋan	ŋaŋan	njanjá	ŋaŋam
give	ji, gi	gi	gi, ji	gi, ji	dá	gi
head	ede	ed, hed	ede	ede	hédi	ed
headscarf	ingkecha	ed tai	aŋisa		hángísa	ɛŋkintʃa
hear	arik, harik	yeri, yer	arki	aliki	jéi	jɛri
he/she	a, o	im, in, ing	a	a	a	i
hello	odio, hodio	houdi du	ɔdi	odi	ódi	adu
how	ufa, ofa	hou	fa, o	on fa	ún fá	aw, a
in/at	na	ina, a, da	na	na	na, a	na
kill	kii, ki	kil	kiri	kii	kíi	kil
knife	indepe, indufe	naif	nefi	nefi	sémbí-ndéfi (razor)	nɛf
knock, hit	naki	nak	naki	naki	náki	nak
know	sabi, sa	no, nuo	sabi	sabi, sa	sábi, sá	no, sabi
leg/foot	futu	fut	futu	futu	fútu	fut
live	lib, libis	lib, liv	libi	libi	líbi	lib
look (at)	luku	luk, luku	luku	luku	lúku	luk

	Jamaican Maroon ("Spirit Language")	*Normal Basilectal Jamaican Creole*	*Sranan*	*Ndjuka*	*Saramaccan*	*Krio*
make	meke	mek	meki		mbéi	mek
middle	mildri	migl	mindri	mindi	míndi	midul
mouth	mutu, moutu	mout	mɔfo, boka	mofo	búka	mɔt
night	net	nait	neti	neti	ndéti	nɛt
person	suma	smadi, smari	sma, suma	sama	sòmbè, sèmbè	pɔsin
pig	hagu	hag	agu	hago	hágu	ɔg
place	pre, pres	plies	pe, presi	pe	kamía	ples
pleasure, pleased	priis, priiz	pleja, pliiz	prisiri	piisii	piizíi	plɛʃɔ
plantation, yard	prandes	yaad	prɛndasi, pranasi		pandási	
pull	puu	pul	puru	puu	púu	pul
ride	re	raid	re	re		rɛd
self	sjref	sef, self	srefi	seefi	seéi, seépi	sɛf
stomach	bere, beri, beli	beli	bere	bee	bèè	bɛlɛ
swallow	swara	swala	swari	gobe	gulí	swɛla
swear	swiri, sweri	swie, swiir	sweri	sweli	sói	
take	teka	tek	teki	teke	téi	tek
talk	taki	tak, taak	taki	taki	táki	tɔk
time	tem	taim	tẽ	tiŋ	tén	tɛm
to (locative)	na	a, da	na, a	na, a	na, a	na, to
ugly (evil)	ogri, hogri, ogli	iivl, ogli	ogri	ogii	wógi, ógi	wogri
walk	waka	waak	waka	waka	wáka	waka
what	onti, honti	wa, we	san	sa	andí	wetin
white	wete	wait	weti	weti	wéti	wet
who	uma, huma	hu, huu, u	o suma	sama	ambè	uda
wood, forest	wudu, udu, hudu	wud, hud, ud	udu	udu	údu (wood; mátu = forest)	wud
yam (yam cultivation)	nyãs, nyamis	yam, nyam, nyams, nyaams	jamsi		njámísi	ŋams
yonder	anda, yanda	yanda	jana	janda	alá, aá, na andé	janda
you (sing.)	i, yu, u	yu	ju, i	i, ju	jú, i	ju
young man	nyũman	yong man, nyong man			njúma (sister's son)	
verbal marker (durative)	e, he	a, da, de	de, e	e	tá	de, di
verbal marker (future)	sa, wi	wi, gwain	sa, go	sa, go	sa, ó	go

The Question of Preservation

I have yet to address the question of whether the "spirit language" of the Maroons should be considered an accurate representation of the actual speech of an earlier time. Participants in Kromanti Play have no doubts about this; it is only natural, they say, that the ancestors, when they possess living mediums, should continue to use the form of language which they knew when they were alive.[25] But there is little independent evidence to be found in support of this belief. Almost nothing can be stated with certainty about the language of the early Maroons, since the few existing historical documents give us little information.

The two standard passages concerning the language of the early Maroons, by R. C. Dallas and Bryan Edwards, give us little to work with:

> The Maroons, in general, speak, like most of the other negroes in the island, a peculiar dialect of English, corrupted with African words; and certainly understand our language sufficiently well to have received instruction in it (Dallas 1803: 92).

> Concerning the Maroons, they are in general ignorant of our language ... Their language was a barbarous dissonance of the African dialects, with a mixture of Spanish and broken English (Edwards 1796: xxvii, xxix).

Although these statements conflict with one another in their assessment of the Maroons' competence in the "standard" English of the metropole, their gist is the same. What we can conclude from these accounts is that the Maroons of the eighteenth century spoke some kind of creole language which was lexically largely English-derived, but included also a number of contributions from various African languages. Beyond this, there is little we can say.

Dallas provides an example of what is supposed to be Maroon speech, while discussing polygamy. In the following segment, a Maroon is objecting to the suggestion, made by a Christian who was trying to convert him, that he would have to give up one of his wives.

> "Top, Massa Governor," said he, "top lilly bit — you say me mus forsake my wife." — "Only one of them." — "Which dat one? Jesus Christ say so? Gar

a'mighty say so? No, no, massa; Gar a'mighty good; he no tell somebody he mus forsake him wife and children. Somebody no wicked for forsake him wife! No, massa, dis here talk no do for we" (Dallas 1803: 113).

Of course, this can hardly be considered a faithful rendition of the sort of language Maroons used amongst themselves, or even when talking to colonial officials. Nevertheless, this passage suggests that the language heard by Dallas and other British visitors to the Maroons struck these observers as being similar to the language used by slaves on the plantations. The above segment reads much like other attempts by contemporary writers to portray creole speech, either on the plantations or in town. In fact, there is nothing in this passage which is distinguishable from normal slave speech during this period, as recorded (albeit in distorted form) by contemporary authors. Thus, we cannot know whether the Maroons at this time spoke as their primary language a form of creole English which differed little, if at all, from the language of the plantations; or whether they spoke their own distinct form of creole English (alongside the creole of the plantations).[26]

In any case, the documents from after this period add little to our knowledge of Maroon language, and are of little help in trying to place the "deep" language of possessed Maroons in diachronic perspective.[27] We are forced, then, to rely primarily on oral traditions. What they tell us is this: in the not so distant past, within the memory of some living Maroons, people used to talk "deeper" than they do today; in those days, it is said, outsiders could distinguish Maroons from other Jamaicans merely by their speech — which is no longer possible. Although these memories of a once-distinct form of Maroon speech are sometimes invoked in order to explain the speech of possessed Maroons, they are often also discussed independently. Most older Maroons would agree with the following comment, made in passing by a Maroon from Charles Town, then in his seventies; indeed, several older Maroons from all of the communities made similar statements to me.

