East Cree nominalizations: negotiating category[1]

Solveiga Armoskaite   Marie Odile Junker

University of Rochester   Carleton University

INTRODUCTION

Bliss, Ritter & Wiltschko (2012) proposed a typology of Algonquian nominalizations based on Blackfoot data. Following their call to verify the typology across Algonquian, we show how East Cree facts complement a Blackfoot-based view. Comparing the East Cree data with neighboring languages Innu (Drapeau, 1979) and Naskapi (Jancewicz, 1996), we conclude that nominalization in Algonquian is subject to cross-linguistic and cross-dialectal variation. Specifically, we compare and contrast the behavior of independent order verb forms (with nominalizer suffix *–suu/-siu*) with the behavior of conjunct participles (affixed with *kaa-…-t/-ch/-k*).

The paper is organized as follows: We first introduce the typology proposed by Bliss, Ritter & Wiltschko (2012) (henceforth BRW). Then we show how some East Cree data match up the proposed typology, and how some East Cree data diverge from it. Focusing on the conjunct participles, we first submit them to language internal categorization tests. Then we discuss the extent to which morphosyntactic category tests available for Blackfoot, Innu or Naskapi apply to East Cree. The tests reveal that East Cree conjunct participles are verbs while they may be *interpreted* as either verbs or nouns, in particular contexts. Finally, we sketch out a proposal that allows for categorial ambiguity in the interpretation of East Cree participles.

Based on Blackfoot, BRW (2012) propose a typology for Blackfoot

nominalizations that distinguishes between four types, each identified by a different

morphological marking, input and referent semantic role correspondence. Strikingly, each

type of nominalization in Blackfoot corresponds to a particular form of stem, and,

moreover, a particular thematic role, as the Table 1 below summarizes.

TABLE 1. Nominalization typology based on Blackfoot. BRW 2012

Type	Marking	Input	Referent
Abstract	-hsin~n	[Stem (Adv)/(N)-[Root V] – AI/II Final] [Intransitive verb stem]	Process/result
Instrument	-a'tsis	[Stem [Root V] – AI/II Final] [Intransitive verb stem]	Instrument
Bare	--	[CP INDEPENDENT VAI…]	Actor
		[CP INDEPENDENT VTI…]	Actor
		[CP INDEPENDENT VTA-a…]	Goal
		[CP INDEPENDENT VTA-ok…]	Actor
		[CP INDEPENDENT VTA-yii…]	Actor
Conjunct	-hp	[CP CONJUNCT… linker… linker…hp]	Time
		[CP CONJUNCT… linker…hp]	Time/Loc/Ins
		[CP CONJUNCT… Object…hp]	Object

Even though the proposed typology is for Blackfoot, BRW state that their ultimate

goal is to determine whether these parameters are sufficient to characterize the full range

of nominalizations in other Algonquian languages. Herein lies our interest. We use BRW

study to contemplate nominalization in East Cree. However, BRW typology captures East

Cree facts only in part, as summarized in Table 2.

TABLE 2. East Cree nominalization based on Blackfoot typology

Type	Marking (ECS/ECN)[2]	Input	Referent
Abstract	-win	VAI stem	Process/result
Instrument (Concrete)	-kan/-kin	VAI, VTI stem	Instrument[3]
Bare	--	--	--
Actor	-suu/siu	independent VAI stem	Actor
Conjunct	kaa-…-t/-ch/-k	conjunct VAI, VII, VTI stem	Actor, or Theme, or Instrument

Abstract and Concrete (Instrument) nominalizations are attested, and match up their Blackfoot counterparts. For example, Blackfoot nominalizer *-hsin~n* is similar to East Cree *-win*; while Blackfoot nominalizer *-a'tsis* serves the same end as East Cree –*kan/kin*, as the comparison between Table 1 and Table 2 sums up. A couple of examples are given in (1ab).

(1) a. chiskutimaachaa-win[4]   *ECN*
          teach.vai-**nomz**
          'teaching'

     b. sináákssiiksi[5]   *Blackfoot*
          sinaaki-**hsin**-istsi
          write.vai-**nomz**-in.pl
          'writings'   Frantz 2009:116

Given the clear parallels in the two languages, we will not dwell on the similarities. For the purposes of this study, we will focus on the differences.

The so called Blackfoot bare nominalizations, as in (2) below, – where just a verbal stem on its own could be used as a noun - are not attested in East Cree.

(2)   áakso'kaawa   *Blackfoot*
          áak-yo'kaa-wa
          FUT-sleep-3SG
          i) 'He will sleep.' ii) 'One who will sleep.'   Wiltschko 2013:198

Wiltschko (2013) uses such examples to argue that Blackfoot bare stems are category neutral and may be interpreted as either verbal or nominal. Given the absence of such forms in East Cree, we can only note the interesting gap.

Where East Cree diverges from Blackfoot most is in the contrast between independent *-suu/-siu* forms versus conjunct *kaa-…* forms. Both can be Actors/Agents as can be seen in (3a-b). Unlike Blackfoot, the conjunct participle *kaa-…-t/ch/k* forms do not match with a particular thematic role in East Cree, in the sense that they can play roles other than Agent/Actor as exemplified with inanimate participles in (4).

