



Meet Cree: A Guide to the Cree Language

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Language, Vol. 59, No. 3 (Sep., 1983), 703-704.

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gender shifts etc. on the basis of extensive ethnographic field experience, with informative anecdotes. L.-Ph. Vaillancourt ('Relations entre langue et culture') explains why the Cree call old people 'great'. P. Martin ('Visualisation syntaxique fonctionnelle du montagnais') proposes and exemplifies a schematic presentation of Algonquian syntax, inspired by the functional approach of A. Martinet. More conventional syntax is represented by D. James ('Past tense, imperfective aspect, and irreality in [Moose] Cree'), showing above-average sensitivity to the nuances and complexities of such problems, and by A. Johns ('A unified analysis of relative clauses and questions in Rainy River Ojibwa'); the latter, regrettably, seems to be based on a small corpus of sentences elicited by translation (and recorded impressionistically).

P. Voorhis ('The Kickapoo sound system and Kickapoo standard orthography') includes a brief sample text. D. G. Frantz and E. Creighton conclude that there is no 'Indefinite possessor prefix in Blackfoot'. W. Cowan presents 'General Treat's vocabulary of Narragansett' (ca. 1820), with some Penobscot and Passamaquoddy words—a puzzle that seems almost entirely explainable as a copying, sometimes inexact, from Roger Williams. F. T. Siebert's extensive 'Frank G. Speck, personal reminiscences' treats in detail a number of questions of Eastern Abenaki (Penobscot) history, linguistics, and ethnography (and in passing, some on Catawba and other groups), with a critical discussion of Speck's accounts; his attention to the linguistic aspects of all questions and his discussion of the Penobscot patrilineal totemic groups is especially valuable.

Two papers discuss native language education in the North: J. Murdoch ('Cree literacy in formal education') and B. Burnaby ('On the success of school programmes involving a Native language').

The over-all competence and diversity of these papers make them perennially among the very best and most interesting of such collections. [IVES GODDARD, *Smithsonian Institution*.]

Meet Cree: A guide to the Cree language. 2nd ed. By H. CHRISTOPH WOLFART and JANET F. CARROLL. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press; Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1981. Pp. xx, 116. US \$12.50.

A revised version of the excellent non-technical account of the Cree language written by W&C in 1973 (*Meet Cree: A practical guide to the Cree language*, University of Alberta Press), the present volume has a slightly different focus. This change is shown clearly by the subtitle, for the book is now a 'guide' to Cree and not simply a 'practical guide' as before. The first edition was aimed largely at an audience of non-linguists, 'mainly ... teachers, nurses, and other Euro-Canadians who live and work in Cree-speaking communities', though it was also usable 'in courses on the structure of Cree and as background reading in spoken language programs'; but W&C now recognize yet another audience, 'the general reader who may turn to a brief book on the Cree language simply from curiosity'. Most readers of *Lg.* would fall into this last category, and thus linguists have cause to rejoice at this added emphasis. Still, the newer edition does not turn its back on the previous audiences, and in fact contains more discussion of basic linguistic concepts than before; indeed, all readers who turn to *Meet Cree* should come away satisfied.

The basic organization of the first edition is retained, with brief but concise sections on Cree dialects, phonology, grammatical categories, inflectional morphology (both nominal and verbal), and syntax—all written so as to be accessible to the lay reader. In general, no information found in the first edition is omitted here; but since this is a revision, it seems most appropriate to focus on its differences from the 1973 edition.

The first significant difference is in the range of material covered. In particular, a short section has been added (pp. 2–4) on ways of writing Cree, including Cree syllabics (though not enough information is given on this writing system to help one decipher syllabic texts); and an additional chapter has been written (Chap. 6, pp. 89–105) containing facts on Cree literature, as well as two Cree texts with English translations. The texts are an especially welcome addition, since they give one a feel for what connected Cree prose is like; however, interlinear glosses (as given in the sample text of Wolfart's *Plains Cree: A grammatical study* [Philadelphia: APS, 1973], pp. 85–8) would have made this section more generally useful, especially to non-Algonquianists and to non-linguists who might try to make sense of the individual words, phrases, and sentences in the texts.

