# FRENCH LOANWORDS IN CREE

David H. Pentland
University of Manitoba

Cree is not usually mentioned as a language which freely borrows words from others, as English does: like German, it prefers native formations when a new word is needed to describe previously unknown technology or other concepts. Sometimes, to be sure, the new word is a loan translation of a foreign term, but the very rich derivational system of the Cree language can handle almost any concept in a single word, e.g. sēhkēpańīs[1] 'automobile' (literally 'thing that moves by itself', probably only coincidentally a translation of the European term), cikāstēpicikēw 'he takes a photograph' ('he causes things to cast shadows'), onīmipēw 'camel' ('one who carries his own water'), mińāhcikēs 'Volkswagen Beetle' ('little thing that goes along sniffing the ground'), mohco-pīhtwāwin 'marijuana' ('crazy-smoking'). Except for the meanings, these terms are indistinguishable from most words referring to traditional concepts, since almost all of the Cree vocabulary is derived from a limited number of roots by a large set of productive suffixes: cīmān 'canoe' is literally 'a thing to be paddled'; ospwākan 'pipe' is 'thing for smoking'; even ińiniw 'person, human being, Indian' is a derivative, literally 'ordinary being'.

Despite this ability to create new words at will from its own resources, Cree has been borrowing words throughout its history. Its ancestor, Proto-Algonquian, borrowed from the neighboring Iroquoian languages (Pentland 1978) and perhaps from Siouan (Siebert 1967, Goddard 1978): *nātowēwa 'Iroquoian' (Cree nātowēw 'Mohawk') is from Seneca nõtawá?ka·? 'people of the big hill, Seneca'; *(k)ālahkonāwa 'bread' (Cree āńahkonāw) is probably from Laurentian karahkó·ni (Carraconny in Jacques Cartier's vocabulary); *wekehcitāwa 'warrior' (Cree okihcitāw) may be from Dakota akičita.[2]

After the break-up of Proto-Algonquian (around 1000 B.C.) Cree continued to borrow from other languages. A number of Cree words have no obvious cognates in other Algonquian languages, e.g. astotin 'hat', pīsim 'sun', omānihkwēw 'Assiniboine woman'; some may have been borrowed from non-Algonquian languages, including the unrecorded languages that Cree must have replaced when it spread across central Canada. Others were borrowed before European contact from neighboring Algonquian languages, e.g. niyāńan 'five' (probably from Fox: Proto-Algonquian *nyāθanwi would have become *nātan in Cree), mīcim 'food' (from Ojibwa: Cree would have had *mīcihp < *mīcye?mi); still others were passed from one dialect of Cree to another, such as Swampy Cree arīkis 'frog' (beside expected anīkis), cowēkalāpisīs 'dragonfly' (beside cowēkanāpisīs), and northern Plains Cree cilowī 'killdeer' (from Moose Cree?), cahcakārōw ~ cahcakālōw 'blackbird' (beside inherited cahcakāyōw), ciyāsk 'gull' (from Montag-

*Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics. Vol. 7, 1982. pp. 105-117.*

nais, beside normal kiyāsk).

Early Historic Loanwords

Loans from the early contact period are often indistinguishable from the interdialect borrowings discussed above. A word for 'gun' was coined in one of the languages around the Great Lakes (probably Ojibwa) and was borrowed (or loan-translated) into the others, but Cree pāskisikan, Ojibwa pāškisikan and Fox pāškesikani could easily pass as descendants of a Proto-Algonquian word *pāškesikani 'gun' were it not for the meaning. Also early is *kāšakehsa 'domestic cat' (literally 'little glutton'): Cree kāsakis ~ kāsakēs is attested from 1708, but is probably a loan from Ojibwa kāšakēns, like Menomini kāsakɛh.

In the seventeenth century a number of such terms spread from language to language, together with names for the people who brought the new items. Pseudo-Proto-Algonquian *wēme?tekōšiwa 'one who has a wooden boat' is reflected by Cree wēmistikōsiw 'Frenchman, Englishman, European' (first recorded in 1743), Ojibwa wēmihtikōši 'Frenchman', and Fox wēmehtekōšīha (diminutive) 'Frenchman'; Menomini wēmɛhtekōsew is borrowed from Ojibwa or Fox, as shown by the medial ht instead of inherited ?t. Probably a little more recent is *ke?ci-mōhkomāna 'American' (literally 'big knife'): Cree and Ojibwa kihci-mōhkomān, Menomini mōhkomān, Fox mōhkomāna, the latter two without the prefix 'big'.

