it is *ni-nipāh*.   The speech of members of the *Uāshau-innu* group
within the community may use both forms of the past tense, thereby
marking the geographic origin of their families' ties with Sept-Isles.

The situation of extensive variation within this Labrador
Montagnais community provides a real laboratory for the study of
sociolinguistic variation and of historical change with a language.
It is expected that the completion of the research study on
linguistic variability recently undertaken will make a significant
contribution to the understanding of how language works in real
life, rather than in a grammar book.

## 4.  Language and Education

### 4.1.  Native Language in the Schools

When Montagnais and Naskapi children in Labrador first begin
school, they speak little or no English.   The schooling available
to them, however, is almost exclusively in English.   This situation,
which is very common in the Northern areas of Canada, has unfortunate
consequences for the quality of education.

In both Indian communities of Labrador there is a day school,
operated by the Roman Catholic School Board, which children attend.
At Sheshatshiu, kindergarten through grade eleven is offered, while
at Davis Inlet only the elementary grades are offered.   Until now
children who wish to attend higher grades have had to leave the
village for Happy Valley, Labrador City, Corner Brook or St. John's.
More often than not students who attempt to further their education
in a larger centre are unsuccessful; of the many reasons contributing
to this situation, language is a very important one.

Speakers of Montagnais and Naskapi are in a minority-language
situation within Newfoundland and Labrador since there are, at most,
eight hundred speakers.   Minority languages are common throughout
the world.   Within Canada as a whole, every language except English
is in the minority.   Within Newfoundland, Gaelic, French, Inuttut,
Micmac, Montagnais, Naskapi and formerly, Beothuck, formed minority
speech communities.

Historically, it has been considered desirable that minority
speakers learn and use the language of the majority, as part of
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This pluralistic approach has been put into practice, through "bilingual" and "bicultural" programs in which the minority language is actually taught in the classroom alongside that of the majority (ibid). This change in approach has come about because of a) a conspicuous lack of success of the assimilationist approach among many groups and b) emerging ethnic consciousness of the importance of one's heritage leading to demands for recognition within the educational system.

It is now well established that minority children who are not first educated in their mother tongue have higher drop-out rates, lower than average achievement at each grade level and may never attain fluency or literacy in the dominant language. Indeed, the ability to function competently in their own language may even be hindered or impaired.

As a response to these situations in Canadian Indian and Inuit schools, special language programs have been introduced over the last decade. These programs may be either "balanced" with equal time given to both languages or "transitional", with schooling starting out primarily in the minority, or home language, and continuing in the majority language. On closer examination, the transitional approach, as used in Canadian Indian schools, turns out to be little more than a more effective way to assimilate children to the majority language and culture. Another version of this approach is "native language inclusion" whereby there is a given amount of time within the school timetable alloted to the minority language. This may range from having a native speaker as a teacher aide at the primary level to scheduling a fixed number of minutes per day or week for learning to speak, read or write the children's language. An overview and critique of these approaches may be found in Clarke and MacKenzie (1980 a and b).

At Sheshatshiu and Davis Inlet there has been only token inclusion of Montagnais and Naskapi languages in the school curriculum. Children who arrive at school have had to adapt very quickly to English as the language of instruction since virtually every classroom teacher has been English-speaking. This has meant that children must learn two very different things at once: a) a new language and b) how to use that language to learn specific content and behaviour. It is no surprise, then, that native children seem to learn the content of a curriculum very slowly. They very likely have not yet mastered the language which is being used to teach the material.

In both Labrador Innu schools, there are now a few native teachers and more teacher aides at the primary level. These indi-

viduals, since they are members of the community, know the children
well and can communicate with them in their own language.  This
means that the transition from home to school is somewhat eased.

However encouraging this situation may seem on the surface,
there are still serious problems.  Those native teachers who are
in charge of classrooms, as well as using the native language to
communicate the basics of appropriate behaviour, are expected to
teach oral English, reading in English and English language
subjects - all without specialized training in Teaching English
as a Second Language.  Those teachers who are attempting to teach
reading, writing or religion in the native language are in as
difficult a position.  All these teachers work under the difficult
conditions of lack of a curriculum, learning materials and adequate
teacher training.  Lack of certification, of course, results in
salary levels far below those of other teachers.  Memorial
University has made some effort to provide training through the
Teacher Education Program for Labrador (TEPL) established in 1978.
The program has been rendered less than effective by lack of
guaranteed funding, lack of professors familiar with native
language and culture, little continuity of directorship and minimal
support from the administrative levels of government, school boards
and the University.