. . . them [older people] always talk deep. All when me a little bit of boy, them no speak plain like now . . . even without [Kromanti] language, any speaking at all, whether [Kromanti] language or no [Kromanti] language. Because

> first time, when you go to Moore Town, you hear them say: "kõ ye . . . kõ ye, ba" [i.e., as opposed to "kom ya" in normal creole] . . . a so them always talk . . . them speak different now, for them get more enlightened now more than in those days.[28]

These oral traditions are confirmed by C. L. G. Harris, the Colonel of the Moore Town Maroons; in his book (Harris n.d.), he provides many examples of what he claims to be the Maroon speech of an earlier period. (He does not connect these examples explicitly with present-day possession speech.) Colonel Harris' discussion of this earlier form of speech is presented below, at length, for it is of great interest:

> It is worthwhile to know that as late as the early 1920's the ordinary speech of some of the older Maroons would not be understood easily by non-Maroons, for though the words used were basically English (with a few genuine Ashanti expressions thrown in here and there) they were so distorted as to render recognition by others extremely difficult if not impossible. Some people hearing this dialect erroneously believed that they were listening to Coromantee (Harris n.d.: 101).
>
> The disguises found so often in many English words used were not deliberate but rather were a natural distortion which gradually became standard speech. Thus *kee, poo, teh*, meant *kill, pull, tell*, respectively. *Nhumawn* (the first syllable is very short) meant *youngman*. But some words and combinations of words are difficult to assess although their meanings are clear to the Maroon. Consider the question, *na hunty yu cohn yeh fi*? Here *yu, yeh, fi* are readily identifiable as you, here, and for respectively; and *cohn*, because of its sound and position among the others presents no difficulty in being recognized as *come*. However, *na* and *hunty* present a different picture: the meaning of the former is *is*, and of the latter, *what*; therefore their combination can mean *is what* as well as *why*; so the question literally is, *is what you come here for?* (why do you come here?) (Harris n.d.: 105).[29]

It is clear that all of the examples of an earlier form of speech offered by Colonel Harris above are found still in the speech of possessed Maroons. When all of the evidence is tied together, then, there can be little doubt as to the status of the Maroon "spirit language." Although it should not be considered a fully-preserved, static replica of an earlier language form, it seems certain that many of its distinctive elements hark back to an old layer of creole which was once spoken by Maroons in ordinary contexts. Today it lives on only in the voices of the ancestors who come to visit Kromanti Play.

Historical Questions

If we accept that the distinctive characteristics of the Maroon "spirit language" outlined above represent survivals from an earlier form of creole once used in ordinary contexts — and there is every reason to believe this, as I have shown — then a number of further questions emerge. What implications, we might ask, does the existence of this "deep" creole have for our understanding of the language history of Jamaica?

For one thing, the data presented in this paper add further support to decreolization theory in general. It would be difficult to interpret the Maroon "spirit language" as anything other than a partially non-decreolized language-form from an earlier time which has been preserved (though not totally without change) in ceremonial contexts. What this might tell us about the more general developmental history of Jamaican Creole, however, is open to argument. Do we have here definitive evidence that there once existed on the Jamaican plantations a form of English-based creole quite different from (i.e., "deeper" than) the basilectal varieties found throughout the island today — a form which was carried into the bush and preserved by Maroons?[30] Or should the Maroon "spirit language" be considered the present-day remnant of a special form of creole developed independently by the Maroons, and historically limited, for the most part, to their own communities?

Whichever of these interpretations one might favor, the remarkable similarities between the Jamaican Maroon "spirit language" and the creoles of both Suriname and Sierra Leone still require explanation. Once again, the available data allow us to arrive at no final answers. On the one hand, the parallels between the Jamaican Maroon deep creole and a number of other creoles geographically far-removed from it might be seen as some of the strongest evidence yet presented that a common substratum underlies all of the Atlantic creoles.[31] It would be difficult to account for the specificity and the sheer number of these parallels without positing the existence of such a substrate. On the other hand, the picture is complicated by the fact that there are well-documented and important direct historical connections between Jamaica and both Suriname and Sierra Leone.

In 1667 the colony of Suriname was taken from the English by the Dutch. Although the new Dutch governor attempted to keep as many of the original British settlers as possible in the colony, most of them ended up leaving, along with their slaves, by the year 1680. A sizeable number chose Antigua as their destination, but the majority sailed for Jamaica. There is no way of knowing the exact numbers of those who resettled in Jamaica, but existing documents allow us to say that *at least* 1748 persons from Suriname made Jamaica their new home during the 1670's (517 arrived in 1671, and another 1231 in 1675). Of this number, we can say with certainty that at least 981 were slaves (although the actual number of slaves was probably considerably higher).[32]

It must be kept in mind that at the time when this migration took place, Jamaica was still a fledgling English colony. The English had been there only since 1655, and the plantation system was still very young. When the Suriname immigrants came on the scene, the population of slaves already there was both small and relatively new to the island (in 1673, the slave population was around 9,500, meaning that by 1675, slaves of Surinamese origin constituted roughly one-tenth of the total slave population — if not more).[33] Coming as they did on the eve of an explosion of new slave imports, the Suriname immigrants entered the picture — linguistically-speaking — at a critical time; for the original Jamaican pidgin/creole linguistic base which was to serve as a model for the thousands of African slaves who poured into the island in the following decades must have still been in the process of formation.[34] That the newly-arrived slaves from Suriname contributed to this process seems more than likely.[35]

There is yet further evidence pointing in this direction. It is known that the Suriname immigrants became spread out over a wide area soon after entering Jamaica. Although a large number of the smaller settlers gravitated to a single locale in the western part of the island (which was known as the "Suriname Quarters"), those who possessed the means — and thus also the largest number of slaves — purchased large tracts of land and started plantations in several different parishes, including St. Catherine, St. Dorothy, St. Elizabeth, Vere, Clarendon, and St. George (Cundall 1919: 153–172). We know, therefore, that many of the

slaves of Surinamese origin were kept together and shared the same plantations in Jamaica; but at the same time, their main concentrations were spread across several different areas. This would mean that the already-existing shared creole base (i.e., cultural and linguistic) brought by the Surinamese slaves could have been maintained in a communal setting; and it can be surmised that the Surinamese influence might have radiated out from these centers of concentration so as to affect the larger population. Although nothing is known about the extent to which slaves of Surinamese origin were involved in marronage, clearly their numbers and geographic distribution were such that we cannot rule out the possibility that they had a significant linguistic impact in the island as a whole, and in the early Maroon communities in particular. Whether this fact in itself will suffice as an explanation for the striking parallels between the Jamaican Maroon "spirit language" and the present-day Suriname creoles is a matter for further argument.

As for the parallels with Krio, the creole of Sierra Leone, it is well known that an entire community of Jamaican Maroons, numbering nearly six hundred, was transported to Freetown in 1800, and some linguists believe that the language they brought with them played an important part in the formation of Krio.[36] It should be noted, however, that whereas the Maroons who were sent to Sierra Leone came from the western part of Jamaica, the Maroons who provided the data for this paper all belong to the eastern communities, and their ceremonial tradition differs considerably from that found in the surviving western community of Accompong. Whether the Accompong Maroons (who formed the "sister" community of the Maroons who were transported to Sierra Leone) now possess, or have ever possessed, a distinctive "spirit language" comparable to that of the eastern communities, I do not know. But it is known, in any case, that the eastern and western communities were not completely isolated from one another in the past, and they still display a number of cultural similarities.