Sometimes the traders' own words (not always perfectly understood) were used instead of coining a new term: the place name [mõreal] Montréal was borrowed as *mōliyāwa 'Frenchman' (> Cree mōńiyāw, Ojibwa mōniyā), but Menomini preserves the older meaning 'main city of the Europeans' in mūnīyāk 'New York City' (borrowed from Fox or Ojibwa in its locative form). The French plural [lezãglɛ] les Anglais 'the English' was adopted as *(s)ākalāhsiwa 'Englishman' (singular), whence Cree ākańāsiw and Ojibwa sākanāhs ~ šākanāhš (the latter with pejorative š for s); Menomini sākanās is a loan from Ojibwa.

With the establishment of the first Hudson's Bay Company fort in 1670 Cree began to borrow words from English as well as French and Ojibwa. The English greeting What cheer? was borrowed (from an r-less dialect) as wāciyā 'greetings, hello, goodbye'; it is, as Faries (1938:518) commented, 'now thoroughly naturalized into Cree', with derivatives wāciyēmēw 'he greets him, says goodbye to him', wāciyēmitowak 'they greet each other', wāciyēmitowin 'handshaking', etc. By 1743 sugar and cheese had been adopted as sōkāw and cīs respectively, the former already with a derivative sōkāwāpōwińākan 'punchbowl' (Isham 1949:15-16; literally 'sugar-liquid-dish'). The English playing card terms were also borrowed very early: in 1743 Isham (1949:28) recorded kańapis 'club', tāyiman 'diamond', hāc (with nonphonemic initial h) 'heart' (modern also wāpos, literally 'rabbit'), pēc 'spade' (modern ispēt); tēhāmān 'card' (animate, like the names of the suits) could be a native Cree word derived from the verb tēhāmāw 'he plays cards', but more likely the verb is a back-formation: Isham spelled the noun Dia maw nick 'cards', showing

that it probably is a doublet from English diamond. The names of the individual cards are Cree — pēyakwasinahikan or pēyak masinahikan 'ace' (literally 'one written thing'), nīswasinahikan or nīso masinahikan 'deuce', etc.; kihci-okimāw 'king' (literally 'great chief'), okimāskwēw 'queen' ('chief's wife'), kisē-iñiniw 'joker' ('old man') — except for cāk (plural cākwak) 'jack'.[3]

## Western Cree Contacts with the French

Almost all Cree speakers live within the area drained by Hudson Bay, the territory granted by Charles II to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670. Despite accusations by contemporaries who wanted to break their monopoly (and by many modern historians) the English traders made a considerable effort to explore their enormous fief and to keep the Indians resident in it loyal to them rather than the French, but the independent traders from Montreal enjoyed certain geographical advantages and a greater ability to adjust prices to current conditions: the English prices were fixed by a committee in London, and most of the HBC forts were north of the range of the birch (essential for canoe making) and at the mouths of rapid-filled rivers, whereas the French could buy canoes locally, paddle downstream or across lakes for much of their journey to the western Cree, and set their own prices on arrival.

The earliest trading posts in Cree territory were established by the Hudson's Bay Company, beginning with Rupert's House in 1670. Their first expedition to Hudson Bay was guided by Pierre Radisson and his brother-in-law, the Sieur des Groseilliers, but the two Frenchmen returned to Quebec in 1676 and six years later led a French expedition to the mouth of the Hayes River (Manitoba), where they built Fort Bourbon next door to an HBC post and one established by a group from New England. In the spring of 1683 Radisson captured the New Englanders and took their ship to Quebec, but the governor released both the prisoners and their property on the grounds that France was not at war with England at the time. In disgust Radisson rejoined the English, sailed to Fort Bourbon, and seized it from Groseilliers's son. The three trading posts were torn down and their materials incorporated into a new HBC fort at the mouth of the river, York Factory.

In 1697 the French captured York Factory and held it until 1713, when it was returned to the Hudson's Bay Company. This was the longest period during which there was a French presence on the west coast of Hudson Bay, and, except for brief raids (such as the one by La Pérouse in 1782), their last foray into the Bay. While the French never again settled on the western shores of Hudson Bay, neither did the English make any move to settle the country inland. Exploring expeditions were sent out from 1690 on from York Factory and Churchill, but it was Frenchmen, led by La Vérendrye, who systematically explored the regions west of Lake Superior, proceeding up Lake Winnipeg and the Saskatchewan River perhaps as far as the foothills of the Rockies. To finance his explorations La Vérendrye relied on the profits of the fur trade, and to this end set up

a string of forts from Lake Superior to central Saskatchewan, unopposed by the English.