(3) a. chiskutamaache-suu   b. kaa-chiskutamaache-t   *ECS*
        teach.VAI-**NOMZ**   **PV**-teach.VAI-**3.IIN**
        'teacher'   'teacher'

     c. chiskutimaachaa-**siu**   *ECN*[6]
        teach.VAI-**NOMZ**
        'teacher'

(4) a   kaa-kaawaa-ch   b. kaa-chiyipipiyi-ch   *ECN*
         PV-be.rough.VII-0.CIN   PV-close. VII-0.CIN
         'scouring pad'   'zipper'

     c. kaa-kwaapihaamaasunaaniwi-ch d. kaa-tushtupiyi-ch
        PV-pass.food.VII-0.CIN   PV-be.flexible.VII-0.CIN
        'buffet'   'jello'

In the remainder of the paper, we explore the *kaa-…* conjunct participle forms addressing the following questions: (i) how can one establish the category of *kaa-…*? (ii) how *kaa-…* forms relate to *-suu/-siu* forms? (iii) what does the careful look at these forms tell us about the cross-linguistic variation in nominalization across Algonquian?

The shape of East Cree conjunct participles

East Cree conjunct participles consist of a verbal stem preceded by a preverb (usually *kaa-*)[7] and a 3rd person conjunct suffix (like *-t* or *–ch* in the examples below), from both

East Cree dialects. Almost any Conjunct Indicative Present 3rd person verb form can be used to refer to what is usually translated by an English noun, and offers a flexible device for neologism. A general spelling convention is to write in one word the lexicalized form (preverb+inflected conjunct verb).

TABLE 3. The shape of East Cree Participles

Independent Indicative Neutral Verb	Conjunct Indicative Neutral Verb	Participle
ECS		
chiskutamaache-u	kaa chiskutamaache-t	kaa-chiskutamaache-t
teach.VAI-3.IIN	preverb teach.VAI-3.CIN	preverb teach.VAI-3-CIN
'S/he teaches'	'(the one who) teaches'	'teacher'
ECN		
iskwaahtawiipayi-u	kaa iskwaahtawiipayi-ch	kaa-iskwaahtawiipayi-ch
go.up.VII-0.INN	preverb go.up.VII-0.CIN	preverb-go.up.VII-0.CIN
'It goes up.'	'that which goes up'	'elevator'

Note that verbs of distinct transitivity and animacy may be the basis for participle formation[8].

Tests for categorical disambiguation

The fact that East Cree conjunct participles are translated into English as nouns does not mean that they, in fact, are nouns. To ascertain their categorial affiliation, we submit the conjunct participles to category tests. We apply a set of tests that are both language internal and based on the related Algonquian languages, namely Blackfoot and Innu.

In line with BRW 2012, we assume that category tests must be language-specific. However, comparing category tests across related languages is nonetheless useful. Such a comparison provides insights into typological variation across Algonquian. Moreover, it disperses a plausible assumption that related languages may behave uniformly with respect to categorization. Then the questions of what categorization patterns there are, and how the differences arise become interesting.

To the best of our knowledge, there is only one language internal test that distinguishes conjunct participles from inherent verbs in East Cree: the use of locative suffix. In (5a-b), the locative suffix is used on a noun; in (5c-d), the locative suffix is seen on a conjunct participle.

(5) a. waaskaahiikin   b. waaskaahiikin-**ihch**   *ECN*
     house   house-**LOC**
     'a house'   'in a house'

     c. kaa-chisikaah-kisu-**t**   d. kaa-chisikaahkisu-y**ihch**[9]
       PV-[(?)-burn. VAI]-**3.CIN**   PV-cigarette-**LOC**
       'a cigarette'   'on the cigarette'

Thus, with respect to this Cree specific test, conjunct participles behave like nouns because the locative suffix is not found on verbs. While the locative can be affixed to a noun expressing a destination (6a), it cannot be affixed to a verb describing a destination, as in (6b). The desired meaning may be expressed in a paraphrase, as in (6c):

(6) a. Utiwaa-**hch**   nit-ispihyaa-n   *ECN*
     Ottawa-**LOC**   1-fly.to. VAI-1IIN
     'I fly (by plane) to Ottawa.'

     b. *nit-ispihyaa-n chimuwin-**ihch**
       1-fly.VAI-1IIN   it rains.VII-**LOC**

     c. nit-ispihyaan anitih muush aah chimuwih-ch[10].
       1-fly. VAI-1IIN   there always PV   rain.VAI-1IIN
       'I am flying (by plane) to where it is always raining.'

We now turn to other tests that could potentially help to establish the categorial affiliation of East Cree conjunct participles.

BRW (2012) used two tests to verify and establish noun-hood in Blackfoot: grammatical number and co-occurrence with demonstratives. Drapeau (1979) concludes that only three tests were in favour of noun-hood for Innu participles: possessive affixation, diminutive suffixation, and denominal derivation. For number and obviative,

she argued that Innu participles inflect like verbs. Jancewicz (1996) used most of Drapeau's diagnotics to reach the same conclusions for Naskapi participles. In what follows, we examine which diagnostics are applicable to East Cree.

Number is an inconclusive test for the Northern dialect of East Cree, since the suffix for 3rd person plural (3PL) is the same for nouns and conjunct verbs, thus not allowing for a noun-verb disambiguation, as in Innu and Naskapi.

