1   The Carib language

1.1   Identification

The Carib language is the language of the people who call themselves *Karìna* 'Carib' (phonetically: [kaɽiʔnˈa])[1] and their language *Karìna auran* (phonetically: [kaɽiʔnˈauɽaŋ]) 'language of the Caribs'. The accent grave in *Karìna* represents a glottal stop in the pronunciation, which is all that is left of a lost syllable *po* or *pu*.[2] About the meaning of *Karìna* nothing certain can be said apart from that it nowadays is the auto-denomination of the Carib people.[3]

The Carib people live in the coastal region of northern South America, in villages on the rivers and creeks in Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana[4] (see the map on the next page, in which C1, C2, C3 and C4 are symbols for four Carib dialects).[5] Carib villages usually have some dozens to some hundreds of in-

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[1] The equivalent of *Carib* in French is *Galibi*, in Dutch *Karaïeb*, and in Spanish *Caribe*. (The Guarani word *karaíva* 'gentleman' may very well be related to equivalents showing an *a* following the *r*, like *Karaïeb*.) Although recent publications show support for the introduction into the English language (and other languages) of the Carib word *Karìna* (in various spellings, and referring to both the language and the people), this book will continue to use the traditional term *Carib*.

[2] That syllable *po* or *pu* can be recognized in the names of two other peoples in the Amazonian and Caribbean area. A people in Colombia that speaks a language that is related to Carib (and closely related to the Trio language, a Cariban language spoken in southern Suriname), calls itself *Karihona* (in Spanish orthography: *Carijona*). And *Garifuna* is the autodenomination of the speakers of Black Carib, an Arawakan language which shows signs of past contacts with speakers of Carib. Maybe, the Wayana word *karipono* 'person' (Jackson 1972 67) is also related.

Two non-Cariban peoples and their languages in Brazil also have a name that is likely to be related to the Carib word *Karìna*, i.e. *Karipuna*. A Tupi language in the Brazilian territory of Rondônia called *Karipuna* or *Karipuna de Rondônia* is nearly extinct, and an unclassified Amerindian language in the territory of Amapá (near the French Guianese border) called *Karipuna* or *Karipuna do Amapá* is completely extinct. The people that used to speak *Karipuna do Amapá*, are now speaking a French-based creole language, which is also called *Karipuna* (or *Karipuna Creole French*).

[3] According to Renault-Lescure (1981 7) and Hoff (1995b 53), it might be a contraction of an Arawakan word *kaniriphuna* which would mean 'people of the cassava clan'.

[4] There are also some dozens of Caribs living across the French Guianese border in Brazil. They seem to be living in a mixed village, and shifting to Portuguese.

[5] For more information about Carib dialects, see 1.3 Differentiation.

habitants. The total number of Caribs is approximately 17000.[6] Probably more than half of them do not speak the Carib language any more, as the Carib language is being replaced by other languages (Spanish in Venezuela, English or Creole English in Guyana, Dutch or Surinamese in Suriname, French or Creole French in French Guiana, and Portuguese in Brazil). Even in villages where Carib is the language of daily conversation, command of the language is deteriorating because the national languages are used at school and many young people move to non-Carib towns and cities for further education and continue to live there for quite some time or even the rest of their lives. As they have become used to interacting with people who don't speak Carib, many Caribs speak two or three languages.

Traditionally, Caribs build their houses and villages near rivers and creeks, the highways of the jungle. Food is found both in the water and in the jungle: fish, meat and fruit and vegetables. Vegetables are grown in 'shifting cultivation', i.e. vegetable gardens are created by slashing and burning a small part of the forest. After two or three years invading weeds are hard to get rid of and a new garden is selected and prepared. Men take care of the slashing and burning, and removing the trees. Women look after the garden and bring crops and tubers from the garden to their home. The most important vegetable food is the bitter manioc tuber. These tubers are peeled, washed and grated. The resulting pulp is poisonous, but it is detoxified ingenuously: a tubular basket (called a *matapi*) is used to squeeze the poison out of the pulp. Then the pulp is pounded and sifted. The resulting flour is used to bake breads on a round griddle (called an *arìnatu*). Apart from manioc plants, a garden may contain banana plants, sweet manioc, pineapple, yam, sweet potato, sugar-cane, and pepper. Among Caribs, there is no fear of hunger and famine: their environment supplies them with sufficient food.[7]

In Carib culture, old people represent wisdom and knowledge, which may be passed on to later generations by means of traditional stories, that usually have no historical setting,[8] but a setting in a strange world in which animals may act and talk like people. Spirits and monsters also occur. Even where christianity has been introduced, forest and underwater spirits and monsters appear both in traditional stories and in accounts of personal experiences. Contact with spirits is the express specialty of the shaman (in Carib: *pyjai*). His spiritual knowledge is considered helpful in combatting illnesses and dangers. A shaman may even send a spirit to kill an enemy (as evidenced by traditional stories, but not readily admitted in personal accounts),

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[6] In the literature, Carib population numbers vary between 10000 and 25000. But the number of Carib speakers may be less than 6000 (cf. Decker 2004).

[7] For more information about Carib life and culture, see Basso 1977, Collomb and Tiouka 2000, Forte 1996, 1999, 2000, Gillin 1934, 1936, Kloos 1968, 1969, 1971, Kambel and de Jong 2006.

[8] Stories that deal with historical facts (like the arrival of white people to South America) are probably based more on non-Carib history books than on Carib historical tradition. Compare Kloos 1971 154-156 about knowledge of history in Carib culture.

or he may control other animal life forms or transform himself into a dangerous beast, if needed for some purpose. The arrival of western medicines, medical doctors, hospitals, and christianity have reduced the importance of the Carib shaman. Nowadays, there are even villages without a shaman, and many villages may not only have a Roman Catholic church, but also one or more Protestant churches. These facts, however, do not preclude stories about spirits and monsters and spiritual interpretations of birds and animals.

1.2   Affiliation

The Carib language is part of the Cariban language family, that may have consisted of as much as three dozens of languages spoken in the Amazonian area, mostly north of the Amazon, and some a considerable distance to the south from the Amazon. About ten of those languages are not spoken anymore.[9] The map on page 4 shows the location of Cariban languages that are still spoken today.

