

LESSON 4

THE NOUN: LOCATIVES AND DIMINUTIVES

READING PASSAGE

<i>Tânite tekuâk¹ tetapuâkan?²</i>	Where is the chair?
<i>Mîtsuâpît anite takuan.</i>	It is in the house.
<i>Tânite tekuâk mashinaikan?</i>	Where is the book?
<i>Mîtsuishuâkanit anite takuan.</i>	It is on the table.
<i>Tânite tekuâk atâuitshuâp?</i>	Where is the store?
<i>Utenât takuan.</i>	It is in town.
<i>Tânite tekuâk ûsh?</i>	Where is the boat?
<i>Nâshipetimît anite takuan.</i>	It is on the shore.
<i>Tânite etât Nâpeu?</i>	Where is Napeu?
<i>Âshûkanit anite tâu.</i>	He is over there on the bridge.
<i>Tânite etât Ishkueu?</i>	Where is Ishkueu?
<i>Meshkanât anite tâu.</i>	She is on the road.

VOCABULARY

<i>anite</i>	(indecl part)	(over) there (pronounced [nte]; optional with locatives)
<i>atâuitshuâp</i>	(inan noun)	store
<i>etât</i>	(an <i>be</i> ; in questions)	s/he is (in a location)
<i>Ishkueu</i>	(female proper name)	
<i>meshkanau</i>	(inan noun)	road, path
<i>mîtsuâp</i>	(inan noun)	house
<i>Nâpeu</i>	(male proper name)	
<i>nâshipetimît</i>	(indecl part)	on the shore
<i>nipî</i>	(inan noun)	water
<i>takuan</i>	(verb taking inan subj)	it is (there), it exists
<i>tâu</i>	(verb taking an subj)	he/she is (there), s/he exists
<i>ûsh</i>	(inan noun)	boat, canoe
<i>utenau</i>	(inan noun)	town

¹ As noted in Lesson 2, the verb *tekuâk* is a special form of the verb *takuan* known as the conjunct, which is required in certain types of clauses. Similarly the verb *etât* is the conjunct form of the verb *tâu*. The conjunct is introduced in Lesson 15.

² In questions such as these, younger speakers tend to use *nâ* (from *nânâ*, indicating 'absence from speech situation') directly before an animate noun and *ne* (from *nene*) before an inanimate noun.

POINTS OF GRAMMAR

I. The Locative

Nouns may take a locative suffix, that is, a suffix which indicates spatial position or direction. The basic form of this suffix is *-î*t after words ending with all consonants except *-n*:

	NOUN	LOCATIVE FORM	
1.	<i>mîtsuâp</i>	<i>mitsuâpî</i> t	in the house

After words which end in *-n*, the suffix *-î*t is added and the *-i* vowel may be deleted or pronounced as *-î*:

2.	<i>shâkaikan</i>	<i>shâkaikanî</i> t	in the lake
	<i>âshûkan</i>	<i>âshûkanî</i> t	on the bridge

This suffix has two other phonetic shapes, *-t* and *-ut*, as the following examples demonstrate:

3.	<i>nîpî</i>	<i>nîpî</i> t	in the water
	<i>ashinî</i>	<i>ashinî</i> t	on the rock
	<i>assî</i>	<i>assî</i> t	on the ground
4.	<i>meshkanau</i>	<i>meshkanâ</i> t	on the road, path
	<i>utenau</i>	<i>utenâ</i> t	in town
5.	<i>shîpu</i>	<i>shîpî</i> t	in/on the river
	<i>pitshu</i>	<i>pitshî</i> t	in the gum
6.	<i>massek^u</i>	<i>massekut</i>	in the bog, marsh, muskeg
	<i>minishtik^u</i>	<i>minishtikut</i>	on the island

A locative in *-t* occurs when the noun to which it is attached ends in a vowel (Group 3). In addition, if the noun ends in a diphthong, the second element of the diphthong is dropped before the addition of *-t* (Group 4) and the first vowel is lengthened. Most nouns which end in *u* change the *u* to *î* when the *-t* is added (Group 5).

If the noun ends in a labialized consonant (*k^u* or *m^u*), the *-î*t locative is labialized to *-ut* (Group 6).

In Innu-aimun the locative can denote a variety of spatial locations which correspond to a number of different English prepositions ('in', 'on', 'at', 'to', 'from', etc.). Various particles do exist in Innu-aimun, however, which correspond to specific English prepositions and which can be used with a noun in the locative if the spatial relationship in question needs to be specified. A short list of such particles follows; note that, like all other particles, these words do not take any inflectional endings, though any noun they appear before would typically take a locative inflection:

behind	<i>utât</i>
far (from)	<i>katâk^u</i>
in front (of)	<i>nîkân</i>
near	<i>pessîsh</i>
on the other side (of)	<i>kueshte</i>
on (top of)	<i>tâkut</i>
under	<i>shîpâ, shek^u</i>

II. The Diminutive Suffix

A noun may be made diminutive through the addition of the suffix *-iss* or *-îss* (depending on the preceding consonant and dialect), as follows:

<i>shîshîp</i>	duck	<i>shîshîpiss</i>	duckling
<i>minûsh</i>	cat	<i>minûshîss</i>	kitten

If the noun ends in a vowel, the suffix reduces to *-ss*, as in:

<i>ashinî</i>	stone	<i>ashinîss</i>	little stone
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The second element of a diphthong is dropped before the *-ss* is added, as in:

<i>ishkueu</i>	woman	<i>ishkuess</i>	girl
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Many nouns ending in *-u* change this vowel to *-î* when *-ss* is added:

<i>shîpu</i>	river	<i>shîpîss</i>	creek
<i>pishu</i>	lynx	<i>pishîss</i>	little lynx, young lynx

A noun ending in *-k^u* or *-m^u* adds *-ss* rather than *-îss* and the superscript *u* is pronounced and written as a full vowel, as in:

<i>atim^u</i>	dog	<i>atimuss</i>	puppy
<i>mishtik^u</i>	stick	<i>mishtikuss</i>	little stick

III. The *-ish* Suffix

The suffix *-ish* or *-sh* is mainly added to personal names, and may be glossed as 'old'. It follows the same spelling/phonological rules as the diminutive suffix, as illustrated by the following examples:

<i>Shûshep</i>	Joseph	<i>Shûshepish</i>	old Joseph
<i>Ânî</i>	Annie	<i>Ânîsh</i>	old Annie

The suffix is also added to other nouns to convey the meaning of 'old' or 'in bad shape', as in *mîtshuâpish* ('shack') or *utâpânish* ('old car').

EXERCISES

- I. Translate the following sentences into Innu-aimun, on the basis of the following model:

The boat is on the lake. *Shâkaikanit anite takuan ûsh.*

1. The car is on the road.
2. The apple is under the tree.
3. The chair is in the house.
4. The puppy is in the water.
5. The man is on the island.
6. The food is in the store.

Additional Vocabulary

<i>mîtshim</i>	(inan noun)	food
<i>uâpimin</i>	(inan noun)	apple