In the Southern dialect of East Cree, however, the suffix for 3PL (VAI) is different between nouns and conjunct verbs, and the participle clearly bears the verbal plural suffix, as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4. Number in Southern and Northern East Cree

	VAI Conjunct *'when s/he sleeps'*	*NA* *'child'*	*NAP* *'singer, the one who sings'*
NORTHERN			
3	aah nipaa-**t** PV sleep.VAI-**3.CIN**	awaashish child	kaa-nikimu-**t** PV-sing.VAI-**3.CIN**
3PL	aah nipaa-**ch** PV sleep.VAI-**3PL.CIN**	awaashish-**ich** child-**PL**	kaa-nikimu-**ch** PV-sing.VAI-**3PL.CIN**
SOUTHERN			
3	e nipaa-**t** PV sleep.VAI-**3.CIN**	awash child	kaa-nikamu-**t** PV-sing.VAI-**3.CIN**
3PL	e nipaa-**twaau** PV sleep.VAI-**3PL.CIN**	awaash-**ach** child-**PL**	kaa-nikamu-**twaau** PV-sing.VAI-**3PL.CIN**

We take this much to mean that the number test groups East Cree conjunct participles with verbs rather than with nouns.

The second diagnostic that BRW (2012) apply is demonstratives that modify nouns without occurring pronominally otherwise. This diagnostic does not work for East Cree. As observed by Junker & MacKenzie (2003), *all* East Cree demonstratives can be used pronominally, illustrated here with *uuch* 'these':

(7) a. niwaapamaauch **uuch** atimuch   b. niwaapamaauch   ***uuch***   *ECS*
         I.see.them   **these** dogs   I.see.them   **these**
         'I see these dogs.'   'I see these ones.'

Drapeau (1979) claims that the possessive suffix is a nominal marker[11]. In her

Innu example below, the conjunct personal suffix of the participle has been dropped and

replaced by a possessive suffix (-im). Furthermore, a personal prefix, normally only

allowed on independent verbs or on nouns, is now present on the conjunct form.

(8) a. **ka**-piminuesh-t   b. **ni-ka**piminuesh-**im**[12]   *Innu*
         PV-cook.AI-3.CIP   ne + [ka.pemenwe.śi] + em
         'a cook'   1-   [cook]   -POSS
         'my cook'   Drapeau, 1979, (ex. 34 p. 223)

East Cree participles also take the possessive suffix, but, crucially, they also drop

the preverb *kaa-*, only allowing the personal prefix on the bare stem, as illustrated below.

(9) a. **kaa**-nishtuukaate-t   b. **ni**-nishtukaate-**m**   *ECS*
         PV -three.wheeler-3.CIN   1-three.wheeler-**POSS**
         'a three-wheeler'   'my three-wheeler'

     c. *? **ni-kaa**-nishtuukaate-**m**   d. **u**-nishtukaate-**m-h**
         1-PV-three.wheeler-**POSS**   3-three.wheeler-POSS-OBV
                                               'his/her three wheeler'

The fact that the conjunct preverb *kaa-* has to be dropped for possessive forms

(9b, d) had not been previously observed for related languages[13]. Possessive prefixes are

the same for nouns and verbs except in the third person. Nouns usually take the third

person personal prefix, but verbs do not. Here, the stem (stripped from *kaa-*), behaves

like a noun stem, in taking the prefix *u-*, as shown in (9d). A verb in the third person

would not bear such a prefix, as shown in (10).

(10) a. nipaau-u   b. *u-nipaau-u   *ECS/ECN*
         sleep.VAI-3   3-sleep.VAI-3
         's/he sleeps'

The nominal status of these (bare) possessed forms is further confirmed by the fact that obviative (nominal) morphology can be added on top of the possessive form, as in (11).

(11) a. ukapiminueshiminua   *Innu*
         u+ [ka.pemenwe.śi] + em + **elu**
         3- [cook]   -POSS-OBV
         '(he sees) her cook'   Drapeau, 1979, (footnote 14, p. 223)

    b. ni-nishtukaate-m-**h**   *ECS*
       1 three.wheeler- POSS-OBV
       '(she sees) my three-wheeler'

However, given that the preverb *kaa-* is dropped in these possessive constructions in East Cree, and that just a stem is used, are we still dealing with the participle *kaa-* conjunct participles, or with a new formation for possessive constructions? We thus conclude that the possessive test is not available for East Cree.

Modification by diminutive suffixes is another noun-hood diagnostic for Innu, where there is a different suffix for verbs (-*sh*) and nouns (-*ss*). The *kaa-* forms take the nominal suffix -*ss* (Drapeau 1970:224). However, as noted by MacKenzie (1996), diminutive suffix –*sh*- is attested across verbal and nominal categories in East Cree with no difference between verbs and nouns, as in (12):

(12) a. atim(u)   b. atimu-**sh**   c. ni-nipaa-n   d. ni-nipaa-**sh**-in
        dog.NA   dog.NA-**DIM**   1-sleep.VAI-1   1-sleep.VAI-**DIM**-1
        'dog'   'puppy'   'I sleep'   'I take a nap'

Thus, the diminutive test is of little use in East Cree because the diminutive itself turns out to be a category neutral functor.

The process of derivation of a verb is the third diagnostic for Innu[14]. A noun stem is re-categorized as an animate intransitive verb if a verb final suffix –*u* (13b) is added. The same derivational process is attested with Innu participles (13c):

(13) a. mus   b. ni-mus-u-n   c. nikapiminueshiun[15]   *Innu*
     'moose'   1-moose-vai-1   ni- [ka.piminue.shi]-u-n
                            'I am a moose.'   1- [cook]-vai-1
                                          'I am a cook.'
                                          (adapted from Drapeau, 1979, p. 223)

In East Cree, the denominal verb formation does not use the *kaa-* form (14c), i.e., Innu-like forms as in (13b) are simply not attested. Given that *kaa-* is dropped, it is impossible to tell if the base in (14b) is a verb or a noun.