Unfortunately for the French, they were unable to enjoy for very long the inland monopoly they had in effect been granted by the Hudson's Bay Company: the traders from Montreal were forced to remain at home during the Seven Years' War (few trade goods were slipping through the British blockade anyway), and Quebec was captured in 1759. At the Treaty of Paris, which brought the war to a close in 1763, Britain decided to keep Canada rather than Martinique — a decision which was not universally applauded in England — and the influence of France on the development of the prairie provinces was at an end. From 1756 to about 1763 the Hudson's Bay Company was unopposed in the west, but even before the signing of the treaty English, Scots and French-Canadians — in greater numbers than ever before, and now supplied with goods identical to those of the HBC — set off from Montreal for the rich fur areas of the northwest. The British provided the capital and management, but it was the French-Canadians and the Indians living around Montreal who guided them and paddled the canoes.

By 1767 a Québécois named François le Blanc, known to the Cree as sāswē, had established a post at Nipawin in central Saskatchewan. In succeeding years the number of Montreal-based traders increased rapidly: in 1775, 130 men with thirty canoes were plying the Saskatchewan River. In 1774 Joseph Frobisher had arrived for the first time in Saskatchewan; the next year he moved on to Frog Portage on the Churchill River, and before the end of the decade he and his employees had set up posts all the way to Lake Athabasca. In 1779 Frobisher and most of the other traders from Montreal combined to form the North West Company, which made their competition with the Hudson's Bay Company even more efficient and vicious. Until 1821, when the HBC finally absorbed its younger rival, the west was the scene of what might be called a fur rush, since it greatly resembled a typical gold rush in economic and personal terms: whole districts were trapped out within a few years; rival companies established trading posts within sight of each other until there might be three or four at a single location; Indians coming in to pay off their debts to a trader would be forced into a competitor's fort and relieved of their furs; hundreds of Mohawks from Montreal were imported into Alberta to trap beaver when the local Indians did not show sufficient enthusiasm; and there were even a few murders (which usually went unpunished — the area did not become part of Canada until 1869) to enliven the scene.

A side effect of this great rush into the west was the intimate association of hundreds of French-Canadians with the Cree and neighboring tribes. The Hudson's Bay Company officially frowned on employees' contacts with Indian women; the Nor'Westers did not — in fact, they encouraged their men to take Indian wives to cement relations with the various bands. One product of this policy was the large number of Métis (French-Canadian/Indian halfbreeds) in the prairie provinces; another was the introduction of French lexical items into the local Indian languages.

Unassimilated French Loanwords

The most remarkable example of an Algonquian language that has borrowed lexical items from French is the variety of Plains Cree known as Métchif[4] or Mi(t)chif, spoken in North Dakota (Turtle Mountain reservation), Manitoba (San Clara and probably elsewhere), Saskatchewan (Ile-à-la-Crosse, Beauval, Buffalo Narrows, etc.) and Alberta (at a number of "Métis" settlements in the Peace River valley and elsewhere). Métchif has replaced almost all nouns, and a few other words, with their French equivalents, usually with little or no phonological adjustment. The most extreme variety is the Turtle Mountain dialect described by Crawford (1973) and Rhodes (1977), in which all but five nouns ('mother', 'father', 'grandmother', 'grandfather' and 'chokecherry') are French; other varieties of Métchif retain more Cree nouns, but appear to be identical in most other respects.

Northern Plains Cree (of which Saskatchewan and Alberta Métchif is a variety) has one of the smallest inventories of phonemes known: eight consonants /p t c k s h m n/, two semivowels /w y/, and three vowels /a i o/ plus vowel length. By analytical tricks it is possible to reduce the number even more (c and the semivowels might be treated as underlying /t o i/ respectively, or vowel length could be eliminated in favor of sequences of vowels), but in any case it contrasts sharply with the neighboring languages: English (24 consonants, 15 vowels and diphthongs in the local dialect), French (21 or 23 consonants, 17 vowels in the dialect from which Métchif has borrowed), and Chipewyan (according to Li [1946: 398-399] 39 consonants, 25 vowels, 2 tones). Southern Plains Cree (including North Dakota and Manitoba Métchif) has one additional phoneme, long ē.