In any case, much of the effectiveness of teacher preparation
is lost unless people can practice their skills on a specific
curriculum.  A curriculum which deals with Montagnais and Naskapi
language (grammar, spelling, vocabulary, literature) has never been
formulated, nor has one which deals with Montagnais and Naskapi
history and culture.

It has been suggested that a rational learning sequence for
native children who come to school speaking only their mother tongue
would be as follows:  begin with teachers who speak the children's
language and can teach them the content and behaviour necessary to
succeed in school; introduce the majority language using second
language methodology until the children have a good grasp of it;
continue teaching of content subjects (mathematics, social studies,
etc.) in one or both languages.  Unfortunately, this situation
exists in virtually no native schools in Canada.  The implementation
of such a program would require a great effort on the part of every-
one involved in native education: parents, Band Administrators, School
Board Administrators, non-native and native teachers, teacher trainers
and curriculum developers.  Unfortunately, when native people are
involved in the long process of fighting for a just settlement of
Land Claims, working for adequate housing and water and trying to earn
a living in an area of high unemployment, the problems of education
do not receive high priority.  It is to be hoped that Innu parents

in Labrador will be able to convince those in charge of the education
of their children of the need for change before it is too late
for the future of the Innu language and culture.

## 4.2. Difficulties in Learning English as a Second Language

Even though it is important for children to receive schooling
in their native language, it is equally important that they receive
excellent training in the majority language. The "immersion"
approach which expects students to begin learning subject content
in a language which they do not speak has had predictably unsuc-
cessful results. This method has been referred to more accurately
as the "submersion" technique, as it tries "to promote competence
in the majority language and dominant culture at the expense of
the child's first language and ethnic background." (Clarke and
MacKenzie 1980b:205).

Whichever approach is used for the inclusion or teaching of
the native language, the dominant language can most effectively
be taught when a) the structure of the first language is taken
into account and b) a well-structured and sequenced introduction
to second language material is followed. This section will describe
some of the areas in which the structure of the Montagnais and
Naskapi language causes problems for speakers who want to learn
English. An awareness of the existence of these areas of
interference between the languages can help the teacher to plan
a more effective English as a Second Language Program.

### 4.2.1. Pronunciation

The existence of pronunciation errors which are the result of
interference from an Algonquian language has been recognized in
the publication of a useful handbook, From Cree to English by
Marilyle Soveran (1966). Although it focuses on the Plains dialect
of Cree, it contains valuable explanations and pronunciation drills
for teachers. Most of these can be used with Montagnais-Naskapi
speaking students.

As mentioned above (2.1.) Montagnais and Naskapi has fewer
consonant and vowel sounds than English. This means that children
will have to learn to hear and pronounce several new sounds. Until
they can do this, they will use the closest sound from their own
language in place of the English one. This replacement of unknown
patterns of pronunciation and grammar by known ones in the early

stages of learning a new language is referred to as <u>interference</u> from the first language. Speakers of Montagnais and Naskapi experience interference in pronouncing, <i>ɾ</i>, <i>l</i>, the varied stops, most of the fricatives, some vowels and most consonant clusters of English. Examples of this process are abundant in the Indian pronunciation of English and French proper names:

| French | Innu | French | Innu |
|--------|------|--------|------|
| Louis | Nūī | Jérome | Shenum |
| Pierre | Pīen | Mathieu | Mātiu |
| Hélène | Enen | Grégoire | Kanīkuen |
| Luc | Nūk | André | Āntane |
| Philippe | Pinip | Charles/Jean | Shān |
| Yvonne | Ipuān | Marguerite | Mānikanet |
| Philomène | Pīnamen | | |
| Georges | Shāush | English | |
| Cécile | Shishīn | | |
| Joseph | Shūshep | Margaret | Mānikanet |
| Michel | Mīshen | Johnny | Tshānī |
| Simon | Shīmūn | Max | Mākass |
| Jeanette | Shānet | Jack | Tshāk |

The English sounds <i>l</i> and <i>ɾ</i> do not occur in the Labrador dialects of Montagnais and Naskapi and are replaced by the nearest equivalent sound, which is <i>n</i>. This is seen in the name <i>Pīen</i> for Pierre, <i>Mānī</i> for Marie, <i>Nūī</i> for Louis, <i>Nūk</i> for Luc, <i>Enen</i> for Hélène.