Usually, languages that are spoken in neighbouring areas are more similar than languages that are spoken far from each other, and this seems to be generally true for the Cariban language family, too. Abbott who speaks the Makusi language states that she had no trouble talking to the neighbouring Arekuna people (who speak a dialect of the Pemon language),[10] while Edwards states that Arekuna people can converse with Akawayo people (who call themselves Kapon);[11] this means that Makusi, Pemon and Kapon are not only geographically close to each other, but might even be considered dialects of a single language. Meira states that nearly extinct Akuriyo (which is spoken by less than a dozen of Amerindians living with the Trio) is, of all Cariban languages, closest to Trio, together, however, with Carijona which is spoken in distant Colombia, and he suggests a name for the three of them together: 'Taranoan'.[12] He also states that nearly extinct Sikïiyana (spoken by not more than 10 old people living with the Trio[13]) is almost identical to Kaxuyana.[14] Derbyshire states that the Waiwai language, spoken in the same area as Hixkaryana, is the most similar to Hixkaryana among all Cariban languages.[15]

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[9] The following Cariban languages are listed in Gordon 2005 as extinct or nearly extinct: (*in Colombia:*) Coyaima, (*in Venezuela:*) Cumanagoto, Mapoyo, Pemono, Tamanaku, Yawarana, (*in Suriname:*) Sikïiyana, and Akuriyo. Two Cariban language groups in Colombia, Opone and Carare, may be extinct: they haven't been seen since the 1960's (cf. Landaburu 1998).

[10] Abbott 1991, 23. Significantly, the Makusi people also use 'Pemon' as an autodenomination.
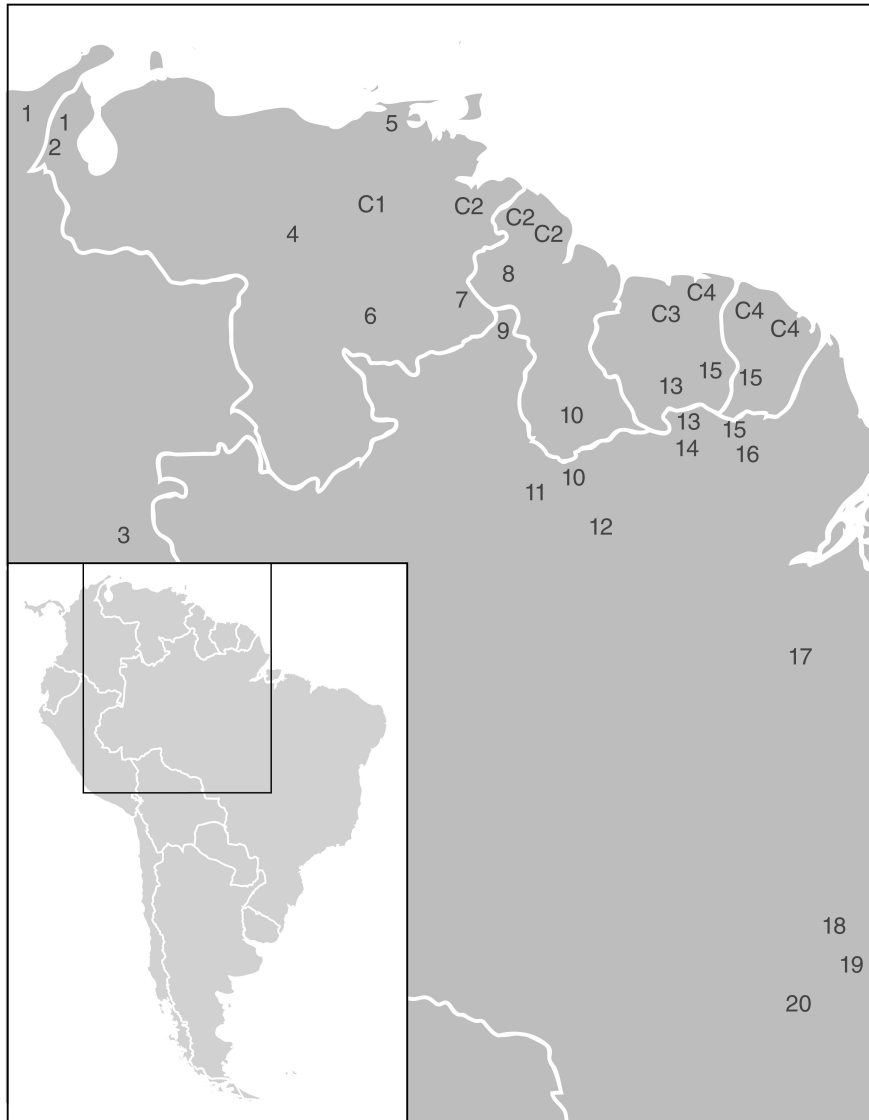
[11] Edwards 1972, 34.

[12] Meira 1999, 21. For a comparative study of the Trio, Akuriyo and Carijona languages, see Meira 2000.

[13] Carlin 2004, 2.

[14] Meira 1999, 785.

[15] Derbyshire 1985, xv.

| **4** | *The Carib language*

Map indicating the location of living Cariban languages

The above graphic is based on 'SVG blank map of South America' by the user 'canisluposarctos' from the Wikimedia Commons website, and is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution ShareAlike license version 2.5.

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Explanation of numbers and signs in the map on the opposite page[16]

Living Cariban languages
(with number of speakers indicated in parentheses): [17]

1	Yukpa (3000)	11	Waimiri-Atroari (350)
2	Japreria (100)	12	Hixkaryana (600)
3	Carijona (140)	13	Trio (2000)[18]
4	Panare (1200)	14	Kaxuyana (70)
5	Chaima (?)[19]	15	Wayana (750)
6	Yekuana (5000)	16	Apalai (420)
7	Pemon (6000)	17	Arara (200)
8	Kapon (10000)	18	Ikpeng (320)
9	Makusi (25000)	19	Kuikuro-Kalapalo (950)
10	Waiwai (2000)	20	Bakairi (950)

Carib dialects
(with number of speakers indicated in parentheses):[20]

C1	Venezuelan Carib (1000)
C2	Guyanese Carib (2000)
C3	Western Surinamese Carib (500)
C4	Eastern Surinamese and French Guianese Carib (3000)

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[16] The map is based on the maps accompanying Queixalós and Renault-Lescure (ed.) 2000, and on the information in Gordon 2005.