Métchif maintains two phonological systems — French and Cree — with little interaction. The southern variety (Turtle Mountain, examples from Rhodes 1977) has [č] for French t before high front vowels (cf. Québécois [c]) and for Cree c (cf. Northern Plains Cree [c]): [pči] 'little' (Québécois [p'ci] petit), [mi·čišuw] 'he eats' (Cree mīcisow); it has borrowed [šč] for orthographic hc from the Swampy Cree dialect of northeastern Manitoba (other dialects have [hc]), as in [ušči] ohci 'from'; and it assimilates sibilants in French words ([šavaž] sauvage 'Indian', [sæs] chasse 'hunt') by a Cree rule which has been lost in the western dialects because they have merged š with s (cf. eastern Cree kīsisow 'he is cooked', underlying /kīš-iso-w/). Otherwise most of the French words appear to be identical to their Quebec French counterparts, and except for the [š] allophone of s the Cree words are indistinguishable from the forms in dialects spoken farther west. Morphologically, too, the French and Cree components of Métchif are similar to other varieties: French adjectives make feminine and plural forms in the usual way (e.g. [pči(t)] 'little', fem. [pčit], masc. pl. [pči(z)], fem. pl. [pčit(s)], etc.) and there are only one or two innovations in the complicated Cree verb paradigms.

It is when words are combined into sentences that Métchif suddenly

ceases to be familiar to speakers of standard French or Cree: a Québécois would have little difficulty with [lɪ livr] le livre 'the book' or [čīy] ti[5] (question marker), nor a Cree with [anima] 'that' (inanimate), [ni·ya] 'I' and [ka·-aya·yin] 'that which you have', but the sentence [lɪ livr anima ka·-aya·yin, ni·ya čīy anima] 'Was that book you had mine?' (Rhodes 1977:14) is incomprehensible to both. It is not just the words that are unfamiliar: a speaker of Métchif must maintain a knowledge of both languages' syntactic requirements in order to apply the Métchif agreement rules. He must know not only that livre 'book' is masculine in French, but also that Cree masinahikan 'book' is inanimate, in order to say lɪ livr anima 'that book' (not *la livr nor *ana). Such a knowledge could have arisen only in a community where a large part of the population was fluently bilingual, e.g. in families where the father spoke French (and some Cree) while the mother spoke Cree (and perhaps a little French).

The Turtle Mountain dialect of Métchif has borrowed only a few English nouns, but in the Saskatchewan dialects a considerable part of the formerly French vocabulary has been replaced by English equivalents, just as the French words replaced Cree terms at an earlier date. Both of the earlier gender systems have been maintained without alteration: Cree nouns are animate or inanimate, and verbs obligatorily agree with both subject and object; French nouns are masculine or feminine, and articles and adjectives must agree with them. Thus the sentence given above in the Turtle Mountain dialect (lɪ livr anima...) would begin at Ile-à-la-Crosse with lɪ bʊk anima, where the English loanword bʊk 'book' is masculine because it replaced French livre and inanimate because livre earlier replaced Cree masinahikan. On the other hand Métchif binz 'beans' is feminine and animate — Canadian French la fève (contrast Standard French le haricot, masculine) and Cree mistañicīmin (pl. -ak) — in sentences like tut li bon binz kī-kitamwāwak 'all the good beans have been eaten' (with feminine bon 'good', not masculine bɔ̃, and transitive animate kitamwāwak 'someone ate them (animate) up' rather than transitive inanimate *kitānāniwiw).[6]

## Partially Assimilated Loanwords

Most Métchif loans from French show only slight phonological adaptation, but a few words are more completely assimilated to the Cree phonological system. I recorded [nɔm] 'the man' and [nɪbwa] 'the wood' at Turtle Mountain, whereas Rhodes (1977) has lɔm (French l'homme) and lɪ bwa (French le bois). In all varieties of Métchif the plural article appears to be [lī] li rather than [le] (French les); similarly the plural possessives are mi 'my', ti 'your (familiar)' and si 'his, her' (French mes, tes, ses) with the northern Cree shift of ē to ī even in those Métchif dialects which otherwise retain ē. Such assimilated forms may belong to an earlier stratum of Métchif than the main body of French loanwords — they are all very basic words — but in the absence of any documentation of earlier stages of the language we can only speculate on the causes of the irregularities.

In ordinary Plains Cree (i.e. the non-Métchif variety) and the neighboring Woods and Swampy dialects only a few French nouns have been borrowed. Such loans are at least partially assimilated to the Cree phonological system, and they are completely integrated into Cree morphological patterns. French voiced stops and fricatives are replaced by Cree voiceless consonants, f (and v) becomes s, and š (and ž) has more recently (mid-nineteenth century) merged with s. I do not have sufficient examples to make definitive statements about the vowel reflexes, but French orthographic oi (Standard French [wa], but [we] ~ [wɛ] in earlier Standard French and modern Quebecois) is reflected as wē, e.g. latwēl 'canvas' (French la toile), lapwēt 'box' (French la boîte).

