

Sarcee is an Athapaskan language spoken on a reserve at the western limits of Calgary, Alberta. The language is, unfortunately, dying; Sarcee is spoken with reasonable competence by about 15 speakers aged 40-60, and around 20 elders (all over 60). How Sarcee is related genetically or otherwise to other Athapaskan languages is still far from clear, although its affinity to Beaver has been suggested by several researchers (Cook 1984).

This recording is of the same male speaker as is in R to R "Sarcee" and DAT A1 "Linguistics 421 W95 Languages #2". At the time of this recording he was 48.

### Sarcee Consonants:

Sarcee exhibits a large and complex consonant inventory, most of which is exemplified in this recording. Plosives come in three classes: plain lenis, aspirated, and ejective or glottalized.

Lenis		d	dz	dʒ	dl	g	
Aspirated		t <sup>h</sup>	ts <sup>h</sup>	tʃ <sup>h</sup>	tʰ	k <sup>h</sup>	
Ejective		t'	ts'	tʃ'	tʰ'	k'	ʔ
Fricatives			s	ʃ	ʈ	x	h
			z	ʒ	l	ɣ	
Sonorants	m	n		j		w	

[l] and [ʈ] are classified here as lateral fricatives rather than liquids. This classification is justifiable on the basis of the phonological rules to which all the fricatives are subject (Cook 1984).

It has been a common practice for Athapaskan linguists to use such symbols as d, dz, g, etc. for plain (unaspirated, unvoiced, unglottalized) stops and affricates (Cook 1984). Those who are not familiar with this practice should not misunderstand the phonetic properties these symbols represent here.

### Sarcee Vowels and Tones:

There are only four vowel phonemes, two high and two low. These exhibit considerable phonetic variation, however, and it is often difficult to be sure which vowel is being spoken. Any of three level tones may be applied to the vowels, and the vowels also show phonemic lengthening, or gemination.

Four phonemes	i	u
	a	ɑ

Three tones                      low [˩]              mid [˥]              high [˨˩]

The vowels show lengthening which is contrastive. The phonetic quality of a long vowel may vary depending on the tones it carries. Specifically, a long vowel with two different tones (contour tone) will be realized as [V:]. A long vowel with identical tones will be realized as an overlong vowel, shown phonetically as [V:V] (Cook 1971). This phonetic variation is quickly disappearing in modern speech, and the recorded examples designed to illustrate the effect do not consistently do so. In the word lists that follow, the long vowels are written as geminates (two vowel symbols) in order to show the tone carried by each.

Sapir's recognition of three level tones has never been challenged, nor has there been a thorough argument to establish their phonemic status (Cook 1984). We here assume that there are in fact three tones, but our speaker does not consistently employ them. Sarcee is usually characterized as having a low-marked tone system (Cook 1984).

### I. Sarcee Prayer

### II. Spontaneous Speech

Spontaneous speech is interspersed with the word list; it occurs after items 41 & 81

### III. Word List

- |     |                              |
|-----|------------------------------|
| 1.  | 'all'                        |
| 2.  | 'and'                        |
| 3.  | 'ashes'                      |
| 4.  | 'at ground level'            |
| 5.  | 'back'                       |
| 6.  | 'it is bad'                  |
| 7.  | 'bark'                       |
| 8.  | 'because'                    |
| 9.  | 'belly'                      |
| 10. | 'big'                        |
| 11. | 'bird'                       |
| 12. | 'I am biting it'             |
| 13. | 'you are biting it'          |
| 14. | 'he / she / it is biting it' |
| 15. | 'you and I are biting it'    |
| 16. | 'you guys are biting it'     |
| 17. | 'they are biting it'         |
| 18. | 'someone is biting it'       |

