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Demonstratives in East Cree

MARIE-ODILE JUNKER
Carleton University

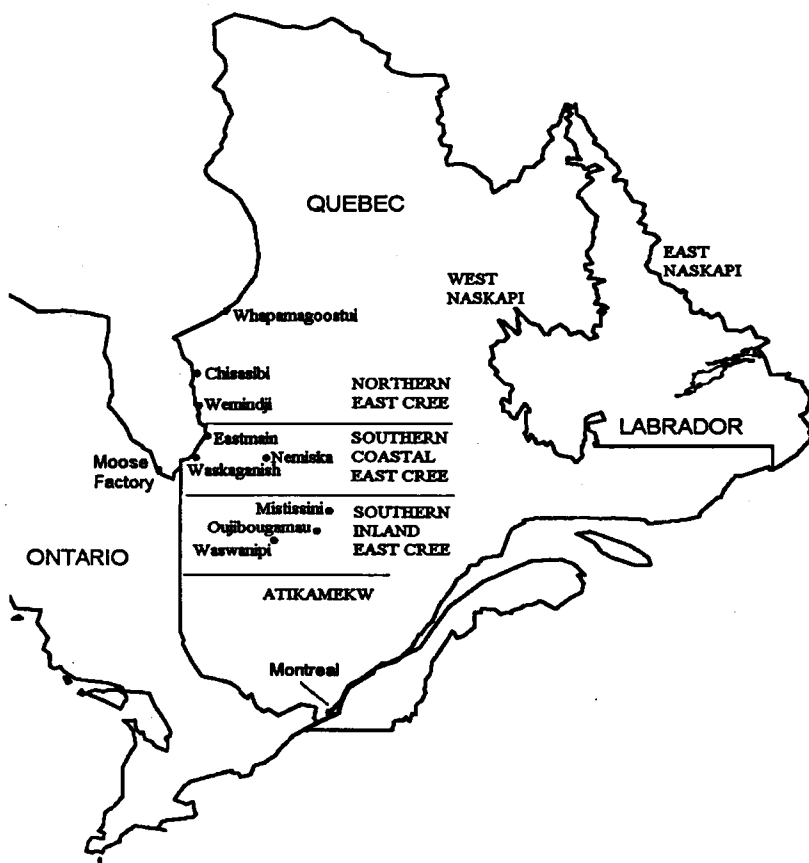
MARGUERITE MACKENZIE
Memorial University

Demonstratives in East Cree are numerous and intriguing. There is a basic set of pronouns and adverbials, coding three degrees of distance from the speaker: near, away, and far away. The adverbials are further differentiated to indicate movement or static position. This basic set combines with various particles and suffixes to create other sets: absentatives, emphasis and focus demonstratives. We present here an overview of some of the morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic properties of these forms.¹

East Cree is a y-dialect of the Cree-Montagnais-Naskapi continuum, spoken by approximately 13,000 people in nine communities on the east coast of James Bay and Hudson Bay and inland. Recently the "Mocreebec Nation" has been established in Moose Factory (Ontario) by the migration of speakers from immediately adjacent Québec communities. There are two major sub-dialects of East Cree, Northern and Southern; the Northern dialect is characterized by the change of the vowels $e > \hat{a}$ in all environments and of a to i in all post-consonantal environments except after h , as well as some differences in the verbal suffixes. Within each group there are further sub-dialects, the most significant being the Coastal/Inland division of Southern speakers (see map, overleaf).² The exceptionally full set of demonstratives found in East Cree is shared only with the related dialects of Western and Eastern Naskapi. We show here that the sets are more extensive than those reported by Pentland (2000b) for non-palatalized Cree dialects to the west. The examples will be taken primarily from

1. We wish to thank all the Cree speakers from various communities who were consulted and without whom this documentation effort could not have been successful, especially Louise Blacksmith, Elsie Duff, Ella Gull, Daisy Moar and Luci Bobbish-Salt. This research was partially supported by SSHRC grants 820-2000-2013 and 410-2000-0413.