Most nouns are borrowed with the appropriate article (li, la, lē < French le, la, les) — the exceptions are minōs 'cat' (French minou + the Cree diminutive /-is/) and tōrōw '(domestic) bull' (French taureau) — but the French gender is otherwise irrelevant, each word taking the Cree gender (animate or inanimate) of the noun it has replaced, e.g. lapwēl 'frying pan' (French la poêle; animate like Cree sāsēskihkwān 'frying pan' and askihk 'kettle, cooking pot'), lamwēl 'marrow' (French la moelle; inanimate like Cree wīni 'marrow'). The definite article is not recognized as such: it remains even when the word is used in indefinite senses (e.g. namōya nitayāwāw lapwēl 'I don't have a frying pan') and does not change from li or la to lē in the plural: lapwēlak 'frying pans', lapwēta 'boxes'. Nouns borrowed in the plural are treated as singulars, e.g. lēpōs 'inch' (French les pouces 'the thumbs, inches'): pēyak lēpōs 'one inch', tānitahto lēpōs 'how many inches long is it?' (Cree tānitahto 'how much, how many' + singular).

In inflection and derivation French loanwords behave exactly like native words. Almost all Cree nouns that end in k in the singular have underlying /kw/, which appears on the surface when a suffix (e.g. plural -ak or -a) is added, as in atihkwak, plural of atihk 'caribou'; borrowed words with final k are reanalyzed as having /kw/: lapatāk 'potato' (Québécois [la patak] la pataque), plural lapatākwa. In diminutives Cree t is changed to c, e.g. wāta 'holes', wāca 'small holes'; so also lapwēt 'box', lapwēc 'little box'; lapatāk 'potato', lapacākos 'small potato'. Loanwords also enter productively into the elaborate derivational patterns of Cree: from latwēl 'canvas' + maskisin 'shoe' is formed latwēlaskisina 'running shoes'; from litē 'tea' (French le thé) + askihk 'kettle', litēwaskihk 'tea kettle' (also tīwaskihk, with the English loanword tiy); maci- 'bad' + minōs 'cat' forms maci-minōs 'cougar' (replacing Cree misipisiw 'big lynx').

## Completely Assimilated Loanwords

Some speakers of Cree do not have a phoneme l: Proto-Algonquian *l was changed in prehistoric times to y in Plains Cree (and Woods Cree ð, Swampy n, etc.), and later dialect borrowings like cahcakālōw 'blackbird' are not accepted by everyone. French l and r are replaced by such speakers with what they perceive to be the phonetically most similar Cree

sound, n:[7] lamēlās 'molasses, syrup' (French la mélasse) becomes namēnās; lapwēl 'frying pan' becomes napwēn; tōrōw 'bull' becomes tōnōw. As mentioned earlier, the northern dialects of Cree have merged ē and ī; except in the Métchif dialect of Saskatchewan and northern Alberta, French loanwords also undergo this change: lapwēl 'frying pan' becomes lapwīl or napwīn; likayē 'cottage cheese' (French le caillé 'curdled milk') becomes *likayī, reshaped to likayiy ~ nikayiy to match the numerous Cree nouns with stem-final iy.

While the change of Proto-Algonquian *l to y (etc.) took place far in the distant past, most Cree speakers are quite aware of the correspondences between their own and neighboring dialects. Very rarely l in a loanword is treated as if it were Proto-Algonquian *l: the name Solomon usually appears as sālaman in all Cree dialects, but I have also heard Plains Cree sāyaman and Woods Cree sāðaman.[8] Hypercorrections also occur: anikwacās 'squirrel' (Proto-Algonquian *anyikw-) appears in all dialects, but Manitoba Swampy Cree also has alikwacās and arikwacās in imitation of Moose Cree and Atikamekw (or the extinct Missinipi dialect), which have l and r in some words where Swampy has n, and Bloomfield recorded ayikwacās in a neighboring Plains dialect where the correspondence Swampy n : Plains y is common knowledge. An earlier example is the word for 'all': Swampy and Moose Cree kahkinaw and Atikamekw kaskinā point to Proto-Algonquian *kaxkinawi 'all', but Plains Cree kahkiyaw and Woods kahkiðaw are prehistoric loans with eastern hk < *xk (instead of western sk) and hypercorrect y and ð.

