



Review

Reviewed Work(s): *Vues sur les français d'ici* by Carmen LeBlanc, France Martineau and Yves Frenette

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plusieurs visions du monde. De par sa richesse et son originalité, le verbe d'Hanétha Vété-Congolo mérite qu'on s'y arrête pour le savourer et le méditer.

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LEBLANC, CARMEN, FRANCE MARTINEAU, et YVES FRENETTE, éd. *Vues sur les français d'ici*. Québec: PU de Laval, 2010. ISBN 978-2-7637-8937-9. Pp. 285. \$39,95 Can.

The plural referent in the title of this volume—*les français d'ici*—highlights the heterogeneity of French spoken in Canada. While it is generally considered to have two principal dialects, Quebec French (referred to as *français laurentien*) and Acadian French, Canadian French is in fact made up of many sub-dialects. Among the less well-known varieties discussed in this volume are *mitchif* French, a mixture of French and Algonquian languages (mainly Cree and Ojibwa) spoken in the Prairie Provinces, and *chiac*, a variety of Acadian French in close contact with English spoken in southeastern New Brunswick. The eleven papers in this book were originally presented at a conference about Canadian French held at the University of Ottawa in May 2008. The majority analyze specific linguistic features; others present perspectives from related disciplines.

Three studies are set in a quantitative sociolinguistic framework. Mougeon, Hallion Bres, Papen, and Bigot present a large-scale comparison of Ontario, Alberta, Manitoba, and *mitchif* varieties, finding both convergence and divergence in the use of first-person singular future forms (*je vais/je vas/je m'en vais/je m'en vas/m'as*). Bigot uses data from interviews on the Radio-Canada television network to study the norm of oral Quebec French. He claims that with the exception of two features—the periphrastic future (*je vais le voir* vs. *je le verrai*) and the presentative *c'est des* (*c'est des personnes* vs. *ce sont des personnes*)—usage generally resembles “standard” spoken French. In fact, even these features are not truly different from general contemporary French. Papen and Bigot document the distribution of the third-person plural imperfect forms *ontvoient* (for *étaient*), *sontaient* (*étaient*) and *fontaient* (*faisaient*) in *mitchif* French.

Four other papers present detailed linguistic studies. Côté analyzes vowel lengthening before the consonants [r, v, z, ʒ] in Quebec French. Remysen surveys lexical examples cited by language commentators in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; he finds that a normative bias often overshadowed recognition of the origins of archaisms and dialectalisms that were in use at the time. Cummins, Roberge, and Troberg propose a minimalist syntactic analysis of indirect objects (COI) and their relation with direct objects (COD) and with the preposition *à*. Syntactic and semantic criteria that distinguish quantification at a distance (*Jean a beaucoup lu de livres*) from distance intensification (*Jean a tellement lu de bons livres*) are developed by Bouchard and Burnett. The remaining papers offer views from related disciplines. Labelle discusses challenges that folklorists face when transcribing oral events such as storytelling, and he illustrates them with Acadian French stories. Nougart outlines the work of archivists who prepare historical databases of written texts, such as those used by the *Ecrits du fort privé* research

group in France. Paré offers the perspective of the literary scholar, reflecting on the fragile, and sometimes repressed, situation faced by speakers of a minority language. Working within an ethnographic-sociolinguistic paradigm, Violette observes that recent immigrants to Moncton, New Brunswick, have an ambivalent representation of *chiac*: there is a curiosity and openness to this very local variety but, at the same time, *chiac* is cast in a negative light when viewed in terms of its divergence from the standard model.

The papers are arranged in alphabetical order according to the name of the first author. Although the editors provide a summary of each paper, the presentation lacks an overview of how the various contributions fit together. Nevertheless, each paper is well written, including interesting data and an extensive bibliography that will be useful to both generalists and specialists. This book is significant because it documents the high quality of current linguistic scholarship in this area and hints at the potential of a multidisciplinary approach to this research. It also exposes the complexity of Canadian French.

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PRÉVOST, PHILIPPE. *The Acquisition of French: The Development of Inflectional Morphology and Syntax in L1 Acquisition, Bilingualism, and L2 Acquisition*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2009. ISBN 978-90-272-53132. Pp. xx + 458. \$54.00.

With this comprehensive and extremely well-written monograph on the acquisition of French in several contexts, Philippe Prévost has accomplished a scholarly *tour de force* sure to please a wide audience. The book will certainly interest French linguists, especially those focusing on acquisition. Given its meticulous attention to the acquisition of morphosyntactic phenomena in both L1 (first language) and L2 (second language) contexts—including bilingual child language acquisition and acquisition by French L1 children with specific linguistic impairments (SLI)—the book will also merit a large readership among all acquisition researchers. In addition, Prévost brings a wealth of acquisition data to bear on important theoretical questions in the Universal Grammar (UG)/Minimalist program and highlights the contributions that French acquisition research has made to the development of both syntactic and acquisition theory.

The monograph is divided into four parts, each of which presents one of the linguistic phenomena investigated: the verbal domain, subject and object pronouns, determiner phrases, and questions and embedded clauses. Each section contains four chapters and is organized identically. To begin, every section contains a chapter presenting the relevant facts, background information, and theoretical assumptions. For example, the first chapter in Part II (Subject and Object Pronouns) presents French pronouns and their distributional properties, discusses several theoretical accounts proposed in the literature, and highlights the questions that these pronouns raise for theories of acquisition. The second chapter of each section synthesizes research findings in child L1 French; the third considers French bilingual acquisition and acquisition in children with SLI; and the final chapter focuses on L2 acquisition. The L2 chapter in each section clearly presents separate data for child and adult French L2.

In addition to the 16 chapters described above (four sections with four chapters each), the book contains a general introduction and a concluding chapter.