

LESSON 8

THE ANIMATE INTRANSITIVE (AI) VERB

DIALOGUE

Ântane mâk Pien

- A. *Tân eshpanîn?*
Tshuîtshin â ute? How are you?
Do you have a house here?
- P. *Mâuât, nimûpin muk^u.*
Nâtuâshîsh nûtshîn.
Pien nitishinîkâshun.
Ek^u tshîn, tshimûpin â? No, I'm just visiting.
I come from Natuashish.
My name is Peter.
What about you, are you
visiting?
- A. *Mâuât, nete meshkanât nuîtshin.*
Shâsh â tshekât tshika¹ tshîuen? No, I have a house here, over on
the road.
Will you be going back soon?
- P. *Ehe, uâpâkî nitshîuen.*
Tshinataun â ute? Yes, I'm going back tomorrow.
Do you hunt here?
- A. *Mâuât, nûtâu(i) muk^u natau.*
Tshân ishinîkâshu.
Tshishîuen â kie mâ tshinipâkuen? No, only my father hunts.
His name is John.
Are you hungry or thirsty?
- P. *Ehe, nishîuen mâk ninipâkuen.* Yes, I'm hungry and thirsty.

VOCABULARY

<i>ek^u</i>	(indecl part)	and, then
<i>ishinîkâshu</i>	(AI verb)	his/her name is, s/he is (thus) called
<i>kie mâ</i>	(indecl part)	or
<i>mûpu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he visits
<i>natau²</i>	(AI verb)	s/he hunts
<i>Nâtuâshîsh</i>	(geographic name)	Natuashish

¹ The future preverb *ka*, which is introduced in Lesson 9, is used here following the personal prefix *tshi-* 'you'.

² In Sheshatshiu Innu-aimun, this verb is pronounced as if it were spelled *natûu*.

<i>ni-</i>	(1st person subj verbal prefix)	I/we
<i>nipâkueu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he is thirsty
<i>shâsh</i>	(indecl part)	already, soon
<i>shûenu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he is hungry
<i>tshêkât</i>	(indecl part)	almost, soon
<i>tshi-</i>	(2nd person subject verbal prefix)	you
<i>tshûueu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he goes back, goes home
<i>uâpâkî</i>	(II verb) ³	tomorrow (lit. 'when it is daylight')
<i>ûtschu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he lives (in a place), has a house, tent (in a place)
<i>ûtshûu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he comes from (a place)

POINTS OF GRAMMAR

I. Algonquian Verbs

In Algonquian languages, verbs are divided into four basic categories, since the following two factors must be represented:

- a) whether the SUBJECT (or actor) is ANIMATE or INANIMATE.
- b) whether the OBJECT (or goal) – if there is one – is ANIMATE or INANIMATE.

The following table represents the four verb subtypes, as well as the term normally used to refer to each:

A. ANIMACY OF SUBJECT

- i) ANIMATE subject, no object: ANIMATE INTRANSITIVE (AI)
Example: *mûpu* 's/he is visiting'
- ii) INANIMATE subject, no object: INANIMATE INTRANSITIVE (II)
Example: *nûtin* 'it is windy'

³ The form *uâpâkî* occurs when the main verb in the clause has a 1st ('I, we') or 2nd ('you') person subject.

B. ANIMACY OF OBJECT

iii) (ANIMATE subject), ANIMATE object: TRANSITIVE ANIMATE (TA)
Example: *uâpameu* 's/he sees him/her'

iv) (ANIMATE subject), INANIMATE object: TRANSITIVE INANIMATE (TI)
Example: *uâpâtam*⁴ 's/he sees it'

II. The AI Verb

This lesson introduces the Animate Intransitive (AI) verb. Like other verbs, any AI verb consists of the following three basic parts:

	1. PREFIX	2. ROOT/STEM	3. INFLECTIONAL SUFFIX	
	(designating the subject)	(= the 'verb proper') (ex. <i>mûp(i)</i> 'visit')	(designating the person and number of the subject)	
	1.	2.	3.	
1	<i>ni</i>	<i>mûp</i>	<i>in</i>	I am visiting
2	<i>tshi</i>	<i>mûp</i>	<i>in</i>	you are visiting
3	-	<i>mûp</i>	<i>u</i>	s/he is visiting
3'	-	<i>mûp</i>	<i>inua</i>	s/he (e.g. John's father) is visiting ⁵
1p	<i>ni</i>	<i>mûp</i>	<i>inân</i>	we (excl) are visiting
21p	<i>tshi</i>	<i>mûp</i>	<i>inân</i>	we (incl) are visiting
2p	<i>tshi</i>	<i>mûp</i>	<i>inâu</i>	you (pl) are visiting
3p	-	<i>mûp</i>	<i>uat</i> [ʊt]	they are visiting

Note that the verbal prefix designating subject is identical to the prefix of personal possession, except in the 3rd person or 3rd obviative (henceforth marked 3'); a 3rd person or 3' subject is not marked by a subject prefix. Like the *ni-* and *tshi-* of possession, the verbal subject prefix always occurs in word-initial position.