## French Loanwords in Chipewyan

Mary Haas's interest in French loanwords in the languages of North America is well known: she included a section on loans in 'Notes on a Chipewyan dialect' (Haas 1968a:169-170) and followed it up with a note on the Menomini playing card terms (Haas 1968b). The Cree names of playing cards that derive from English have been given above; in Alberta and western Saskatchewan the terms were probably borrowed from French, but they are now almost completely replaced by native Cree words (Wagner 1979), only lipīk 'spade' (French le pique) and misi-pīk 'spade, especially ace of spades' (Cree misi- 'big') surviving.

Haas noted that the French loanwords in Chipewyan all include the definite article (as in Cree), but the masculine form appears as both li- and lɛ-; she suggested that 'Those with li- rather than lɛ- may be earlier loans or perhaps brought in through the medium of another Athapaskan language' (Haas 1968a:170). Both sets include almost completely unassimilated borrowings, e.g. lidréf 'club (card suit)' (French le trèfle) and lɛgafé 'coffee' (French le café) with foreign f, but in general the Chipewyan nouns with li- are less like the French originals than those with lɛ-, and therefore might well be earlier loans.

There is no reason why Chipewyan should have altered the article le to li- if it borrowed directly from French (either lɛ- or perhaps lə- would be phonetically closer): more likely Chipewyan received the earlier

loanwords 'through the medium of another...language' which had no short low front vowel. The obvious choice for such an intermediary is the northern dialects of Cree, which have no low front vowels at all and are known to have borrowed a number of words from French. Historically the Cree lived between the Chipewyan and the French (there were no Athapaskan languages southeast of the Chipewyan), and it was the Cree who guided the traders into the regions farther north.

The hypothesis that Chipewyan borrowed its first French words through Cree is confirmed by two kinds of evidence. The Chipewyan word for 'pig' is gugus (Alberta dialects) or guguš (Fort Smith, N.W.T.), clearly a loanword from Cree kōhkōs 'pig' (earlier kōhkōš), itself a very old loan via Ojibwa from French coche (Hockett 1981:69). The distinctively Cree form sōkāw 'sugar' (from English) has also been borrowed, as sugá — if Chipewyan had taken the word directly from English it would have preserved the initial š and probably the final r. Beside lidréf 'club' Chipewyan also has k'ásbaké, literally 'ptarmigan's foot', a calque on western Cree pihēwisit 'club; partridge or ptarmigan foot'. The other point is that Chipewyan has i (usually with high tone: í) in a number of words for French [e] and [ɛ], which is explicable only if they arrived through the Cree dialects which have merged ē and ī: lidí 'tea' (northern Cree litī, French le thé); libá 'socks' (Cree *līpā, French les bas); labwíl (Scollon & Scollon 1979:139) or labóyl (Haas 1968a:173) 'frying pan' (Cree lapwīl, French la poêle); lagís 'box' (Cree *lakīs, French la caisse).

Another possible French loanword in Chipewyan is bą́lay 'white man'. Like Cree mōńiyāw it probably comes from the place name [mõreal] Montréal, with the same alteration in meaning, but phonologically a Cree intermediary is unlikely since Chipewyan preserves the nasalization of the first vowel and has l where the northern Cree dialects have n or ð (Plains Cree mōniyāw, with irregular n; Woods Cree mōðiyāw). It may be an early loan directly from French (with b for m, since the latter has a very restricted distribution in Chipewyan), with only the meaning borrowed from Cree.

## Some Conclusions

Not all loanwords in Cree derive from the same dialect of French: three varieties can be distinguished, in part perhaps chronologically rather than geographically different. They appear to correlate very well with three types of Cree dialects that can be defined in historical, geographical, and linguistic terms:

(1) Cree dialects in which a very large percentage of the vocabulary is borrowed from French, identified historically with the Métis (Métchif) descendants of French-Canadian fur traders who took Cree wives; distributed in a narrow band from Belcourt, North Dakota, northwest to the Peace River district of Alberta. The French source dialect was one in which t palatalizes to c before high front vowels (Métchif čiy ~ čī

(question marker) < French [cü] tu or earlier [ci] ti) and in which orthographic oi is [wa] (Métchif trwa 'three' < French trois). The number of loanwords appears to decrease from east to west.

(2) Dialects which have borrowed a few French words: Plains Cree and Saskatchewan Woods Cree (also Chipewyan). The source dialect of French is indistinguishable from that now spoken in most of Quebec, with palatalized t before high front vowels (Plains Cree cī (question marker) < French [cü] or [ci]) and [wɛ] for orthographic oi (Cree lapwēt 'box' < French la boîte). The area in which these dialects are spoken was one of the most hotly contested districts of the fur trade era, at least until 1821 drawing large numbers of men from Montreal; the number of loanwords appears to increase towards the west, perhaps reflecting the lesser competition the Hudson's Bay Company was able to mount in the more distant areas.