It is difficult to disentangle all of these historical threads, and thus it is not possible to arrive at any sort of firm conclusion. While the close relationship of the "deep" creole of the Jamaican

Maroons to Krio and the Suriname creoles may have to do primarily with ultimate common ancestry (i.e., the shared substratum), a more direct, linear (or rather, "triangular") connection through time (via the early migration from Suriname to Jamaica and, subsequently, that from Jamaica to Sierra Leone) cannot be ruled out. Further research, as well as future archival discoveries, may well tip the balance one way or the other. Whatever the case may be, the implications are intriguing, for it becomes apparent that the Jamaican Maroon "spirit language" has provided us with a special kind of entrée into the past. It is to be hoped that esoteric cult and possession languages in other parts of Afro-America will become the subject of careful study in the future, for if the Jamaican Maroon case is an accurate indicator, it would seem that a valuable new dimension could thereby be opened for creole studies.

NOTES

1. For basic background information on the Jamaican Maroons, see Dallas (1803), Kopytoff (1973), Patterson (1970), Williams (1938). For a general look at Maroon societies throughout the Americas, see Price (1979).

Rebecca Bateman, Ian Hancock, Richard Price and Sally Price were kind enough to read and comment on an earlier version of this paper. I would like to thank them for their encouragement and helpful suggestions. I am also grateful to Bonno Thoden van Velzen for his help with Ndjuka, which allowed me to see a number of important connections, and to Joseph G. Moore for his generosity in giving me access to his field materials.

2. Le Page (1960: 102) has stated that "the Creole English of the Maroons preserves a higher proportion of Twi loan-words than is current in other parts of the island." At any rate, the data he presents in his volume come almost completely from the western community of Accompong, and the samples of transcribed speech he offers do not differ significantly from the sort of creole spoken throughout the island; in other words, they do not convey an impression of particular conservatism. The data from the eastern Maroons presented in the present paper, however, do bear out the claims of Cassidy and Le Page, in unambiguous fashion, as I show below.

3. For a detailed description of Kromanti Play based on this fieldwork, see Bilby (1981). The data included in the present study comes from all three of the eastern (Windward) Maroon communities — Moore Town, Charles Town, and Scott's Hall. The bulk of the material comes from Moore Town, where I spent the longest time (twelve months), but there is a significant amount from the other two as well. Since the "spirit languages" of the three communities are very

similar, I have not indicated specific provenience for the items discussed in the main text. Those items which appear to be peculiar to one town or another can be seen in the word-lists offered in Appendix C, in which the lexical data used in the main text are broken down by community (along with a number of additional items not discussed in the main text).

The field research upon which this study is based was later supplemented by archival research at the Public Records Office in London, during September 1982; a few relevant passages from original historical documents in the P.R.O. collections have been incorporated in this paper.

4. Cassidy & Le Page (1980: lv) mention an "archaic specimen" of Jamaican Creole known as "Bungo talk" — a type of speech found in small pockets of the island, which is supposed to be the very most basilectal form. Akers (1981: 74) also refers to "Bungo talk," and places it at the very base of the Jamaican continuum. Judging from these authors' descriptions, the differences between "Bungo talk" and normal basilectal Jamaican Creole are very slight when compared to the differences between the Maroon "spirit language" and the normal creole. Furthermore, these two archaic forms of creole ("Bungo talk" and Maroon "spirit language") do not differ from the normal basilectal creole in the same ways; each form displays its own distinguishing features.

5. For a brief description of the Kromanti language of the Jamaican Maroons, see Dalby (1971). See also Bilby (1981) and Hall-Alleyne (1982).

I am presently at work on a forthcoming paper directly concerned with the Maroon Kromanti language, which is separate from the "spirit language" described in the present paper.

6. I am not a linguist by training; however, the nature of my fieldwork was such that I was in a unique position to gather linguistic material which is not normally easily accessible to outsiders. Hence, I spent a good deal of time and effort on the collection of such materials.

7. Most Maroons insist that possession by the most ancient ancestors is very rare, and dangerous to the medium, but it does occur nonetheless. See Bilby (1981: 57).

8. This means that the more recently deceased an ancestor, the more intelligible his speech is supposed to be to the living — not only because it includes fewer Kromanti expressions, but also because of differences in pronunciation, speed and style of delivery, and so forth. This is supposed to mean as well that the ancestors who come to possess dancers at Kromanti Play can be chronologically placed, in relative terms, by their speech. In practice, however, such placement is difficult, for there appears to be a built-in "ceiling" on the speech of the ancestors; that is, even the most recently deceased Maroons (those who have died, say, in the last ten years) apparently "revert" to a deeper form of speech when they enter the world of the ancestors. Thus, the spirits of a Maroon who died ten years ago and one who died a hundred years ago will use essentially the same form of "deep" language when they come to possess the living.

9. The magnetic power of Kromanti (which is independent of any semantic load) was explained to me by one ritual specialist (*fete-man*) as follows: "... when

you talk the [Kromanti] language, it coming from way back, from olden days. So that power now come up and those man, older man, older man, older man, come up to that language, when you talk that language . . . and hold you fast, and help you fe push that power. When you use the language, it come same like a song. When you sing a song, a olden song, same way you call a olden man, old-time man, from way back . . . from *way* back too!" (Transcribed directly from tape-recorded conversation.)

10. It is interesting to compare how the Saramaka Maroons of Suriname conceptualize their language: "The Saramaka believe that language is a multi-layered phenomenon. The several labels for any particular object are scaled from more to less intimately associated, in a spiritual sense, with the thing they stand for. Those labels whose bond to their referents is most sacred are termed *gaán nĕ* ("true" or "big" names); these epitomize the essence of a thing, are considered private, must be used with circumspection, and include a relatively high proportion of terms derived from African languages. On a more general level, the Saramaka believe that their language, including the various layers, is not the "real" Saramaka language, which was more heavily grounded in reality but was lost in the distant past, and that what passes for the Saramaka language today was learned from forest spirits (*apúku*) at the time the original rebels established their first independent communities" (Price & Price 1972: 342).

11. For a discussion of Maroon secrecy, and a description of the ritual oath, see Bilby (1981: 76–80). This oath is strictly adhered to only in Moore Town. The other two communities were more relaxed about recording during episodes of possession.

12. Although I saw this manuscript while still in the field, I did not read the sections on language at that time, and thus my collection of data and my early interpretations were not influenced by the Colonel's comments. I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to Colonel Harris for making his manuscript available to me after I returned from the field.

13. All items from the Jamaican Maroon "spirit language" are rendered throughout this paper according to the phonemic orthography for Jamaican Creole used by Cassidy & Le Page (1980: xxxix–xl). Two exceptions are made, for sounds which occur in the "spirit language" but are uncommon or non-existent in normal Jamaican Creole: "sj," and "~" (these symbols are explained below).

Professor Ian Hancock (pers. comm., Feb., 1983) has pointed out to me that epithesis may be a retained feature rather than all of the individual forms being retained forms; that is, of the examples listed here, some may represent "standard" Jamaican Creole forms which have been "deepened" by acquiring a final vowel, while others probably have had and continue to have fixed forms. My data indicate that this is indeed the case, and I remember the occasional adding of final vowels to words (not listed here) which were most commonly pronounced, even in possession speech, without them.

14. "Blada" and "debeklin" are variants of the more common forms, "brada" and "debrekin."

Professor Hancock (pers. comm., Feb., 1983) has noted that it is possible that

the less common form, "debeklin," is derived from "de-be(n)-klin" rather than "day-breaking." Krio (Sierra Leone) has "de-don-klin" and normal Jamaican Creole has "die-kliin."