(14) a. kaakischihtaat   b. ni- [kischihtaa.si]-u-n   c. *ni- [**kaa**.kischihtaa.si]-u-n
     'winner'   1-[winner]-vai-1   1-[winner]-vai-1
                        'I am a winner.'

Lastly, there is an obviation diagnostic, used both by Drapeau (1979) and Jancewicz (1996)[16]. Like Innu and Naskapi, East Cree participles pattern like verbs in their obviative morphology as shown in Table 5. The rightmost column illustrates that the obviation marking on the conjunct participles (NAP: 'singer') is consistent with the verbal marking of obviation in the leftmost column. The marking of obviation on inherent nouns (NA: 'child') differs, as presented in the middle column.

TABLE 5. East Cree participle behavior in obviation: verbal

	VAI Conjunct *'when s/he sleeps'*	*NA* *'child'*	*NAP* *'singer, the one who sings'*
SOUTHERN			
3' (PL)	e nipaa-**yuuh** PV sleep.VAI-**OBV**	awaash-**a** child-**OBV**	kaa-nikamu-**yuuh** PV-sing.VAI-**OBV**
NORTHERN			
3' (PL)	aah nipaa-**yichh** PV sleep. VAI-**OBV**	awaashish-**h** child-**OBV**	kaa-nikimu-**yichh** PV-sing.VAI-**OBV**

Running the battery of diagnostics across the related Algonquian languages shows the variation (i) in the applicability of the diagnostics; (ii) and in the behavior of conjunct participles. Table 6 summarizes the contrasts.

TABLE 6. Summary of noun-hood tests available for Innu, Naskappi and East Cree (Northern and Southern) conjunct participles

	Blackfoot	Innu	Naskapi	ECN	ECS
Number	N	V	n/a	n/a	V
Demonstratives	N	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Possessive	n/a	N	N	n/a	n/a
Locative	n/a	N	N	N	N
Diminutive	n/a	N	n/a	n/a	n/a
Obviation	n/a	V	V	V	V
Derivation	n/a	N	--	n/a	n/a

(N=Noun; V=Verb; n/a: test not available; --no data)

Like neighboring languages Innu and Naskapi, East Cree participles exhibit mixed verbal and nominal properties, but are even more limited in their nominal properties. They bear clear nominal morphology only in the locative, in the rare case when this inflection is semantically possible[17]. Otherwise they inflect like verbs, or resort to stripping down to a bare stem for taking on nominal possessive morphology.

COMPLEMENTARY NOMINALIZATION PATTERNS

It might be good at this point to take a broader look again at nominalizations patterns and see how they complement each other. Cases where several forms co-exist can help shed light on inflectional behavior.

Names of professions

For names of professions, both a *kaa-* (conjunct participle) and a *-suu/-siu* (independent verb) forms sometimes co-exist. There is a slight meaning difference, described by speakers as follows: "the participle (form in *kaa-*) focuses more on the action: 'the one who…' thus understood as a headless relative clause (in line with Drapeau 1979:241 on Innu participles), while the *-suu/-siu* form is about 'who this person is'. The -suu/-siu form itself can behave either as a noun or an AI verb in the independent mode: 's/he is a…'. Some examples are given in Table 7:

TABLE 7. *Kaa-…*and *…-suu* parallel forms (ECS)

nikamu-suu kaa-nikamu-t	*singer*
piminawe-suu kaa-piminuwe-t[18]	*cook*
wepihaakune-suu kaawepahaakune-t	*snowplow operator*
wepahiiche-suu kaa-wepahiiche-t	*sweeper*

Notice that whenever the forms co-exist in the same dialect, the possessive will always be based on the *-siu/-suu* form. In elicitation contexts during a workshop on Cree morphology, when asked for possessive forms of the participles forms, speakers have gone back to substitute the entire *-siu/-suu* form paradigm for all the forms, including singular, plural, obviative and locative, giving us an *-siu/-suu* form paradigm instead.

Across languages or dialects, it is often the case that a participle in Innu or Naskapi will have an equivalent *-suu/-siu* form in East Cree. Some examples are given in Table 8.

TABLE 8. Naskapi, Innu *kaa-…* with equivalent…*-suu/-siu* forms in East Cree[19]

English	Naskapi	Innu	East Cree
Surgeon	kaamaatiswaawaat	kamatishauesht	maachishichaasiu (ECN)
police officer	kaamaakunuwaast	kamakunuesht	maakunuwesuu (ECS)
Cook	*?*	kapiminuesht	piminuwesuu (ECS)

The patterns of preference for one process of nominalization over another across languages remain to be determined.

The limited use of nominalizations

What transpired from paradigmatic elicitation sessions with different speakers is that nominalizations can have limited use, compared to regular nouns.

One test for noun-hood for nominalizations was denominal verb derivation. However, this is not a preferred way of speaking. When asked for the denominal verb

based on the -*suu* form 'governor' *tipeyihchichesuu* ECS speakers indicated their preference to revert to the base verb *tipeyihchicheu* 'to govern', as quoted below (with interlinear glosses added):

(15) Q: How would you say (Possessed form on the nominalization) "my governor"?
    A: nitipeyihchichesiim.   *ECS*
        ni-tipeyihchichesi-im
        1-governor-POSS leom

    Q: and "I am the governor"?
    A: nitipeyihchichesiyun…I would rather say " I govern":   nitipeyihchichen. *ECS*
        ni-tipeyihchichesiyu-n   ni-tipeyihchiche-n
        1-be.governor.VAI-1   1-govern.VAI-1

Even when the denominal verb derivation on a nominalized form is widely accepted, it only goes so far. We observed that when asked to put such independent verbs into a conjunct form, speakers revert to the base verb. In the Northern dialect, only the **-siu** form *chiskutimachaasiu* is in use for 'teacher', not the participle form. The denominal verb in (16a) is not possible in the conjunct with kaa (b), one has to revert to the basic verb (c): 'the one who teaches'.