English has eight stop consonants which occur in four voiceless/voiced pairs <i>p/b</i>, <i>t/d</i>, <i>ch/j</i>, <i>k/g</i> while Montagnais and Naskapi have only four stops <i>p</i>, <i>t</i>, <i>ch</i>, <i>k</i>, which are closest in pronunciation to the English voiceless stops <i>p</i>, <i>t</i>, <i>ch</i>, <i>k</i>. For a native child learning English, then, the minimal pairs "pin/bin", "tin/din", "chin/gin", "come/gum" will sound virtually the same. As a result, the child will pronounce these pairs, and others such as "puck/buck", "tab/dab", "cab/gab" in the same way. The difference between the pairs of English sounds can be taught by use of a drill in which students must hear and pronounce pairs of problem words. Lists of minimal pairs and exercises for drilling them are available in Soveran (1966, p. 15 ff.)

Montagnais and Naskapi have only three fricative consonants. <i>sh</i>, <i>ss</i>, <i>h</i>, while English has nine, <i>f/v</i>, <i>th</i> [θ,ð]; <i>s/z</i>, <i>sh/zh</i>, <i>h</i>, again with four voiceless/voiced pairs. Again the nearest equivalent sound in Indian will be substituted: <i>p</i> for <i>f/v</i>; <i>t</i> for <i>th</i>[θ/ð]; <i>sh</i> for <i>s/z</i>, <i>sh/zh</i>. Although <i>ss</i> exists, it is very restricted in its occurrence, and English <i>s</i> is usually replaced by <i>sh</i>.

Names which illustrate the use of p for ɓ/v are *Pīnamen* for
Philomène, *Pinip* for Philippe, *Ipuān* for Yvonne; the use of *t* for *th*
occurs in *Mātā* for Marthe; the use of *sh* for *s*, *z*, *sh*, *zh*, occurs in
*Shūshān* for Suzanne, *Shishīn* for Cécile, *Shīmun* for Simon, *Mīshen* for
Michel. In a number of names *sh* is used for the French pronunciation
of *zh* [ž], rather than for the English *j*: *Shāush* for George, *Shūshep* for
Joseph, *Shānet* for Jeanette, *Shenum* for Jérome.

These habits will carry over to the pronunciation of other English
words containing fricatives. In the case of ɓ/v and *th* [θ/ð], not only
do students need to distinguish between fricatives and stops but also
must learn to distinguish between voiceless/voiced pairs of fricatives
such as the following:

| ɓ/v | p/ɓ | b/v |
|-----|-----|-----|
| ferry/very | pair/fair | berry/very/(ferry) |
| wafer/waver | supper/suffer | rebel/revel |
| safe/save | leap/leaf (leave) | dub/dove/(duff) |

| th [θ/ð] | t/th [θ] | d/th [ð] |
|----------|----------|----------|
| theft/then | tin/thin | den/then/(ten) |
| ether/either | sheeting/sheathing | udder/other/(utter) |
| bath/bathe | bat/bath | tide/tithe/(tight) |

Similarly, words which contain the voiceless/voiced pairs *s/z* and
*sh/zh* will provide the same difficulties:

| s/sh | s/z | sh/zh |
|------|-----|-------|
| see/she | seal/zeal | mesher/measure |
| masses/mashes | prices/prizes | thresher/treasure |
| muss/mush | lice/lies | Aleutian/allusion |

Again, suggestions for drilling these problem sounds can be found
in Soveran (1966).

With practice, students will learn to pronounce the individual new sounds, particularly at the beginnings of words. It is relatively easy to hear the difference between consonants when they occur before a vowel. However, it is much more difficult to hear and pronounce these sounds when they occur in consonant clusters.