2. The map shows all East Cree communities with the boundaries of Northern and Southern as well as Southern Coastal and Inland dialects, Eastern and Western Naskapi, Atikamekw, and Moose Factory.



East Cree dialects.

Southern dialect of East Cree unless otherwise noted, although both Northern and Southern forms will appear in the charts.

SET ONE: THE BASIC SET

The basic set of demonstratives, here referred to as Set One, is found in all dialects of the Cree-Montagnais-Naskapi continuum. These demonstratives code three degrees of distance: near speaker, away from speaker and far away from speaker.

Set One pronominals

The demonstrative pronouns can be used alone or can be found with a noun. When used with a noun, they may be discontinuous, which confirms their status as pronouns rather than determiners. There is variation in pronunciation of this set, particularly in the obviative forms, which is noted by parentheses around extra syllables in Table 1,³ Southern speakers prefer the shorter version but recognize the longer one, which seems to be preferred by the Northern dialects. In addition, there are variant forms for the Southern inanimate proximate plural; speakers prefer the first form, but recognize the second, used in the Northern dialect:

Table 1. The basic set of pronominal demonstratives

| Southern | PROXIMATE | | OBTIATIVE | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| | SINGULAR | PLURAL | NUMBER-INDIFFERENT | |
| ANIMATE | | | | |
| PROXIMAL | <i>û</i> ✓ | PLURAL <i>ûchî, ûch</i> ✓ <i>ûchîch</i> | <i>û(ye)yûh</i> ✓ | |
| DISTAL | <i>an</i> | <i>anichî, anich</i> ✓ <i>anichîch</i> | <i>ani(ye)yûh</i> ✓ | |
| REMOTE | <i>(a)nâ +</i> <i>(a)nwâ +</i> | <i>(a)nechî</i> <i>(a)nech</i> | <i>(a)neyûh</i> | |
| INANIMATE | | | | |
| PROXIMAL | <i>û</i> ✓ | PLURAL <i>ûhî, ûyûh</i> ✓ <i>ûhîch</i> | <i>û(ye)yû</i> ✓ | <i>û(ye)yûh</i> ✓ |
| DISTAL | <i>an</i> | <i>aniyûh, anihî</i> ✓ | <i>ani(ye)yû</i> ✓ | <i>ani(ye)yûh</i> ✓ |
| REMOTE | <i>(a)ne</i> | <i>(a)neyûh</i> <i>(a)nehî</i> ✓ | <i>aneyû</i> ✓ | <i>aneyûh</i> ✓ |

3. The Northern dialect, unlike the Southern, does not write vowel length on the inflected forms of the proximal pronouns for Set One.

| Northern | PROXIMATE | | OBVIATIVE | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ANIMATE | SINGULAR | PLURAL | NUMBER-INDIFFERENT | |
| PROXIMAL | <i>û</i> ✓ | <i>uchî</i> <i>uch</i> | <i>uyâh</i> <i>uyâyûh</i> | |
| DISTAL | <i>an</i> ✓ | <i>anichî</i> <i>anich</i> | <i>aniyâh</i> <i>aniyâyûh</i> | |
| REMOTE | <i>nâh</i> | <i>nâchî</i> <i>nâch</i> | <i>nâyâh</i> <i>nâyâyûh</i> | |
| INANIMATE | SINGULAR | PLURAL | SINGULAR | PLURAL |
| PROXIMAL | <i>û</i> ✓ | <i>uhî</i> | <i>uyâ</i> <i>uyâyû</i> | <i>uyâh</i> <i>uyâyûh</i> |
| DISTAL | <i>an</i> ✓ | <i>anihî</i> | <i>aniyâ</i> <i>aniyâyû</i> | <i>aniyâh</i> <i>aniyâyûh</i> |
| REMOTE | <i>nâ</i> ✓ | <i>nâhî</i> <i>nâyâyû</i> | <i>nâyâ</i> <i>nâyû</i> | <i>nâyâh</i> <i>nâyûh</i> |

Demonstrative pronouns are also used in verbless equational sentences in East Cree, as they are in Plains Cree (Ahenakew 1987), but must follow the noun to have this interpretation:

- (1) *Marie-Odile û*. 'This is Marie-Odile.'
- (2) *Marguerite an*. 'That is Marguerite.'
- (3) *Louise ana*. 'That yonder is Louise.'