(3) Dialects which have absorbed little or no French: Manitoba Woods and Swampy Cree, and the dialects farther east. These dialects are spoken in the districts in which the Hudson's Bay Company was never seriously challenged by the traders from Montreal. Besides the early loans which occur in all Cree dialects, the only French material I have noticed appears in a children's counting-out rhyme from northern Manitoba (Pentland 1981); the source dialect is indistinguishable from Standard French, retaining t before high front vowels (tīs 'ten' < French dix) and with [wa] for orthographic oi (lā < *tilā 'three' < French trois). The rhyme is probably very recent, deriving from Catholic missionaries (many of whom were from France rather than Quebec) who reached York Factory only in the early twentieth century, but it is barely possible that it dates back to the brief French occupation of York Factory in 1697-1713.

English loanwords in Cree have seldom been recorded. This is not because they are lacking, but because relatively unassimilated loanwords (those that are easily recognized as English or French) tend not to be written down, even by professional linguists. Even assimilated loanwords are often ignored by those who are familiar with the source language: therefore the only words that are usually recorded are those so drastically altered that the collector does not recognize his own language, or those from languages with which the collector is less familiar, so that English loans tend to be ignored in the west while French loans are usually ignored in Quebec. There are, however, important lessons to be learned from such borrowings, and those studying Indian languages should increase their efforts to obtain samples of them.

## NOTES

1 The Cree orthography used in this paper is an adaptation of the one developed by Paul Voorhis (Voorhis et al. 1977) for the dialects of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta; it does not take into account some of the contrasts found only in the dialects of Ontario and Quebec, which distinguish š from s (and, in Atikamekw Cree, hs from s, hš from š). The consonants are /p t c k s h m n ń w y/; in western dialects c is [c], in the east [č]; ń is an arbitrary symbol for the reflexes of Proto-Algonquian *l (Plains Cree y, Woods ð, Swampy n). The vowels are /a ā ē i ī o ō/; ē has merged with ī in northern dialects, and short e has merged with i in all Cree dialects.

2 Goddard (1978:587) claims that Cree okihcitāw 'a great warrior', Ojibwa okihcitā 'brave warrior', and an uncited Menomini cognate are borrowed from Dakota akičita 'warrior'. I cannot locate the Menomini form, but there is an obvious Fox cognate in nīkāni-kehcitāha 'headman' (formally diminutive; nīkāni- 'leading') and kehcitāwesiwa 'he is adult'; to the latter may be compared Ojibwa kihcitwāwisi 'he is important', kihcitwā 'important, famous' (also 'Saint' in modern Ojibwa, e.g. kihcitwāšānh 'Saint John'), Cree kihcitwāw(iw) 'he is great', okihcitwāw 'great one, a great warrior' (cf. okihcitāw 'id.' above), and Montagnais cīcītwāw 'he is a saint', which have an unexplained w after the t. We may reconstruct without serious difficulty Proto-Algonquian *(we)kehcit(w)āwa or *(we)ke?cit(w)āwa 'warrior', which looks very much like a derivative of the common root *ke?t-, *ke?ci- 'big, great'. It is difficult to accept Goddard's suggestion that the Algonquian languages have here borrowed from Siouan, since the forms appear to derive from a productive Proto-Algonquian root, and there are cognates as far east as the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

3 Isham (1949:28-29) gives a different set of terms for the picture cards: Wa wa ke to 'king', Es'qua muck 'queen', Com ma com ma kot 'knave' (kā-mākwamikot 'he who is bitten'?). The word for 'queen' is a derivative of iskwēw 'woman', but I do not recognize the suffix. Nor can I identify Isham's word for 'king', unless it is a mishearing or misspelling (Isham was barely literate in English, much less Cree) of wēyōcihtāw 'he has plenty, abundance'.

4 The word Métchif is an old variant of Standard French Métis 'halfbreed, mestizo', with the well known Canadian French palatalization (affrication) of t to [c] before high front vowels (further altered to [č] in Turtle Mountain Métchif), and an unexplained change of final s (silent in Standard French) to f. The earliest record of the form I have seen is Mathevet's Loup dictionary (ca. 1750), where p8k8i is glossed as 'A moitié, v.g. metif, qui est moitié d'une nation et moitié d'un autre' (Day 1975:73; Day reads "metiṣ", with uncertain "s", but the facsimile shows a clear "f").