As pointed out in 2.1., Montagnais and Naskapi have only a few consonant clusters (less than twenty) when compared with English (over two hundred). There are several strategies which Indian speakers use to make these clusters pronounceable. One way has been to insert a vowel between the consonants as in *Mākass* for Max, *Āntane* for Andre, *Mānikanet* for Margaret and Marguerite, *Kanīkuen* for Gregoire, *Kaniste* for Christine. Another possibility is to leave out some of the consonants, such as *r* in *Mātā* for Marthe, *Māssen* for Marcel, *Shān* for Charles and Jean.

This second strategy has serious consequences for clusters ending in *s* or *z* which mark the plural and possessives of nouns ("pants, bands, John's, aunt's") as well as the third person singular present tense ("hit/hits, stand/stands"). If a final *t* or *d* marks a past tense in English ("pass/passed, buzz/buzzed"), this pronunciation difficulty could lead the teacher to think that the child was unaware of the existence of the past tense, when such may not in fact be the case. Other problem pairs will be "can/can't, could/couldn't, should/shouldn't." It is not enough to tell children to pronounce "can't" as "cannot" or "shouldn't" as "should not" since they will seldom hear the second form in normal, everyday speech. The aim should be to make them aware of the style and level of speech which is most frequently used.

Montagnais and Naskapi children have difficulty in, first, hearing and, secondly, pronouncing these clusters. It is to be expected, then, that they will also have difficulty in spelling them. Teachers have confirmed that this does happen.

The pronunciation of vowels is less problematic than of consonants but there may be difficulties in distinguishing sets such as "bit/bet" or "tin/ten/ton". Some proper names which show differences in vowel quality from the English or French counterpart are *Tūpī* for Toby, *Mūnik* for Monique and *Lūk* for Luc.

### 4.2.2. Grammar

Grammar here refers to two aspects of language - the way that words are put together from smaller pieces (morphology) and the way that words are put together into sentences (syntax). Morphology in English here refers to gender and case of pronouns, the plural "-s" for

nouns, the possessive "s" for nouns, third person singular "-s" for verbs, progressive "-ing" for verbs and the past tense "-ed" for verbs. Syntax will here refer only to the use of articles and determiners, prepositions, the auxiliary verb "to be", negation, word order and question formation.

English has three genders – masculine, feminine and neuter, represented by the pronouns, "he, she, it". Montagnais and Naskapi have two genders – animate and inanimate. It makes no distinction between masculine and feminine pronouns. Thus it is difficult for Montagnais or Naskapi children to use the English "he" and "she" correctly, and sentences such as "My father, she ...." are quite common.

Pronouns in English occur in three cases, subject, object and possessive, and three persons, first, second and third, which occur in singular and plural. Pronouns in Montagnais and Naskapi are generally simpler. Subject and object pronouns are covered by the same words. Possessive pronouns use the same words but split them into parts (c.f. sec. 2.2.1.).

Problems will arise for students in learning to distinguish the three English cases and to use them correctly. Examples of errors are:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| me hat | for | my hat |
| they hat | for | their hat |
| me go now | for | I'm going now |

Montagnais and Naskapi distinguish clearly between a singular and plural "you" (chīn and chīnawāw) while English does not. As well, distinction is made between two kinds of "we" (exclusive: nīnān "me and him but not you" and inclusive: chīnān "me and you"). Since, in this case, English makes fewer distinctions, there should be no problem for Innu children when they speak English.

The main way of forming plurals in English is by adding "-s" to the word. The pronunciation of this "-s" may change to -z or -əz according to which sound the noun ends in. Words ending in voiceless stops add -s, those ending in voiced stops add -z and those ending in ch/j add -əz. Special attention must be paid to teaching these differences. The irregular English plurals will, of course, have to be taught separately, as there will be a strong tendency to use the rule of adding "-s" with all words.

The same problems of pronouncing the possessive "-s" after nouns occur as with the plural "-s" and the same remarks apply. Another typical problem which children have is the confusion of the third

person possessive pronoun "his" and the plural "-s".