Set One adverbials

Demonstrative adverbials are formed from Set One pronouns by the addition of the locative clitic *-itah* or *-ite/-itâ*.⁴ There are six different adverbial demonstratives depending on (1) the distance from the speaker (proximal, distal or remote), and (2) whether an entity moves or is static

4. Note the orthography of adverbials: in the static/restricted forms the final vowels are devoiced; the syllabic orthography, which this new roman orthography follows, uses full syllabics without vowel length to indicate devoiced final vowels. A full syllabic character is also used within the word even where there is vowel deletion between homorganic consonants; thus *anitah*, *anite* / *anitâ* is written instead of *antah*, *ante* / *antâ*.

The *Hard times* text (HT) from which example sentences are taken (Cooper 1979) uses the older orthography.

in a location. Our research has shown that the two sets called restricted / extended by Proulx (1988) refer, in East Cree, to a static versus a non-static location. The first set – *ûtah*, *anitah* and *netah* – most naturally occurs with static verbs, while the second set – *ûte*, *anite*, *nete* – tends to occur with verbs of movement.

Table 2: The basic set of adverbial demonstratives

| Southern | STATIC (RESTRICTED) | WITH MOVEMENT (EXTENDED) |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| PROXIMAL | <i>ûtah</i> | <i>ûte</i> |
| DISTAL | <i>anitah</i> | <i>anite</i> |
| REMOTE | <i>netah</i> | <i>nete</i> |
| Northern | | |
| PROXIMAL | <i>utih</i> | <i>utâ</i> |
| DISTAL | <i>anitih</i> | <i>anitâ</i> |
| REMOTE | <i>nâtih</i> | <i>nâtâ</i> |

Examples (4-6) illustrate the distribution of adverbial demonstratives with a static and a movement verb, respectively. When the static adverbials are used with a movement verb, the construction is ungrammatical, as shown in (7-9a). When the movement adverbial series is used with a static verb, the sentence carries with it an implication that the person has to move first to reach the target and then perform the action denoted by the static verb, as illustrated in (7-9b).

Finally, some verbs are neither static nor movement verbs. The static adverbials then take on the role of indicating specificity of a target, while the movement adverbials denote a non-specific target. (Think of French *ici* versus *par ici*, and *là* versus *par là*.) This is illustrated in (10-12) with the verb *ashtâh* 'put':

| STATIC | MOVEMENT |
|---|--|
| (4) a. <i>Aph utah.</i> 'Sit here!' | b. <i>Áshtam ute.</i> 'Come here!' |
| (5) a. <i>Aph anitah.</i> 'Sit there / down!' | b. <i>Mâchih anite.</i> 'Go there!' |
| (6) a. <i>Aph netah.</i> 'Sit way over there!' | b. <i>Mâchih nete.</i> 'Go way over there!' |
| MOVEMENT VERB + STATIC ADVERBIAL | STATIC VERB + MOVEMENT ADVERBIAL ▷ MOVEMENT TO A TARGET |
| (7) a. * <i>Ashtâh utah.</i> | b. <i>Aph ute.</i> '(Come and) sit over here!' |
| (8) a. * <i>Ashtâh anitah.</i> | b. <i>Aph anite.</i> '(Move and) sit down there!' |
| (9) a. * <i>Ashtâh netah.</i> | b. <i>Aph nete.</i> '(Go and) sit over there!' |
| STATIC ADVERBIAL > SPECIFIC | MOVEMENT ADVERBIAL > UNSPECIFIC |
| (10) a. <i>Ashtâh utah.</i> 'Put it here!' | b. <i>Ashtâh ute.</i> 'Put it here!' |
| (11) a. <i>Ashtâh anitah.</i> 'Put it there!' | b. <i>Ashtâh anite.</i> 'Put it there!' |
| (12) a. <i>Ashtâh netah.</i> 'Put / place it over there!' (on a specific shelf) | b. <i>Ashtâh nete.</i> 'Put/place it over there!' (anywhere here/there, in this area, so that it is out of my way) |

An example from the *Hard times* (HT) texts, collected in Mistissini (Cooper 1979), of a movement verb with *anite*:

- (13) *Ekâwî pitamâ ithuhtekw ante kâchî pimâchihîtakuch aschîhch.* (HT 151)
'Don't go there yet to the land where I used to nurture you.'