15. Akers (1981), in his discussion of /r/-distribution in modern Jamaican Creole, makes no mention of the /l/ ~ /r/ variation which is found in the Maroon "spirit language."

In the "spirit language," it should be noted, /r/ is never a trill or flap (as it is, for instance, in Sranan), but is pronounced as a semi-vowel. (It appears that it is a retroflexed vowel glide similar to /r/ in most dialects of American English, although occasionally it goes almost to a "w".) It is interesting to note, however, that when I made a brief visit to the western (Leeward) community of Accompong in 1978 I heard a flapped /r/ in normal Maroon speech there; this seemed to be absent in Maroon speech (whether normal or "deep") in the three Windward communities.

16. In this paper, "sj" is used to represent a sound which occurs in the "spirit language" but not in normal Jamaican Creole. It is a groove fricative somewhat similar to [š], articulated near the back of the teeth ridge with the front of the tongue. A similar groove fricative has been described for Gullah (see Alleyne 1980: 59–60).

Among the Windward Maroons, the greeting "yengkungku?", meaning "are you a Maroon?", is properly answered with "sjref-sjref" (i.e., self-self), meaning roughly, "yes, same as you." This is the same expression noted by Moore (1953: 277) as "shref-shref," although one of Moore's informants erroneously glossed the expression as "spirit." This error made its way eventually into Cassidy and Le Page (1980: 407).

17. In basilectal Jamaican Creole, "bottle" is *bakl*; in this case, it seems that *baklbwai* became *blakabwai*. It should be mentioned that *pripri* is sometimes, though not often, pronounced /pripril/ or /priprl/.

18. In this paper, vowels nasalized in this way feature the symbol "~": ã, ẽ, ĩ, õ, ũ. (The symbol is the same as that used in I.P.A. orthography.)

19. The following examples are all taken from transcriptions of tape-recordings.

20. Hancock (1969: 68) has noted that in each case of a creole language featuring particles which function in these ways, "the verbal form is identical with the locative prepositional form." Note that this holds true for the Maroon "spirit language" (in which *na* can be either verbal or locative), as well as normal Jamaican Creole (in which *a/da* can be either verbal or locative).

21. Schafer (1973: 251) heard an expression "ontiffi!" in Scott's Hall, which was glossed for him as "watch out!" In Moore Town "onti fi!" can be used in a similar way as an exclamation, although something like "what's there?!" would be a more accurate gloss.

22. The following examples are taken from transcribed tape recordings.

23. Jamaican words are rendered according to the phonemic orthography used

by Cassidy & Le Page (1980). All other words (except Saramaccan) are rendered according to a loose approximation of I.P.A. orthography. (A Jamaican exception is "sj," as noted above.) For Saramaccan, the phonemic orthography first proposed by Voorhoeve (1959) is used.

The closest thing Krio has to any of the interrogatives listed here is *wɔ tin* or *wetin* ("what thing"), which bears some slight resemblence to Jamaican Maroon *onti*; otherwise there are no explicit parallels from Sierra Leone.

24. The first paragraph of note 23 also applies for the following word-list.

25. Although the speech of possessed Maroons is conceptualized as the way the possessing spirit used to talk when alive, everyone knows that the spirit of a Maroon who died in 1977 (and who thus spoke modern creole while alive) will use the same "deep" language as other spirits when possessing people at Kromanti Play. This creates no logical conflict; it is not analyzed, and is simply part of "the way things are" (see note 8).

Although the more recently-deceased ancestors all use the same form of "deep" language, the really older ones — those who are said to have lived, for instance, during the time of war or shortly after — do in fact use more Kromanti expressions, and their speech may vary in other ways as well; I do not have sufficient data to elaborate further on this.

26. There are several other historical documents — dealing with the pre-treaty Maroons — which contain suggestive references to language. All of these indicate that the Maroons spoke *some* form of English. One such document, a letter of 1732, makes reference to a captured Maroon "woman who was born in one of the Rebellious Settlements and speaks good English" (Public Records Office, London, C.O. 137: 20, No. 154). In another document — the confession of a slave held in 1733 for corresponding with the Maroons — a slave in conversation with a Maroon is quoted as having addressed the latter as follows: "Master use's us goodee yet, but when him use us ugly we'll come" (Public Records Office, C.O. 137: 20, No. 179). In yet another account of an encounter with the Maroons, a British officer writes of Captain Quao (or "Quoha") of the Windward Maroons that "he spoke tolerable good English," and goes on to provide a rather poignant sample of his speech: "massa you no see this hole in my cheek? one of your shot bounce again my gun, him flly (sic) up, and makeum" (Thicknesse 1788: 124). Other examples similar to these could be provided, showing that the early Maroons had a good grasp of plantation creole; but to my knowledge there exists no document which will allow us to say whether or not the pre-treaty Maroons commanded, *in addition to* the shared creole of the plantations, a form of English-based creole distinguishable as their own.

For an interesting discussion of language among the early Maroons, see Kopytoff (1973: 22–27). See also Hall-Alleyne (1982: 25–26).

27. Certain Maroon words given to Williams (1938) in the 1930's can be recognized as words still used in the "spirit language" today. Before this work, there is virtually no reliable documentation of Maroon language that I know of. The words collected by Williams (ibid: 464–6) which I heard used during episodes of possession are as follows (each word or phrase collected by Williams is followed in parentheses by the corresponding word and gloss collected by myself in one or more of the Windward communities):

From Accompong Town: "*hundad hand*, banana" (hondad han, banana bunch); "*bring-mi cojoe*, walking-stick" (kojo, walking stick); "*cojoe*, cocoa" (konjo, St. Vincent yam); "*a-kete*, war bugle" (akete, signalling horn). From Moore Town: "*tokono midasim*, the man who looks salt is not the man who eats it" (midasem, salt). From Charles Town: "*mut*, mouth" (mutu, mouth); "*tesu*, stand up" (tesu, stand up); "*insho*, water" (ĩsho, water); "*insa*, rum" (ĩsa, rum); "*incheswa*, egg" (ingkeswa, egg); "*incucko*, fowl" (inkoko, fowl); "*timbambo*, fire" (timbambu, fire); "*deppa*, knife" (indepe, knife); "*plantdice*, field" (prandes, yard or grounds); "*sably memhone*, puss" (salimiou, cat); "*cubbity*, good night" (kubaiti, goodbye); "*kaekra*, Maroon bugle" (akrekre, signalling horn). And finally, from Scott's Hall: "*opprosoa*, woman" (opreswa, woman); "*awissa*, pepper" (awisa, pepper); "*ensexcray*, sugar" (insikri, sugar and water); "*cojo topo*, top of a tree" — note the final vowel on "top" recorded by Williams (kojo, tree); "*duchengray*, rope" (dosenggri, rope); "*caban*, house" (kaban, house).

I am able to offer here further valuable comparative data, collected more than thirty years ago. The following items, and the corresponding glosses, have been taken off a tape of an interview conducted by the anthropologist Joseph Moore in St. Thomas parish in 1950. The interview was with a part-Maroon herbalist who had relatives in the Moore Town area. I have transcribed the items directly from this tape, which Dr. Moore was kind enough to make available to me. For further background on Dr. Moore's fieldwork in Jamaica, see Moore (1953). The "Maroon language" elicited by Dr. Moore on this tape is as follows: "*bére*, belly"; "*bígi ĩshó*, the sea"; "*debréki*, yesterday"; "*gángfrara*, ancestor spirit"; "*ĩsho bríbri*, rain or water falling"; "*jákĩsa*, a drink"; "*kubáiti*, goodbye"; "*ónti*, where"; "*ónti da yũman bin*?, where has he been to?"; "*sjref*, self"; "*sómti*, something"; "*tajína*, to talk"; "*wáka*, to walk."

