

**Thompson River Salish Dictionary: *Nteʔkepmxcín*.** LAURENCE C. THOMPSON and M. TERRY THOMPSON. University of Montana Occasional Papers in Linguistics 12. Missoula: Linguistics Laboratory, University of Montana, 1996. Pp. xxviii + 1412. \$45.00 (cloth).

Reviewed by Paul D. Kroeber, *Indiana University*

Thompson River Salish, or Thompson for short, spoken in southern British Columbia, belongs to the Northern Interior branch of the Salish language family. The work under review adds impressively to our knowledge of this language. Indeed, at some 38,000 lines of type on 482 double-columned pages, the Thompson-to-English portion of the dic-

tionary is certainly the most substantial such resource yet published for any Salish language, and one of the fullest for any language of the Northwest. The large body of lexical data now made available will be an essential tool for the further investigation of Thompson Salish morphology, phonology, and syntax, and for the comparative study of the whole Salish family.

Thompson Salish, like the rest of the Salish family and many other languages of the Northwest, has extensive derivational morphology, including reduplicative formations of several kinds, aspectual formations, transitivizing and detransitivizing affixes, applicatives, and a large number of lexical suffixes (that is, suffixes referring to body parts and other relatively concrete notions). Such derivations of roots are fully treated in this work; the large body of data thus provided will be an excellent basis for the further investigation of Thompson stem classes and stem formation. It is very helpful to the linguist that morpheme boundaries are indicated in all Thompson words throughout the dictionary. Entries in the Thompson-to-English section, moreover, often include example phrases or sentences—especially informative in entries for function words.

Appendices to the Thompson-to-English section (pp. 483–561) provide complete lists of roots, of lexical suffixes, and of grammatical affixes and transitive verb paradigms. All but the root list lack cross-references to dictionary entries, but it would hardly have been practical to provide these, especially for the grammatical affixes. An unusual and valuable feature of the book is its very full English-to-Thompson section (pp. 563–1412), whose entries list and translate complete Thompson words whose glosses involve the English headword. This is far better than the English finder list (with mere references to roots or with page references) that is often all that one finds in dictionaries of Native American languages; it should make the dictionary much more accessible to nonlinguist users and will be handy for linguists too.

As is inevitable in such a project as this, some of the compilers' editorial decisions differ from what others might have chosen. Aficionados of controversies in Salish studies will note, for example, that the dictionary tacitly assumes the irrelevance to Thompson grammar of a distinction between noun and verb. Certainly, the syntactic relevance of such word classes is at best much more subtle than in European languages, but I suspect that, as has been claimed for other Salish languages, morphological grounds for a noun-verb distinction might be identified. Judging by the findings of various researchers in other languages, likely morphological properties of a class of noun stems could include the ability to combine directly with possessive pronominal affixes (that is, without first being nominalized by some affix) and the ability to form derivatives meaning 'have a . . .' by means of the stative prefix *ʔes-* (for example, from *cítx<sup>w</sup>* 'house' there is formed *ʔes-cítx<sup>w</sup>* 'have a house'; with other classes of stems, the stative prefix typically has a resultative meaning). As the question of what word classes there might be in Salish languages remains very much an open one, however, it is certainly a defensible policy for the dictionary to avoid specifying word classes.

There seems to be a minor snag with the notation of roots as "control" (roughly, coding volitional actions) or "noncontrol" (covering both involuntary actions and actions that are carried out only with difficulty)—an opposition that has been claimed to be relevant to a large number of roots and affixes in Salish languages. At any rate, some roots listed in earlier work as control roots seem not to be identified as such in the present dictionary, though others are (cf. Thompson 1985). This grammatical topic, too, is a complex one deserving further work, so the omission, if it is one, scarcely affects the dictionary's usefulness.

One aspect of the book's format struck me as less than ideal from the linguist's perspective. Headwords of entries in the Thompson-to-English section of the dictionary are "the surface manifestations or actual pronunciations of the underlying *roots*" (p. xix; emphasis in the original). That is to say, the dictionary does not collect all instances of a

given Thompson Salish root into a single entry, but instead alphabetizes as distinct entries the different phonological shapes of the root. Thompson has various phonological and morphological processes that affect the surface shape of morphemes (these are listed on pp. 483–84): unstressed vowels may drop out, resonants *y* and *w* when between consonants may vocalize to *i* or *u*, schwas may be colored by adjacent consonants, there is an inchoative aspectual infix *-ʔ-*, and so on. Consequently, for example, the root with the underlying shape *kəyʔax<sup>w</sup>* has surface shapes *kiʔax<sup>w</sup>-*, *kiʔx<sup>w</sup>-*, and *kyʔux<sup>w</sup>-*; the root *cəpəx* surfaces as *cəpəx-* or *cəpəx-*; *kəʔ* surfaces as *kəʔ-* or *kʔ-*; *k'ex* surfaces as *k'ex-* and (as an inchoative derivative in different phonological contexts) *k'ʔex-* or *k'eʔx-*. Each of these variant surface forms receives its own separately alphabetized entry, and derivatives containing a particular surface form of a given root must be sought under the entry for that surface form. This is troublesome to the linguist, since the very thing that such a user is most likely to want to find in a dictionary is information about the range of morphological derivatives in which a particular root is attested. I hasten to add that this information is recoverable: each entry includes a specification of the underlying form of its root; by consulting appendix A, which lists roots by underlying form and specifies the attested surface forms of each, the reader can locate the other Thompson-to-English entries that contain the root in question. But this is rather roundabout, especially given that the phonological and morphological processes relating variant forms of roots are straightforward and easily remembered; I would have found it more convenient to have only one main entry per root listing all of that root's derivatives, with entries for alternative phonological forms of the root merely providing cross-references to the main entry. To be sure, nonlinguist users of the dictionary may well find it easier to look things up by surface form, though they will still need to be able to perform some morphological analysis in order to isolate root allomorphs—in particular, they will need to be able to recognize and disregard prefixes (there are only a very few of these, however, and they are listed in the introduction [p. xix]).

Entries in the Thompson-to-English part of the dictionary are densely printed, with subentries run together, rather than being placed on separate lines. This was certainly advisable as a space-saving measure, but it might have been helpful to set off Thompson forms from English glosses by some difference in typeface or by punctuation (the highest-order subheadings are printed in boldface, to be sure). Though no actual confusion results, entries are occasionally somewhat difficult to process visually. The English-to-Thompson section, on the other hand, emphasizes legibility (hence its much greater bulk)—Thompson forms are in italics, while English translations are in roman type, and subentries start on separate lines.

Such problems as I have noted are, at worst, minor matters of aesthetics and convenience that do not impair the book's informational content. And the book is well produced—despite its comparatively low price, it is hardbound with sewn pages. It opens flat, too, as a reference work should. All in all, this fine dictionary should certainly be on the shelf of anyone interested in languages of the Northwest.

### References

- Thompson, Laurence C.  
 1985 Control in Salish Grammar. In *Relational Typology*, edited by Frans Plank, 391–428. The Hague: Mouton.