[17] The estimates of numbers of speakers in Brazil are based on [www.socioambiental.org/pib/portugues/quonqua/quadro.asp]. Numbers of speakers in other countries are based on Gordon 2005, unless otherwise indicated. Extinct or nearly extinct languages are not included in this list.

[18] This number is based on Meira (1999, 1) and Carlin (2004, 1).

[19] Mosonyi and González 2004 relate that the Chaima language and the Cumanagoto language are dialects of a single language which they call 'caribe costeño' (i.e. 'coastal Carib'), and that there were just two fluent speakers of the language left at the end of the 20th century, who were (and are?) involved in a 'miraculous' revival of the language.

[20] The estimates of speakers of Carib dialects is difficult to establish. The numbers given here, are my own estimates, based on the information in: van der Ziel 1997, Queixalós and Renault-Lescure 2000, Decker 2004.

| **6** | *The Carib language*

Recent studies present new views on genetic relations between some Cariban languages. Oquendo suggests that Japreria, which has been considered a dialect of Yukpa before, is now better considered a separate language.[21] Gildea suggests a new genealogy for most of the Cariban languages in Venezuela, according to which Kapon, Pemon and Makusi would form a group, to which Panare would be added to form a macro-group, which would be part of a still larger macro-group, which would include the Panare-Pemon macro-group, the Yekuana language and the extinct or nearly extinct languages Mapoyo, Yawarana, Chayma and Cumanagoto.[22] A comparison of word lists of the Cariban languages spoken south of the Amazon suggests that Arara and Ikpeng should be considered dialects of a single language, which shows most affinity with the Bakairi language, while Kuikuro-Kalapalo constitutes a second branch of the southern Cariban languages.[23]

Although researchers have suggested genetic proximity to (mostly neighbouring) languages, for a reliable classification of all Cariban languages more research is needed, preferably in the form of detailed grammars and extensive dictionaries.

1.3 Differentiation

As one might expect, considering the vast area in which Carib people are found living, the Carib language shows internal differentiation. In part, this variation is the result of contacts with various national languages causing different bodies of loanwords to be introduced into the Carib communities of the four different countries: we find French loanwords in French Guiana, Dutch or Surinamese (Sranan Tongo) loanwords in Suriname, English loanwords in Guyana, and Spanish loanwords in Venezuela, and probably Portuguese loanwords among the Caribs that speak Carib just across the French Guianese border in Brazil. Another reason for differentiation is that Carib villages have not been able to keep in touch with each other in such a large area.

In this book, four Carib dialects are discerned, and all of them are written as far as possible in a single orthography (see 2.5, where the orthography used in this book is introduced, and a list of supradialectal spellings is given). A short characterization of each dialect follows.

Venezuelan Carib   The Venezuelan Carib dialect (C1 in the map on page 6) is the most western Carib dialect. It seems that the use of this Carib dialect has disappeared in some villages and is spoken only by old people in other villages.[24] Mosonyi has written a dictionary and a study on verbal morphology.[25] Materials for

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[21] Oquendo 2004a and 2004b.

[22] Gildea 2003.

[23] Franchetto and Meira 2005.

[24] Decker 2004.

[25] Mosonyi 1978 and 1982.

learning how to read Carib were produced,[26] but apparently they can't stop the disappearance of this dialect. Some recent studies, based on information from Carib speakers originating from the same village where Mosonyi had collected much of his material, show serious deviations from Mosonyi's material.[27] A characteristic feature of Venezuelan Carib is the absence of the future suffixes *-take* and *-tan*.[28]

The following text[29] illustrates Venezuelan Carib, accompanied by a transcription into the orthography used in this book:

Venezuelan Carib	Transcription
Na'na taamuru nükaano: Aamu voorupuaarü taürüanta, kari'ñame yayyü eneepoda. Na'na anuttajkaja yayyütaaroma tüwaarükon	*Nàna tamuru kynkanon:*[30] *Amu worupary tauran ta, karìna me iwairy enepojan. Nàna anutàkàpa iwairy taro man tuwarykon,*

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[26] Medina Tamanaico and Mosonyi 1982, de Morón 1989, Seijas, H. e.a. 1995.

[27] Examples of differences between the verbal morphology described in Mosonyi 1982 and more recent studies are: the prefix *a(j)-* indicating an indirect object instead of a direct object (Romero-Figeroa 2000 4: *wòmy ajatokyi* 'he/she sewed you a piece of clothing'), the combination of middle prefixes not only with middle verbs, but with intransitive verbs (a phenomenon described and called 'fluid intransitivity' in Álvarez 1999a) or the inconsistent use of other prefixes like *ni-* (absent in *wykyryjan eporyi* 'he/she met (some) men', but present in *keere nipikai* 'he/she peeled the cassava tubers'; see examples 4a and 5a in Álvarez 2006) or *ani-* (present in *Juan anenèpa nèi* 'he/she didn't see Juan', but absent in *arepa epemàpa mèi* 'you didn't buy bread'; see examples 2b and 3b in Álvarez 2006).

A more recent description of Venezuelan Carib in which both Mosonyi brothers were involved is Mosonyi, Mosonyi and Medina Tamanaico 2000. In this publication, the endangerment of the Carib language in Venezuela, noticeable in recent publications by others, cannot be recognized in the Carib language material, since the authors maintain the phonological and morphological analysis presented in Mosonyi 1978 and 1982 and the sample texts are taken from a 1982 publication (Medina Tamanaico and Mosonyi 1982). However, the authors recognize the decline of the Carib language in their statement that a lack of motivation to speak the Carib language is quite common among young people (p. 399).