The inflections given in column 3 above represent perhaps the most common inflections of the AI class. The following AI verb example,

⁴ The stem *uâpât-* is often pronounced as *uât-*.

⁵ An obviative or 3' subject requires an obviative verb ending. For discussion of the obviative see Lesson 6.

however, shows that what is noted as a single inflection in the *mûpu* example can better be analyzed as two units:

	SUBJECT PREFIX	VERB STEM	STEM- FINAL VOWEL	INFLECTION	
1	<i>ni</i>	<i>nip</i>	<i>â</i>	<i>n</i>	I am asleep
2	<i>tshi</i>	<i>nip</i>	<i>â</i>	<i>n</i>	you are asleep
3	-	<i>nip</i>	<i>â</i>	<i>u</i>	s/he is asleep
3'	-	<i>nip</i>	<i>â</i>	<i>nua</i>	s/he (e.g. her father/ his mother) is asleep
1p	<i>ni</i>	<i>nip</i>	<i>â</i>	<i>nân</i>	we (excl) are asleep
21p	<i>tshi</i>	<i>nip</i>	<i>â</i>	<i>nân</i>	we (incl) are asleep
2p	<i>tshi</i>	<i>nip</i>	<i>â</i>	<i>nâu</i>	you (pl) are asleep
3p	-	<i>nip</i>	<i>â</i>	<i>uat</i>	they are asleep

In other words, the 'inflection' consists of a vowel (known as a 'theme' or 'stem-final' vowel) followed by an inflection proper; it is the latter that marks the person and number of the subject. Innu-aimun AI verbs have a number of possible stem-final vowels: besides those listed above (*i*- and *â*-stems, respectively), *e*- and *u*-stems also occur, as illustrated by the verbal paradigms presented below.⁶

AI *e*-stems

1	<i>ni</i>	<i>tshîtût</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>n</i>	I am leaving
2	<i>tshi</i>	<i>tshîtût</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>n</i>	you are leaving
3	-	<i>tshîtût</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>u</i>	s/he is leaving
3'	-	<i>tshîtût</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>nua</i>	s/he (e.g. her father/ his mother) is leaving
1p	<i>ni</i>	<i>tshîtût</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>nân</i>	we (excl) are leaving
21p	<i>tshi</i>	<i>tshîtût</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>nân</i>	we (incl) are leaving
2p	<i>tshi</i>	<i>tshîtût</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>nâu</i>	you (pl) are leaving
3p	-	<i>tshîtût</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>uat</i>	they are leaving

⁶ Stems in *î* and *au* also occur, but as these are fairly rare, no paradigms are provided. Note that in the 3rd person form of the *i*-stem paradigm on the previous page, the stem-final vowel *i* is absorbed by the *u* inflection, resulting in a 3rd sg form *mûpu* rather than *mûpiu*.

AI *u*-stems

1	<i>ni</i>	<i>nata</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>n</i>	I am hunting
2	<i>tshi</i>	<i>nata</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>n</i>	you are hunting
3	-	<i>nata</i>		<i>u</i>	s/he is hunting
3'	-	<i>nata</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>nua</i>	s/he (e.g. her father/ his mother) is hunting
1p	<i>ni</i>	<i>nata</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>nân</i>	we (excl) are hunting
21p	<i>tshi</i>	<i>nata</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>nân</i>	we (incl) are hunting
2p	<i>tshi</i>	<i>nata</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>nâu</i>	you (pl) are hunting
3p	-	<i>nata</i>		<i>uat</i>	they are hunting

In this volume, verb forms are normally provided in the third person singular. On the basis of the 3s form, it is fairly easy to construct the other persons through i) the addition of the *ni*- or *tshi*- prefix; and ii) the substitution of the appropriate inflectional ending for the 3s subject inflection.

AI *n*-stems

A small number of AI verbs have a stem ending in *-n* rather than the vowel *-i*, *-î*, *-â*, or *-u*. This stem type is illustrated by means of the verb *takushinu* 's/he arrives/is arriving, comes/is coming (by foot)':

1	<i>ni</i>	<i>takushin</i>	-		I am arriving
2	<i>tshi</i>	<i>takushin</i> ⁷	-		you are arriving
3	-	<i>takushin</i>	<i>u</i>		s/he is arriving
3'	-	<i>takushin</i>	<i>nua</i>		s/he (e.g. her father/ his mother) is arriving
1p	<i>ni</i>	<i>takushin</i>		<i>nân</i>	we (excl) are arriving
21p	<i>tshi</i>	<i>takushin</i>		<i>nân</i>	we (incl) are arriving
2p	<i>tshi</i>	<i>takushin</i>		<i>nâu</i>	you (pl) are arriving
3p	-	<i>takushin</i>		<i>uat</i>	they are hunting

Note that *n*-stems are different from all others previously seen in that there is no inflection in the form of a separate syllable in the 1st and 2nd persons singular.