"John his ball"     for     "John's ball"

In Montagnais and Naskapi, the possessive marker is attached to the thing which is possessed (ball).  In English it is attached to the name of the possessor.  Therefore, the tendency of Indian speakers is to attach the possessive "his/her/its" before the possessed noun.

Problems with verbs occur in the following areas:  past tense markers, third person singular markers, present progressive "-ing", the verb "to be", use of auxiliary verbs and modals.

The third person singular verb form ends in -ʃ and is irregular with respect to the other persons of the verb ("I/you/we/they <u>sit</u>" but "he <u>sits</u>").  First, the children must learn when to add the "-s".  Secondly, they must learn to change the pronounciation of it from -ʃ to -z or -əz.

| Verbs ending in *p, t, k, f, th[θ]* add -ʃ | Verbs ending in *b, d, g, v, m, n, ng, l, th[d], r,* or vowel, add -z | | Verbs ending in *ʃ, z, ʃh, zh, ch, dg = j,,* add -əz |
|---|---|---|---|
| wipe | dab | come | miss |
| hit | hide | burn | freeze |
| talk | dig | sing | blush |
| cough | dive | feel | massage |
| berth | tear | throw | catch |
|  | see | breathe | dodge |

The regular rule for forming a past tense of a verb in English is to add "-ed".  This "-ed" may be pronounced as -*t*, -*d*, or -*əd*, depending on how the verb ends.  The children will have difficulty in distinguishing between the voiced *d* and voiceless *t*.  As well, the addition of *t* or *d* will create a consonant cluster which will be difficult for the child to pronounce.

| Verbs ending in *p, ch, k, f, ʃ, ʃh, th[θ]*, add -*t* | Verbs ending in *b, j, g, v, th[d], z, zh, m, n, ng, l, r* or vowel, add -*d* | Verbs ending in *t, d*, add -*əd* |
|---|---|---|
| drop, pitch, look, laugh, pass, push, berth | dab, smudge, rig, reeve, breathe, seize, climb plan, bang, smell, fear, massage | net, code |

There are, of course, many English verbs which have an irregular past tense and past participle. These will have to be taught separately.

English has two articles: indefinite, "a/an" and definite, "the". Montagnais and Naskapi have no articles and it is <u>very</u> difficult for students to learn to use these two words correctly. In fact, the first tendency of students will be to leave them out entirely. The teacher should have a clear idea of the usage of "a/an" and "the", if possible; and contrastive sets of phrases should be constructed to drill the differences.

The determiners like "some, any, each, other", will be a problem as well since equivalents for some of these do not exist in Montagnais or Naskapi. The demonstratives "this, that, these, those" do have equivalents and the teacher can make the comparison between the two languages.

Montagnais and Naskapi use prepositions as separate words. However, counterparts of the common English prepositions "in, at, to, on, from" do <u>not</u> exist as separate words. This means that most children leave out these prepositions when they construct a sentence in English. "I go bank" instead of "I'm going to the bank" is a common mistake. Sometimes, there is no preposition attached to the verb but there is a location marker attached to the noun. Thus, the locative form of *shīpū* (river) is *shīpīt(s)*, which may be translated "in, at, on, to, from the river". The choice of prepositions in English depends on the context and also on the English verb. The teacher should be aware which verbs and which prepositions can occur together. For instance, "put it in, on, to" are common but "put it at, from" are less acceptable. The teacher must be aware of the semantic (meaning) area covered by each preposition. Montagnais and Naskapi prepositions often make quite different distinctions than do English ones, and there may be confusion.

In Montagnais and Naskapi there are two verbs which can be translated into English as "to be, to be in a place, to exist". However, neither of these is ever used as an auxiliary verb the way English "am, is, are" are used. This means that Innu children frequently leave out the auxiliary "to be" verb entirely. "My ball is red" becomes "My ball red". Since "to be" is a very irregular verb, the students must be made aware of all the variant forms and when these are used.

The use of the present progressive "-ing" ending is closely linked to the use of "to be". In English both are used together – "I <u>am</u> wear<u>ing</u> a hat". Often, the Montagnais-Naskapi child tends to leave out either the "to be" auxiliary or the "-ing" and produces sentences like "I wearing hat" or "I'm wear hat". The situations in which it is appropriate to use the present progressive must be taught

along with the correct syntactic forms.