[28] A periphrastic construction is used instead. For example, *senetake* 'I'll see him/her/it' is expressed in Venezuelan Carib by *enery ỳwa man* 'he/she/it is for me to see', i.e. 'I'll see him/her/it'. This construction may also occur in the other dialects, where, however, it means 'I have to see him/her/it' rather than 'I'll see him/her/it'.

[29] Morón de G. 1989 31.

[30] In Surinamese Carib, the word *kynkanon* ('he says') is often pronounced as not much more than [(ŋ)gano(ŋ)] when it is not sentence initial. This fact supports the interpretation of the Venezuelan Carib word *nükaano* here as the allegation form *kynkano(n)*, instead of the uncertainty form *nykano(n)*. Note that the uncertainty form is appropriate for a question, but inappropriate for an allegation (see 2.10.5).

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tüshiññarükkon, tüwaarerükkon   *tysinarykon, tywarerykon*
iyyomeero tunuuputüürükon.   *iro me ro tynuputyrykon.*

[Translation: Our grandfather says: When someone speaks his own language, he shows he is Carib. It is not inevitable that we lose our way of dancing, our music, our songs and our knowledge.]

Guyanese Carib   The Guyanese Carib dialect (C2 in the map on page 6) is spoken by several thousands of Caribs living in the Barama river area in Guyana near the Venezuelan border and by maybe a thousand Caribs across the border in Venezuela. Much nearer to the capital Georgetown, in the Pomeroon river area, in a place called Manawarin, Carib seems to be spoken only by old people. Younger people in Manawarin understand Carib, but don't speak it. I was told by the village chief that there were living some 2000 Caribs in the marshy Manawarin area.[31] There is not much information available on Guyanese Carib. An anthropological study of the Barama river Caribs contains some 400 words and a few dozen phrases.[32] I made some tape recordings during my field trip to Guyana in 2000, both of Pomeroon river Carib and of Barama river Carib. I will assume that all Guyanese Carib, including the Caribs living in Venezuela near the Guyanese border, speak the same dialect, but more research may very well result in the discovery of some dialectal differences between Carib spoken in the Barama river area and Carib spoken in the Pomeroon river area. I don't know of a single characteristic feature of Guyanese Carib, but the following combination of features may characterize it: Guyanese Carib agrees with Venezuelan Carib, differing from western and eastern Surinamese Carib, in, among other things, using *-nan* instead of *-namon* as the plural form of the suffix *-nen* (which creates an agent nominalization of a transitive verb; see 2.16.1), but it differs from Venezuelan Carib in still using future forms, like eastern and western Surinamese Carib, while Venezuelan Carib has lost them, using instead a periphrastic construction.[33]

The following phrases[34] illustrate Guyanese Carib, accompanied by a transcription into the orthography used in this book:

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[31] I made a field trip of just one week to Manawarin in 2000. Just after this trip, I met some Caribs from the Barama river area in Georgetown, and I remember hearing from Janette Forte, an anthropologist and specialist on Amerindian affairs in Guyana, that there may be as many as 3000 Caribs living in the Barama area near the Venezuelan border alone.

[32] Gillin 1936.

[33] The following words which occur several times in my Manawarin tape recordings, but are unknown in western and eastern Surinamese Carib and as yet unattested in Venezuelan Carib, may be unique to Guyanese Carib: *sàmaron* 'formerly', *kàpare* 'furthermore', *hero* 'truly' (?) and *kànen* 'to continue my story'.

[34] Gillin 1936 255, 256, 259, 260.

Guyanese Carib	Transcription
au kiedi shitche.	*awu kijere sikai.*
amoro arepa ekeshyo.	*amoro arepa ekeiko.*
mokarung sambura amurikatong.	*mòkaron sampura morykaton.* [35]
amoro penyari motaki	*amoro pai `nare mòtake,*
awopusiata. moropo	*awopỳse ajàta. moro po*
atandu moko.	*atantỳmoko.*

[Translation: I have dug cassava. you should cook cassava. they beat the drum. perhaps you will come, if you want to. sit down there.]

Western Surinamese Carib   The western Surinamese Carib dialect (C3 in the map on page 6) is the dialect of the Caribs living in around ten villages on the Wayambo, Coppename, Saramacca and Suriname rivers in the central coastal area of Suriname. These Caribs are called *Murato* 'mulatto' by the eastern Surinamese Caribs, who consider them to be of mixed descent (having intermingled with the maroon population). Although there may be as many as 2000 western Surinamese Caribs, the shift to the Surinamese language (Sranan Tongo) and Dutch is evident, and the actual number of speakers may be no more than a few hundred. The western Surinamese variant of Carib has been described in much detail by Hoff, based on field work in the late 1950's and 1960's and, in later years, on discussions with a western Surinamese Carib informant living in the Netherlands.[36] A single characteristic feature of western Surinamese Carib is the use of the pronoun *àna* instead of *nàna* for 'he/she/it/they and I'.

The following text fragment[37] illustrates western Surinamese Carib, accompanied by a transcription into the orthography used in this book:

Western Surinamese Carib	Transcription
'oʔmáːko kaːe roʔmuñ' kïŋgaːno	*òmàko kaje ròmun' kynkano*
moxko pïyei. 'iʔmaːtîːpa ayaxta roʔmuñ,	*mòko pyjai. ìmatỳpa ajàta ròmun,*
oːpatoro ayeːnuru siʔmotáːke,	*opatoro ajenuru sìmotake,*
(oː)poːt(ïx)pa noːr(o) aweixtóːme.	*òpotỳpa noro awaitòme.*
ataːmurú enuːru meneːyañ, niʔmóːpo	*atamuru enuru menejan? ynìmòpo*
ro xkuru moːro, ataːmur(u) enuːru'	*ro `kuru moro, atamuru enuru'*

---

[35] I transcribe *amurikatong* as *morykaton*, since I interpret the *u* and *i* as representants of sounds that are written as *o* in *y* in my orthography, and I take the initial *a*, which is unattested in the other dialects, as the result of an erroneous interpretation (a word final *a* and a following word initial *a* would normally be pronounced as a single vowel).

[36] Hoff 1961, 1962, 1968, 1978, 1986, 1990, 1995 and 1997.

[37] Hoff 1968 324.