(16) a. chiskutimachaasiu-u   *ECN*
        be.teacher.VAI-3INN
        'S/he is a teacher.'

    b. *kaa chiskutimachaa-siu-t
        PV   be.teacher.VAI-3CIN
        'the one who is a teacher'

    c. kaa chiskutimaachaa-t
        pv teach.vai-3cin
        'the one who teaches'

The observed limitations can be summarized as follows: the denominal -*suu/-siu* forms cannot be put in the conjunct, while the *kaa-* forms revert to a bare (noun) stem when possessive is put onto it.

Lexical and clausal nominalizations

Thus far, we have only considered lexical nominalizations. Many expressions fully

memorized by speakers actually include a noun and a conjunct verb modifying it as a

relative clause, but they have been excluded from dictionaries so far. Drapeau (1979:

p.276) gives a long list of these clausal nominalizations.[20] One of her example, adapted to

standard orthography is given in (17):

(17)   ka-shutshetshishi-t   aueshish   *Innu*
        PV-be.strong.VAI-3CIN   animal
        'lion'

      For clausal nominalizations, nominal inflection goes on the noun and verbal

inflection on the verb, as demonstrated by Drapeau (1979). Now, many participles

(lexical nominalizations), as in (18), are synonymous with a clausal equivalent such as

those in (19). In (19), a head noun *awen* 'person' is modified by a relative clause, in the

same conjunct form as the participle (*kaa-nikamu-t* versus *kaa nikaamut*). However, the

awen kaa nikamut is not a clausal nominalization per se, since it is neither memorized

nor put in the lexicon:

(18)   ni-waapam-e-u   [kaa-nikamu-t].   *ECS*
        1-see.VTA-DIR-3   [PV sing-3.CIN]
        'I see the one who sings' / 'I see a singer.'

(19)   ni-waapam-e-u   [awen [kaa nikamut]].   *ECS*
        1-see. VTA-DIR-3   [person [PV sing-3.CIN]]
        'I see a person who is singing.'

      The (formal) parallelism between on one hand lexical and clausal nominalizations

and, on the other hand, participles and relative clauses modifying an overt noun further

support the verbal status of participles.

Empirical generalizations

We have shown that East Cree participles straddle the line between verbal and nominal interpretations, even more than their equivalents in neighboring languages Innu and Naskapi, because they drop the preverb *kaa-* once nominal morphology is the only option. On the one hand, they are similar to verbs in that they are relative clauses. On the other hand, these same clauses may have a noun-like distribution and interpretation. Thus, they manifest properties of two categories. How to account for the behavior of East Cree participles best? The next section sketches out the approach we take.

PROPOSAL

We take a generative perspective, specifically Principles and Parameters framework in its Minimalist incarnation (Chomsky 1995, 2000). At the heart of the discussion on categories is the often overlooked problem: there are no clear, universally agreed upon criteria on what constitutes the basis for the categorization of parts of speech and what insights into language are thereby gained (Rauh 2010:4). As has been seen in the discussion of East Cree facts hitherto, we assume that morpho-syntactic restrictions determine categorial affiliation in East Cree. Next, we assume that category neutrality is allowed by Universal Grammar (UG). It has been argued for quite a while that UG allows for category neutrality at root level (Armoskaite 2011, Borer 2005, Marantz 1997, among many others). Recently, empirical and theoretical arguments have been put forth allowing for category neutrality at the clause level, too (cf. Baker 2011; Malchukov 2006; Wiltschko 2013). Given our morphosyntactically grounded view of categorization, category neutrality would entail that a particular linguistic string passes *all* tests for *all* categories. In a way, the categorial tests themselves are neutralized because they apply

without contrast (e.g., Lithuanian category neutral roots pass tests for nounhood, verbhood and adjectivehood, see Armoskaite 2011 for more details); conversely, some functors may be category neutral and apply across categories, e.g., East Cree diminutive as discussed by example (12). However, East Cree conjunct participles are verbal: conjunct is a verb based clause typing. Moreover, based on the scant morphosyntactic characteristics – number and obviation- conjunct participles pattern as verbs, too. The only nominal morpshosyntactic property is their ability to take on a locative suffix, to be addressed shortly. Thus, given the empirical generalizations presented so far, we posit that East Cree conjunct participles are verbs, but allow for category neutral *behavior*. I.e., we distinguish between *category neutrality proper* and *category neutral behavior*.

We further propose that this category neutral behavior at the clause level of East Cree conjunct participles can be explained by their relative clause status (cf. Drapeau for Innu, 1979:241). The antecedent of a modifying relative clause can be optional in East Cree, as shown in (20):

(20)   ni-waapim-aa-u (awen)   kaa nikimut.   *ECS*
        1-see.VTA-DIR-3 person   PV sing-3
        'I see (a person) who is singing.'

Thus, we are faced with a clause that may be interpreted as a nominal argument only optionally. What remains to be addressed, is the one environment that requires obligatory nominal interpretation: locative. So how can one reconcile the conjunct participles categorial status of verbs with a locative suffix that pertains to nouns? We propose that locative licenses a zero nominalizer.