19. 'I have bitten it'
20. 'you have bitten it'
21. 'he / she / it has bitten it'
22. 'you and I have bitten it'
23. 'you guys have bitten it'
24. 'they have bitten it'
25. 'someone has bitten it'
26. 'it is black'
27. 'bood'
28. 'I am blowing it'
29. 'you are blowing it'
30. 'he / she / it is blowing it'
31. 'you and I are blowing it'
32. 'you guys are blowing it'
33. 'they are blowing it'
34. 'someone is blowing it'
35. 'I have blown it'
36. 'you have blown it'
37. 'he / she / it has blown it'
38. 'you and I have blown it'
39. 'you guys have blown it'
40. 'they have blown it'
41. 'someone has blown it'
42. 'bone'
43. 'he / she / it is breathing'
44. 'he / she / it has breathed'
45. 'it is burning'
46. 'it has burned'
47. 'children'
48. 'cloud'
49. 'it is cold'
50. 'it was cold'
51. 'he / she / it is coming'
52. 'he / she / it has come'
53. 'he / she / it is counting'
54. 'he / she / it has counted'
55. 'he / she / it is cutting'
56. 'he / she / it has cut it'
57. 'day'
- 58a. 'he / she / it is dying' (human)
- 58b. 'he / she / it is dying' (animal)
- 59a. 'he / she / it has died' (human)
- 59b. 'he / she / it has died' (animal)
60. 'he / she / it is digging'
61. 'he / she / it has dug'
62. 'it is dirty'
63. 'dog' (2 words)
62. 'he / she / it is drinking'
63. 'he / she / it has drank'

64. 'it is dry'
65. 'it is dull'
66. 'dust'
67. 'ear'
68. 'earth'
69. 'he / she / it is eating'
70. 'he / she / it has eaten'
71. 'egg'
72. 'eye'
73. 'autumn'
74. 'far'
75. 'fat / grease'
76. 'father'
77. 'fear'
78. 'feather'
79. 'few'
80. 'he / she / it is fighting'
81. 'he / she / it has fought'
82. 'fire'
83. 'fish'
84. 'five'
85. 'it is floating'
86. 'it has floated'
87. 'it is flowing'
88. 'it has flowed'
89. 'flower'
90. 'fly'
91. 'it is foggy'
92. 'foot'
93. 'four'
94. 'he / she / it is freezing'
95. 'he / she / it has frozen'
96. 'I am giving it to him'
97. 'you are giving it to him'
98. 'he / she / it is giving it to him'
99. 'you and I are giving it to him'
100. 'you guys are giving it to him'
101. 'they are giving it to him'
102. 'someone is giving it to him'
103. 'I have given it to him'
104. 'you have given it to him'
105. 'he / she / it has given it to him'
106. 'you and I have given it to him'
107. 'you guys have given it to him'
108. 'they have given it to him'
109. 'someone has given it to him'
110. 'it is good'
111. 'grass'
112. 'green'

113.	'guts'
114.	'hair'
115.	'hand'
116.	'he / she / it is hearing'
117.	'he / she / it has heard'
118.	'head'
119.	'it is heavy'
120.	'here'
121.	'he / she / it is hitting it'
122.	'he / she / it has hit it'
123.	'he / she / it is holding him'
124.	'he / she / it has held him'
125.	'how'
126.	'he / she / it is hunting'
127.	'he / she / it has hunted'
128.	'I'
129.	'ice'
130.	'if'
131.	'in'
132.	'he / she / it is killing it'
133.	'he / she / it has killed it'
134.	'he / she / it knows him'
135.	'he / she / it knew him'
136.	'lake'
137.	'he / she / it is laughing'
138.	'he / she / it has laughed'
139.	'leaf'
140.	'left'
141.	'leg'
142.	'he / she / it is lying' (not telling the truth)
143.	'he / she / it has lied'
144.	'he / she / it is living with him'
145.	'he / she / it has lived with him'
146.	'liver'
147.	'long'
148.	'louse'
149.	'man'
150.	'many'
151.	'meat'
152.	'mother'
153.	'mountain'
154.	'mouth'
155.	'name'
156.	'narrow'
157.	'near'
158.	'neck'
159.	'new'
160.	'night'
161.	'nose'