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[Translation: 'stop it, I tell you!' says the shaman. 'if you don't stop it, I'll break both of your eyes, so you won't be able to see anymore. do you see your grandfather's eye? I have broken it, that eye of your grandfather's, as you probably know.']

Eastern Surinamese Carib   The eastern Surinamese Carib dialect (C4 in the map on page 6) is found in the Carib villages on the Surinamese bank of the Maroni river, in some villages in western and central French Guiana, and among the Caribs living across the French Guianese border in Brazil. Speakers of eastern Surinamese Carib call themselves *Tyrèwuju*, which purportedly means 'real, unmixed Caribs'. In contrast to western Surinamese Carib, eastern Surinamese Carib is still spoken by young and old in many villages. In French Guiana, the main researcher of Carib is Renault-Lescure, who has written a doctoral thesis on the evolution of the Carib lexicon, several articles on various elements of the Carib language, and she has published some Carib texts.[38] That the original Carib language is in danger of disappearing seems to be indicated by a mixture of French and Carib that is spoken by Carib school children in French Guiana.[39] There is no literature on the Carib dialect in Brazil, but I will assume that it is part of the eastern Surinamese Carib dialect, insofar as it is still spoken. In Suriname, SIL has published a series of texts for stimulating reading Carib,[40] and a Carib New Testament (in the production of which I also have been involved) was published by the Surinamese Bible Society in 2003. I myself have lived and worked in Suriname from 1993 to 2002, studying the Carib language in Galibi, the main Surinamese village where eastern Surinamese Carib is spoken.

The following text fragment[41] illustrates eastern Surinamese Carib, accompanied by a transcription into the orthography used in this book:

Eastern Surinamese Carib	Transcription
Kulukulu tɨka'se i'wa man, mo'ko inon 'wa kulukulu tɨka'se man. Kinika'san no, kunu'kuposan mo'ko tɨpɨtɨ 'wa. Tonomɨ anokatopo molo man. Iwala tɨwaiye man. Tɨkamɨma te i'wa man, mo'ko inon 'wa tɨkamɨma man molo kulukulu. 'Elome te kulu', ɨnkano, 'u'kuko se!'	*Kurukuru tykàse ìwa man, mòko ino `wa kurukuru tykàse man. Kynikàsan ro, kynùkupòsan mòko typyty `wa. Tonomy anokatopo moro man. Iwara tywaije man. Tykapỳma te ìwa man, mòko ino `wa tykapỳma man moro kurukuru. 'Erome te `kuru' kynkano ùkuko se!'*

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[38] Renault-Lescure 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1986(a), 1986(b), 1999, 2002a, 2002b, 2004, , and Renaul-Lescure a.o. 1987.

[39] Alby 2001.

[40] See the *Bibliography of the Summer Institute of Linguistics in Suriname 2001*, p. 9-11.

[41] Gipet-Tiouka, Tiouka and Renault-Lescure (ed.) 1999.

[Translation: He made a basket, the husband made a basket. He made it, and repeatedly checked if his wife would fit in it. It was a basket for smoking meat. That's what he did. He finished it, the husband finished the basket. 'Come on,' he said, 'see if you fit in it!']

Although there is a dialectal differentiation within the Carib language, its unity seems to be cherished by Caribs in all dialectal regions[42] and affirmed by Caribs who have had the opportunity to visit a dialect region that is far from their own, witnessing to mutual intelligibility.

1.4   Previous research

The oldest Carib language materials can be found in documents dating from the mid-seventeenth century. The Jesuit missionary Pelleprat wrote an account of his experiences in Venezuela from 1653 to 1654, which was published in 1655 and included a 30-page introduction to the Carib language.[43] Two reports of efforts to establish a colony in what is now French Guiana, one in the 1640's by Boyer[44] and one in the 1650's by Biet,[45] include some Carib grammar notes and a short word list. Although the Carib language data in the reports by Boyer and Biet seem to reflect a Carib based pidgin language rather than the Carib language itself,[46] Carib words and phrases in all three mid-seventeenth documents show that Carib morphology has hardly changed in the past few centuries. A remarkable phonetic difference between seventeenth-century Carib and present-day Carib is that the perseverance of the pronunciation of an /i/ till after the next consonant or consonant cluster, which is quite general today, seems to have been absent in the seventeenth century.[47] The following words taken from Pelleprat's report may illustrate the phonemic and morphological similarity of seventeenth-century and present-day Carib:

Pelleprat	present-day Carib	morphemic analysis
sícassa 'I make it'	*sikàsa*	*si-kapy-ja*
mícassa 'you make it'	*mikàsa*	*mi-kapy-ja*

---

[42] Cf. Mosonyi and González 2004.

[43] Pelleprat 1655 [1971].

[44] Boyer 1654.

[45] Biet 1664.

[46] Taylor and Hoff 1980.

[47] As noted by Renault-Lescure 1981 61-67.

anicabouipaoua	*anikapỳpa wa*	*ani-kapy-`pa w-(w)a*
'I don't make it'		
sónoui	*sonoi*	*si-ono-i*
'I have eaten it'		
mónoui	*monoi*	*mi-ono-i*
'you have eaten it'		
anonópaoua	*anonòpa wa*	*ani-ono-`pa w-(w)a*
'I don't eat it'		
anabópaico	*anapòpa aiko*	*ani-apo-`pa (w)ai-ko*
'don't touch it'		
moco bouroulourebo	*mòko pyrorory po*	*mòko pyroro-ry po*
'on his grounds'		

In the eighteenth century, de la Salle de l'Estaing reorganized the seventeenth-century Carib language materials into a dictionary, consisting of a French – Carib part and a Carib – French part, but apart from that he didn't shed much more light on the Carib language.