We have shown in the section on noun-hood tests that there are hardly any properties that would distinguish nouns from verbs East Cree (e.g., diminutive is category

neutral, all demonstratives can be pronominal; number is category neutral in one dialect, while it is verbal in another which is, at best, inconclusive or else supports the verbal view of participles, etc). Moreover, the syntactic status of nouns in Algonquian is debated. For some languages, it has been argued that nouns are adjuncts (e.g., Hirose 2003 for Plains Cree, Junker 2004 for East Cree, among others). For other languages, it has been claimed that there exist arguments-like rather than adjunct-like nouns (e.g., Bliss 2013 argues for DP arguments in Blackfoot; Bruening 2001, 2009 argues for DP arguments in Passamaquoddy, among others). We take this to mean that in Algonquian language family there is cross-linguistic variation in how prominent nouns turn out to be in a particular language. Meanwhile, we argue that for East Cree the scarcity of noun specific properties combined with functors pertaining to both verbal and nominal domains results in behavior that is category neutral. In other words, while these conjunct participles are not deprived of category - they are verbs – they can be interpreted as category neutral. In particular contexts, e.g., when they serve as objects for a transitive verb, they may be perceived as *either* nouns or verbs.

We know that locative suffix attaches to inherent nouns and does not favor verbs (see discussion on examples (5)-(6)). We take this to mean that the locative suffix (i) is not a derivational morpheme per se (or else it could derive deverbal nouns, which is not the case); (ii) selects for category noun. The participial constructions with locative thus could have the structure in (21), cf. Citko (2004), with a zero marked nominalized head. The participial constructions without locative would have the structure as in (22):

(21) $_{NP}[_n\varnothing$ $_{CP}$[kaa-chisikaahkisu-**yihch**]]   *ECN*
                PV-cigarette-**LOC**
           'on the cigarette'

(22) ₙₚ[ₙ awen ꜀ₚ[kaa nikamu-t]]   *ECS*
      person   PV   sing-3.CIN
      'a person who is singing'

The presence of this structure can only be argued based on the presence of a locative functional head. In line with Carstens (2008), we argue that locatives license an empty noun head. Carstens (2008), in the case of Bantu, bases the licensing on rich overt noun class agreement morphology facts. East Cree does not have the rich noun agreement morphology. In fact, as we have insisted, manifesting noun-hood tests is problematic in general. However, we can posit this zero head as it is in line with the above-mentioned selection facts: in the absence of an overt n head, we posit a covert n head.

In addition, positing a zero nominalizer is in line with language internal facts. As we have discussed above (see under example (6)), there is a considerable subset of data which indicates that the lack of such zero nominal head results in a-categorical derivation. Namely, East Cree has a lexicalized but structurally transparent set of particles that are roots merged with locational suffix *-hch*.

(23)   aanaa**hch**   'on the bottom'
       tihku**hch**   'on top of a surface (touching)'
       waapinuutaa**hch**   'on the east side'
       nipichistiku**hch**   'on the floor'
       saaku**hch**   'last spring'

Crucially, these lexicalized entries are *indeclinable* as either verbs or nouns. Under our approach, the fact that they are indeclinable falls out: locative suffixes select for a (c)overt nominal head. In the absence of such a head, derivation results in an a-categorical entry, i.e., in *indeclinable* particles.

CONCLUSIONS

As a response to BRW (2012) call, we explored conjunct participle nominalizations in East Cree. In the process, we compared a number of diagnostics for noun-hood across Blackfoot, Innu, Naskapi and East Cree. We have shown that East Cree conjunct participles are predominantly verbal, while they may be interpreted as category neutral, at times. We proposed that while conjunct participles are verbs, the category neutral behavior may be expected given the language particular properties. We argued that the locative suffix licenses a zero nominalizer.

We conclude that nominalization in Algonquian is subject to cross-linguistic variation, and that patterns of nominalization need to be explored further (cf. Déchaine & Wiltschko 2012). The best analysis of the conjunct participles would be in line with Drapeau (1979)'s suggestion that these are relative clauses. If the noun like distribution of participles in East Cree is due to their headless relative clause status, then in order to understand East Cree nominalization patterns we need to reveal the properties of these clauses. Another promising direction would be to study the clausal uses of other 'nominal' formations like the Actor forms.

Our speaker consultant preferences and judgments also gave us a pause with respect to alternative interpretations of one and the same utterance. How does one deal with strings for which speakers *consistently* offer alternative interpretations? What methodological tools are available to us? What view can one take of the (apparent) discrepancies? At times, it may be important to seriously consider Boas observation that 'The true difference between languages is not in what may or may not be expressed but in what must and must not be conveyed by the speakers' (cited by Jacobson

1959/1990:326). We all know that there is more than one way to convey the same content in a language, but some ways are more appropriate than others. If you were to point to someone as your daughter's former teacher, what would you say in English versus in Cree? Contrast in (24) versus (25) illustrates the distinct strategies as discussed with a bilingual consultant (Ruth Salt, p.c).

(24)   English strategy:
        He used to be my daughter's teacher. This is my daughter's former teacher.

(25)   East Cree strategy:
        He used to teach my daughter. This is the one who used to teach my daughter.

The question is then: what are the language specific reasons that drive the choice of one structural strategy over the other? We hope to have provided here the first element of an answer.

NOTES

---

[1] This work was partially funded by SSHRC grant #856-2009-0081 awarded to the second author. Data on Cree participle inflection was gathered during a Cree grammar workshop held in September 2011 at Carleton University by the second author. We wish to thank our research partners, the Cree consultants from Cree Programs, Cree School Board. We also wish to thank Hélène St-Onge for checking the Innu standard orthography we applied to Drapeau's examples and Mimie Neacappo for additional data. We also thank our anonymous reviewers for comments and suggestions. All remaining errors are our own.