28. Taken from a transcription of a tape-recording.

29. The Colonel uses the cluster "nh/hn" loosely to represent the sort of vowel nasalization which I indicate with "~". Thus, "cohn" equals "kõ," and "nhumawn" equals "nyũman."

30. Alleyne (1980: 189) states: "even the basic creole dialect of Jamaica... may... be considered an instance of decreolization because the contemporary form is much closer to standard English than its 17th-, 18th-, and 19th-century forms." The question is, just *how* different were these earlier forms from modern creole, and in what ways? — in the same ways that the Maroon "spirit language" differs from the normal creole?

For an interesting linguistic analysis of an early nineteenth-century Jamaican song, based on several surviving texts, see Lalla (1981). Although Lalla used the texts to show how the Jamaican Creole of the early nineteenth century differed from the modern version, the differences she points out are very slight when compared to those between the Maroon "spirit language" and modern basilectal Jamaican Creole. None of the several peculiar features of the "spirit language" which appear to be completely absent in present-day Jamaican Creole turn up in the song texts, although Lalla (ibid: 25) does mention one feature which is a rarity in the modern basilect but is quite common in the Maroon "spirit language": namely, "the variation between [r] and [l] evidenced in the textual variation swallow ... swarra."

A useful general discussion of how written texts from the past can be used to

gain insights into earlier forms of creole can be found in Lalla (1979). For a good discussion of the creole continuum found in present-day Jamaica, see Hall-Alleyne (1980).

The objection might be raised, in response to the theory of a once more widespread "deeper" form of creole, that there appears to be no trace today of this "deep" form (i.e., with Maroon features) in any parts of Jamaica other than Maroon areas; one would like to find *some* evidence elsewhere, but none has yet been uncovered. However, this might not be such a coincidence. After all, according to older Maroons, the archaic features of possession speech have not been a part of normal Maroon speech since the 1920's or earlier. Such features could have once existed in other parts of the island and over time, as in Moore Town, disappeared from normal speech. Perhaps the only reason these "deep" features still exist in Moore Town (and the other Windward towns) is that these communities have well-integrated, closed ceremonial complexes in which this kind of speech plays an integral part. It seems that non-Maroon Jamaican areas, with few exceptions, have in recent times lacked ceremonial traditions comparable to Kromanti Play, which might have served the same sort of preservative function. (Many Maroons under age 60 or so — those who have never attended Kromanti Play, for religious or other reasons — do not even know that such a deep language exists!)

I try in the final section of this paper to begin to take into account some of the general socio-historical considerations raised by Sidney Mintz (1971), with whom I fully agree about the need for careful historical contextualization in creole linguistic studies. However, in a paper of this length, justice cannot be done to the complexities of the sociolinguistic situation in Jamaica during the years when the Surinamers arrived. I offer here but a few broad suggestions, based on my interpretation of the available demographic data. Much work remains to be done in this area.

31. Among the several competing theories which have been put forth to explain the many parallels between the Atlantic (and other) creoles are those which postulate polygenesis (parallels between creoles being attributed to universal processes involved in contact between languages); and those which postulate monogenesis in an original pidgin or creole substrate language which, after undergoing relexification and decreolization, developed into the different varieties of creole languages found today. The latter position is clearly set out in Whinnom (1965) and, from a different perspective, Voorhoeve (1973). Alleyne (1980) seems to support the idea of an original substrate, but opposes the monogenetic relexification theory, postulating instead the existence of a common *general African-based* substrate which has been modified over time through acculturation processes. The monogenesis/polygenesis debate has yet to be resolved. (See DeCamp 1977: 13–16).

Ian Hancock (personal communication, February, 1983) offers the hypothesis that the Jamaican Maroon "deep" creole and the Suriname creoles both represent surviving forms derived from "Guinea Coast Creole English," a "domestic, household, ethnic" language which became established along the mouth of the Gambia River and in the Nigeria-Cameroon border area some time between 1580 and 1630. In contrast to these forms, Professor Hancock suggests, most of the other English-derived creoles spoken in the West Indies might be derived from a more anglicized, general lingua franca which developed along the West African coast at a later point, and which did not reach the New World

until after the "deeper," more African creole had already become firmly established in a few areas (such as Suriname, and parts of Jamaica). The subtler intricacies of Professor Hancock's argument cannot be presented here, but the reader will find a clear exposition of the "domestic origin hypothesis" on which it is based in Hancock (1972).

32. These figures are taken from Cundall (1919), which remains the most thorough published account of the migration from Suriname to Jamaica. Several later writers have provided figures which agree with these, including Bridenbaugh & Bridenbaugh (1972: 218), Hancock (1969: 14), Le Page (1960: 17), and Voorhoeve & Lichtveld (1975: 275). The migration of 1671 is documented in the Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, Vol. 7 (1669–1674): in a letter of January 16, 1672 (No. 734), it is stated that two ships from Suriname had arrived in Jamaica carrying a total of "517 persons" (including "105 families"); unfortunately, the letter does not indicate how many of these passengers, if any, were slaves. The later migration of 1675 is also documented in the Calendar of State Papers, same series, Vol. 9 (No. 932), where all the "Christians" who made the journey are listed by name, followed by the number of slaves owned by each (the total number of slaves is 981, 31 of these being listed as "Indians" rather than "Negroes"). A more complete list, including the names of most of the 981 slaves who were brought from Suriname to Jamaica at this time, can be found in a copy of a letter of September 22, 1675, which has been preserved in the Public Records Office in London (C.O. 278: 3, Nos. 119–135).

33. The figure of 9,500 slaves for 1673 is based on the estimates of Curtin (1969: 59) and Dunn (1972: 155); it should be seen as a rough estimate, since the combination of primary and secondary sources consulted by these two authors cannot be considered completely reliable (as they themselves note). Professors Michael Craton and Barry Higman have both indicated to me in personal communications that the period under consideration is open to much more detailed demographic work. The figures put forth in this paper, thus, may eventually need revision as more detailed data from archival sources comes to light.

34. The initial years of British colonization and slave-importation — during which the Suriname immigrants happened to arrive — appear all the more crucial to the development of Jamaican Creole, when one considers what recent work has shown about the history of Sranan, the present-day English-based creole of Suriname: namely, that it developed with astonishing rapidity, taking its basic form within the colony's first two decades (Price 1976: 20; Voorhoeve 1971: 307. See also Mintz 1971: 491–494.)

It should be noted also that the arrival of the Surinamers coincided with the early growth of the Windward Maroon groups (the western, or "Leeward," Maroons appear to have formed their major settlements at a later point, after the important rebellion of 1690 in Clarendon). The Spanish Maroons remaining behind after the British occupation continued to hide out in the Blue Mountains, and new escapees began to flee to the eastern interior almost as soon as the British began to import slaves. By 1665, these various eastern groups were already active enough to cause the British colonists great consternation, and their numbers steadily increased in the following decades.