In the nineteenth century, comparative research of languages became a matter of interest, and, at the end of the century, Adam used the literature just mentioned as part of an effort to compare elements of Cariban languages.[48] He proved himself an intelligent observer, but he didn't add original Carib language material to what was already known. A Dutch researcher, and a keen observer as well, de Goeje, did expand Adam's work with original data and more recent literature, and his comparative work was published in 1909, and included a Carib grammar and word list.[49]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, from 1914 to 1926, the Dutch missionary Ahlbrinck studied the Carib language, travelling to and staying for some time in all the Carib villages of Suriname. The result was a huge 'encyclopedia', which for the most part is a Carib – Dutch lexicon (of almost 500 pages).[50] In this lexicon, one can find not just a lot of language data, but also a lot of anthropological and ethnographic material. Ahlbrink's understanding of the phonology of the Carib language, however, is poor. For example, he writes a single high mid vowel (*y* in the

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[48] Adam 1893.

[49] De Goeje 1909, 90-180. More comparative research on languages of the Cariban language family, as well as grammars of the Wayana and Akuriyo ('Triometesem', i.e. '(people) who are like Trio (people)') language were later published in: de Goeje 1946.

[50] Ahlbrinck 1931.

orthography used in this book) in at least 10 different ways (*ë, e, ï, i, ü, u, ui, il, ïl,* and *uil*), as can be seen in the following examples:

Ahlbrinck	this book	meaning
kënoro	*kynoro*	'scarlet macaw'
pe'ito	*pyìto*	'disappoint'
kïto	*kyto*	'bind'
ilri	*yry*	'give'
püjei	*pyjai*	'shaman'
munu	*mynu*	'blood'
puire	*pyre*	'upright'
mil	*my*	'bind'
purïlwa	*pyrywa*	'arrow'
puilta	*pyta*	'get a wife, get married'

The first description of the Carib language by a professional linguist is Hoff's PhD dissertation *The Carib language*, which contains a detailed phonology, morphonology, and morphology as well as a number of texts and a word index.[51] Hoff's description is based on field work in the 1950's among the western Surinamese Caribs (mainly some 200 Caribs living in Corneliskondre, a village on the Wayombo river in western Suriname). For a long time, Hoff's description remained the best grammar published on any of the Cariban languages.[52] Since the publication of his dissertation, Hoff has written several insightful articles on details of the western Surinamese Carib dialect.[53]

Since the publication of Hoff's dissertation, Carib studies continued to be mostly restricted to the individual countries where scholars were most 'at home'. Thus, the French scholar Renault-Lescure wrote her 1981 PhD dissertation on the evolution of the Carib lexicon in French Guiana, as well as a number of articles on details of French Guianese Carib and transcriptions of French Guianese Carib stories.[54] Venezuelan linguists wrote on Venezuelan Carib: Mosonyi's 1978 dictionary and 1982

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[51] Hoff 1968.

[52] Only recently two grammars of a Cariban language have been written that are comparable in thoroughness and comprehensiveness: the Trio grammars by Meira and Carlin (Meira 1999 and Carlin 2004).

[53] Hoff 1978, 1986, 1990 and 1995.

[54] Renault-Lescure 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1986a, 1986b, 1999, 2002a, 2002b, 2003, and Renault-Lescure a.o. 1987.

verbal morphology of Venezuelan Carib were followed by detail studies by several other scholars writing in the late 1990's and the beginning of the 21st century.[55]

Comparative research in the Cariban language family has been most actively pursued by the American linguist Gildea, who wrote a book and a number of articles on the verbal system in Cariban languages, including subjects like ergativity, inversion, and reanalysis of verbal constructions.[56] One of his articles, relying mainly on Hoff's data, expressly discusses the verbal system of the Carib language in Suriname, as compared to other Cariban languages.[57] Some other comparative studies have been already mentioned in the introduction to the Cariban language family (see 1.2 Affiliation).

Although a lot has been written, in the last few decades, on individual Cariban languages and on comparative features of Cariban languages,[58] research in this language family would still benefit from more reliable, comprehensive grammars and dictionaries of individual languages.

1.5   New in this book

The previous section (i.e. 1.4) contains an overview of Carib language research. This section, though, aims at presenting the most important new facts and insights this book contains, as well as statements on the position this book takes in some current controversies.

eastern Surinamese Carib   First of all, whereas Renault-Lescure studied the Carib language in French Guiana, and Hoff described western Surinamese Carib, the information in this book is mostly based on the eastern Surinamese variant of Carib, and in particular the Carib language as spoken in Galibi, a Surinamese Carib village that has been able to keep its ancient culture and language alive more than others, due to various factors. It is in Galibi that I studied the language, spending my days alternately there and in the Surinamese capital Paramaribo, between 1994 and 2002, excluding a one year interval in 1996/1997. Even in Paramaribo, I had the opportunity to study Carib, since my wife is a native speaker of Carib from Galibi and relatives of hers or other Carib visitors often came to our house to stay with us for a few days. My involvement in the production of a Carib translation of the New Testament also gave me lots of opportunities to learn more of the (Surinamese) Carib language.

phonological analysis   The phonological analysis in this book differs from previous studies. It differs from Hoff who distinguishes 35 phonemes for western

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[55] Mosonyi 1978 and 1982, Socorro Sánchez 1998, Romero-Figueroa 2000a and 2000b, Beria 2000, 2001 and 2004, Beria and Granados 2003, Álvarez 1998a, 1998b, 1999a, 1999b, 2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2006.

[56] Gildea 1989, 1993a, 1993b, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2003.

[57] Gildea 1994.

[58] For lots of references, see Fabre 2005.

Surinamese Carib,[59] from Renault-Lescure who distinguishes 34 or 35 phonemes for French Guianese Carib,[60] and from Mosonyi, who distinguishes 22 phonemes for Venezuelan Carib.[61] And while the phonemes analyzed in this book are the same as the 15 phonemes of Álvarez, who studied the same Carib variant as Mosonyi did,[62] the analysis of coda phones is different. Both Álvarez and I consider coda nasals to be allophonic (and I would add: in coda nasals, the opposition between /m/ and /n/ is neutralized), but unlike Álvarez, who considers all non-nasal coda phones non-phonemic insertions based on the need of mora preservation, I recognize as phonemic (i.e. as underspecified allophones of syllable initial non-nasal consonant phonemes) all non-nasal coda phones that may be considered debuccalizations of reduced syllables.