The correct usage of the other auxiliary verbs "do" and "have", as well as the modals, such as "can, may, should, would, etc." will cause a great deal of difficulty as there is seldom a direct translation for the words or concepts. Often the concept which is expressed by a modal in English is expressed by a verb ending or a verb prefix in Montagnais and Naskapi. It does not appear as a separate word (c.f. sec. 2.2.3.). This is also true of the future tense auxiliary will. The teacher will have to understand the range of usage of each English word and use appropriate example sentences to explain and drill them.

Negatives in Montagnais and Naskapi are formed by placing a single negative word (apū, ma, ekā, ekāwī) before the verb. In English the negative word not is used but an auxiliary ("do not, have not") must also be used. Children will tend to use only "not" and to leave out the auxiliary verbs ("I not go, he not sick").

Word order is much more important in English than in Montagnais or Naskapi, where the verb is the most important part of speech. The verb contains subject and object pronouns, the verb stem and gender markers, as well as instrumental prepositions, adjectives or nouns. In English, one or more separate words is used for each of these categories and these words must occur in a certain order. "John saw Mary" means something different from "Mary saw John", while "Mary saw John" and "John was seen by Mary" mean the same thing. These distinctions are all made in Montagnais and Naskapi by the use of inverse markers (see 2.2.) on the verb, rather than by the inversion of the words in the sentence. Thus, it is to be expected that Innu children will need special drills to make these structures clear.

Questions in English are most often formed by changing the order in a statement (declarative) sentence. ("He is going" - "Is he going?"). Other ways to form questions are: by using a rising intonation with a declarative sentence ("He's going?"), or by using a tag questions with a declarative sentence ("He's going, isn't he?"). Innu children again will have difficulty with the use of changed word order necessary to form English questions. In Montagnais and Naskapi, yes-no questions are formed by adding an interrogative marker -a to the end of one of the words in a sentence - Shāsh-a chīwew Mānī? "Did Mary go home yet?". The use of rising intonation along with the change of word order will have to be carefully taught.

It should be clear from these brief comments that the teaching of English to Innu children requires that the teacher be specially trained in English as a Second Language techniques. Firstly, there must be a clear awareness of the areas of difference in pronunciation and grammar

between English and Montagnais or Naskapi. Secondly, the teacher must be equipped with pronunciation drills and structural exercises to ensure that the children acquire the correct patterns of English usage. Without a serious effort to provide proper training for both native and non-native teachers in this vital area, it is quite likely that Innu children will continue to be hampered in their education by inadequate language skills.

## 5.   Conclusion

In this overview, it has been possible to describe only a few of the most striking features of the Montagnais and Naskapi dialects in Labrador. There is an unfortunate but widespread assumption that a people who follow a technologically uncomplicated way of life must also speak a simple, almost primitive, language. The examples from the grammar, vocabulary and usage of the language of the Innut have been chosen to illustrate a level of complexity of structure which is equal to, if not greater than, that of any European language. By studying these dialects, and more importantly, by getting to know the people who speak them, we can enter a world which is significantly different from our own. It is hoped that this brief introductory sketch will encourage interested individuals to learn more about the Innu people of Labrador, their language[2] and their culture.

## NOTES

1.  The use of the Conjunct Dubitative Neutral requires a change in the first vowel of the verb stem, e.g., *nipā*- becomes *nepā*-. This process in known as Initial Change and is discussed in Clarke (forthcoming).

2.  For those who are interested in reading further about the Cree language complex, there is one excellent introductory book Meet Cree by H. Christoph Wolfart and Janet F. Carroll (1981). Although the examples are taken from Plains Cree, the explanations apply equally to the Montagnais and Naskapi dialects. Besides the grammatical sketch of Sheshatshiu Montagnais by Clarke (forthcoming), there is an excellent reference grammar of Plains Cree by Wolfart (1973). Mailhot and Lescop (1978) have compiled a large lexicon of Montagnais vocabulary with French translations. The only readily available dictionary with an English translation is Fairies (1938), but it is difficult for a beginning student to use.

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