The specific / non-specific location is illustrated in the text example (14): *anitah* is used with a static location, where the canoe was, and *nete*, with a non-specific location, correlated with the movement of 'across'. In (15), although the verb is a verb of movement, the use of *ut* conveys the meaning that there is a specific place where the paddling was taking place, and that the memory of the storyteller is accurate.

- (14) *Ekut ant, âkâm sipî mâk nete ekute kâ ihtakuch an nitûtinân.* (HT 1423)
'It was there, over there across the river, where our canoe was.'

- (15) *Ekut ut kâ pimiskâyâhch.* (HT 1520)
'This is where we paddled.'

Static / specific adverbials may also be used for indicating a specific time: *ekutah anitah* 'at that time', a construction which occurs frequently in stories:

- (16) ... , *ekut ant kâwî âyimihch.* (HT 1592)
'At that time, it was then that is was difficult.'

Set One absentatives

Absentative pronouns are used when the person is missing or deceased, or when a thing is missing or gone. The set based on the pronoun *û* (closer to the speaker) are used to refer to humans who have left and not returned, perhaps quite recently, but are not dead. The set based on the pronominal *an* may be used with humans and animate or inanimate objects which are deceased, gone or missing. Where both sets are found, they are used contrastively to refer to missing (but alive) versus dead persons. The forms show a PA*-*yi*- absentative morpheme as well as the absentative plural *-ehkâ* < **enk* (Pentland 2000a).

Table 3. Absentative pronouns.

| Southern | PROXIMATE | | OBVIATIVE | | |
|----------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| | ANIMATE PROXIMAL (COASTAL) | SINGULAR <i>uyâ</i> | PLURAL <i>uyehkâ</i> | SINGULAR <i>uyâh</i> <i>uyehkâh</i> | PLURAL <i>uyâh</i> |
| | DISTAL | <i>aniyâ</i> ✓ <i>aniyânâ</i> ✓ | <i>aniyehkâ</i> <i>aniyehkânânich</i> | <i>aniyehkâh</i> ✓ <i>aniyâh</i> ✓ | <i>aniyehkâh</i> ✓ <i>aniyâh</i> ✓ |
| | INANIMATE (INLAND) | <i>aniyene</i> ✓ | <i>aniye</i> ? <i>aniyehkânânih</i> ? | <i>aniyeyû</i> ? | <i>aniyehî</i> ? <i>aniyehkânânih</i> ? |
| Northern | | | | | |
| | ANIMATE PROXIMAL | <i>uyâ</i> | <i>uyâhka</i> | <i>uyâh</i> | <i>uyâh</i> |
| | DISTAL | <i>aniyâ</i> | <i>aniyâhkâ</i> | <i>aniyâh</i> | <i>aniyâh</i> |
| | INANIMATE | <i>aniyâ</i> | <i>aniyâhkâ</i> | <i>aniyâ</i> | <i>aniyâh</i> |

The Southern dialects show significantly more variation than the Northern dialects, with variant forms appearing not only between inland

and coastal communities but also among inland ones, and perhaps even among speakers of different ages within communities. The extent of this variation remains to be investigated.

(17) *Ni chischisítawâu anyâ nûhkum.* 'I remember my late grandmother.'

(18) *E ishi ate anyâ nitawâshîm.* 'I wonder where my (lost) child is?'

(19) *Ni mihtâten anyene nimasinahîkan.* 'I miss my late / absent book (gone / lost / burned).'