Besides these additions, the various compo-

nents of Cree grammar are described in significantly greater detail. Thus we now find more extensive discussions of gender in the Cree noun (17–22, with a specific example of problems which a Cree speaker might encounter with English gender) and in the Cree verb (53–8), of 3rd person possession (47–51), and of the interaction of the person hierarchy with the direction markers in the verb (68–70). Moreover, parallels between nominal and verbal morphology, in terms of both the shape of morphemes and the relevant grammatical categories, are spelled out more explicitly (pp. 53–4). Finally, W&C add the small but extremely important observation (especially to linguists interested in obviation in Cree) that ‘the inflection of II [= Inanimate Intransitive] verbs is the only occasion where the distinction of proximate and obviative in the inanimate gender is expressed by inflectional elements’ (66).

W&C have also made mechanical changes which improve their book. Some material is placed in new separate sections, either through the creation of new subdivisions, as in the section on nominal stem types (38–9) and that on the four main types of verbs (60–63), or through the creation of entirely distinct chapters, as for noun and verb inflection (Chaps. 3 and 4 respectively); this format better highlights certain important features not given sufficient prominence before, and leads to a better exposition of key points. The use of the symbol \acute{y} for the dialectal reflexes of Proto-Algonquian **l* (*y* in Plains Cree, *n* in Swampy Cree, etc.; see pp. xv–xix) eliminates the repetitive footnotes of the first edition, in which Swampy Cree forms—corresponding to the Plains Cree forms in the main body of the text—were often given. In fact, much information relegated to footnotes in the first edition, e.g. the morphophonemics of adding possessive suffixes, is now part of the main text; this was a good decision, since footnotes often are not read as carefully as they should be, and important information might thus have been overlooked by some readers. Finally, the deletion of the summary chapter of the first edition was a wise move; the book is (and was) concise enough to make such a chapter unnecessary.

The only shortcomings that one might mention are minor: the rather unusual use of the symbol θ for the [ð] of Woods Cree (xvii–xviii), and the omission of any mention of the ‘*r*-Cree’ dialect (with *r* for PA **l*) of northwest Saskatchewan and the eastern Ontario/western Que-

bec area (even though this dialect was mentioned in the first edition).

Linguists who read this book will of course want more details on the language and grammar, but they need only consult W’s excellent grammatical description (referred to above) for further information on virtually any point (excepting Cree syllabics). In general, W&C are to be applauded for their judicious selection of which facts to include and which to omit (e.g., no mention is made of the dubitative forms or of TA verbs with inanimate actors—and wisely, for they are marginal within the over-all system of Cree). This sensible approach has enabled W&C to achieve their stated goal of providing a generally accessible sketch of the Cree language. Amerindian linguistics would be well served by more books of this nature in any of the language families. [BRIAN D. JOSEPH, *Ohio State University*.]

Syntaxe de l’haïtien. Ed. by CLAIRE LEFEBVRE, HÉLÈNE MAGLOIRE-HOLLY, and NANIE PIOUS. Ann Arbor: Karoma, 1982. Pp. xiv, 251. \$15.00.*

Since so many creole grammars stop where the syntax gets interesting, it is pleasant to find one that starts at that point. In addition to an introduction by Lefebvre, the volume contains articles on the syntax and semantics of the definite article *la* (Lefebvre), on *pu* as modal, preposition, and complementizer (Hilda Koopman and Lefebvre), modals (Magloire-Holly), verb fronting (Piou), reduplicated verb constructions (Piou), relativization (Koopman), and *wh* questions (Koopman). Enough background information is given to make the materials accessible to those without previous acquaintance with Haitian Creole; but most of the questions dealt with have not previously been treated, or have been treated only superficially. The work is also unusual among creole grammars in that it is based on a single (and recent) grammatical theory, the Revised Extended Standard Theory version of generative grammar. The authors’ analyses are in general competent, if at times

* [Two book notices were received for this book, and the editorial decision was made to publish both. The reader should therefore be aware both of this notice, by Derek Bickerton, and of the one which follows, by Chris Corne.]