[2] ECS= East Cree Southern dialect; ECN= East Cree Northern dialect

[3] Some animate *-kin/-kan* forms have Actor referents, but with an instrument connotation, for example:

(i) chisheuchimâuâpachihâkan *na* 'Indian agent, civil servant'
    uchimâhkân *na* 'chief'
    wîchiâpatisîmâkan *na* 'co-worker' (From Visitor et al., 2013, Topic: People/Career)

[4] Abbreviations used: AN – animate; CIN – conjunct indicative neutral; CP – complementizer phrase; DIM – diminutive; ECS – East Cree Southern dialect; ECN – East Cree Northern dialect; IN – inanimate; INN – independent indicative neutral; OBV-obviation; LOC – locative; pers – person; N – noun; n/a – not applicable; NAP – nominal animate participle; NIP – nominal inanimate participle; NOMZ – nominalizer; PL –

plural; PASS – passive; POSS – possession; PV – preverb; V – verb; VAI – intransitive verb with an animate subject; VII – intransitive verb with an inanimate subject; VTA- transitive verb with an animate object; VTI – transitive verb with an inanimate object; 1 – 1st person; 2 – second person; 3 – third person animate; 3' – third person animate obviative; 0 – third person inanimate; 0' – third person inanimate obviative; 1>3 first person subject acting on a 3rd person object; X – Passive Proximate person.

[5] The surface sound changes are due to Blackfoot phonology, which has no bearing on the discussion of nominalizers.

[6] The *kaa-* form is not attested as a participle for the Northern dialect, except as a verb.

[7] While most lexicalized forms will be preceded by the preverb *kaa-*, it is possible to have nominalizations with other preverbs:

(ii)   e   niishukaapuu-naanuu-hch
         when getting.married.VAI-PASS-X.CIN
         'a wedding anniversary'

[8] As shown in the example in the note (3) above, Passive or Indefinite Actor forms may also be used. For a detailed study of the bases for participle formation, see Jancewicz (1996).

[9] The y in the locative ending is an epenthetic segment.

[10] The n of the stem becomes h in the conjunct form.

[11] The (possessive) suffix *-(i)m* is attested across verbal and nominal categories in East Cree. Many nouns take an *-(i)m* suffix in the possessive. The suffix tends to appear on nouns that are not usually possessed, i.e., 'a duck', as opposed to 'a book':

(iii) a. **ni**-shiishiip-**im**   b. **chi**-shiishiip-**im**
         1-duck-POSS   2-duck-POSS
         'my duck'   'your duck'

In EC, this suffix is found both on some nouns and some verbs, right after the stem for marking disjoint reference (Junker, 2003, 2008), casting doubt on its exclusive nominal status. The suffix shows up on dependent nouns (inalienable nouns that always require a personal prefix) denoting body-parts**:**

(iv) a. nishkashii   b. nuushkashiim
         ni-shkashii   ni-u-shkashii-**m**
         1-nail   1-3-nail-**POSS**
         'my (own) nail'   'my nail (but not my own, originally someone else's)'

The suffix also shows up on transitive animate verbs as in (v), including conjunct forms as in (vi):

(v) a. wâpam-e-u   u-tem-h
         see.VTA-DIR-3   3-dog-OBV
         'S/he sees his/her own dog/s.'
    b. wâpam-**im**-e-u   u-tem-iyû-h.
         see. VTA-**POSS**- DIR-3   3'-dog-OBV.POSS-OBV
         'S/he sees his/her (someone else's) dog.'

 (vi)
    a.   aa wâpam-aat   b. aa wâpam-**im-**aat
          PV see.VTA-DIR-3CIN   PV see.VTA-DIR-3CIN
          'when he loves her'   'when he loves her (son)'

While *-im* does not show up on VAI and VTI, which instead carry a relational suffix, because of its presence on transitive animate verbs (VTA), the nominal status of *-im* is questionable; it cannot serve as a proof of noun-hood.

[12] The first line of the Innu examples gives the current standard orthography, as used in the on-line innu dictionary, Mailhot et al. (2013), with morpheme breaks.

[13] A few EC (Mistissini) speakers, located closer to Innu dialects, consider (9c) somewhat acceptable.

[14] Such constructions are not discussed by Jancewicz (1996) for Naskapi.

[15] *ne-[ka.pemenwe.śi]-u-n* in Drapeau' s original transcription.

[16] "Due to the fact that they […*kaa* nominalizations…] continue to take verbal plural and obviation markers, they have not completely lost their verb-like-ness." (Jancewicz 1996:29).

[17] In elicitation, speakers always have to add *aayihtaayihch* 'it is there' to make the form with the locative plausible, it does not come as naturally as other forms: *Kaa-chisikaahkisu-yi-hch aayihtaayihch*. 'It is there on the cigarette.'

[18] There is a tendency to spell the verb stem with the vowel coalescence a>u before w, (see *miskaweu > miskuweu* in the conjugation guide), but the stem is the same.

[19] Source of data : Dictionaries of East Cree (Junker et al., 2012), Innu (Maihlot et al., 2013) and Naskapi (MacKenzie & Jancewicz, 1994).

[20] Clausal nominalizations were called "phrase-words" by Bloomfield (1933).

REFERENCES

Armoskaite, Solveiga. 2011. The destiny of roots in Blackfoot and Lithuanian. PhD thesis, University of British Columbia.

Baker, Mark. 2011. Degrees of nominalization: clause like constituents in Sahka. *Lingua 121*: 1164–1193.