A remarkable series of *anyâ*, all one after another, with a discontinuous one (*anyâ kîpâ Maggies*) occurs in the *Hard times* texts:

(20) *Ekut mâk wetihtachiht ekw anyâ George. Ekut mâk ekw eihâyâhch ant. Ekw mîn anyâ George, "nika-ituhten ante," iteu "ante kê-ispichito," iteu, anyâ usah. "Che nitû-tîpâchimuyân," iteu. Anyâ kîpâ Maggies ekut eihât. Ekw chek tekushihk anyâ George. Ekw eitwet; "shâsh nika-chîwepichinân, iteu," iteu, anyâ usah* (HT 323-326).

'There and we came to him now / finally the late George. So that is where we stayed. The late George said, "I will go there, where they went by sled," – his late father in law. "I will go and tell the news," he said. The late Maggies was there. Finally the late George came. And he says, "We will go back home now, he said," he said, his late father-in-law.'

SET TWO: ADDING EMPHASIS TO SET ONE

These demonstratives, found only in East Cree and Naskapi, are formed through prefixation of the emphatic particle *mâ/mwâ* (cf. *ôma* in Plains and Swampy Cree) to those of Set One. They are often used as verbless sentences – 'Here/there it is.' – accompanied by a gesture of the hand or pointing with the lips.

Pronominals

As with corresponding Set One, we have a three-way distinction relative to the distance of the speaker. Of the two inanimate proximate plural forms, the second one with plural suffix *-hî* is dispreferred by Southern speakers but is recognized, being primarily used by Northern speakers. For the obviative forms, the longer version, including the extra *-ye-* syllable, is said to be less used and bears further investigation

Table 4. Emphatic demonstrative pronouns.

| Southern | PROXIMATE | PLURAL | OBVIATIVE | |
|-----------------|---|---|--|--|
| ANIMATE | SINGULAR | PLURAL | NUMBER-INDIFFERENT | |
| PROXIMAL | $\left[\begin{array}{c} m\dot{a}w \\ mw\dot{a}w \end{array} \right] \checkmark$ | $m(w)\dot{a}uch\dot{i}$ $m(w)\dot{a}uch$ | $m(w)\dot{a}u(ye)y\dot{u}h$ | |
| DISTAL | $\left[\begin{array}{c} m\dot{a}n \\ mw\dot{a}n \end{array} \right] \checkmark$ | $m(w)\dot{a}nich\dot{i}$ $m(w)\dot{a}nich\dot{i}i\dot{c}h$ | $m(w)\dot{a}ni(ye)y\dot{u}h$ | |
| REMOTE | $\left[\begin{array}{c} m\dot{a}n\dot{a}h \\ mw\dot{a}n\dot{a} \end{array} \right] \checkmark$ | $m(w)\dot{a}nech\dot{i}$ | $m(w)\dot{a}ney\dot{u}h$ | |
| INANIMATE | SINGULAR | PLURAL | SINGULAR | PLURAL |
| PROXIMAL | $\left[m(w)\dot{a}w \right] \checkmark$ | $m(w)\dot{a}uy\dot{u}h$ $m(w)\dot{a}uh\dot{i}$ | $m(w)\dot{a}uy\dot{u}$ | $m(w)\dot{a}u(ye)y\dot{u}h$ |
| DISTAL | $\left[m(w)\dot{a}n \right] \checkmark$ | $m(w)\dot{a}niy\dot{u}h$ $m(w)\dot{a}nih\dot{i}$ | $m(w)\dot{a}ni(ye)y\dot{u}$ | $m(w)\dot{a}ni(ye)y\dot{u}h$ |
| REMOTE | $\left[m(w)\dot{a}ne \right] \checkmark$ | $m(w)\dot{a}ney\dot{u}h$ $m(w)\dot{a}neh\dot{i}$ | $m(w)\dot{a}ney\dot{u}$ | $m(w)\dot{a}ney\dot{u}h$ |
| Northern | | | | |
| ANIMATE | SINGULAR | PLURAL | NUMBER-INDIFFERENT | |
| PROXIMAL | $\left[m\dot{a}w \right] \checkmark$ | $m\dot{a}uch\dot{i}$ $m\dot{a}uch$ | $m\dot{a}uy\dot{a}h$ $m\dot{a}uy\dot{a}y\dot{u}h$ | |
| DISTAL | $\left[m\dot{a}n \right] \checkmark$ | $m\dot{a}nich\dot{i}$ $m\dot{a}nich$ | $m\dot{a}niy\dot{a}h$ $m\dot{a}niy\dot{a}y\dot{u}h$ | |
| REMOTE | $\left[m\dot{a}n\dot{a}h \right] \checkmark$ | $m\dot{a}n\dot{a}ch\dot{i}$ $m\dot{a}n\dot{a}ch$ | $m\dot{a}n\dot{a}y\dot{u}h$ $m\dot{a}n\dot{a}y\dot{a}y\dot{u}h$ | |
| INANIMATE | SINGULAR | PLURAL | SINGULAR | PLURAL |
| PROXIMAL | $\left[m\dot{a}w \right] \checkmark$ | $m\dot{a}uh\dot{i}$ | $m\dot{a}uy\dot{a}$ $m\dot{a}uy\dot{a}y\dot{u}$ | $m\dot{a}uy\dot{a}h$ $m\dot{a}uy\dot{a}y\dot{u}h$ |
| DISTAL | $\left[m\dot{a}n \right] \checkmark$ | $m\dot{a}nih\dot{i}$ | $m\dot{a}niy\dot{a}$ $m\dot{a}niy\dot{a}y\dot{u}$ | $m\dot{a}niy\dot{a}h$ $m\dot{a}niy\dot{a}y\dot{u}h$ |
| REMOTE | $\left[m\dot{a}n\dot{a} \right] \checkmark$ | $m\dot{a}n\dot{a}h\dot{i}$ | $m\dot{a}n\dot{a}y\dot{a}$ $m\dot{a}n\dot{a}y\dot{a}y\dot{u}$ | $m\dot{a}n\dot{a}y\dot{a}h$ $m\dot{a}n\dot{a}y\dot{a}y\dot{u}h$ |