⁷ The *st*- pronunciation at the beginning of this word is explained on page 8 of Lesson 1, section 2(i).

III. Phonetic Shape of the *ni-* or *tshi-* Prefix

As in the case of the possessive prefix, a *t-* is added to the *ni-* and *tshi-* subject prefix when the verb begins with a vowel other than *u-* or *û-*. When the initial vowel is *u-* or *û-*, the prefix reduces to *n-* or *tsh-*.

Examples:

<i>âpâshueu</i>	s/he melts it (an)
<i>nitâpâshen</i>	I melt it (inan)
<i>âkushu</i>	s/he is sick
<i>tshîtâkushin</i> [stagoʃən]	you are sick
<i>ûtshû</i>	s/he comes from (a place)
<i>nûtshîn</i>	I come from

IV. AI Verbs – Examples

<i>i-</i> stems		1st person
<i>pûshu</i>	s/he leaves/is leaving (by vehicle, e.g. car, plane, boat, train)	<i>nipûshin</i>
<i>apu</i>	s/he sits down/is sitting down	<i>nitapin</i>
<i>aimu</i>	s/he talks	<i>nitaimin</i>
<i>nîmu</i>	s/he dances	<i>ninîmin</i>
<i>tshîtîmu</i>	s/he is lazy	<i>nitshîtîmin</i>
<i>pâpu</i>	s/he laughs	<i>nipâpin</i>
<i>âkushu</i>	s/he is sick	<i>nitâkushin</i>

â-stems

<i>pimipâtâu</i>	s/he runs past, passes by in a car	<i>nipimipâtân</i>
<i>pâpâtâu</i>	s/he arrives (by running or by wheeled vehicle)	<i>nipâpâtân</i>
<i>mishakâu</i>	s/he arrives (back from a trip)	<i>nimishakân</i>
<i>mâu</i>	s/he cries	<i>nimân</i>
<i>tâu</i>	s/he is (in a location)	<i>nititân</i> ⁸

e-stems

<i>atusseu</i>	s/he works	<i>nitatussen</i>
<i>pimûteu</i>	s/he walks	<i>nipimûten</i>
<i>pîtutsheu</i>	s/he comes in	<i>nipîtutshen</i>
<i>nipâkueu</i>	s/he is thirsty	<i>ninipâkuen</i>

u-stems

<i>ishinîkâshu</i>	her/his name is	<i>nitishinîkâshun</i>
<i>innû</i>	s/he is alive	<i>nitinnûun</i>
<i>minuinnû</i>	s/he feels well, is healthy	<i>niminuinnûun</i>
<i>nikamu</i>	s/he sings	<i>ninikamun</i>
<i>tipâtshimu</i>	s/he tells a story	<i>nitipâtshimun</i>

n-stems

<i>minupanu</i>	s/he is well, is lucky	<i>niminupan</i>
<i>pimishinu</i>	s/he is lying down	<i>nipimishin</i>
<i>minu</i>	s/he is drinking	<i>nimin</i>
<i>shûenu</i>	s/he is hungry	<i>nishûuen</i>

î-stems

<i>shûtshishû</i>	s/he is strong	<i>nishûtshishûn</i>
<i>mashkûshû</i>	it (an) is hard; s/he is difficult	<i>nimashkûshûn</i>
<i>uenûtishû</i>	s/he is rich	<i>nuenûtishûn</i>
<i>matshikâushû</i>	s/he is bad, mean	<i>nimatshikâushûn</i>

⁸ The verb *tâu*, which does not appear on the recording, is irregular and has an initial *i-* in 1st and 2nd person forms.

EXERCISES

I. Translate the following sentences into English:

1. *Tshiminuinnîun.*
2. *Tshimînuân.*⁹
3. *Pâpu Tshân.*
4. *Nimân.*
5. *Uâpishînuâ Mânî umînûshima.*
6. *Nipâu Ân.*
7. *Pîtuâuat â?*
8. *Mânî ishinîkâshu nuîtsheuâkan.*
9. *Auâssîu ishkuess.*
10. *Tipâtshimunua Pinûte uîtsheuâkana.*
11. *Tshipuâminâu â?*
12. *Tshitinnu-aimin â?*
Ehe, nitinnu-aimin.

II. Translate the following sentences into Innu-aimun:

1. *We (incl) are hunting.*
2. *Peter is from Natuashish.*
3. *Is he young?*
4. *You (pl) are hungry.*
5. *I am thirsty.*
6. *We (excl) speak the Innu language.*
7. *Mary is hungry.*
8. *She is dreaming.*
9. *Are they visiting?*
10. *They are sick.*

Additional Vocabulary

<i>auâssîu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he is young
<i>innu-aimu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he speaks (the) Innu (language)
<i>mînueu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he gives things away
<i>pîtuâu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he smokes
<i>puâmu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he dreams
<i>uâpishîu</i>	(AI verb)	s/he, it (anim) is white
<i>uîtsheuâkana</i>	(an noun)	his/her friend

⁹ The recording contains a transitive form of this verb rather the correct AI form which appears here.