orthography   Usually, a written representation of a language reflects to a large extent the linguistic expertise of the original designer or designers. For the Carib language, linguists have been involved in the design of an orthography in three countries. In Venezuela, the current orthography, used in Carib school materials as well as scientific publications, shows the influence of the two linguists, and brothers, Jorge C. Mosonyi and Emilio E. Mosonyi: it includes the writing of stress in various ways (double vowels, double consonants, insertion of *j*) and symbols for allophones or phoneme combinations (*ch ' v d sh j ñ w y*). In French Guiana, the provisional orthography that was adopted in 1997 in an assembly of French Guianese Caribs[63] bears the marks of the French linguist Renault-Lescure: it includes the signs *ɨ* and *l*, which don't occur in Carib orthographies in the other countries, but were already used by Renault-Lescure in her 1981 dissertation. In Suriname, the influence of the Dutch linguist Hoff is recognizable in a 1986 report of an orthography committee: its list of phonemes agrees with Hoff's analysis, except that two nasal phonemes and all long vowels in Hoff's analysis are now excluded, and two new diphthongs (/eu/ and /ou/) are included.[64]

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[59] Hoff 1968 31: /p t k b d g m n ñ ŋ w y r s x ʔ h a aː e eː o oː i iː ï ïː u uː au ai ei oi ïi ui/. Hoff symbolizes the third nasal as a combination of ŋ and a circumflex (which combination I can't reproduce, so I will use ñ instead), and states that its pronunciation is the same as the palatalized *n* which occurs syllable initially following an *i*.

[60] Renault-Lescure 1981 55 and 57: /p t k ʔ b d g m n ŋ (f) s x h w y l a aː e eː o oː i iː ɨ ɨː u uː au ai ei oi ɨi ui/.

[61] Mosonyi 1982 3: /p t ch k ' v d s sh j m n ñ r w y a e i o ü u/. This phoneme inventory has been maintained in a more recent publication: Mosonyi, Mosonyi and Medina Tamanaico 2000.

[62] Álvarez 2003: /p t k s m n r w y a e i o ü u/.

[63] See Renault-Lescure, Fereira and Tiouka 2002 and the section on the Carib language and orthography in Collomb and Tiouka 2000 125-137.

[64] Aluma a.o. 1986: /p t k b d g m n w j r s ʔ h a e o i y u au ai ei oi yi ui eu ou/.

| **16** | *The Carib language*

Since the orthography in this book is based on a phonological analysis that differs from the analyses by the Mosonyis, Renault-Lescure and Hoff, and since it strives to be usable for all Carib dialects (which means it avoids the writing of allophones and allomorphs, which may be dialect specific), it differs from past orthographies designed for the Carib language. It uses 15 symbols for 15 recognized phonemes, and writes the two coda allophones as *n* (or *m* preceding /p/) and a grave accent.[65] For the high central vowel the sixth vowel symbol of the Roman alphabet is used (in accordance with Surinamese Carib publications), instead of an adaptation of one of the other vowel symbols (like *ü* in Venezuela or *ɨ* in French Guiana, which symbols might lead to the wrong conclusion that they are, somehow, variants of *u* and *i*, instead of being a vowel in its own right). Using *y* as a vowel symbol resulted in using *j* as a consonant symbol instead of the consonantal *y* which is used in Venezuela and French Guiana.

final vowel prefixes   An observation that to my knowledge has not been made before, is that Carib (and Cariban) prefixes tend to end in a vowel, and suffixes tend to start with a consonant. The list of affixes in this book contains only three prefixes that are not written with a final vowel: the middle prefixes *w-* 'I', *m-* 'you' and *kyt-* 'you and I'. Since, however, these three prefixes always precede vowel initial morphemes, there is no proof that they do not as well end in a vowel, that has been elided preceding the next vowel initial morpheme. Thus, this book questions the appropriateness of analyzing Carib prefixes as ending in a consonant.[66]

syllable reduction   Syllable reduction, especially the reduction of verb stem final syllables preceding suffixes, is a well-known phenomenon in the Cariban language family.[67] In this book,[68] attention is also given to the reduction of word stem initial syllable reduction following prefixation (like *òtary* from *a-pyta-ry* 'your foot sole'). Moreover, this book contains the description of something that to my knowledge has not been described before: the reduction of two contiguous CV syllables in such a way that the first vowel disappears, and the second consonant reduces to a syllable coda preceding the first consonant (like *ajàkary* from *a-akuwa-ry* 'your spirit').

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[65] Some reasons for using an accent grave are mentioned in 2.5.8.

[66] Examples in the literature: *j-* for *y-*, *aj-* for *a-*, *an-* for *ani-*, *t-* for *ty-*, etc. Note that a glide is usually inserted between single vowel prefixes and vowel initial morphemes: *yjainary* (from *y-aina-ry*) 'my hand', *ajainary* (from *a-aina-ry*) 'your hand'. Only the prefix *i-* is normally, but not always, completely elided: *ainary* (from *i-aina-ry*) 'his/her hand', but also *ijonkairy* (from *i-onkai-ry*) 'his/her comb'.

[67] See Gildea 1995 for comparative data on the reduction of verb final syllables.

[68] See the section on syllable reduction in 2.3.1.

the prefix ni-   Usually, the prefix *ni-* which appears preceding verbal stems is interpreted as a pronominal prefix. In morphological analyses its meaning is indicated by means of abbreviations representing some kind of a third person.[69] Without success, Gildea tries to give *ni-* a place in various sets of pronominal prefixes.[70] In this book, the prefix *ni-* is interpreted as a prefix that, instead of indicating one or two third persons, indicates that no morpheme is to be interpreted as the object of the verb to which it is attached, whether the word which contains it is a finite form (see 2.10.4) or an infinite form (see 2.10.12). This nominative-accusative switch function of *ni-* explains why it can't be enlisted among the ergative or absolutive (or, in Gildea's terminology: 'direct' or 'inverse') pronominal prefixes.

past irreal tense   In earlier descriptions of Carib morphology, there is only one morpheme indicating irreality in a finite verb form: *-ry*. In this book, a new morpheme (or a new combination of two morphemes; see 2.10.9) *-ryine* 'past irreality' is distinguished from the morpheme *-ry* 'present irreality'.