162.	'not'
163.	'old'
164.	'one'
165.	'other'
166.	'person'
167.	'he / she / it is playing'
168.	'he / she / it has played'
169.	'he / she / it is pulling'
170.	'he / she / it has pulled'
171.	'he / she / it is pushing it away'
172.	'he / she / it has pushed it away'
173.	'rain'
174.	'red'
175.	'right' (correct)
176.	'right' (side)
177.	'river'
178.	'road'
179.	'root'
180.	'rope'
181.	'it is rotting'
182.	'it has rotted'
183.	'he / she / it is rubbing it'
184.	'he / she / it has rubbed it'
185.	'salt'
186.	'sand'
187.	'I am saying it'
188.	'you are saying it'
189.	'he / she / it is saying it'
190.	'you and I are saying it'
191.	'you guys are saying it'
192.	'someone is saying it'
193.	'I have said it'
194.	'you have said it'
195.	'he / she / it has said it'
196.	'you and I have said it'
197.	'you guys have said it'
198.	'they have said it'
199.	'someone has said it'
200.	'he / she / it is scratching'
201.	'he / she / it has scratched'
202.	'sea'
203.	'he / she / it is seeing'
204.	'he / she / it has seen'
205.	'seed'
206.	'he / she / it is sewing'
207.	'he / she / it has sewed'
208.	'sharp'
209.	'short'
210.	'he / she / it is singing'

211. 'he / she / it has sang'  
212. 'he / she / it is sitting'  
213. 'he / she / it has sat'  
214. 'skin'  
215. 'heaven'  
216. 'I am sleeping'  
217. 'you are sleeping'  
218. 'he / she / it is sleeping'  
219. 'you and I are sleeping'  
220. 'you guys are sleeping'  
221. 'they are sleeping'  
222. 'someone is sleeping'  
223. 'I have slept'  
224. 'you have slept'  
225. 'he / she / it has slept'  
226. 'you and I have slept'  
227. 'you guys have slept'  
228. 'they have slept'  
229. 'someone has slept'  
230. 'small'  
231. 'he / she / it is smiling'  
232. 'he / she / it has smelled'  
233. 'smoke'  
234. 'smooth'  
235. 'snake'  
236. 'snow'  
237. 'some'  
238. 'he / she / it is spitting at him'  
239. 'he / she / it has spit at him'  
240. 'he / she / it is splitting wood'  
241. 'he / she / it has split wood'  
242. 'he / she / it is squeezing it'  
243. 'he / she / it has squeezed it'  
244. 'he / she / it is stabbing him'  
245. 'he / she / it has stabbed him'  
246. 'he / she / it is standing up'  
247. 'he / she / it has stood up'  
248. 'star'  
249. 'stick'  
250. 'stone'  
251. 'straight'  
252. 'he / she / it is sucking'  
253. 'he / she / it has sucked'  
254. 'sun'  
255. 'moon'  
256. 'it is swelling'  
257. 'it has swelled'  
258. 'he / she / it is swimming'  
259. 'he / she / it has swam'

260.	'tail'
261.	'that'
262.	'there'
263.	'they'
264.	'thick'
265.	'thin'
266.	'he / she / it is thinking'
267.	'he / she / it has thought'
268.	'this'
269.	'you'
270.	'three'
271.	'he / she / it is throwing a stone'
272.	'he / she / it has thrown a stone'
273.	'he / she / it is tying'
274.	'he / she / it has tied'
275.	'tongue'
276.	'tooth'
277.	'tree'
278.	'he / she / it is turning'
279.	'he / she / it has turned'
280.	'two'
281.	'he / she / it is vomitting'
282.	'he / she / it has vomitted'
283.	'I am walking'
284.	'you are walking'
285.	'he / she / it is walking'
286.	'you and I are walking'
287.	'you guys are walking'
288.	'they are walking'
289.	'someone is walking'
290.	'I have walked'
291.	'you have walked'
292.	'he / she / it has walked'
293.	'you and I have walked'
294.	'you guys have walked'
295.	'they have walked'
296.	'someone has walked'
297.	'it is warm'
298.	'he / she / it is washing'
299.	'he / she / it has washed'
300.	'water'
301.	'we'
302.	'wet'
303.	'what'
304.	'when'
305.	'where'
306.	'white'
307.	'who'
308.	'wide'



309.	'wife'
310.	'wind'
311.	'wing'
312.	'he / she / it is wiping it off'
313.	'he / she / it has wiped it off'
314.	'with'
315.	'woman'
316.	'woods'
317.	'worm'
318.	'you guys'
319.	'year'
320.	'yellow / orange'

References:

Cook, Eung-Do (1971) "Vowels and tones in Sarcee," *Language* 47: 164-179.

Cook, Eung-Do (1984) *A Sarcee Grammar*, Vancouver: UBC Press.

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