5 The interrogative marker in Canadian French is [cü] tu, as in [õ va cü] on va tu 'Are we going?'. In earlier Canadian French, as in various dialects in France, it was ti (Standard French [va ti] va-t-il 'Is he going?' : nonstandard [i va ti] il va-t-il, whence on va ti 'Are people going, is one going?', tu vas ti 'Are you going?', etc.); the modern Canadian form is due to contamination with the second person singular pronoun, especially in such forms as [va cü] ~ [cü va ci] vas-tu 'Are you going?'. Most Cree dialects have a question marker na (which follows the first word in the clause), but all Plains Cree dialects have substituted the (early?) French loanword cī; I do not know why the Turtle Mountain dialect has a nasalized vowel in [čĩy], but the same phenomenon appears in some Saskatchewan Métchif dialects.

6 The sentence quoted was created by myself (it has not been checked by a native speaker of Métchif) from shorter authentic examples to illustrate the agreement rules; I have no reason to doubt its grammaticality. When I discussed Métchif gender and agreement rules at a University of Manitoba Linguistics Colloquium in January 1981, at least one syntactician objected that such a system should not exist in any language, since it requires the speaker to known not only the "underlying" (French) forms of the English nouns, but also the "underlying" forms of the underlying forms. A fuller description of the system in the Buffalo Narrows dialect of Saskatchewan (my examples are from the neighboring Ile-à-la-Crosse dialect) is now available in Hogman 1981.

7 But in Woods Cree, French l and r appear to have fallen together with Proto-Algonquian *l, as ð: ðitī 'tea' (beside litī) < French le thé.

8 There is a good chance that forms like Plains Cree sāyaman 'Soloman' are created only in fun and would not be used where they might give offence: they were recorded during discussions with a close-knit group of linguistically sophisticated Cree speakers, all about the same age, one of whom happened to be named Solomon. What was permissible to say to a fellow student might not be said to a stranger with the same name.

## REFERENCES

Crawford, John C. 1973. Linguistic and sociolinguistic relationships in the Michif language. Proceedings of the Linguistic Circle of Manitoba and North Dakota 13:18-22.

Day, Gordon M., ed. 1975. The Mots loups of Father Mathevet. (National Museums of Canada Publications in Ethnology, 8.) Ottawa.

Faries, Richard, ed. 1938. A dictionary of the Cree language... Toronto: Church of England in Canada.

Goddard, Ives. 1978. Central Algonquian languages. Northeast (vol. 15 of Handbook of North American Indians), ed. by Bruce G. Trigger, 583-587. Washington: Smithsonian Institution.

Haas, Mary R. 1968a. Notes on a Chipewyan dialect. IJAL 34:165-175.

———. 1968b. The Menomini terms for playing cards. IJAL 34:217.

Hockett, Charles F. 1981. The phonological history of Menominee. Anthropological Linguistics 23:51-87.

Hogman, Wes. 1981. Agreement for animacy and gender in the Buffalo Narrows dialect of French/Cree. MASA (Journal of the Manitoba Anthropology Students' Association) 7:81-94.

Isham, James. 1949. Observations on Hudsons Bay, 1743... (ed. by E. E. Rich & A. M. Johnson). Toronto: Champlain Society.

Li Fang-Kuei. 1946. Chipewyan. Linguistic structures of native America, by Harry Hoijer et al., 398-423. (Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology, 6.)

Pentland, David H. 1978. An early Iroquoian loanword in Algonquian. Algonquian Linguistics 4:27-29.

———. 1981. A stray number system in Swampy Cree. Algonquian and Iroquoian Linguistics 6:8-9.

Rhodes, Richard. 1977. French Cree — a case of borrowing. Actes du huitième Congrès des Algonquinistes, ed. by William Cowan, 6-25. Ottawa: Carleton University.

Scollon, Ronald, & Suzanne B. K. Scollon. 1979. Linguistic convergence: an ethnography of speaking at Fort Chipewyan, Alberta. New York: Academic Press.

Siebert, Frank T. 1967. Discrepant consonant clusters ending in *-k in Proto-Algonquian, a proposed interpretation of saltatory sound changes. Contributions to anthropology: linguistics I (Algonquian), ed. by A. D. DeBlois, 48-59. (National Museum of Canada Bulletins, 214.) Ottawa.

Voorhis, Paul, et al. 1977. A Cree phrase book, based on the dialects of Manitoba. Brandon, Man.: Department of Native Studies, Brandon University.

Wagner, J. P. 1979. Cree playing-card terms. Algonquian Linguistics 5:25-27.