As pronouns, their most common use is for referring to objects being handed to someone or pointed at. This is illustrated in (21) and (22). Speakers tell us that (22) can be used in writing when talking about plans, but not over the telephone.⁵

(21) *Mwâu chimasinahikan*. 'Here is your book!' (when handing back the book)

(22) *Mwâu che ihtiyân*. 'Here is what I will do!'

They can also be used in equational sentences, but must be placed before the noun:

(23) *Mwâu Daisy*. 'Here is Daisy!'

(24) *Mwân Ruth*. 'There is Ruth!'

(25) *Mwânâ Patricia*. 'There (yonder) is Patricia!'

Adverbials

As with Set One, the pronominals of Set Two have six adverbial counterparts, depending on the distance of the speaker and the static/movement distinction.

Table 5. Emphatic demonstrative adverbs.

| Southern | STATIC (RESTRICTED) | WITH MOVEMENT (EXTENDED) |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| PROXIMAL | <i>mâutah</i> | <i>mâute</i> |
| DISTAL | <i>mwânitah</i> | <i>mwânite</i> |
| REMOTE | <i>mwânetah</i> | <i>mwânete</i> |
| Northern | | |
| PROXIMAL | <i>mâutih</i> | <i>mâutâ</i> |
| DISTAL | <i>mânitih</i> | <i>mânitâ</i> |
| REMOTE | <i>mânâtih</i> | <i>mânâtâ</i> |

5. This discrepancy between the usage on the telephone and in writing may reflect the fact that the first written texts were transcription of oral stories.

ADDING MORE EMPHASIS

Intonation

Emphasis may be added to the remote sets through intonation by lengthening the vowel: the longer the vowel, the further away the object.

(26) *mwâna* > *mwââââna* 'over there (singular)' (really far in the distance)

(27) *mwâââânechî* 'over there (plural)' (really far in the distance)

(28) *nete* > *neeeeeeeeete* 'over there' (very far)

(29) *Neeeeeeeeete Ottawahch*. 'All the way there in/from Ottawa.'

