

LESSON 3

NOMINAL PLURALS; NUMERALS

Inanimates

<i>Tshekuâna</i>	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{nenua ?} \\ \textit{nemenua ?} \end{array} \right\}$	What are those?
<i>Tshîmana</i>	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{nenua.} \\ \textit{nemenua.} \end{array} \right\}$	Those/they are matches.
<i>Metuâkana</i>	<i>nenua.</i>	They are toys.
<i>Pâssikana</i>	<i>nenua.</i>	They are guns.
<i>Âshûkana</i>	<i>nenua.</i>	They are bridges.

Animates

$\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{Tshekuenitshenat} \\ \textit{Auenitshenat} \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{anitshenat?} \\ [\text{əndʒent}] \end{array} \right\}$	Who are those? (people)
<i>Nâpessat</i>	<i>anitshenat.</i>	Those/they are boys.
<i>Ishkuessat</i>	<i>anitshenat.</i>	They are girls.
<i>Nâpeuat</i>	<i>anitshenat.</i>	They are men.
<i>Ishkueuat</i>	<i>anitshenat.</i>	They are women.
<i>Natûkunîshat</i>	<i>anitshenat.</i>	They are doctors.

VOCABULARY

<i>anitshenat/</i> <i>anitshe</i>	(an dem pro pl)	those (ones)
<i>âshûkan</i>	(inan noun)	bridge
<i>metuâkan</i>	(inan noun)	toy
<i>natûkunîsh</i>	(an noun)	doctor
<i>pâssikan</i>	(inan noun)	gun
<i>tshîman</i>	(inan noun)	match

POINTS OF GRAMMAR

I. Animate Plurals

The normal animate plural inflection is *-at* [ət]. The phonetic shape of this plural may vary, however, depending on the final sound of the singular noun to which the plural is added:

1. **Nouns ending in consonant other than *-n*, *-k^u* or *-m^u*:
animate pl *-at***

<i>ashâm</i>	snowshoe	<i>ashâmat</i>
<i>auâss</i>	child	<i>auâssat</i>
<i>ishkuess</i>	girl	<i>ishkuessat</i>

2. **Nouns ending in *-k^u* or *-m^u*: the *u* is lowered (in writing) before the animate plural ending, and the sequence *-uat* is pronounced [wut]**

<i>kâk^u</i>	porcupine	<i>kâkuat</i>
<i>atîk^u</i>	caribou	<i>atîkuat</i>
<i>atim^u</i>	dog	<i>atimuat</i>

3. **Nouns ending in *-n*: animate pl *-at* (often pronounced [nt])**

<i>teueikan</i>	drum	<i>teueikanat</i>
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4. **Nouns ending in a vowel: animate pl *-at* (often pronounced [t])**

<i>nâpeu</i>	man	<i>nâpeuat</i>
<i>innu</i>	Innu person	<i>innuat</i>
<i>utshimâu</i>	boss, chief	<i>utshimâuat</i>
<i>ânapî</i>	net	<i>ânapîat</i>

II. Inanimate Plurals

All inanimate plurals take the plural inflection *-a*, as in:

<i>massin</i>	shoe	<i>massina</i>
<i>mashinaikan</i>	book	<i>mashinaikana</i>

In the case of words ending in *-k^u* and *-m^u* the *u* is lowered (in writing) before the plural inflection *-a*, as in:

pâushtik^u waterfall, rapids *pâushtikua*

Rarely, inanimates undergo a change in their final consonant before the plural *-a* is added:

ûsh boat, canoe *ûta*
mîûsh suitcase, box *mîûta*

III. Numerals

The following are the numbers from one to ten in Sheshatshiu Innu-aimun:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. <i>peik^u</i> | 6. <i>kutuâsht¹</i> |
| 2. <i>nîsh^u</i> | 7. <i>nîshuâsht</i> |
| 3. <i>nisht^u</i> | 8. <i>nishuâush</i> |
| 4. <i>neu</i> | 9. <i>peikushteu</i> |
| 5. <i>patetât</i> | 10. <i>kutunnu</i> [kwotono] |

IV. Demonstrative Plurals

	Animate	Inanimate
these	<i>utshenat</i>	<i>umenua</i>
those	<i>anitshenat</i>	<i>nenua/nemenua</i>

V. Interrogative Plurals

who/people ²	<i>tshekuenitshenat/auenitshenat</i>
what/things	<i>tshekuâna</i>

Note that the sequence *-nat* in the above is pronounced [nt].

¹ The final consonant cluster *-sht* of the numbers for 'six' and 'seven' is pronounced as *-ss*.

² When these words do not appear in a question, their meaning is (indefinite) 'things' or 'people'.

EXERCISES

In I. and II. below, supply the correct plural form.

I. Examples of inanimate nouns for pluralization:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------|-------|
| 1. <i>mîtschim</i> | food | 8. <i>mîtschuâp</i> | house |
| 2. <i>shûniâu</i> | money | 9. <i>uâu</i> | egg |
| 3. <i>natûkun</i> | medicine | 10. <i>pâssikan</i> | gun |
| 4. <i>patshuiânish³</i> | shirt | 11. <i>shâkaikan</i> | lake |
| 5. <i>mitâsh</i> | sock | 12. <i>ushtâshk^u</i> | axe |
| 6. <i>mûkumân</i> | knife | 13. <i>ashinî</i> | stone |
| 7. <i>mishtik^u</i> | stick | 14. <i>tshîman</i> | match |

II. Examples of animate nouns for pluralization:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. <i>tshîâshk^u</i> | gull | 7. <i>ishkueu</i> | woman |
| 2. <i>kâkâtshu</i> | crow | 8. <i>teueikan</i> | drum |
| 3. <i>pineu</i> | partridge | 9. <i>uâpimin</i> | apple |
| 4. <i>mitshishu</i> | eagle | 10. <i>emûkuân</i> | spoon |
| 5. <i>pineshîsh</i> | bird | 11. <i>âtshik^u</i> | seal |
| 6. <i>akashk^u</i> | arrow | 12. <i>anûshkan</i> | raspberry |

III. Translate each of the following word groups and sentences into Innu-aimun, using the forms of the verbs supplied for animates and inanimates:

There are eight Innu (here). *Nishuâuush itashuat innuat (ute).*
There are eight cars (here). *Nishuâuush itâtin(u)a utâpâna (ute).*

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. man | 7. boy |
| 2. men | 8. boys |
| 3. there are seven men (here) | 9. there are eight boys (here) |
| 4. bridge | 10. girl |
| 5. bridges | 11. girls |
| 6. there are six bridges (here) | 12. there are five girls (here) |

³ When a vowel is followed by *-nish*, the *n* disappears, and all that remains is a nasalized vowel, as occurs in such French words as 'vin' or 'vendre'.