35. A few further figures might help to put things in perspective. As late as 1661 — according to a letter (No. 204) summarized in the Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, Vol 5 (1661–1668) — the total number of "negroes" in Jamaica was only 514. Not quite ten years later, in 1670, it was estimated that the total slave population was 2,500 (C.S.P., same series, Vol. 7 [1669–1674], No. 144). It is easy to see, thus, that the arrival of the Suriname immigrants coincided with a rapid influx of *new* slaves into the island. According to yet another letter (C.S.P., same series, Vol. 10 [1677–1680], No. 945), a total of 11,816 slaves were imported into Jamaica between June 25, 1671 and March 25, 1679. Of these, nearly three-fourths came from Africa ("Guinea"), while the remaining quarter were from Suriname (as part of the migrations discussed above) and the Lesser Antilles (Dunn 1972: 157). These figures make it apparent that once the slaves from Suriname had been resettled, they must have represented a rather substantial proportion of the minority of already-creolized (or partially-creolized) slaves who worked alongside, and doubtless influenced, the swelling population of newly-imported Africans in Jamaica. By 1703, the slave population had already grown to roughly 45,000 (Curtin 1969: 59).

36. For background on the Maroon rebellion of 1795–6, which led to the deportation of the entire community of Trelawny Town Maroons from the western part of the island, see Furness (1965).

See Hancock (1969: 9; 30) for a few brief comments on the role of the speech of the Jamaican Maroons (which he believes to have been overestimated by earlier writers) in the development of Krio in Sierra Leone. For a more recent and detailed outlining of his objections to the hypothesis of predominant Jamaican influence in Krio, see Hancock (1981: 247–248).

APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPTION OF SEGMENT OF TAPED DEMONSTRATION OF MAROON "SPIRIT LANGUAGE"

(Recorded in Moore Town, October 26, 1978)

im a go se: "nyũman! arik mi gudufa. wĩ yu min de waka na da pre an yu si dat sonti... man, dat sonti, ufa? i sabi... onti o luku na yu?... arik mi gudu! if mi no min bin na da pre, ku suma o na yarifo na yu. bika disya pre we yu waka, a no gudu pre. sumte tere nait, wen di suma kõ na pre, den suma waka o pas anda pre, suma o pas anda pre, o kisõ dat sonti so, chai dat sonti so, put na da sonti na yu no. o shala, se wel den, dat sonti o no tan gudu.... wen u luku na u sjref, u sabi se da sonti a no gudu sonti. yu a go se, 'ha!'... luku na sjref... yu se 'hufa bot?... ogri! i na ogri sonti. o... o sonti o kõ frã sali wata, se o wo kõ frã sali wata o naki mi lasi.' so u sabi ampang onti mi sa se?" dat a yu nou. di ada wan se... yu se, "iis." yu nou se, "iis."... in se, "arik, onti u bin?" yu se, "mi bin a legonan." in se, "arik! tere, wĩ yu bin da na pre, da suma kiir wan sonti. so wen da suma teka dat na onti, yu min priis?" yu a go se, "onti bat?" yu se, "onti bat?" dat a yu nou. yu a go aks in se nou, se, "grãfa, onti bat?"...yu a go se, "grãfa, honti bot." im a go se... im a go taak tu yu nou, yu nuo, ka di guos a go taak tu yu nou... im a go se, "wĩ yu min a dat sotin pre, yu bin na tuakwantan, na yu bin na legonanan, na yu bin na ĩsho

bere" . . . wen im se 'ĩsho bere,' im miin tu se, yu min a daiv, an yu kom op bak. . . wen im se 'ĩsho bere,' . . .dat miin se yu daiv dong ina wata, yu no. . . wen di guos se 'ĩsho bere,' wen im se 'ĩsho bere,' dat miin se onda wata yu daivin an yu kom op. . . dat miin se yu a bied, an yu daiv, an yu kom op bak, an kal yu fren. . . him kal tu yu an se, "hou di wata luk onda de tu yu?" yu se, "bwai, it luk difren, yu no." so di guos nou a go aks dat kweschan, "yu no min bin na da sotin pre, na ĩsho?" yu se, "yiis." dat taim yu a go se, "yis, grãfa" . . . di guos a go taak tu yu nou. im a go se, "win. . . na yu no bin na ĩsho bere?" yu se, "yiis, grãfa." im se dan, "wĩ yu bin na ĩsho bere, yu no si sotin sonti?!" dat miin, wen im se 'sotin sonti' nou, yu a go no se, wel, im miin se di stuon. . . if im se 'sotin sonti' . . . bika a so guos gen kaal i, im a go se 'sotin sonti.' dat miin se, yu min si wan stuon, or yu min si bambu trii, ar yu si wan sintin. . . . yu se, "yis, grãfa." da miin se. . . a grãfa im niem. das it.

TRANSLATION

He is going to say: "Man! Listen to me carefully. When you were walking at that place, and you saw that thing. . . man, that thing, how? Do you know. . . who was looking at you?. . . listen to me good! If I hadn't been at that place, a person could have hurt you. Because this place where you walked, it is not a good place. Sometime tonight (today-night), when the person came to the place, then the person walked and passed that place, the person passed that place, he took that thing so, carried that thing so, put that thing by you now. O shala (?), say well then, that thing was not good. . . when you looked at yourself, you knew that that thing was not a good thing. You are going to say, 'ha!' . . . look at yourself. . . you said, 'what is it about? . . . evil! It is an evil thing. It. . . the thing came from the sea, it came from the sea and hit my ass.' So do you understand completely what I'm going to say?" That is you now. The other one says. . . you say, "yes." You now say, "yes." . . . he says, "listen, where have you been?" You say, "I've been to a distant place." He says, "listen! Today, when you were at that place, that person prepared a thing. So when that person took that there, were you pleased?" You are going to say, "what about?" You say, "what about?" That is you now. You are going to ask him now, "Grandfather, what about?" . . . you are going to say, "Grandfather, what about." He is going to say. . . he is going to talk to you now, you know, because the ghost is going to talk to you now. . . he is going to say, "when you were at that particular place, you were at the crossroads, you were at a distant place, you were under water" (ĩsho bere) . . . when he says 'ĩsho bere,' he means to say, you were diving, and you came back up. . . when he says 'ĩsho bere'. . . that means that you dove down into the water, you know. . . when the ghost says 'ĩsho bere,' when he says 'ĩsho bere,' that means that you were diving under water and you came up. . . that means that you were bathing, and you dove, and you came back up, and called your friend. . . he called to you and said, "how does the water look under there to you?" You said, "boy, it looks different, you know." So the ghost now is going to ask that question, "weren't you at that particular place, at the water?" You say, "yes." At that time you are going to say, "yes, Grandfather" . . . the ghost is going to talk to you now. He is going to say, "when. . . weren't you under the water?" You say, "yes, Grandfather." He says then, "when you were under water, didn't you see a particular thing?!" (sotin sonti). That means, when he says 'sotin sonti' now, you are going to know that, well, he means the stone. . . if he says 'sotin sonti'. . .

because that is what the ghost is going to call it, he is going to say 'sotin sonti.' That means that, you saw a stone, or you saw a bamboo tree, or you saw something. ... you say, "yes, Grandfather." That means that... he is named Grandfather. That's it.

APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPTION OF A TAPED SPEECH TO AN ANCESTOR, DURING POURING OF LIBATIONS
(Recorded in Scott's Hall, April, 1978)

yes, bigi suma, da nyũman ya bin fram big ĩsho, bin fram abrouni, bot afa im bin a yangkungku pre, grãfa, da man de a manis. grãfa, di nyũman a manis. wi tuk tek na im na wi kaban. grãfa, wi tuk tek na wi kaban tel i about yangkungku sonti. bot grãfa, im a bin bak di taim. im a bin bak frã ĩ uon prandes an ĩ uon kaban. an di man tuajina mi, onti taim in bin bak... ĩ wi bin bak kushu toun. so grãfa, in se in wi bin bak. mi no no onti fi, if da man a tel laiis, a im a taak truis, bot wi tek wa in se. if im a tel lais, wen im bin bak wi de go go na in sikin. if in no tel lais, wen in bin bak, wi al se, "wiakwamba, wiakwamba, wiakwamba, denko na mi fremili... wiakwamba, wiakwamba, grãfa shukumse."

TRANSLATION

Yes, old one, this man came from (across) the sea, came from outside, but after he came to the Maroon place, Grandfather, that man is (showed himself to be) a man. Grandfather, the man is a man. We took him into our home. Grandfather, we took him into our home and told him about Maroon things. But Grandfather, he is coming back sometime. He is coming back from his own yard and his own house. And the man told me (privately), when (which time) he would come back... he will come back to Kushu Town (i.e., Scott's Hall). So Grandfather, he said he will come back. I don't know which, if the man is telling lies, or he is talking the truth, but we took what he said. If he is telling lies, when he comes back we will go to his body. If he didn't tell lies, when he comes back, we will all say, "wiakwamba, wiakwamba, wiakwamba, denko na mi fremili... wiakwamba, wiakwamba, Grandfather Shukumse" (Kromanti language).

APPENDIX C

LIST OF WORDS COMMONLY FOUND IN POSSESSION SPEECH

Items are divided by town of provenience. In those cases in which alternate forms are listed (e.g., wúdu/údu/húdu/wúdi), the most common form is given first, and the least common appears last. Words are rendered according to the phonemic orthography of Cassidy and Le Page (1980). (Exceptions: "~" equals vowel nasalization; "sj" equals a groove fricative articulated near the back of the teeth ridge with the front of the tongue.) Only primary syllabic stress is indicated.

Moore Town

Words which also appear in Harris (n.d.) are included in brackets, alongside the corresponding listings below; Colonel Harris' original spellings are retained (ex., arete [arretteh, CLGH]). (A few of the items appearing in this list have also been noted in Dalby 1971 and Cassidy & Le Page 1980.)

A

a	he, she, it
abáso	bowl
abáso tik	drum-stick
abukíng	stone
adawó/adowá	metallic percussion instrument
afána	machete, cutlass
akáni tik	drum-stick
akéte	cot, bed
akéte/akéke/akrékre [akikreh, CLGH]	abeng (i.e., signalling horn)
am	him, her, you (obj.)
ampáng/ampóngko	complete, much (as in 'sabi ampang')
anángka	snake
apísi	letter, message
aréte [arretteh, CLGH]	all right
árik/hárik/arík/harík	hear, listen
as/has	spirit medium (i.e., 'horse')
asáfo hous/osáfu hous	ceremonial house (or area)

B

ba	brother
bére/béri/béli	belly
béri	very
bési	woman, child
béti	to bet
bígi	big, old
bígi ĩsho	the sea
bígiman	ancestor
bígipre	grave
bin	be, come, go
bláka/báka/bráka	black
blákabwai/bákabwai	bottle
bo	boy
búku	cramp, injure
bújufra/búsufra/obújufra	blood
búkun	book
búta	bow-and-arrow
buwé	dog

CH

chai	carry, take

D

dákuma/dakú/dakó	child
débe/débre	dead, death
débrekin/débekin/débeklin	dawn
dédekum	mirror
dígaman	hoe (i.e., 'digger-man')
díndi/díindi	clothes, hand, foot, eyes, belly
dúfe	knife

E

e/he	verbal marker (durative)
éde	head
émba	anybody

F

fáinggrien	rice (i.e., 'fine-grain')
féte [fetteh, CLGH]	to fight, to dance for sickness
féteman/oféteman	Kromanti ritual specialist
fútu/ofútu	leg, foot
fútpuosuol	shoe, boot (i.e., 'foot post-hole')

G

grãfa/grãfara/grángfa	grandfather
gúdu [goodu, CLGH]	good
gúdufa	well, carefully
gyála	girl, woman

H

hóndad han	banana bunch (i.e., 'hundred-hand')

I

i	you
iis/yis/yiis [yees, CLGH]	yes
índi	name, hand, belly, ears
ingkechá	headscarf

ingkéswa	egg
ísa	rum
ísho/ishó	water

J

jájomp	far away
jákīsa	rum
jége [djegay, CLGH]	divining instrument
jénkem kótoki	adult
jet	to get
ji	to give
jíjifo [jijifo, CLGH]	evade, fool, trick
jóngga/júngga	lance, spear

K

kándal	clothes
késu/tésu	stand up, sit down
ki/kii [kee, CLGH]	to kill
kiir	take care of, prepare
klem	climb
kõ [cohn, CLGH]	to come
kõ [cohn, CLGH]	cousin
kójo	walking stick
kóndri	country
kongkongkrába	abeng (i.e., signalling horn)
kóngkõsa	gossip
kónjo	yam (specifically, St. Vincent yam)
kre	to clear
kréba	clever
kríkri	quickly, quick
kubáiti	goodbye
kúkram	kitchen, cook-house
kúmfu/kŭfu	ritual specialist
kúta	dog
kwat	bamboo percussion instrument
kwíta	walk gracefully, dance

L

lási	arse, buttocks
láizi	cat
légonanan/légonan	distant place, far
lúku	to look at

M

máial	spirit possession (i.e., 'myal')
malãfo	salt, harmful substance
mánti	morning
méke	to make
midásem	salt
míldri/míljri	middle
mínibo	ground, earth, grave
mútu/mutú	mouth

N

na [na, CLGH]	be; at, in, on, etc. (loc. prep.)
náki	to hit, to knock
nãsi	spider (i.e., anansi)
ne (no + e)	won't (negative verbal modifier)
net	night
nínyã [nynneah/nynnyam, CLGH]	food, yams
nyába	to dance
nyámis	yams, cultivation ground
nyãs	yams
nyũman	man (i.e., 'young man')

O

o	he, she, it
obráye	loincloth
obrébo	indirect reference, veiled insult
obróni	outsider, non-Maroon
obúngge	eel
obwáso/obwásu	bowl
obwáto	boy
ófa/hófa/hóufa/úfa/húfa	how? (sometimes why?, or what?)
ógri/hógri/ógli/hógli [ugly, CLGH]	evil, spirit-sickness
ógliman	obeah-man
óglitadi	hot pepper
okóko	fowl
okréma	chickenhawk
okréma	drummer
oníni	rain
ónku/hónku [uncku, CLGH]	uncle
ónti/hónti [hunty, CLGH]	what? (sometimes, which?, where?, who?)
opéte	vulture
opóngko	horse
oprákо	pig
otúa	gun

P

pákit	personal spirit of ritual specialist
piik [peak, CLGH]	speak
píkibo	child
píkin	child
pinyáak/pinyáku	chickenhawk
prándes	house, yard
pre/pres	place
prem/prim/trim [prem, CLGH]	prime, prepare
priis/priiz	pleased, pleasure
prínting/aprínting/oprínting	drum
pu/puu [poo, CLGH]	pull
puyáku/puyáak	banana

