

1 Introduction

There are two politically independent Hocąk tribes today. The larger group are the Wisconsin Hocąks. They have about 7,950 enrolled members who live scattered in various places of south, central, and northern Wisconsin. Their government and most of the departments of the tribal political organization are located in Black River Falls, WI. They call themselves and their language Hocąk (pronounced [ho:'tʃäk]) which is the traditional self-denomination. The other group are the Nebraska Hocąks, who have about 4,000 enrolled members living mostly in their reservation in Nebraska. They use the name Winnebago for themselves and their language. This name is of Algonquian origin and has been used in the linguistic and anthropological literature to refer to both groups. There are minor lexical and perhaps phonetical differences between the inherited languages of both groups. A linguistic investigation of these differences is still lacking. It is probably apt to speak of Wisconsin Hocąk and Nebraska Winnebago as dialectal varieties of one language, which is also true from a historical perspective. The Hocąk/Winnebago were historically one tribe with their homeland in eastern and central Wisconsin. The contemporary separation of the tribe is the result of the land cessions and deportations in the 19th century by the U.S. government.

The present dictionary reflects almost exclusively the Wisconsin Hocąk variety, since it was compiled with speakers of that group, who work either as language instructors at the Hocąk Wazija Hacı Language Division in Mauston, WI, or are otherwise associated with this tribal institution. However, if the compilers of the lexicon came across lexical differences due to the dialectal separation of the tribe, then these differences were recorded and included in the present dictionary.

It is difficult to estimate the actual number of fluent speakers of Hocąk, since this figure is changing constantly. But according to tribal internal surveys it is safe to say that there are less than 200 speakers left and almost all of them are 60+ years of age. Only recently, because of the efforts of the tribe to revitalize the Hocąk language, there are a few younger tribal members being on the way to become speakers of Hocąk.

Hocąk is a Siouan language. This language family comprises about 17 languages. Hocąk belongs to the Mississippi Valley Siouan subgroup and is closely related to Chiwere, consisting of the Oto, Missouri, and Iowa dialects.

The purpose of the materials presented here is rather to serve as a reference tool for the language learner than to be a grammatical and lexical description of the Hocąk language for academic linguists. The materials are composed of two main sections:

- (1) The section “Elements of Hocąk grammar” only contains the most basic information on three areas of the linguistic system.
- (2) The section “Learner’s dictionary” actually comprises a set of dictionaries, viz. a Hocąk-English and an English-Hocąk wordlist, a Hocąk thesaurus and a frequency dictionary. These lists should be consulted when studying or composing a Hocąk text.

For the Hocąk language, there is no easily intelligible grammatical description available. Therefore, the editors decided to provide a grammatical section dealing with some important aspects of Hocąk grammar. It helps the Hocąk learner to understand the structure of the dictionary examples and of the text. However, this section is very elementary, treating only the spelling, the conjugation, and the grammatical morphemes needed to construct word forms and sentences. This section should be elaborated in future editions.

A dictionary is a repository of the lexical units of a language. It contains in principle all the words and phrases that cannot be derived by the grammatical rules of the language. It is the task of a dictionary to list all such items and to provide information with regard to the spelling, the pronunciation, the meaning, the grammatical class and category, and the syntactic construction in which they can be used.

Furthermore, these materials contain a thesaurus of Hocąk words. A thesaurus is a classification of words by semantic/ontological criteria. In the vocabulary, not only nouns but also verbs and

adverbs have been marked for their semantic category. The thesaurus is a grouping of the entries with regard to the semantic category. The language learner may consult this part of the dictionary to look up larger groups of Hocak words which form a semantic field. This section allows the learner to review all words which, for instance, describe weather conditions, colors, or designate the various kinship relations, and so forth.

The last part of the dictionary is a frequency list of Hocak words. It may be used for didactic purposes, viz. in order to teach the most frequent words first.

Further reading

For readers who may be interested to learn more about the grammar and the lexicon of Hocak, there is a list of publications and semi publications which may serve these needs. The studies listed below treat more specific details of the Hocak language:

- (1) Hartmann, Iren 2007. *Modality in Hocak* (unpubl. MA Thesis. University of Erfurt, Germany).
- (2) Hartmann, Iren & Marschke, Christian 2010. *Hocak Teaching Materials. Volume 2. Texts with Analysis and Translation, and an Audio-CD of Original Hocak Texts* Albany: SUNY Press.
- (3) Helmbrecht, Johannes 2002 “Nouns and Verbs in Hocank (Winnebago)”. *International Journal of American Linguistics (IJAL)* 68,1:1-27.
- (4) Helmbrecht, Johannes 2002. “Argument structure of the Hocank (Winnebago) clause.” *Arbeitspapiere des Seminars für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Erfurt (ASSidUE) Nr. 4*. Erfurt: University of Erfurt. (Available as a pdf file: <http://www.db-thueringen.de/servlets/DerivateServlet/Derivate-1768/ASSidUE04.pdf>).
- (5) Helmbrecht, Johannes 2003. “Possession in Hocank (Winnabago) Problems for a prototype approach.” *Arbeitspapiere des Seminars für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Erfurt (ASSidUE) Nr. 8*. Erfurt: University of Erfurt. (Available as a pdf file: <http://www.db-thueringen.de/servlets/DerivateServlet/Derivate-1887/ASSidUE08.pdf>).
- (6) Helmbrecht, Johannes 2005. “Hocank as an active/inactive language.” (Paper presented at the Conference on the Typology of Stative/Active Languages at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Mai 2005). *Arbeitspapiere des Seminars für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Erfurt (ASSidUE) Nr. 20*. Erfurt: University of Erfurt. (Available as a pdf file: <http://www2.uni-erfurt.de/sprachwissenschaft/ASSidUE/ASSidUE20.pdf>).
- (7) Helmbrecht, Johannes 2006. “The accentual system of Hocank a typological rarity.” (Paper presented at the Rara & Rarissima Conference at the Max Planck Institute for evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, March 2006). To appear in: Wohlgemuth, Jan & Cysouw, Michael & Gensler, Orin (eds.) *Proceedings of the Rara & Rarissima Conference at the MPI in Leipzig, March 2006*.
- (8) Helmbrecht, Johannes 2006. “The problem of tense, mood and aspect enclitics in Hocank – how annotated corpora and concordancing tools can support descriptive linguistics.” In: Steiner, Petra & Boas, Hans Christian & Schierholz, Stefan (eds.). *Contrastive studies and valency. Studies in honor of Hans Ulrich Boas*. Bern: Lang, pp. 171-199.
- (9) Helmbrecht, Johannes 2006. “Are there Adjectives in Hocank (Winnebago)?” In: Lois, Ximena & Vapnarsky, Valentina (eds.). *Lexical categories and root classes in Amerindian languages*. Bern: Lang, pp. 289-319.
- (10) Helmbrecht, Johannes & Lehmann, Christian 2008. “Hocank’s challenge to morphological theory.” In: Harrison, David & Rood, David, & Dwyer, Ariane (eds.) *Lessons from documented endangered languages*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, pp. 271-317.

- (11) Johnson, Robinson & Thorud, Lavina 1976. *Wisconsin Winnebago lexicon*. Ed. by Kenneth Miner. Milwaukee: Native America Language Project.
- (12) Kingswan, Chuck 1993. *AottnK wo w KH Ao tti KAe Le Ai dn. Winnebago Lexicon Starting Kit*. Unpublished ms.
- (13) Lindenlaub, Juliane 2003. "Text typology. A compilation of parameters." *Arbeitspapiere des Seminars für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Erfurt (ASSidUE) Nr. 11*. Erfurt: University of Erfurt. (Available as a pdf file <http://www2.uni-erfurt.de/sprachwissenschaft/ASSidUE/ASSidUE11.pdf>).
- (14) Lindenlaub, Juliane 2006. "How to talk about the future. A study of future time reference with particular focus on the Hocąk language." (Unpublished MA Thesis. University of Erfurt). *Arbeitspapiere des Seminars für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Erfurt (ASSidUE) Nr. 22*. Erfurt: University of Erfurt. (Available as a pdf file: <http://www.db-thueringen.de/servlets/DerivateServlet/Derivate-9541/ASSidUE22.pdf>).
- (15) Lipkind, William 1945. *Winnebago grammar*. New York: King's Crown Press.
- (16) Marino, Mary Carolin 1968. *A dictionary of Winnebago: an analysis and reference grammar of the Radin lexical file*. Berkeley: University of California [Ph.D. dissertation].
- (17) Miner, Kenneth L. 1992. *Winnebago field lexicon*. Unpublished ms. Lawrence: University of Kansas.
- (18) Susman, Amelia 1943. *The accentual system of Winnebago*. New York: Columbia University [Ph.D. dissertation].
- (19) White Eagle, Josephine P. 1988 "A lexical study of Winnebago." Cambridge: Center for Cognitive Science, MIT (*Lexicon Project Working Papers*, 26).
- (20) Zeps, Valdis J. 1994. *Winnebago lexicon (Materials toward a Winnebago lexicon, as of June 1994)*.