Bliss, Heather, Elisabeth Ritter and Martina Wiltschko. to appear 2014. Blackfoot nominalization patterns. *Papers of the 42nd Algonquian Conference*, ed. by Monica Macaulay, Rand Valentine.

Bliss, Heather. 2013. The Blackfoot configurationality conspiracy: Parallels and differences in clausal and nominal structures. PhD thesis, University of British Columbia.

Bloomfield, Leonard. 1933. *Language*. New York: Holt.

Borer, Hagit. 2005. *In name only*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bruening, Benjamin. 2001. Syntax at the edge: Cross-clausal phenomena and the syntax of Passamaquoddy. PhD thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Bruening, Benjamin. 2009. Algonquian languages have A-movement and A-agreement. *Linguistic Inquiry* 40(3):427–445.

Carstens, Vicky. 2008. DP in Bantu and Romance. *The Bantu–Romance Connection: A comparative investigation of verbal agreement, DPs, and information structure*, ed.

by Cécile de Cat and Katherine Demuth. pp. 131–165. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Chomsky, Noam. 2000. Minimalist inquires: the framework. *Step by step: essays in syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, ed. by Martin Roger, David Michaels and Juan Uriagereka, pp 89–155. Cambridge: MIT press.

Chomsky, Noam. 1995. *The Minimalist Program*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Citko, Barbara. 2004. On headed, headless and light headed relatives. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*, 22:95–126.

Déchaine, Rose-Marie and Martina Wiltschko. 2012. Micro-variation in Agreement, Clause-typing and Finiteness: Comparative Evidence from Blackfoot and Plains Cree. *Papers of the 42nd Algonquian Conference*, ed. by Randolph Valentine and Monica Macaulay, pp. 69–102. Albany: Sate University of New York Press.

Drapeau, Lynn. 1979. Aspect de la morphologie du nom en montagnais. Thèse de doctorat, Université de Montréal.

Frantz, Donald and Norma Jean Russell. 1995. *Blackfoot dictionary of stems, roots and affixes*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Frantz, Donald and Norma Jean Russell. 1989. *Blackfoot dictionary of stems, roots and affixes*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Jacobson, Roman. 1959. Boas' view on grammatical meaning. *American anthropologist* 61:139-145. Reprinted in 1990. *On language / Roman Jacobson*, ed. by Linda R. Waugh and Monique Monville-Burston, pp. 326–331. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Jancewicz, Bill. 1996. Nominalizations in Naskapi. *Papers of the 28th Algonquian Conference,* ed. by David H. Pentland, pp. 181–199. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Junker, Marie-Odile and Louise Blacksmith. 2001. Nouns with Locative inflection, in East Cree Interactive Reference Grammar. Retrieved December, 20 2013. http://www.eastcree.org/cree/en/grammar/southern-dialect/nouns/inflections-locative/

Junker, Marie-Odile and Marguerite MacKenzie. 2003. Demonstratives in East Cree. *Actes du trente-quatrième congrès des Algonquinistes,* ed. by Christopher Wolfart, pp. 201–16 Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Junker, Marie-Odile. 2003. East Cree Dependent Nouns and Disjoint Reference. *Algonquian and Iroquian Linguistics* 28 (1):11–13.

Junker, Marie-Odile. 2004. Focus, Obviation and Word Order in East Cree. *Lingua,* 114(3): 345–365.

Junker, Marie-Odile. 2008. Ghost Arguments: Obviative -*im* and relational verbs. Paper presented at the *40th Algonquian Conference*, University of Minnesota.

Junker, Marie-Odile, Marguerite MacKenzie, Luci Bobbish-Salt, Alice Duff, Ruth Salt, Anna Blacksmith, Patricia Diamond, and Pearl Weistche. 2012. *The Eastern James Bay Cree Dictionary on the Web: English-Cree and Cree-English, French-Cree and Cree-French (Northern and Southern dialects).* http://dictionary.eastcree.org/ (accessed December 20, 2013).

Junker, Marie-Odile and Marguerite MacKenzie. 2013. East Cree Word formation [Northern dialect with Luci Salt, and Southern dialect with Ruth Salt]. *East Cree Interactive Reference Grammar*, ed. by Marie-Odile Junker. http://www.eastcree.org/cree/en/grammar (accessed December 20, 2013).

Hirose, Tomio. 2003. *Origins of predicates: evidence from Plains Cree*. Routledge Outstanding Dissertations in Linguistics.

Mailhot, José, Marguerite MacKenzie and Marie-Odile Junker (eds) .2013. *Innu on-line dictionary.* www.innu-aimun.ca/dictionary (accessed December 20, 2013).

MacKenzie, Marguerite and Bill Jancewicz (eds). 1994. *Naskapi Lexicon*. Schefferville: Naskapi Development Corporation.

MacKenzie, Marguerite. 1996. Diminutive Suffixes in Cree Dialects. Paper presented at the *28th Algonquian Conference*, University of Toronto.

Malchukov, Andrej. 2006. Constraining nominalization: function/form competition. *Linguistics* 44(5), 973–1009.

Rauh, Gisa. 2010. *Syntactic categories*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Visitor, Linda, Marie-Odile Junker and Mimie Neacappo, (eds). 2013. *Eastern James Bay Cree Thematic Dictionary (Southern Dialect)*. Chisasibi, QC: Cree School Board.

Wiltschko, Martina. 2013. Patterns of nominalization in Blackfoot. *Cross-linguistic investigations of nominalization patterns*, ed. by Paul, Ileana, pp. 189–214. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.