Addition of suffix *-hawe* or *-he*

Variant forms of both sets occur in Southern Inland dialects only, and are not used on the coast, in either Southern or Northern dialects. These are formed by the addition of an emphatic suffix *-hawe* or the contracted form *-he*, found regularly on all demonstratives in Atikamekw. As the Atikamekw live directly south of the Inland dialects and there is some bi-dialectalism among older speakers, it is likely that this feature has been borrowed. The use of *-he* is reported in La Brosse (1768) for Old Montagnais as a vocative emphatic particle. In modern East Cree it is added only to uninflected forms, not to plurals or obviatives; neither may it be suffixed to adverbials (although the adverbial *netehe* is reported in neighbouring Montagnais).

(30) *Awen anihawe? Awen anihe?* 'Who is that?'

(31) *Awen ûhawe? Awen ûhe?* 'Who is this?'

(32) *Chekwân anihawe?* 'What is it/that?'

(33) *Chekwân ûhawe?* 'What is this?'

(34) *Petâh anihawe masinahikan!* 'Bring that book!'

(35) *Petâh ûhawe masinahikan!* 'Bring this book!'

(36) *Mwâuhe chimasinahikan*. 'Here is your book.'

FOCUS DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS: FOCUS PARTICLE + SET ONE

The demonstrative pronouns of Set One combine regularly with the particle *eukw* to indicate focus. This combination is used primarily as the first words in the sentence:

(37) (S) *Eukw aniyûh nâhtinahk an iskweu aniyûh nitakuchikaninânih*. (HT 1291) 'Those are what that woman took down: our bones.'

(38) (N) *Áyukw aniyâh châkwâyûh kê nitiwâyihthk*. 'Those are the things he wanted.'

There is a fused form *eukun* made up of the focus particle *eukw* and the distal demonstrative pronoun *an*. This fused form can be fully inflected as shown in table 6.

Table 6. Focus demonstrative pronouns

| Southern | PROXIMATE | | OBLIATIVE | |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| | SINGULAR | PLURAL | SINGULAR | PLURAL |
| ANIMATE | <i>eukun</i> | <i>eukunich</i> | <i>eukuniyûh</i> | <i>eukuniyûh</i> |
| INANIMATE | <i>eukun</i> | <i>eukunh</i> | <i>eukuniyû</i> | <i>eukunh</i> |
| Northern | | | | |
| ANIMATE | <i>âukun</i> | <i>âukunich</i> | <i>âyûkunh</i> | <i>âyûkunh</i> |
| INANIMATE | <i>âukun</i> | <i>âukunh</i> | <i>âyûkw</i> | <i>âyûkunh</i> |

This focus-demonstrative fused pronoun is also used at the beginning of a sentence, as in (39) and (40), where it is followed by a verb that acts like a relative clause:

(39) (S) *Eukun kê nitaweyimak*. 'That's the one I wanted.'
(N) *Áukun kê nitiwâyimik*. 'That's the one I wanted.'

(40) (S) *Eukunh aniyûh pepâwîchewât*. (HT 1016) 'Those were the ones he goes around with.'
(N) *Áyukunh aniyâ pâpâwîchâwât*. 'Those were the ones he goes around with.'⁶

6. Northern translation by Luci Bobbish-Salt and Elsie Duff.

Only Southern speakers can use the fused form *eukun* followed by another bare demonstrative or indefinite pronoun, as in (41) and (42).

(41) (S) *Eukun an*. 'That's the one!'
(N) **Áukun an*.

(42) (S) *Eukun awen*. 'That's the one!'
(N) **Áukun awân*.

There does not seem to be any difference in meaning between the fused form and the particle + demonstrative combination, but we notice some dialectal variation in the range of use of the fused form.⁷

A syntactic puzzle: Demonstratives in focus constructions

In the Southern Inland dialect, all proximate (singular) NPs in initial position must be construed with a demonstrative. We checked this data with several speakers over time, and the judgements are the same. Obviative initial NPs may be used without a demonstrative, but proximate initial NPs may not. See the contrast between the (a) and (b) examples below. Remember that initial position for NPs indicates focus in Cree (Reinholtz 1999; Junker [in press]). The focus is contrastive: it generates alternative sets and presuppositions, for example, as shown by the glosses 'children not adults'; 'dogs not cats'.