R

re	to ride

S

sa	verbal marker (future)
sa	sister
sábi/sa [sabi, CLGH]	know, understand
sábiman	knowledgeable specialist
sabreké/sabréke	goat
sabrúsa	beads
salimióu	cat
sáliwata	salt water
sálo	to use spirit power, without possession
salónggo	to cool down
sási/asási	ground, earth, grave
séke	sick
sháfana	dodge, fool, trick
shain	kerosene lamp
síkin	body, skin
sjref [shrehf, CLGH]	self
sónti [suhntie, CLGH]	thing
sótin	particular, certain
súma [summa, CLGH]	person, somebody
súmans/súmanz	crayfish
swára	swallow
swípswip	to sip
swíri/swéri [swee-swee man, CLGH]	swear

T

táki	talk
tákifa	money
tánopman	house
te [teh, CLGH]	tell
téka	to take
tem [tem, CLGH]	time
tére/teré [terreh, CLGH]	today
téretere	land, territory
tésu/késu	stand up, sit down
tímbambu/timbámbu	fire
tínya	sing, play (music)
titái	to tie, string, relative (kin)
titáiman	ritual specialist
tónbaig	to leave, turn back
tríifutman/chríifutman	pot (i.e., 'three-foot man')
tríiyaiman/chríiyaiman	coconut (i.e., 'three-eye man')
tuajína	to talk, discuss in private
tuakwántan	crossroads
túju/túju b	lance, spear
túro	tomorrow

U

úma/húma/húba/hub [umma, CLGH]	who? (sometimes, what?)
u	you

W

wáka [wakka, CLGH]	walk
wayukwámba	chick
wérewu jéfru	moon
wíwi	wheeled vehicle
wúdu/údu/húdu/wúdi	woods, forest

Y

yánda	to sound (a drum)
yángga	to dance
yárifo	sick, dead; to kill, to hurt
ye [yeh, CLGH]	here
yéngkungku/yángkungku	Maroon
yerokúm	mirror

Scott's Hall

A

abúba	stone
adúfa/adúfe	fire
adúwa	gun
áfa	after
afána	machete, cutlass
áksi	to ask
akúta	dog
am	him, her, it, you (obj.)
atipó/hachibó	bed
awísa	pepper

B

béksis	angry (i.e., 'vexed')
bére/béri	belly
béri	very
bígi	big
bígipre	grave
bígĩsho/bígi ĩsho	the sea
bin	be, come, go
bládis/bláda/mbláda	blood
bláka/blákis/blákish	black
blákisman/blákishman	cooking-pot
bo	boy
bráda/bláda	brother
bro	to blow
bróbo	car
bróuni/abróuni	outsider, non-Maroon; outside place
bútwa	boot
bútwa	cousin

CH

chip	to sleep

D

dágo	dog
déde	dead
dérokum	mirror
dosénggri	rope
doshénggri	sugar

E

engkéswa	egg
entáchwa	egg
engkwésta	fire-stick

F

fête	to fight, to dance for sickness
féteman/oféteman	ritual specialist and dancer
fráfra	fire
frákis	trousers
fre	friend
frémili	family
fútu	leg, foot

G

glaú/gláu	glass
grándi	drum
grãfara/grángfa	grandfather
gúdu	good

H

hágu	pig, hog
hánu	arm, hand
háta	what
hódio	hello
hónti/ónti	what (sometimes which, where)
hóufa	how

I

iis/yiis/hiis	yes
íisjak	yes
imbúsu	cotton-tree
imbútwa	brother, cousin
indépe/indúfe	knife
inkóko	fowl
insíkri	wine; sugar and water
ĩsa	rum
ĩsho	water

J

jafána/jafán/jíjafana	evade, fool, trick
jége	divining instrument
jíaro	outsider, non-Maroon (derogatory)
jíjifo	evade, trick, fool
joséngwi	salt
joséngwij	cane-liquor
jram	to drink (i.e., 'dram')

K

kában/kabán	house, home
katú	bag carried over shoulder
kimbómbo	vagina
kítireri	corpse, dead
kójo	tree, walking stick
kóndri	country
krem	climb
krému	Maroon dance
kubáiti	goodbye
kúkri	make haste
kúshu	cashew
kútakuta	chair
kwat	bamboo percussion instrument
kwíta	walk, dance

L

lángteil	cow (i.e., 'long-tail')
lángteilfuofutu	cow (i.e., 'long-tail-four-feet')
lem	to chop
líbis	to live
lúku	to look at

M

máial	spirit possession (i.e., 'myal')
mánti	morning
mánu/mánsu/mánis	man
mbébwa	brother
mememép	goat
móngki	drum
múnumunu	menstruation
mútu/móutu	mouth

N

na	be; at, in, on (loc. prep.)
nába	no
nábajak	no
náki	to hit, to knock
ne (no + e)	won't (negative verbal modifier)
nínibo	ground, earth, grave
nyűman	man (i.e., 'young man')

O

obróbo	indirect reference, insult
ógri	evil, spirit-sickness
okrému	drummer
opéte	vulture
opréswa	woman

P

pákit	personal spirit of ritual specialist
píkibo	child
píkin	child
pinyáku	chickenhawk
prándes	yard, home, house
pre	place

R

rácha	medicinal herbs

S

sáfri hous	ceremonial house (or area)
sálimam	drum
sámbo	sun
sho	girl
shóman	crayfish
shóyo	Maroon dance
síkin	body, skin
síplbungga	snake
sjref	self
súma	person, somebody

T

táki	talk
tákifa	money
timbámbu	fire
tínya	to play, to dance
tónbaig	to leave, to turn back
tuajína	to talk privately
tuakwántan	crossroads

W

wáka/wákis	walk
wéte	white
wéteman	rice (i.e., 'white man')
wíngkaz	dancer's headtie
wúdu	woods, forest

Y

yárifo	corpse; injure
yéngko	us, ourselves

Charles Town

A

abróuni	a half-Maroon person; outsider
adáwa	metal percussion instrument
afána	machete
ákwa	drum
am	him, her, it, you (obj.)
anánti ará	the sun
apéte	vulture

B

babasínya wéngkini	a non-Maroon person
big ĩsho	the sea
bláka	black
bo inkóko	rooster
bráda	broad
búku	to do something bad (to somebody)

D

dadikóm	mirror
debeklín	dawn

F

féte	to fight, to dance for sickness
féteman	ritual specialist and dancer

G

grándi	drum

H

hagúbu	pig, hog
hógli	evil
hógli bisáni	spirit-sickness

I

imbébwa	relative (kin)
inkóko	hen
ísa	rum
ísho	water

J

jíaro	stranger, non-Maroon (derogatory)

K

kában/okában	house, home
késwa	egg
kõ	to come
krimpóng	pair of drums
kúmfu/kũfu	ritual specialist

L

lángteil	cow (i.e., 'long tail')
lépman	toad

N

nángka	snake
nyángka	eel

O

obíowu	goat
ókreman	drummer

P

pákit	personal spirit of ritual specialist
píkibo	child
pinyáku	chickenhawk

S

sáfra grong/sáfri grong	dance-ground (ceremonial)
súmans/súmanz	crayfish

T

timbámbu	fire
tínya	to dance for pleasure
tuajína	to talk in private

W

wéngkini	stranger, non-Maroon

Y

yárifo	dead, sick
ye	here
yiis	yes

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