split intransitivity   In the literature on Cariban languages, there has been some discussion about split intransitivity, i.e. the phenomenon that there are, besides transitive verbs, two classes of intransitive verbs: those that combine with equivalents of the Carib pronominal prefixes *y-* '1', *a-* 'you' and *ky-* 'you and I', and those that combine with equivalents of the Carib pronominal prefixes *w-* 'I', *m-* 'you' and *kyt-* 'you and I'. It has been duly noted that the second series of prefixes also occurs with transitive verb stems that have become 'detransitivized' by the addition of some form, or transformation, of a prefix that is related to the Carib reflexive pronominal prefix *ase-* 'oneself, each other'. This book describes the intransitive verbs that combine with the equivalents of *w-*, *m-* and *kyt-* as 'middle verbs' and the 'detransitivized' forms of transitive verbs as 'middle forms' of a transitive verb, in accordance with the following facts: (a) 'middle voice' is quite established as a term that covers both intransitive and reflexive meanings, and (b) the occurrence – in a single language – of both 'middle forms' that can be assigned to a transitive verb

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[69] For the Carib language: Renault-Lescure 2002a (277: '3P', but 279: '3A'), Romero-Figueroa 2000b (3: '3sABS' but also '3sS'), Beria 2001 (40: '3sABS') and 2004 (2: '3/3'), Àlvarez 2005 (example 4b: '3', example 5a: '3/3'), Hoff 1995a (351: both '3/3' and '3'). For related languages: Waiwai (Hawkins 1998 26: '3S'), Trio (Meira 1999 287: '3AO', but 292: '3S'), Aparai (Koehn and Koehn 1990 34: '3').

[70] Gildea (1994 200), who distinguishes *ni-* '3A3O', occurring with transitive verbs, from *ni-* '3S', occurring on intransitive verbs, states that *ni-* '3A3O' neither fits in with the direct pronominal prefixes (i.e. *si-* '1A', *mi-* '2A' and *kysi-* '1+2A') nor with the inverse pronominal prefixes (i.e. *y-* '1', *a-* '2' and *ky-* '1+2').

and 'middle forms' that cannot, is also a familiar phenomenon (e.g. in Greek and Latin).[71]

adjectives Traditionally, a class of adjectives has been analyzed for the Carib language. The view of Hoff and Renault-Lescure is that there is a class of adjectives, which may be nominalized by suffixation with (some allomorph of) *-no*.[72] Mosonyi, however, considers such nominalizations of adjectives to be attributive forms of (predicative) adjectives.[73] More recently, Álvarez questioned the existence of Carib adjectives, calling them adverbs which may be nominalized.[74] The position taken in this book agrees with Mosonyi's view: the majority of Carib adjective stems are used predicatively, and suffixation with (some form of) the suffix *-no* results in forms that are used attributively.[75]

causative suffixes In his description of causative suffixes, Hoff makes a distinction between *-po* (with an alternant *-nopo* suffixed to final *a* verb stems, and an alternant *-ka* suffixed to verb stems showing final syllable reduction), and *-nopy*. In Hoff's analysis, the first suffix results in a meaning 'make someone perform what the verb stem indicates' and the second one in a meaning 'by means of active intervention or influence make someone perform what the verb stem indicates'.[76] This book offers a different analysis: intransitive verbs, which all end in either *a* or *y*, may be transitivized by suffixation with *-nopy* if they end in *a* and with *-ka* if they end in *y* (see 2.10.6), and the suffix *-po* is combined with transitive verbs, adding the element 'indirectly' to the transitivity of the verb. The suffix *-nopo* is not a separate suffix, but a combination of *-nopy* and *-po*, and is written, according to the orthography in this book, as *-nòpo* (the grave accent representing the remnant of a syllable reduction).

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[71] In both Indo-European languages, like Greek and Latin, and Cariban languages, 'middle verbs' are a minority. The dictionary part of this book contains more than 1300 transitive verb entries, a little more than 400 intransitive verbs and less than two dozen middle verbs, some of which can be recognized as irregular transformations of transitive or intransitive verbs (see 2.10.1).

[72] Hoff 1968 259-263, Renault-Lescure 1981 95-96.

[73] Mosonyi 1978 vi.

[74] Álvarez and Socorro 1998b. The view of Álvarez and Socorro (reiterated in Álvarez 2006) agrees with views presented in grammars of the related languages Hixkaryana (Derbyshire 1985 234-235) and Trio (Meira 1999 146 and Carlin 2004 384).

[75] In this book, a small class of words that resembles adjectives in that they seem to designate qualities are here classified as nouns because some of their characteristics seem to be noun characteristics (see 2.8.3: Adjectival nouns).

[76] Hoff 1968 126-127.

the prefixes i- en ty-   Although Hoff states and exemplifies that the suffix -*to* 'past habitual' does not combine with a third person prefix in a finite verb form, he does exemplify the combination of the same -*to* and the third person prefix *ty-* in what he considers to be infinite verb forms.[77] According to our information, not only the anaphoric pronominal prefix *ty-* is used in past habitual forms that may be interpreted as finite, but another third person prefix, *i-*, as well. Thus, this book contains the first description of the third person prefixes *i-* and *ty-* being used in finite verb forms.

dictionary   As the title of this book indicates, part of it is a dictionary, which contains several unique features. (1) Although it is foremost a dictionary of the eastern Surinamese dialect, it includes information on the occurrence of words in the other three Carib dialects recognized in this book, as far as could be ascertained (see 3.4). (2) Second, since skimming through the existing literature yielded a database of some 3500 words and since the dictionary now contains some 6500 entries, this dictionary contains some 3000 words that may have never been written down before. (3) Skimming through a selection of the literature on related languages yielded lots of cognates for the words listed in the dictionary, and they are duly indicated (see 3.6). (4) Whenever there is dialectal evidence or evidence in related languages which suggests that a Carib word in the dictionary used to be different or may have been different in the past, the suggested original form is indicated (see 3.5). (5) When it is clear that a word in the dictionary is polymorphemic, its constituting morphemes are indicated (see 3.5).

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[77] Hoff 1968 172 and 199.