- (43) no DEM: 'A child likes a dog / dogs.' (Direct)
a. *?*Awâsh miyeyim-e-u atim-h*.
child-(PROX) like.TA-DIR(3>3)-3 dog-OBV

7. The restriction exemplified in (39) and (40) seems to follow from a restriction on the use of the focus particle *eukw* in the Northern dialect. It is not possible to use *eukw* + demonstrative alone in the Northern dialect:

(S) *Eukw an*. 'That's the one.'
(N) **Áukw an*.

A verb forming a relative clause with the demonstrative pronoun as its head makes the construction possible:

(S) *Eukw an kê nitaweyimak*. 'That's the one I wanted.'
(N) *Áukw an kê nitiwâyimik*. 'That's the one I wanted.'

It thus seems that the focus particle *eukw* has different properties in the Southern dialect, where it can act as a predicate.

- b. *Atimh miyeyimeu awâsh.*
dog-OBV like.TA-DIR(3>3')-3 child-(PROX)
'It is dogs / a dog that a child likes (not a cat / cats).'
- (44) no DEM: 'A child / children like(s) a dog' (Inverse)
- a. *Awâsh-a miyeyim-iku-u atim.*
child-OBV like.TA-INV(3<3')-3 dog-(PROX)
'It is children/a child who like(s) a dog (not adults/an adult).'
- b. **?Atim miyeyimikû awâsha.*
dog-(PROX) like.TA-INV(3<3')-3 child-OBV

If there is a demonstrative on the Proximate NP, the sentences are fine.

- (45) DEM on the proximate NP: 'This child likes dogs.' (Direct)
- Û awâsh miyeyimeu atimh.*
this-(PROX) child-(PROX) Like.TA-DIR(3>3')-3 dog-OBV
'It is this child who likes dogs, (not the other one).'
- (46) DEM on the proximate NP: 'This child likes this dog' (Inverse)
- Û atim miyeyim-iku-u awâsh-a.*
this-(PROX) dog-(PROX) like.TA-INV(3<3')-3 child-OBV
'It is this dog that the child likes, (not the other dog).'

Now, why must proximate NPs in focus bear a demonstrative, while obviative ones do not need to? Could it be that this difference is due to number? Recall that while the singular/plural distinction is marked for proximate animate nouns, it is not for obviative animate nouns. Thus, obviatives in initial position would always be interpreted as generic plurals, and singular proximates would be ruled out, because such an interpretation would not be available. However, as the glosses above show, obviative NPs in initial position can be understood either as plurals or as singulars. Second, proximate plurals in initial position do not fare any better than singular ones. This is shown in (47) below.

- (47) a. **?Awâshach miyeyim-e-ch atim-h.*
child-PROX.PL like.TA-DIR(3>3')-3 dog-OBV
- b. **?Atim-uch miyeyimikû-ch awâsha.*
dog-PROX.PL like.TA-INV(3<3')-3-PL child-OBV

The explanation must therefore rest on the proximate-obviative distinction, which we will take, following the Algonquian tradition, to be a topic/non-topic one. If topicality carries its own presuppositions, some-

thing like "the one(s) (we are talking about)," then a proximate NP implies the creation of a set of individuals in the universe of discourse as being a subset of all the other (obviative) ones. So whenever a proximate NP is put in a contrastive focus position that entails the creation of an alternative set, it requires a demonstrative to identify yet another new subset: ("this particular one, among the one(s) (proximate) we could be talking about and all the other (obviative) ones").

CONCLUSION

The demonstratives of East Cree both preserve aspects of the Proto-Algonquian system, such as absentatives, and at the same time include innovative forms built on existing elements, as seen in Set Two. The richness of the East Cree demonstrative system described here deserves further investigation with respect to dialectal variation, historical sources and syntactic and pragmatic behaviour. We hope that our overview will stimulate more research into this traditional, yet intriguing topic.

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